

Kilbarchan East Church of Scotland (1786-2012)

Interim Moderator : Rev. Kenneth Gray

ONWARD

January 2012

EDITOR'S COMMENT :

NO UK GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR CHRISTIANS - NOTHING NEW HERE THEN !

The UK Government is refusing to support a group of Christians fighting for their rights in the European courts. Two individuals who have been disciplined at work or lost their jobs after refusing to remove crosses are attempting to overturn the decisions of British courts and tribunal.

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, had appealed to Prime Minister David Cameron on their behalf.

But the Government told the European Court of Human Rights that it backed the British judges and does not accept that the Christians have suffered discrimination.

To add insult to injury, the Government even said that wearing a cross or a crucifix was not a 'generally recognised' Christian practice - even though Church leaders say it is a hugely significant symbol. To quote Lord Carey, 'Such is the result of a liberal establishment that has become deeply illiberal.'

The court in Strasbourg is to consider the cases of Shirley Chaplin, a Devon nurse banned from working on the wards after she failed to hide a cross she had worn since the age of 16, and Nadia Eweida, a check-in clerk for British Airways who was told to remove her small crucifix at work.

Even the Government's own watchdog, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, has told the European Court that the British courts have failed to protect the rights of some believers.



Alex Ritchie (01505 - 704959)
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A Message from our Interim Moderator

Dear Friends,

It is now nearly a year since I became the Interim Moderator. I have enjoyed my time and have been very impressed by the commitment and faithfulness of the office bearers. It has been a privilege to get to know some of you through pastoral situations and I have been touched by the warmth and kindness of everyone I have met.

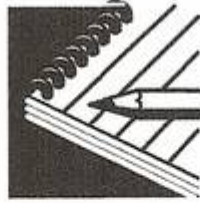
I have also enjoyed sharing worship with you and have been touched by the generosity of many of the comments. This is a year when big decisions will have to be taken and it is up to us to reach our own conclusions on these decisions. If the right proposals are being made then they will command support if not then they will be rejected.

My job is not to push a line but rather to minister to everyone during this period of time. That work will go on for as long as I am needed.

I am looking forward to having a small part to play in the service on the 1st of January and in the meantime wish you all a very happy new year.

Yours,

Kenneth Gray



KIRK SESSION NOTES

We have just come through a very busy period in the life of Kilbarchan East and thank everyone involved in organising events during December. We have to thank those who organised the design, printing and distribution of our Christmas cards and I am sure we all look forward to seeing the church decorated and thank those who helped at the start of December.

We are very fortunate in having Kenneth Gray as interim moderator and Russell Banks as Locum minister and thank them for all their work during the past year.

Most of the year has been taken up with discussion about the best way forward for Kilbarchan East Church. Joint meetings have been taking place with representatives from the West Church to agree a basis of linkage. The next stage would be to agree a basis of union which would include surveys of all properties owned by both churches and agreeing a name for the united church. The congregation will be involved in any decisions made.

Beadle duties for the coming months will be carried out by

January Isabelle Robertson and Fulton Dunn
February Una Strachan and Willie Beattie
March Margaret Wooler and Elizabeth Dunn

Attendance at communion

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|----------------|------|------|------|
| March | 135 | 125 | 131 |
| June | 125 | 119 | 115 |
| October | 126 | 125 | 129 |
| December | 126 | 105 | 124 |
| Average | 128 | 119 | 125 |

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Special Collections at Communion

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| March | £203.34 | £169.38 | £186.73 |
| June | £159.03 | £156.46 | £205.63 |
| October | £234.24 | £121.23 | £186.28 |
| December | £165.08 | £176.88 | £149.37 |
| Total | £761.69 | £623.95 | £728.01 |

