

Blackbraes and Shieldhill
Parish Church
linked with
Muiravonside Parish Church
Easter 2018



www.bsandm-church.org.uk

Locum Minister: Rev Marion Perry BD

Registered Charity

Blackbraes and Shieldhill SC 002512

Muiravonside SC 007571



Locum Minister's Message

Thought for today

Now is the season of promise
When new life's beginning to grow.
The time for rebirth and awakening
When blossom and buds start to show.

The newborn appear in the meadow
On farm and in hedgerow and pond
There's a chorus of birds sweetly singing
In field and in forest beyond.

Daffodils brighten our gardens
Showing that winter is past
The snowdrop and crocus still blooming
Tell us that spring's here at last.

After the grey days of winter,
colour is appearing in the gardens once again.

Easter comes at this time of year.

(Anon)

A time when Christians remember that Jesus died on the cross and, like the trees and flowers now waking from their winter sleep, he rose again from the dead.

Christians believe that after life, death is a new beginning and most religions in the world look on the season of spring as a message of hope and promise.

Spring is an exciting time that lifts us from the gloom of winter to the hope of a new beginning.

Even as we look out of the window we can see signs of spring at the moment?

No matter who we are.....new beginnings are always possible.

We thank God, for the beauty and wonders of His world and for the signs of spring that show us that life does go on. The triumph of the Christian faith is that Jesus is not dead, he is alive , a living reality in

the present bringing us hope.

The message of the angels on that first Easter is still as true today as it was in the past.

"He is not here; he has risen!"

Like Peter it is possible to return from the empty tomb with the love of Jesus' forgiveness in our hearts and lives.

The resurrection of Christ gives us hope for salvation and for our own resurrection and eternal life.

May we rejoice, that God in his infinite wisdom and divine grace has opened our eyes to see, our ears to hear, and our hearts to believe this

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you"

(1 PETER 1:3,4).

Amen



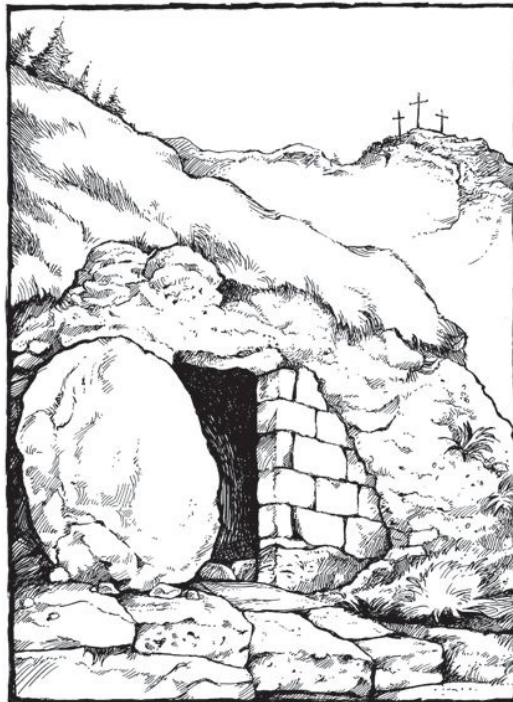
Welcome

Welcome to the Easter edition of the Blackbraes and Shieldhill linked with Muiravonside Parish Church magazine. Easter is here again and after the terrible snows that we had recently, we are looking forward so much to Spring and hopefully much better weather.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Easter as we rejoice in the wonderful news of our risen Lord.

Best Wishes and Blessings

From Drew



New Member
Blackbraes and Shieldhill Parish

Anne Simpson
on 18 February 2018



On Sunday 18th February, Rev Marion Perry admitted Mrs Anne Simpson as a full member of our congregation at Blackbraes and Shieldhill.

This was a big occasion for both ladies as Anne has never joined any other church and it is the first time that our Minister had performed that lovely, moving ceremony.

The congregation in Shieldhill extend a very warm welcome to Anne.

