

**REPORT FROM CHURCH OF SCOTLAND COMMITTEE  
ON CHAPLAINS TO HM FORCES.**

Chaplains to the Armed Forces were welcomed at the 2018 General Assembly. The Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Susan Brown assured them that the Assembly and Church recognises their ministries as both necessary and valued. The Convenor of the Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces the Rev. Gordon Craig, in his final reply as convenor, stated strongly that the Registration of Ministries Act made it difficult for chaplains to return to the Church of Scotland as parish ministers. Moreover, it made them feel marginalised. However, the Registration of Ministries Committee will now support chaplains through the process in conjunction with the Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces.

Rev. Dr. Marjory MacLean, the newly appointed Convenor of the Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces will work with committee members on new challenges such as how to improve Chaplains support and to attract parish ministers into the armed forces. Other religions are complementing Christian Chaplains now with more secularisation and humanist beliefs. Service personnel can now attend Christian services voluntarily. All Chaplains will receive an Easter Card again next year from the Committee. A system of buddying is being developed with volunteer committee members for Chaplains. Our annual visit, this time to Glencorse Army Barracks, was postponed so I will write a report for the next newsletter.

Despite the 2017 Covenant, there are only 21 Presbyteries from a total of 43 in Scotland appointing Veteran Champions. Dr. MacLean will pursue this concern with Presbyteries.



Ethne Brown.

# NEWS FROM ST. SERF'S

*December 2018*



Your Elder is \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

From the Locum.....

Many years ago now – before I went into Ministry, I felt some uncertainty as to whether or not I was doing the right thing. A friend of mine graciously purchased a photo frame and had printed in it the words from Jeremiah 29:11- “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” I have always held this Scripture dear to my heart. For years I kept the photo frame on my study desk to serve me as a reminder, until the cardboard stand finally gave way. Little did I know how much I would need to depend on this short passage to help me through what has been one of the most difficult, yet surprising experience of my life!

When I came here just over two and a half years ago, I had no idea what to expect. I didn't even know where I was going to and I had to do a Google search to find out! Since then, a lot of water has gone under the bridge. Most of my experiences have been enjoyable – especially serving as the Locum of St. Serfs, but also getting to know other people in the Community. Coming from a coal mining town in South Africa, I could resonate with the people, who were genuinely “salt of the earth!” I have certainly cherished working with Pamela and Aileen as well as my interaction with other Minister's in the area. I have considered it a privilege to be invited to officiate at various services, such as the Dedication of the Miner's Garden in Ballingry in August, the various Remembrance Day Services as well as being invited as a guest speaker for several organisations. My weekly visits to members of the Congregation and up until the end of September, my work with TIBAL (Together in Benarty and Lochgelly) have been a great blessing. However, I must admit that due to changes in circumstances in my own life, and also the inevitable changes within the Church of Scotland, I have increasingly felt the need to find a more sustainable future for myself.

In May this year, I was approached by Re/Max Scotland to become an Independent Contractor. I met with the CEO, who happens to own the office in Glenrothes, and after a discussion he offered me the possibility of retaining my Locumship at St. Serfs, while spending the remaining working hours in the real-estate industry. Although initially enthusiastic about the possibility, there were a few obstacles that I needed to overcome. However, one by one the obstacles that were in the way were solved and it became clear by the middle of October that I needed to make a decision.

For this reason, I have decided to take up the offer given to me by Re/Max Scotland. Although it will take some time to get established, I have been in the industry before and I am confident that I will be able to perform my duties at St. Serfs, whilst giving my best shot at finding solid ground and expanding my horizons.

