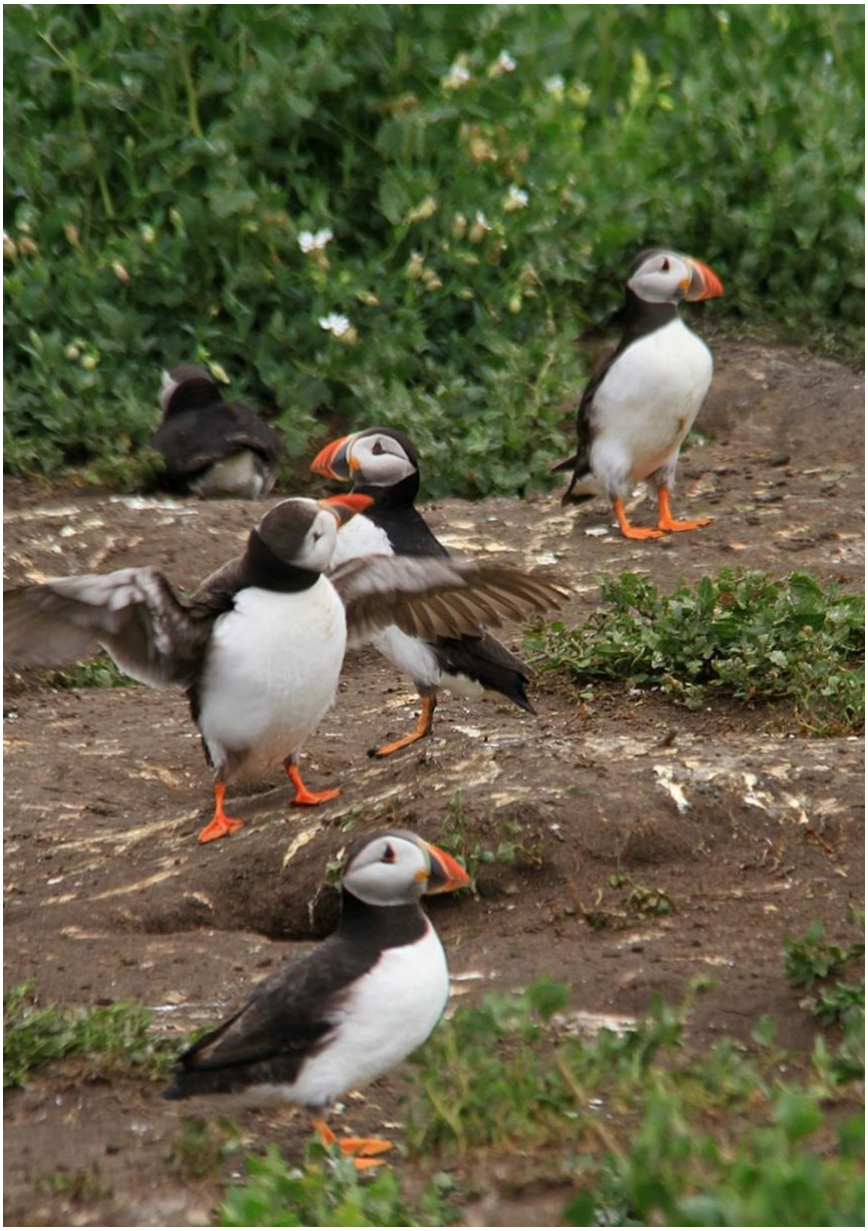
July/August 2024 Issue 162

The Link



The magazine for the linked congregations and communities of the West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood.

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Dear Friends



On the 18th of June I've officially been the minister of our linked charge for 10 years. Can you believe it? Time most certainly flies…

And what an amazing 10 years it's been! My 2 wee boys are now big teenagers, and our Frenchie, Leo, joined our family 3 years ago. Lots of change, yet one thing stayed exactly the same - the love my family and I experience at our churches. We came from far away, and are most certainly home now. I praise God for sending me to the West Kirk and Polbeth Harwood.

