

News from the Pews

The Newsletter of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church
February 2017



Markinch and Thornton Parish Church



Ministry Team:

Rev. Carolann Erskine

Mr David Murdoch

Rev Dr Douglas Galbraith

Miss Dawn Laing

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 19th March 2017**

If you are unable to attend these services and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact your Elder so that arrangements can be made.

Your Elder is _____

Contact Details _____

The Vestry, Spring 2017

The church is no longer a triumphant institution conquering the world. Rather, I believe that she is being sent out in fresh expressions by God in a spirit of bold humility to listen and to care. At the heart of the matter we try to throw off contentment and strive for a more effective way of 'being church' in what seems a graceless age.

I believe there is a genuine demand for the Christian narrative, for people long to understand how it is that they belong in God's story. The question is, can we faithfully render the identity of Jesus Christ in us, or will we spectacularly miss the point? Will people be drawn to the church because of us or will they turn away because of us?



I think that we are a caring church that reaches out to the community and the wider church sharing skills to respond to elderly, family and youth expectations, but we must keep working together in harmony for unity if we are to thrive in abundance for God through enthusiastic worship and outreach. In the name of Christ, in times of joy and sorrow, when all is well with us and when nothing seems to go right, we carry our cross, we follow Jesus and proclaim the resurrection of eternal life.

In recognition for all the work done by all our volunteers, the Kirk Session greatly appreciates your work within and outwith the church for when a commitment is made, it is to Christ, to the Church and to the world. Grace is biblical and so is our service to God. I pray, this Easter and always that you have the Grace to 'see' that.

Blessings, Carolann

Contact Details

Minister	Rev Carolann Erskine Tel 01592 758264 Email CErskine@churchofscotland.org
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

From the Session Clerk

Bind Us Together

Since the congregations of Markinch & Thornton formed a union in 2014, it was felt we couldn't make any changes during a vacancy period. Since Carolann joined us in April 2016, we have made some changes to promote unity between congregations of the old Markinch and Thornton charges.

As you would expect, it's not always plain sailing, as some people don't like change. But, we must look forward and evolve, so compromises must be made in order to unify the people of Markinch and Thornton. It is quite common nowadays for churches to hold joint services in one of the church buildings, designed to bring worshippers together who would normally worship in one church. We are no different, and some services over the course of 2017 will be 'joint services'. Please watch out for notice of such services and come along and meet your friends from Markinch, or Thornton.

As a session, we have made decisions to form sub-groups which deal with various areas of church matters, from property, finance, projects etc to pastoral care and publicity. If you feel you can contribute something to help unite us as a family, please refer to the committee remits posted on the walls of the halls at Markinch and Thornton, then get in touch with me. You can then be part of 'binding us together' as part of a committee suited to your skills. For example, if you feel you can help visit the elderly in a care home, or even come up with ideas relating to church projects, then get in touch.

You may even work in a trade where help may be provided to the church for free. An example, would be a roofer offering to repair the church roof, which would help us toward meeting some of the work identified in the recent report by the central church needed to our buildings.

It's not always easy doing God's work, although you can be a small cog in helping the work that Markinch & Thornton are doing.

John Wood, Session Clerk

Gift Day - 19th March 2017

Our Gift Day is being held to coincide with our communion service in March. We have just recently received the results of the central church's official report on the condition of our buildings, and some parts do not make for good reading!

Therefore we appeal to all members to dig deep to help us repair the church buildings. We cannot do it without the help of members. We need in the region of £50,000 to complete work required, although due to this sizeable amount, will need to prioritise work accordingly as such funds are not held.

Remember to Gift Aid donations made, as the church will receive an extra 20%! Forms will be available on the day for those members not already part of the scheme.