## CHURCH NEWSLETTER

*My thanks as usual go the leaders and members of our church groups for submitting articles to the newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading about what they have done since our last newsletter and in some cases what they are looking forward to doing in the new year.*

*Thanks to Bob for putting up with me rabbiting on about finding space for articles which come a bit too close to the last acceptance date. Thanks also to the ladies who proof read this and help sort out the copies for each district.*

*From all of us “To you and your families have a lovely Christmas and best wishes for 2019”*



*Anne Scott.  
Editor.*

## WORSHIP AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY GROUP

On the evening of Remembrance Sunday churches up and down the country were invited to take part in a special event as part of the Nation's Tribute – Battles Over – to commemorate the centenary of the end of the World War I. Over 20 people attended a special service in both Benarty and Lochgelly where we met outside the hear the church bells ringing and then proceeded inside for a short time to listen to prayers and poems and also sang 'Guide me O thou Great Jehovah' unaccompanied. It was very poignant and we had refreshments afterwards.



At the time of writing we have yet to meet to plan our Nativity Service on 23rd December and are looking forward to our visit to the pantomime and our Christmas party before then.



Laura Pepperday, Group Member

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Geoff



**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION  
WILL BE CELEBRATED ON SUNDAY 9TH DECEMBER  
AT A JOINT SERVICE  
IN ST. SERF'S, LOCHGELLY AT 10.30am**



**There will be a retiring offering for the Church Samaritan Fund**

## Baptism

**JAMES HENRY DONALD**

**&**

**GRACE NIVEN DONALD**

**IN**

**ST. SERF'S LOCHGELLY**

**ON**

**SUNDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER**

# FUNERALS

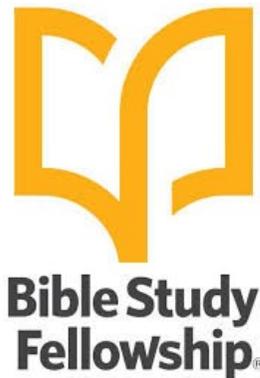
Elizabeth McDonald  
Michael Glynn  
Catherine Younger  
John Blamey  
Annie Black  
Christina Lee  
Susan Ainslee  
George Tatters  
Georgina Melville  
Cathie Herd  
Janet Campbell  
June Anderson  
Betty Scott  
Charles Ferguson  
Henry Aitken  
Andrew Raeburn



many valid reasons why some members cannot attend it is vital that all members support the work of the church in any way they can – freewill offering envelopes, fabric boxes/envelopes, donations. We need £720 each week just to survive and don't meet this target very often. Did you know an empty Steradent tube holds £20 in 20p's!!

Your Elder will be happy to collect envelopes or donations or fabric boxes (or steradent tubes) if you are unable to attend church and their contact details are on the front of this newsletter. There is also another way you can support the church and it won't cost you a penny. We have registered as a charity with Easy Fundraising and will receive a donation from them every time someone shops online at places like Amazon, Argos, PC World, John Lewis, etc. I'm sure, like me, most families have younger members who buy online nowadays and more information is given elsewhere about how to register your support. I'll get off my soap box now and leave you to ponder our predicament over the festive period. God's blessing be with you at this time.

Laura Pepperday, Property Convener



The Fellowship & Bible Study Group started again after a break during the summer months with the course, Fruitfulness on the Frontline. It has been well attended with there being seven some weeks, with six being an average attendance. Anyone who feels that they wish to join the group, to think a bit more about the love God has for us, would be made very welcome.





## PROPERTY GROUP

The 5-year Presbytery Property Inspection (Quinquennial) was completed in September for both churches and the Manse. The report has now been issued and the work required has been split into three categories – urgent, for work that must be completed within a year of the report – essential, work which must be completed within five years, and – desirable, work considered beneficial but capable of being delayed. There are suggested costs for the work totalling over £90,000 with over £30,000 for urgent repairs. As you can imagine this is quite an undertaking and we simply do not have the money readily available to consider much work at the present time. Prior to the inspection we were faced with urgent work at Benarty when the boiler packed in at the beginning of October. A new boiler has now been installed and has certainly improved the heating in the church. Around the same time the planned installation of the sound system at Benarty was taking place and this is also now up and running and, after a few teething problems are resolved, will enhance worship. The money for the sound system was set aside from a bequest and fulfils a requirement to provide Benarty with a system on par with the system at Lochgelly. Members attending Benarty will also have noticed that one of the windows has been removed and is currently undergoing repair. Coupled with all of this is the instruction from the General Trustees to encourage congregations to look at new ways of 'being church' in view of the number of vacant charges and the shortage of ministers. More information is given elsewhere in the magazine. Basically we have been asked not to start any new projects or do anything other than urgent work until such time as various avenues have been explored as to the way ahead which may or may not result in the closure of buildings. So what can we do about it? Well, there are 355 members on the church roll for whom we pay a capitation fee of £3.90 each and approximately 70 to 80 members who attend church regularly. While we appreciate there are