Thank you so much for all your love and support.

I will be in South Africa on annual leave until the 28th of July. If you need the services of a minister during this time, please contact Rev Alison Quilter.

I pray that God will bless you all this summer.

Much love,
Nanda

Mark 6:45, 46

Stepping back, stepping forward

Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

Have you ever heard of Henry the Hermit or St Cuthbert? Both are associated with the magical coast of Northumberland. St Cuthbert made his home on Lindisfarne, otherwise known as Holy Island – a small rocky outcrop connected to the mainland by a narrow causeway that for most of the day is submerged by the sea. Henry was even more of a recluse, spending his days in prayer and meditation on an island some distance offshore.

Few of us will feel called to quite such an austere way of life but we can learn something from their example, for there are times when we too need to get away from it all, if only for a few moments, in order to hear God's voice. It is not that he is removed from the daily round of life – far from it – but sometimes pressures can build up in such a way that they obscure his presence. When writing services, prayers, items for the Link and other things, there are times when I struggle for inspiration, becoming increasingly

agitated and frustrated when none was forthcoming. I used to try and soldier on, spending hours getting nowhere. But I have learned that walking away; take a stroll, or simply spend a few moments doing nothing, doing something different, can help me able to step forward.

It is noticeable that Jesus himself, at key moments in his life, made time for quietness, drawing away from the crowds spending time alone high in the hills so that he could focus on the presence of God, away from the innumerable pressures and demands put upon him. I know it is not always easy to do that. If you have a pile of ironing or washing up to see to, then more meetings and calls to make, deadlines to respond to, or family seeking your time, stepping back can seem a luxury we can ill afford. Yet, the fact is, it is a necessity; a step we sometimes need to make if we are to have any hope of progressing further.

Prayer

Living God, teach us to find time for you each day, if only for a few moments, so that I may hear your voice and discern your will. Teach us to step back and take stock, so that we may then step forward, renewed in faith, strengthened in spirit, and equipped for whatever you may ask in Jesus' name. AMEN

Rev Alison Quilter

The Bridge  '16 to 25 year olds'

'The Bridge' for young folk aged 16 to 25 years old is held quarterly. A get together and have a blether, sharing a meal or light snack and explore our faith and discuss things that matter to you as young folk in 21stC.

If you are interested please get in touch with myself or Nanda and bring a friend along too!

We normally meet once a quarter in Polbeth Harwood Church Café Area on a **Wednesday at 7pm**, but the September 4th will take place off-site. Look out for the WhatsApp details.

The Bridge let's stay connected! Look forward to seeing you there!

Nanda and Alison

Save the Date

The fundraising group at the West Kirk are holding another afternoon tea on Saturday 8th September with the theme being garden produce. More details at a later date.

St. Columba's & Knoydart Church

Mallaig

We travelled to Mallaig a week past Thursday {13 June 2024} and stayed in a B&B before a trip across to Rum on the Friday. We had time in the morning to explore around the town before catching the ferry after 12 p.m. We also visited the Church of Scotland, up Davies Brae and Annies Brae, so quite prominent above the town.

I had recall that Mallaig was the home town of Mary Dilbey, where she spent her childhood and school years before moving to Edinburgh to teach, and then became our Minister in West Calder. The Church is quite plain, painted white on the outside with arched windows all around. When we approached the door we heard noise from inside, we opened the door and met a lady 'hoovering' in preparation for arranging flowers. She talked with us for a while and we explained our connection through Mary, whom she did not know, perhaps no surprise after this length of time. The Minister of the Church also visits the Small Isles, Rum, Canna, Eigg and Muck, and also Morar and Arisaig. A large parish to be covered by one Minister.

The interior walls are also painted white but with a dark red arch feature above the altar table and decorative red frieze around the apse. The roof is dark exposed timber structure and boarding, with a red carpet and light wood pews. Very well maintained throughout.

During our wait for the ferry I took a photo of the Church, which can be viewed from the terminal. The bell on top of the front gable is prominent from there.

