October 2024 Issue 164

The Link



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

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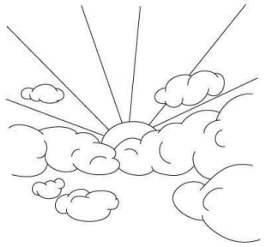
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Dear Friends



At the time of writing this letter, I was reflecting on the weather (as we so often do here in Scotland!). We had a lovely week, with surprisingly sunny and warm weather. But when I opened the curtains this morning – it was wet and dull outside, with a thick layer of fog covering everything. And that made me think of life…

Sometimes we have lovely, sunny moments – moments filled with love and laughter, moments when we feel cherished and happy. But then, sometimes we have moments where it feels as if all the sunlight got sucked out of our lives and there is a thick layer of fog hanging over our heads, making it very difficult to see what the road ahead looks like.

What I would like to remind you today, is that in times like these, we should never lose hope. Because the sun is still there, even if we can't see it…

Romans 5:3-5 in *The Message* reads: *"There's more to come: We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!"*

So whether you are finding yourself in a sunny spot or lost in the *haar* at the moment, please remember: God is there with you. Always. He can turn our suffering into perseverance; our perseverance into character; and our character into hope. And if we have hope, we *will* be fine.

God bless,

Nanda

Being Still!

Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here;
come bow before him now with reverence and fear:
in him no sin is found - we stand on holy ground.
Be still, for the presence of the Lord,
the Holy One, is here.

Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around;
he burns with holy fire, with splendour he is crowned:
how awesome is the sight - our radiant King of light!
Be still, for the glory of the Lord
is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place:
he comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace-
no work too hard for him. In faith receive from him.
Be still, for the power of the Lord
is moving in this place.

How many times have you sung this hymn?
A book I recently purchased called 'Finding your Hidden Treasure' is all about being still… just being with God. Silent prayer – no words needed – just be with God in the silence. I have found this book a gem. It slows me down, it lets me be – just me, knowing that God is with me, his presence around me

and that I don’t need to use words to talk to him - I simply listen!!

As I sit quietly, (a novelty for me I hear you say!), in the Lord’s presence I begin to savour the sound of silence. All without is silent. All within is silent. There is just God and me. And he is silent too. In the hushed and sacred silence, words are now a mere noise. I sit in God’s presence and take a deep breath. My whole being gathered together in a reverent hush.

This is the moment when all is wrapped in silence. Maybe a word comes from deep within, or maybe not. All that matters is open-ness, attentiveness, alertness. Not trying to understand. Just a calm letting be. The moment is a gift.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta was once asked: ‘When you pray, what do you say to God?’ She said: ‘I don’t say anything. I listen.’ Then she was asked, ‘All right. What does God say to you?’ She said: God doesn’t say anything. God listens.’ And she added: ‘If you can’t understand that, I can’t explain it to you.’

In daily life, when we listen to ourselves, what we usually hear is the jangled noises in our minds. In the silence we pick up another sound. When the mind becomes quiet we pick up the music that is on our hearts. That is a remarkable discovery.

If we can silence the noise in the mind the inward ear, the ear of the heart, picks up that music which is everywhere, if only, the world’s noise did not intrude. Those who know how to be still for long periods hear the music of God’s festivity. And this finds an echo in our hearts.

I wonder if people who have never heard anything within except their noisy minds are surprised to find there is a song in their hearts. I am learning this all over again. The touch of God in our lives seems always to stir a song on our hearts and on our lips. It's as if in any encounter with God the heart must sing.

Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist broke his long silence with a song when his son was born. He sang of the loving kindness at the heart of God. Mary, when she was greeted by Elizabeth as 'the mother of my Lord' broke into song. She sang of the great things the Lord had done for her, (Luke 1:46).

When we reach our still centre we, too, find ourselves breaking into song, a song of delight, a song of praise. We realise the absolute truth of who we are and this makes the heart sing.

Prayer

Living and loving God, teach us to find time for you each day, if only for a few moments, so that we may hear your voice and discern your will. In the silence …… AMEN.

Rev A Quilter



For those of us who have started to think about Christmas, and like to get organised in advance.

At the West Kirk this December, we will be collecting gifts for the children of inmates at Saughton prison, a very worthwhile cause which we supported last year.