## A LETTER FROM THE OUTREACH WORKER

I have now been in post for 9 months and feel very accepted as part of the Church Family. I had a busy summer organising 'Summer Tuesdays' in Benarty and am really enjoying assisting with Messy Church there. Our alternative Halloween party, 'Pumpkin Heroes' was great fun and we were grateful to all those who donated jam jars which were turned into lovely lanterns.

There is now a small team of us operating weekly lunchtime nurture groups in both Lochgelly South and West Primary Schools where we do crafts and Lego. Staff are commenting that this is making a difference within the schools and contributing to better behaviour. I have made contact with Lochgelly High School and they are keen to have us involved both in a Nurture Group and in curriculum subjects. We would greatly appreciate more help from within the congregation to allow us to operate these groups effectively.

During the summer, St Serf's acted as a pick-up point for the distribution of food to families struggling during the holidays and the equivalent of over 300 meals was supplied. I am meeting with Fife Council and other local Churches to discuss how we can be more involved in addressing Food and Fuel Poverty in the community.

I have also been involved with all the Benarty Lochgelly Churches Together events and worked alongside the Salvation Army at their Holiday Club.

I would like to thank everyone for their continuing support and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year

Aileen



## FROM THE TREASURER AND FINANCE GROUP

The Finance Group met 30th October and considered the current financial position of the congregation. I was able to report that we are on target to meet the budget set for the year for the general account which provides for the day to day ministry of the church in Benarty and Lochgelly. This is due in the main to lower than expected expenditure and a larger than anticipated tax recovery thanks to Gift Aid. Those members making donations under a Gift Aid declaration and the use of the Small Donations Scheme which allows us to make a claim for freewill offerings or anonymous donations (under £20) enabled the Gift Aid Convener to claim back £9,271 – we expected only £8,500. Speak to me or Ella Reid if you need any more information about this.



Unfortunately, those of you who follow the weekly receipts figure in the orders of service will not be surprised to learn that offerings to the end of September were only £27,097. We should have had £30,375 to meet budget so the extra gift aid recovery is already more than used up. We definitely need to do better either in our direct offerings or in the support we give to the fundraising initiatives throughout the year – too many to mention but think of Coffee Mornings, Burns Suppers, Quiz Nights, Beetle Drives, Summer and Christmas Fayres and even sales of second hand books and that gives you some idea of how our fundraising budget of £8,900 may be achieved. At the end of September it sat at £6,675, so there is some way to go. Please turn out and give your support to the efforts of the praiseworthy volunteers who plan and carry out these events. Also, give some thought to using ‘easyfundraising’ if you are an online shopper over the Festive season – check with Ian Brown if you don’t know how to.

In addition, I have mentioned before, the need to repair and improve our buildings. The quinquennial inspection reports have been received and it is clear that very large sums will have to be found and spent to carry out even the essential works needed. To the end of September offerings for the Fabric Fund came to £2,031 – a very poor offering indeed. We have a local fund of just over £16,000 banked and the General Trustees hold another fund of just over £50,000 but the surveyors are talking about works totalling over £90,000. The Property Convener Laura Pepperday, will be giving the Kirk Session and Congregation more details but at a time when the National Church is very concerned over numbers of buildings, we need to show that we are in a strong position to maintain our buildings in excellent order.