Stewart Munro, 23 June 2024

JAM & Sunday Club are now on their summer holidays, but children are always welcome in church any Sunday over the summer. Both groups resume on Sunday September 1st.





KIDS, during the summer holidays why not try making your own home-made ice lollies? You don't need to buy special moulds, you could just use a small plastic yogurt tub and plastic spoon.

We have listed below a few healthy food choices for your creamy fruit flavoured ice lollies.

Ingredients

1 cup of Greek yogurt, 1 soft banana, 1 cup of Raspberries

Mix together and pour into the moulds, freeze for at least six hours.

Other options to try:

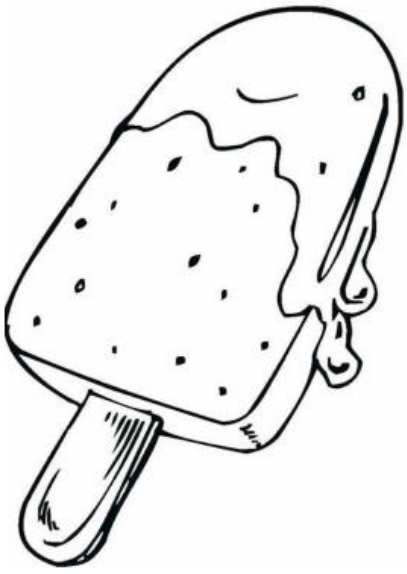
Vanilla yogurt & Strawberries - Mixed berry yogurt & blueberries -

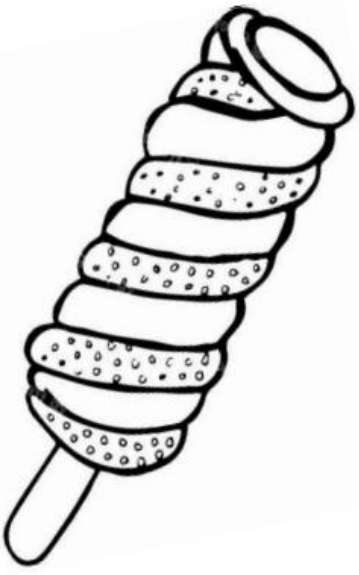
Natural yogurt with banana and honey.

Perhaps you could experiment with different fruit and yogurt flavours and tell us what was your favourite?

<u>Colour these images below to brighten up this page</u>







ROCKY'S plaice

The big count down is now on!

Come July 1st we have only 28 sleeps until we open the doors to Rocky's Plaice the best Fish & Chip restaurant in the whole of West Lothian!

We currently have 56 children registered with still a few more places to fill, before we close registration. So if you know of any children who would like to join us can you please pass this information on to them, so they can act quickly to secure a ***plaice***. See QR code below.



<u>A wee Holiday Club information reminder</u>.

Rocky's Place welcomes all children who will be age to go into primary one this August, right up to children who have currently just completed P7 and will start high school in August.

It starts at 10am on Monday 29th of July and ends on Friday 2nd of August, but we will be introducing the theme of the holiday club at our Sunday morning family service, in **The West Kirk** on Sunday 28th of July at 9:45am to which everyone is very warmly invited.

We end the week with a very colourful family service on Sunday 4th of August in **Polbeth Harwood Church** (AKA Rocky's Plaice) at 11:15am

This year, we have a record breaking team of young helpers 18 years and under, and we do promise an action packed week for everyone who is able to join us! And the best bit is, it is absolutely *FREE! Yes, free for all children.*

Where else in the county can you get two and a half hours of rest and relaxation for a week for free during the summer holidays?

Let us take care of the kids while you put your feet up and enjoy the morning.

"Haha image: Freepik.com".

