

Bennochty Parish Church of Scotland

# Newsletter

March 2020



The first signs of rebirth are appearing in the gardens and fields, and the lengthening days promise warmer weather to come. We hope all our readers are filled with the joy of spring. Our easter services likewise celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and his promise of a better future for those who wish to follow him. Come and join the celebration

Minister: 643518

Session Clerk: 200179

Church Office: 201723

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

*Registered Scottish Charity SC005628*

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

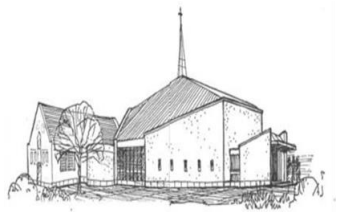
I read an interesting article recently. It was entitled, "What are ministers looking for?" and was about what ministers look for when applying for new positions. The person writing the article believed that most ministers look for a 'healthy' congregation. That of course leads to a second question, "what are the characteristics of a healthy congregation?" This what the author said:

- Missional - a congregation that is outwardly focused and not endlessly anxious about their own survival.
- Flexible - a congregation that is eager to experiment and innovate in response to a changing culture.
- Accountable - a congregation that is clear about their mission.
- Sensible - a congregation with clear and realistic expectations.
- Professional - a congregation that is competent in all administrative, financial, safeguarding and fabric matters. Who make decisions openly, and who know how to behave when conflict arises, and who respect and trust one another.
- Faithful - a congregation whose members care about Scripture, prayer and who wish to follow Jesus. They are guided by the Spirit of God.

Have a think about the kind of congregation we are, and how would you rate us against these characteristics? Where do we need to improve, and what is your role in helping us to be more 'healthy'?

Yours in Christ

***Robin***



## Easter & Holy Week services 2020

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	Palm Sunday celebrations, Bennochty Church, 11am	
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> April:	Abbotshall Church, 7pm	
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> April	Linktown Church, 7pm	
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	Congregational Church, 7pm	
Maundy Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>Bennochty Church, 7pm</b>	
Good Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	10am-4pm Linktown Church open for prayer and meditation with short service at the cross in the church garden at 4pm	
Good Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	St Bryce Kirk, 7pm	
Easter Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	6am, Auchtertool Kirk - garden sunrise service, followed by breakfast inside	
Easter Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	8.30am, joint service at the fountain in Beveridge Park	
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	“Christ is risen!” our Easter morning worship in Bennochty church at 11 am, with communion	

**Guilds Together Service & AGM** - On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 7.15pm the Guilds Together Service & AGM will take place in Bennochty Church. This is an open meeting and Jacqueline Thomson, Moderator of Kirkcaldy Presbytery, will be taking part. Refreshments will be available.

### Treasurer

As you may be aware Margaret Kinnear resigned as Treasurer at the end of 2019 and our grateful thanks go to her for her time in that role.

In January 2020 we were pleased to welcome our new Treasurer, Douglas Black and we wish him well. He will, as always, be supported by the Finance Team who continue to oversee the various aspects of church finance

## Holy Land 1995

I was privileged to visit the Holy Land 25 years ago and I recently unearthed a diary I kept. This seemed appropriate for Easter.

Jerusalem streets are so narrow it was no surprise to have lunch in a convent built mostly at roof top level. However beneath the Ecce Homo Sion convent are the remains of the Roman city and its pavements are there still for us to see, for this is the beginning of the Via Dolorosa, the Way of the Cross, the Way of Sorrows, which leads to Calvary and the place of the Crucifixion.

But today it is not all sorrow and I cannot think it ever was. A long part of it runs through the Souk or market, up slopes and steps, turning and twisting a mile or so to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

It is narrow, noisy, smelly, colourful and boisterous. You can only walk two or three abreast, because everywhere people are selling and buying from shops, stalls and barrows. There are lots of money changers and impossibly young soldiers, one eating a raw red pepper, his gun in one hand. There are a few beggars, and we have been warned already that the small children are the best pickpockets.



