



Dear Friends,

I can't believe it is Newsletter time again. How quickly time passes when we are involved and working for the Lord.

By the time this Newsletter reaches your hands – or screen-- we will have started the process of looking for a new Minister. To me, as a member, that is exciting. What will a new Minister bring to us in teaching and new ideas? As Locum and Interim Moderator it is a wee bit sad as I am thoroughly enjoying serving God here in Blairgowrie. So do we now sit and wait and see who God brings us?



Of course not! All of our work continues as we serve Him and do what He has given us to do for Him. We cannot stand still while we wait. We move forward in all areas.

The Fabric Committee continues to keep all our property in good repair; the Communication Group makes sure what we do as a Church is publicised and plans for the new Audio-Visual system; the Pastoral Team visits those in need at home and in care; the Mission and Outreach Group works at providing as many opportunities as possible to spread the Gospel; the Worship Team plans for Services and Events and several folk lead some of these; the Finance Team, under Bob's leadership, keeps our accounts in good order; the Leadership Team oversees much of this and prepares to bring it to Session. Session leads and guides and makes decisions in all we do, ably led by our Session Clerk. Members of the team doing important children's work in Messy Church and the JAM Club continue to provide for these activities. We are very blessed in folk who serve our Church and I am very grateful for them.

If you feel you want to be involved in serving God here please speak to myself or Clifford Cooke, Session Clerk, and don't worry. We will find you a way to serve. There is much to be done. We are already seeing green shoots in the ground, and see these as a sign of new life. So as we move on we see and feel little shoots of new life in our Church too. They may be tiny but they are there, giving us hope and the reminder that God never ceases to work and grow His people.

So as we press on let us all look forward and be ready to welcome whatever God has for us.

Blessings

Brian Dingwall: Interim Moderator and Locum



For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

Song of Solomon 2:11-12

Church Diary Dates:



- Mar. 2nd - Early Morning Service, 9.30am**
Mar. 2nd - Evening Praise Service, 6.30pm
Mar. 16th - Messy Church, 9.30am
April 6th - Early Morning Service, 9.30am
April 6th - Evening Praise Service, 6.30pm
April 9th - JAM Club, 2pm
April 10th - JAM Club, 2pm
April 11th - JAM Club, 2pm
April 12th - Praise in the Wellmeadow, 10.30am
April 12th - Guild Spring Tea, 2pm
April 13th - Palm Sunday Family Service, 11am
April 17th - Maundy Thursday Service, 7pm
April 18th - Good Friday Service, 7pm
April 20th - Messy Church Special, 10.30am
April 20th - Easter Sunday Family Service, 11am
May 4th - Early Morning Service, 9.30 am
May 4th - Evening Praise Service, 6.30pm
- Please check the website or the intimations on the weekly order of service for further details.**

The Church Newsletter

Thank you to everyone who has signed up to receive this newsletter by email. If you haven't yet but would like to, then please contact me at colleenajoslin@gmail.com. The newsletter is also available on the church website at <https://www.blairgowrieparishchurch.org.uk>. and we provide a print copy for those who wish it.

Meanwhile I would welcome ideas for the development of this newsletter. Please be in touch if you have ideas of what you'd like to see in it. And would anyone like to take on a guest editor or roving reporter role for one issue or for regular issues of the newsletter? A new touch could add some variety.

Colleen

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:4-7

Easter

Most glorious Lord of Lyfe! that, on this day,
Didst make Thy triumph over death and sin;
And, having harrow'd hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win:
This joyous day, deare Lord, with joy begin;
And grant that we, for whom thou diddest dye,
Being with Thy deare blood clene washt from sin,
May live for ever in felicity!

And that Thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same againe;
And for Thy sake, that all lyke deare didst buy,
With love may one another entertayne!
So let us love, deare Love, lyke as we ought,
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.



