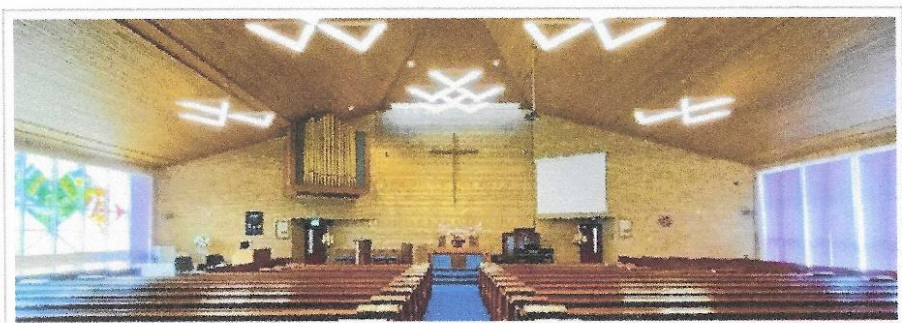


Bennochty Parish Church of Scotland

Newsletter

March 2024



The first signs of Spring are with us and always cheer the soul. We hope all our readers are well and looking forward to the better weather. The Presbytery Review Group has just reported back to Presbytery and various inter-church meetings have taken place, so we are moving forward, albeit rather slowly. We also have a new Interim Moderator who has contributed to this edition by way of introduction.

Interim Moderator: Rev. Adriaan van Tonder 07565 289852

Session Clerk: 200179

Church Office: 07483 162346

Website: www.bennochtyparishchurch.org.uk

Registered Scottish Charity SC005628

MARCH 2024

An Easter message from the Interim Minister

As I write this the House of Commons has just been in chaos around a debate on a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. There appears no end in sight for the fighting in Gaza even though there is now talk from the USA of a temporary ceasefire. Meanwhile the Russian invasion of Ukraine has moved to the inside pages and has been going for two years now, while we could also point at other locations where fighting and suffering seems a way of life. Living in a world of uncertainty and conflict is not easy.

As we approach Easter, we journey through a period of deep uncertainty from the mountain top of Transfiguration through the wilderness of temptation along the dusty roads into the city of religious and political upheaval. Along the way people reach out to Jesus for answers but clarity seems elusive, and we are not sure if Jesus withholds that clarity on purpose or if even he was uncertain where the road would end. Perhaps he was sure what the outcome would be as a result of his words and actions and wanted to shield people from the pain until it was all over. For only once it was over would the people receive that clarity. Only through conflict, suffering, and death comes the rising to new life and without that how could they bear the suffering on its own?

We are post-Easter people, holding to a belief that in suffering there is hope, and through conflict there is purpose, and out of the darkness comes light. So, the Christian



faith in the does not and cannot avoid struggle, suffering, conflict, pain, darkness or even death ... but it does hold on to hope and is certain there is always the possibility of new life. There will be clarity though we may

not yet see it. As the letter to the Hebrews says (11.1), *“To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see”*.

As we continue this journey of Interim Ministry together there has been much uncertainty, and yet there have been many signs of hope amidst the questions, conversations, difficulties and glimpses of answers even if we do not yet have full clarity. However, we are Easter people living through a Lenten journey in the knowledge that clarity breaks through when that stone is rolled away. As we sit and wait for that clarity, perhaps you may be able to help give that stone a push.

Presbytery Decision on Kirkcaldy Churches

From Stewart McPherson, Interim Minister

At a specially arranged meeting of Presbytery on Thursday 7th March, the recommendations of the Presbytery Review Group on Kirkcaldy Town Centre Churches were agreed. This means there is no change to the original plan that the Abbotshall and Linktown buildings will close (*at a date yet to be established*) and Bennoch and St Bryce Kirk buildings will be retained for the ministry and mission of the new united church. (*Note that the Union will be formulated prior to the actual disposal of the buildings which will then be the responsibility of the new Kirk Session.*)

The next meeting of the Strategy Team is arranged for 21st March when the Interim Minister will present a *‘Timeline Towards Union’*

and for actions to be agreed. An outline of this was recently shared with all the elders from the four congregations. That information will then be shared with all the congregations.