BEST BITS

COME JOIN US AT

Polbeth Harwood Church

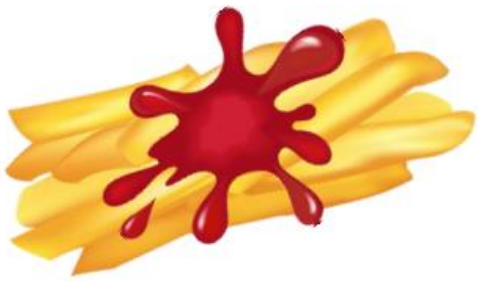
Friday August 2nd at 7pm

Were we will share with you a selection of our best bits from throughout the week at holiday club!

This will last around 30 minutes, so it is not a late night and we will end with a cuppa and some very tasty topical goodies!

This invitation is for everyone, whether you know a child or helper who attended the club, come see what we go up to!





Fish Image by ibrandify on Freepik.com

Birds of the Bible – The Raven

From time to time as we listen to scripture readings during Sunday services or while we are reading the Bible in other contexts, we may notice that different species of bird are mentioned. In the coming editions of The Link I plan to write a short piece about some of those birds and explain where they are mentioned in the Bible, perhaps even why they are mentioned and a bit about our own, equivalent, native species here in Scotland if that is relevant. It is worth bearing in mind that the different versions of the Bible sometimes translate the original text differently so it can be unclear if the bird referred to is indeed the same as the one we would recognise here. I guess that just adds to the challenge of birdwatching!

The first bird to be mentioned by name in the Bible is the Raven and it goes on to be named a further ten times in both the Old and New Testaments. In Genesis 8:6/7 we read that “At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth”. Interestingly, unlike the dove, the raven was never re-admitted to the ark. Perhaps this was because it was considered to be ‘unclean’ (Leviticus 11: 13-15) or more prosaically because it found plenty carrion to feast on as the waters dried up revealing the carcases of drowned creatures.

Isaiah prophesied that after God judged Edom, it would be so deserted that only the owl and the raven would live there (Isaiah 34:11) alluding to the generally solitary nature of the bird capable of surviving in barren and hostile environments.

Perhaps the most surprising mention of the raven comes in 1 Kings 17:4 when the Lord declares, “I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.” Imagine Elijah sitting alone by a stream when suddenly a flock of birds approaches him. They are ravens, unclean scavengers. It must have been a fearsome sight to see these enormous black birds swooping in with bread and meat in their beaks. But they did not come by chance: God sent them, God commanded them, God directed them, and so they came to the prophet’s aid. Exactly what Elijah thought about this can only be imagined but I am sure I would have been more than a little afraid.

The final mention of the raven is in Luke 12: 24 where we are told “Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?” Jesus is explaining to his disciples that they should trust God for their survival. If God can provide food for ravens, He can feed them; they are far more valuable than ravens.

There are two types of raven in the Holy Land – the common raven and the brown-necked raven. Here in Scotland the raven is the largest of our corvids at around 64cm in length with a wingspan of 1.2m. It is all black with a massive bill and a shaggy ruffled throat and distinctive deep croaking call. In spring the birds perform remarkable tumbling aerobatic displays which includes flying upside down and nose-diving. Although ravens can be found throughout Scotland they are most common on sea cliffs and in woods and crags on hills and mountainsides in the north and west where they will nest on rocky ledges.

Ravens are scavengers. They eat berries, fruit, insects and carrion. They sometimes kill small birds and mammals such as rabbits and rats. Given their black plumage, their enormous wingspan, and their reputation as scavengers, it is no surprise that ravens have gained a mythic reputation. They have even given us a word that describes a person so hungry that he will eat anything. Such a person is said to be ravenous.



West Kirk Twitcher



The Quiet Service

A monthly mid-week quiet service in Polbeth Harwood will next be held on **Wednesday 18th September at 3:30pm** in the 'quiet room'. All are welcome to this short service followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and a 'blether'.

Anyone who would like to come and needs assistance with transport should call Sandra Dixon on 07855861223.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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Appeal for your Summer Stories

I hope everyone has a fantastic summer break. It would be great if you could share some of your stories when we return for our next edition of the Link.

