

Columba News



SUMMER  2019

CHURCH PERSONNEL

"COLUMBA NEWS" - JUNE 2019 - Issue No. 228

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Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Church Charity Number: SC014338

Church Services (Midton Road):

9.30am - Family Service; 10.00am - Sunday School and Bible Class

11.15am - Morning Worship; 6.30pm - Evening Services (Last Sunday of the Month)

Church Services (Lochside)

10.00am Morning Worship

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From the Interim Moderator

June 2019

The Vacancy

Your Nominations Committee is working hard to find possible candidates for the vacant post of Minister of Ayr: St. Columba. The size and quality of your congregation has attracted a good deal more interest than many other places have to thole. Please, however, give the Committee time and hold the members in your prayers that they may be drawn to God's choice.

The General Assembly

As I write, I am just home from one of the most challenging and radical General Assemblies in all my 44 years! The thrust of three major reports was "to identify ways in which a leaner organisation can better support local congregations". Change at every level of our structure was set in motion – 12 new Trustees will take over executive control (under the authority of the General Assembly) of all the central administration – the Councils will be reduced to two new bodies - Presbyteries will be reviewed and reduced in number to as few as 8 – the state and necessity of all church buildings will be reviewed. Phew!

Moreover, new reviews were set up to report in the future – on tenure (should Ministers and Congregations have a "reviewable" relationship rather than an unrestricted one) – and Manses (could we not have a "mixed economy" of tied houses and Ministers' privately-owned houses) Both of these have come up many times before in my time, but the Assembly was not content with the answers we came up with!

The General Assembly itself will be reviewed – yet again – and its size, duration and frequency of meeting reconsidered.

If I sound a little grumpy, I apologise: but it is the retired person's prerogative to bemoan the ways or choices of those who have taken his/her place! In fact, I was greatly heartened by this Assembly: my generation have banged on for years about slimming down the central and regional administrations and putting the local congregations first. Now it may just be happening.

The Kirk's membership is falling rapidly, the number of Ministers, too; income is plateauing and predicted to fall. So we can't just have more of the same: we need a leaner, fitter organisation.

You and Me

But, above all, we need to concentrate on communicating the Gospel to our communities. St. Columba Parish Church has been a place and a church-family to which people may come and hear the Gospel clearly and inspiringly preached. Your Nominations Committee is striving to find a Minister who will continue to serve you well in this regard.

And every member, too, must apply themselves to personal witness: newcomers and enquirers must be able to find, when they come to church and when they meet us in any other situation, loving, believing and enthusiastic members who attract them to the Lord.

Cheers and blessings,

DWL

COLUMBA NEWS COPY DEADLINE

Please note the deadline for the **SEPTEMBER** edition will be
SUNDAY, AUGUST 11th

Norman Reid, Editor

SUNDAY DOOR DUTY

MORNING SERVICES

(9.30am and 11.15am)

EVENING SERVICES

(6.30pm)

JUNE

23rd Team 5

30th 9.30am Team 6

11.15am Team 7

6.30pm Team 8

JULY

7th Team 9

14th Team 10

21st Team 11

28th Team 12

AUGUST

4th Team 1

11th Team 2

18th Team 3

25th Team 4

SEPTEMBER

1st Team 5

8th Team 6

15th Team 7

22nd Team 8

29th Team 9

6.30pm Evening Service

WEDNESDAY COMMUNION will be held at 2pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month
(except June, July, August, December), the forthcoming occasions being September 25.

SHOWSTOPPERS!

Summer Holiday Club

15-19 JULY

**AYR: ST COLUMBA CHURCH, MIDTON ROAD
PRE-SCHOOL - P.7**



Holiday Club time is nearly with us again!

This summer all the halls will be transformed into a theatrical palace of wonders as we explore some of the must know stories of the Bible.

From Monday 15th July to Friday 19th July every morning 10am-noon all children aged 3 to primary 7 are welcome to come and join us as we explore the Bible together.

Each day will be a mixture of songs, stories, games, snacks, challenges and more, followed by a family get-together at the end of the week.

We are always looking for new and enthusiastic members of the team to come and join us in this important outreach event.

If you think that you would be interested in finding out more about how you can become involved, then please contact Irene in the office.

There are a whole range of jobs needing done from decorating the hall, helping prepare crafts, admin, preparing snacks, running games, being a small group leader, helping with technology and many many more!

NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL GROUP

Earlier in May a meeting was set up with some of the young folk in St Columba's Kids who are moving up to secondary school after the summer to discuss what they would want from a new group for secondary aged young people at the church.

Kerrie Lee and her team are in the process of creating a new group for secondary aged young people and ask that if you have any children between S1-S6 then please keep an eye on the church Facebook page @ayrstcolumba to find out more information as it develops.

There will be another meeting intimated in church soon for parents and teens to finalise plans for the new group.