John Wood, Session Clerk

Treasurer's Report

Income to year end	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
Weekly Freewill Offering	28099	28359
Open Plate	7432	6077
Standing Orders	30619	25726
Gift Day	3418	3722
Donations	3002	1078
Fundraising	4094	3461
Tax Rebate	14113	13204
Hall Rents	3268	2941
Weddings & Funerals	2845	3210
Bequests	133	133
Bank Interest	125	127
Advert-News from the Pews	225	75
General Trustees	29152	7175
Annie Jamieson	287	288
Selkirk Trust	1250	1185
Misc. Income	<u>1050</u>	<u>1443</u>
	129112	98204

Expenditure to year end		
Ministry Allocation	47239	47189
Minister's Travel	1076	189
Salaries	11250	12769
Insurance/Council Tax	8185	6495
Gas & Electricity	5714	7004
Postages & Stationery	2215	2318
Telephone	355	0
Piano/Organ Repairs	372	1352
Church Repairs	978	2585
Hall Repairs	661	912
Manse Repairs/removal expenses	33062	113
Advertising	0	443
Copyright Licence	468	463
Locum Minister	3874	11706
Pulpit Supply	1089	794
Presbytery Dues	1389	1264
Life & Work	505	469
Cleaning/Kitchen Supplies	168	165
Communion Expenses	32	42
Auditor	660	1290
W.F.O. Envelopes	336	467
Sunday School	0	133
Grow	6250	0
Miscellaneous	<u>2854</u>	<u>1073</u>
	128732	99235

Excess Income/Expenditure	380	-1031
General Fund Balance at 31/12/2016	5538	
Fabric Fund Balance at 31/12/2016	10057	

I would urge anyone who pays tax and has not completed a Gift Aid Declaration to do so as it is a good source of income for us. We have been able to claim £14113 from HMRC this year. I have the necessary form if you are interested.

Nancy Munro, Treasurer

About The Church of Scotland

The vision of The Church of Scotland is to be a church which seeks to inspire the people of Scotland and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities.

The Church of Scotland is one of the largest organisations in the country. We have over 350,000 members, with more regularly involved in local congregations and our work. Within the organisation, we have around 800 ministers serving in parishes and chaplaincies, supported by more than 1500 professional and administrative staff. Most of our parishes are in Scotland, but there are also churches in England, Europe and overseas.

The Church of Scotland works with communities worldwide. At the heart of our work to achieve these aims is one of the largest organisations in Scotland that has a pivotal role in Scottish society and indeed religion throughout the world.

Central to the Church of Scotland is our love and worship of God through following the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ. We express our love for God by our love and practical care for each other and for those we live with and encounter in our daily lives.

Getting To Know You

As wonderful as it is to experience God in our lives so that we transform and live more meaningful lives, we would like to invite you to tell your story of how you became a Christian. Please send your article to Ken Wilkie by email to ken@kenwilkie.com or call 01592 760042.

Elder Retirals

Two long serving Elders have recently advised that they wish to retire. Jean Briggs, who has served as an Elder for over 27 years wants to retire after serving the church faithfully for that time. Also, Charlie Forrester who has served as an Elder for more than 54 years has also requested that he moves into retirement. Both Jean and Charlie have been extremely dedicated to their duties as an Elder and have gone that extra mile regularly taking care of duties not normally undertaken.

On behalf of the session, I would like to formally thank Jean and Charlie for their dedication to the role of Ruling Elder and hope they will 'take a back seat' and enjoy worshipping with us without thinking about their duties.

John Wood, Session Clerk

Church Hall Bookings

Anyone enquiring about booking the Markinch church hall should contact Karen Wood on 01592 750327 or email [**hall@markinchchurch.org.uk**](mailto: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

Parish News

Joined The Church

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42

By Certificate

Fiona Ford
Nigel Ford

By Resolution

Heather O'Brien
Robert Downie
Anne Irvine
Margaret Bloomfield
Sheena Maney

Removed

By Death

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Susan Adair
William (Bill) Ford
William (Wullie) Crawford
Catherine Kirk
Nancy Williamson
Robert Sharp
Margaret Duncan
Grace Wyse
Constance Hodge
Angus McKain
Anne Nicholson
Beatrice Shepherd

By Certificate

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Cor 5:7

Alexander Grant

Baptised

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Harry John Normand	15th January 2017
Jacob Nigel Ford Daly	22nd January 2017

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church
warmly welcomes David Murdoch as part time Parish Associate



David is an approved and gifted preacher whose pastoral gifts are evident. He will work part-time alongside our ministry team sharing in services of public worship, funerals and pastoral care.

