

News from the Pews

The Newsletter of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church
September 2016



Markinch and Thornton Parish Church



Minister:

Rev. Carolann Erskine

A warm welcome is extended to all visitors and newcomers to the community to share in the worship, work and witness of the congregation.

Church Services

Thornton Church - Sunday 9.45am

Markinch Church - Sunday 11.15am

www.markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SC003417

Communion Sunday

You are invited to share in the celebration of

Holy Communion

in Markinch Church at 11.15 am

and Thornton Church **at 2.30pm**

on

Sunday 18th September 2016

Your Elder is _____

Contact Details _____

The Vestry, May 2016

“O God, you are my God, and I long for you. My whole being desires you; like a dry, worn-out, and waterless land, my soul is thirsty for you.”
Psalm 63:1

At this time of year, when summer begins to fade, we begin to see those wonderful autumnal colours: reds, oranges, yellows and browns appearing on the trees and for many of us, the season of Autumn reminds us that it is time to prepare... for winter will soon be here. Brrr. Meantime, the child in me still very much looks forward to walking through the woods (and sometimes dancing when no one is watching) delighting as I walk through the crisp, crunchy leaves. And so, just as we see nature, in plants and trees drawing in what is good right back into the core whilst letting go of what is no longer needed, we are reminded of who we depend upon to support and nurture us through life.



In Psalm 63:1 we find wonderful words to reassure us as indeed God's steadfast love is better than life itself. How heartening then, to know that the Psalmist, like us, had experienced the *seeming* absence of God in trying times of life. The thirst and the hunger of any soul shows the great need for the presence of God in any life but, how do we prepare to be in the presence of our Lord?

Preparation... I got to thinking about how people prepare for worship and I don't just mean on a Sunday! You see even through all of our responsibilities and struggles that can drain our energy and emotions, we often forget that these trials can steal our joy and rob us of hope, leaving us parched. So whilst we try to prepare for worship, we often arrive rushed, frazzled and in desperate need of peace. Trials, it would certainly seem, are part of our lives however, the Psalmist often used trying situations as opportunities to express his deep commitment to God. Perhaps a good lesson for us too. And so, in this cooler weather, we turn our thoughts to perhaps turning on the heating for a while, wearing an extra layer of clothing and, we prepare for a much colder season.

As we approach autumn and winter, how will you prepare your hearts for Jesus? Will your heart grow colder, or will it warm through and melt with the love and compassion of the Gospel that will satisfy you more than the richest feast?

Blessings, Carolann

From the Session Clerk

COMMUNION SERVICE THORNTON 18th SEPTEMBER 2:30pm

Session recently made a decision to hold an afternoon communion service which is designed to gauge interest, as it was felt that some members may prefer a later service.

We decided that this service will take place at Thornton on 18th September at 2:30pm, therefore no service will take place at 9:45am. It will be a one-off service, although we want to hear your views, as positive responses may mean we will introduce more communion services in the afternoon.

The communion service at Markinch at 11:15am on the same day will still take place, so you will have the opportunity to select a service that suits, or even go for a double dose!

Remember, all are welcome to celebrate communion, so we hope to see you on the 18th.

John Wood, Session Clerk

Everything I need to know, I learned from Noah's Ark

1. Remember that we are all in the same boat
2. Don't miss the boat
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark
4. Stay fit. Someone might ask you to do something really big when you are 80 years old
5. Don't listen to critics, just get on with the job that need to be done
6. Build your future on high ground
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs
8. Speed isn't always an advantage, the snails went on board with the cheetahs
9. When you are stressed, float awhile
10. Remember, the Titanic was built by professionals, the Ark by amateurs
11. No matter the storm, there is always a rainbow waiting

Contact Details

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Session Clerk	John G Wood, 16 Loch Katrine Gardens, Glenrothes, KY6 2NW Tel 01592 750327 Email sessionclerk@markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk
Treasurer	Nancy Munro Tel 01592 743822 Email amunro6687@aol.com

Treasurer's Report

Income up to 2nd May 2016

WFO	£18027
Open Plate	£3851
Standing Orders	£18986
Gift Day	£2418
Selkirk Trust	£1250
Weddings/Funerals	£1725
Tax Rebate	£10876
Hall Rents	£2512
General Trustees	£29152
Donations	£1093
Fund Raising	£2304
Misc. Income	£862
Total Income	£93056

Expenditure

Ministries & Mission	£27568
Insurance/Council Tax	£5275
Heat & Light	£4660
Locum/Pulpit Supply	£4549
Minister's Travel	£219
Salaries	£6675
Church/Hall Repairs	£1114
Manse Expenses	£28889
Stationery/Postage/ /Telephone	£1657
Piano/Organ Repairs	£372
Grow	£3000
Misc. Expenses	£3969
Total Expenses	£87947

Ministry & Mission still due £19741

Insurance still due £2022

Grow still due £3250

I would urge anyone who pays tax and has not completed a Gift Aid Declaration to do so as we have claimed £10876 from Inland Revenue so far this year.