Please email them to me at Sandra.dixon71@gmail.com so that I can get them into our future magazines.

Jak's Den

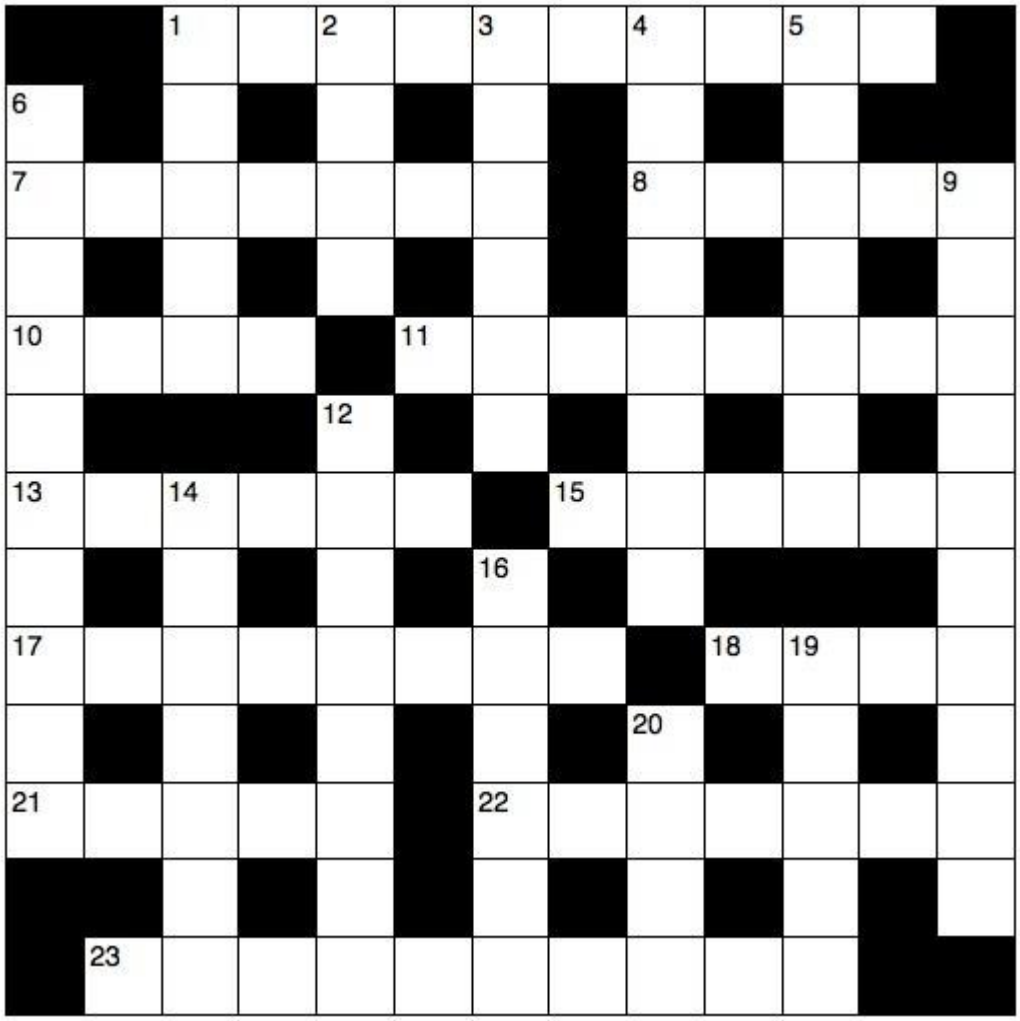
I can't believe I've done a month already of my 3 month walking challenge. I thought I'd be plastering myself in sun tan lotion for my walks 😂 but I think I've used more Voltarol than sun cream and I've been soaked I don't know how many times. Anyway my goal was 5k a day and so far I've been averaging over 6k which I'm pleased about, although not quite made 50k per week, last week being nearly there 48.6k.

