

THE LINK MAGAZINE
BATHGATE HIGH CHURCH
SUMMER 2023



Scottish Charity No. SC007418

Our Mission statement -*We seek to share the love of Jesus by worship, faith and fellowship with all ages.*

Church office – info@bathgatehigh.com

From the Editor

Welcome to this summer edition of The Link.

Inside you will find important congregational updates, a message from our locum, David Wilkie, and news from our parish organisations.

Tempus fugit, a very common saying relating to our perception of the speedy passing of time!

"Things seem to be going faster nowadays!" the recent sagacious words of an eight-year-old which took me quite by surprise! Time must surely seem to fly if our younger members of society are remarking upon it! The endless to-dos of the daily routine, the overpacked weeks crammed full of commitments, the weekends which seem to disappear just as soon as they have started, the constant rushing.

Wishing everyone a lovely summer and, hopefully, a chance to slow down a little bit, to rest, to recharge and to renew.

Alison

Be still
and know
that I am
God
-PSALM 46:10

Locum's Message

Dear friends,

In Paul's message to the Christian Church in Rome he shares these words from his heart as an encouragement to the young Christians of the power of the Gospel:

'I have complete confidence in the gospel; it is God's power to save all who believe, first the Jews and also the Gentiles.'

Romans 1 v16

Let this verse be an encouragement to you also:

'God is good and in His love for all of His creation He sent His son, His only son Jesus into the world that we who were sinners could be reconciled with God, our Heavenly Father, adopted as His sons and daughters.'

I heard a statement on Premier Christian Radio recently that touched my heart as to me it speaks volumes, it also challenges me to share the good news that Jesus brought into this dark and broken world, to bring light, love, joy and hope.

The phrase is short and simple but is powerful and convicting:

'We are the Good News people in a bad news world'.

Continued...

Locum's Message Continued

Are you prepared to accept the challenge? Remember as you share the gospel you don't walk alone because God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit walks with you.

The Holy Spirit will give you the words to share, the appropriate time to share and when the time is to keep quiet.

I have been searching my mind for a praise item I know that I feel reminds me that the church still grows and folks are still coming to faith. It eventually came to mind MP957:

*'We want to see Jesus lifted high, a banner that flies across the land, that all men (women) might see **the truth and know HE is the way to Heaven...**'*

Be encouraged, despite falling rolls, lack of ministers, and a fall in congregational income, know that God has given us the power of the Holy Spirit and His word contained in our bibles for the church to be great again, the fulfilment of 'the Great Commission' given to Jesus' disciples as He returned to His Heavenly Throne that He had left to bring us the Good News.

Please remember I am more than happy to visit you folks at a time suitable to you, maybe a loved one who needs some prayer. Please get in touch and I will arrange a visit.

God Bless, David Wilkie (Locum) 07578 006922

Vacancy and Readjustment

The tiny pinprick you see might just be light at the end of a very long tunnel.

Since Presbytery finally approved the Mission Plan last month, there has been a push on to turn the plan into implementation. There has been a series of meetings and some revision of documents, but it seems that we are finally getting to the stage of voting on the proposed union with St John's.

This will take place in a series of stages;

On Thursday 29th June, Session will discuss the finalised documents and vote to approve them. A member of Presbytery's Deployment Group is required to be at this meeting.

On Sunday 10th September, (this date is currently 'pencilled in' only) there will be a meeting of the congregation to formally vote on the proposal to unite with St John's and approve the finalised documents. Again, a member of Presbytery's Deployment Group has to be present for this meeting. Only members of the church, those on the Supplementary Roll and those formally listed as Adherents are able to vote. Voting must be in person – there are no proxy votes, postal votes or on-line votes allowed by church law.

It is hoped that there will be an information / question and answer session two weeks before the formal congregational meeting but this will be confirmed later.

If both congregations vote to accept the union, this will be ratified by Presbytery at their September meeting. This timescale may allow the union to be formalised before the New Year.

Continued...

Vacancy and Readjustment (cont'd)

This is, however, not the end of the process. The issue of the buildings will be addressed and decided by Presbytery by the end of the year. This will be a long and complicated process and at the end of the day, one congregation will be disappointed.

Even when the union is formally ratified by Presbytery, we are still not quite at the stage of the new charge being able to call a minister. Formal processes such as writing the parish profile and the appointment of a nominating committee will be required, and, as we will be working as part of a grouping with Boghall, a formal document outlining the purposes and the extent of our cooperation needs to be agreed.