I have the necessary form if you are interested.

Nancy Munro, Treasurer

Diary Dates

Every Monday	Coffee morning at Thornton, 10.00am-12noon
Every Monday	Prayer meeting at Thornton, 10.15am
Every Thursday	Coffee morning at Markinch, 10.00am-11.30am
17th September	Tea at the Ritz (Markinch Church Hall)
18th September	Communion Sunday
19th September	Kirk Session Meeting, Markinch Church Hall 7.15pm
7th October	Rosyth Concert Band (Markinch Church Hall)
12th November	Winter Fayre (Markinch Church Hall)
25th November	Quiz Night (Markinch Church Hall)

Remember - This is YOUR newsletter !

If you have any interesting news, stories, poems etc, please hand them to

Ken Wilkie or email ken@kenwilkie.com or call 01592 760042

Sunday School

Surafel

Before the summer break the children drew pictures to send to Surafel. Letters can be sent via e-mail to his school but it is good for him to have something the children have made that he can take home. In his last letter he says he has not been able to attend school as despite taking his medication his epilepsy is no better. We will soon be sending money for a Christmas gift and as funds are always low at this time of year we ask for donations to enable us to reach our commitment for the year. Thanks to all who have already contributed this year.

Sunday School

Carolann asked the Sunday School to lead the first part of the service on Prizegiving Sunday and the children were pleased to do this. They then sang "*Jesus love is very wonderful*" and asked the congregation to join in second time around, complete with actions. Afterwards, several members of the congregation congratulated the children on their part of the service.

The new session starts in September when we look forward to seeing the children back in Church.

Vocations Conference

Saturday 5th November 2016 The Royal George Hotel, Perth

Following the great success of our launch of the Tomorrow's Calling campaign in 2015, I'd like to commend to you the next Vocations Conference. Tomorrow's Calling video, which captured the imaginations of those who saw it, and has since been viewed an estimated 150,000 times via Facebook and 8,900 on our YouTube channel. This video can also be viewed on our new recruitment website: www.tomorrowscalling.org. In 2015, even with the campaign launch part of the way through the year, we recruited 31 new candidates, 21 of them for the full-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament, an increase of 50% on recent years. We're both thankful and ambitious, determined to build on that success and to find more Church members who may be inspired by those who have already said 'Is it me, Lord?' and willing to ask that question of themselves. 'Is it you?', 'Well, maybe...'

- The Conference is designed, not only for those with an interest in Ministry of Word and Sacrament, Diaconal Ministry or Readership but as a much wider exploration of the ministry of the whole people of God.
- Applications to participate in the Discernment Process for ministry will not normally be accepted from someone who has not been a member, or adherent member, of the Church of Scotland, or a member of a church belonging to WCRC, for less than three years prior to assessment. This rule can be waived in certain circumstances and does not exclude those affected from attending a Vocations Conference.
- A £15.00 booking fee will be charged which assists with catering costs. This ensures a greater attendance at conferences, and is often subsidised by an individual's home congregation. However, if this presents a problem for an individual enquirer, please encourage them to contact us at vocation@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Parish News

Deaths

Lucy Fleming
Antony Ogilvie
Margaret Lumsden
Isobel Westwater
Helen Gibson
Beatrice Taylor
Jessie Stevenson
Margot (Margaret) Ward
Nan Winton
Agnes (Nessie) Wilkie
Anne Balfour-Fraser
Robert (Roy) Spittal
William (Bill) Massie



Baptisms

26 th June	Fraser Andrew McCluskie
3 rd July	Grace Antonia Jilley
24 th July	Alfie Joshua James Barratt
7 th August	Antje Jean Lucinda Balfour
14 th August	Arlo Christopher John McCormick

There are tall ships
There are long ships
And ships out to sea
But the best ships
Are friendships
And may they always be

Church Hall Bookings

Anyone enquiring about booking the Markinch church hall should contact Karen Wood on 01592 750327 or email hall@markinchchurch.org.uk You can also collect a booking form from the notice board in the church hall.

