

Issue 32

The Link



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

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

The Parish Record

Funerals

2 February – Marian Kigour, Woodlands Nursing Home, Livingston

18 February – James Fairley, Dickson Street, West Calder

2 March – Nan Aitkin, Burngrange Cottages, West Calder

11 March – Edith Stewart, Langside Gardens, Polbeth

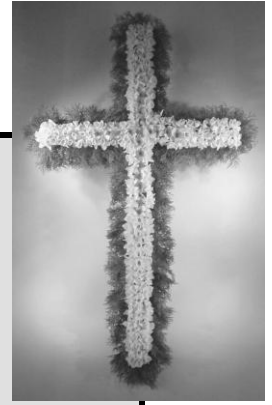
12 March – Gladys Storry, Hartwood Road, West Calder

6 April – Russell Cowan, Learmonth Crescent, West Calder

9 April – Steven Johnstone, Butteries View, Armadale

14 April – Robert McCrum, Chapelton Drive, Polbeth

21 April – Bill Scott, Chapelton Terrace, Polbeth



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

The Smell of Spring

With the smell of spring
there's new promises that bring
a hope of tomorrow
a new day waiting to be born;



New life at its start
a small beating heart
waiting to carry someone new
through time - joyous, happy,
but also blue



Everything, awaiting, the future's at hand
what is it holding in for our land?
Politics, sport, the weather report
Time is being counted down
and now, my friend, why the frown?



You will also be one
of the millions to see
Spring's promises and what it holds
for you and for me



Annette Coetzee
www.christianstories.com

Easter Facts



- In medieval times a festival of egg throwing was held in church, during which the priest would throw a hard-boiled egg to one of the choirboys. It was then tossed from one choirboy to the next and whoever held the egg when the clock struck 12 was the winner and retained the egg.



- Easter Bonnets are a throwback to the days when the people denied themselves the pleasure of wearing finery for the duration of Lent.
- The traditional act of painting eggs is called Pysanka.
- To Egyptians, the egg was a sacred token of the renovation of mankind after the Flood.
- The egg has always been a symbol of the Resurrection to Christians.



- The date of Passover is variable as it is dependent on the phases of the moon, and thus Easter is also a movable feast.
- The custom of giving eggs at Easter time has been traced back to Egyptians, Persians, Gauls, Greeks and Romans, to whom the egg was a symbol of life.



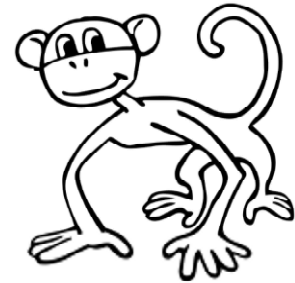
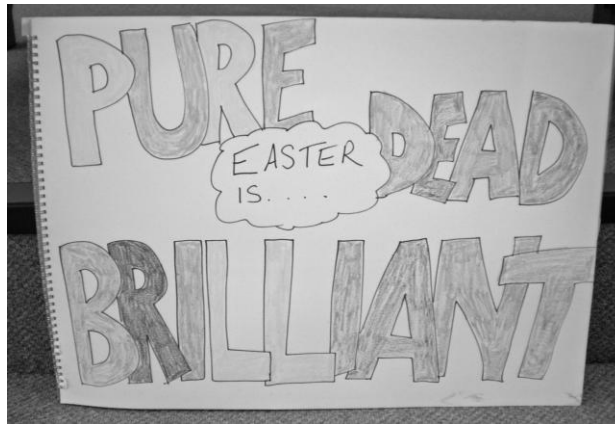
- Every year at Easter Pope Benedict XVI, sends his "Urbi et Orbi" to the world.
- Easter is now celebrated (in the words of the Book of Common Prayer) on the first Sunday after the full moon which happens on or after March 21, the Spring Equinox.
- Some Churches still keep up the old tradition of using evergreens - symbolic of eternal life - embroidered in red on white, or woven in straw, but most now prefer displays of flowers in the spring colours of green, yellow and white.



- In the United States Easter is celebrated with a large Easter Egg Hunt by children on the White House Lawn.
- To the Jews, the egg marked the time of their departure from the land of Egypt.

Cheeky Monkey's Easter Thoughts...

For those at the services on Easter Sunday you will remember Aileen's attempt at summarising Easter which did not meet with Cheeky Monkey's approval.



He believed that he could summarise Easter in a handful of words: **Pure Dead Brilliant!**



What words summarise Easter to you? Perhaps you could try either Aileen's strategy or think of a few key words for Easter like Cheeky Monkey.



The pictures above were designed and painted by Lynne Stewart. The children at Polbeth Harwood Jam Club assisted in the finishing touches with Lynne's guidance.

West Kirk Fundraising Group Report

The Candy Bars have been successful this year and it has been good to see all our regular and new customers.