Rena Moore

Funerals

'The Lord will protect you as you come and go, both now and forevermore'.



Blackbraes and Shieldhill Parish

Elizabeth Fleming

Funerals

‘The Lord will protect you as you come and go, both now and forevermore’.



Muiravonside Parish

John Campbell

Nominating Committee News

As the Nominating Committee of Blackbraes and Shieldhill linked with Muiravonside seek a new Minister for our Parish, we encourage you as a congregation to pray thoughtfully and be with us along this journey.

A thought:

Someone once said:
“Don’t Walk behind me -
I may not lead.
Don’t walk in front of me -
I may not follow.
Walk beside me and be my friend.”

No matter how you are feeling - Jesus is the friend who is willing to walk beside you. Never feel alone.

Submitted by: John Robertson



Let us Pray

Heavenly Father, we thank you for giving us our never ending hope in our search for a new Minister.

May the light you shine upon us never dim.

We thank you Lord, for the strength and support you provide within our congregations in our daily lives.

By your grace, allow us to remain faithful and forever in your midst.

Be with us now and forever more.

Amen

John Robertson and all at the Nominating Committee.

A poem:

God hath not promised skies ever blue.
Flower strewn pathways all our lives through.
God hath not promised sun without rain.
Joy without sorrow. Peace without pain.
But he hath promised strength for each day.
Rest after labour, light for our way.
Grace for all trials. Help from above.
Unfailing sympathy. Undying love.

Submitted by: John Robertson



Guild Annual Report March 2018

This session marked the last year of the three year strategy “Be Bold Be Strong”, the theme being “Go in Love”. Guild numbers twenty-two and there has been a regular attendance at the Wednesday fortnightly meetings. The Christmas party finished early and the January meeting was cancelled due to wintry weather.

Evenings continue to run smoothly. Short devotions involving members begin our meetings. Barbara Currie takes charge of our finances and Janet Hunter still keeps a keen eye on our project. Christine and Liz make our refreshing cup of tea, always to a high standard. Thanks to Andy Pender and Drew Robertson always on hand to do what is required. Robert Thompson because of ill health has been unable to attend this session.

The Guild and Welcome-In teams continue to plan the varied syllabus and co-ordinate church events. We were saddened by the death of our honorary member Jessie Mitchell in October '17. She had attended well over many years and her valuable contribution was much appreciated. Another committed past member Sarah Churchill died in March '17. She had been a past treasurer and although unable to attend meetings in the last few years still showed interest in the group.

Four members attended the annual meeting in Dundee and some have attended Presbyterial council meeting and visited neighbouring Guilds. Philip Hacking opened the session. We had our annual outing to FTH to see “All Shook Up” a show which suited the many Elvis fans. A friend from Muiravonside Janie Allan gave us a personal insight to Wimbledon fortnight. The author Jess Smith attracted a good number of friends both from sister Guilds and beyond.

Recently a particularly interesting talk was given by Rev George Lind about our chosen project FGM (Feminine Genital Mutilation) related to a province in Kenya. We learned much about the efforts to campaign against this cruel practice and we even had a photograph taken for the project website. Also at this meeting, we had a welcome visit from June Annan, Presbyterial Council Convenor.

Our fundraising event is on Thursday 5 April when the Forth Bridges Accordion band will entertain. Tickets, including supper, are £6 and can be had from Guild members.

We give thanks for the continuing support of the Kirk Session, the regular attendance of members and for all who contribute in any way to the fellowship enjoyed in the Guild group. Our syllabus with varied

topics will be available in September. We meet fortnightly from 7.30pm to 9pm in Shieldhill Church Hall. Always on offer, are a warm welcome, fellowship with friends, an interesting topic and tasty refreshments. Guild is open to all male and female.

We are blessed in Shieldhill with many talents working well together

Whose we are and Whom we serve
Lorna Coulter





Tales From outside a Shieldhill Garden.