“FAREWELL KING COAL”

By Anthony Seaton

A new St Columba library book.

This is a book written by a scientist of stature. It is so well written that the contents can be understood by anyone without a scientific background and it is reasonably easy to read. Much of the book describes the health cost of using coal and efforts to make the coal industry safer.

It is towards the end of the book (last 2 chapters) where damage to the earth's climate is described along with the science behind it. This is a topical subject that should be considered by all. In my view, Christians have a duty to understand this topic and live lives that are compatible with a sustainable future for generations that follow us.

Anthony Seaton is a retired professor. He has worked as a respiratory physician, a professor of occupational health and at the end of his career he led the team that defined the standards for air pollution that are now applied worldwide. He is a regular church attender at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh and launched his book there in November 2018.

Andrew Muirhead

The Guild

"Whose we are and Whom we serve"

The Guild doesn't meet over the summer months but the Committee meet to plan ahead for next session and the syllabus is complete and ready for printing and we express our thanks to Irene and Margaret in the office who are such a great help at this time.

One of our members, Lorna, received an invitation from The Guild at Dunblane Cathedral inviting us to visit The Cathedral. This was arranged and Dorothy organised a coach and 37 guild members set off from the Church on Wednesday, 1 May and what a welcome we received. Morning coffee was served in one of their halls, a delicious lunch in the Cathedral Hall and before we left at 4 p.m. afternoon tea. In between all that one of the Elders gave us a most informative and interesting talk as he showed us around this magnificent Cathedral. What a wonderful day we had! Thank you Dorothy and Lorna for arranging it and thank you to the ladies of Dunblane Cathedral Guild for giving us such a warm welcome and wonderful hospitality.

Our opening meeting is on Monday, 30 September at 7.30 p.m. : Dedication of The Guild and we are delighted that the Revd Ian Paterson will be our guest and who will inspire us for the new session and we look forward to seeing everyone and also having new members join us again this year.

Our annual Coffee Morning will be held on Saturday, 23 November from 10 a.m. to noon which we hope will be another success and look forward to welcoming everyone to enjoy a coffee, friendship and chat. The Annual Outing to the Gaiety Theatre is on Thursday, 7 November and this year the Ayrshire Philharmonic Opera Society will be presenting Oliver a favourite musical well known to everyone. Some dates for your diary!

On behalf of Dorothy and the Committee may I wish you all a pleasant and restful summer and hopefully you will be able to enjoy some long sunny days with family and friends.

Maureen Fullerton

Secretary

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Four times a year we have our main Services of Holy Communion – on the last Sundays of October, January, April and June. With this issue of the magazine, your Elder will have brought your invitation. The Sacrament is the most important act of worship in the Christian community – through the mystery of the bread and wine, Christ is present with us and we recall His life and death and resurrection. As we eat and drink together, He builds us into His Body, the Church. Your place is reserved for you. We look forward to seeing you at any services on Sunday 30th June at 9.30a.m., 11.15a.m. or 6.30p.m.

Jesus said, *"Do this in remembrance of Me."*

MAYBOLE CHARITY SHOP

Ayr & Prestwick Lions Club would like to thank the many people who donated items for their week at the shop in April. The response from the congregation was wonderful and a healthy sum raised towards the club's charitable work. Most of the money is used in the local community including assisting young people who volunteer in Third World countries which they have to fund themselves and assisting less well known organisations in Ayrshire. All reasonable applications are considered. Some money is also used to support international work by Lions International such as disaster relief.

Due to some of our colleagues moving away from the area Ayr & Prestwick Lions Club welcomes new members. The Lions Club meets monthly (but not in June) on the last Monday of the month at 7.30 pm at the Abbotsford Hotel. We take a stall at some outdoor galas and run a few events ourselves so the commitment is not too demanding of one's time. For more information please contact our club President Phiroze Mehta on 263318 or myself on 443381.

Alec Mooney

Ayr & Prestwick Lions Club

CROSSREACH NEWS

150th anniversary exhibition

In celebration of 150 years of the Church of Scotland providing social care in Scotland, CrossReach will be showcasing a very special exhibition.

The 150th anniversary exhibition was debuted at Heart and Soul 2019 and will now tour venues in Scotland throughout the year.

As we celebrate 150 years – help us knit 150 Wellbeing Octopuses!

150 years ago, the Church of Scotland started sowing the seeds of 'care in Christ's name.'

To join in the celebrations CrossReach invites you to take part in knitting 1 or some of 150 knitted CALAMARI SHANARRI octopuses for children throughout Scotland to enjoy.

Wellbeing is at the heart of the work of CrossReach with children, young people and their families. Are you ready to start sewing some wellbeing messages?

To learn more and download your pattern visit: http://bit.ly/CR_meet_CAL or email tanya.anderson@crossreach.org.uk

Notes from Session ...

