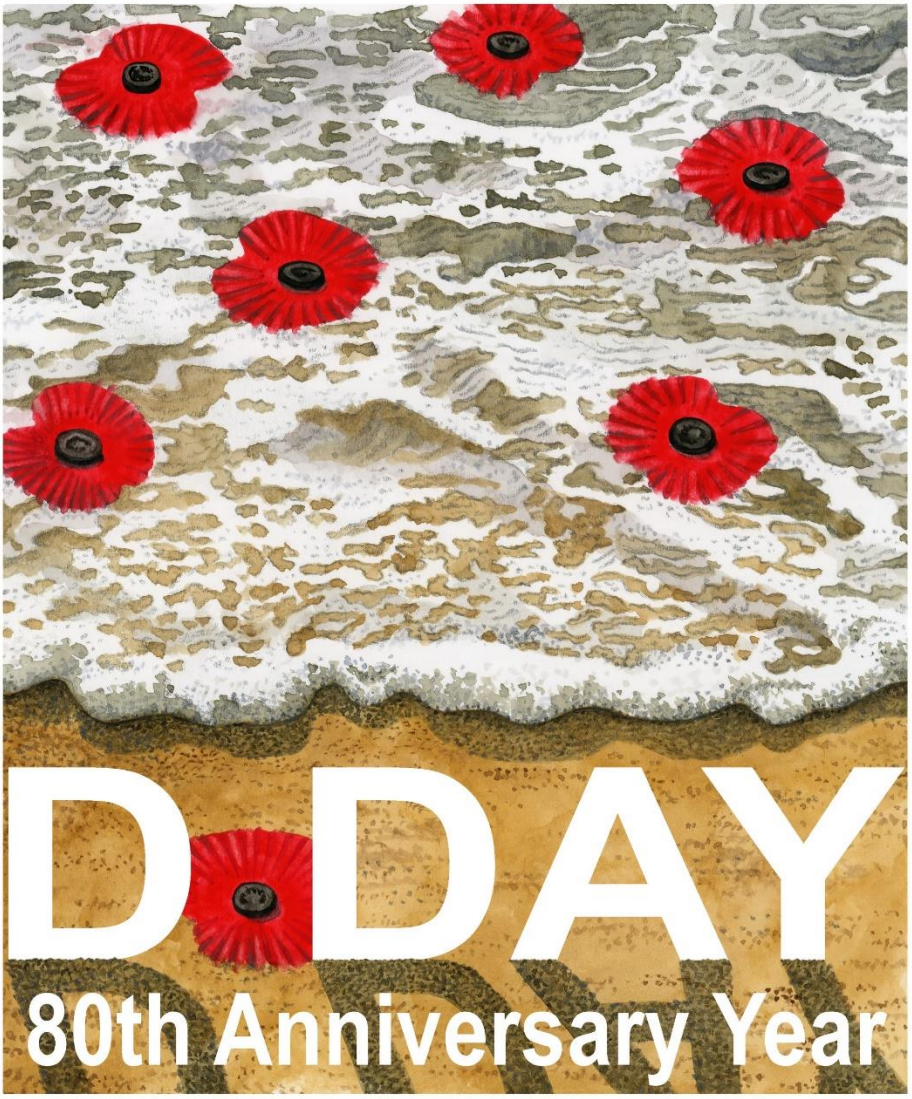
November 2024 Issue 165

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

Everything changes…

The lush green leaves that adorned the trees all summer, are now red, yellow, or brown, and most of them are not hanging on branches anymore but covering the pavements and the paths in a thick blanket that warns us that winter is not far away. And like leaves sharing a branch, hanging together until one is blown away by the wind, we lose people who make our lives beautiful too. This autumn, one of the leaves that gently blew away from our church-branch, is Marian Kinsman, our lovely Assistant Session Clerk at Polbeth Harwood Church.

Marian was just always there. I still expect to see her sitting in the AV-corner when I look up on a Sunday morning, giving me a gentle nod of approval; I still expect to hear her voice – organising, planning, praising, supporting, around every corner in the church. She touched all our lives. She lived for the church. She often told me that it didn't bother her at all if everything in her house wasn't in place, but if anything at the church was out of order, she would go sort it out straight away. And I think some of

the warmth that shone through her whole being, will always be in the church, even if she isn't there herself anymore.