Blytheswood Care Shoeboxes



Blytheswood Care is a Christian organisation that celebrated its 50th anniversary having been founded in 1966. It is a Scottish Charity; the head office is in Rosshire, although groups south of the border take part in their Shoebox appeal

Over the years they have provided humanitarian aid and helped communities that have been touched by disaster. They send vans full of stuff such as toiletries, food, clothes medical equipment and furniture for schools and hospitals. In 2007 they sent three fire engines to Serbia and a further twenty fire engines and six ambulances went to Moravia, Romania and Serbia. These were replacing some vehicles that were just too old

The charity works with agencies that are working in the community receiving the aid and sometimes they work with the local church in an effort to ensure that the people who need the aid are the ones who receive it.

Blytheswood Care is one of the charities that provide help after disaster such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and hurricanes. They send supplies such as toiletries, some food, heavy-duty gloves. They work with other charities to provide shelter packs that have tents, candles, cooking pots and aqua packs that have water-purifying tablets.

The Christmas Shoebox Appeal is the best-known appeal and started 23 years ago when 300 shoeboxes were delivered to a care home in Romania. This year 115,932, 77 of which came from Shieldhill. Our certificate can be seen on the noticeboard on the back wall in the hall.

Over the past 23 years over 2 million shoeboxes have been delivered to Eastern Europe and Pakistan. Filling a shoebox is something that I feel that I can do to make a difference. The shoeboxes go to some of the poorest people imaginable and they give a bit of joy. It lets these folk know that someone is thinking about them and cares. In the countries where the boxes go, there is no welfare state that will provide help should the bread winner has a life-changing injury or illness; the type of injury that stops this person working. The alternative is to live by scavenging.

Some people have menial jobs that have little revenue and so live in extreme poverty. The boxes give them some joy and may be the only gift that this family will get all year. Some boxes are handed out to the children in school; some are given to the elderly in care homes. Wherever the boxes go, they make a small difference.

The shoebox appeal will go ahead again this year and I hope to exceed our 77 boxes.

Many, many thanks are extended to the people who handed stuff in to fill the boxes.

I think the time has come for the majority of people to fill their own boxes. Many of you will be cheaper filling a box because some of you handed in a huge amount of stuff. You can fill one on your own or with a friend, so sharing the cost. There is some stuff left from last year and I will make this available for people to take to add to their boxes. Already this year, I have received make-up bags and pencil cases and people are welcome to take these for their boxes. I will have Friday afternoons when people can come and collect stuff.

We may have left Europe politically; these people are still our neighbours. Jesus said that loving your neighbour was one of the greatest Commandments.

Shoebox tips.

The boxes that have lids that lift off are by far the easiest type to cover in paper.

What goes in the boxes?

There are some things that must be in every box:

Toothbrush and toothpaste; Hat, Scarf and Gloves, Soap, Small Toy (child's box), Sweets (use by date no earlier than March 2018. No chocolate, loose sweets and lollies or undated bags.)

Clothes must be new.

There are some things that cannot be put into the shoeboxes.

Do not Include

Damaged items, war related items, guns, knives, war figures, hand made stuffed/knitted toys, chocolate or any other food other than sweets. No chocolate éclairs nor chocolate limes. Books that are mainly words as the boxes go to non-English speaking countries.

Other things can be chosen to go into the boxes and those are clearly displayed on the red leaflets. It will probably be the middle of the summer before I can get leaflets for 2018.

Blytheswood Care have a good website and if you want to know more about the work that they do or the shoeboxes, it is worth a visit.

Rena



Update from Carol Anderson

I read the story of the Robin in the last magazine and thoroughly enjoyed it. We have a Robin on the farm who follows us around while we are feeding the animals, I adore watching the birds and especially the Robins so thank you for sharing the story.

I thought I should update everyone on what's happening through my period of discernment with St Andrews Bo'ness. My mentor minister is Graham Astles and he has been a great mentor, encouraging me to try out new things and shadowing in many different areas of ministry.