A meeting of the Kirk Session, chaired by the Moderator, Revd Fraser Aitken, was held on 12th February 2019. A summary of issues discussed at this meeting is given below:

- The Moderator praised the generosity of members who had contributed to the total of £6,000 which had been raised at the Christmas Services. This had been divided equally between Whiteleys Retreat, the Yemen Appeal and Independence from Drugs and Alcohol (Scotland).
- The Moderator said that the Services and events at Christmas had been well attended. He expressed his thanks to Matthew Hynes for the excellent music and for his work on the Lessons and Carols Service. He also thanked the Flower Teams and John Stewart and his helpers with the superb Christmas Tree, which had been left up to adorn the funeral of former Session Clerk, Mr Jim Wilcox. The Moderator thanked everyone who had been involved in the events over the festive period.
- The Moderator informed members of Session that Services would be held at 9.30am and at 11.15am on Sunday 31st March, which would be his final day at Ayr St Columba Church. In expectation of a very high attendance, arrangements were being made to accommodate the potential overflow in the Midton Road Hall, where seating would be available and the Service would be relayed on a sound link. The Offering would be counted on the Monday morning to allow the Duty Team to travel to Turnberry in good time.
- The Moderator said he was preparing to move into his new house in Prestwick in the coming weeks. He was very pleased with the house, but it would seem rather small after living in the Manse for so long. He would take two weeks' holiday before vacating the Manse on 15th April.
- The Moderator informed members that the new Offering Plates had been dedicated in memory of Dr Bob Henderson. Designed by Stuart Clachan, the Plates had been gifted to the Church in Bob's memory by his family.
- The Moderator said that the '20s in the Pews' scheme had been operating since 1994, when £9,000 had been raised. Many charities had benefitted over the years. Following discussion, it was agreed that the proceeds in the coming year would go to Alzheimer Scotland.
- Address to Members of Session: The Moderator noted that, for him, this was the final meeting of the Kirk Session. He spoke of his joy and privilege at being Moderator of the Kirk Session for over twenty-seven years. He said that each member had been invaluable to him and to the ongoing life of St Columba Church. Words were not adequate to express the joy, blessing, comfort and support which had been given to him.

The Call to him to be Minister was signed by 1414 people and he had now conducted 832 of their funerals. Many whom he knew and loved had gone and others had come on board. He was indebted to them all. He paid tribute to the four Session Clerks who had served alongside him: Jim Younger, Ken Gray, John Forsyth and Bob Bartholomew.

He assured members that, once he had retired, he would not accept requests for

conducting funerals or weddings in order that his successor had space to find his or her own way forward. However, he hoped that he would eventually come back on occasion to worship in the building which he had loved. There was much he would miss once he had left.

He closed by saying that he loved all the members on the Roll and the Church with all the passion that God had given him. The challenge now was to commit ourselves in prayer for the Nominations Committee, the transition process during the Vacancy and for our new Minister, whom God had already chosen. He urged members not to look back, but to look forward to some of the greatest days in the history of Ayr St Columba.

Members stood in a warm, extended and emotional appreciation of the Moderator's words.

- The Cathcart St Hall had been placed on the open market and had attracted interest from six parties.
- The Review and Planning Committee proposed that the house at 82 Chalmers Road be taken off the market and be let out instead. The proposal was approved and the matter was formally remitted to the Review and Planning Committee for action.
- The Clerk expressed his thanks to Mrs Margaret Doncaster who had dealt very efficiently with a problem regarding the Utility Voucher scheme at Lochside.
- Some activities were still running at Lochside. There were a few social clubs and there was an after school club for Primary pupils on a Wednesday afternoon. It was hoped to arrange a Holiday Club at Easter and a Family Event on some Sunday afternoons. The Clerk expressed his gratitude to the volunteers who were running these activities.
- The Moderator spoke in praise of the work done in very difficult circumstances at Lochside by Colin Naismith, Mike and Nancy Mortimer, Duncan Anderson, Stuart McKinlay and Keith Fullerton. Despite the recent issues, there was no doubt about the commitment and the quality of these good folk who had achieved a great deal and who deserved the gratitude of Session.
- The Senior Outing this year would visit Rosslyn Chapel followed by a meal at the Fenwick Hotel. The cost would be £20 per person and the Church would cover the cost of £500 for the bus.
- Mrs Bartholomew reported that the Electoral Register had been sent to the Presbytery Clerk in connection with the forthcoming Vacancy.
- Tribute to the Moderator: The Clerk expressed gratitude for the ministry of the Moderator at Ayr St Columba Church on behalf of all members of the Kirk Session. For over 27 years the Moderator had kept the individuals who comprise our Kirk Session in good order. He had led them, directed them, informed them and reassured them in a manner which had set him apart and which we would sorely miss. It was more than a privilege to thank him for all he had done. The Clerk expressed profound gratitude for it all and offered the Moderator very best wishes for a happy, relaxed and Session-free retirement.