It came as no surprise to me that her favourite passage in the Bible was 1 Corinthians 13, a passage about love. Because Marian loved, and she was loved. By so many people, and by God. In verse 8 we read that "love never fails". Everything changes, but love doesn't. Because the love she had for her church, will always be visible in Polbeth Harwood, and felt by the people who worship there.

The only thing in life that is evergreen, is God's love for us. So, if you are feeling the cold because some of the leaves in your life have blown away too, just remember, that different to actual leaves falling down to the ground, when we have to go, the gentle breeze called the Holy Spirit takes us straight Home…

May God's love bring you warmth when you feel the cold this November.



Much love,
Nanda

Autumn Reflections

By Rev Alison Quilter

Autumn, with its vibrant colours and gentle breeze, is a season of transition and transformation. As the leaves fall and nature prepares for the colder months ahead, Christians find inspiration in this beautiful time of year to reflect on their faith and seek renewal in their spiritual journey.

A Time for Reflection: Autumn invites us to slow down and reflect on the passing of time. As the leaves transform into breath-taking hues of red, orange, and gold, we are reminded of the transient nature of life itself. It serves as a gentle nudge to pause and ponder our own spiritual journey. Just as the trees shed their leaves, we are called to let go of anything that hinders our growth in Christ, embracing the opportunity for renewal.

Trusting in the Seasons of Life: The changing seasons remind us of the cyclical nature of life, with each season serving a unique purpose. Autumn teaches us to trust in the sovereignty of God and the divine order He has established. Just as trees trust that spring will come again, we can rest assured that God is working even in the midst of difficult seasons. In times of uncertainty, we can find solace in knowing that God's plans are greater than our own, and He is faithful to bring forth beauty from the ashes.

Finding Beauty in Imperfection: Autumn brings with it a certain sense of vulnerability as trees shed their leaves, revealing their bare branches. Yet, it is in this vulnerability that we witness the beauty of imperfection. In a world that often values perfection and masks, autumn reminds us that it is through our weaknesses that God's strength is made perfect. As we embrace our own vulnerabilities and allow God's grace to work through us, we become a testimony to His transformative power.

Harvest and Gratitude: Autumn is a season of harvest, a time to gather the fruits of our labour and offer gratitude for God's provision. It prompts us to reflect on the blessings we have received and express our thankfulness to the Giver of all good gifts. Let us cultivate a heart of gratitude, not only for the abundant harvest in our lives but also for the spiritual growth and lessons learned along the way.

To conclude: As we immerse ourselves in the enchanting embrace of autumn, let us open our hearts to the profound messages this season carries. Autumn invites us to reflect on the transient nature of life, trust in God's perfect timing, embrace our vulnerabilities, and cultivate a heart of gratitude. May this season be a time of spiritual renewal and a reminder of God's unending love and faithfulness. Let us rejoice in the beauty of autumn and carry its lessons with us throughout the year, continually growing in our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

What is the Biblical Meaning of Autumn?

Every season has a reason whether it be a physical season or a season of life. Each season comes with joys and disappointments, fears and anticipations.

Solomon tells us that "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:" (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

The Biblical meaning of autumn is also closely related to changing of seasons in life. Going from young to old, grief to joy, anger to peace.

Solomon continues reminding us that there is a time for all seasons of life such as:

To be born and die
To plant and to harvest
To kill and to heal
To break down and to build
To weep and laugh
To grieve and dance
To be silent and to speak
To have war and to have peace

It is important for us to remember that when we are going through a rough time and our season is dark, that we are not meant to stay in this dark time. Our seasons are only seasons, they are not permanent. You will come out of your grief or depression; your season will change from one of fear and anxiety to one of peace and joy.

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. (Isaiah 43:19)

Daniel praises God acknowledging that He is in control of our seasons:

"Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. (Daniel 2:20-21)

'The harvest of the Spirit' by Grace Johnson

This poignant poem by Grace Johnson encapsulates the beauty and significance of autumn as a season of introspection. It emphasises the parallel between the changing leaves and the transformation of our souls. Like the falling leaves, we surrender our fears and trust in God's guidance, knowing that He will carry us through the changing seasons of life.