Please remember and pray for those who will carry the grief of closing the doors of their church buildings. Remember also that the Union will mean an ending for four congregations and the beginning of a new one. Offer your prayers, support, and hope for this phase of the journey.

A New Name for our New Congregation Langtoun Central Kirk



Following a process where all members were invited to submit a suggested name for our new congregation after the union, your Strategy Team, then each Kirk Session, drew up a short list. This was then refined by the Strategy Team with two names emerging as the strongest and most favoured candidates: Kirkcaldy Central Kirk and Langtoun Central Kirk. All members were then invited to select their preference, resulting in a majority decision for Langtoun Central Kirk.

The name expresses a fondness for the intimate friendliness of the Langtoun name while also indicating the geographical location for the new congregation's ministry and mission. Officially, it will also include something like (Church of Scotland, Kirkcaldy) in brackets on official documents.

This name will be included in the Basis of Union (along with other items) on which each congregation will vote in due course.

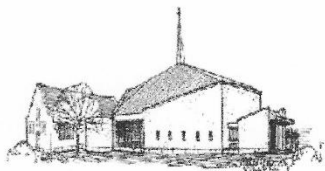
Thank you to all who participated and contributed.

***Stewart McPherson,
Interim Minister***



The Minister's Cat is...

- A an **adorable** cat [Love is always part of what we do]
- B a **beautiful** cat [beauty and chaos belong together in Creation]
- C a **carbon neutral** cat [of course!]
- D a **delightful, disciple** cat
- E an **eco-friendly** cat
- F a **Fairtrade** cat [There's so much overlap between green and fair]
- G a **green** cat
- H a **holistic** cat
- I an **insulated** cat, and, indeed an **inclusive** cat too!
- J a **justly transitioning** cat
- K a **kilowatt -reducing, kind cat** to the environment
- L a **low-hanging cat** [with all the 'low-hanging fruit']
- M a **multi-use** cat
- N a **Net-Zero** cat
- O a **Net Zero** cat spelled differently
- P a **photovoltaic** cat
- Q a **quiet** cat
- R a **recycled, repurposed, repowered** cat [9 lives plus?]
- S a **strategically sustainable, solar-powered, spiritual** [in a sun puddle]
- T a **tidal, turbine** cat
- U an **undersold** cat [Do good stuff and shout about it!]
- V a **virtual** cat [think of the emissions saved by a virtual meeting]
- W a **wave-powered** cat
- X an **eXpert xenophilic** cat [love of the other] **xeriscape** (a landscaping method with the goal of conserving water) cat
- Y a cat who says **'Yes!'** to positive change
- Z a **zero-waste cat** who won't 'zzzzzz' whilst the Earth is harmed. And a frequent companion on **Zoom** meetings!



Bennochty Parish Church of Scotland

Meldrum Road
Kirkcaldy,
Fife,
KY2 5HR

Session Clerk (01592) 200179

TO ALL MEMBERS
BENNOCHY PARISH CHURCH
KIRKCALDY

March 2024

GIFT DAY - SUNDAY 7th April 2024

The first of our two Gift Days this year is on Sunday, 7th April, 2024.

As you know, most of our income comes from your weekly/monthly donations to the church whether, through the Free Will Offering scheme, by Standing Order or in the Open Plate. These two Gift days add a significant amount to our annual income each year along with us reclaiming Gift Aid on behalf of those members who have signed a declaration form. Like yourselves, the church is having to deal with rising costs and your donations help us to meet the many obligations that we have and to make sure we have a warm, clean, and welcoming environment for our many users to come to.

The usual Gift Day envelope will be delivered to you along with the Church Newsletter. 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 or give to a friend or relation to bring it for you.

If you prefer you can donate using Online Banking using the usual church bank account number and sort code.

Sort Code is 80-16-84

Account number is 06022892.

If using this method, please make sure you put in '**Gift Day**' as a reference.

Thank you for being such an important part of the Bennochty Church community and for your generosity in the past.