R A Bartholomew

Session Clerk

St Columba's Kids

At St Columba's Kids since Easter we have been enjoying following the early church through the book of Acts.

There are so many lessons that we have been able to reflect on from these first Christians that each week gives us a new challenge in our own lives.

Just the other week some members of the congregation for the 11.15 service received 'Be Bold' badges and had the story of Peter and John in front of the Sanhedrin recounted to them from even the youngest members of the beginners.

Each Sunday sees the team offer a morning of songs, craft, games, challenges, snack and reflection on the Bible story that we are focussing on that week. We look forward to prize-giving in a few weeks time and our end of year trip, which this year will be at the Heads of Ayr Farm Park to round off the year.

We are always delighted to welcome new faces to St Columba's Kids – so if you have or know of a child between 3 years old and primary 7 then bring them along to try it out!

P.S. – Keep an eye out on the church Facebook page @ayrstcolumba to get a glimpse of some of the things that we are getting up to!

The children are also pictured presenting Fraser with a Bible on his retirement



LIFE AND WORK

JUNE 2019

Bringing Clean Water and Sanitation

Jackie Macadam reports on the work of Toilet Twinning and AquaAid

'From Jeely Piece to Jane Haining'

Interview with Mary Miller, author of a new book on the missionary who died in Auschwitz

Baking Bread

Continuing the series celebrating 150 years of social care in the Church of Scotland, the Rev Dr Doug Gay visits CrossReach project Threshold.

Diaconate Spotlight

A major conference for deacons and deaconesses is returning to Scotland in June

General Assembly 2019

Summaries of reports to this year's Assembly, including the Radical Action Plan

Disaster and Redemption

Continuing his series on stories of slavery and freedom in the Bible, the Rev Richard Baxter considers the best-known: the story of Joseph.

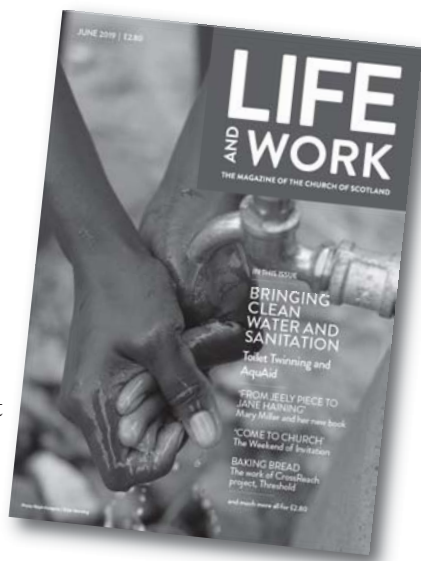
'Go On'

The Very Rev Dr James Simpson reflects on a meeting with Sir Harry Secombe

Plus news, reviews, letters, registers and crosswords

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Ayr Presbytery Meeting

May 7, 2019 within the Carrick Centre, Maybole

Extension Ayr : St Quivox: Presbytery granted an Extension of Leave of Call to Ayr: St Quivox for a further period of one year.

Ministers from Non - EEA Countries excluding Switzerland: Presbytery agreed that Coylton Parish Church linked with Drongan Parish Church and that Ayr: St Andrews may be listed for Ministers from Non - EEA Countries excluding Switzerland.

Appointment of Additional Elder: Presbytery appointed Mrs Lorna Paterson, Elder at Ayr : St Columba as an Additional Elder.

Rural Church Conference, Carrick Centre, Maybole: Presbytery was updated on the 5th Rural Church Conference which was held on Saturday 4 May 2019. 36 participants attended and the Conference theme was how mission and outreach work could be undertaken in a rural situation. It was recognised that there is not a one size fit for all and the Conference proved once again to be a success.

Street Pastors: Presbytery made an appeal for individuals to volunteer to become Street Pastors in the Ayr and Prestwick Areas.

Release of Funds from the Consolidated Fabric Fund: Presbytery noted that while Presbytery rules and procedures for the carrying out of repairs or alterations to Churches, Halls and Manses require the approval of Presbytery for works costing £20,000 or over, requests to the General Trustees for the release of any amount of capital or the release of revenue in excess of £10,000 require the support of Presbytery and should be accompanied by an appropriate Extract Minute.

Three Presbyteries Union: Presbytery agreed to hold back meantime on any proposed Union between the three Ayrshire Presbyteries. Thus is because the General Assembly in May 2019 will be considering the Radical Action Plan which looks at reducing the number of current Presbyteries to 12. Further discussions will take place following any decisions arising from the General Assembly on this issue.

Care for Creation: Presbytery in light of increased awareness of environmental issues encourage individuals and congregations to take time to reflect on ways in which they can care for creation. There is an opportunity to empower their way forward.

