

The Link



**The magazine for the linked congregations and community of the
West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood**

Rev David A Albon BA MCS
01506 870460

The Manse, 27 Learmonth Crescent
West Calder EH55 8AF

theminister@west-kirk-polbeth-harwood.co.uk

West Kirk

Session Clerk

Stewart MacRae
01506 872486

23 Westmuir Road
West Calder
EH55 8EX

sessionclerk@westkirkofcalder.co.uk

Treasurer

William Calder
01506 871281

25 Harburn Road
West Calder
EH55 8AJ

treasurer@westkirkofcalder.co.uk

Polbeth Harwood

Session Clerk

Marian Kinsman
01506 871125

12 Langside Crescent
Polbeth
EH55 8UW

marian.kinsman@polbethharwood.co.uk

Treasurer

Tom Griffin
01506 439595

60 Easter Bankton
Murieston
Livingston
EH54 9BE

tom.griffin@polbethharwood.co.uk

News Editor

Colin Dempster
01506 414565

140 Staunton Rise
Dedridge West
Livingston EH54 6PA

thelinkeditor@west-kirk-polbeth-harwood.co.uk

www.west-kirk-polbeth-harwood.co.uk

A Word From Our Minister

The Manse
27 Learmonth Crescent
West Calder
EH55 8AF

Monday, 21st January 2008

Dear Friends

Welcome to the first *Link* of 2008! As I write, it is another wet day and even though it is approaching 10 am, it is still quite gloomy and dark. Still, we have the lengthening days to look forward to and the promise of Spring. How early will it come this year?

I can tell you that the seasons of Lent and Easter are very early this year: the first Sunday in Lent is 10th February and Easter Sunday is 23rd March. Barely time to leave Christmas behind! Do keep a look out for more information about what is going on during this special time of year in the weekly intimations at church and in *'The Link'*.

I look forward to journeying with you through Lent to Easter again this year and hope that these weeks early on in this New Year give opportunity for both individual and collective reflection and prayer.

I'm going to conclude with the blessing that was said on the first Sunday of 2008 as a number of folks said they had appreciated it.

Blessing for a New Year

May God make your year a happy one!
Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;
Not by making your path easy,
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making your life always pleasant,
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,
and by making you anxious to be there to help.
God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.



Rev David A Albon
Minister of the Parish Churches of the West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood

The Parish Record

West Calder

Funerals

13th December – Allan Davidson, Parkhead Cottages

15th January – Alec Gibb, 'ViewPark', Rusha Farm

Polbeth

Funerals

8th December – Jane Harris, Polbeth Crescent

24th January – Jessie McCabe, Limecroft Nursing Home

Worship in the Linked Congregations

Sunday Morning Worship takes place in the West Kirk at 9.30 am and in Polbeth Harwood at 11.15 am.

1st Sunday of Lent – Sunday 10th February

4th Sunday of Lent – Sunday 2nd March

Sacrament of Communion:

West Kirk – 9.30 am, Polbeth Harwood – 11.15 am

United Communion at Polbeth Harwood – 6.30 pm

Palm Sunday – Sunday 16th March

Monday 17th March

West Kirk open for prayer and reflection – 6.30 - 7.30 pm

Tuesday 18th March

West Kirk open for prayer and reflection – 6.30 - 7.30 pm

Wednesday 19th March

West Kirk open for prayer and reflection – 6.30 - 7.30 pm

Thursday 20th March

'On the night He was betrayed': A United 'Potluck meal' and celebration of Communion at Polbeth Harwood – 7.30 pm

Good Friday – 21st March

Good Friday United Service at the West Kirk – 7 pm

Easter Sunday – 23rd March

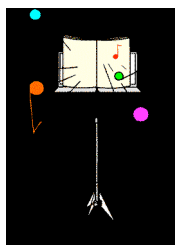
Ecumenical Celebration of Easter in the Auld Kirkyard, West Calder followed by breakfast in Limefield Church Hall – 7am

West Kirk Easter Sunday All Age Celebration – 9.30 am

Polbeth Harwood Easter Sunday All Age Celebration – 11.15 am

Reflections

**Praise him with fanfares on the trumpet; praise him on harp and lyre;
Praise him with tambourines and dancing, praise him with flute and strings;
Praise him with the clash of cymbals; with triumphant cymbals praise him.
[Psalm 150]**



The young man recognized us in the foyer of the theatre. He did not know that we had watched his performances often but this was the first time in years that we had managed to chat to him. We had known his mother and father well in the old days and we reminisced about them and about Polbeth Harwood Church.