There is compassion, however, just as there might have been 2000 years ago. I am walking beside an 80 year old friend, who is finding the physical aspect a challenge. But as we go, the shopkeepers call out, offering him a seat, a drink, a rest, a smoke. One shouts cheerfully, and we are not sure if the offer is serious or the best English he knows, "Fish and chips?" and we have to laugh.

I am sure the first Good Friday was like that. People went about their daily business, just got on with their lives, while the Son of God stumbled by them. And some would have felt sorrow and compassion for him and his friends, and others would have laughed. Most maybe, just ignored him.

I felt there was a lesson there for us Christians, because that is the way many people today see Christianity and Jesus.

The Holy Land, like the Bible, is like that, forever making you revise your expectations, shocking you out of your preconceptions and replacing them, hopefully, with far more relevant insights and revelations.

*Nancy Gilmartin*

## **The E word December 12, 2019 by John Edgerton**

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the LORD God is my strength and my might and has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And in that day you will say: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name; make known God's deeds among the nations," proclaim that God's name is exalted. - Isaiah 12:2-6 (NRSV)

The prophet Isaiah wants you out in public, giving praise to Gods name. Isaiah wants you engaging with people who have never heard good news about God. Isaiah wants you focusing on places where Gods name has a bad reputation.

Evangelism. Isaiah wants evangelism.


Hold on, before you lick your page-flipping finger, hear me out.

For Isaiah, evangelism is telling people about the deep wells of joy that faith gives you to draw upon. What Isaiah means by evangelism is that when you meet someone new you should tell them about your faith, because otherwise they will never understand the way you live your life. What Isaiah means by evangelism is that you should build your life upon the promises of God because though the world might be in an uproar, God's promises will never fail.

Tell someone about the times in your life when God has meant the difference between life and death. Make it a not-too-scary someone to start off. Don't tell them what they need to do to get right with God, but what God has done for you to get you right with life.

If you're honest, if you're vulnerable, if you glorify God, you'll be amazed where the conversation goes.

### **Deaths**

20.10.19	Mrs Nancy Baillie, 2b Floors Place	
30.12.19	Mrs Isabella Speed, 1 Berwick Place	
09.01.20	Mrs Jean Cook, Marchmont Home, 24 Bennoch Road,	
14.01.20	William Slater, 39 Appin Crescent.	

## Message to the Congregation from the Session Clerk

Whilst our annual accounts have not been presented to the Congregation I feel it appropriate to thank our members in advance for your financial contribution towards God's work here at Bennochty.

The past year has brought many unexpected challenges and opportunities which without the generosity of our members, would have been difficult to address

On behalf of the Kirk Session it's my privilege to acknowledge this continual support not only of the financial elements but also the time and talents expressed by our members.

I hope that whatever fresh challenges are presented this year, we address them knowing that it is with the guidance of God in the betterment of his work as we serve our Congregation and Community.

Many thanks once more.

***George Drummond***  
***Session Clerk***

## Sunday Teas

I would like to thank all who make donations whilst enjoying Tea & Coffee after the Church Service on Sundays.



Last year donations contributed £1100, which is a great help to our Church Funds here at Bennochty. It also allows our members time for a bit of chat.

Thanks also to the hard working ladies who team together to provide this much enjoyed service.

***Jane Drummond***

- **New addition in the vestibule** - Book case with a variety of books. Please take one away and return. Open to all.





# Jenny Featherstone's Newsletter from Zambia

Dear church friends,

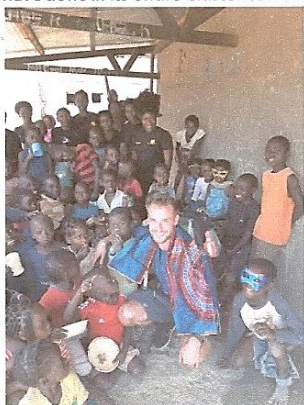
First of all may I say I hope you have a blessed and peaceful Christmas this year and the meaning of Gods unspeakable gift to us is seen with a new freshness at the close of 2019.

