

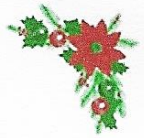
Bennoch Parish Church of Scotland

# Newsletter

December 2019



To all our readers we wish a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year.



Minister: 643518

Session Clerk: 200179

Church Office: 201723

Website: [www.bennochparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.bennochparishchurch.org.uk)

Registered Scottish Charity SC005628

***'From the 'Manse',***

*In a recent article for the Fife Free Press I wrote, 'Ed Catmull, former president of Pixar and Walt Disney Animated studios said, "There is a sweet spot between the known and the unknown where originality happens; the key is to be able to linger there without panicking."*

*None of us like to live where the old certainties have gone and the new has not yet arrived, but unless we cross the threshold of the 'known', we will never enter the place of true creativity. For the people of God, this was the desert experience, where after leaving Egypt as a slave nation, they wandered 40 years, seeking God's promise of a new land.*

*When life is uncertain, the 'sweet spot' is the last place we wish to stay. We are tempted to return to our known places of comfort, or, travel as quickly as we can, to leave our 'desert' experiences behind. However, it is only in looking back through uncertain times that we see the 'desert' has made us who we are, and in its embrace we have become different people.'*

Kirkcaldy Presbytery is seeking to discern a new Presbytery plan for the next ten years and, as part of that, Bennoch Church is engaging in conversation with representatives from the other Kirkcaldy town centre charges. As we step over the threshold into the unknown, God asks us to be still, and in that stillness, to listen.

It is not just about making decisions about what buildings to retain, or what ministry will look like, we first need to discern the questions that God is asking us. Discernment is about 'seeing'. What is God up to in our communities, and then joining in. We need to understand that God is an active agent in the world, and that his purpose is what we seek as we make **decisions, in the life of Bennoch Church and beyond.**

In a world where the logical and the rational have ruled our decision making processes, let us make room for the mystery and the miracle of the work of the Spirit of God.

**Robin**



## **Harvest Thanksgiving**

Our Harvest Thanksgiving service this year took place on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> October when, despite a few technical difficulties, we managed to speak to Jenny Featherstone, our mission partner, via Skype from Zambia. A special collection was taken to support Jenny's work in Zambia, which amounted to £417.70. Thanks to all who contributed. Our food donations were delivered to the Kirkcaldy Foodbank, who are always very appreciative of our much needed support.



## **Jenny Featherstone - Zambia**

There is, as yet, no official news from Jenny in her new role, apart from expressing hopes and plans for the coming year as on the Skype conversation at our Harvest service.

However, it is perhaps worth noting her job description running from June 2019-2020 to make us aware of the range of commitments listed, and keep them in our prayers, and more knowingly give support when required.

1. C.A.B. type organisation as prototype for UCZ ( United Churches of Zambia)
2. Alcohol abuse scheme - a 12 step model with trained volunteers.
3. PLAY 4 ALL project - admin support, supervision & 4 monthly visits.
4. Credit Union - explore possibilities
5. Chodart Training College - assistance when requested

The UCZ Deaconess will be involved in the first two projects.

At our Harvest service, Jenny suggested that funds raised could be used to fill the gap in bonus payment to Staff, this due to withdrawal of regular support from Charity organisations. Our contribution was £417.70.

We look forward to Jenny's first newsletter once things are well underway.

***Margaret Simpson***

## Blythswood Shoebox Appeal.

Thank you very much to everyone who filled a shoebox or gave a donation. 87 boxes were filled by the congregation and 25 boxes were filled by children of Dunnikier School and Nursery. Also, donations amounting to £135 were received from people who were unable to fill a shoebox. This was greatly appreciated by the driver and his passenger who have done voluntary work for Blythswood for a number of years and love to come to the cafe' when they come on a Thursday to uplift the boxes.



By filling a shoebox with simple things you can bring a smile to someone living in poverty this Christmas. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make the Shoebox Appeal so successful. Well done Bennoch Church!

## Flower List 2020

My garden beautifies my yard and adds fragrance to the air,  
But also my cathedral and my quiet place of prayer.  
So little do we realise that the glory and the power  
Of He who made the universe, lies hidden in a flower.



*Helen Steiner Rice*

Every Sunday our church has two flower arrangements. These flowers are gifted by members of the congregation or by donations to the flower fund, often in memory of a loved one.