He told us he was working from home as editor of a national magazine. We discussed our church magazine, *The Link*, and without hesitation he offered help. "I don't go to church nowadays. I don't have much time for religion," he said, "but just let me know what you would like and I will do an article for you."



"It's not where you go that counts; it's what you do," I answered. He had to hurry off so we arranged to keep in touch and waved goodbye.

We took our seats in the auditorium for the annual Christmas Concert and there he was, in his place in the Whitburn Brass Band. There followed a heart-warming evening of favourite carols, haunting melodies and rousing refrains, secular songs and religious ones, and lovely new additions to the repertoire. They played with their usual enthusiasm and expertise and they gave great pleasure. They introduced their latest recruits and these children and their tutor were welcomed with generous encouragement.



At such times, when our familiar church organ music is replaced by the fanfares of trumpets, the cymbals, the tambourines, and the crashing drums, suddenly, as Psalm 150 suggests, carols take on a more triumphant resonance and praise becomes more meaningful. The spirits rise, the season is happier and audiences, regardless of their own philosophy of life, leave the concert with warm appreciation and a sense of peace. George Lillo and Joseph Addison, writing in the 17th century, have these fine words on music:

***'There's sure no passion in the human soul
but finds its food in music'.***

***'Music, the greatest good that mortals know
and all of heaven we have below.'***

The gift of music is certainly 'food for the soul' and 'the greatest good' for mankind. It is something to be proud of, as all parents are whose sons and



daughters accept the strict discipline of study to improve their gifts and express the joy of sharing those gifts with all of us.

Ann

A Unique Relationship

by Kenneth Crookston

Throughout our lives, we all have occasion to go back to our roots when we find ourselves in new situations or in the company of new friends. 'So, where do you come from?' is one of these questions with which we have an intimate two-way relationship, and the answers of everyone reading this would no doubt appear like a page out of the index of a world atlas when amalgamated.

Having answered 'Polbeth' to this question many times over the past 40-odd years, the reactions have encompassed everything from 'pole where?' to a knowing grimace, suggesting that an upbringing in Chapelton is viewed by some as being akin to one in Beirut or Baghdad. However, anyone lucky enough to enjoy a childhood there will tell you that Polbeth is a great place. It always has been.

We had everything we needed in those days - a fantastic putting green, tennis courts, a bowling green for the slightly less energetic, a massive public park with the highest chute in the Western Hemisphere and the 'witches hat', a relic from the Victorian era that won the King Herod Award for Child Safety at the Great Exhibition in 1851. There was adventure 'up the burn' and endless summer trips along to the woods at Bellsquarry to collect blaeberreries, or up to Harburn to look for golf balls; just the job for toughening up today's generation of middle-aged comfort seekers!

One of the most remarkable things about Polbeth was always the church. My parents never seemed to be out of the place and, as we lived just across the road, every second caller at number 10 was there to collect the key so that the slimmers, the yoga club, the carpet bowlers... you name it... could get started. Somehow it made me feel quite important that we were trusted enough to have the key for the church, but looking back, I guess it was just that we were handier than anyone else.

Ann Watson spoke last month about a chance meeting at a brass band Christmas concert and it was during that lovely five minutes that a particular 'young man' (her words!) found himself transported back in time to the watch-night services at Polbeth Harwood during the 1970s. It was the same young man who used to 'borrow' the church key occasionally, but not with any sinister intent; he looked at it as more of a social service to relieve his neighbours from the perpetual scales and arpeggios blaring out of the end of his cornet, with the added benefit of kidding himself that he sounded like a better player in the church's big hall.