He has preached in every congregation in the Presbytery of St. Andrew's, has been Interim Moderator on three occasions in Leven, Cupar and most recently in Falkland and Freuchie for 39 months where he was also full time Locum.

David lives in the village of Lower Largo, in The East Neuk of Fife. He has been a member of the Presbytery of St Andrews for more than 20 years and was elected as its first ever Elder Moderator in 1998/99. He is a Past President of The Rotary Club of Bothwell & Uddingston and is now a member of St Andrews Rotary Club. In his younger days, he was a Grade 1 Scottish Football referee. His interests and hobbies include, hymnology, classical music, food & wine, and travelling on holidays in search of the sun!

David is delighted to work for God's purposes in this parish and will join us on the 5th February 2017.

If you require to contact David, his details are as follows:

'Stroudwater'
5 Drummochy Road
Lower Largo,
KY8 6BZ

Tel: 01333 329600

Email: largobay@googlemail.com

Sunday School

Sunday School

Everyone enjoyed their visit to "Funbox" in December for our Christmas outing. Jack was on stage, Grace had her birthday announced and Markinch Sunday School had its name read out as being in the audience!

Since we came back in January we've learned how Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist differed from those of babies being baptised in the Church nowadays. Harry and Jacob's baptisms gave us a first hand experience of this .

See the wall for the worksheets and art work covering this.

Surafel

We haven't heard from Surafel since November so don't know if his health is improving or if he is back at school. Money was sent for the aid worker to buy a Christmas gift so we hear shortly how it was spent.

The calendar for 2017 is on the wall in Markinch hall. Thanks to all who have contributed and shown an interest in him.

The following poem was written by Amy Winton who died in 1998. Amy was born and brought up in Thornton and faced many uphill struggles in her life. She suffered from breast cancer which resulted in lymphedema in her arm, and she was widowed with three children, but she never complained.

She was a member of the Church Women's Guild and was also the church treasurer for many years. She was the first woman elder at Thornton and took all her commitments very seriously

The hand of Christian fellowship tries to bring relief,
To folk who may be burdened with trouble, pain, or grief.
It also should show pleasure when other folks are glad,
It's equally important when they're happy or when sad
To offer help where needed should be part of our creed,
The rewards we'll see in heaven, if we only heed.

Welcome every stranger, who may come here to stay,
They may be feeling lonely, don't just turn away.

And when at last the great day comes, before God's throne we'll stand
He'll say come in my children, you're home, now here's my hand

Amy Winton (1930-1998)

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@kenwilkie.com

Spring Teas

Thornton Church Hall

Saturday 25th March

10.00am to 12noon

Stalls will include, cake & candy, books, bric-a-brac, etc.
Donations to stalls would be greatly appreciated
and helpers are also required on the day.
Tickets £2 or pay at the door

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
20th March 2017	Kirk Session Meeting (Thornton Church Hall, 7.15pm)
25th March 2017	Spring Teas (Thornton Hall, 10.00am-12noon)
16th April 2017	Easter Sunday Brunch & Easter Egg Hunt (Markinch Hall)
22nd April 2017	Afternoon Tea Outing (Loch Leven's Larder)
24th April 2017	Project Team Meeting (Markinch Session House, 7.00pm)

Easter Services

Service of Healing 12th April at Thornton 6pm

Maundy Thursday 13th April at Markinch 7pm

Good Friday 14th April (reflection time 2-4pm) at Thornton

Easter Sunday 16th April Normal service times but the
services will include a less formal communion.

After the Markinch service bacon rolls will be served in the hall.