To book Thornton church hall please contact Margaret Colville on 01592 774295

Thornton Prayer Meetings

Our prayer group meets at 10.15am on a Monday morning. If you would like us to pray for you or any of your friends or relatives, we have prayer slips available with a box to put them in. These are available in the quiet room which is just before you enter the worship room .

Generosity as a way of life – Good Stewardship

Based on biblical principles of Christian giving, true to say that we give in response to the generous giving of God our Heavenly Father. Teaching and promoting the Christian giving of time, talent and money is a fundamental part of our Christian giving. As your minister, my understanding of stewardship through the integrity of our faith creates a balanced, more regular sustainable place in the life and work of the congregation rather than irregular giving and sharing.

So, over the next few months, we shall consider our **Christian Giving Of Time**. Time is a fundamental part of God's creation (Genesis 1:14-19) and I encourage you to reflect on the way in which you use your time...time for God, time for family and friends, time for work, time for rest and retirement, recreation and time for church. Many people seem willing to reconsider the sharing of the gospel through a more balanced approach to life and its demands.

We shall then turn to **The Christian Giving Of Talents** to remind us that each person is then unique with his/her own physical characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. This theme is developed by Paul the Apostle (Romans 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12:1-31) when he refers to Christians as different parts of the body of Christ and he encourages them to use their particular gifts for the glory of God. We have a pool of ability which enables God to be glorified here in this parish where it helps in ministry to all ages. From chaplaincy in schools, across the parish for all ages including vital mission in youth work, to those more elderly in Care Homes, in leadership, pastoral care, recording and maintaining the church records, maintenance of buildings, safeguarding, finances, projects, publicity and communications as well as education and mission works. So, be encouraged and keep up the good work.

And, into next year, we shall explore **The Christian Giving Of Money** which is vital for the work of the church to continue. Consider what your offerings would pay for in the church. We hope to be in a position to provide a breakdown of church expenses which will be helpful as we all reconsider how much and how often we give to the church. Jesus spoke of money and possessions (Luke 12:13-21, 18:18-25, 21:1-4) and some of the most practical comments in Paul the Apostle's letters are concerned with money (1 Cor 16:1-4, 2 Cor 8:1-15). These are very encouraging as they remind us that we are accountable for what we do with ALL of our money.

Photocopying and Printing Services

The church has a high specification photocopier in the Session House at Markinch which we use to produce the quarterly newsletter and weekly bulletins.

We are able to do colour or black and white printing up to A3 size at fairly competitive prices and we also have A4 folding and binding facilities. If you or your club, organisation or business require leaflets, posters or programmes printed please give us a chance to quote. Any profits we make will go to offset the rental costs of the photocopier. Contact Ken Wilkie on 01592 760042 or email ken.wilkie@lineone.net

Lynn Cunningham Chartered Accountant

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MacDuff's Kirk?

Recent survey work on the old Kirk has given us a fresh understanding of the building and its builders, although there is much more to do. It will also be necessary to flag up how important the building is, not only within Fife but within Scotland as a whole. To this end a short book has been produced focussing in on the building's early history. It is hoped that the book will convince an academic audience of the building's quality and antiquity but it is designed to be readable by anyone with an interest in the subject.

A signed first edition draft of the book was presented to Rev. Carolann Erskine recently by the author, Bruce Manson and it is hoped that subsequent copies will be available over the coming months.

The book summarises the archaeological work that was carried out recently by volunteers as well as the pioneering work on masons' marks and the resistivity survey of the churchyard. A chapter is devoted to an assessment of who commissioned and paid for the original 12th century building and why it was built in Markinch. A detailed description of the tower is given, and later chapters examine how the building was altered both before and after the Reformation.

It is hoped that the book will encourage Historic Environment Scotland and similar bodies that at Markinch we have a national architectural treasure that requires continuing care and attention. It will also shine a light on a building that could become a highlight for tourists and pilgrims alike.

Bruce Manson



Golden Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to David and Mary Buckley from Thornton, who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 2nd July 2016.

They were married at St Chad's church in Wyburnbury, South Cheshire, in 1966 and they returned there in May of this year to renew their marriage vows as part of their anniversary celebrations.