Thank you to everyone who has sponsored me so far, by the time the next Link is due I'll be finished and will let everyone know how much I've raised .

Have a great summer.

Margaret Hogg





Across

1 Relating to the Jewish day of rest (10)

7 Point of view (Matthew 22:17) (7)

8 20th-century Brethren philanthropist whose construction company became one of the UK's biggest, Sir John — (5)

10 Girl's name (4)

11 Peter was accused of being one in the courtyard of the high priest's house (Luke 22:59) (8)

13 The fifth of the 'seven churches' (Revelation 3:1–6) (6)

15 'Now the famine was — in Samaria' (1 Kings 18:2) (6)

17 Banned by the seventh Commandment (Exodus 20:14) (8)

18 Insect most closely associated with itching (1 Samuel 24:14) (4)

21 Bantu tribe which gives its name to tiny landlocked country in southern Africa (5)
22 Familiar material in churches that use an overhead projector (7)
23 Last book of the Bible (10)

Down

1 The young David's favourite weapon (1 Samuel 17:40) (5)
2 'Your vats will — over with new wine' (Proverbs 3:10) (4)
3 Once yearly (Exodus 30:10) (6)
4 Milled it (anag.) (3-5)
5 Region north of Damascus of which Lysanias was tetrarch (Luke 3:1) (7)
6 Comes between Philippians and 1 Thessalonians (10)
9 Lake where the first disciples were called (Luke 5:1–11) (10)
12 Abusive outburst (8)
14 Are loud (anag.) (7)
16 Printing errors (6)
19 'Take my yoke upon you and — from me' (Matthew 11:29) (5)
20 Jacob's third son (Genesis 29:34) (4)

ACROSS: 1, Ambush. 4, School. 8, Tired. 9, Famines. 10, Citadel. 11, Endor. 12, Atonement. 17, Avert. 19, Oracles. 21, Married. 22, Lance. 23, Rhythm. 24, Hyssop.
DOWN: 1, Attach. 2, Biretta. 3, Sided. 5, Compete. 6, Owned. 7, Lustre. 9, Falsehood. 13, Ostrich. 14, Talents. 15, Farmer. 16, Asleep. 18, Early. 20, Alley.



SUMMER



July 24

Sundays	7th 14th 21st 28th	United Morning Worship	West Kirk	09.45
Wednesday				
Monday – Wednesday	29th - 31st	Holiday Club	Polbeth Harwood	10.00

August 24

Thursday - Friday	1st & 2nd	Holiday Club	Polbeth Harwood	10.00
Friday	2nd	Holiday Club Open Evening	Polbeth Harwood	19.00
Sundays	4th 11th 19th 25th	United Morning Worship	Polbeth Harwood	
Wednesday				

Summer is the time to

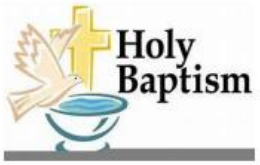
Read; Relax; Renew



September 24

Sunday	1st	Holy Communion Bible Class	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood West Kirk	09.45 11.15 09.45
Thursday	5th	Session Meeting	West Kirk	19.00
Saturday	7th	Afternoon Tea	West Kirk	14.00
Sunday	8th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.15
Wednesday	11th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk hall	11.30
Thursday	12th	Beyond Kirk Wall Services	Dickson Court Burngrange Home	13.45 15.00
Sunday	15th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.15

Parish Record



Baptism

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as them."

23rd June – Fearn Myra Griffin, infant daughter of Mark & Nicola Griffin (nee Pew)



Deaths

Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life."

To all who have lost a loved one we extend our sincere sympathies and prayers.

18th May – Catherine Beattie, Westcraigs Road, Harthill

2nd June – Elizabeth Waugh, Ravensbrae, Livingston

5th June – Robert Gillespie, Meadowhead Place, Addiewell

Be, O Lord, a guiding star above us,
a smooth path below us,
a kindly shepherd behind us
and a bright flame before us;
today, tonight and for ever.

Attributed to St Columba