2019 has brought about many changes to my life in Zambia, firstly I have moved house and now am living in a house on Chodort estate instead of the Principals manse. Secondly I have given up the job as Principal of Chodort, and been superseded By Rev Frank Bwalya, former Bishop of Muchinga province.

As part of my semi retirement I am now working part time alongside Deaconess Mukambo setting up Choma Alcohol Prevention Programme (Choma app) to be run in several churches along the lines of the Alcoholics Anonymous 12 steps programme. We also have set up something akin to Citizens Advice, where once a month throughout various church groups in Choma, there will be an open forum where the speaker can use their expertise. This could be a nurse talking about diabetes or child health, a business person discussing simple cash flow and bookkeeping, or a social worker talking about gender based violence. The aim is to inform the general public about issues that will help them in daily life.

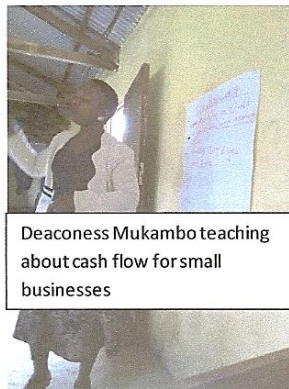
Progress has been slow but steady, and a newly formed group Choma Alcohol and Drugs Rehabilitation Organisation (CADRO) is joining us in weekly sessions about how to start AA style groups using the 12 step materials.

Chodort has also received another German volunteer Amelie Weber, a fresh 19 year old who is helping with various administrative jobs. This meant we had to say a sad goodbye to Laurenz Kock in August. Laurenz visited play4all with me at the end of 2018, and was so overwhelmed by the kids and volunteers of my little project that he began to make it his own, He raised funds for a feeding programme for the most deprived children and to buy a plot of land nearby the original building and set up something similar on site. This was no mean feat considering the copious Zambian bureaucracy and the overseeing of the building of the new structure, in all he raised an amazing 11,000 euro for play4all – more than I have done in its entire existence! A very big thank you to both Laurenz and Jane Mwenda ( Play4all project manager) who oversaw the project.



Another big change at play for all is that Jane got married earlier this year to a teacher whom she had known for some time. He has been posted far away but hopes to come back in 2020 to teach chemistry at Copperbelt University in Kitwe.

We have also been following closely the plight of 2 brothers who are regular visitors to Play4all. Benson came with very severe burns on his hands which had been inflicted by his



Deaconess Mukambo teaching about cash flow for small businesses

mother when she lost 10 kwacha (about 50p) and was accusing him of taking it. Mum is an uneducated lady with alcohol problems and was pregnant at the time, so after visits to the clinic and police, no further action was taken. Bennison, the younger brother, had huge goitre like protrusions on his neck and was operated on in October / November this year. Having a small baby meant mum was not allowed to stay with him in hospital and look after him as is traditionally practiced, so Jane took on much of that role, especially after his second operation, bringing him food and toys and general encouragement. I believe both boys are no longer living with their mother but with relatives in the villages.

This brings me to another factor, although food in hospitals is generally dire and relatives often bring in titbits or full meals for the patients, Jane tells me Kitwe hospital, for some time, has stopped providing meals altogether. Although I don't know the facts I can only assume it is caused by high inflation / lack of funds. The pound is now 19 to the kwacha as opposed to 15 last year and mealie meal prices have risen from K62 a bag (typically 2 weeks supply) to K220 in Choma, with corresponding price rises in other goods.

The main cause of this, is the severe and ongoing drought which we are facing, particularly in southern province. The government say there is no national emergency, (therefore are not eligible for assistance from other countries) but have issued some of their food reserves at a half the price of a bag of mealie meal. The 2 drawbacks being that people have to produce their registration cards to receive 1 bag of dried cobs and have to find somewhere to mill them, the other drawback is that this is by no means a quick process, so many people do not bother. I heard of one person who waited in line 2 weeks before he got his bag of mealies.