The minister at the time always appeared happy with this and would sometimes even encourage by sitting and listening to him playing, but David Robertson always seemed to be particularly in his element on Christmas Eve. Perhaps he was excited because Santa was coming, or because the church was packed almost to the roof, although it may have been the music, which three Crookston laddies, Alex McLean, John Sneddon and others were providing on their brass instruments. Some parents were never more proud than when their boys were playing in the church, but the rest of the congregation appeared to appreciate it too.

Although it may not have seemed like a big deal for those listening at the time, these occasions were a priceless part of life's education, which set every one of the young participants out on their journey with a wonderful tool in his bag – the ability to bring real joy to others through music. It also gave some, who haven't necessarily grasped any other aspects of religion in a big way, a unique connection to the church - both the building and the community.

Although he's rarely there for much more than hatches, matches and despatches these days, a certain 'young man' can't walk into a church anywhere without finding himself back in Polbeth over three decades ago. Now that is a special and never-ending relationship!

Kenneth Crookston is the Editor of British Bandsman. He works and lives in Mid Calder with his wife, Anne, and two daughters, Clare (15) and Katy (12).

Bible Study

All (from both congregations) are welcome to join the Bible Study Group, which meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 8 pm in various houses. Up until June this year, we will be looking at the Sermon on the Mount.



For more information contact Jean on 01506 873532.

Overheard

at the local supermarket checkout ... just before Christmas

Two elderly ladies (already laden with parcels) chatting to one another.

"Aye, Mary and Joseph have a lot to answer for!"

"Indeed that is true!"



EH

West Kirk Fundraising Group Report

It seems a long time since we held the Christmas Candy Bar but I am sure that you would be interested to know that the excellent sum of £2219 was raised. Thanks go to all who helped behind the scenes as well as all our regular customers who came

The February Candy Bar will have passed by the time you read this. The Youth Link and friends will be organising the one after that on Saturday 1st March.

Although the redecoration is complete there are other projects that require funds and your support is always much appreciated.



The group is always open to suggestions for new fund raising ideas. If you think you can help, please approach any member of the group.

We look forward to seeing you throughout 2008.

Jill Murray (Convener)

West Kirk – Eco-Congregation

As a Church we cannot get a blue bin of our own, so soon we will be using a compost bin to make a trial of composting the organic material (mostly grass cuttings) from the Church grounds.

I will also be putting in strategic places a few boxes into which paper for recycling can be put, and emptying them as need be.

In these ways I hope that what needs to go into the grey bins will be much reduced.



Get a GREEN Habit

At the Christmas Candy Bar the Youth Link Trackers Group sold cotton bags with children's own designs printed on them for use as an alternative to plastic bags to convey the environmental message 'Reduce, reuse, recycle', and we still have some left which we will sell at our March Candy Bar. Your support in choosing to buy and use these bags is appreciated. There is talk of supermarkets starting to 'outlaw' plastic bags, by charging an unattractively high price for them – so take this chance to get prepared, and start a good habit.

About once a month I place an order with Greencity Wholefoods (www.greencity.co.uk), on behalf of the 8-10 members of the West Calder Food Co-op, many of whom attend church. Greencity specialises in products which are vegetarian and GM-free, with a large proportion also being Vegan, Fair-Trade, Gluten Free and Organic. Contact me on 01506 871259 if you'd like to know more about this.



Rosanna Rabaeijs

Christian Aid Totals for 2007

Christian Aid Walk and Forth Road Bridge Cross	£330.00
Christmas 2007	£355.50
TOTAL	£685.50

This was a quiet year for Christian Aid. Only 5 adults, 1 child and 1 dog took part in the Forth Road Bridge Walk. If you enjoy a walk why not join us this year. More details and dated nearer the time.

If you are a taxpayer, please fill in the Gift Aid section of your Christian Aid envelope as this enables Christian Aid to claim back about 30p in each pound from the tax.

Eleanor Davidson

Death and beyond

Advertisement for a North American life insurance company in the early 1960s: Death is nature's way of telling you to slow down.