Overseas Visitors to Markinch

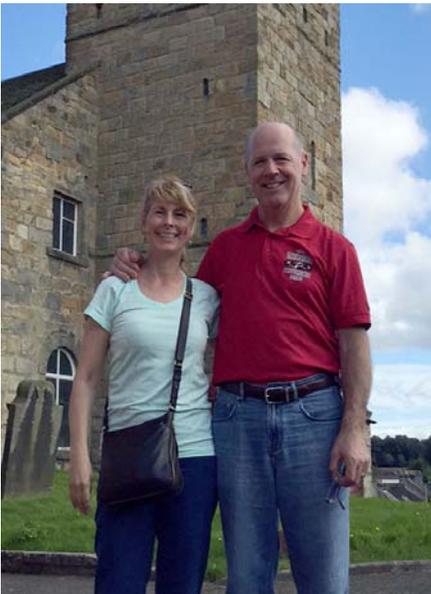
On Tuesday 23rd August, Rev Carolann Erskine met with and warmly welcomed a family that had travelled from Alaska and California to trace the footsteps of a member of their family in Markinch from many years ago. Mr Andrew McDonald 1700-1834 was Session Clerk at Markinch and was also the school Headmaster.

Over the summer, an email was received from Mr Jim McDonald who wondered if it would be possible to bring his wife, sons and daughters in law to see around Markinch Church. The whole family were so looking forward to this time together. Sadly, and very suddenly, Jim died a few weeks ago. Loretta, (Jim's wife) and family decided that they would still come to Markinch in Jim's memory.



The family very much enjoyed their visit and were deeply grateful for the opportunity to connect with part of their family history.

The previous day, Monday 22nd, had seen more visitors to Markinch Church, John and Elaine Paton from Ontario, Canada. Their daughter Krista had visited Markinch while on her travels two years earlier. John is Australian and has traced his family back to Markinch so he was excited to be visiting the town his ancestors left to go to Australia in 1855.



His great, great, great grandfather Robert Paton was born in Markinch. Using the 1799-1854 burial records which can be found on the church website it was established that Robert died in 1827 and was buried in Markinch churchyard. The records stated that he was buried in his wife's grave and although there is no headstone, the record for her burial indicated the approximate location of the grave in relation to the Balfour stone which is near the main doorway of the church.

John and Elaine had never been to the UK before and were able to discover some additional family history at New Register House while staying in Edinburgh.

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If you shop online you can help our church raise extra funds by using the link on the church website to take you to the Amazon website. Commission will be paid to the church on every purchase you make. www.markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk

Markinch Youth Club

Markinch Youth Club is open to youngsters from the age of nine years old, in the church hall on Thursday nights from 6.30pm to 8pm. The cost is £2 per child (plus some money for the tuck shop). New members are very welcome.

Two of the youth leaders and some of the kids attended the Youth1st AGM and presentation evening at the Gilvenbank Hotel recently. They were surprised but delighted when they were presented with the "Special Achievement Award 2016" by Cllr. Kay Morrison for "...giving the young people in the village a chance to meet in a safe environment and have fun. ...and get involved in a variety of projects and activities..." As well as the certificate they were presented with £50 worth of High Street Vouchers. For more information call Tracy Thomson on 07786 675507.



I Should Have Known Better.....

Some of you may remember that a couple of years ago, I tried to achieve “perfection” by appearing on the quiz show of that name. As anyone who knows me will testify, I was doomed to failure on that count. I still can't believe that I could have thought that Sir Isaac Newton invented cat food.....

For some reason, last year I managed to forget the embarrassment I had brought upon myself, so when I saw an advertisement looking for contestants for Channel 4's “Fifteen To One”, I decided to apply.

A follow-up telephone call from the production company led to an audition in Edinburgh, complete with a screen test to help the producers decide whether I was suitable camera fodder, by answering insightful questions such as, “ How would you describe yourself in three words?”, “How would your friends describe you in three words?” and the request, “Tell us something surprising about yourself.....”

This experience ended with the instruction to go away and wait – if I heard from them again, I had passed the audition; if I didn't hear from them, I hadn't passed.

As it turned out, a few weeks later, I received an e-mail telling me that I had been selected, and that I would be required on Saturday 17th October, at the BBC studios in Glasgow. To help me be there on time, they had reserved a room for me for the Friday night. “No rush in the morning, then,” I thought. “A nice leisurely breakfast, then off to the studios.....”. Then I read on..... “Your call time is 06.30 a.m.. Please be ready at hotel reception at that time.....” So much for my gentle start to the day!