Just to remind you:

- Only NEW, UNOPENED and UNWRAPPED gifts can be given (this is for security reasons – the prison has to know what is being handed over by a prisoner before it is wrapped).
- Gifts should be for children up to the age of 12, although gifts for early teenagers are also welcome.
- Ideal gifts are toys, books to read and activity books

Please do not give cash! More information in next month's Link.





Stackable, sturdy plastic armchairs

for sale at the West Kirk

£15 each or two for £20

Contact Lorna for more information

Blythswood Care Shoebox Appeal - Final Call

Just a timely reminder that the final date for handing in monetary or physical donations or filled Shoeboxes is **Sunday 27th Oct 2024**. They will be going to the Sorting Centre in the week of the 28th. If you have your box ready or donations to hand in please do asap - this will allow me time to check the box , add it to our statistics and bag them ready for collection.
I appreciate all your support to Eleanor Davidson at Polbeth Harwood and me at the West Kirk as we endeavour to ensure our Churches support this annual project which literally reminds us that what we consider everyday items are an absolute gift of preciousness to those whose situation is very different from ours. Let our Christmas boxes brighten someone's day to know that a stranger cared enough to make a difference by filling their box with Love.
Here are a few suggestions of filler items for your boxes: laundry pegs, vegetable peeler, wooden spoon, scissors, tape measure, sewing kits, crotchet hook, ball of wool, pack of cards, dominoes, nail brush, tennis ball, birthday balloons.
Looking forward to updating you in November with our final statistics.

Thank you for all your prayers & support.

Rhoda. X

A HUGE THANK YOU

Last month I wrote that I had nearly finished my walking challenge to raise funds for Jak's Den, I can't believe how quickly the 3 months just flew past

My aim was to walk at least 5k every day during June, July and August. I'm pleased to say that I exceeded that nearly every day and walked 6 and 7k giving me an average of 44/45 k every week. My total for the 13 weeks was 621.25k which worked out about 386 miles.

I enjoyed my daily walks , meeting people I hadn't seen for ages and making new friendships with people I met regularly while they were walking their dogs and I'm determined to keep up my routine and not be tempted to jump in the car as often

On the 2nd of September I visited Jak's Den to hand over the money that had been raised and was shown round all the facilities. I thought it would just be an office with a few rooms for meetings etc , but was surprised to find that there are facilities for teenagers who are having treatment for cancer, activities for younger siblings, quiet rooms , sensory rooms, comfortable counselling areas.

In fact, everything that can possibly be done to help families during the trying times has been thought of.

I had a lovely chat with Allison, who started the charity in memory of her son Jak. She has such a positive, cheery personality. When I handed over the donations we had our photograph taken beside the Angel Tree which is a beautiful metal sculpture of a tree with lots of branches bearing leaves with names of all the Angels who have been part of Jak's Den over the past nearly 10 years and was actually standing next to the leaf with Jack Angus Lee's name, who sadly lost his battle with a brain tumour on 30th November last year, a very poignant moment.

My daughter Pamela had put a Just Give page on social media and this realised £251 and my sponsor sheet had a final total of £410 so I was delighted to hand over £661 .

I would like to thank friends and family who supported me, with a special thanks to all my friends in both the West Kirk and Polbeth Harwood who gave so generously. It was greatly appreciated both by Allison and myself.

Margaret Hogg

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 me or Nanda and bring a friend along too!

We meet once a quarter in Polbeth Harwood Church Café Area on a **Wednesday at 7pm.** At the start of September we had a very enjoyable evening at the Chainrunner in Livingston when we shared a meal together and caught up with everyone. I was surprised how quickly our young folk can consume an Ice-Cream Sundae (Rocky Road Style!).

Our next quarterly scheduled meeting will be in December – date to be confirmed nearer the time. **HOWEVER**! – We are set to meet at Polbeth Harwood on Wednesday 9th October at 7pm to assist Rhoda with the ‘Shoeboxes’. We will be fortified with goody snacks to keep us going.

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

Nanda, Sandra and Alison



The Quiet Service

A monthly mid-week quiet service in Polbeth Harwood will next be held on **Wednesday 16th October 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.