George Park
Presbytery Elder

Session Clerk's Report to the Stated Annual Meeting on 2nd April 2019

Dr Lacy, Fellow Elders, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At our Stated Annual Meeting one year ago our Minister announced that he would retire at the end of March 2019. It is no exaggeration to say that the 12 months which have passed since then have been unlike any others during my time in office or, I suspect, any others at all. The events we have witnessed in this past year have ranged widely from scenes of unprecedented celebration to moments of great sadness and our members have experienced deep emotions arising from both positive and negative experiences. As we move forward into a new era in the life of our Church, it is my belief that the inspiration derived from the positive experiences and the lessons learned from the negative ones will help to ensure that the future is bright, that it is positive and that it is characterised by the very best principles.

We are certainly in a strong position to bring this about, as will become clear when we acknowledge the many people who are deserving of our gratitude for their efforts throughout the past year. It is a pleasure to recognise all that they have done and it is also a very fulfilling task. The length of the list alone has brought home to me just how fortunate we are to have so many hard working, capable and committed folk among us.

Let me start with our Treasurer Tom and the Finance Committee. I congratulate Tom for his excellent presentation of the Accounts for the past year. He has spent many hours preparing this and he has presented the figures so clearly that it makes the task seem simple. But it most certainly is not that, and I am very grateful for the time and for the expertise he has provided so generously over the year. This has been a very stressful year for Tom who has experienced a family bereavement and has had to deal with some very difficult financial circumstances over an extended period. I think that everyone who has worked with him, who has seen the quality of the work he does and the extent he goes to to provide advice and support for others, will realise just how valuable an asset he has been for our church. I thank him and all the hard working members of his Committee for their efforts throughout the year.

Our Fabric Convenor and Church Officer, John Stewart, has also had a very busy year. John has been heavily involved in dealing with matters relating to our properties at Chalmers Road, at Cathcart Street and, more recently, at Lochside in addition to the work he does here at Midton Road. Much of this work goes on quietly as the rest of us wrestle with other church matters, but it really does deserve a high profile. As always, John has done all his work to a very high standard and we are the beneficiaries of this. In his capacity as Beadle, John has looked after our Minister in an exemplary manner in his final year and I know that he will feel the departure more than most. I thank John for his wide ranging and valuable efforts over the year. I also thank the sterling members of the Wednesday Team who week in and week out continue to attend to the many matters which keep the church in good shape and fit for its higher purposes. It is a real tonic to come into the Church on a Wednesday morning and see this happy band in action. The good humour, the positive atmosphere, the willingness to be involved and the quality of their work are very much appreciated.

Jane Hunter and the Hospitality Committee have had yet another outstanding year. Everyone who attended Fraser's Celebration Lunch will know just how well it went and will appreciate all the tremendous work which went on behind the scenes to make it possible. I congratulate Jane and everyone involved in organising this once in a generation event. The Celebration which you planned and made possible will live on in our thoughts for many years.

We also appreciate the work Jane and her Committee have put into organising all the other excellent social events over the year. The Seniors' Outing and the Christmas Parties were much appreciated and they have added significantly to our members' enjoyment of a special year.

Many thanks to Linda Sharp and the Pastoral Teams for their continuing work in supporting so many of our members. The 'Time to Remember' Service was excellent and the quiet work done by Linda and the teams has made a real difference to families and to individuals who are in great need of support. Theirs is an understated, but profound contribution to the life of the church.

Thank you also to Bryce Hartshorn and the Education Committee. St Columba Kids continues to do valuable work with young people at a time when many local churches have no Sunday School provision and we are grateful to the Teachers and to our Sunday School Coordinator, Stuart McKinlay, for all that they do. This work is overseen by the Education Committee who are constantly looking at ways of providing more experiences for our young people. We commend them for this and thank them for all they have done in the past year.

Bryce Hartshorn will be stepping down as Convenor of the Education Committee this summer and I would like to thank him warmly and publicly for his work on the Committee since its creation in 2011. With his professional interest in education, his attention to detail and his willingness to do all he can to take the work of the Committee forward, Bryce has been a great asset for the church. He stood up and helped us out when the previous convenor left and he has been at the forefront in organising Elders' training and Heartstart events. He is always prepared to voice his opinion on church matters and is happy to share his expertise with others. It is a pleasure to thank Bryce for all he has done in his role as Convenor of this important Committee.

Irene Bartholomew and the members of the Central Committee have been absolute stars once more this year. The volume of work they do is quite astounding. The Central Committee is involved with Sound in the church, the Church Magazine, Church Technology, Charity Liaison, Data Protection, Safeguarding, organisation of Districts, Duty Teams, Church Calendar and most other things that don't fit into other Committees. This year they have volunteered to deal with major issues relating to the Vacancy, including the Electoral Roll, the Church Profile and the organisation of local and Locum Ministers. Overall, this is a tremendous contribution to the operation of our Church and we are deeply grateful for it.