George Bernard Shaw, twentieth century playwright:

The statistics about death are very impressive. One out of every one dies!



Jim Elliot, martyred missionary to the Auca people, 1956:
When it comes time to die, make sure all you have to do is die.

Henry Scott Holland, nineteenth century preacher:
Death is nothing at all ... I have only slipped away into the next room. I am I and you are you. Whatever we were to each other that we are still. Call me

by my old familiar name; speak to me in the easy way, which you always used. Put no difference in your tone; wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, and pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was. Let it be spoken without effort, without the ghost of a shadow on it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was; there is absolute unbroken continuity. Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am waiting for you for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner. All is well.

West Kirk Guild Report

We hope you all had a good Christmas and we wish you all the best for 2008.

19th November we enjoyed our Guest night in the Church entertained by the "Eastfield & Harthill Flute Orchestra" there was a collection and £110 was donated to "The Vine Trust" the Amazon project Bo'ness, a most enjoyable evening.

6th December we all enjoyed a shopping trip to Leith Mills in Edinburgh.

17th December we closed with a Christmas Party in the Church hall.

7th January was our first Guild night of 2008 Allison Baxter brought along some videos about Projects the Guild may want to consider for 2008/2009 it was very interesting.

21st January "Broadley Scots Society" are coming to entertain us in the Church hall.

Dates for your diary:

Monday – 4th February	Inter-Organisational Quiz
Monday – 18th February	“Cross Reach Social Care” (Beyond the Blues)
Monday – 3rd March	“Yorkhill Children’s Foundation”
Monday – 10th March	“Mary’s Patch” – Easter Craft Demonstration
Tuesday – 11th March	“Spring Rally” – Mid Calder Kirk

Moira Jack (Secretary)



The Boys' Brigade

The Object of The Boys' Brigade is the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self Respect and all that tends towards a true Christian Manliness.



Project Stedfast:

It's been a while since I have updated you all on the project, and thought that I owe you all a progress report considering the fundraising work that you have been doing.

From the beginning the response from all has been incredible and a source of huge encouragement to all involved in the fund raising effort, though, all our hard work here at home was rewarded when we saw first hand the tremendous effort and hard work that has gone on in Kenya since our last visit, what a sight to behold!



In July 2007 the walls for the first three classrooms were completed, with each classroom to hold a maximum 30 pupils with a target class of 25. All of the work is being carried out by hand, right down to the quarrying of the stone for the walls, testimony itself to the determination, skill and hard work of the Boys' and Girls Brigade with the People of Ooloolua Church and continued inspiration to our own fundraising efforts.

During our stay in July 07 we were able to meet with the whole project team once again, Church Elders, Architect, Engineer and representatives from the youth of The Girls' and Boys' Brigades. The hospitality extended to us was incredibly humbling, being looked after so well makes it so difficult to comprehend just how hard life there can be for so many of these people. The Roof and fitting out of these first classes along with the construction of the sanitary facilities were already well underway, with the interviews of the teachers and the induction of the first children during January 2008.

Even though our trip was short, we were able to visit with the orphans at the Massai Orphanage for Girls in Suswa (the orphanage is operated by The Brigade Captain and her husband, supported by Thomas Barnardos).

A wonderful day was spent listening to and talking with the children in between playing volleyball in the garden. All of the gifts we took them were hugely appreciated; the greatest gift we took away was love. For these children and indeed all the young people of Ooloolua the time we spent with them was worth more than any material object we left behind.

The next phase of building will see work commence on the accommodation unit for disabled children. In Kenya the St Andrews School and its



principals will break new ground in education with the integration of both able and disabled children into joint education. This integration is something we take as being the norm here in Scotland, but is a huge leap forward in Kenya. Whilst society in Kenya will often turn its back on the plight of disabled children, education is

undoubtedly the most direct way of helping remove the stigma and isolation felt by so many. On completion of the School, a facility will also be made for the education of children with specific needs which cannot be catered for in the main school. This integration will continue on the principal that even where they cannot take lessons together, they can always learn to play together and to respect each other.