My latest adventure was with the farming minister in Ayrshire where we visited farms and the local farmers mart. I had a fantastic time as I have a passion for farming and perhaps farming ministry is somewhere I would look at again in the future.

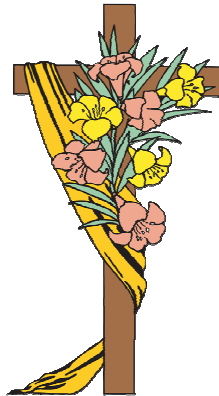
I have written and given sermons, lead prayers, given bible readings and even lead the entire service so having a great time learning new skills as well as studying theology.

My exams are going well and I hope to be at the local reviews in the spring of this year.

Life is not easy for someone in discernment and many questions have to be asked about our call and our faith, but I have enjoyed the process and the training, and God willing will soon be a minister in candidacy. Thank you all for your prayers and support it is very much appreciated and I hope to return to the pews in the back left (if only for a short time) soon.

Blessings

Carol





Drew's
view

*Hi Everyone,
I've decided to do something different this time and have written a story with fictional characters. However, the events described could actually happen when the greatest love of all is involved – God's love.*

Longing to say “Hello Again”

The operation was so routine that it would be over in just half an hour.

“A piece of cake, Mrs Walters! Absolutely nothing to worry about at all!”

This was how her consultant surgeon, Mr Edwards described it in very confident and cheerful tones as Emily sat in his office, which was bathed in a brilliant glow of morning sunshine, streaming in through the large floor to ceiling windows. Outside, from where she was sitting, she could just make out in the glow, hundreds of daffodils which now graced the hospital gardens. They were almost in full bloom and swaying ever so gently in the soft morning breeze.

She found this pleasant sight reassuring. It was almost as if the daffodils were nodding in agreement and sharing her consultant's great confidence. At church, her Minister had told her about how these gentle little flowers had always reminded her of little Easter bells which were about to ring out the wonderful news of the Resurrection. She thought this was such a lovely image and immediately felt a bit better.

“I might even be well enough to make it to the Easter Sunday service in three week's time,” she thought as the consultant made a quick phone call to one of the other departments and she gazed out at the gently swaying flowers again which still seemed to be nodding in agreement.

When the call was over, Mr Edwards apologised for the interruption. He possessed the most reassuring smile she had ever seen and Emily was treated to this again as he looked at some scan results, rubbed his hands and said:

“Right Mrs Walters! Here's what we're going to do!”

Emily liked him. She had asked what must have been some of the silliest questions he had ever heard in all his years of practice, but he had listened intently and patiently answered each one. This had been

done not just with great sympathy and tact, but also in a way that made her feel that what she asked was thought provoking and important.

“No question is silly, Mrs Walters.”

He went on to add, “There is no such thing as a silly question in hospitals. If it helps to dispel any fears you have or reassures you in any way, every question is important.”

But most importantly, bless him, he had sensed that deep down, she was scared of the operation because about twenty years ago, when she last had surgery, Emily had suffered slight breathing difficulties while under the anaesthetic. In two minutes flat, he reassured her by telling her an anaesthetist would be monitoring every breath that she took, as well as all the advances that have been made over the last twenty years with anaesthetics. He had given her new confidence. She loved him for that.

The operation was scheduled for the following Tuesday and as the weekend came and passed by so fast, Emily was beginning to feel a little bit apprehensive as everybody does in this situation. How she wished her husband Eric was still here. He had such a sense of humour and an absolute knack for making her laugh, even in the most serious of situations. He took nothing in life seriously and sailed along, whereas she was always the worrier.

Every time he spoke to her on the phone while he was away on business, he would say “Hello again my dear.” After that, he would continue, “You’ll never believe what happened to me today...” Then he would tell her a really funny story about something that could only happen to him which would have her in stitches! The “Hello Again” became a sort of pet phrase between them and they would laugh together at the beginning of each call.