Irene, Stuart and a few others are also regularly involved in the Messy Church initiative which brings local youngsters into the church for fun activities on the last Saturday of each month and also in the Holiday Clubs which have proved very popular with youngsters during school holidays. These activities are of great importance to the church at the moment and, I believe, to the church of the future and everyone involved is deserving of our fullest gratitude.

Now, if you will permit, I would like to say a few words regarding our operation at Lochside. Firstly, let me say that, having had opinion shared from all sides and with the financial situation having been discussed fully at the Trustees' meeting, I think it is very important for the health of our Church that we now leave the issues in the past and move forward. I will therefore not comment on any financial or management matters. However, I want to put on record my personal appreciation of the contributions of our people at Lochside. Many of our members have been involved there in one capacity or another and a few have given a tremendous amount of their time and their energy to help children from a community which is characterised by multiple deprivation and lack of opportunity. By any standards, the motivations, the intentions and the contributions of these individuals have been outstanding. However, I know that in doing this work, some of our members have felt unsupported and unfairly blamed for the situation which developed there. And I know that these people are some of our very finest Elders. Whilst it is right that we now move forward, as Session Clerk I feel that I owe a personal apology to any member who feels that they have been unsupported in these difficult months and I offer that apology this evening.

Although the 'Go for It' project has effectively come to an end, it is important to recognise that Lochside still exists and has life. I would like to thank Roddy McNidder for his work with the worshipping congregation there and for his support of our Minister and the work here at Midton Road. There are still a number of activities run by volunteers at Lochside and I am very grateful to Michael Hall, our caretaker, come cleaner, come handyman at Lochside for his excellent work in keeping the building in good order and for his support of the activities there. My thanks also go to Sheena Stewart who is involved with social activities at Lochside.

I would like to give a special mention to our Assistant Treasurer, Margaret Doncaster, who spent a great deal of time resolving difficulties with vouchers which had been issued to needy folk in

the community, to John Ferguson, who volunteered to help itemise and deal with the large number of items stored at Lochside, to Terry Swinn, who looks after IT issues there, to Irene, who has spent a lot of time sorting out matters relating to the day to day running of the building and to John Stewart, who has liaised with Michael on fabric issues. We thank all these good people most warmly.

Back at Midton Road there are many more people who have contributed in different ways to the life of the church in the past year. Thanks are due to Anne Drennan and the ladies in the Flower Teams for their magnificent floral displays week after week and to all those who deliver the flowers on Sundays. To Alistair Swan and the group of willing volunteers who comprise our Sound Team, our Magazine Editor, Norman Reid, our Webmaster and those who look after our Facebook pages, our cleaners Dot and Joy, the Oasis Teams, the Parent and Toddler Tea Ladies, everyone who organises special events and all those parents, children, Elders and members who support our kaleidoscope of church activities.

This, by no means, completes the list. We are grateful also to Dorothy Bone and the ladies who organise the Guild, to Linda Sharp for her work with the Ladies Fellowship, to Terry Swinn who organises the Men's Association, to Elizabeth and Margaret who run the Badminton Clubs and to Irene who keeps many of our members in tip-top condition in her Fitness classes. Thank you also to the members of various ad hoc committees which have been operating this year and to the leaders of all our uniformed organisations.

Lorna Hilderley has indicated that she is stepping down as Safeguarding Coordinator after many years of commendable service and I thank her for all she has done. I also express best wishes to Anne Mills who will be taking on responsibility in this area, which is critical to many aspects of our church activities.

A very special thank you this year goes to Ann Vance and everyone in the team responsible for the Lunch Café. Their outstanding work over many years has benefitted not only those enjoying their fine wares, but also the charities they have supported, especially the Ayrshire Hospice. We thank them most warmly for this and we hope that their work can continue in some form at some point in the future.

I would like to record my gratitude to members of the Review and Planning Committee. More than any other year, I know that this past year has been challenging and stressful for them as they have worked hard to respond to a wide range of issues. Matters remitted to them have included dealing with the Cathcart St Hall and the Manse at Chalmers Road, both of which have been rollercoaster experiences and they have also had a vital role in supporting the Minister and myself with matters which arose from time to time. I am very grateful for everything they have done for the benefit of the church this year.

Our Presbytery Elder, George Park, has continued his valuable work in fine fashion this year. His succinct and informative reports of Presbytery meetings are delivered with a wry sense of humour and are easy to listen to. I suspect the meetings themselves are rather less easy to listen to and we are very grateful to George for representing us so well at these and at other meetings. I thank George also for the particular support he has given me at Communion Services in recent months.

I also express great gratitude to our Director of Music, Matthew. The depth of his enthusiasm, the quality of his playing, the warmth of his character and his willingness to help the church in many different ways have made him a central figure in the life of the church. Whether he is introducing visitors, thanking performers or witnessing bells being cast at the foundry, Matthew is an outstanding ambassador for our church. We thank him for all that he does and express our gratitude also to the members of our Choir who, week after week, lead us so well in song.