Edmund Spenser (1552 –1599)

From the Session Clerk: Pray for Our Vacancy

I know that to many people it feels as if we have been slow to seek out our new minister. After all, Benjamin stepped down at the end of June! However, Benjamin did not officially demit post until mid-August and we were not permitted to call a minister until certain national and Presbytery measures were in place. They now are!

At a special meeting of Presbytery held in January, it was agreed that Blairgowrie Parish Church should remain a single charge – rather than united with another congregation. Why? Because Blairgowrie is a fast-growing town and Presbytery believes we are called to develop our Mission and Outreach in the community and we can better do this as a single charge.

Preparations are now underway for filling the position. An Electoral Register is being compiled. If you are a member, you will automatically be added. Adherents can have their names included. Please ask me for the relevant form! If you are a member of a church elsewhere but wish to be included on this register, you should lift your 'lines' and lodge them with us. Once Session has agreed this register, there is an opportunity for you to check that you are indeed included.

An ad hoc group is working on a new Parish Profile which attempts to describe our congregation and community, along with our aims and objectives. This is issued to any potential candidate. In addition, the Fabric Working Group has been working hard ensure that The Manse is in tip-top condition for its new occupant.

The Kirk Session is meeting with the Presbytery Advisory Committee on 5th March when we discuss how best to go about the recruitment process. Thereafter, the congregation will be called upon to elect a Nominating Committee whose job it is to seek for our new minister.

Do be aware that, once this committee is formed, we will hear nothing else until the group members are ready to bring forward one candidate to preach as 'sole nominee'.

In the meantime, what can each of us do?

Please pray for the work of Session and the Nominating Committee as they seek to do God's will. Pray too for Brian as he continues as our Locum and Interim Moderator. Pray for the minister who will be called to come to Blairgowrie. Both we and they may not yet know who it is, but God does!

Importantly, please support your church by attending worship regularly. Is there someone you can encourage to come back or come along?

Clifford Cooke: Session Clerk

Presbytery Report: February/ March 2025

Presbytery continues to be busy with a plethora of Unions and Linkages, or a combination of both to manage.

Before the new Presbytery of Perth came into existence the 'Legacy Presbyteries' were tasked with finalising their individual Presbytery Plan. A couple of these were only finalised after the union. However the formation of Perth Presbytery has offered the opportunity for linkages across former Presbytery boundaries.

The 'Old Plan', envisaged Blairgowrie uniting with Bendochy Church, which would then be closed. However, the Plan has been changed, so we are now set as a church by ourselves, with no link, or union with another Parish. This is in part because of the population growth underway in Blairgowrie that will require us to be responsive to the needs of our wider community, and it will make it much easier in terms of administration, to prepare for a new minister, and possibly make the charge more attractive. We were due to have a Congregational Review, but this has not taken place due to the vacancy situation.

David Howat: Presbytery Elder

The Finance and Stewardship Group

Dear members,

This point in the year is taken up by transferring the figures in the church management accounts to the Statutory Accounts required by OSCR. We have been fortunate in the past in that



we had the expert assistance of Rhona Nicol from Presbytery to assist with this. This year started off no differently and Rhona was quickly out of the blocks to produce a 1st draft of the accounts, with only a few changes required. Unfortunately, before we could instigate these changes Rhona resigned from her duties. Whilst unexpected, this has not been too big a problem as regards the Finalising of the Statutory Accounts, and I am confident with the assistance of the Liberty software developers that these will be finalised shortly. The bigger drawback is that the accounts have to be "independently examined", a task that Rhona also had in hand. So, at this juncture I am at the last minute on the hunt for someone who is willing to carry out this task. This does not require a degree in accountancy! If any one can help, I would be most grateful.

To the financial situation as it stands at present. Dare I say it, we are sitting reasonable comfortably having circa. £40,000 in the bank account and the Growth Fund in the Investors Trust currently valued at £175,400. However, we had a fairly lean year last year as regards property expenditure and I know Susan now has a list of forthcoming costs. Bearing in mind our main source of income is still dependant on givings which are not increasing, I hesitate to be complacent.