The Finance Team



Bennochty Parish Church

Saturday April 20th, 4.00 p.m.

Mark your calendars! On Saturday, April 20th, we join in celebrating International Organ Day, promoted by the Royal College of Organists. It's a day to appreciate the rich sounds and history of this musical instrument. Join us for an afternoon featuring a mini-recital and talk by our organist, Stuart Watson.

Some of Stuart's piano students will then showcase their keyboard skills, an opportunity you won't want to miss! Ever been curious about playing the organ? We'll also have a "come and try" session, open to anyone who wants to experience playing our lovely pipe organ.

The event will be held in the sanctuary of Bennochty Church, Elgin Street/Meldrum Road, KY2 5HR. The programme begins at 4:00pm and lasts about 90 minutes. Admission is free, but donations for the upkeep of our organ will be gratefully received.

For further details, please speak with Stuart after the service, or contact the office directly.

Tel. 07483 162346

Or email us via our website: www.bennochtychurch.org.uk

Bennoch Community Choir



After our successful performance at the Fife Festival of Music on the 2nd of February, choir members got together for a Social Evening on the 12th of February. It has always been seen that the social side is as important as singing and members enjoyed the opportunity for a chat and refreshments. Currently, there are 59 active members including 7 tenor/ baritones who continue to keep up with (and sometimes out-perform!) all the sopranos and altos. This session we are delighted to welcome a German exchange student studying at Kirkcaldy High this term. We always welcome new members to join us on Monday evenings from 6.30 until 8pm.

Thanks to the generosity of choir members, family and friends, £300 was raised for charities at our Christmas performance in the Church.

We remained indebted to Ella and Graeme Wilson for their dedication and enthusiasm in leading Bennoch Community Choir.

Bunny Drive

The Women's Group's popular Bunny Drive will take place in the Methven Hall on Tuesday 9th April at 6.30pm. Tickets, £4 adults and £2 children, are available from Group members. Come along and join in the fun with raffle, prizes and light supper. Bring the family.



Car Parking

We are grateful to Rexel, the electrical wholesalers in Katherine Street, who have kindly agreed to allow us the use their premises for car parking in the evenings and at weekends. This would ease the parking problem at joint services and other events when larger numbers are expected.

On 11th February we bade a fond farewell to our Interim Moderator, Rev Adriaan van Tonder, before he left to take up his new charge in Brechin. He was presented with a small token of our appreciation, and we wish him and his family well in their new home. His new congregation will surely enjoy hearing his stories of South Africa, as we did. He left us with this South African prayer –

Walk tall, walk well, walk safe, walk free
And may harm never come to thee.

Walk wise, walk good, walk proud, walk true
And may the sun always smile on you.

Walk prayer, walk hope, walk faith, walk light,
And may peace always guide you right.

Walk joy, walk brave, walk love, walk strong
And may life always give you song.

Amen

On Sunday 3rd March we were pleased to welcome Morag Wilkinson as our new Interim Moderator and she has sent the following introduction. We look forward to seeing her in the months to come.

Greetings from your new Interim Moderator!

Hello everybody! As I'm sure you know, your previous Interim Moderator, Adriaan, left to take up a call to a congregation in Brechin.

At the February meeting of Presbytery, I was appointed as your new Interim Moderator.

My name's Morag Wilkinson, and I'm an Elder at Forthview – Inverkeithing. Up until mid-January, I was the Interim Moderator at Burntisland, finishing there when they completed their union with Kinghorn. I was also on the steering committee for the cluster union between Inverkeithing, Dalgety Bay,

North Queensferry, Aberdour and Rosyth that created Forthview Parish, so I am hoping these experiences will stand me in good stead as we work together with the other churches in your cluster towards your union.

I usually sum up my main interests in three Rs – Runrig, rugby and religion. The order varies depending on the time of year, with rugby taking a higher priority in the spring and autumn, when I get to use my Murrayfield season ticket.

In my “real job”, I work as a translator and proofreader, translating from German to English. This can be quite interesting, quite challenging, and quite mind-numbing, depending on the text.