Fulton Dunn - Session Clerk

The Roll

Deaths

- 6/10/2011 Mrs Jen Dougall, 4 Milliken Place.
- 12/10/2011 Mrs Irene Fraser, Ranfurly Care Home,
Quarrelton Road, Johnstone
(formerly 30 Burnside Gardens.)
- 14/10/2011 Mrs Mary Thompson, Mount View,
Bracklinn Road, Callender
(formerly 3 Rhumor Gardens.)
- 18/11/2011 Mrs. May Morrow , Braemount Nursing Home
21 Donaldswood Road
(formerly of 34B Meadside Avenue)

The roll is now 361



DRAMA GROUP

Thanks to all who came along to see the Drama Group's November production "Whisky Galore". We had three great audiences despite horrible November weather. We would also like to give a special thanks to our Stage Crew who created an excellent stage set for this challenging production.

Fiona Fulton

On behalf of the Drama Group

Senior Choir

Choir practices started at the beginning of September on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm and Sunday mornings at 10am, and the members are rehearsing for the Maundy Thursday service before Easter.

New members would be made welcome in every section of the choir-rehearsals are good fun as well as the serious business of learning new music for Sunday mornings and special events. If you're not sure, please speak to Ian Trushell or any choir member.

Milk bottle tops

At the moment, these are being collected by Janet Stevenson and they should be left in the hall kitchen for Janet to uplift.

Shoebox Appeal

Thanks on behalf of Blytheswood shoebox appeal for your generosity in filling 75 boxes and donating a large sum of money towards transport-thanks also to the Sunday school and Bible class for helping to fill boxes with goods you donated.

The Stitching Group

Another season of the stitching group has passed and the Christmas presents and decorations finished. We raised a very respectable total of £520 at the Christmas Fayre and we thank all our supporters.

Our Christmas outing to Ardardan was put in jeopardy by wind and rain, but the intrepid lunchers were not daunted and stopped at Erskine Hospital instead. We intend to have another lunch at Ardardan in the New Year to compensate. Our next target is the Easter Eggstravaganza when we will have a range of Easter gifts and, by popular request, more scarves



Alison McNicoll

THE GUILD

We are nearing the end of the first half of the Guild session. Our final night for 2011 was December 13th. when the Senior Choir entertained us. This was also the evening when we brought our parcels for the Salvation Army. All of our speakers have been most interesting.

Mr. Sef Storey, who was going to talk about the work of the Paramedic Rapid Response Team, was unable to come owing to work commitments.

Mr. Willie Beattie kindly agreed to be our speaker on that evening and he spoke about the Church in the community. He gave us food for thought and it was a very interesting talk.

We resume for the second half of the session on January 10th.2012

January 10th.2012 - *A talk on the General Assembly*
(Mr. Jim Moffat)

January 24th.2012 - *Mini Burns Supper*

Saturday, February 4th.2012 - *Coffee Morning*

February 14th.2012 - *Coats and Clarks Philanthropic Legacy*
(Mrs. Valerie Riley)

February 28th.2012 - *An evening with John and Peter*

March 13th.2012 - *Guild Project*

March 27th.2012 - *Annual General Meeting*

Anyone wishing to hear any of those speakers is most welcome to come along any evening.

Eliza MacKenzie.

GUILD PRAYER :

*Heavenly Father, Thank you for loving me right where I am.
Help me to know your love deep in my heart and enable that
love to flow from me to those with whom I am in contact.*

Treasurer's Report

Many members will be surprised that I am still writing this Report after I tendered my resignation as Treasurer a few months ago. It is an open secret that I was totally disillusioned with the process being followed over the last year or so by Greenock and Paisley Presbytery (and others) that I could think of no other meaningful action to take other than tendering my resignation. I do not regret this decision but I did say to my close friend and Session Clerk Fulton Dunn that if no volunteer stepped forward take up the position of Treasurer I would never let Kilbarchan East Church - the Church that most of us love-down in any way. At a recent meeting of the Congregational Board I was delighted to be reinstated in order to ensure that the Accounts are finalised and examined for 2011 and our financial records will be maintained whatever the future brings.