At the time of writing we are scheduled to travel to visit the school on 23rd January, although travel advice to Kenya may prevent this. The trip should witness the first children being educated and project manage the second three classrooms. Even although there is unrest at this time, some of our friends from the Church are attempting to go about their business and comment that things are almost normal where they are, with the area safe and experiencing no trouble.

Fundraising is going extremely well with our target of £58,000 due to be reached and even exceeded during the first months of 2008. A very well done and thank you to all who have embraced this very worthwhile project which will make a difference to the lives of all of the children who will attend the school. Whilst around 170 children will be in attendance at the school when fully open, not including the disabled children who will be accommodated in the disabled unit, the local economy will benefit through increased employment.

We continue to use and extend the Ooloolua Secondary school moto.

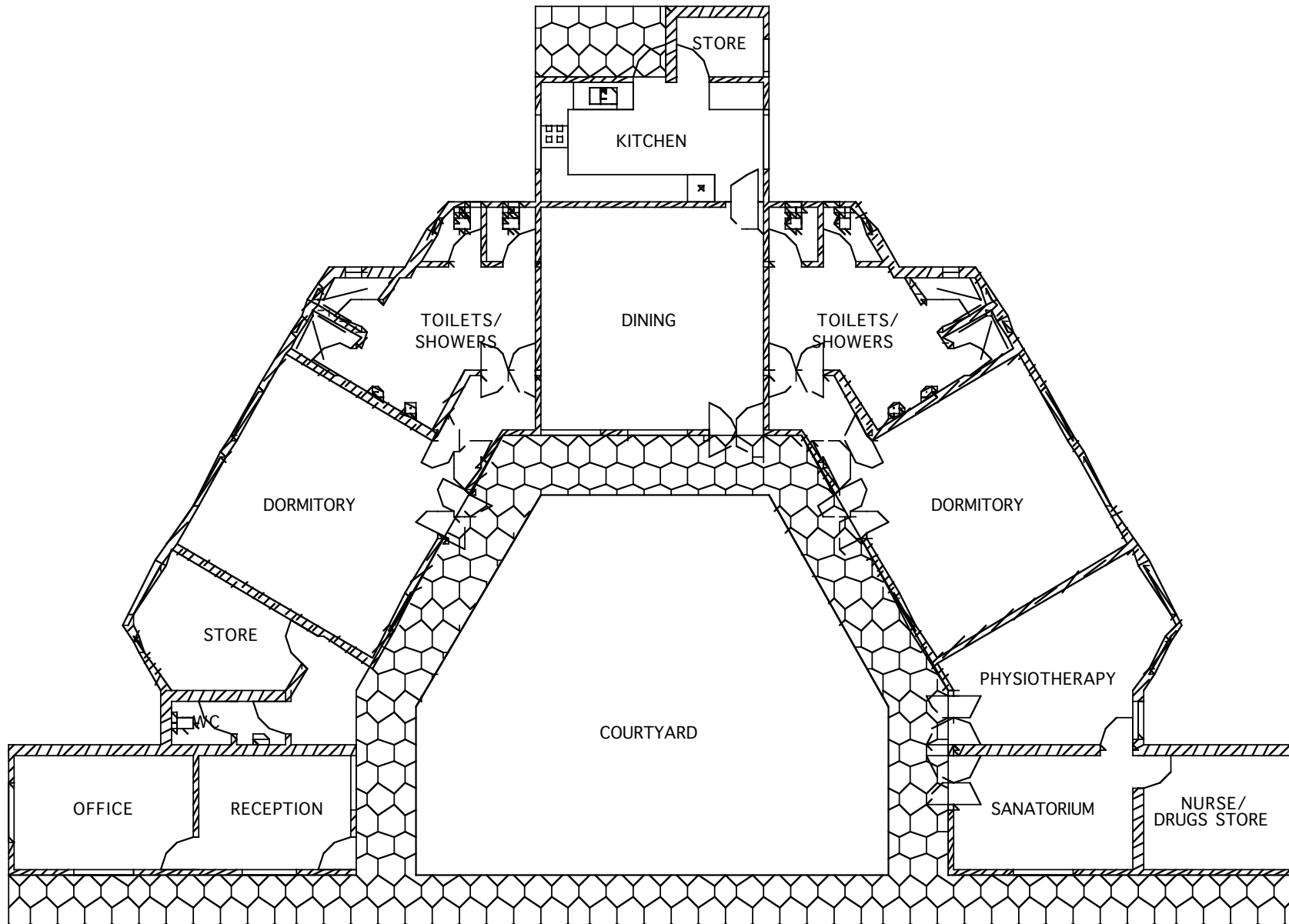
'IT CAN BE DONE' but with your help 'IT WILL BE DONE'