In February, the Group raised £560 and in March, the Youth Link made over £700. All must be congratulated for their hard work cooking, baking and helping serve and man the stalls.

The next Candy Bar was run by the Guild on Saturday 4 April and will be followed by the Choir on Saturday 6 June. There will be the usual stalls and donations to these are always appreciated.

Our Candy Bars are very much a social highlight of the village as well as raising much needed funds. We are grateful for all the support shown.

Jill Murray (Convener)

West Kirk Guild Report

Monday 16 February

Alison from Waste Management gave an insight into recycling, it was very interesting and informative, we also were given a shopping bag, notepad and pencils, all recycled.

Monday 2 March

Eileen Milne came to give us some Armchair Exercises, we had a good laugh, but more importantly we were given exercises that we could do at home, not too strenuous but could help keep us supple.

Friday 6 March

World Day of Prayer, this was held at Polbeth Harwood Church. Several of our ladies participated in the service, and we all then enjoyed a cup of tea and a chat.

Tuesday 20 March

Spring Rally was held at Breich Valley Church, with a very good turnout. The guest was the church's own minister, the Rev Tom Preston. Our own Juanita Allan has been voted on as Convener.

Monday 16 March

The International Organisational Quiz, which had to be cancelled on Monday 2 February due to bad weather, was held this evening.



Our quizmaster was Stewart MacRae, who did the quiz in the format of "Who wants to be a Millionaire" the audience had to participate, and we even had 'phone a friend' (Uncle Bill). Everyone enjoyed the evening.

The end result was:	4th Youth Link	£44,000
	3rd Kirk Session	£48,000
	2nd Guild	£69,000
	1st Choir	£80,300



Unfortunately, they are all still waiting for their prize money!

Dates for your diary:

Thursday – 23 April	AGM & Closing Social
Wednesday – 20 May	Outing to Mellerstain House & Peebles

Moira Jack

Pastoral Care Group News

Our Christmas Party was once again a great success. After a lovely buffet meal provided by the committee we had dances, games and carols.

More than fifty people attended the Scots Night in January. The beautiful meal of Scottish fare was followed by excellent entertainment consisting of bagpipes (Ewan Sturrock), songs (David McNab), a Scottish quiz and community singing.

We shall be organizing some outings and events throughout 2009. Please note there is no minimum age to take part – all are welcome.

May I take this opportunity to thank all of you who attended the concert of piano and organ music which I did in January and those who gave donations. As a result of these donations and the money raised from the concerts at the West Kirk and at Garrowhill, coronary care charities have benefited by £1400.

Bill Russell

Forthcoming Concert

The annual concert which I arrange in memory of my mother (Effie's Concert) will take place this year in the West Kirk on Saturday 25 April at 7.30 pm. The artists are "Bill Russell and friends" – Carolyn Hamilton, Denise Ashwood, Jim McLean and David Glen. This will be an evening of songs and instrumental music (piano, organ, accordion, clarinet and saxophone) with tea and coffee at the interval.

Tickets (£4) will be on sale soon or you can pay at the door. The money raised will go to church funds and charities.

Bill Russell

Re-energise Conference



In January, I attended a Church Without Walls 'Re-energise' conference in Aviemore. I joined 300 other delegates from churches all over Scotland at the Macdonald Highland Hotel. We gathered together to worship, share stories, exchange ideas and re-charge batteries, and hopefully leave refreshed and inspired!

"You welcomed me as though I was an angel" Galatians 4:14 was a key verse for the event, tying into the theme of the conference which was 'Coming Home?' (*linking in with Scottish Government's project 'Homecoming 2009' to promote Scottish culture and heritage*) The aim was to challenge parishes to rethink how we welcome visitors and strangers, and develop creative ways to engage with our communities and help the church become 'home'.

This homecoming theme was expanded through looking at the parable of the Prodigal Son. Worship leaders and speakers looked at the theme from various perspectives each day and there was a lovely flow of continuity between everything that was going on - from the hymns and songs chosen to the topics for discussion.

I met many lovely people during the conference, each with their own story to tell. It was inspiring and touching to hear these life stories and it made me think how good it would be to hear more of the stories from our congregations.

So let me just finish with the way the conference finished for me, with the stories from two wonderful older ladies. They came up to me, one walking with a stick and the other (who was in her 80s) recovering from a cataract operation a few days before and they were BUZZING! They told me, almost with tears in their eyes, that they couldn't sleep the night before because they were so excited and full of ideas about what they could do when they went home to their church.

I spent the next hour listening to those ideas and how they had organised: a 'chippy tea' for the working groups in the church; a cradle roll party for the parents who'd had children baptised that year; a wedding anniversary service of blessing for couples who'd been married between certain years ... and many more inspiring things!



**The main speakers were totally inspiring
and well worth a listen:**

www.cwwresources.org.uk/talk

I left the conference with a smile on my face and my heart warmed with the knowledge that there are little pockets (and big pockets!) of life and hope all over the Church of Scotland, shining out of the lives of God's people.