Southern province is also the home of lake Kariba, the largest man-made lake in the world. Its main function has been to provide 50% of the electricity needs for the country. 4 Months ago it stopped working because with the low water its turbines were at 7% capacity. For almost a year we have had daily nationwide electricity cuts, currently they are between 10 and 18 hours a day and with very poor rain again this year it looks set to continue indefinitely.

I think most scientists say climate change will affect the African continent first, and perhaps 3 out of the last 5 years of drought are an indication of the future Zambia. Already ex pat farmers from 6 farms in the area have sold up and left, and those that remain are

struggling to feed and water their animals and crops. Dams (including Choma dam which should supply the town) are bone dry, and the local water company has sunk 30 bore holes in an effort to supply



Choma dam is still completely dry

for



people. This will no doubt have a detrimental effect on the aquifers and watertables, but the ground water simply isn't there.

Having said all this, for me, all is not gloom and doom. I have a solar water heater and solar panel which provides lights and internet when power is off and have built a primitive rocket stove which will boil water as quickly as any kettle once it gets going.

These are hard times though, and the new principal for Chodort has found it too much of a challenge and is leaving in a few weeks. So far, there is no suitable candidate to take over the job, and the situation is a matter of urgency. A new Principal will not find it easy, as morale is low, and, climate change and introductions of further taxes etc due to almost insurmountable government debts, have made life very challenging for small colleges. However we believe God is in this situation, just as he was there with His people in all the troubled times in days gone past.

#### Items for prayer

- That Chodort can find a suitable principal to carry their programmes forward in 2020.
- That Benson and Bennison, and all children at Play4all will flourish under the leadership of Jane and the volunteers.
- That the effects of climate change will not add further burdens to the people of Southern province this year.
- That my 2 projects in the community continue to gather momentum
- For the failing economy of Zambia.
- For all those who are fearful or suffering because of high food prices and lack of drinking water

#### Items for Praise

- For the commitment of Laurenz to the children of Kamatipa and his unique fundraising ability.
- For the way Jane project managed the new building and all ensuing matters such as rates and security.
- For local initiatives like CADRO with which we can work hand in hand to help the addicted.

With every good wish to you all for Peace, Grace and Joy this Christmas,

*Jenny*

Jenny Featherstone

Email [jenny.featherstone@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.featherstone@gmail.com) Skype Jenny Featherstone 1

## **Cycling Skills Course**

Greener Kirkcaldy approached me (as the development worker for Bennoch Church) to facilitate a Cycling Skills course - I was a bit sceptical. Do people in the area want such a course? To find out, I conducted a wee survey amongst the Olive Branch Café customers to see if there was interest in such a course.... And there appeared to be.

Greener Kirkcaldy stated that it would be good for me to attend the course, to enable people to see a friendly known face. I made my excuses ... 'The course is on a Saturday, 'Whenever, I have been on the bike it has always been on a cycle path or in a forest, never on a road with traffic', 'I live too far from my work base to cycle to work', and when I heard that it was to begin in the winter month of February... 'I'm a fair weather person', 'I have not been on a bike for almost eight years' and 'I don't have a bike!' For every excuse I protested, Greener Kirkcaldy had an answer. So, for the past few weeks I have been improving my cycling skills and cycling confidence on a Saturday morning in and around Dunnikier Primary School.

I didn't go out and buy or borrow a bike, but hired a free bike from Greener Kirkcaldy. This was so easy to do. I was matched up with my height and preferred style of bike (mountain, city - even electric). I was offered a helmet, bike chain lock and tool kit. I have the bike on hire for a month, but can renew it if there is no demand for that particular bike.



The tutor is very patient and great at encouraging me, teaching me basic bike maintenance (which I always used to leave to my husband, but which now I am able to do for myself). My confidence has soared, as each week I overcome a personal barrier. I am now able to know which gear I should be in (and change them without looking at them), can indicate on a road, manoeuvre in traffic and take a wheel off to repair a puncture, plus much more. Next week, I am to travel on a train with my bike!