## THE DROP IN

We resumed our weekly “Drop In” in September and we have had a few new folk as well as our usual people stopping by for a cuppa and a chat. Our door is open to all who care to pop in. We meet every Thursday from 10am till 12 noon. On Thursday 6th December we are having a Soup and Sweet Lunch. The price for this is £3.00. It would be nice if you can join us.

Margaret Swan.– convener.



## WAYS & MEANS GROUP

It’s been a busy time lately with various fundraising events going on.

We recently had a successful Quiz Night in Lochgelly organised by Shona and our Christmas Fayre and Gift Day on 10th November raised over £1,000. The Christmas Fayre at Benarty is planned for Friday 30th November and Saturday 1st December from 10am to 12 noon and we are already thinking about our Burns Supper in February. A lot of work goes into planning various events and we appreciate the support received from members of the congregation and friends. If there are any good ideas out there for a fundraising event we would be happy to consider them. Just

we would be happy to consider them. Just speak to any member of the Ways & Means group. We would also be happy to welcome any new members as our group is very small at the moment..

Laura Pepperday, Group Member



### ST. SERF'S CRAFT GROUP

If you enjoy company and are interested in crafts, this is the place to be. Our group meets every Thursday at 2pm till 4pm where we enjoy a wee cuppa and a blether while doing our various craft work. We then use our crafts to raise funds for the church. The group also have a Coffee Morning on the last Friday of each month where people from the community are very welcome. We look forward to seeing you at one or all of our events throughout the year.



May Binnie  
Group Member.



### TUESDAY AFTERNOON GROUP

We resumed our regular meetings on Tuesday 13th September. There was a good attendance and we discussed the new syllabus.

Our first guest speaker was from CHAS and the theme was "Keep the Joy Alive" Our next Speaker represented Air Ambulance based in Perth. The information and enthusiasm about their subjects was much appreciated and the ladies gave both the above charities generous donations. As usual Moira's fun afternoon was well received and there was much laughter and banter. Our final meeting will be a demonstration of Homemade Chocolates.

We will close this session on Tuesday 11th December with our Christmas Lunch.

On behalf of all our members I wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful, healthy 2019.

Marion Lumsden  
Group member.

Come let us  
*Adore*  
Him



2019 will bring many challenges on a lot of fronts, but I wish you all the best when it comes, and in the meantime we can celebrate again the anniversary of a gift beyond measure, God's own gift to us of his son, Jesus Christ.

Robin Millar

### FROM THE PARISH ASSISTANT

It is hard to believe that six months have past since the last Newsletter. I had planned to have a much quieter Summer, using the time to plan and prepare for the coming months. I am not sure what happened, but my thoughts did not come to fruition. My summer was spent carrying out visits, care home services, weddings, one funeral and helping Aileen with Summer Tuesdays, which ran ever Tuesday throughout the school holidays. Now we are back in the schools weekly and making some wonderful connections with pupils and staff. We will be running Bubblegum 'n' Fluff again this December, a Christmas event for P6's. We have a date for Lochgelly South but nothing from the West yet. There has been a Study Course, which has run from October, called Fruitfulness on the Frontline. This has allowed us to be more aware of our actions when we meet people, so that we can make a difference where we are.

I have just had word that my post has been re-designated as that of Deacon. Although that will make no difference to the way I work and what I do, it does acknowledge the theological training I have undertaken.

In June, I spent three days at Diaconate Council. This gave me time to spend with other Deacons while also allowing me time to reflect and worship God.

I realise this is something we all need, a time to be still and reflect on our lives, where we are just now and where we should be in the future. I pray that we all get a bit of time, during the forthcoming Advent and Christmas season, to spend with God.

May I wish each and everyone a Merry, Joyous and Peaceful Christmas.

