

Broxburn Parish Church of Scotland

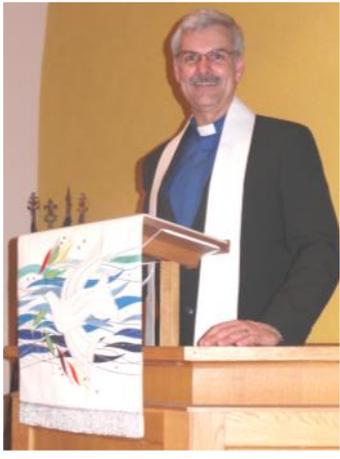
The Bridge Magazine

Spring 2019



● **FRIENDLY** ● **FAMILY** ● **FELLOWSHIP** ●

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From the Manse

The days are getting longer and everywhere shoots of green are visible. After the long dark winter sleep nature is awakening beginning the preparation for the summer. Reflecting on this I can't help to be awed by the wonder and splendour of creation -

and more importantly still - the Creator God who made it all. This is the same Creator God who made us and in the fullness of time sent his only begotten Son to free us from the bondages of death. In the resurrection of Jesus I see the tomb breaking open in the same way as a green shoot breaks through a dark brown branch of a tree. Overnight, what appeared to be dead and lifeless was transformed into green shoots of life and hope - we might still see growth and fruit. The tree isn't dead; there is life beyond the grave.

We are journeying to Easter. It's that wonderful time of year when we, as Christians, celebrate salvation and life - eternal life. The same God who raised Jesus Christ from the tomb is working in and through us. He brings new life and hope for the summer—the time we bear fruit. The best part of it all is that we didn't have to apply for this or hope for the best.

God gives it freely to those who surrender to his working in their lives. And this might be the best preparation we can ever make for Easter - to surrender to God's working in our lives. How? By slowing down from 60mph to walking speed. It takes a good while for green shoots to appear, then to turn into leaves and branches, and even more time to mature and bear fruit. Similarly, we need to slow down to walking speed for a closer walk with God.

My prayer is that you will discover new ways to slow down. Be warned, though, it takes effort, self-discipline, and lots of practice. It is, however, life transforming!

Wishing you every blessing,

Jaco

Diary Dates

2nd March	Coffee Bar: 11am—12.30pm
10th March	Communion: 11am and 6.30pm
27th March	Board and Kirk Session Meeting: 7.30pm
30th March	Afternoon Tea: 2-4pm
6th April	Coffee Bar: 11am—12.30pm
19th April	Good Friday service: 7.30pm Broxburn
21st April	Easter: 5.53am sunrise, 11am service
1st May	Board and Kirk Session Meeting: 7.30pm
4th May	Coffee Bar: 11am—12.30pm
30th & 31st May	Bridge Choir concerts: 7.30pm

The Bridge Choir



As I'm writing this, it doesn't seem any time since

Christmas and now Easter isn't that far away, so I thought I'd update you on what the choir is doing.

Since we started back in August we've been busy rehearsing for our summer concerts. We also sang at St. John's Hospital at Christmas where we raised almost £100 for the Food Bank, then performed at the 'Carols and Readings' evening in Church. We have been invited by Generation Arts to take part in an afternoon concert called 'Show Time' at Howden Theatre on Sunday 17th March along with other local groups, so if you feel like attending it would be lovely to see you there. Tickets are £5.

We are of course busy rehearsing for our concerts which take place on Thursday 30th and Friday 31st May, and I hope you decide to come along and support us. Our amazing Junior Choir will no doubt delight us all once more, especially as they have grown in numbers! We now have 26 youngsters which is fantastic so it promises to be a great evening. We also have a guest musician as Fraser Borland has kindly agreed to play for us.

As with most events it wouldn't be possible to stage them without help and support with teas, front of house etc., so if you feel you are able to offer any help please see myself or any choir member. It would be greatly appreciated.

Tickets for the concerts should be on sale around Easter, so look out on the notices sheet for more details. Thanks again for your continued support.

Elaine Gilmour (07785 106895)

Prayer Corner

We are living in times of great uncertainty. As a national Church we have too few ministers to fill parishes up and down the land and there is no evidence that things will improve soon. Difficult decisions need to be made to address the current situation as it is not sustainable with the status quo.