Anyway, I made it to Glasgow, and I even made it to hotel reception for 06.30a.m.! However, as anyone who saw any of the three programmes I was on knows, I didn't make much progress in the actual quiz. All three episodes were recorded on the Saturday, and they took rather longer than the final version shown on television. We left the studios at 09.30 p.m. – a mere 15 hours since we'd left the hotel.

I now know more than I did then. For one thing, the show's host, Sandi Toksvig, is extremely pleasant and easy to talk to. I've also now remembered that it's easy to shout answers at the television when you're not under pressure. Yes, I know that Ryan Giggs is Welsh, so couldn't be the English footballer who was red-carded, and yes, I know that it was David Beckham – but I couldn't remember Beckham's name!!

Oh yes, and the word from the Latin for “white” that is used for a blank book you put photos in, or for a collection of musical tracks.....I know I shouldn't have asked for the question to be repeated!! I know it's “album” – my mind just froze.

Those are just two of my lapses, and excuses. The fact is, as so many people say, a question is only easy if you know the answer – or, in my case, if you remember the answer!

So now I know I can't achieve perfection, and I can't make it from 15 to 1. When all is said and done, my efforts at quiz success have been pointless. “Pointless”? Now there's an idea.....! (Or maybe not!)

Bryan Gould

Colours through the Christian Year

I have been asked by a few people about the significance of prayer stoles and so I thought it might be helpful to offer an explanation. When I was inducted into my previous charge of Craigie and Moncreiffe, they very kindly gifted me four prayer stoles one for each season of the Christian year each stole embroidered with symbols so carefully chosen.

As the Church moves through the year, it provides many symbols to remind us of the significance of seasons and days. Colour can be highly expressive and reflective of mood and meaning and so, coloured vestments such as pulpit falls, Bible makers, prayer stoles and such like can contribute to this significance.

However, as Percy Dearmer pointed out a good many years ago in his classic book, *The Parson's Handbook*, there is a great deal of misunderstanding, and sometimes even a misinformed dogmatism, about particular colours and colour sequences but colour can help to establish a setting for worship that supports a common sense of meaning.

Colours appropriate to the seasons are:

Purple	Advent
White	Christmas season (beginning Christmas Eve)
White	The Epiphany of our Lord
Green	Sundays after Epiphany (but the last Sunday, Transfiguration Sunday is white)
Purple	Lent (but no colour on Good Friday, or Saturday)
White	Easter Season (Easter Day to Sunday after Ascension)
Red	Pentecost
Green	Sundays after Pentecost (but the first Sunday which is Trinity Sunday, and Sunday the Reign of Christ the King which are both white)

Other occasions may be marked by appropriate colours:

White	Marriage
Purple or white	Funeral
Red	Ordination and induction of a minister, ordination and admission of an Elder.

In many churches, a white pulpit fall and Bible markers are used at the Sacraments of Baptism and Communion. Different colours may also be used to recognise the movements and moods of the Christian year such as: purple for preparation and penance; white or gold for celebration and rejoicing, green for re-commitment and growth in Christ; red for the fire and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Church of Scotland is a reformed church and she keeps reforming. So, to help renew and enrich the setting of worship and thus to freshen and enhance the worship itself this can only be a good thing.

Rev Carolann Erskine

'On the Road'

Listening, Sharing, Planning to listen to the voice of people in the local Church – to hear your views on what we need to do to enable a flourishing Church into the 2020s and beyond. 'On the Road' is a process designed to enable the *national* Councils, who exist only to support the *local* Church in its mission and ministry, to plan well for the future. Like every household throughout the land, we need to prioritise what we *do* and what we *spend* – and we need your ideas and wisdom to do that well.

'On the Road' is an open invitation to everyone connected with the Church. Whether you are a regular worshipper, or an occasional attender; whether you take a leadership role in your local Church or simply drop in from time to time – 'On the Road' wants to hear from you. We want to hear from folks from every background and every congregation: don't leave it to someone else – come and have your say!

This can be done very simply online using the Eventbrite system and **booking is open now** at <http://churchofscotland.eventbrite.com>
Group booking is available, so please bring others along with you!

Here are the meetings closest to our parish:-

Dundee, Steeple, Wednesday 21st Sept, 11am-3pm

Perth, Letham St Mark's, Wednesday 9th Nov, 6.30pm-9.30pm

Edinburgh, St Andrew's & St Georges, Thursday 24th Nov, 11am-3pm

Printed or Digital ?