"It's either an appeal to youth culture or we can't afford to service the boiler for the Winter season"

Birds of the Bible – Sparrows



In the Bible, sparrows are mentioned in two key verses that show their significance. They were common in biblical places. The Hebrew people generally considered sparrows unimportant because they were so plentiful, and even annoying, because of their busyness and tendency to nest around people's homes. But in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Jesus used sparrows as an example of how God values all the creatures in creation. Jesus points out in Matthew 10:29-31: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your

head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." Luke 12:6-7 records Jesus making a similar statement: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

Sparrows in the Bible represent how far the Creator's love extends for creation. While people may overlook sparrows, God always sees them and cares about them. Sparrows show us that no creature – no matter how small or common – is beyond the reach of God's love. These diminutive birds call attention to the fact that God values everyone and everything he has made. Jesus is saying in these two Gospel verses that since God takes good care of even seemingly insignificant creatures like sparrows, we can trust that God will take good care of us.

Besides those two key verses in the Gospels, the Bible also mentions sparrows in these three verses:

"Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young – a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God." – Psalm 84:3

"'They will come from Egypt, trembling like sparrows, from Assyria, fluttering like doves. I will settle them in their homes,' declares the Lord." – Hosea 11:11

"Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest." – Proverbs 26:2

Bible verses about sparrows show us that even the smallest and most ordinary parts of creation are worthy of God's care, so we can be confident that God cares for us with his wondrous love. We never have to worry that God has forgotten about us. If he watches over sparrows, how much more will he watch over us?

We cannot be sure which type of sparrow was being referred to in the bible, or even if the term was simply used to refer to any small noisy bird, but it is likely that then, as now, the familiar House Sparrow was prevalent in biblical lands along with the Rock Sparrow which we do not find in Scotland. Many of you may have noisy House Sparrows in your gardens or you will see small flocks around our towns and cities. Sadly, like many of our garden bird species they are much fewer in number than in decades past. Indeed by 2018 the UK population had fallen to such an extent that it was placed on the Birds of Concern Red List. More recent data shows a significant recovery in numbers but there is a long way to go.

Some of you may be lucky enough to have a pair of Tree Sparrows coming to your garden to feed. These little birds are slightly smaller than the House Sparrow and do not appear in the noisy flocks we associate with their bigger cousins.

Of course we must not forget the sparrow that isn't! The Dunnock or Hedgesparrow is an inconspicuous grey and brown but fairly common member of the Accentor family which is to be seen foraging under hedges and making the occasional foray to the base of bird feeding stations.

WEST KIRK FUND RAISING GROUP

Our Afternoon Tea held on Saturday 7th September was a great success, with all tickets sold. The theme for this event was Autumn Produce and we had a wide range of jams, pickles, chutneys, plants and garden vegetables on sale, and we even had fresh laid eggs courtesy of Lorna's young hens.

There was some produce and baking left and most of this sold on Sunday to those who joined us for a cuppa after the service. To date the amount realised is in excess of £670 and we will be able to add the quiz money to this early next month.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our fundraising event, to all the bakers, gardeners, coffee & tea makers and servers, and to everyone who came along and supported us on the day, your help is much appreciated.

Margaret Hogg



Festival of Light

A songs of praise service, with spoken word and drama to celebrate the light that remains with us, as we approach the dark months of winter.