A Perfect Church

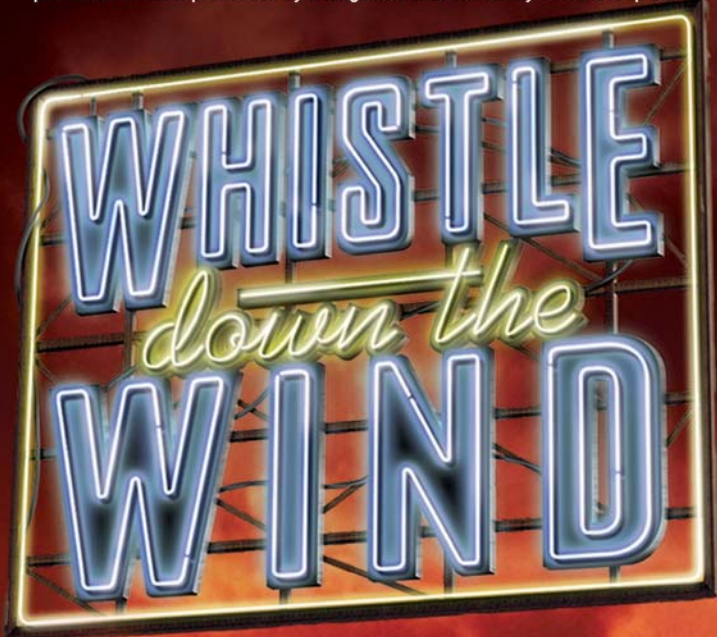
If you should find the perfect church without one fault or smear,
for goodness sake don't join that church you'd spoil the atmosphere.

But since no perfect church exists where people never sin,
let's stop looking for that church and love the one we're in!

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 .

MAOS - The Markinch Musical Society
present an amateur production by arrangement with The Really Useful Group Ltd



Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber
Lyrics by Jim Steinman

With book by Patricia Knop, Gale Edwards and Andrew Lloyd Webber.
Orchestrations by David Cullen & Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Markinch Town Hall
21st to 25th March 2017
Doors open 6.45pm, curtain 7.15pm



Tickets:-

£11.00

Concessions:-

Senior Citizens £9.00 on Tuesday and Wednesday
Children £9.00 Tuesday to Friday

Phone booking on 01592 754537 from Monday 23rd January

Tickets also at Markinch Town Hall from 13th-18th March on 01592 611167

Tickets will be available online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/maos
from Monday 23rd January (booking fee applies)

Contact Valerie Thomson, Secretary,

'Belmar', 16 Betson Street, Markinch, KY7 6AA

Call 01592 754537 or email secretary@maos.org.uk

MAOS - The Markinch Musical Society is the operating name of Markinch Amateur Operatic Society,
Registered Scottish Charity SC025712

Lynn Cunningham

Chartered Accountant

Markinch & Cupar



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info@stevenjohnstondecorator.co.uk

Coin Box Appeal

We would like to update everyone on the success of our ongoing money box appeal. This simple act of filling a coin box between communion services and handing it in at church when it is full helps us greatly with our ongoing fabric fund which pays for the upkeep and improvement of our buildings.



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 07801 279899 to arrange to have one delivered. Please can we count on your ongoing support with this simple ongoing activity?

Jigsaw Lending Library

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church has an extensive library of jigsaws which are available to borrow at a cost of £1 per jigsaw.

These are available in the hall at Markinch every Thursday and Sunday at coffee time.

If you would like to make use of this service but cannot get to the hall please contact Meg Sankey to arrange delivery of your choice of jigsaws.

Contact Meg Sankey on 07834 729420 for more information



Markinch and Thornton Parish Church



- ✓ Join us for afternoon tea at Loch Leven's Larder on the 22nd April 2017 at 2pm
- ✓ This lovely venue offers a lovely selection of drinks, snacks and cakes in an informal setting with stunning views out over the loch
- ✓ For the more energetic amongst us, there is easy access walking from the Larder to the loch's edge
- ✓ Transport can be arranged for anyone wishing to join in this outing by calling Marianne (07801279899)
- ✓ Everyone is welcome

trypraying.

there is hope

Sincere thanks to the person who so kindly donated the banners and the trypraying booklets for adults, youths and children. It was such a simple idea to gift these booklets to other people. Primarily, these are for 'those who don't do church'. It's an invitation to begin talking to God.