Despite the uncertainties of 2011 the Church finances have stood up remarkably well. With just over two weeks to go the end of December - our year end - it is possible that we shall achieve last year's level of Offerings including Gift Aid. While this would represent a standstill I would suggest it is Good News when you consider the position that we have been placed in. Recent fundraising events have been well supported-Ladies Evening and Christmas Fayre-with the latter raising over £2,100

Significant expenditure has been incurred on the Manse over the last few months and ,as I write, we are hopeful that a tenant will move in shortly. The Church and Church Halls have also undergone roof repairs following the strong winds early December in terms of the Church and the theft of lead on the halls' roof.

I would expect the Church Reserves to still be in good shape come the year end.

Referring to the start of my article I could use this report to have a good "rant" at what has been happening to our Church over the last few years and how little influence we have over events but I have my views and others have different views and I have no intention of offending friends that I have made over the last forty years or so. The life of the Church must continue.

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When I became an elder I 1975 I joined a Session of Kilbarchan East Church including many stalwarts - Hector Urquhart, David Smith, George Nicol, John Nicol to name a few -and almost immediately at the Presbytery's "instructions" joined the West Church in discussing a Basis of Association After quite a number of meetings with little or no agreement the meetings were discontinued. After over thirty five years not a lot has changed but in the intervening years few will disagree that the choice of worship in Kilbarchan and the many social and cultural events in both Churches has been a great benefit to the village. The Christenings and Weddings together with Funerals in both Churches some with strong family connections going back generations have been memorable and never to be forgotten. When I hear one or two say that these years in debate and discussion "have been wasted" most of us in both Churches will remember the many happy and maybe some emotional occasions in our Churches. Let us pray for many more happy years working for the expansion of Christianity in Kilbarchan.

Jim Moffat



The TOTS CLUB

The Christmas Party was held on Monday, December 19th. where about 26 children had a visit from Santa Claus.

We hope that everyone has had a merry Christmas and we wish everybody a Happy New Year.

The Tots Club resumed activities on Monday, January 9th.

Alex Lightbody

The Convener of the Legal Questions Committee on the response to the Same Sex Marriage Consultation

"The Church of Scotland, it seems, has sprung a surprise. We've now answered the Scottish Government's questions about same-sex marriage and civil partnerships. The surprise, apparently, was that the Church knows where it is and has the courage to say so.

"So where is the Church? Our Response did nothing more or less than explain where we are at the moment. We restated our abhorrence of homophobia. We recognised the passion and pain innate to these issues. And we explained that there has never been a time when we understood marriage to include same-sex couples. We have, to date, always believed that God's will is that marriage is properly a union between one man and one woman. Only our General Assembly can change this. It has not done so and it has not yet been asked to do so. Therefore, we told the Government that we couldn't support its proposal to redefine marriage to include same-sex couples.

"We also told the Government that we have set up a Theological Commission to consider the issues around same-sex relationships, civil partnerships and marriage. This will report in May 2013. Debate will undoubtedly follow. Therefore, no-one in the Church should feel either triumph or despair at this time. We hope that our Response will help to preserve the space that we need to make our decisions according to our Presbyterian policy and the will of God.

"We are a national church. We care what our country thinks and we neither can nor want to impose our beliefs on others. We welcome public debate and more of it. Our answers will be unpopular with some people. Others will welcome them. Yet, our position cannot be based on opinion polls. Public opinion sent Jesus to the cross so we, who try to follow Him, will not be silenced by any survey. Instead we will continue to seek God's will for the Church and the nation.

"Nothing in the Church's Response diminishes our sacred commitment to care for all the people of Scotland, regardless of sexual orientation or practice or beliefs. We will not stop asking God to show us the right ways to do so."

**Rev Alan Hamilton
Convener
Legal Questions Committee**



1st Kilbarchan Boys' Brigade

The Company is up in numbers a little this year with good number of Anchor Boys and Junior Section and Company section up to 25 boys. The year has started off well with the boys enjoying all the activities.