Eric had tragically died in 1988 at the tender age of 32. Now approaching 60, as time passed by, Emily was longing for the time to come when she could say “Hello again.” There wasn’t a day that went by when she didn’t think about him and every night after prayers, she would open a large diary which shows each day as an entire page.

The diary contained a little piece of paper with their favourite piece of Scripture which was very special to them. It was the very famous one from John 3:16. “For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have

eternal life.” On the very first day they had met each other as teenagers at a joint service, this was the piece of Scripture that had been read out.

Every night, she would look at this little piece of Scripture and then she would look at another sentence from Second Corinthians, chapter 7 which was just as special and had brought her great comfort. She had found this sentence from the passage which was called “Paul’s Joy,” not long after Eric died and had written it on the back of a photograph of them together. The words said, “We are always together, whether we live or die.” (2 Corinthians 7:3.)

After that, she would write a letter to him on the diary page for that particular day, telling him what had happened and if her day was happy or sad. She had never missed an entry in the thirty years that had now passed and always ended it “Longing to say ‘Hello Again’.”

Tuesday came round at breakneck speed – far too fast for Emily and a couple of hours after checking into day surgery, she was now being wheeled into theatre. The anaesthetist had the same reassuring eyes as Mr Edwards which seemed to smile at you as they gazed down benevolently from above the mask - she was so glad about this and couldn’t help but smile back.

“Emily, I’m going to inject some anaesthetic through the small device that is in your arm. I just want you to count back from 100 for me and you won’t feel a thing. You’ll just fall asleep.”

His eyes smiled and Emily counted. She thought about Eric and the letters.

100...99...98...now a little slower.....97.....96.....now very drowsy but feeling very pleasant.....95.....94.....longing to.....

Then sleep that was so deep and peaceful...and wait a minute...now she was dreaming. She knew it was a dream because everything was so bright. It was like looking at a large tv screen which was tuned between channels – what her husband used to call “white noise.” Then the brightness expanded all around her – brilliant and beautiful light filled with such hope and joy - and suddenly, she was now sitting

in a very peaceful, small cosy room with a table and a small lamp. If she needed any more proof she was dreaming she had it now because Eric was sitting right beside her.

What an absolutely fantastic dream!

She was so frightened the dream would end, but after a wonderful embrace which she also didn't want to end, he was still there. A close friend had once told her that "Loved ones who have passed away live on in your dreams." She must tell her how right she was. She also told Eric about this. He smiled that old Eric smile which she missed so much and told her how correct she was, but he then added that there was more to it.

"Loved ones who have passed away live on in your soul."

He went on to tell her that he knew about the letters she wrote to him and had read every single one because he was always with her and always would be. He added that she should not worry about the operation. It will be a total success although he added rather enigmatically, "You're giving them a heck of a fright down there just now!"

Then he became a bit more serious. He held her hand and said,

"Emily, time goes slower here, so we are still OK, but down there you only have one and a half minutes and then you must go back. Time is probably almost running out, but always remember that I will never leave you. After this operation finishes you'll live a long and healthy life, but it will be a life full of joy and hope, not sadness, because you know now that I'll always be with you."

Then just as she was about to reply, another voice filled the room. It came from all corners. The kindest and most compassionate of all voices - full of love and grace. "So this is what Jesus' voice sounds like," she marvelled. "What a wonderful dream!"

The voice said,

"Eric, you must let her go now. Remember, it is not her time yet. Emily must go back now. There are things she still has to do that I want her

to fulfil.

Emily was dismayed. "No!! I don't want to go back! Please let me stay!"

Then she remembered of course, she was only dreaming and the dream must end.

One last embrace, then the bright light returned which was so peaceful and enveloped her in its gentle grace. Then, white noise like a tv tuned between channels and last of all, voices which sounded concerned, then became excited.

"She's coming round!"

"Thank God," another voice said.

She opened her eyes slowly and saw another light, but this one was much more familiar. It came slowly into focus and she was gazing up at the fluorescent lights in a hospital recovery room. She realised she had a sore throat although it was not too painful.