More detail will follow in the Financial report in the Finalised accounts. Meantime thanks for your support.

Bob Strachan: Treasurer and Convener

MEIGLE MUSICALITY—Sing in the Sanctuary

On a dark night in November Meigle Musicality entertained members of the congregation and the community with an evening of easy listening music, followed by refreshments in the hall.

Hosted by Blairgowrie Parish Church Guild, the event raised the incredible sum of £561 for the Tayside Children with Cancer and Leukaemia charity at the door, plus other donations into the collecting buckets.

It was a very enjoyable evening and one that we would really like to repeat at some time.



J.A.M Club (Jesus And Me Club)

The J.A.M. (Jesus And Me) Club is an event run for three afternoons in the Easter and October school holidays. We have now had four of these clubs with 12 to 15 children each time and two or three teenage helpers. Around 12 adults are normally there too, working with the children. Tasks for the adults include crafts with the children, joining in the singing and fun (which can include some Keep Fit!); providing a snack; helping out in games---in fact a multitude of things including storytelling and a wee bit of drama. A number of folk have committed to praying for the JAM CLUB. We also have two or three helpers who worship in other Churches and that is such a benefit to us.

On 9, 10 and 11th April 2025 the JAM CLUB will be in a Circus setting so look out for clowns, invisible men and strongmen. We will be learning that Jesus is stronger than any strongman and can give more happiness than any clown. We meet in the Hall from 2pm to 4pm. A very big thank you to the groups who give up their space for those three days.

If you want to pop in and see what we are up to you are more than welcome. On the Friday from 3.30pm parents, grandparents and anyone else are invited to join us for the last part of the programme so please do, if you can.

And please tell any children you have contact with about JAM CLUB. Also pray for families who come. The contact for more information is esther.dingwall@gmail.com

Esther Dingwall

Who Gets the Job?

ADAM: Good man but has problems with his wife. One reference told us how he and his wife enjoyed walking nude in the woods.

NOAH: Former pastorate of 120 years with no converts. Prone to unrealistic building projects.

JOSEPH: A big thinker, but a braggart; believes in dream interpreting and has a prison record.

MOSES: A modest and meek man, but poor communicator; even stutters at times. Sometimes loses his temper and acts rashly. Some say he left an earlier church over a murder charge.

DAVID: The most promising leader of all until we discovered the affair he had with his neighbour's wife.

SOLOMON: Great preacher, but serious woman problems.

ELIJAH: Prone to depression; collapses under pressure.

HOSEA: A tender and loving pastor, but our people could never handle his wife's occupation.

JONAH: Told us he was swallowed up by a great fish. He said the fish later spit him out on the shore near here. We hung up.

AMOS: Too much of a country hick. Backward and unpolished. With some seminary training, he might have promise; but he has a hang-up against wealthy people.

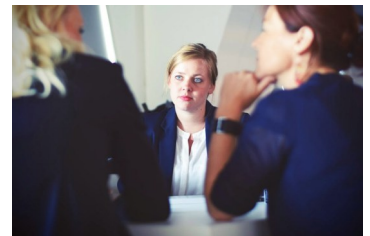
JOHN: Says he is a Baptist, but doesn't dress like one. Maybe Pentecostal? Tends to lift both hands in the air to worship when he gets excited. Sleeps outdoors, has a weird diet, and provokes denominational leaders.

PETER: Too blue collar. Has a bad temper, even said to have cursed. He's a loose cannon.

PAUL: Powerful CEO type and fascinating preacher. However, he's short on tact, unforgiving with young ministers, harsh, and has been known to preach all night.

TIMOTHY: Too young.