If you have a story then we would love to hear from you. Tell us...

- If you found the trypraying booklet helpful.
- What you are noticing God doing in your life as you pray.
- About an answer to prayer.
- Whether you are getting to know God in a personal way.
- What happened when you gave the trypraying booklet to someone; etc.

It would be great to hear from you.

Youth Club

The Co-Op gives 1% of everything that their members spend on selected products back to local causes and our youth club has been nominated by The Co-Op to receive a share of that money to buy new equipment and resources.

If you are a Co-Op member you can help us by nominating our youth club as your preferred local cause.

You can choose to give your 1% to our group by logging onto your membership account online at www.co-op.co.uk/membership or by calling the membership contact centre on **0800 0234708**



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
The deadline for the May-July issue is 24th April

Celebrating The 500th Anniversary Of The Reformation

The Church of Scotland, established in 1560 was very much a Reformed kirk modelled on the principals that Calvin had put into practice in Geneva, as was the case with the Protestant Churches of France and the Netherlands.

This year marks the 500th anniversary of the event generally taken to mark the start of the Protestant Reformation. In nailing up his 95 theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, a university town in East Germany, Martin Luther attacked some of the practices and doctrines of the late medieval Catholic Church, especially the sale of indulgences.

What does the Reformation mean to you?



Some News from Kirkcaldy Presbytery

At the December meeting, Rev Rosie Frew the current Presbytery Clerk and Minister at Abbotshall Church intimated that she had been asked to preach as Sole Nominee for the charge of Bowden and Melrose in the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles. Since then, she has preached at that charge and was accepted by the members there.

Many of you will remember Rosie from her time at Markinch Church during her training for the Ministry. We wish her well in her new charge.

In light of that announcement, Presbytery appointed Rev Alan Kimmitt, Minister of Glenrothes: St Columba's, as her successor. Alan will take over following the March 2017 meeting of Presbytery.

Pulpit Interchange Sunday is on 12th February 2017. Mr John Hutchison will preach at Markinch and Thornton Churches.

Moderator Urges Keep the Faith after US Election.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland urged Christians to 'breathe deeply' and 'keep the faith' in the wake of Donald Trump's election as President of the USA.

The Rt Rev Dr Russell Barr, who made a visit to the US and Canada shortly before November's election, said he hadn't been surprised by the result.

As with UK's Brexit vote, earlier in the year, it was clear that momentum was with the Trump campaign as the election day approached.

And as with the Brexit vote, Trump was able to appeal to an anti-elite and anti-politics sentiment which has clearly resonated on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the coming days, it will be important for all of us to breathe deeply as the dust settles and we come to terms with Mr Trump's election.

It will be important to listen carefully for whether on the USA or the UK, there is an evident disconnect between people and politicians, and a loss of trust in what has been the accepted political process.

And as we live through these changed and changing times, it will also be important for people of faith to keep faith in the God who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, and that to trust beyond the principalities and powers of the present times, we are embraced in the radical grace, hospitality and love revealed to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Life and Work, Jan 2017)

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

Do you shop online at www.amazon.co.uk

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**

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.



churches together

IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

This year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity saw many churches in Glenrothes gather together for an evening of ecumenical worship on Sunday 22nd January at St. Paul's Church. This busy service, themed The Love of Christ Compels Us, was led by Father Gerry Hand, Rev Carolann Erskine and Rev Eileen Miller. We were accompanied by the music group, by Val Harley playing Meditation on flute accompanied by Eric Christie and by Alison Normand singing solo, There is a Hope, accompanied by Alan Normand.

Bob Fyffe, General Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland said, "This is a difficult time of great change and uncertainty around the world as we confront difficulties such as climate change, migration of people across the planet and conflict spreading in many places. We need to pray for a greater vision of a united church. With so many global and local issues confronting all of us every day, the churches witness needs to be strong and clear in its call for unity. We need to be resolute in standing together to witness a Christ centred Church, in standing with those on the margins who have no voice and no power. Prayers for unity need to become daily prayers, so that we deepen Christ's life in each one of us."