If you would like to provide flowers for the sanctuary please put your name on the flower list in the vestibule of the church, or you can give a donation to the flower fund.

Thanks to everyone who has donated flowers and to the ladies and gent who deliver them on a Sunday.

The flowers and visits are very much appreciated by the bereaved, sick, housebound and elderly in the congregation. If you know of any person who requires a visit and the flowers please let us know, or for further details please speak to Senga Booth.

## **Louisa Turner – Development Worker**

The development worker post is funded half by Bennoch Church and half by the 'Go For It' fund which is funded by the Church of Scotland. The Church of Scotland will be closing the 'Go For It' fund at the end of 2019. The fund itself has run for seven years, with Bennoch Church receiving funding from it for the last four years. A new fund - the Growth Fund, will be introduced later in 2020 with different criteria. In order to assess the effectiveness of the 'Go For It' fund, the Church of Scotland likes to visit projects. Word has got out of the tremendous work of our volunteers within Bennoch Church and specifically the Open Door Project. Our funders want to visit us.

The Moderator of the Church of Scotland is going to see the good works for himself, on Thursday 5th December. The Rev. Colin Sinclair may chat with some individuals and volunteers, to hear for himself the impact that the Open Door Project has made on the community and individuals.

Now time to get your diaries out .....

**Christmas Community Sing** - is open to everyone! Come along and get into the Christmas spirit on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December from 6.30 - 7.30 p.m. in Bennoch Church to join in the singing and hear the Bennoch Community Choir, Kirkcaldy North Primary Choir and Bennoch Handbell Ringers perform some contemporary Christmas songs, and join us afterwards for some refreshments. This is a free event, but cash donations would be appreciated for the Foodbank.



**Messy Christmas in the Mercat** - this will take place on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December from 12noon - 3pm. Christmas themed crafts and activities along with songs and the telling of the Christmas story in an interactive way. Please pop in to the shop unit in the Mercat and say hello. Everyone is welcome - free refreshments are available.

**Dementia Friendly Christmas Service** - Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2pm followed by a tea dance until 4pm. This has been jointly organised with Alzheimers Scotland and everyone is welcome to this relaxed Christmas service in Bennoch Church, when Dunnikier Primary school will be

singing. If you wish to attend the service and tea dance, please let me know, in order that the organisers can cater for everyone.

**BookBug** - our last Book Bug session for 2019 will be on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December from 1.30 - 2.15pm, when we will be singing Christmas themed rhymes and sharing the greatest story of all time. Come along with your wee ones and enjoy some Christmas fun.



And for 2020 .... exciting news .... New Year new start! We will be partnering with Greener Kirkcaldy to deliver Bike Maintenance and bike led rides around Kirkcaldy. There is no need to ask Santa for a bike for Christmas as there will be some bikes to freely hire from Greener Kirkcaldy, including electric bikes! This will be open to families and individuals. If you are interested in trying to get fit in the new year and in making new friends, please speak to me.

Do you like to read? Did you enjoy reading to your children and grandchildren? We are looking for volunteers for one hour after school at Kirkcaldy North Primary School (day of the week still to be arranged) to engage with children in the school library, to help them develop a love of books and reading. Fun interactive sessions for all ages.

Volunteers are being sought for one hour a week, to share their skills of sewing with children at Kirkcaldy North Primary. If you would like to be involved with simple sewing activities, please contact myself.

More volunteers are sought to join the small Community Garden team to create a sensory garden but, more importantly, to create friendships and enjoy time in the fresh air. If the weather is inclement the group still meets but uses the time to plan, natter and sometimes visit garden centres. Come along on a Monday morning from 9.45am - 12 noon. Everyone is welcome regardless of fitness, or knowledge of gardening!



If you would like other activities organised, please speak to myself as I will endeavour to make it happen for you in 2020!

## Remembrance Service

This year our beautiful Centenary poppy display made a welcome reappearance, modified only slightly, this time to mark 80 years since the start of World War 2. If you didn't see it outside the church you may have seen it in the local press.

During the service we once again sang 'I stand alone', Brian Fairful's moving hymn, written in memory of his grandfather's brother, killed in the Boer War in 1900. Visit [www.forcespoetry.com](http://www.forcespoetry.com) and click on 'Poems by Author' then scroll down to Brian if you would like to know more about his hymn.