The leaves, like souls, begin to change,
From green to gold in a vast exchange;
Autumn's embrace, a gentle reminder,
Of our own seasons, a time to surrender.

God's hand, like the wind, guides our way,
As we walk through life, both night and day;
And just as the trees, we shed our fears,
Trusting that His love will dry our tears.

For every leaf that falls to the ground,
A new prayer rises, a hopeful sound;
Our hearts, like branches, sway in the breeze,
As we find solace on our spiritual knees.

'The harvest of Grace' by Samuel Matthews

Samuel Matthews' poem, "The Harvest of Grace," beautifully highlights the connection between autumn's harvest and the abundant blessings we receive from God. Just as farmers gather their crops, we gather the fruits of God's grace, finding strength and renewal in His presence. This poem serves as a reminder to be thankful for the blessings we receive and to seek God's embrace during the season of autumn and beyond.

The fields are ripe, the harvest is near,
Autumn's bounty, a reminder so clear;
As we gather the crops, both wheat and grain,
We witness God's grace, a gift we attain.

Just as the earth bears its fruitful yield,
We too receive blessings, our souls healed;
For autumn whispers a message of hope,
That through God's love, we learn to cope.

Let us gather the fruits of His grace,
With grateful hearts, we seek His embrace;
For in this season, we find renewal,
And God's presence, ever faithful.

Prayer

Dear Lord, as the leaves fall and the seasons change, help us to trust in Your divine providence. May we find comfort in knowing that You are in control, guiding us through uncertainty. Strengthen our faith, Lord, and remind us that every ending brings new beginnings. Let us embrace Your plans with open hearts, trusting in Your wisdom and love.

Loving God, as the leaves fall and the air turns crisp, we pause to remember our beloved ones who have departed. May their memories bring us comfort and warmth, and may we honour their lives through our actions. Help us to cherish the moments we shared and to find peace in our hearts.

Loving God, as the autumn leaves fall, we pause to reflect on the beauty of Your creation. We thank You for the changing seasons, which remind us of the cycles of life and the blessings we often overlook. May our hearts be filled with gratitude for the abundance around us, and may we embrace each moment with joy and appreciation.

Amen.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY



The fundraising group at the West Kirk are holding a Christmas Soup and Savoury event on Saturday 7th December from 10am until 2 pm.

Tea and coffee accompanied by a mince pie or shortbread will be served from 10am - 11.15am. Soup and savouries will be served from 11.30am - 1pm.

There will also be the usual stalls, cake & candy, handcrafts, tombola & raffle.

So please come along, buy some goodies, enjoy a cuppa or have lunch and a blether with friends.

TICKETS

Tea/coffee and mince pie/shortbread £3; and tickets for the soup & savoury lunch priced £7 will be available to purchase in the next couple of weeks.

WEST LOTHIAN FOODBANK

HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Harvest Gifts

West Lothian Foodbank sends their grateful thanks and blessings for the 135.6 kg of donations that our linked churches of Polbeth Harwood and the West Kirk of Calder sent following our Harvest Festival services. This weight equates to 323 meals, and this will help families and individuals who are in crisis across West Lothian.

The Foodbank asks that all who are connected to the Foodbank service users, volunteers and staff, are held in your prayers as we enter the winter months.

The current shopping list for the Foodbank is as follows:-
Cleaning spray
Long-life milk
Razors for shaving
Shaving foam/gel
Tea bags
Tinned meat
Washing up liquid
Curry sauce (jars)
Diluting Juice
Instant Mash Potatoes
Dry Rice
Male Deodorant
Shower Gel
Sponge Pudding
Spreads (Jam/Chocolate Spread)
Toilet Roll
Vegetable Stock Cubes
However, any items will be gratefully received whether they be big or small.

For those that want to know what the current requirements for West Lothian Foodbank are then please use the App – BankTheFood

West Lothian Foodbank – Reverse Advent Calendar

The Foodbank is again doing its Reverse Advent Calendar during November 2024. If you wish these to be collected at either church, then please bring them to Church on Sunday 1st December when they will be collected and delivered to the warehouse in Bathgate. Many thanks. Douglas Horn



Birds of the Bible – The Eagle

The Bible's first mention of the eagle is in Leviticus 11:13. Eagles, along with other unclean birds, were prohibited as food for the Israelites. God gave the newly formed nation of Israel dietary laws to help set them apart from the pagan nations around them. The dietary instructions were also given for health reasons as part of God's promise to "put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians" (Exodus 15:26). Eagles are birds of prey that sometimes act as scavengers, eating dead flesh as vultures do. Eagles could carry diseases harmful to humans; God protected Israel at a time of limited medicines and inadequate sterilization procedures.