The Company had a very successful Coffee Morning in the East Church Halls on Saturday 29th October making in excess of £250 on the day. The enrolment service was on Sunday 30th October in the East Church and was well attended. On Friday 4th November the Company joined with the Scout Group in the village to have their annual Fireworks Display, which was again a great success, many thanks to David and his team. The 13th of November seen Remembrance Sunday, there was a great turnout from all the youth organisations.

The Company Section has had a great start to the session in the Battalion Championship winning the Junior Basketball and the Senior Badminton, coming second in the Junior Quiz and third in the Volleyball. There are many more competitions coming up, so let's hope we stick to our winning ways.

On two Fridays 11th and 18th November the Company Section boys visited Paisley Fire Stations Fire Safety Centre. They had a great couple of nights there getting a tour of the station and getting a chance to rescue a casualty from a burning building (it wasn't really burning, just a simulation, but very realistic)

We have our annual all night games night organised for the end of February. The boys are also working hard towards their badges and awards. The Company Section up in numbers, this is very encouraging for the future.

On Saturday 3rd December the BB Disco was held at the local bowling club. We had a great night and made the sum of £450, many thanks to all who helped and attended. The only disappointment was there were only three sets of boys parents present, many thanks to them, but please support your boys. On Saturday 9th December the whole Company went to the Pantomime at the Pavilion. This was a great adventure for them and a good round off for the Christmas Holidays. The Company Section were bag packing in Dobbies, Braehead on Saturday 10th December and done very well.

Many thanks to Mr Russell Banks for his support towards the Company, as this has visited all three Sections, attended the coffee morning and our start of session staff meeting.

W.C. Speirs - **Captain 1st Kilbarchan Boys' Brigade**

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LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF

It was late 1972 and the world of myself and my wife, Margaret, was in chaos. We had been married for four years, and had began our married life in a tenement flat in the Yorkhill district of Glasgow (opposite The Queen Mother's Hospital). Now we were moving to a new house in Paisley, a house with a back and front door, and a front and rear garden - a real house!!!!

We knew it would not be an effortless move - ours was the only house in the cul-de-sac which was finished (so the builders said, Ha Ha), but we were full of enthusiasm, and so we needed to be.

We had sold our flat and had to move, there was no point in putting it off any longer. The road and pavement had no tarmac, and we had no driveway worth the name. We did however have a house - our house - and we had arrived to stay.

Those of you reading this article who have similarly moved into a new housing development will have experienced some, or all, of our frustrations at trying to get the builders to sort out the myriad of problems in this so called 'finished' house. But we had an additional problem - we had moved in between Christmas and New Year - and the builders were winding down for a long holiday over the festive season. Eventually we reached the stage where the house was habitable and everything else would just have to wait for the resumption of work in the new year, apart from the gas supply which we needed for cooking. We cannot speak too highly of the gas board engineers who worked tirelessly to resolve the problem, and on New Year's Eve, for the first time since we had moved in, we had no tradesmen clambering all over the house.

So here we were, alone in the development, no other house for about 100 yards, no street lights, and it looked like - no festive cheer.

Then came a knock at the door. An occupant of one of the nearby houses, having watched our arrival over the past week, had noticed our house lights, and paid us a visit. 'Come along to our house after you have 'seen in the bells' he said, and join our party.'

We did, and started a close friendship, which lasted 30 years, until his death in 2002. He had been an elder at Paisley Abbey for 25 years, and at his funeral service I was granted the privilege of reading the lessons. Our friendship with his widow, Phyllis, continues on, and as we once again approach Christmas and New Year, not for the first time, I wonder if John Small ever thought what effect his simple act of kindness had on two people who had once been strangers.

Russell Banks

THANK YOU

As a family we would like to thank everyone for their kinds words, flowers, gifts, cards and continuing support during Jennifer's illness. It means so much to be part of such a caring congregation.