JUDAS: His references are solid. A steady plodder. Conservative. Good connections. Knows how to handle money. We're inviting him to preach this Sunday in view of a call. **(Permission. The Parish Window 2025)**



Badminton Beginner: The Social Club

Recently, neighbours of mine have been coming to church and noticed that we have a Social Club. This resulted in me warily accompanying one of them to the Badminton. Fortunately, there were spare rackets around. My neighbour was doing well and he knew the rules; I didn't! So after seeing my initial attempts someone kindly took me to the Lower Hall area and gave me lots of individual practise and helpful tips. It worked! It wasn't long before I was scoring points back in the Main Hall.



Halfway through we were treated to tea and biscuits; a good chance for a natter, then it was back to having some light, leisurely exercise batting the shuttlecock. We left feeling more refreshed than when we first went. We'll go again. Anyone for... er, badminton?

The Social Club meets from September to May in the Church Hall.

Tuesdays: Badminton 1:30-3:30 pm

Wednesdays: Badminton 7 pm onwards

Fridays: Carpet Bowls 10-12 noon

For further information, please contact Anne Byres or Bruce Dow (07910397580) **Mary Mackay**

Messy Church & Family Services

The theme of January Messy Church was New Beginnings. We discussed making New Year resolutions and new starts at school or a new job. Sometimes things don't go right but we learn from it.

The children looked at photographs and decided what was good and not so good. They then shredded the bad things, so learning that things go wrong but we can move on from them.

There was also a weaving mat which had good thoughts on it and a large 'Forgive' in bubble writing.

The next Messy Church is on the 16th March at 9.30am.

There will be early morning services on the 2nd March and April 6th at 9.30am. These are suitable for families with children and are short services with activities during the service for all to take part.

On Easter Sunday, 20th April, there will be a Messy Church at the special time of 10.30am and at 11.15 we will join the service in the sanctuary.



Susan Whiteford

Mission and Outreach Working Group



The Mission and Outreach Group meet almost monthly in Faith and Fellowship. Our aims are based on an action plan which was approved by the Kirk Session and based on the Five Marks of Mission.

At the end of November, we set up the Blairgowrie Parish Church stall at the Farmer's Market and met many people from our community, sharing scriptural texts, booklets and 'goodies' for the children. We also distributed leaflets highlighting the Christmas Services. Members of our group and Church family who helped at the stall found the experience both rewarding and encouraging. We are delighted that we will have the same opportunity at the March Farmer's Market on the 29th.

We are looking forward to the next 'JAM Club', and many of the Mission and Outreach group will be involved in sharing Faith and Fun with our local children. Some of our members are also discussing future progress with our young children and reaching out to the Youth of the community.

We are developing 'Welcome Packs', for new and visiting members to our Church, and those who use our halls. Two of our team are engaged in developing the 'Adult Welcome Pack' and another two members are involved in the 'Children's Welcome Pack'. We hope to have these available by Easter. Discussions have also centred round Creche facilities ensuring our welcome is **Fit for Purpose!**

We thank our Guild and Craft Group for their Outreach and also the opportunity to come together for Fellowship. There are many new houses in Blairgowrie and we are aiming to deliver Welcome Leaflets in the near future.

As we continue our service in Mission and Outreach in His name, we would appreciate your prayers and support, and/or you could come and join us or add your name to our volunteer list when we are trying to achieve our aims.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6

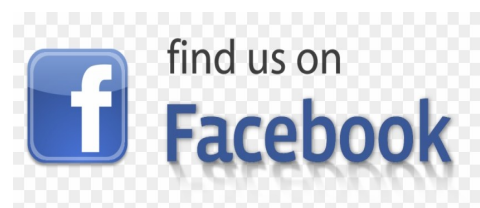
I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the Light of Life. John 8: 12

Margaret Conroy: Convener

Church Website: <https://www.blairgowrieparishchurch.org.uk>:

From the church website you can access our:

- ⇒ weekly pastoral letter
- ⇒ monthly prayer diary
- ⇒ triannual newsletter
- ⇒ daily reflections
- ⇒ audio and video recordings of morning worship
- ⇒ daily Bible verse
- ⇒ worship resources





The Pastoral Care Working Group

It seems like only yesterday that I was writing a report for our church newsletter when Christmas was a dot on the horizon and now Easter is approaching.