The next time an eagle is mentioned is in Deuteronomy 32:11 as part of the song God instructed Moses to teach the Israelites (Deuteronomy 31:19). In that song, God compares His care for His people to that of a mother eagle who spreads her wings to cover her young and carry them away from danger (cf. Exodus 19:4). Throughout Scripture, eagles represent God's handiwork, such as in Proverbs 30:19, which says that "the way of an eagle in the sky", an example of God's wondrous creation. Job 39:27 is another example. But eagles also symbolize power. God often used the imagery of an eagle in issuing warnings to Israel and other nations who did evil (e.g., Obadiah 1:4; Jeremiah 49:22). He chose the bird they considered powerful and unstoppable to demonstrate His sovereign control over everything.

Isaiah 40:31 is the most familiar biblical reference to eagles: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (KJV). This verse is the conclusion of a chapter detailing the greatness of God. It reminds the reader that the strongest of people may stumble and fall, but those who trust in the Lord have a strength that this world cannot offer. When we see an eagle in flight, soaring on invisible air currents, we can be reminded that the Creator who supplies the eagle's strength will also strengthen those who call upon His name (Psalm 50:15; Isaiah 55:6–7).



At least four distinct kinds of eagles have been observed in Holy Land: the Golden Eagle, the Spotted Eagle, the Imperial Eagle, and the very common Short-toed Snake Eagle. Along with other large raptors, including the vulture, it is likely that the scripture refences to eagles cover all of these birds.

Here in Scotland until very recently our only eagle was the Golden Eagle. Today it is still a rarity but can be seen soaring and gliding in the mountains where its nest sites remain heavily protected and monitored. It's huge size and splayed wing tips distinguishes it from all other large raptors, except the newly reintroduced White-Tailed Eagle.

The White-Tailed Eagle is now Scotland's largest bird of prey, but had become extinct in the UK in the early 20th century due to illegal killing. The present population is descended from reintroduced birds and its distinctive white head, neck and tail feathers and wedge-shaped tail make it unmistakeable on our wilder coastlines.

CHRISTMAS SING ALONG

The West Kirk will host an evening of Christmas Cheer on Sunday 15th December from 7pm -8pm.

So come along, wear your Christmas jumper, reindeer antlers, deely bops or flashing earrings and sing along to all your favourite Christmas songs, Carols and Hymns.

You can also enjoy a cup of tea or coffee accompanied by a mince pie or shortbread in the hall after the service.

There will be no admission charge, but a collection plate will be available at the front door on entry with proceeds going to a local charity.



FREEWILL WEEKLY OFFERING ENVELOPES 2025

The envelopes for West Kirk are now available for order. If you would like to receive these, please give Hazel Tod your name and address. They will be distributed around the end of November by your elder or can be picked up in church.

You can contact Hazel on 07714249492 or 01501762237 - there is an answer machine so please leave a message.



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 a blether, sharing a meal or light snack and exploring our faith and discussing things that matter to you as young folk in 21st Century.

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**. Our next quarterly scheduled meeting will be on **December 4th** for a Christmas get together.

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 20th November at 3:30pm** in the 'quiet room'. All are welcome to this short service followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and a 'blether'.

Please enter via the ramp door.

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

We look forward to seeing you there.

Sandra, Alison and Thomas

Polbeth Harwood Church Christmas Fayre

Saturday 30th November 2pm till 4pm

Come along to our Tabletop Fayre and browse the stalls for a Christmas gift or two. We have many local talented crafters and small businesses bringing their goods to tempt you.

Visit Santa's grotto for a photo with Santa.

Try your luck at our raffle and tombola stalls.