On top of this, negotiations to exit the European Union have not gone well. There is little unity in Parliament, even political parties are divided on opinions to the best way forward. It appears there is too much 'me' and not enough 'us'. Meanwhile people are concerned about their medication, much of it from Europe, to their holidays in Europe, and industry and commerce uncertain about tariffs, movement of goods and employment of European workers. As our Government is focussed on Brexit we see a widening of the gap between rich and poor, poverty on the increase amongst children and the elderly. Food Banks have seen increasing numbers with Universal Credit rolling out.

Yes, the picture at times does not look rosy, but we must hold on tight and trust God in every circumstance. Our God has never failed us in the past but we need to be his hands, feet and mouth in these times. Great is His faithfulness! Amen.

In your personal prayers please pray for:

Our minister Jaco and our office bearers that God will give them wisdom in decisions about our congregation.

Our Queen and her Government in Westminster as they pursue an acceptable exit from the European Union before the cut off on 29th March.

The Church of Scotland in this time of crisis with a significant shortfall in parish ministers.

Congregations in vacancy that they might work together to maintain God's work and love in their parishes.

The vulnerable in our communities that they will be provided for, and remember the work of the Food Banks.

Girls' Brigade

It's been a hectic time for 1st Broxburn Girls' Brigade since the company started up back in September. We were delighted to welcome new girls as well as lots of familiar faces and we feel truly blessed to be in such a healthy position going forward.

Our Explorers have been learning about Science and Space and have been carrying out lots of fun, and sometimes messy, experiments! The Junior section have been learning about wildlife and, in particular, how to care for birds in the winter. Some of their crafts included making feeders to hang in their garden. The girls were also encouraged to take part in the 'Big Garden Bird Watch' between 26th and 28th January. The Brigader section have been looking at diversity and discrimination and are currently undertaking a rigorous fitness programme!

In September some of the Explorers attended the Division event in Livingston where they got to meet exotic animals – including a meerkat!

October saw the company enjoy a fun evening at our fancy dress party.

November was a busy month with parades, church services and a giant sleepover at the Science Centre with over 400 girls from Girls' Brigade Scotland. Not much sleep for any of us, but certainly an experience we won't forget for a long time.



In December we hosted a successful evening of Lessons and Carols; thanks go to those who supported us. In complete contrast, the following week was a very noisy pyjama party!

The leaders welcomed everyone back in January for the second half of our session. Badge work is well underway and the Junior section enjoyed a bowling night.

The next few months will see badge work completed and Division events, including the Quiz and Service, both of which promise to be very special.

Deborah Hislop, Acting Captain, 1st Broxburn Girls' Brigade

Boys' Brigade

This is my first article about your Boys' Brigade Company here at Broxburn Parish Church. I started in the Company as a boy in the Pre-Junior Section and then as Lieutenant from 1991. 38 years after starting I've been Captain since the autumn. Along with Lt. Andrew Macpherson we run the Company for the boys. I would like to thank my predecessor as Captain, Jim Borland, who served the Company well and continued the Company's journey, as well as Kenny Young who was acting Captain last year. I hope to be as good a steward of this Company as those who have gone before as we journey through our 88th year.

We meet on a Monday night and since our return in January we have been at new times. Change sometimes happens, and hopefully as this change beds in we will feel more as one as a Company because we are smaller just now, and the benefits will be far more than any challenges or difficulties it brings. We now overlap each section and have each section interact. We have been working through badge work, fun and games. Working together as teams and also solo as we meet with our friends in the presence of Jesus. The Company section took part on a sunny day in late October in the Battalion Orienteering competition and came 3rd out of 9 teams for the Junior pairs event. In March we are looking forward to the Junior section's Battalion 5-side football and hopefully the Anchors and Juniors craft events. We should close the session in June with our annual camp - camping out in the wilds of Scotland.



Our age range is from P1 to S6 and any boys who want to be part of our journey as we follow our Object* are welcome.

***Douglas Leiper, Captain, 2nd Broxburn Company
2broxburn@boys-brigade.org.uk (07751 040520)***

*The advancement of Christ's kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness.

The Guild



Our theme for this session is 'Seeing the Way'. We have had a wide variety of speakers on a wide range of topics from the Suffragette Movement in West Lothian, to Women Pilots of the Air Transport Auxiliary Spitfire in World War 2, and also the Cyrenians (who offer a support for older people who need help getting out and about). We had an outing to MacKinnon Mills in Coatbridge for Christmas shopping and a lovely lunch.