A significant number of our members and friends now receive *News From The Pews* in an electronic format (PDF) by email, rather than a printed copy.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list and receive the electronic copy instead of having your elder deliver a printed copy please contact Ken Wilkie confirming the email address(es) you wish the newsletter to be sent to. Call 01592 760042 or email ken@kenwilkie.com

Church Flowers

To arrange for flowers to be put into Markinch Church contact Teresa Henderson on 01592 754892.

To arrange for flowers to be put into Thornton Church contact Margaret Colville on 01592 774295.

We would also ask if members of the congregation could inform us of the elderly, sick, bereaved or anyone who they think might like a visit. so that we can brighten up their Sundays with a lovely bouquet of flowers.



CENTENARY COMMEMORATIONS OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME, JULY 1, 2016

For many months it seemed to be Mission Impossible. Trying to obtain admission tickets for any of the Commemoration Ceremonies for the First Day of the Battle of the Somme, being held on July 1, 2016, was a test of patience, as every Ceremony was admission by ticket only. The whole area of France associated with July 1, 1916, was turned into a secured-zone by the French Government, with no ordinary traffic allowed to move inside the zone on July 1, until after 20.00.

There were application forms to be completed, deadlines to be met, and waiting-lists to be joined. Then, there were security details to be submitted, including Passport details, along with make and number of car, regardless of which Ceremony one wished to attend. The French authorities made it clear that it would only be possible to attend one from, Lochnagar Crater, Contalmaison, Thiepval, Ulster Tower, Newfoundland Park, or Fricourt. Some British Royalty did manage to attend Thiepval, Ulster Tower, and Newfoundland, one of the benefits in being Royalty, I suppose.

We settled for a visit to Contalmaison, for McCrae's Battalion of the Royal Scots, where the Ceremony is at 9.15am. However, we were staying some two hours drive away, in Belgium. Whilst tour coaches would be allowed access, ordinary motorists would have to leave their cars at Albert Airport, and Park-and-Ride, with shuttle buses provided to take them to their destination, or join a tour coach at some point, early that morning. For Contalmaison, the Shuttle buses would leave at 07.00 am, and motorists had to be at the Car Park between 06.00 and 06.30 to go through the Security Checks before boarding the shuttle bus. On the last Monday in June, I was sent a map showing the no-go area, and the prescribed route to the Park-and-Ride at Albert. So, we got up at 03.00am, to leave at 04.00am, to cross into France at Lille, and reach Bapaume at 05.30am, where the Gendarmes had blocked the prescribed route to the Park-and-Ride at Albert, and the main road to Albert was also blocked, as it was in the secured zone. Motorists were left to find their own route to the Airport, which meant ignoring SatNav and TomTom, as they preferred the roads which were closed, and we made it by 06.00am.

Then, after passing through Security, we had to wait for the Shuttle buses, as the Lochnagar buses were running late. At 07.10 we left on our bus for what should have been a ten-minute journey, but the bus driver got lost, and with all the side roads and main road closed, we attempted several U-turns, and did a great many multi-point turns, and arrived in Contalmaison at 07.55. Noticeably, nobody knew, or told us, when the buses would do the return journey, so we mingled with the others, and now had breakfast at Contalmaison. The tour coaches arrived, and by 08.30 everybody was in place, ready, and there was still another 45 minutes to wait.

STV, with David Cowan, were reporting from Contalmaison; Cameron Buttie was there for BBC Scotland's Reporting Scotland, and Forces TV was also there to record the event. The Ceremony was very good, and very moving, as shown in the news reports that Friday evening, and in subsequent programmes. By now, we were wearing our McCrae's Battalion, Raith Rovers F.C. tops, as we were through the security checks. We met Dave Hancock, from Coaltown, who had cycled from Stark's Park to Contalmaison, fund-raising for McCrae's Battalion, along with his wife and daughter, who had accompanied him; Keith Brown, Scottish Government Minister, the Provost of Fife, Jim Leishman, and an ex-teaching friend Sam Hendrie, from Glenrothes, were among the others whom we met in the Village.

Then, at 11.45, word spread that the buses were returning from Contalmaison to

Albert at 12.00. This was a take-it or leave-it option. Leave-it would mean a six-mile walk, along closed roads, roads so closed that locals could not even walk from one end of the village to the other because the roads were closed. So, we took it, this time a ten-minute journey back to the Park-and-Ride, and we reached our car. We gave some Hearts fans a rousing rendition of Geordie Munro in the car park before we then tried to return to Albert, to spend some time in the town, as we had been hoping to go to the McCrae's Commemoration Dinner in Pozieres at 17.30, but, of course, the roads were all closed, and would not open until 20.00, which was when the Dinner was due to finish, which was of no use to anyone. We discovered that there were many others in the same position as ourselves, and indeed there were six unfortunate people who were never told the return-bus departure time, and it needed the local mayoress to help them out by driving them in her own car back to the Park-and-Ride, in mid-afternoon, after a difference of opinion with the gendarmerie, as I am led to believe.