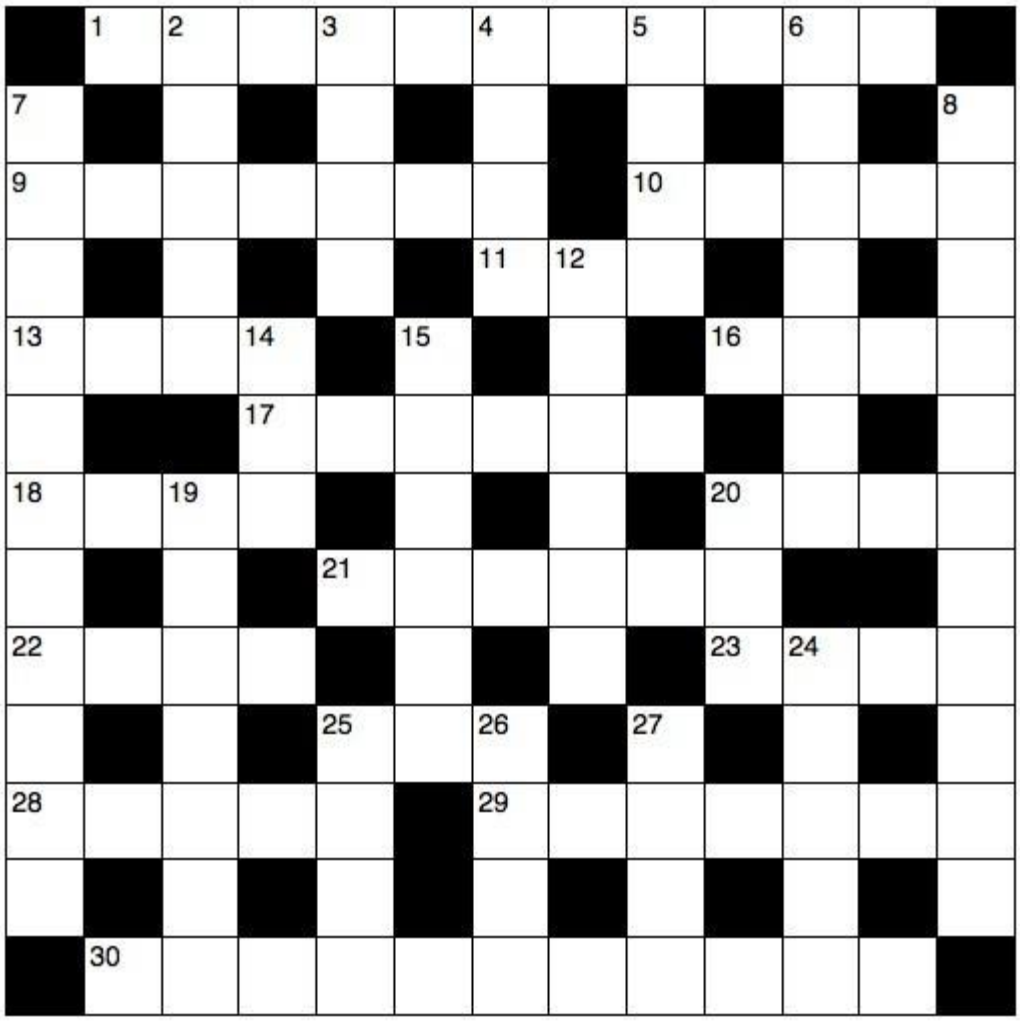
Enjoy an afternoon tea with friends and family and chat with folks you haven't seen in a while.

Hope to see you on the day!









Across

1 In David's battle with the Arameans, 700 of these were killed (2 Samuel 10:18) (11)

9 'No — , impure or greedy person has any inheritance in the kingdom of God' (Ephesians 5:5) (7)

10 City on the banks of the River Nile (5)

11 Stamped addressed envelope (1,1,1)

13 Taverns (4)

16 'Be on your guard; stand — in the faith' (1 Corinthians 16:13) (4)

17 'He will not always — , nor will he harbour his anger for ever' (Psalm 103:9) (6)

18 and 27 Down Where the magi came from and what guided them (Matthew 2:1–2) (4,4)

20 Ancient Celtic alphabet of 20 characters (4)

21 She married Esau when he was 40 years old (Genesis 26:34) (6)

22 A great-grandson of Noah (Genesis 10:7) (4)

23 Title accorded to certain Roman Catholic clerics (abbrev.) (4)

25 'My house will be a house of prayer; but you have made it a — of robbers' (Luke 19:46) (3)