A special collection was taken during the service for 'Poppy Scotland', which raised the sum of £390.29.



## Treasurer

As you are aware, I intimated some time ago that our Treasurer, Margaret Kinnear, has indicated that she wishes to retire at the earliest opportunity, and will in fact now be standing down at the end of the year. We have been actively seeking her replacement and have asked if any of our members or friends would be interested in this position. To date we have had no volunteers and the situation has now become critical, as we have been informed by the Church of Scotland that ***we cannot operate as a Church without a designated Treasurer.***

In an attempt to overcome this situation I have re-presented the list of duties that Margaret does in the hope of attracting a number of people who may be able to assist with some of the following individual skill-sets required, thus enabling our church to function effectively. I would stress that those who volunteer to assist would not assume the role of Treasurer, as we can get round this, but **only** if all these roles are fulfilled. Please give serious consideration to this plea, due to the severity of the situation.

***George Drummond***  
***Finance Convenor***

## **List of Duties for Treasurer**

### **Weekly**

- Keeping weekly account spreadsheets - Income and Expenditure for General Account and Fabric Improvement Fund.
- Pay the accounts for work done or goods supplied.
- Bank any money given after entering into spreadsheet - eg: Donations, Quiz money, Sunday Tea/Coffee money, Wedding and Funeral payments

### **Monthly**

- Reconciling weekly Spreadsheets with Bank Statements.
- Email accounts on a monthly basis to Bob Colville.
- Pay slips emailed once a month from Patterson Boyd Accountants
- Print off and give to employees.
- Pay employees on 26<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- Make sure pay in slip book is in church for Sunday morning service and that there is a supply of coin bags and large night safe bags

### **Annually**

- Post spreadsheets, bank statements etc to Paterson Boyd, Accountants for accounts preparation for annual audit and liaise with any queries
- Standing Order for Ministries and Mission payment (10 monthly payments from January to November)

### **Ad-hoc**

- Liaise with Church of Scotland, Edinburgh with regards to obtaining information relating to Consolidated Fabric Fund, Investors Trust.

### **Individual skill-sets required**

- Basic excel spreadsheet skills
- Posting payment to suppliers
- Visit the bank to deposit money
- Receive e-mails, print and post pay slips
- Periodic phone calls to obtain information requested by Finance Convenor

## Stewardship Season 2019

This year's Stewardship season took place over 2 Sundays in October and the following presentations were made by George Drummond and George Grant, highlighting how we, as members, can make a difference to Bennochy.

### Bennochy Membership (as is)

		7	80	50	16	9
		less than £1	£1 - £5	£6 - £10	£11 - £17	over £17
246						
£0						
	£182	£15,028	£18,928	£10,816	£10,868	
£55,822						

- Steps are showing contributing members and weekly average giving band – constructed with £1 increments
- Columns show annualised amount per contributing group
- Bottom band shows annual total giving
- The challenge is to step into the next bracket

### Bennochy Membership (like to be)

		0	54	74	22	12
		less than £1	£1 - £5	£6 - £10	£11 - £17	over £17
246						
£0						
£0	£0	£9,256	£26,676	£13,988	£14,144	
£64,064						

- The effect of a £1 step up per member per week within the step band category
- £8,242 improvement
- Steps are showing contributing members and weekly average giving band
- Columns show annualised amount per contributing group
- Bottom band shows adjusted annual total giving

## Current Situation

- 73 members pay by S/O = £30,663 (30 are gift aid – the most effective method of giving)
  - 89 members pay by FWO = £21,206 (46 are gift aid) – some members do not make up for non-attended weeks (joint services for example)
  - Open Plate = £3,699 - we cannot establish who or amount which is contributed by our members or visitors
  - Our gift aid claim was £13.3k (which includes gift days and small claim payments for teas and donation boxes).
- We pay circa £3.50 per member for presbytery dues -  
**246 members do not attend at a cost of £861**
- This year we bought 160 sets of FWO envelopes - 71 sets were unused at **a cost of £131**
- **£992** cost of non contributing members

## How You Can Help?

- Step up a £1 to the next category
- Step up from Open Plate to FWO
- Step up from FWO to Standing Order
- Step up and sign up for Gift Aid - every pound generates an extra 25p at no additional cost.