Day 1 Reflection – Friendship. What does that mean for you?

Day 2 Reflection – Re-source. “

Day 3 Reflection – Re-human. “

Day 4 Reflection – Remember. “

Day 5 Reflection – Re-new. “

Day 6 Reflection – Covenant. “

Day 7 Reflection – Reformed. “

Day 8 Reflection – Be-holding. “

Prayer

God of reconciliation, through Christ you call us to a unity that is not an option.
Yet we fall back tenaciously on our old ways:

Conflict, division and
Fractured relationships.

Confront and convict us of this failure;

Break through the walls of our excuses,

And set us free to participate in your ministry of reconciliation.

Triune God, we thank you for this week of Prayer

That has brought us together as Christians

And that has enabled us to experience

Your presence in different ways.

Grant us ways to praise your holy name together

So that we can continue to seek reconciliation and grow towards unity.

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Fife Women's Aid



Fife Women's Aid is a charity and a company, which supports women, young people and children who are experiencing domestic abuse.

They provide:-

- Confidential support for women and children listening to them and supporting the choices they make
- Information about rights, legal issues, housing and benefits, and liaising with other agencies on your behalf
- Safe temporary refuge accommodation
- A 24-hour emergency helpline
- Confidential counselling services
- Outreach work with women who come to FWA for support, who may remain in their own home, or have not been admitted to refuge
- Follow on work enables women, children and young people to receive support once they have been re-housed into their new community
- Training, development and awareness raising on the effects of domestic abuse on women, children and young people, including talks to community groups.
- Refuge accommodation
- Individual support, and group support.

Please help us to support this local charity.

We are looking for:-

- Underwear and warm outer wear
- Sock, hats, gloves and pyjamas
- Hot water bottles and toothbrushes,
- Hair brushes, toiletries and small toys

Deliver them to either church building and place in the box in the vestibule, they will be collated and delivered every quarter by the project team.

This amazing charity relies on assistance and donations from organisations such as our Church to provide the basic essentials for women and children in crisis.

Many Thanks from The Project Team

The following is taken from a letter received by Margaret Colville after our church's Christmas Gift Appeal for Fife Women's Aid

Dear Margaret

I am writing to thank you for the many Christmas gifts you delivered to us. We understand the items were donated by parishioners of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church and we would be grateful if you pass on our appreciation to those involved.

The items donated will be distributed amongst the families we are working with over the festive period to help ensure every family has an enjoyable Christmas.

The donations are very thoughtful and are a great help to, and are much appreciated by, all staff and service users.

Thank you for your support towards our work with women, children and young people who have experienced abuse.

Yours sincerely

Joy Patrick, Manager, Fife Women's Aid

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. 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



Just a word to encourage you about the trypraying booklet

My oldest grandson is now 39 years of age. When he was 12 years of age he played football for his school team in Glenrothes and one Sunday afternoon he was playing in Thornton Memorial Park. As I have no knowledge of what footballers do except score goals I wasn't in a hurry to go to the park, so the rest of my family went for the kick off. By the time I got there the game was in full swing and all eyes were on the game.

I was walking up towards the stand when I spotted my grandson running up the playing field. I stopped and I didn't pray but I felt so much love for him and my thoughts were 'please Lord don't let him get hurt', and I heard an audible voice say 'what about the other boys'. I looked around and there was no-one about.

I shall never forget that experience of hearing God's voice and it taught me to think about other people, not just your own, as God knows our thoughts.

Jean Kane, our Prayer Promoter

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church Fundraising and Social Diary Dates for 2017

25th March 2017	Spring Teas (Thornton Hall)
16th April 2017	Easter Sunday Brunch & Easter Egg Hunt (Markinch Hall)
22nd April 2017	Afternoon Tea Outing (Loch Leven's Larder)
24th April 2017	Project Team Meeting (Markinch Session House, 7pm)
24th June 2017	Strawberry Teas (Thornton Hall)
9th July 2017	Fellowship Meal (Drummonds, Markinch)
1st October 2017	Fellowship Meal (Beijing Banquet, Glenrothes)
18th November 2017	Winter Fayre (Markinch Hall)

There are a number of other events in the planning, so please keep yourself updated on our Facebook page, Website or the weekly bulletin.

Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help with the fundraising effort, if you can spare some time to help at any of the events above or have any other ideas for fundraising activities please get in touch.

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 Project Team

The remit of the project team, (formerly the fundraising and hospitality committees) is to plan, organise and oversee all social and fundraising activities within the church community and also any special projects that arise. Our committee includes both members of the Kirk Session as well as other members of the congregation. The Working Group is convened with Elders and members who have been approved by the Kirk Session, so any other members interested in joining the group should initially contact the Convenor or Session Clerk.

As convenor, I would like very much too express my thanks to everyone who has dedicated their time and talents to our mission in 2016, and look forward to working with you going forward.

Some of our current projects include developing the fellowship of our combined congregation, through outings and meals which are already listed in the diary. We are also working to get some speakers to visit our community to talk about some of the very interesting projects that they are involved in. If you would like to suggest someone to be asked along to speak, please let me know.

Our next meeting will be in the Session House in Markinch on Tuesday 24th April at 7pm. Many thanks.

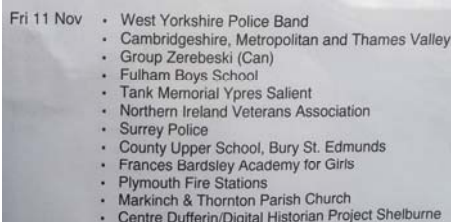
Marianne Sankey

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church Wreath at the Menin Gate, Ypres, November 11, 2016

Arrival at Dover Eastern Docks on a Thursday morning at 7.30, with no other vehicles arriving at the same time, can only mean one thing. After progressing through British and French Passport Control, British Customs Officers will want to check the contents of the vehicle, and the car boot; and they duly did, before we could make our way to the P&O check-in point, and then proceed to the ferry.

After that, it was plain sailing. We reached Belgium in the afternoon, and visited Ypres in the evening, as the Last Post Ceremony is always worth visiting. Already, Ypres was busy with people arriving for the Armistice Day Events. There are also numerous events organised for the 10th of November, at Passchendaele for example, and over the two days, it is impossible to attend every Armistice event, especially as the numbers involved, and the weather, can affect timings

We found that Markinch and Thornton Parish Church was, indeed, on the list of Wreath-layers for the evening of November 11th, and decided on our plans for the 10th, which involved visiting friends, avoiding the numerous St. Martin's Day Parades, and relaxing, before returning to the Menin Gate for the Last Post Ceremony. On the 10th, there were Military Bands, both brass and pipe; a soprano soloist, who sang the hymn 'Abide With Me', a cappella; and a solo violinist, among the musical tributes at the Ceremony.

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- Fri 11 Nov
- West Yorkshire Police Band
 - Cambridgeshire, Metropolitan and Thames Valley
 - Group Zerebeski (Can)
 - Fulham Boys School
 - Tank Memorial Ypres Salient
 - Northern Ireland Veterans Association
 - Surrey Police
 - County Upper School, Bury St. Edmunds
 - Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls
 - Plymouth Fire Stations
 - Markinch & Thornton Parish Church
 - Centre Dufferin/Digital Historian Project Shelburne

On the 11th the crowds were vast, but, amazingly, we got the car parked in the centre of Ypres in the morning, thirty yards from the Main Square. We took the wreath, in its box, to our local, friendly, chocolate-maker Hans, as he and his wife Stephanie had agreed to let us leave it there, in their shop, for the day, to be collected again in the evening. Their shop, I should add, is at the end of the square, en route to the Menin Gate, so this was an ideal arrangement for us. We then went to see the Poppy Parade forming up, outside the Ypres Cathedral and along as far as St. George's Church, with the military, police, and civilian, bands, and dignitaries of many nations there also, and were thankful for choosing the evening service for the Church wreath-laying. The Bands were first-class, and the Parade excellent, and we accompanied the Parade to the Belgian Memorial, for the service there. We then continued to the main square, and watched the Armistice Service, along with thousands of others, at the Menin Gate. Later, on speaking to some who were in the Poppy Parade, they commented that the Parade was so large that they could not see the events at the Menin Gate because of the crowds. We did not have any difficulty, lucky us.