28 Annie (anag.) (5)

29 Plead with (Zechariah 7:2) (7)

30 Tenth foundation of the new Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (11)

Down

2 ‘We have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by — hands’ (2 Corinthians 5:1) (5)

3 Uncommon excellence (Proverbs 20:15) (4)

4 ‘You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; fine — have been poured upon me’ (Psalm 92:10) (4)

5 — Homo (‘Behold the Man’) (4)

6 ‘He has given proof of this to all men by — him from the dead’ (Acts 17:31) (7)

7 ‘Our — is in heaven’ (Philippians 3:20) (11)

8 ‘This is a day you are to — ’ (Exodus 12:14) (11)

12 Assault (Psalm 17:9) (6)

14 ‘Jesus found a young donkey and — upon it’ (John 12:14) (3)

15 Liverpool dialect (6)

19 ‘Remember the — day by keeping it holy’ (Exodus 20:8) (7)

20 Nineteenth-century German physicist after whom the unit of electrical resistance is named (3)

24 Nazirites were not allowed to eat this part of a grape (Numbers 6:4) (5)

25 ‘If anyone would come after me, he must — himself and take up his cross and follow me’ (Mark 8:34) (4)

26 Evil Roman emperor from AD54 to 68, responsible for condemning hundreds of Christians to cruel deaths (4)

27 See 18 Across

Answers to Issue 164

ACROSS: 1, Deacon. 4, Appear. 7, Wits. 8, Heavenly. 9, Argument. 13, Mob. 16, Broken-hearted. 17, Ran. 19, Suddenly. 24, Obstacle. 25, John. 26, Enable. 27, Market.

DOWN: 1, Dawn. 2, Afternoon. 3, Nehum. 4, Again. 5, Prey. 6, All to. 10, Users. 11, Ephod. 12, Trace. 13, Metalwork. 14, Body. 15, Eber. 18, Alban. 20, Uncle. 21, Dream. 22, Stab. 23, Gnat.

Mercy Ships 2024

Africa Mercy is in Madagascar at the port of Toamxione. Global Mercy arrived in Sieria Leone in August this year and will stay until June 2025.

Another sister ship identical to Global Mercy is being built this year.

These ships sail to African Nations to provide much needed medical and surgical care where it is most needed.

At the age of 38, Malagasy builder, Fidisoa noticed a tiny spot appear on his back. Gradually the spot grew into a lump the size of a fist. It continued to grow until Fidisoa looked as if he carried a backpack underneath his shirt.

For 15 years Fidisoa carried the weight around, struggling to do the high level of manual labour required from his livelihood and unable to sleep comfortably lying down.

Fidisoa spent his life savings on three unsuccessful attempts to remove the tumour. To cover the cost of his third surgery in 2021, Fidisoa took on a work contract abroad to raise the final funds he needed – all of which he spent on the treatment.

Fidisoa has three children aged 5, 22, and 25. Despite the intense physical pain, Fidisoa kept on working hard in the fields to provide for his family.

Then one day he heard some life-changing news. Free surgeries

for conditions such as his were available on board the hospital ship the Africa Mercy.

Fidisoa boarded the ship on his 53rd birthday.

Volunteer reconstructive plastics surgeon, Dr Tertius Venter, from South Africa, was among the team who operated on Fidisoa in a procedure called a back hibernoma excision. The team removed the entirety of the benign tumour, a soft lobular fibroma which weighed 5 kilograms (11 lbs). After past surgeries regrowth occurred because not all abnormal tissue was removed.

After the four-hour surgery, Fidisoa's family, including his wife, daughter, and sister, were all waiting for him outside the operating theatre and were elated to see the tumour had gone.

This is only one of the many operations, medical care and education given on these ships and, as usual at Christmas, they need all the help they can get.

Your donations, however small, are much appreciated.

I will collect any donations you have on Sunday 17th November. Please remember all the volunteers in your prayers.

Lilias

Raising a smile this Christmas



Our Gift Services this year. Sunday 8th December
IN THE WEST KIRK:

It is estimated that over 20,000+ children are affected by the imprisonment of a parent every year in Scotland. And Christmas is a particularly difficult time for all.
So, this is why we have decided to support prison officer Colin O'Flaherty as he embraces his 40th year of collecting and organising the distribution of gifts from more than 25 churches all over the Lothians and Fife, for children of imprisoned parents in Saughton Prison in Edinburgh. A very worthy cause.