**Gift Aid Guidance** - I am retired and living on the standard pension. Can I Gift Aid? If you are no longer paying any tax, then no. However, if you have savings and pay income or capital gains tax of an equal or higher amount than we are trying to claim (currently in the £), then you can Gift Aid.

*Further information, Standing Orders or Gift Aid Declaration forms available from*

- George Drummond – Session Clerk/Finance Convenor
  - Margaret Kinnear - Treasurer

## Stewardship Season – Legacies and Gifts

Last year at the Remembrance Service you may recall that we had in the pews silhouette-type figures, to remind us of members no longer with us. Today the same figures are with us to remind us of the good stewards from our congregation in bygone years who left gifts to our church in their wills.

Many of our former members have given generously towards the work of the church – they were good stewards. Many also recognised that the work would have to go on after they were no longer with us and decided to leave a monetary gift in their will as part of their legacy to the church.

We have benefitted greatly in recent years from this in various ways, perhaps the most visible being the stained-glass window to celebrate our union. This was paid for from a number of different legacies. In your pew you will see Good News Bibles, many of which were purchased from the legacy from Miss Ruth Bolton. We have a good stock of CH4 Hymnaries, purchased with a gift in memory of Beth & Rev Jack Millar. A start up grant from Miss Beattie's legacy went to the Olive Branch Café. These are but 4 examples; there are numerous other ways in which we now benefit.

Over the period 1990-2019 we received nearly £100,000 from 31 different legacies. It should be noted that most of these legacies were willed whilst others were given by family members. The value of individual gifts range from a few hundred pounds to more than £30,000. Some mentioned specific uses for the legacy, most did not. All were put to good use.

As part of our Stewardship Season this year, for the first time, we are remembering with gratitude the gifts received from our former members, reminding current members of their generosity. **We respectfully ask you to reflect on this, think about it and consider whether or not this aspect of Stewardship is something appropriate for you.**



**BENNOCHY PARISH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, KIRKCALDY**  
**Meldrum Road/Elgin Street, Kirkcaldy, KY2 5HR**  
**Tel: 01592 201723**

**Charity Registration Number SC 005628**  
**(Registered Scottish Charity)**

**TO ALL MEMBERS**  
**BENNOCHY PARISH CHURCH**  
**KIRKCALDY**

**November 2019**

**GIFT DAY, SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2019**

As we can see from the decorations in the shops, the adverts on television and all the other reminders, Christmas is coming. Perhaps you have finished your Christmas shopping, and everything is wrapped. Maybe you haven't started yet.

As in previous years we are asking you to please remember your Church family as you do your own and give a Christmas present to the church at our second Gift Day of 2019. This will take place on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> December.

A Gift Day envelope will be delivered to you, along with this Newsletter, before this date. These envelopes are printed with a Gift Aid Declaration on the back, and so if you are a tax payer and want your donation to be Gift Aided, please make sure you fill in your details, even if you have already signed a Gift Aid Declaration Form. The line at the top of the envelope which says 'Name of Charity' should be filled in saying Bennochty Parish Church.

If you are unable to come on this Sunday but still wish to contribute to the Gift Day Appeal, please put your donation in the special envelope and put it in the collection plate when you are next at Church.

If you are debating the level of donation for the Gift Day, we would ask you to consider the value of gift that you would give any of your family members or friends as a guide, if your personal circumstances allow.

We wish to thank you once again for your continued support in God's work here at Bennochty and pray that you continue to have a Church home where your life is enriched by worship and Christian fellowship.

***The Finance Team***



It is so **easy** to **raise funds** for

## Bennochty Church

when you are Christmas shopping online



Find us on

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/bennochychurch](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/bennochychurch)

**4000 retailers are ready to donate a percentage  
of your purchase total to our church funds.**

**Trusted retailers such as –**



amazon.co.uk



Clarks



White  
Stuff

## Children in Need Ramble

Regular viewers of BBC's Countryfile may have watched the programme highlighting the various Rambles throughout Britain in aid of Children in Need. The more eagle eyed may have spotted our own Bruce and Sandra Davies, who took part in the ramble around Scone Palace (Sandra carried the banner) and some of our members donated, either in person on the Sunday morning, or by text, all helping to raise funds for the many worthy causes.