So, as the only roads which were passable led away from the secured-zone, we left at about 13.00 to return to Belgium, luckily avoiding all of the traffic delays and security checks which were affecting Belgian, and Welsh, fans heading to Lille for the Euro 2016 match that evening. When vehicles were stopped en route to Lille, all alcoholic drinks had to be consumed, or poured down the drain, at the control-points. We spent the Friday evening at a Belgian Football Party, watching the match, and not wanting to be vocal in supporting Wales. We had first met the Welsh version of the Tartan Army at Dover on the Thursday. So many Welsh supporters wanted to get to Lille for the Euros Match on the Friday evening, that the ferries and Eurotunnel were full for two days, so it was impossible to get an earlier ferry. The lack of a match-ticket did not worry the Welsh, most just wanted to be there, in the fanzone, and those who sailed on the same ferry as us would be beyond the security-checks for alcohol before they were being enforced, which was a good thing for them.

On the Saturday evening, we went to the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, in Ypres, and among those there, we saw the group who had been cycling from Fife to the Somme, to commemorate Robert Dunsire V.C.. Also there that evening was Jim Leishman, again laying a wreath on behalf of Fife Council.

For anyone now going to visit the Ypres area, and planning to attend the Last Post Ceremony at 20.00 any evening at the Menin Gate, a piece of advice. If you want to see the Ceremony, make sure that you are at the Menin Gate by 19.15 at the latest, as the crowds attending this year are more numerous than ever. Next year will be even more popular with tourists in the Ypres area, as it is the Centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele. Hopefully, the Belgians will have learned from the events of 2016 at the Somme, and access to events in Belgium will be much easier than it was in France.

We were coming back to Scotland on the Sunday, and having cleared all of the on-road security checks on Friday around Lille without stopping, now made up for it. At Calais, French Passport Control wanted to check the contents of the car-boot, as well as our passports, then British Passport Control decided to also check both our passports and the car-boot. Not to be outdone, P & O Check-in then got in on the act, and for the third time in 200 yards, the car-boot contents were checked. However, we, being good Scots, had nothing to hide, or declare, and at Dover, Customs Control waved us straight through, without checking the car contents.

Long may Dover Customs Control maintain that policy towards our trips to the Continent.

Harry Gould

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church Fundraising Diary Dates for 2016

17th September 2016	Tea at the Ritz (Markinch Church Hall)
7th October 2016	Rosyth Concert Band (Markinch Church Hall)
12th November 2016	Winter Fayre (Markinch Church Hall)
25th November	Quiz Night (Markinch Church Hall)

Many thanks from the Fundraising Team!

There have been a number of fun events this year including the sponsored walk which raised a total of £573.00 and also the garden party where around 40 members of our congregation enjoyed a fun afternoon in the sunshine. We will continue to run these inclusive events and hope that you continue to attend, participate and support them. Many thanks!

We would also like to thank all the people from both Markinch and Thornton who turned out in numbers to support our Strawberry Teas held in Thornton on June 25th. Every event seems to raise more money than the previous one! This time our total was £413.95. The winner of the jar of sweets was Helen Forrester with the correct guess of 127 sweets.

Communion Coin Boxes – There are individual collection boxes for you to take home or to work and fill between communion services. Collection boxes can be emptied any Sunday or Thursday morning by seeing Marianne Sankey, Karen Wood or Meg Sankey. Additional boxes will be made available for anyone who wishes to take one to work, or give to their extended family or non-members who would like to help. If you cannot collect a box but would like one, we can deliver and collect them by telephoning Marianne Sankey on 07801 279899.

Rag Bag – Donate any clothes, towels, bed linens, shoes, curtains, bags or textiles. If you need transport for your donation, please contact Marianne on 07801 279899 to arrange an uplift.

Jigsaw Lending Library – A cost of £1 per jigsaw. If you require any information about this activity please contact Meg Sankey on 07834 729420.