*Pamela Scott DCS*



## GREETINGS FROM THE INTERIM MODERATOR

Dear members,

At the time of writing the country has just finished the many events which were held to mark the end of The Great War. Churches across the country were asked to ring their bells at 7-05pm on the Sunday evening of 11 November. You may have heard the bells ringing at St Serf's both in Lochgelly and Benarty. Bells were rung out at the end of WW1 to celebrate the end of war, ending the years of silence when they had been unable to be rung. We live in a time when we have the freedom to ring out the bells to call people to worship but sadly many of these bells remain silent now because crumbling bell towers mean it would be unsafe to ring them. It is a problem along with others for many churches who are faced with expensive repairs of maintaining their buildings. A problem which is facing us too in St Serfs.

Listening to the early morning TV programme as I write I was interested to hear how the Church of England are faced with an ever increasing drop in numbers attending church and how a church in London was responding to it by offering alternative worship times at lunch time on a Tuesday when workers gather for lunch and worship around tables. It is not only the Church of Scotland who are experiencing problems of falling numbers. Churches all over are having to ask what do we need to change to meet needs in the world today.

At the General Assembly this year an instruction was passed to all Kirk Sessions and Congregations to meet in conference and look at the decline in membership, decline in the number of ministers,( here in St Serf's you have experienced what that is like) the age profile of congregations and how that will affect leadership and the problem of maintaining buildings. The Kirk Session of St Serfs,(as well as all the other Kirk Sessions in Scotland) are looking at how **WE** will tackle these issues and to this end **YOU** will be hearing more in the near future how You can give us your views of where you see the Church in Lochgelly and Benarty in five years time. Gloomy news in one sense but how do we respond to it and turn the negative into the positive. We have the freedom, denied to many in other countries, to worship God and to share the good news of the Gospel with others. Have we become complacent and retreated behind the closed doors of our buildings, kept our faith to ourselves? How do we respond to



Messy Church continues to attract between 20 and 30 people on the second Thursday of each month at Benarty. Everyone enjoys the caring, family atmosphere as well as the stories. This term we have learnt about God's provision for us at Harvest, have thought about Caring for Others as we packed shoe boxes and made sure we put Jesus at the centre of the Christmas Story.

Over the Summer we held 'Summer Tuesdays' where we had an hour for unaccompanied Primary School children and then a Messy Church Hour. Over 50 people participated during the holidays and everyone seemed to enjoy the wide range of activities which focused around acting out and discovering more about a different Bible Story each week. There was a relaxed atmosphere allowing plenty of time for chat and relationship building. We followed this up with a successful Messy Tuesday in October where we had great fun focussing on David and Goliath.

The parents enjoy the crafts so much that we are holding an evening just for them on 5th December when the focus is on the Grown-Ups and child care will be provided.



Agnes Seath and Aileen Christie

### IF YOU NEED HEL,P OR ADVICE IMPORTANT CONTACTS

<b>Rev. Geoff Probert</b>	<b>Locum Minister</b>	<b>mob. 07491 139129</b>
<b>Pamela Scott BD DCS</b>	<b>Parish Assistant</b>	<b>mob. 07548 819334</b>
<b>Aileen Christie</b>	<b>Outreach Worker</b>	<b>mob 07966660258</b>
<b>Betty Martin</b>	<b>Session Clerk</b>	<b>Tel. 01592 781715</b>
<b>Ian Brown</b>	<b>Web Page/ Facebook</b>	<b>Tel. 01592 782515</b>

## PASTORAL CARE GROUP

Members of the Pastoral Care Group met in September, sad at the loss of John Blamey. John had served faithfully as Convener, with cheerfulness and kindness to fellow pastoral visitors and everyone included on the visit list over the years. John is a loss for all of us, but we will strive to continue our good work.

Several members attended the Church of Scotland Pastoral Care Conference this year, keeping our knowledge and skills up to date.

There are 17 Pastoral visitors working in pairs and 24 Members of the church being visited four times a year in their own homes or in care homes. Janet Patrick is our secretary, compiling agendas, minutes and correspondence for our quarterly meetings.

Pastoral Care has several definitions, but we find the opportunity to offer emotional and spiritual healing to sustain people who feel estranged from others/God. Pastoral Care is not professional counselling, fixing problems or about us. Patience, kindness and being able to listen are skills we require. Leaving a prayer card gives people a link with the Church when they are no longer able to attend.