Our Associate Minister, David Ness, has continued to serve the church in a commendable manner. He fills the pulpit with consummate ease whenever he is called upon and a great many of our members have been extremely appreciative of his visits, full of wise, comforting and friendly words. His

support for Fraser has been invaluable and his willingness to help during the Vacancy is very much appreciated. I thank David for his input throughout the year.

I also thank all our Elders for their work in their Districts, in their Duty Teams, at Communion Services and for supporting the wide range of Ayr St Columba church activities so well.

During the Vacancy we are very fortunate to have the services of our Interim Moderator, the Very Revd Dr David Lacy. I can tell you that Fraser was over the moon when he told me that David had accepted this role. He knew that we had secured the services of a highly knowledgeable and highly capable individual. David has already made himself well known to us and has set us off confidently on the path of finding a new Minister and I thank him for this. Further, in accepting the role of Interim Moderator he has allowed Fraser to retire with a much greater peace of mind and we are extremely grateful for that. And, of course, I am extremely grateful to David for moderating this important meeting tonight and for accompanying us so well.

For many years now I have expressed my heartfelt gratitude to our Assistant Session Clerk, Duncan Anderson. I have spoken of his wide ranging and unassuming support for the things that I do and for so many of the things that other people do. He has been there so often. At Session meetings, at Clerk's Committee meetings, at Review and Planning meetings, at Central Committee meetings, at Lochside, at Communion, at Easter, at Christmas, in the Office, in his District, at Funerals, at celebrations, when organising magazines, when driving members to Church, when visiting the unwell and whenever he was needed, he was there. But not only was he there, he was himself. His friendly character and willingness to help made him a friend to many, many people and he had no enemies. I have seen the respect that others have for him, I have seen the love that his family have for him and I have seen the love that he had for his family. He has been my colleague and my main support in Church, he has been my golf partner and my coffee mate out of church and he has been a true friend. He will be sorely missed and he has earned the deepest and the most sincere level of gratitude that I can offer and I know he has earned the admiration and respect of all his colleagues here in Church. Duncan, we salute you.

Of course, there is another gentleman whom we are going to miss - the Revd Fraser Aitken, Minister Emeritus (Ayr St Columba). I think everyone will understand that nothing I can say in this address will properly express all that Fraser has meant to our Church over the past 12 months and, indeed, for the 27 years before that. His contribution has been immense, his popularity has been unrivalled and his retirement has been very well earned. He is the number one reason that our Church has blossomed and flourished for so many years and I know that we all feel that we have said goodbye to a man whose work with us will be spoken of in the most cherished and affectionate terms for years to come. Fraser is unique and, on behalf of all our Elders and all our members, I wish to thank him for his service to the Church, which has been of the very highest order, and to wish him a long and a healthy retirement.

All the people I have mentioned this evening are, or have been, members of our Church community. They, along with many others whom I have undoubtedly failed to mention, have played their part in the continuing story of Ayr St Columba Church. It is very reassuring to know that so many talented people are working among us. The range of their achievements is impressive and the potential they give us for the future is tremendous. Whomsoever it may be who eventually finds their way into our pulpit will be a very fortunate individual. With the continued support of the people who form this Church, there is every reason to believe that they will also be a very successful individual.

We should look to the future with confidence, with expectation and with our fullest commitment. We should do this for one another, for our community and for those who will not be with us next year.

I thank everyone for their efforts over the past year and I look forward to exciting times ahead.

R.A. Bartholomew
2nd April 2019

Magazine Dates - Session 2019/ 2020

The dates below indicate the schedule relating to the Columba News in the coming year.

Issue	Occasion	Copy Deadline	Collation Day (Publications Comm)	Publication Day
September	Start of Season	Sunday, 11 August	Friday, 30 August	Sunday, 1 September
Autumn	October Communion	Sunday, 22 September	Friday, 11 October	Sunday, 13 October
Christmas	Christmas	Sunday, 3 November	Friday, 22 November	Sunday, 24 November
Winter	January Communion	Wed, 18 December	Friday, 10 January	Sunday, 12 January
Spring	April Communion	Sunday, 22 March	Friday, 10 April	Sunday, 12 April
Summer	June Communion	Sunday, 24 May	Friday, 12 June	Sunday, 14 June



Messy Church continues to go from strength to strength.

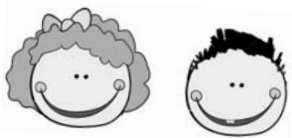
In April we looked at the Easter Story – it is important that our young people are involved in the whole story of Easter – celebrating the empty tomb and Jesus' resurrection. Lively Easter songs, superb crafts, Easter treats, and Kerrie told the story and there was chocolate! An exciting day for everyone.