West Kirk of Calder

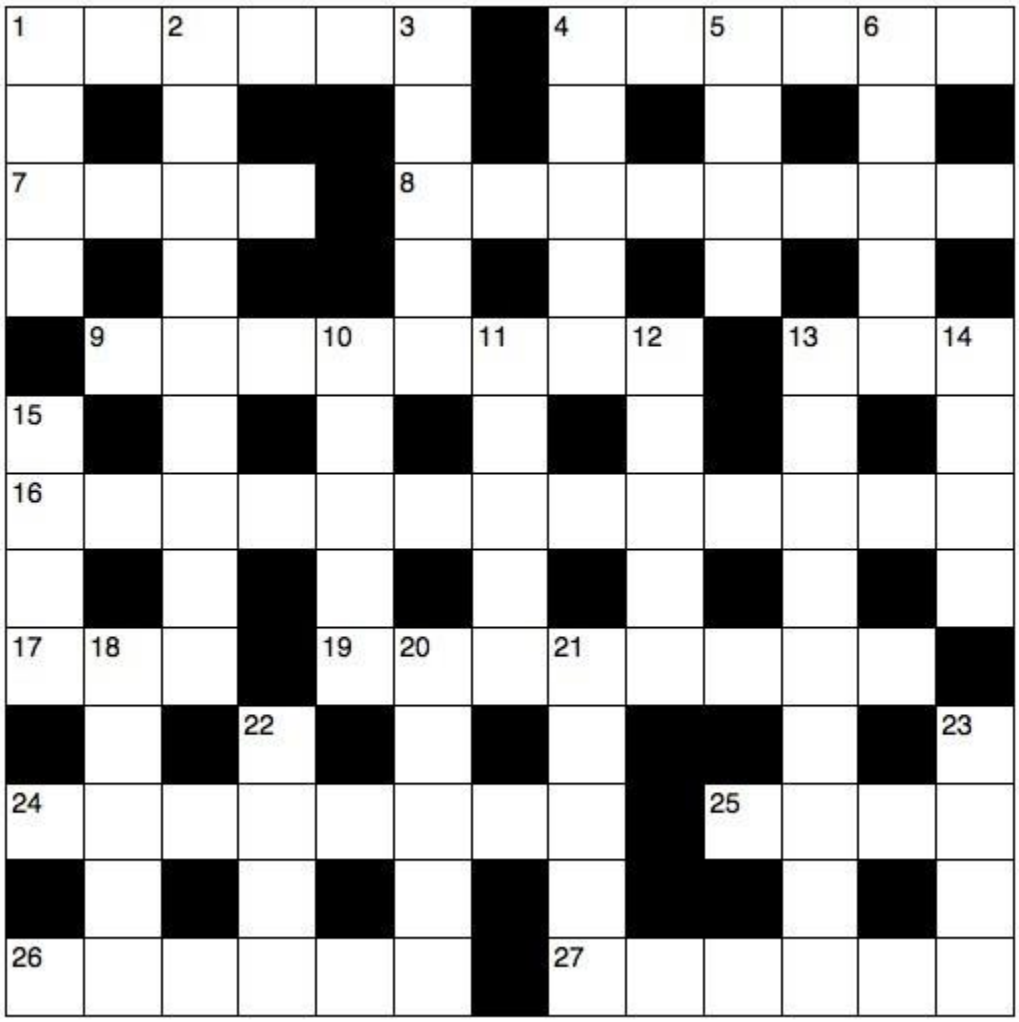


27 October at 6:30pm

Lasting approx. 45 mins



With light refreshments served in the church hall after the service.



Across

1 He must be ‘the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well’ (1 Timothy 3:12) (6)

4 ‘For we must all — before the judgement seat of Christ’ (2 Corinthians 5:10) (6)

7 ‘They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their — end’ (Psalm 107:27) (4)

8 See 19 Across

9 It concerned who among the disciples would be the greatest(Luke 9:46) (8)

13 Formed by the Jews in Thessalonica to root out Paul and Silas (Acts 17:5) (3)

16 ‘He has sent me to bind up the — ’ (Isaiah 61:1) (6-7)

17 Moved rapidly on foot (Matthew 28:8) (3)

19 and 8 ‘ — a great company of the — host appeared with the angel’ (Luke 2:13) (8,8)

24 Hindrance (Romans 14:13) (8)
25 Comes between Luke and Acts (4)
26 Empower (Acts 4:29) (6)
27 ‘Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a — !’ (John 2:16) (6)

Down

1 Sunrise (Psalm 119:147) (4)
2 The part of the day when Cornelius the Caesarean centurion had avision of an angel of God (Acts 10:3) (9)
3 He was one of those who returned with Zerubbabel from exile inBabylon to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 7:7) (5)
4 ‘No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born — ’(John 3:3) (5)
5 Animal hunted or killed as food (Ezekiel 22:25) (4)
6 ‘He encouraged them — — remain true to the Lord’ (Acts 11:23) (3,2)
10 Ruses (anag.) (5)
11 Jewish priestly vestment (Exodus 28:6) (5)
12 Visible sign of what had been there (Daniel 2:35) (5)
13 This was the trade of Alexander, who did Paul ‘a great deal of harm’ (2 Timothy 4:14) (9)
14 ‘This is my — , which is for you; do this in remembrance of me’ (1 Corinthians 11:24) (4)
15 One of Noah’s great-great-grandsons (Genesis 10:24) (4)
18 Traditionally the first British Christian martyr (5)
20 Relationship of Ner to Saul (1 Samuel 14:50) (5)
21 Jacob had one at a place he named Bethel while on his way to Haran, fleeing from Esau (Genesis 28:12) (5)
22 Bats (anag.) (4)
23 ‘You strain out a — but swallow a camel’ (Matthew 23:24) (4)