While this is a situation that we do not necessarily want to find ourselves in, the union seems to be the only viable way forward for the two churches in the town centre, given the well understood problems of falling rolls, falling income and the Church of Scotland's radical plan to limit the number of minister posts nationally. Neither church survives a union, but the new united charge gives the possibility of a new chapter for the Church of Scotland in the town and so we pray for its success.

Joint Services

As in previous years, we will be operating a series of joint services with St John's over the summer months. On each Sunday in July, we will be worshipping in St John's. David will be taking some of these services, but other visiting ministers will also be involved on three Sundays.

On each Sunday in August, the joint service will take place in the High Church, and David is likely to be taking these services.

Situations Vacant

With the number of active members of the church falling, it is becoming more difficult to staff some of the activities that we as a church see as important to provide a focus for our mission and our service to the community. Too often burdens seem to fall on those already heavily involved. We would be delighted to see more volunteers to work in a number of areas –

The Foodbank, the Preschool sessions, manning the church office, the cleaning team, the Coffee Morning team, the Thrift Shop team, the property maintenance team, Link distribution and any other service you can think of!

There are also ways that you can contribute to the weekly worship; The Flower Committee, the Choir, the AV team, the readers' list, the Welcome team and interaction via the Facebook page.

Please think seriously and prayerfully whether you can offer any service within our Fellowship to further our mission and enhance worship.

jw

Bessie's Quote

Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle!



The Guild

Well, we have come to the end of another successful session. We have finished our weekly meetings for the “summer” break but instead of our annual “Mystery Tour” we are going to Linlithgow for a journey on the barge up to Avon Aqueduct and back, taking a picnic with us, so we are looking forward to that and a good day weatherwise too.

Our afternoon meetings seem to be suiting everyone, better so, if you are free on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm and want to join us, you will be very welcome.

We will be back again from September 6th till Christmas. We hope for a speaker each week, but if not, the cup of tea and chat is good midweek therapy.

Yours, in His service,

A Ferris (Secretary)



Bathgate Churches Together

Following the report given in the Easter edition of the Link magazine, the Bathgate Churches Together [BCT] group have had one meeting on Tuesday 18th April in St. John's Church.

Our agenda covered events planned for Christian Aid week, 14-20th May.

The week started with a united service in Boghall Church, which was well planned and involved participants from different churches. There was a good representation from each church.

Some churches were holding soup lunches and coffee mornings were being planned for future dates. The High are having a CA coffee morning in the large hall on Saturday 7th October.

The very popular Booksale in St. George's West Church was going ahead throughout the week, albeit on a smaller scale.

Enquiries were made about the possibility of having a thrift shop in May or June in one of the cafes up for sale at the time, but this did not come to pass. However, BCT are having a stall at the Bathgate market on Saturday 8th July, selling mainly bric a brac and proceeds will go to Christian Aid.

The Coronation

The churches were not planning any events/ services. However, the Rev. Rosie Addis from St. Columba's Episcopal Church was leading a prayer at an event organized by West Lothian Council to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. This will be held in Howden Centre on 4th May.

Continued...

The Planter in the Pedestrian Precinct.

BCT is continuing to maintain the planter and the group decided that up to £75 may be spent on purchasing two more labels for the planter on the north and east sides, indicating that it is maintained by BCT.

Alastair Small, our secretary, has been attending the care of the planter and we are grateful for his time and efforts.

The Ecumenical Lent Study Groups

Feedback was given on the series of seven weekly studies, led by Morag Crawford, retired deaconess of the Church of Scotland. The study material was good, and the group was attended by between 10-12 people and we all agreed that we gained more insight in our journey of faith. It is hoped that a series of studies on the theme of Women in the New Testament may begin in the Autumn.

The Church of Scotland Stamp Appeal

It was agreed to intimate this in our churches. The appeal is intended to raise funds to help the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian [CCAP] improve nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, create youth employment, and mitigate the impact of the climate crisis. Margaret Samuel from Boghall is willing to act as recipient for stamps collected by BCT.

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Bathgate Poverty Initiative

Councillor Harry Cartmill had asked if BCT would be interested in participating in a Bathgate Poverty Initiative. He mentioned a number of pensioners in Bathgate living with no heating and young mothers who can't afford to wash their children's clothes. [St John's church have now had a washing machine installed in The Tryst, at the back of the hall. This was funded by the council]. More details will follow as the initiative takes shape.