From the catio at my back door (yes, I’m the kind of cat owner who would have a catio built – if you don’t know what that is, it’s an enclosure that enables a cat to safely enjoy a little bit of the outdoors), Keechya – that’s the cat – and I have a ... changeable ... view across the river to Edinburgh. Sometimes, the weather comes in, and we can’t even see the river, never mind the other side, but on clear days, it is glorious.

This always strikes me as a good metaphor for life, and for change. Sometimes, we can see where we’re going, and sometimes we can’t. Even though I can’t always see Edinburgh, it’s still there. We might not always be able to see our destination, but we know we are on a path. In the case of Bennochty and the other Kirkcaldy town centre churches, you have already travelled quite a long way on that path. There’s still a distance to go to your destination, though. Even when the clouds come in and you’re in danger of losing sight of where you’re going, trust the journey.

More importantly, trust the One whose hand always guides us and who will support us all the way. Even when the clouds obscure our vision, God is still there, and when those clouds lift, we will see the glorious things God has in store for Kirkcaldy.

I look forward to working with you and getting to know you over the coming months.

Blessings,
Morag

The Wedding Ceremony

At a wedding ceremony in the Highlands the minister asked if anyone had anything to say concerning the union of the bride and groom. If so then it was their time to stand up and talk, or forever hold their peace.

The moment of utter silence was broken by a young beautiful woman carrying a baby. She started slowly walking toward the front.

Everything quickly turned to chaos.

The bride slapped the groom.

The groom's mother fainted.



The best man and groomsmen started giving each other looks and wondering how best to help save the situation.

The minister asked the young woman "Can you tell us why you came forward. What do you have to say?"


The woman replied, "We can't hear at the back".

Deaths

13.12.23	Mrs Elizabeth Simpson
15.12.23	Mrs Agnes (Anne) Spowart
01.01.24	Mrs Wina Thomson
11.01.24	Robert Waddell
18.01.24	Mrs Lily McCrabbe



Easter & Holy Week Services

Sunday 24 th March	Palm Sunday Service in Bennoch, led by the Worship Group, 11am	
Tuesday 26 th March	Service in Linktown, 7pm	
Wednesday 27 th March	Service in Abbotshall, 7pm,	
Thursday 28 th March	Maundy Thursday service in St Bryce, 7pm	
Friday 29 th March	Good Friday service in Bennoch , 7pm	
Sunday 31 st March	Easter Sunday service in Bennoch , joint with St Bryce, led by Rev Stewart McPherson, 11am	

Easter/Spring Calendar

April 7	Gift Day	No Sunday School
April 9	Women's Group	Bunny Drive
April 20	National Organ Day	
April 28	Joint service at St Bryce	



The Olive Branch Cafe

Our Community Café is open every Thursday from 11am – 2pm, serving tea, coffee and home baking from 11am and light lunches from 12 noon.

Why not drop in for a bite to eat and a chat, or join the Knit & Natter Group who meet in the café at 11am.

www.bennochparishchurch.org.uk

Eco-Congregation Scotland Certifies:

Bennochry Parish Church of Scotland

as committed to caring for creation,
making the link between environmental
issues and the Christian faith, and
responding with practical action in
the church and wider community.



eco
congregation
Scotland

Registered
2024

Church ID: EC52269. For information on Eco-Congregation Scotland visit www.ecocongregationscotland.org

Eco-Congregation Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) regulated by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Scottish Charity number SC4537

Current Activities in Bennochy Church

Girl Guides:	Wednesday
Rainbows	for girls aged 5 - 7 years
Brownies	for girls aged 7 - 10 years
Guides	for girls aged 10 - 14 years
Senior Section.	for girls aged 14 - 25 years
Women's Group	Tuesdays, fortnightly
Community Choir	Monday
Al Anon	Tuesday
Dru Yoga	Tuesday
Hand Bell Ringers	Tuesday
Country Dancers	Tuesday
Indoor Bowling	Monday
Tai Chi	Monday & Wednesday
Zumba	Wednesday
The Olive Branch	Your community café.
	Internet connection is available.
	Every Thursday 11.00 - 2.00

More information on these activities can be found on our website.