Asantisana
(Thank you very much)

*Tom Griffin
Project Stedfast*

On the next page you can view the floor plan for the disabled unit.

Update on 14 January: the school has been painted, the furniture is in position and children are now in the building.



dnt P.C.E.A. OLOOLUA P.O. BOX 176 NGONGHILLS dir: b: g: r: t: e: -----	job PROPOSED SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE - P.C.E.A. OLOOLUA CHURCH, NGONG	drawing SCHEME DESIGN title FLOOR PLAN	scale 1:200	 BUILDING DESIGN CONSULTANTS P.O. Box 38100511 CROOKWATER telephone 07252743540733799172 Email: nwanne@nw1@yahoo.com
			date JUN 2007	
		drawing NW 150-02	sheets 01-SD/A	

The Link
 Issue 25
 February 2008 – March 2008



West Kirk – Rota Information

West Kirk Crèche Rota

10th February	Mary Calder
17th February	Olive Gibson
24th February	Melanie Dickinson
2nd March	Val Occardi
9th March	Margaret Farquhar
16th March	Kathy Black
23rd March	Shirley MacRae
30th March	Mary Calder
6th April	Olive Gibson
13th April	Melanie Dickinson

West Kirk Tea Rota

Contact Olive Gibson 01506 871291
Note: Tea Makers, please bring milk.

10th February	Margaret Lamb	Janet Meikle
17th February	Moira McRae	Jill Murray
24th February	May Arnott	Olive Gibson
2nd March	Margo McEwan	Hettie McIntyre
9th March	Isobel McChesney	Olive Gibson
16th March	Juanita Allan	Jim Allan
23rd March	Kate Jessiman	Olive Gibson
30th March	Alison Baxter	Alison McNaught
6th April	George Stott	Morag Stott
13th April	Katie Albon	Olive Gibson

West Kirk Flower Rota

If you cannot manage your turn to arrange or deliver flowers, please either swap, or contact Margaret Greenhorn (01506 871139) for help in finding someone.

The calendar for 2008 is on the wall in the Church entrance, but with this rota produced bi-monthly, if you would like to donate flowers in the coming weeks where there are some gaps, please do, and speak directly to whoever is the arranger for the relevant week.

We could really do with a few more folk on the rota, both to arrange and to deliver – please consider this and let it be known if you can help.

	Given	Arranged	Delivered
3rd February	Elizabeth MacPherson	Rosanna Rabaeijs	Kathy Black
10th February	M A Smith	Katie Albon	Moira McRae
17th February	Jean Graham	Isabel Graham	Ivy Johnstone
24th February	Liz Dyer	Margo McEwan	Irene Grindlay
2nd March		Rosanna Rabaeijs	Kathy Black
9th March	Helen Sneddon	Katie Albon	Moira McRae
16th March		Margo McEwan	Ivy Johnstone
23rd March		Rosanna Rabaeijs	Irene Grindlay
30th March		Katie Albon	Kathy Black
6th April	Jill Murray	Margo McEwan	Moira McRae