The next meeting of the group is on 1st August 2023 in St Columba's Church, and we are delighted that the Rev Rosie Addis will be with us.

Liz Orr



Flower Committee

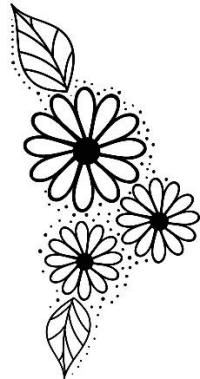
Thanks to the generosity of our congregation who gift flowers for church use, the Flower Calendar is now almost full for the rest of the year.

Our very small committee is still struggling due to staff shortages/illness and ever decreasing number of available drivers, though. We have managed to catch up on the Covid backlog! At the moment, we are still having to limit arrangements to only two per week. Hopefully, batteries will be recharged during a welcome break the whole month of July when we unite with St. John's Church in joint summer services.

We look forward to welcoming friends from St. John's to the High Church in August.

Happy Summer Everyone!

Beth Anderson



Foodbank June 2023

Since my last update on the Foodbank, the number of customers we see on a Tuesday has increased (up to 20 sets of customers some sessions) but so has the donations!

We received a generous grocery donation from Bathgate Thistle junior community football club and a cheque from Ladbroke's in Bathgate. I was also invited to visit 2nd Bathgate Girls' Brigade (St John's Church) recently and was given two car loads of food for our store. It was a very pleasant evening seeing the girls get their awards and a wonderful recompense for speaking to them and their parents about the Foodbank for just a few minutes.

Scotmid in Bathgate has been giving us rolls on a Tuesday morning, which our customers enjoy, as well as a keeping a grocery donation box in their store. Thanks to Janet Purdie for collecting and delivering these items each week.

Of course, we still have our regular donations from our own church, the E.U. Church and St. Mary's Church which we are very grateful for. Any money we receive is extremely useful in filling the empty shelves after a Tuesday morning - we seem to be doing that a lot lately.

It is sad that, in our community, there are those who have to use the Foodbank, but we are glad to help Bathgate / Boghall families and individuals. That is what we are here for!

After my appeal to the congregation for helpers, we now have four new volunteers from within our own church. We welcome Ian, Janice, Anne and Crawford to our volunteer team. They are all proving to be great assets. This does mean that through the summer months, the Foodbank will stay open – at the usual time and place. It also allows the volunteers to go on holiday with an easy conscience, knowing that their place in the team is covered. **Continued...**

Foodbank June 2023 Continued

If this is something you might be interested in doing every fortnight, month or occasionally, please speak to Jean Logie or myself, or phone the church office.

We have been trialling simple recipes and giving out ingredients for these - like a pasta bake, or savoury rice - to encourage those clients who aren't confident cooks to have a go. This has proven to be fairly successful, but it's a "work in progress."

I would like to finish by saying a huge "thank you" to everyone who contributes money or goods, regularly or once in a while. It all counts and is extremely appreciated by the Foodbank team and all our customers.

I wish you all a healthy and happy summer.

God Bless,

Christine Robertson (Foodbank volunteer)

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LOVE GOD
LOVE OTHERS

Big Clean

As you are probably aware we will be having joint services with St. John's during July and August with the services for the 5 Sundays in July being held in St John's and conversely the services in August being held in the High.

I would like to take this opportunity to do a 'Big Clean' during July, specifically on the Wednesdays.

To facilitate this, I would like for volunteers to make this happen.

If you are willing to help, or require further details, please get in touch with me.

Jean Logie

Thrift Shop

Advance notice of our intention to have our Autumn Thrift Shop during the School Holiday period in October, from Monday 9th through until Saturday 14th.

Setting up on the Sunday 10th, following the morning service and clearing up on Saturday 14th after close of business.

We will be looking for assistance, not only for setting up and clearing up 10.00 am – 3.00 pm weekdays and 10.00 am until 12.00 on Saturday.

We will hopefully have our normal range of items for sale and if you have items to donate, please make arrangements with me for delivery to the church or collection.