"Mrs Walters! Emily! Can you hear me?" It was Mr Edwards. He looked calm and confident, but there was something else etched on his face – concern. Emily smiled and asked, "Is the operation over?"

"It most certainly is!" This time, he smiled back, looked a lot less concerned then said, "I'll tell you all about it a bit later, but first you must rest. We're going to keep you in overnight just as a precaution, but don't you worry, it's just routine." Then, more like his old self again, he added:

"You'll be able to sample some of our cuisine!"

Later, Emily was now sitting up in a small single room of her own, enjoying a very light meal of toast and some coffee. She was thinking about the lovely dream which she could remember vividly. When she had finished, Mr Edwards came in. She was so pleased to see him. She was looking well and it must have shown because there was absolutely no concern on his face now.

Mr Edwards told her that the operation had been a success, but something a bit out of the ordinary had happened and although there was now no cause for concern, he wanted to discuss it with her. He thought a moment about how to start and said,

"Emily, everything went fine with the surgical part of things but you will probably still have a sore throat?"

She nodded and he continued,

“During the operation, you had breathing difficulties again, but this time your vital signs - respiration, heart, etc all suddenly stopped. It has happened before to other people and we are well prepared for it, but to put no finer point on it, you ‘died’ for approximately a minute and a half before everything got going again. Your throat is sore because we had to put some tubes down there, but it will soon heal. We are keeping you in to just do some further tests to make sure your breathing is OK”

Emily thought about her dream and then realisation set in. Total joy filled her heart. It had all been real. She had been granted a wish that probably almost no one else has had. A chance to be reunited, even if it was just for a few moments, with a husband she loved and missed so much.

Mr Edwards looked surprised at her reaction. It was quite the opposite from what he expected. He felt very much that he had let her down and continued,

“I’m so sorry we’ve had to keep you in for a bit longer, but I’m very confident that everything will turn out fine with the tests.”

Emily sensed his sorrow and beckoned him over. Probably not for the first time, a consultant was hugged by one of his patients and she said softly,

“Mr Edwards, you said I died, but I can tell you that for one and a half minutes, I *lived* for the first time since the 3rd of October 1988. I can tell you now that the tests will be fine and I will leave the hospital fully recovered – I’ve been told this by the highest authority!”

Mr Edwards looked a bit puzzled, then his face cleared and he nodded. Emily knew he was thinking that the effects of the anaesthetic were still working on her and that was why she was telling him rather strange things. She thought about telling him about the whole experience, but then realised he would think it was simply the effects of the anaesthetic. How do you explain a miracle? So she simply nodded and he smiled back.

Emily left the hospital two days later. The tests were totally fine and after bidding Mr Edwards an emotional “Goodbye,” she went home and was never in a hospital as a patient again.

She did manage to attend the Easter Sunday Service, but she was a different woman, full of joy and hope for what the future held ahead.

Everyone was invited to lay a daffodil on the communion table just like in a memorial service and they could enclose a small note with it remembering a loved one, or simply giving thanks for something that was happening in their life.

Emily placed the daffodil – an Easter bell which had indeed rung out to celebrate a Resurrection and wrote on the little note:

“We are always together, whether we live or die.

Longing to say ‘Hello Again.’”



Website - Our magazines are now available on our website www.bsandm-church.org.uk. If anyone would prefer to access them this way, instead of paper format, please let your Church Elder know.

As well as saving paper, and trees, you would receive the magazine in colour. It could also be enlarged if you need to see it in large print.

Resurrection

Resurrection is such a wonderful word.
Engendering great joy after total despair.
Signifying such tremendously good news.
Unmistakable and utterly definitive proof.
Rolled away completely is the stone.
Revealing a tomb which is now empty.
Eliciting such hope and joy for us all.
Confirming irrevocably to everyone here.
That death hasn't been slightly beaten.
It is absolutely and irrefutably conquered.
Our Lord is risen on this beautiful morn.
Now and forever he is always by our side.