ISSUE 163 ANSWERS

ACROSS: 8, Kiriath Jearim. 9, Toe. 10, Ill at ease. 11, Hated. 13, Miletus. 16, Started. 19, Micah. 22, Leviticus. 24, Eli. 25, Mary and Joseph.
DOWN: 1, Sketch. 2, Priest. 3, Samizdat. 4, Shalom. 5, Wept. 6, Breast. 7, Embers. 12, Art. 14, Limassol. 15, UNA. 16, Salome. 17, Adverb. 18, Decade. 20, Clever. 21, Height. 23, Tear.

ST ENOCH



St Enoch



Statue of St Mungo in Kelvingrove Art Gallery

Visitors to Glasgow may well visit the St Enoch Shopping Centre - the famous 'Glasgow Greenhouse' - in the middle of the city without paying much thought to why it, or the mainline railway station for 90 years before it, is named after St Enoch.

Did you know……..

She was in fact a sixth century princess of the old kingdom of Gododdin (later Lothian), originally named Princess Theneva. Her story is quite remarkable, from the horrific - (raped at a young age and then dispatched off a cliff by her angry father) – to the transforming.

She survived, but that survival marked her as a witch.
She was cast away on the river Forth, coming ashore in Culross where she was taken in by St Serf.
There, she gave birth to her son, Kentigern, also known to us later in his life, as Mungo.
Around 570 AD Mungo founded a church and community in a green hollow called Glas-gu - a little place back then that we now know as the sprawling city of Glasgow, of course.


TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A
SEASON Ecclesiastes 3:1

YouTube

If you aren't able to be with us in person,

be with us online!



West Kirk Polbeth Harwood

@westkirkpolbethharwood

The linked churches of West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood.

Subscribe

Hit the subscribe button

Join us each week live online

(alternate congregations)

West Kirk 9.40 am **Polbeth Harwood 11.10 am**

Catch-up online anytime afterwards!





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October 24

Sunday	6th	Morning Worship Bible Class	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood West Kirk	09.45 11.15 09.45
Wednesday	9th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk hall	11.30
	9th	Parkhead School Harvest Service	Parkhead Primary School	09.30
Thursday	10th	Beyond Kirk Wall Services	Dickson Court Burngrange Home	13.45 15.00
Sunday	13th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.15
Wednesday	16th	Quiet Service	Polbeth Harwood	15.30
Sunday	20th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.15
Friday	25th	Youth Group	Outside Venue	19.00
Sunday	27th	Café Church	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.15
	27th	Festival of Light: Songs of Praise	West Kirk	18.30



November 24

Sunday	3rd	Morning Worship Bible Class	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood West Kirk	09.45 11.15 09.45
Thursday	7th	Session meeting	West Kirk	19.00
Sunday	10th	United service of Remembrance	West Kirk	09.45
Wednesday	13th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk hall	11.30
Thursday	14th	Beyond Kirk Wall Services	Dickson Court Burngrange Home	13.45 15.00

Parish Record



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.

23rd August – May Farquhar, Parkhead Cottages, West Calder

25th August – Gertrude Prentice, Hall Road, Nemphlar, S Lanarkshire

31st August – Robert Smith, Newpark Road, Bellsquarry

4th September – Nathan Gifford, Chapelton Drive, Polbeth

14th September – Norman Stewart, Saltcoats Gardens, Livingston

Lord God,

To those who are losing heart

give your heavenly encouragement and patience;

To the young and vulnerable

give heavenly protection;

To the ill and bereaved

give heavenly healing and inner peace,

as you touch our lives with yours.

Amen

Susan Sayers