If you know of anyone in the congregation who would like pastoral visits please inform any member of the group. If you feel you would like to be involved in being a Pastoral Care Visitor, please get in touch for a chat. You may enjoy and obtain satisfaction from sharing some of your time with another person unable to attend church.

Matthew 25:31-40

Ethne Brown



### CHURCH WEBPAGE

[www.stserfschurch.co.uk](http://www.stserfschurch.co.uk)

You can also keep in touch on Facebook at  
Lochgelly and Benarty St. Serf's Church.

the need of society today?

Over two thousand years ago a small frightened band retreated behind closed doors in a room in Jerusalem because their leader had been crucified. Jesus came to that small frightened group and told them to go into all the world and make disciples – no mean task! A few weeks later on the day of Pentecost that frightened band took to the streets and the Church grew and developed and has survived to the present day. We are challenged today to think of how we can meet the challenges to be the Church today for the future generations. Jesus still calls us to go and make disciples where we are, to the people we meet each day. In the next wee while you will be asked to give your thoughts of what we can do, how St Serf's can meet the challenges of the future. The thoughts and prayers of all of you are essential to us. How can you, where you are, be a disciple and share the Good News of God's love in a world that is crying out to hear the good news that God loves and cares for them. You might say I am too old I don't get out how can I do it – your prayers, your faith and your interest in what is happening is essential to keep others going.

May God bless you all

Morag Crawford

Interim Moderator



### GREETINGS FROM THE CHURCH ADMIN. OFFICE



Gosh, how this year has flown by. After a glorious sunny summer we are back to the cold dark mornings and nights. I suppose, like myself most of you will have experienced ups a downs during this year, but isn't it a relief to get up each morning and thank God for giving us the opportunity to do so when others are less fortunate. Bob and I wish you all a lovely Christmas and Best Wishes for the year to come.

Anne Scott

Administrator

## WELFARE GROUP

Well, another Welfare Tea and Concert has come and gone - doesn't time fly! This year our lovely catering was provided by Morrisons "Food To Order" service which we all enjoyed and agreed it had been a very successful choice. Our entertainment this year was "Stagestruck" which is organised by Margo Imrie, who although she lives in Glenrothes, informed us she had been married in our church many years ago. Despite a late technical hitch we enjoyed the entertainment thoroughly and the group were appreciated by all our guests.

Our Tea and Concert in 2019 will be held on 24th Sept and we are pleased to announce we have secured the services of Mr. Roy McArthur and friends to entertain us and they come highly recommended. So book your place early to avoid disappointment

Many thanks to all who supported us at our Coffee Mornings during the year both financially or practically. It is much appreciated. On behalf of the Welfare Group Committee I wish everyone a lovely festive season and a healthy, happy 2019.

Brenda Dickson



## THE MAGAZINE ON CD'S

Just a wee reminder that recorded CD's are made each time the newsletter is printed. This is a free service to anyone who has difficulty reading news print. Please give me a call on 01592 780077 and I can arrange for you to have one.

**Margaret Morgan.**



## A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE GROUP

With your Newsletter you will find Christmas Gift envelopes. Some members have already given a Christmas Gift following the distribution of envelopes at Church on Sunday 4th November and at the Christmas Fayre and Gift Day on Saturday 10th November. The envelopes distributed with this Newsletter enables members who have not already donated, the opportunity to do so.



The November Christmas Fayre and Gift Day was very successful, with the Fayre bringing in the sum of £1010.70. The Christmas Gift envelopes have raised the sum of £350 to date and the envelopes will continue to come in over the next two weeks. Thanks go to all who helped in any way, including everyone who supported the venture. The funds raised are not going to a special purpose but will help to ensure we can again finish the year on target.



## SHOE BOX APPEAL 2018

Thanks to the very kind people at St. Serf's we have been able to send 243 Shoe Boxes to Romania this year. That means there will be 243 happy smiling faces opening the boxes at Christmas.