We continue to visit members of our congregation who are ill, frail or house-bound so if you know of someone whom you think would appreciate having a church visitor, please chat to one of us to arrange this.

Over the course of 2024, we sent out 71 cards to people who were bereaved or who were ill or suffering injuries and we pray that this brought a measure of comfort in difficult times. We can only do this if we are told about these situations so again, if you know of someone who would find this a comfort, please let us know.

In December we went to St Ninian's, Beech Manor and Muirton House to sing carols and tell the Christmas Story. We were very grateful to Martha Easton for playing for these services and to Keith Redwood who brought together the carols and readings. All those who took part enjoyed this immensely and we hope that the Care Home Residents, their visitors and staff also felt blessed by these events. We are praying that the Care Homes will welcome us back at Easter time so that we can share the joy and hope of Easter with them.

We are a small group – Elinor Smith (Convenor), Jane Blackburn, Ruth Brand, Dorothea Cooke, Martha Easton, Kenneth Mackay and Sheila Watkins. If you would like to discuss anything, please just speak to anyone of us as we would be delighted to hear from you.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” 1 Peter 4:10-11.

Elinor Smith: Convener

Tulip Facts:

Tulips were first cultivated in central Asia, possibly as early as the 11th century.

They were brought to the Netherlands in 1593 and introduced to England in the 1630s.

Their bright colours were the result of a viral infection.

Tulips were very valuable in the period sometimes known as ‘tulipmania’. At the height of the craze in 1637, some bulbs were recorded as being sold for more than ten times the amount they had been selling for a month before.

They were even responsible for an economic bubble, with a speculative frenzy of buying and selling in Holland in the 17th Century! (**English Heritage, 2025**).



The Communications Working Group



Since the last report we have been trying, with no success, to access grants from outside bodies to finance part or all of our Audio-Visual upgrade. It would appear that there are many sources of funding for Mission Projects, such as starting up Lunch Clubs, Play Groups for children, or Activities for teenagers, etc. However there is only a limited number of sources dealing with enhancing worship for present members without a specific Outreach aim.

We have contacted a number of organisations, with either no reply, or 'no' as a reply. Unfortunately not all of these sources provide any kind of feedback that would allow us to understand the reason for their decision. We believe that our applications are thorough and relevant to the Five Marks of Mission, which is the basis of the criteria required by many of these trusts, so it may simply be that our reserves are preventing a positive response if it is felt that we should be using these.

We continue to provide the order of service each week and additional resources for a variety of outreach purposes. David has also undertaken to ensure the notice board outside of the church is current and attention-grabbing. It has been an underused resource recently and we are eager that it is a focal point and information source for anyone passing

We have also been looking at some documents that come from Presbytery, as a first-stop before they go to Session, so that anything that we feel might be problematic can be addressed before going to Session.

The old photocopier is being taken away shortly (the lease has ended), and we are looking at a charging system that will allow church and other groups to make use of the new printer at a fair price.

Our energies are now going to be turned to the question of the Vacancy. We have to prepare a Parish Profile, which informs any would-be applicants for the post of Minister here with us, as to what to expect from us. The Communications Group, along with a few other interested members of Session will put this together, again for approval and acceptance by Session.

David P. Howat (Convener)

Every day is a fresh beginning;
Listen my soul to the glad refrain.
And, in spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted, and possible pain,
Take heart with the day, and begin again.

Susan Coolidge, (1835—1905)



The Guild: Let Us Build A House



Our Strategy for 2024-2027 is 'Let us Build a House' and this year's theme of 'Sure Foundations' are reflected in our meetings and in our speakers, along with the current discussion topic of 'Faith – The Reason We Serve'.