## Bennochty Bell Ringers

We are into the seasonal mood with a selection of music for Christmas, old favourites and some things new...

- \* We are to join the music makers at the Community Sing-a-Long on Friday evening, 6<sup>th</sup> December.
- \* We are also to contribute to the lunchtime Dementia Friendly service on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December.
- \* We look forward to pealing the bells at the Advent service on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December.

We do hope you enjoy the "reverberations" on these occasions. It has been a concerted experience, often a trial of different bells per person in cases of absence, but essentially good fun!

We would always welcome new, would-be players to come and try - hand bell ringing, developed from Church tower ringing, has a long history, now practised world-wide. Our bells date back at least 8 decades - a generous donation to the Boys' Brigade of the Church proved to be very popular and concerts were regularly given throughout Kirkcaldy.

Needless to say, we play a set of 12 bells (sometimes more), duly restored and resonating well!

*Margaret Simpson*



## **I'm Dreaming of a Quiet Christmas 2019**

On a summer holiday in Austria, Spain and Italy, you might as I have, been surprised to find a Christmas Crib scene, sometimes in a church but also in the street, all year round. And Bennoch Church too has an all year round Crib. It's in a glass case and the figures are of beautiful Spanish lladro porcelain, the gift of the Shepherd family.

The Cribs abroad are usually fairly large, showing a Bethlehem that looks like the local town, and all that is going on, while in a small corner are tucked away the traditional Baby, Mary and Joseph scene.

The first Christmas Crib was set up for St Francis in Greccio, north of Rome in 1223 and it was revolutionary in its showing a poor stable, farm animals and ordinary people. This reminded people to celebrate the first day of Christmas, not, as was the custom of the time, the last day, the visit of the Kings. It sent a message that Jesus was from the very beginning of his life, there among the poor, not with the rich and powerful.

It's a message that can still sometimes be lost in modern day Christmas celebrations too. So for I'm Dreaming of a Quiet Christmas, our Playmobil Crib tries to make a 21st century street scene and among all the busy-ness is the Baby, and his parents. The Crib also gives you a chance to add a Playmobil figure to the scene to represent yourself or others and remind us of the meaning of Christmas.

So why not come and see us on 19<sup>th</sup> December in Bennoch Church from 10.30am - 2pm .... stay as long as you want!





## SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School has had a busy time during this session. We participated in the Harvest Service, the Remembrance Service and are now preparing for the Christmas Service which will be on Sunday 22nd December. We will also have our usual short party afterwards. We should be getting a visit at our party from a very special person if he can come; we expect him just after 12pm.

The Sunday School will be on holiday on 29th December and 5th January. We look forward to seeing everyone back on Sunday 12th January 2020.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from us all in the Sunday School.

## Christmas Services

December 1	Family Service for <b>Advent</b> with donations of new toys for the work of the Salvation Army.
December 8	<b>Advent 2</b> Contribution from Bennochty Choir Gift Day
December 15	<b>Advent 3</b> Contributions from the 'Bells'
December 22	<b>Advent 4</b> Christmas jumper Sunday. Contribution from Bennochty Sunday School & Bruce Davies
December 24	Watchnight at Bennochty. Carols from 11.15pm. Service begins at 11.30pm
December 29	Joint Service at <b>Bennochty</b> with Abbotshall, Linktown and St Bryce Kirk



## Christmas Calendar

November 28	@ the Café Studies
November 30	Christmas Afternoon Teas
December 5	Christmas Lunch at the Olive Branch Cafe
December 6	Christmas Community Sing
December 7	Messy Christmas in the Mercat
December 9	Dementia Friendly Service
December 11	Guides Fundraising Christmas Fayre, 6-8pm Stalls, photo booth. All welcome.
December 12	<i>General Election - no Café - halls in use</i>
December 19	Bookbug



## The Olive Branch Café

Open every Thursday in the Methven Hall from 1100 am – 2.00 pm for teas, coffees & home baking. Lunches served from 12 noon.  
Our internet café is also open from 11.00–2.00 with free Wi-Fi

❖ The Café will be closed on Thursdays 26<sup>th</sup> December and 2<sup>nd</sup> January, opening again on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

- Next Newsletter: March 2020