May saw us on the Road to Emmaus – coping with shattered dreams in the light of knowing Jesus walks beside us always! This was a busy meeting and one of our very best! Our junior leader, Sophie stepped up to the mark as there were a few leaders not able to attend. Great songs and crafts, stories and prayers. Fantastic supper of Ayrshire tatties and home baked ham; followed by strawberries in meringue baskets with cream and strawberry sauce!

We look forward to catching up again in June.









Next meeting

Saturday 22 June

4pm - 6pm

Walking Together –Reflective Walks for All Ages

Walking Together was the theme of the 2018-19 Moderator, the Very Rev Susan Brown, and General Assembly has been encouraging churches to get involved in different types of pilgrimage.



What opportunities might there be to walk with a group from your church? Can you create a time to walk, talk and pray? Reflective walks can be a meaningful way for people to connect with God, creation and each other. They can be done alone or in a group, with church regulars or those with no church connection, in a rural or urban setting.

Walking Together cards have been produced to encourage conversation and reflection with people of different generations. These have proved very popular and have already been used by Boys and Girls Brigade groups, Guild groups and church groups of different ages. The cards focus on a theme such as a view, a stone, food or water, and provide walkers with prompts for something to think about, something to do and something to talk about.

Free sets of cards and a Leaders' Guide can be downloaded or ordered from the Resourcing Mission shop: <https://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/shop>

In Your paths, Lord Jesus,
We walk, our hands in Yours
As You lead us forward
In step
Together
Open to You
And Your world
For Your sake

Very Rev Susan Brown

There are countless definitions and interpretations of pilgrimage. A new page on the Resourcing Mission website signposts just a few of these different approaches. <https://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/mission/pilgrimage>

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

JUNE 2019

DEATHS

20th March 2019	Mr Hugh J. Nelson, 25 St. Ninian's Road, Prestwick
24th March 2019	Mrs. Sarah McKnight, 22 Savoy Court, Ayr
23rd March 2019	Mr. Graeme Wyllie, 91D South Harbour Street, Ayr
2nd April 2019	Mr. John Cramp, 25 Fairfield Park, Ayr
8th April 2019	Mrs Rita Caddis, Redford Nursing Home, Ayr
14th April 2019	Mr. Kenneth William Murray, 47 Holmston Drive, Ayr
17th April 2019	Mr. John March, Claremont Care Home, Ayr
7th May 2019	Mr. John Ritchie, 21 Lothian Road, Ayr

BAPTISMS

Douglas	14th April 2019, Samuel Clark Douglas, infant son of Ryan and Linzi, 9 Solway Place, Troon
Maxwell	12th April 2019, Jacob Thomas Maxwell, infant son of William and Susan, 48 Beresford Terrace, Ayr

WEDDINGS

1st March	Miss Stacy Martin and Mr. Kenneth Gilchrist, 9 Sycamore Drive, Girvan
6th April	Miss Lauren McKinstry and Mr Allan Low, 17 Castle Square, Ayr.

CLOSING THOUGHT

**WORRY ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER, NOT YOUR
REPUTATION, BECAUSE YOUR CHARACTER IS WHO YOU
ARE AND YOUR REPUTATION IS ONLY WHAT OTHERS
THINK OF YOU.**

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REGULAR ACTIVITIES

MIDTON ROAD HALL

MONDAY

5.30 pm	Rainbow Brownies	Aynsley Bell	07914 842 118
7.30 pm	The Guild (fortnightly)	Mrs. D. Bone	441651
7.30 pm	Men's Association (fortnightly)	Mr. T. R. Swinn	441896
7.30 pm	Ladies Fellowship (fortnightly)	Linda Sharp	286951

WEDNESDAY

2.00 pm	Holy Communion (4th Wed)	Church Office	269524
2.00 pm	Fitness with Friends	Mrs. Margaret Doncaster	477381
5.45 pm	9th Ayr Brownies	Mrs. E. MacDonald	445529
7.30 pm	Girl Guides	Susan Christie	442374
	9th Ayr Ranger Guides (every second Wednesday)	Susan Christie	442374

THURSDAY

10.30 am	Oasis Café	Mrs. Rene Kidd	
10.20 am	Ladies' Badminton	Mrs. Elizabeth MacDonald	445529
2.00 pm	Men's Association Games	Mr. R. Park	268788
6.30 pm	Cub Scouts	Mr. D. Hope	263376
7.30 pm	Senior Choir	Church Office	269524

FRIDAY

10.00 am	Parent & Toddlers	Church Office	269524
6.00 pm	Beaver Scouts	Fiona Wilson	290414
7.30 pm	Scouts	Jereon Bolte	07511 489 755

SATURDAY

4.00 pm	Messy Church (last Saturday of the month)	Irene Bartholomew	269524
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