Towards the end of last year, members and friends enjoyed a lovely afternoon with Carols and Readings which Martha prepared to help lead us into Christmas. We also enjoyed a great Christmas Lunch and a time of fellowship at Strathmore Golf Club.

Our meetings began again in 2025, when Rev. Brian Dingwall, through a Bible Study, challenged us in our personal faith and also how we use and share our faith in our local community. Our next meeting was led by one of our Leadership Team – Sheila— when Messy Guild made us more aware of our creative senses. Great fun! Another Guild member, Christine Pate, who is also our Church Flower Convener, gave an amazing demonstration of flower care and flower arranging, using super-market flowers—and as a bonus, some lucky members got to take flowers home.



Jean and Jim Gibb with Christine.



Betsy Mann with her display.

As I write this article, our Guild is looking forward to a visit from David Howat who will be taking us through Genealogy, specialising in the family history of two of our members. We also look forward to hearing more about activities in our local community, focusing on B.R.A.N., (Blairgowrie and Rattray Access Network); the BARI Food Shop, and the Soroptomists. And as Easter approaches we will, of course, spend time reflecting and celebrating our Faith.

As always, we have been involved in many other activities. We hosted a concert by Meigle Musicality to raise funds for Tayside Children with Cancer and Leukaemia, raising a total of £561 at the door and the singers collected more in their buckets. Our November Coffee Morning raised £511 and we have also helped in selling some shopping bags on behalf of Blairgowrie Reusable Bag Company, which is a group of entrepreneurs from Blairgowrie High School who are running a Social Enterprise, developing skills for life, learning and work.

All funds we raise go towards our Guild Projects and Church Projects.

Why don't you come and join us? We can promise Fun, Fellowship and Faith (and tea) in a friendly group, meeting alternate Mondays in the church hall.

By the Grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.' (1 Corinthians 3 v 10-11)



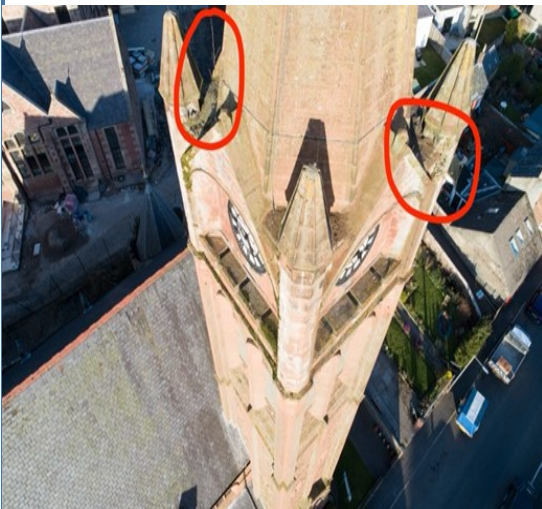
Margaret Conroy, for the Guild Leadership Team.

Fabric Working Group

The church heating has been the main problem over the past few weeks with a part being identified as causing the problem of not being able to heat the sanctuary and the hall at the same time. Most of the problems came from the original installation and now we have had much of the boilers replaced even though they are only 18 months old. Discussions with the company are ongoing to make sure there are no more problems.



The Fabric Working Group has continued to check the manse on a weekly basis. In preparation for the new minister the windows in the vestibule have been replaced with plastic ones to match those in the house and to reduce painting in the future. The study is to be painted and also the upper hall which was damaged when there was a roof leak.



There are other small areas to be touched up but on the whole the manse is in excellent condition.

A steeplejack will be working on the clock tower sometime in March to remove all the vegetation, to spray with weedkiller to prevent it returning and to check the stone and make any repairs that maybe required. This should be a sight to be seen!!

(A view from above the clock tower marking the areas to be treated.)

The curtains in the hall currently are an experiment to deaden the noise. This has been successful so a more permanent solution is being investigated. This could be by erecting sound boards on the walls and the ceiling.