Drew Robertson



**BRAES CHURCHES
JOINT HOLY WEEK
SERVICES
2018**



**Monday March 26th
Redding and Westquarter**

**Tuesday March 27th
Brightons**

**Wednesday March 28th
Shieldhill**

**Thursday March 29th
Slamannan**

**Friday March 30th
Wallacestone**

All at 7p.m.

Update from Drew

I would like to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and prayers while I was in hospital. I am now recovering at home and the Doctors have said that I should be fully recovered around the 2nd of April. I am very much looking forward to returning to church around that time and will see you all soon.

Best Wishes

From Drew



Muiravonside Church Facebook Page

Muiravonside Parish Church now has a Facebook page which gives all the latest news of events and can be viewed at:

<https://www.facebook.com/muiravonsideparishchurch/>



Food for thought

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely show the way
The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear:
Fine counsel is confusing but example always clear
And the best of all the preachers are the men who live their creeds
For to see good put in action is what every body needs.
I soon can learn to do it if you'll let me see it done.
I can see your hands in action, but your tongue too fast may run
And the lectures you deliver may be very fine and true
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do
For I may not understand you and the high advice you give
But there's no misunderstanding how you act and live.

From a poem by Edgar Guest

Submitted by: Lorna Coulter

Poetry Corner

EASTER CRACKED OPEN

Saturday 24th March
11am till 3pm

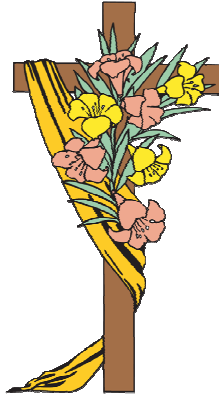
Community Hub next to M & S
Falkirk Howgate Shopping Centre

Stories, games, crafts, music

All welcome



Falkirk Presbytery Charity No. SC018587



Female Force

International Women's Day is celebrated annually on 8 March. It has been recognised by the United Nations as a Day for Women's Rites and International Peace, since 1975. Recently in the media, much has been made of gender inequality regarding pay scales, in Parliament and other institutions. Society has changed and improved in many ways in the last century. Theresa May and Nicola Sturgeon are both leading politicians and now there is even a woman Dr Who but in the past one hundred and fifty years we owe much to brave committed women who have struggled to improve the working and social lives of their sex.

February 6 marked the centenary of women being granted the vote with limitations. The activities we hear of are mainly based in London but we hear little of the fact that a well supported suffragist movement existed in Scotland from 1867. Between 1867 and 1876 the members of the Scottish Federation of Women's Suffrage (SFWS) collected 2 million signatures presenting them to the London Parliament, challenging the legality of women being denied the vote. Women in Victorian times were regarded as chattels seen as inferior to men and being reminded that their place was in the home. Queen Victoria, a sovereign Queen and Empress of India did not support the Suffragist Movement and said " Let women be what God intended a helpmate for man with totally different duties and locations."

One suffragist, better known in medical circles, was Dr Elsie Maud Inglis. Appalled at the horrific conditions of working class women and

the fact that there was no specialised care for women, and an ardent supporter of Women's Rites, she became an active member of the suffragist movement in Scotland even serving as secretary in 1906.

Although born in India, her parents, keen that she should have a good education returned to Scotland and in a time when women doctors were few qualified in 1892.

Having been unsuccessful to secure a position in Glasgow, she moved to London then Dublin before returning to Edinburgh and qualifying as a surgeon in 1899. Being particularly interested in women and children, she set up a hospital for them in 1901 which was entirely staffed by women. She was a tireless worker for working class women. When war came in 1914 she founded a Socialist Women's Hospital unit for Foreign Service. Dismissed by the British government, she offered her services to the French government which they accepted.

She accompanied the team to Serbia where they set up a hundred bed hospital. This was increased to a six hundred bed unit to cope with the many battles. She was even captured but repatriated in 1915. Suffering ill-health she arrived back in England in 1917 but died a day later. She was honoured when her body lay in state in St Giles Cathedral. She did not live to see women being granted the vote in 1918 but had fought bravely for women to be given more opportunities and recognition.