I'd recommend this experience to anyone; 'Re-energise' did exactly what it said on the tin!

Lorraine Clarke

Life & Work – May Issue

LIFE AND WORK

The Editorially Independent Magazine of the Church of Scotland
www.lifeandwork.org

General Assembly 2009

- Reports to the General Assembly and Assembly Diary
- Profile of the Moderator Designate, the Rev Bill Hewitt

Christian Aid Week

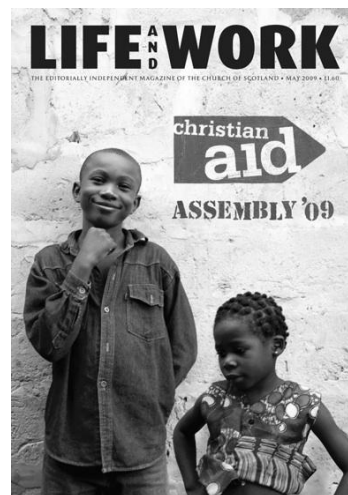
- Interview with the Head of Christian Aid Scotland
- Christian Aid's work around the world
- What can my church do?
- Christian Aid Week Prayer

The Voice of Poverty

Jackie Macadam reports from Scotland's first Poverty Truth Commission

All About Love

The outgoing Moderator, the Rt Rev David Lunan, reflects on the meaning of love.



Emerging Church

Jackie Macadam hears of new ways of being the church.

Cruise the Canal

A charity that takes disabled people and carers on canal trips.



Fair Deal

Anne Collard's visit to Peru reveals just how effective fair trade can be

Simple but Meaningful

John R Hume pays a visit to Hoselaw Chapel.



Love is Never Rude

The Very Rev Dr James Simpson reflects on the damage done by misrepresentation and rudeness

Plus – Presbytery of Uist, all the regular columnists, news, letters, reviews and crosswords – all for just £1.60

Church Bulletins

Believe it or not, the following announcements have actually appeared in various church bulletins.

- 1 Don't let worry kill you – let the church help.
- 2 Thursday night – Potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.
- 3 Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.
- 4 For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- 5 The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of Rev and Mrs Julius Belzer.
- 6 This afternoon there will be a meeting in the South and North ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends.
- 7 Tuesday at 4 pm there will be an ice-cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.
- 8 Wednesday the ladies liturgy will meet. Mrs Johnson will sing "Put me in my little bed" accompanied by the pastor.
- 9 Thursday at 5 pm there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All ladies wishing to be "Little Mothers" will meet with the Pastor in his study.
- 10 This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
- 11 The service will close with "Little Drops of Water." One of the ladies will start quietly and the rest of the congregation will join in.
- 12 Next Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and do so.
- 13 The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They can be seen in the church basement Saturday.
- 14 A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
- 15 At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.



West Kirk Membership Survey 2008

The results of the survey were discussed at a special meeting of the elders at the end of January.

The purpose of the survey was to bring our roll up to date and to find out what level of contact our members wanted.

Not all of the forms were returned. Out of the 265 forms that were returned 247 members indicated that they wished to remain members of the West Kirk. The difference of 18 was made up as follows: 4 members on the Roll had died, 2 had already joined other churches, 5 wished to have their lines transferred, 2 were moving overseas and 5 wished to have their names removed.

Of the 247 who wished to remain on the Roll, 211 said that they were happy to receive visits at home, 32 did not want visits but were happy to receive literature and 2 wished no contact.

The survey also showed that one member was confined to bed, 2 were housebound, 2 were hospitalised and 19 were no longer at the address on the Roll.

Some names were incorrect and these have been updated on the Roll along with some incorrect addresses.

Our membership as at 31 December 2008 stands at 300.

The Kirk Session wishes to thank all those who took the time to complete the survey forms and would urge you to keep our Roll Keeper, Liz Dyer informed of any changes in the future.

Stewart MacRae



Mellerstain House

The West Kirk Guild Outing to Mellerstain House will take place on Wednesday 20 May leaving the West Kirk at 10 am.

The cost for the outing including 2-course meal at Tontine Hotel and coffee and shortbread on arrival at Mellerstain House is £25.

If anybody is interested contact Jill Murray 01506 871755 or Liz Dyer 01506 871672



Mind over Matter

**Age is a question of mind over matter.
If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.**

EH



Stampie's Collection

Please remember to collect used postage stamps for the Jam Club (*Jesus and Me*) at Polbeth Harwood.



You can drop them into Stampie's mouth any week.

Contributions for the next edition ...

Contributions for the next edition of *The Link* Magazine can be **submitted at any time** however for Issue 33 (Summer) the latest submission date is Sunday 24 May (extended by one week).

Your contributions are always very welcome.



Paws... for thought



He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask is a fool forever.

Chinese Proverb