Susan Whiteford: Fabric Convener

The Church Halls and Meeting Rooms



Regular rental income from our halls and other rooms provides an important part of our church income. It also encourages members of the wider community into the building so we continue to maintain it well and to work towards full use of the spaces.

Recently a problem with the sprung floor - which is valued highly for sports and dancing - needed attention to ensure its safety. It has been fixed for now, but this is an ongoing maintenance issue and we are fortunate to have a good relationship with the dancers who alert us to any issues.

Unusually we have some hall and meeting room availability just now, both through the week and at weekends, so please share information about our halls with any contacts you may have. We have a lot of space and it is mostly well equipped (we are working on the audio-visual aspect); we also charge reasonably with discounts for community or not-for-profit organisations. Please tell your friends.

I can be contacted on 01250 873701 or at colleenajoslin@gmail.com.

Colleen Joslin

Craft Group

The Craft Group continues to meet every Wednesday morning from 10.00 – 12.00 in the Choir Room where our members knit, crochet, sew and embroider—and sing! Sometimes there is more chat than craft! Our numbers have been growing and there is always a lively buzz in the room. We have been encouraged by visits from Rev. Dingwall as well as Marjorie Ferguson and Charlie Smith from the Kirk Session.



Some of our members, as well as others in the church, knit for Crossreach who distribute baby clothes, blankets, toddler clothes and soft toys to the families of prisoners who are serving their sentences in Perth Prison. This is an excerpt from the letter of thanks that we received :

“All the knitting has gone. It was very thankfully received and is being used and worn in different areas all over Scotland, England and some in Northern Ireland too. It is amazing how far reaching your kindness goes. Please pass on heartfelt thanks to everyone.”



If you have some spare time on a Wednesday morning, you are very welcome to pop in and see what we get up to. You can be assured of a warm welcome.

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” Ephesians 2: 10.

Elinor Brown



Hello friends, we are still hoping you will share your news with your church family. We’d like to hear about the things that are happening and important in your lives. Have you had a big anniversary? A big (or big enough) birthday? Holiday of a lifetime? Successful hobby, a new house, a new grandchild, a new hip? Why not let us celebrate with you? Photos welcomed. **Colleen**

GUESS WHO?

Blairgowrie High School 1956

So who’s the handsome laddie in the middle of the back row?
Any guesses?

Clue: He went, he came back, he serves.....

Answer on page 13.



Alzheimer's / Dementia

At some unknown point in the past few years, our friend John Campbell took time to write his feelings about his developing Alzheimer's disease. Elspeth, who only found the poem recently, has bravely decided to share his writing with us. Here she and John are giving us an insight into a world that most of us struggle to understand. It is a privilege to read John's words. It is emotional and educational and it will certainly stay in my memory for a very long time. I thank Elspeth and John for their courage and generosity.

By John Campbell.

ALZHEIMERS REQUEST.

DO NOT ASK ME TO REMEMBER
DON'T TRY TO MAKE ME UNDERSTAND
LET ME REST AND KNOW YOU'RE WITH ME
KISS MY CHEEK AND HOLD MY HAND

IM CONFUSED BEYOND YOUR CONCEPT
IM SAD AND SICK AND LOST.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT I NEED YOU
TO BE WITH ME AT ALL COST.

DO NOT ~~LOSE~~ YOUR PATIENCE WITH ME
DO NOT SCOLD OR CURSE OR CRY
I CAN'T HELP THE WAY I'M ACTING
I CAN'T BE DIFFERENT THOUGH I TRY

JUST REMEMBER THAT I NEED YOU
THAT THE BEST OF ME IS GONE
PLEASE DON'T FAIL TO STAND BESIDE ME
LOVE ME TILL MY LIFE IS GONE.