WHAT CAN I GIVE?
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, Colin says that gifts for early teenagers are also welcome. Ideal gifts are toys, Activity books and books to read. **No cash gifts allowed**. Sincere thanks for helping us support these children this Christmas with the help and support of Colin O'Flaherty.

IN POLBETH HARWOOD CHURCH:

We will be collecting for a brand-new project being set up by social workers for children going into care for the first time.

Many children go into foster care with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing, and like all children they would all like something they can call their very own. Especially at such a scary time.

The project will ensure that every child has a box to take with them that will give them some comfort. This will include a soft toy, blanket, books and pencils among other things. More information will follow.

Special services to Remember:

Joint Remembrance Service at the West Kirk: Sunday 10 Nov, 9:45am; followed by Ecumenical Remembrance Service at the War Memorial (10:45am).

Informal Café Church Service on Sunday 17 Nov, at both churches (9:45am WK & 11:15am PH). Service led by Nanda and Rev Ken Brown, about the very important topic of MISSION.

On Sunday 1 Dec at 3pm, we will have our joint Bereavement Service at the West Kirk. Anyone welcome to come remember a loved one no longer with us.



Nativity Service ~ all children welcome

As the leaves start to fall even quicker from the trees, and the nights draw in, it reminds me it's that time again, when we make plans for one of my favourite services of the whole year, our united family Nativity Service.

I wanted to remind everyone that this service is for any child who would like to join us and take part during the service. We let them choose how big a part they would like to play and if they have any special talents they want to share with us, it's all good! The more the merrier!

So please can I ask you to help me spread the word and if you know of any child or children who would like to join us this year, please let me know so I can get in touch with them now to ensure we get the right role for them.

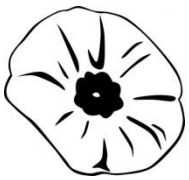
We have a full dress rehearsal on Saturday 21st December, usually at a time which suits most kids, and we practice each week at JAM Club & Sunday club on Sunday mornings from late November.



Nativity Service

22nd December

09:45



Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.
Deep peace of the Son of Peace,
fill our hearts, our workplace, our world.

Echoes of the Universal Prayer for Peace. Ray Simpson

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 Community Memorial Service	West Kirk West Calder War Memorial	09.45 10.45
Wednesday	13th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk hall	11.30
Thursday	14th	Beyond Kirk Wall Services	Dickson Court Burngrange Home	13.45 15.00
Sunday	17th	Café Church	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.05
Wednesday	20th	Quiet Service	Polbeth Harwood	15.30
Thursday	21st	Rosebery Service	Polbeth Harwood	11.30
Sunday	24th	Morning Worship	West Kirk Polbeth Harwood	09.45 11.05
Friday	29th	Youth Group	West Kirk hall	19.00
Saturday	30th	Christmas Fayre	Polbeth Harwood	14.00



December 24



Sunday	1st	Holy Communion	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
		Bible Class	West Kirk	09.45
		Bereavement Service	West Kirk	15.00
Wednesday	4th	The Bridge	Polbeth Harwood	19.00
Saturday	7th	Christmas Fayre	West Kirk	10.00
Sunday	8th	Morning Worship	West Kirk	09.45
			Polbeth Harwood	11.15
Wednesday	11th	Wednesday Warblers	West Kirk	11.30
Thursday	12th	Beyond Kirk Wall	Dickson Court	13.45
		Services	Burngrange Home	15.00
Sunday	15th	United Lessons & Carols Service	Polbeth Harwood	11.15
		Jak's Den Concert	West Kirk	14.00
		Evening of Christmas Cheer	West Kirk	19.00
Tuesday	17th	WL Council Christmas service	West Kirk	10.00
Wednesday	18th	Parkhead School Christmas service	West Kirk	09.30
		Quiet Service	Polbeth Harwood	15.30
		Advent Reflections	Our Lady & St Bridget	19.00
Sunday	22nd	United Nativity Service	West Kirk	09.45
Tuesday	24th	Family Service	Polbeth Harwood	18.30
	24th	Watchnight Service	West Kirk	23.30
Sunday	29th	United Worship	Polbeth Harwood	11.15

Parish Record

Proclamation of Faith

6th October – Marc & Nicola Griffin, at Polbeth Harwood Church

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 September – Lilian Sills, Hartwood Road, West Calder

26th September – Marian Kinsman, Langside Crescent, Polbeth

11th October – Nan Miller, Chapelton Gardens, Polbeth

14th October – Marion Miskelly, Dickson Street, West Calder

Caring Father

We thank you for the way you protect

and enfold us every moment of every day.