Jean Logie

Tel: 077100 57034

Duncan Macpherson

It is with great sadness, just as the Link is going to press, that news has come of the death of Duncan McPherson. Duncan served faithfully as an Elder at the High for a number of years and was a regular at Coffee Mornings and organisations. Duncan will also be remembered as a regular contributor to the Link, with articles from his rich life experience, his early life on Skye and serving in the Light House Service. However diverse the subject matter, it always came back to his strong faith and his love of the beauty of God’s creation. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife and family and his loss will be felt throughout our fellowship.

jw



Messages of Thanks

Thank You,

I am sure most of you are aware that David and I moved from Kirk Road, Bathgate to Whitburn just over 1 year ago. We were so lucky to find our dream bungalow with a beautiful south facing garden. Unfortunately, David's health was not too good. I would like to thank Beth Anderson and the Flower Committee for the beautiful Floral Display I received at this time. This cheered both of us up.

David passed away peacefully on the 21st of February, and I have been overwhelmed by the number of cards and flowers I have received from church members and friends. Also, the members that attended the service at the Crematorium. I really feel blessed to have so many people that cared.

My full family would like to thank you all.

Phyllis Sproul



Please convey my thanks to the Flower Committee and congregation for the beautiful floral arrangement I received on Easter Sunday, which was very much admired. Thanks also to Beth Drysdale for delivering the flowers to me.

More recently I also received Church flowers for my 101st birthday, which was very much appreciated, as was the friendly chat.

Mary Thomson

Messages of Thanks Continued

Grateful thanks for the beautiful floral display which I received following the peaceful passing of my dad on Holy Saturday, 8th April. Thanks to Beth Anderson for delivering the arrangement.

I was very touched by the many cards we received and thoughtful words of condolence. Sincere thanks to those who were able to attend the funeral Mass – your presence (and beautiful singing) meant a great deal to me and my family.

Alison Paul



Christian Aid

The recent Christian Aid envelopes distributed through the High Church raised the sum of £507. A further £75 will be added to this through Gift Aid.

Many thanks to all who donated.

Liz Orr

St Andrew's Church, Malta

The articles in the last two editions of the Link of this church brought back happy memories of the many times I have worshipped there over the years as a frequent visitor to Malta. Most of the times I visited, the minister was the Rev Colin Westmarland, a Church of Scotland minister. Colin is now retired, still lives on the island but worships in St Paul's Anglican Cathedral.

The next minister was Rev David Morris, a methodist who had a very successful ministry for five years, subsequently extended to seven. He was the minister at the 150th anniversary service in 2007 which I attended. I remember writing an article for the Link about this service. I think it was during his tenure that the local ecumenical partnership was formed. Many Church of Scotland members were not particularly happy about this formation. A Church of Scotland minister followed David Morris for five years and I think since then it has always been a methodist again. The last time I attended a service it was a lady methodist minister with a very strong north east of England accent. At the end of that service, I was asked by an elderly English lady of the congregation where I came from. When I told her she said, "Oh you are one of "those" Scots". I remember her from attending services in the past but I was so upset that I have never gone back there again. The style of service was very much more methodist than it used to be and there were few of the Scots that I remember in attendance at that time.

Probably about six years ago, one of the Guild national projects was to support St Andrew's church help immigrants to Malta. After a service I got chatting to the treasurer who gave me more details about some of these projects. On my return I wrote an article in the Link about this which was forwarded by Mrs MacRae to the Guild national committee.

Ian McLean

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Session Clerks: - Mr John Wood sessionclerk@bathgatehigh.com

Mr Ian McLean ”

Mrs Liz Orr ”

Church Officer: - Mrs Jean Logie, Mobile 07710 057034

***All other office bearers/ head of groups contact via Church Office
Phone 01506 650517 Email: - info@bathgatehigh.com***

Treasurer: - Mr Ian McLean

Clerk to the Board: - Mrs Brenda Kilpatrick

Property Convenor: - Mr Dave Robertson

Sunday School and Creche: - Mrs Carolyn McCusker

Safeguarding Officer: - Mrs Carolyn McCusker

Boys Brigade: - Mr Graeme Robertson

Guild:- Mrs Agnes Ferris

Data Protection Officer:- Ms Lorna Hutcheon

Roll Convener:- Mrs Janette Peel

WFO Convener:- Mrs Anne Graham

Musical Director:- Ms Alison Paul

Pre-School:- Mrs Karen Redmond

Flower Convener:- Miss Beth Anderson

Pastoral Care Team:- Miss Bessie Stein

Food Bank:- Mrs Christine Robertson

**The Church Office is open Monday to Friday 10am-12noon.
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