Alzheimer's Request

Do not ask me to remember
Don't try to make me understand
Let me rest and know you're with me
Kiss my cheek and hold my hand

I'm confused beyond your concept
I'm sad and sick and lost
All I know is that I need you
To be with me at all cost

Do not lose your patience with me
Not scold or curse or cry
I can't help the way I'm acting
I can't be different though I try

Just remember that I need you
That the best of me is gone
Please don't fail to stand beside me
Love me till my life is done

Think of life in this way

But only once I pass this way,
And then---no more.
But once-- and then, the silent door
Swings on its hinges-
Opens-----closes-
And no more I pass this way.
So while I may,
With all my might,
I will assay
Sweet comfort and delight,
To all I meet upon the pilgrim way.
For no one travels twice the great highway
That climbs through darkness up to light-
Through night to day. (Anon)

Guess Who? : from Page 12.

Did you recognise our locum minister, Rev. Brian Dingwall?



Memories of Blairgowrie Branch of Perth and Kinross Foodbank.

The Foodbank at the St. Catherine's Centre has now closed to clients but parcels are still available to them in Perth and free travel to collect their supplies can be provided. Emergency parcels are held by two agencies in Rattray and Blairgowrie and donations of food can still be made at Tesco Welton Road and Sainsburys on the High Street.

Towards the end of 2013 Perth and Kinross Foodbank had been established in two rooms at the top of the Old High Street. I was, obviously, much younger and fitter in those days and went twice a week to Bannatyne's Fitness Club. The new Foodbank was only a few minutes walk away and I started taking donations of food collected at the Parish Church to them. Back in Blairgowrie, EFACTS met to discuss ways of having a Foodbank in Blairgowrie and established that we could function as a branch of Perth & Kinross Foodbank under the Trussell Trust. Six of us agreed to work together.

From the Parish Church we had 4 people (Maureen Mowbray, Anna Bowman, Claire Robb and myself), one from St Catharine's and one from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. By this time Les Paskin from the Salvation Army had been appointed manager of the Foodbank in Perth and he set our group of six the task of finding premises and finding agencies to hold vouchers they could issue to their clients. I must admit that this was a daunting task for our group and many times I felt the need for a Foodbank might be over before we found premises! How wrong was I? During the next two months we approached schools, churches, the housing office, Social work department and Employment Agency to hold vouchers and we had the good fortune to be offered a cupboard at St Catharine's to store food parcels made up at the Perth Foodbank. We also had the use of one of their rooms to issue parcels to clients. We opened for one and a half hours on a Tuesday morning and Thursday afternoon and issued our first parcel in the first week of February 2014. As the number of clients grew so did the number of volunteers who helped distribute the parcels, man the collection of food days at Tesco and help with taking the donated food to Perth.

In 2017 we started a scheme where we issued Christmas gift bags to children in families who were struggling. This was a Church led initiative supported by Perth and Kinross Foodbank. Agencies such as the Children and Education Department or Community Nursing provided us with the first name, age and gender of each child in the family and we provided a Christmas bag with several smaller gifts and one main wrapped gift. We included a Christmas message from the Churches in each bag and involved others in the making up of the bags. I will always remember making up the bags at Newhill Primary with the children choosing the gifts, books etc. It was a real pleasure to work with so many generous people.



In 2018 we were able to rent premises at the St. Catharine's Centre where we could store and process the food donated locally and make up suitable food parcels for the clients as they arrived. We dealt with anyone who lived in our area or where it was easier to come to Blairgowrie rather than Perth or Dundee.

By the time Covid-19 arrived I had stepped back from active participation in the Foodbank but the Christmas Gift Bags Scheme continued through the Parish Church. Local organisations supported the food bank in

various ways. The photograph shows members of the Lyric Choir handing over a donation.

I look back with great fondness on all the work we did in the community and hope that it would be considered God's work. At the Foodbank in Perth, Les Paskin had a notice headed 'Our Values' which included the quotation from Matthew 25:35-36. It begins '**For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.....**' and I hope in some small way we did just that.

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