Be especially close to all those

whose journey through life is hard or dangerous,

and those who are grieving, exhausted and fragile.

In the days ahead, help us to put our trust in you

as we journey into the future with all that it may hold.

Amen.

In loving memory of Marian Kinsman

Marian was born on the 11th of January 1951, to Tam and Moira Walker. She was born just as the one o'clock gun was fired at Edinburgh Castle – she certainly knew how to make an entrance!

She was the middle child of 3. Janet is her older sister, and she had a younger brother Eddie, who passed away in 2019.

The family lived in Loganlea until Marian was four, and then they moved to Mossend. At the age of five, she went to school in Gavieside for a short time. Then the family moved to Bowland Estate. Marian loved the freedom she felt living there, as there was so much to explore. She was always the adventurous one of the three children. She went to Stow School until Primary 6. When her mum and dad got jobs in Limefield House, they moved to Polbeth. They stayed in the cottage at the entrance to the big house. Marian now went to Parkhead Primary School, and then on to West Calder High School. She went to the old high school first, and then moved to the new one in Polbeth when it opened.

It was there that she met Alex. They started dating when she was 15 and he 16, and they got married on the 20th of September 1968, when she was 17 and Alex 18. Sandra was born in 1969, followed by Brian in 1972. Marian loved being a mum. Her life revolved around the children and their friends were always welcome in the house.

Marian was great fun and enjoyed taking all the young people in her life on outings. But all those close to her knew that they shouldn't dare to go too far, as she had 'the look'!

Marian worked in Bellsquarry Primary School, after which she got an auxiliary job in West Calder High School, where she remained until she retired. She loved her job there.

Sandra and Brian both joined a pipe band when they were young and Marian and Alex, along with Janet, followed the band around the country supporting them at all their competitions. Marian would be seen sitting at the side of the competition field with her knitting needles busily knitting

socks. Not just for Sandra and Brian, but for any of the other children whose parents didn't knit, as they all had to have the same hand knitted socks.

Marian and Alex served on the Gala Day committee, making sure that the local children all had a day to remember each year. Marian also joined the Women's Rural and was on the committee for many years. As a born organiser, she soon had the annual summer trip sorted and organised like a military operation, along with the annual bus trip to the pantomime.

Marian was delighted to welcome Ian and Lisa into the family when they were introduced by Sandra and Brian, and she and Alex were so happy when their grandchildren came along. Iona in 2003 followed by Rothnie in 2005 and Holly in 2010. She was never happier than when they were with her - whether for a few hours, a sleepover, or mini break at home or away.

The church was always a central part of Marian's life. She started doing readings in the church when she was just 11 years old, and she was *always* active in the church community. She became an elder in June 1992 and took her duties very seriously. She made sure she always did her absolute best. She was Session Clerk in Polbeth Harwood Church for 26 years before handing over the administration. Even then she still couldn't give up her other duties, and she liked to make sure that things were run as she wanted them to.

She followed in her family's footsteps here, as both her parents were elders and very involved in church life, and her grandad was Session Clerk too.

Alex and Marian celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary on the 20th of September. Although by this time Marian was very weak, she still managed to send a message to Sandra at 5:30am to get a card for Alex and take it to her. She was so determined to write it herself.

That's just the kind of person Marian was… Making a difference in the lives of every single person she met.

Marian passed away very peacefully on the 26th of September, at Tippethill House Hospital. She will be missed.

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I thank God for everything he did for our church through Marian, and for the skills that she passed on to the rest of us to keep Polbeth Harwood Church the special place it is. Not having Marian here anymore leaves a huge hole in our church and in the lives of not only her family, but so many other people too. And I am ever so grateful – as I am sure every single one of you are too – for having been able to know Marian, and to have been loved by her…

May she rest in peace.

Nanda

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