Craft Stall – Handcraft items for sale in Markinch hall. Please feel free to make a donation to church funds in the dish provided. We welcome donations of handcrafts, baking, plants, jams, chutney's etc. Please note that the craft stall is now in what was previously the book cupboard near the hall door.

'Cross in my Pocket' – These keepsakes are available in the vestibule at a cost of £1 each.

The Winter Fayre will be taking place in the Markinch Church Hall on Saturday 12th November between 10am and 12pm. The entry will be £2 per person which will include tea / coffee or juice and cakes. There will be a number of different stalls available to browse including craft, jewellery, cake and candy, cards, wrapping paper, woodcraft, tombola, chocolate tombola and Yankee Candles, we hope to see you all there.

We are looking for donations for the craft, tombola, chocolate tombola and cake and candy stalls. These can be given to any of the Sankey family, Karen Wood or Betty Gray any time prior to the Fayre. Sandra Ewan will be organising the refreshments. The hall will be open from 8.30am the morning of the Fayre for any cake and candy or donations to be delivered. If you are available to help at this event at all please contact any member of the team directly or call Marianne Sankey on 07801 279899.

Coin Box Appeal

We would like to update everyone on the success of our ongoing money box appeal. In the first two years that this initiative ran we raised a total of £1796.38. In the last year, we have raised a total of £251.00. That is a total of £2047.38 from this simple act of filling a coin box between communion services and handing it in at church when it is full. The boxes are available in the vestibules of both churches and also in the hall at Markinch.

If you would like a box but are unable to visit one of the churches to collect one or to have it emptied please give Marianne Sankey a ring on 0780 1279899 to arrange to have one delivered. Can we please count on your support with this simple ongoing activity?



Rag Bag Collection

The Rag Bag Collection continues to provide us with a continuous income, but we continue to look for textiles, curtains, bed linens, towels, clothes, bags, belts and shoes. Please ensure that donations are placed in a tied plastic bag.

Please ask your neighbours, family, colleagues and friends to have a clear out and help this appeal by contributing as well.



Markinch Church have been collecting for some time but collections are now being made at Thornton Church as well. A large box has been placed in the choir room for your contributions. Please speak to Betty Gray if you need more information.

If you cannot transport your collection or have a large donation that you need assistance to move, please do not hesitate to contact Marianne Sankey to arrange collection. Tel. 07801 279899

Glenrothes and District Food Bank

Thank you to those who have contributed food over the past months. If anyone would like to add some items to the container in the vestibule we would be most grateful. Tins and non-perishable goods, especially macaroni, dried pasta, UHT milk and fruit are needed, as are washing powder and toiletries for men and women.

Glenrothes and District Foodbank are holding a Fall Ball in Balgeddie House Hotel on Friday 28th October from 6.30 till midnight. Tickets cost £35 and include a 3 course dinner. Music is provided by the Silver Kings. Tickets available from Joan Grant (01592610396) or you can email info@glenrothes.foodbank.org.uk



Taking care of the detail

There is never a right time to lose someone we love, never a right time to have to make arrangements for their funeral, to say goodbye in a way most suitable to them and those left behind.

In the midst of grief the responsibility of making arrangements can seem overwhelming. Crosbie Matthew Funeral Directors can help you shoulder the burden. We are an independent family-run business with over 70 years experience of supporting bereaved families in Fife and beyond. Arrangements can be made at our purpose built premises in Nicol Street, Kirkcaldy which offers comfortable arrangement rooms and a dedicated service room with lift access. Alternatively we can visit you at a time suited to you in the comfort of your own home.

Professional

Crosbie Matthew's professional team of funeral directors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to personally answer your calls and guide you sensitively at your time of loss.

Support

Practical advice and support can be given on paperwork required for registration, and covers everything from press notices, floral tributes and catering to order of service sheets and attendance cards.

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We can help you with the type of service you require, your choice of officiant who may be a minister, civil celebrant,

family member or friend; your options for music, poems, hymns; personalised order of service sheets with photographs if you wish. We are here to discuss any other ideas you may have to make the funeral a more personal tribute.

We pride ourselves in listening to you and helping you to arrange a funeral best suited to your and your loved ones wishes.

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Golden Charter pre-paid plans are available. More people are finding that a pre-paid funeral plan eases the financial and emotional burden on their families. It means they are paying for a funeral at today's prices and leaving written details available for that time of need.

Payment Options

We request a deposit for the disbursements (payment made by us to third parties on your behalf). Payments can be made in full by card, cash or cheque. With flexible payment options available we offer you a first step to peace of mind

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