The course numbers are small and the course itself will end at the end of February. However I would encourage anyone who is wanting to get back on their bike, to just do it! The physical and mental health benefits are well recorded and if you join one of Greener Kirkcaldy's Guided Bike Rides you will make new friends too. The Bike Rides are for any ability, but cycling in a group when you haven't been on your bike for a while will give you the reassurance that there are people there to immediately support you. For more details of the rides contact Greener Kirkcaldy direct.

***Louisa Turner – Development Worker***

## **Bennochty Bells**

The weekend of May 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> 2020 is declared a national holiday to commemorate VE DAY, 75 years on as ‘a collective celebration for peace’  
website: <http://www.veday75.org>

Friday for music making - bugles, pipes and BELLS  
Saturday for parties, pubs and toasts,  
Sunday for special services in churches and cathedrals



The Bell Ringers are intending to take part in a “ring” which will take place nationwide between 7pm and 9pm on the Friday. We are still at the ‘thinking stage’, and would welcome ideas and support for the event in Bennochty Church.'

Thanks in advance.

***Margaret Simpson***

## **Community Choir at the Fife Festival of Music.**

At the end of January the choir sang on stage once again at the annual festival in the Adam Smith Theatre. This year 17 community choirs of widely different sizes took part with over 600 singers spread over two very enjoyable evenings. Although this was a non-competitive event, an adjudicator gave a brief report at the end of each evening - essentially a supportive critique of strengths and weaknesses of each choir.

We were delighted that our feedback this year was entirely positive and enthusiastic. This was in no small part due to the excellent guidance the choir enjoys from Ella and Graeme Wilson.

The choir is now over 70 strong, meeting on Monday evenings from 6.30 until about 7.45. We are always keen to get new members, especially men. It is a very positive and feel-good experience. No auditions are involved, so if you fancy trying it out why not give it a try. Although we have been going for a few years now, we regularly start new programmes of music, so it is not difficult to fit in.

If you fancy some fun to start the week, please come and join us.

*Come on and celebrate  
Bennochty Church's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

# Hootenanny & Ceilidh

Saturday 16th May 2020 7pm – 10pm  
at Bennochty Church Community Hall



Dance to the Raith Probus Band

Enjoy our Guest Singers, Musicians and 🎵🎵

Scottish Country Dancers





Tickets - Adults £8 Schoolchildren £3

(Includes Haggis Stovies, Ice Cream & Soft Drink)

available from The Olive Branch Café, Church Fundraising Team  
or by contacting 07980 367632

You are welcome to BYOB

## Spring Calendar

March 5	Guilds Together Service & AGM (in Bennoch)	
March 15	Communion	
March 22	Trustees Conference	
April 7	Women's Group Bunny Drive	
April 9	Holy Week Service in Bennoch (Maundy Thursday)	
April 12	Easter Sunday Service	
May 8	Bell Ring for VE Day	
May 16	Hootenanny & Ceilidh	
June 7	Communion	

**Bunny Drive** - The Women's Group annual Bunny Drive is on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 6.30 p.m. Come along to the Methven Hall and enjoy an evening of fun for all the family, with prizes, raffle and a delicious dessert supper. Tickets, adults £4, children £2, are available from Group members.



**Kirkcaldy Foodbank** has moved. As of Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February the foodbank no longer operates from the church at Dysart but is now in Viewforth Church Hall - times below. Your donations are still much needed and are always greatly appreciated. Our foodbank trolley can be found in the Methven Hall on Sundays and on Thursdays at the Cafe.

**Viewforth Church Hall**, Viewforth Terrace, Kirkcaldy, KY1 3BW.  
Monday 1-3pm, Tues 10-12 noon, Wed & Thurs 6pm-8pm



### **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



Next Newsletter: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020