West Kirk Duty Rota

	Door Duty			Car Run
10th February	Richard Bryce	Liz Dyer	Alex Easton	Hugh Clarkson
17th February	Jeanette Ferguson	Victor Ferguson	Lorna Graham	Richard Bryce
24th February	Irene Grindlay	Beryl Henderson	Alan Jessiman	Robert Hawes
2nd March	Alison McNaught	Stewart Munro	Jill Murray	Beryl Henderson
9th March	Christine Nicholl	Evelyn Paterson	George Stott	Alan Jessiman
16th March	Hazel Tod	Juanita Allan	Jim Allan	George Stott
23rd March	May Arnott	Angus Baxter	Richard Bryce	Hugh Clarkson
30th March	Liz Dyer	Alex Easton	Jeanette Ferguson	Richard Bryce
6th April	Victor Ferguson	Lorna Graham	Irene Grindlay	Beryl Henderson
13th April	Beryl Henderson	Alan Jessiman	Alison McNaught	Robert Hawes



Polbeth Harwood – Rota Information

Stewart Court Taxi Rota	
10th February	Charlie Sturrock
17th February	David Prentice
24th February	Eleanor Davidson
2nd March	Margaret Marr
9th March	Charlie Sturrock
16th March	David Prentice
23rd March	Eleanor Davidson
30th March	Margaret Marr
6th April	Charlie Sturrock
13th April	David Prentice

Polbeth Harwood Cleaning Rota		
(for week commencing)		
10th February	Laura Carroll	Petrona Carroll
17th February	Reeta Griffin	Tom Griffin
24th February	Mary Gray	Josephine Greer
2nd March	Dot Cibbald	Norma Wilson
9th March	Anna Muirhead	Betty Macauley
16th March	Marian Kinsman	Joan Philips
23rd March	Ann Watson	William Watson
30th March	Margaret Marr	Jocky Marr
6th April	Esther Hamilton	Pat Erskine
13th April	Linda Eardley	Hazel Speirs

Polbeth Harwood Duty Rota				
	Door Duty			
10th February	Anna Muirhead	Tom Walker	Reeta Griffin	Tom Griffin
17th February	Ena Prentice	David Prentice	Wilma Dickson	Lilias Fairley
24th February	Hazel Speirs	Linda Eardley	Margaret Hampson	William McCallum
2nd March	Moira Mushet	Marian Kinsman	Jimmy Greer	Charlie Sturrock
9th March	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton	Betty Upton	Margaret Dempster
16th March	Etta Walker	Eleanor Davidson	Effie Halliday	Frank Mabbutt
23rd March	Alice Mackay	Kenneth Mackay	Jenny Doyle	Janice Davidson
30th March	Jessie Kelly	Tom Kelly	Ann Watson	William Watson
6th April	Betty Macauley	Gordon Erskine	Janet Russell	Alan Mercer
13th April	Anna Muirhead	Tom Walker	Reeta Griffin	Tom Griffin

Polbeth Harwood Café Rota		
13th February	Betty Upton	Janet Walker
20th February	Grace Peace	Janet Russell
27th February	Frank Mabbutt	Gordon Erskine
5th March	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton
12th March	Wilma Dickson	Jessie Kelly
19th March	Betty Upton	Janet Walker
26th March	Grace Peace	Janet Russell
2nd April	Frank Mabbutt	Gordon Erskine
9th April	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton
16th April	Wilma Dickson	Jessie Kelly

Singing together is such a beautiful sound It lifts the spirit all around

Joining together in the Lord's song
Righting the world from all of its wrongs

A feeling of community as we gather together
Attending the church in all types of weather

I hope this gift is one you will treasure
Using it often to bring you pleasure

Celebrating Christmas brings such joy
Remembering the birth of a special baby boy

So in 2007 on Christmas Day
There is only one thing left to say

"Merry Christmas Mum"



Contributions for the next edition ...

During 2008 *The Link* will be published as double issues throughout the year. Your thoughts on this slightly reduced publication schedule would be greatly appreciated.



Remember that this is your magazine; your contributions are most welcome at all times.

Contributions for the next edition of *The Link* Magazine can be **submitted at any time** however for Issue 26 (April and May) the latest submission date is Sunday 16th March.

Contributions and comments can be sent via email, or handed in person to either Rev David Albon or Colin Dempster.

Paws... for thought



Exhilaration is that feeling you get just after a great idea hits you, and just before you realise what's wrong with it.

Unknown