Neil & Maria Chittick

THANK YOU

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the flowers, get-well cards and phone calls received during my stay in hospital and at home.

Your concern was very much appreciated.

Maisie Pelling

THANK YOU

Dear Friends,

I would like to express my grateful thanks for the beautiful flowers, cards and well-wishes, extended to me on my very special birthday.

This kind gesture is greatly appreciated.

Jeanne Ferguson



HILL-WALKING GROUP

Yet again the October walk was stymied by bad weather, but the six who did turn up at the Steeple went to Chatelherault near Hamilton, and enjoyed a lovely walk in the country park. We were more fortunate for the November walk when twelve of us climbed the Graham of Cruinn a'Bheinn. This hill sits next to Ben Lomond, but to get to it we drove to Inversnaid, parked the cars there then walked southwards down the West Highland way for 3 km before turning eastwards to climb steeply on a very good track. The weather was wonderful and the views from the summit were superb.

As we were in the middle of a period of gales and flooding, we decided not to travel as far as Lanark for the planned walk in December, but instead go to Nitshill!! After parking in Sainsbury's car park, David led us on a most interesting walk, past what used to be bleach fields; dams and waterworks where the bird life was great, and on to a little hill known as "The Craigie". It was a most enjoyable walk and a completely new area for most of us.

At the AGM on December 10, the following syllabus was agreed for 2012:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>January 7</i> | <i>Hill of Stake, Muirshiel</i> |
| <i>February 4</i> | <i>Cort-ma-Law, Campsies</i> |
| <i>March 3</i> | <i>Beinn Bheula, Lochgoil</i> |
| <i>April 21</i> | <i>Beinn a'Bheithir, or alternatively Stob na Cruaiche</i> |
| <i>11/12/13 May</i> | <i>Ratagan Hostel</i> |
| <i>15/16/17 June</i> | <i>Great Glen Way Hostel</i> |
| <i>July 14</i> | <i>Meall Greigh, Meall Garbh and An Stuc or alternatively Creag a'Mhadaidh</i> |
| <i>August 4</i> | <i>Binnein Mor, Na Gruagaichean and Stob Coire a'Chairn or alternatively Beinn na Gucaig</i> |
| <i>September 8</i> | <i>Casteal Abhail - Arran *</i> |
| <i>October 6</i> | <i>Meall Corranaich and Meall a'Choire Liath or alternatively Creag Each and Creag Ruadh</i> |
| <i>November 10</i> | <i>Stob Diamh or alternatively Meall Tairbh</i> |
| <i>December 8</i> | <i>Greenock Cut</i> |

* The Arran walk is the only one which does not leave from the Steeple at 8.00 am, but instead from Ardrossan Harbour, meeting at 9.30 am.

A syllabus giving further information regarding map numbers, grid references of the hills, etc is now available. Anyone wishing to join us will be made most welcome.

This is the 25th Anniversary of the club during which time we have seen about 25 members climb all the Munros.

Margaret Beattie



FUND-RAISING NEWS

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this, we shall have welcomed a New Year 2012 and we all hope that this year will be peaceful and happy. Our Ladies' Evening in October was very successful. The staff of Decorus gave us demonstrations of their products, which were very interesting. Carol and the retail department from the Prince and princess of Wales Hospice shop were quite delighted to sell over £830 of gifts and cards and hope to come along again next year. Overall, we raised £300 for our church funds.

For many years, we have been saving small coins-e.g. 1,2 and 5 pence pieces-please remember to keep handing these in at the church door or with the offering.

We have a quiet time for the moment, with our next event being the Easter Extravaganza at the end of March.

New ideas are always important, so let us know if you have heard of a possible event.

We would be delighted to welcome new members to the committee. The present members are: Nan Chittick, Betty Clark, Fulton Dunn, Margaret Gray, Irene Moffat, Jemima McDermid, Jenifer Pitchers, Grace Tod & Una Strachan.

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