She changed the ways of maternity care in hospitals and to continue her legacy the Elsie Inglis Hospital opened in Edinburgh in 1925. Although closed in 1988, part of the hospital remains having been converted to apartments and care units.

Society in Bible times was male dominated but women are included and are important in the books in the bible. A favourite for me is Ruth, only four chapters long it tells the story of a humble yet bold, possibly determined young woman. Elimelech, Naomi and their two sons experience famine in Israel and travel, virtually refugees to Moab to survive. Having settled in Moab, the two sons marry two Moabite girls Ophrah and Ruth. With the death of the father and two sons, the future of the three widows seems bleak. Having decided to return to Israel, Naomi encourages Ophrah and Ruth to remain in Moab where they belong with family. Out of love and loyalty for Naomi Ruth is brave when she refuses to leave Naomi but to travel with her to what is for Ruth a foreign land with little knowledge what might lie ahead.

In Israel, for Naomi and Ruth's survival, the latter is allowed to gather

grain in the fields of Boaz, a relative of Emilech. Naomi under social rules which govern marriage and for a safe future for them urges Ruth to marry Boaz. According to God's plan, Ruth and Boaz become the grandparents of King David

Elsie Inglis and Ruth are only two of the stories of many which could be recorded about a female force over the centuries who have bravely struggled and been involved in securing rites and recognition for women.

God can use anyone to fulfil his purpose and change the world

Favourite verse from Ruth chapter 1 verse 16 - Authorised version 1611

And Ruth said "Intreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee; For whither thou goest, I will go and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people will be my people and thy God ,my God.

Lorna Coulter

Tea, coffee and a
chat are always
available in the hall
after services.
Please stay if you
can.



Not So Cautious Optimism

I most certainly don't want to tempt fate,
perhaps this should be said in a hushed tone.
Or even safer still not to engage in this debate,
if it comes back we will certainly be forlorn.
Also much sadder than we have been off late,
but I think all the snow may finally have gone!

"Oh no!" you may shout, "Don't say this out loud!"
you know what will certainly happen now.
Clouds will rush in covering like a shroud,
and orders will be issued, "Standby snowplough!"
Grit stocks will be hastily debated out loud,
to see how much coverage they can allow.

I certainly don't want to do anything rash,
as last traces of ice cling tenaciously here.
And I certainly don't want to make a hash,
by sabotaging any future Christmas cheer.
But white Christmases I can say with panache,
are absolutely definitely not dreamt of this year!

God in his wisdom has other plans in store,
so do not despair because it's not all forlorn.
Spring is almost here with us and what's more,
until sunshine comes to visit it will not be long.
So I think I can say throwing caution out the door,
that all the dreaded snow may finally have gone!

Drew Robertson

Seventeenth Century Nun's Prayer

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will some day be old.

Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject on every occasion. Release me from the craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of other's plans, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to dash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet, I do not want to be a saint- some of them are so hard to live with- but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me the grace to tell them so.

Amen

Anon

Submitted by: Lorna Coulter



The following beautiful and touching poem was read at Mrs Betty Fleming's funeral and her family have very kindly given permission for us to share it with you.

*Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there, I do not sleep
I am a thousand winds that blow
I am the diamond glints on snow
I am the sunlight on ripened grain
I am the gentle Autumn rain
When you awaken in the morning's rush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight
I am the soft stars that shine as night
Do not stand at my grave and cry
I am not there, I did not die.*

From a poem by Mary Elizabeth Frye





A Quick Message from the Editor

Just another quick note to thank everyone for their magazine articles. We have again had a wonderful response, both from Blackbraes and Shieldhill and Muiravonside.

It is always such a pleasure to receive these articles and it is even more exciting compiling them and seeing the magazine take shape.

Thank you again and I look forward to the next magazine.

Drew