After the Service, we had a cup of tea in the Main Square, and decided to go to the Black Watch Armistice Service at Nonneboschen, on the outskirts of Ypres. Later, this proved to be a bad move, as on return to Ypres, we had to park the car some half a mile from the city centre. There is an excellent

restaurant some fifty yards from the Black Watch Monument at Nonneboschen, so we lunched there. The Menu was only in Flemish, so we were totally perplexed, but the sight of us Scots in kilts soon had the locals all speaking to us to explain what was on the Menu; we chose the stoofvlees, superb.



The Armistice Service at the Monument had a Pipe Band, a choir, a saxophonist, a compere, various local dignitaries, Tam McCluskey (along with his wife) from the Black Watch Association, a crowd (mostly Belgian), and us. The Ceremony lasted some thirty minutes, but was memorable in many ways. For example, the choir sang Highland Cathedral, a cappella, excellently, while the saxophonist played a solo Highland Cathedral, and the Pipe Band also played Highland Cathedral; when, at the end of the Service, they combined for a fourth rendition of Highland Cathedral, everyone was singing, and there was scarcely a dry eye in the crowd. Also, the Black Watch, and the Belgians, were paying special tribute to three men from Dundee who were killed on November 11,

1914. One was John Connelly, aged 28, from Todburn Lane, in the old Overgate area; I have subsequently found out that he was the fifth young man from Todburn Lane to be killed in the first three months of the War. The other two were George and Benjamin Ogilvie, brothers aged 27 and 25 respectively, from Alexander Street, in the Hilltown area, the same Dundee street where our father spent his early years, before our family moved to Fife. After the Service, we headed back to Ypres, to go to the Armistice Concert in Ypres Cathedral, where, this year, the Concert was paying tribute to the role played by Women in the Great War. The Concert was superb, and finished at 18.00, to leave us time to have a bite to eat, before we headed off to the Menin Gate at 19.14 for the Last Post Ceremony.

We re-collected the Wreath, in its box still, from the chocolate shop. Then, we had to show our Confirmation Letter, and the Wreath, before we were allowed to walk along the fenced-off street, to the Menin Gate. The ordinary members of the public had to make their way along the congested pavements, and regarded us as important dignitaries. We reached the Menin Gate and were shown to our place in the Ceremony; we would be 20th to lay a wreath, out of what ended up as 59 wreaths that evening. There was still over half an hour to wait, as the Bands marched up, and the dignitaries arrived, some of them to be placed after us in the Ceremony. Immediately behind us for the wreath-laying were representatives from Lochee Boys Brigade in Dundee. The soprano soloist from the previous evening was also





there, as was a solo violinist, and a solo piper. The soprano repeated her performance from the previous evening, whilst the violinist this time performed the one of her own compositions, in honour of her grandfather who had been killed in the Ypres area in the Great War, and the whole Ceremony lasted some thirty minutes. We were all agreed that, for us, it was a privilege and honour to lay a Wreath on behalf of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church.

After the Ceremony, and some photo-taking opportunities, we returned to the chocolate shop to thank Hans and Stephanie for their help; and, yes, we did buy some chocolates when we were there.

We were heading home on the Saturday. When we reached Calais, we created a new personal record for arriving at French Passport Control, then continuing through British Passport Control, Customs, and Ferry check-in; six minutes in total for all four, and when we reached the assembly lane, we sat for one minute before we drove on to the ferry; only two vehicles made it after us, as the ferry then set sail for Dover. If only we could progress as rapidly in Dover Docks.

Harry Gould



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