In March we will have a bible study led by Rev. David Black. There is also a Daffodil tea on 18th, and on 20th a 'Bring and Buy' sale to help with funds. In April, there's an Easter meditation and the close of the session will include a fish tea and some fellowship. You are very welcome to join us for any of our remaining meetings on Wednesday evenings at 7.15pm. See the notices sheet for dates, or speak to Sandra Stirling.

Easter Sunrise, Prayer and Coffee (ESPC)

For most of us ESPC probably means Edinburgh Solicitors Property Centre, but not at Broxburn Parish Church. For us, ESPC stands for **Easter Sunrise, Prayer and Coffee!** Yes, on **Easter Sunday 21st April** we will give you the unmissable opportunity to watch the sunrise – **at 5.53am!** Yes, it is **VERY** early (almost the middle of the night!) but your reward will be a wonderful way to start our celebration of Jesus rising. We will then have a short time of prayer in the church followed by a cup of coffee.

For those who can't quite make 5.53am, we will have coffee and croissants from **10.30am** before our Easter service begins at **11am**. As usual we will decorate our floral cross, so you are invited to bring some flowers with you on Easter Sunday. The cross will then be placed at the corner of Main Street and Church Street as a public sign to the Broxburn community of Easter and Jesus rising.

Social and Fundraising



Social and Fundraising would like to thank everyone who attended any of our events during 2018. Our most recent was the Christmas Fayre where we raised over £2,200 which was a great achievement and my thanks go to everyone who helped make it so successful. While our group works hard to put on events, they can only be successful if our congregation along with friends and family get behind it. It is just as important for us to bring people together and share fellowship as it is to

raise money so this year, please continue to come along and support whenever you can.

There will be a Soup & Sweet lunch after morning worship on **Sunday 3rd March**.

Then on **Saturday 30th March** there will be an Afternoon Tea from 2 till 4pm - tickets will be on sale soon but you can also pay at the door. This is always popular so don't miss out on the chance to catch up with old friends, make some new ones and enjoy some great home baking!



Finally, we are hoping to put on another Flower Festival in September. We are relying on as many people as possible to get involved as it is a big undertaking, so if you would be willing to get involved or would just like to find out more, please speak to anyone on the Social and Fundraising group.

Thank you.

David McWilliams

West Lothian Food Bank

As many of you will be aware, the distribution centre in Broxburn for the West Lothian Food Bank is in our Church hall. We are open every week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12.30 until 2.30pm. Sadly 2018 has been our busiest year to date. In Broxburn alone we provided food to 416 adults and 154 children during 2018. If we look back to January 2018, we gave food to 29 adults and 12 children. In January 2019 the figures were 59 adults and 16 children - an alarming increase of 83%.

The food we give out is donated by local people. You'll remember we had the Food Bank Christmas tree in the church in December. People donated generously. We had 27 crates of food that week to be picked up from Broxburn Parish Church, which had been handed in by our congregation, local people and businesses as well as nearly £500 cash. During the week before Christmas, as well as the usual teas and coffees, clients sat down to a mini Christmas lunch of homemade soup, Christmas pudding and trifle, with Jim and Moya providing background music on the piano and fiddle.



All clients come with a voucher, issued by a range of different agencies, which entitles them to food for three days. We are also able to supply some toiletries and cleaning products, pet food, nappies and baby food. We have 'kettle boxes' for people who don't have access to cooking facilities. Our team of volunteers welcome clients, and spend time chatting to them over a cup of tea and a sandwich. Having no food is almost always a symptom of other issues, so we also look to provide information about other agencies who can provide them with additional support to help them get their lives back on track.

They appreciate being somewhere warm and welcoming, and having someone to spend time with them.

Many people who we see never imagined that they would have to come to a Food Bank. They will tell us about how not very long ago, they were in work, with a secure income, somewhere to live. As a result of a crisis like losing their job, their world is turned upsides down. It's not unusual to have an adult in who hasn't eaten for three days. They will go without, but it's not being able to feed their children or their pet that is their tipping point.

It's the generosity of people donating food, money, or volunteering their time, that enables us to run the Food Bank. If you are interested in volunteering or just finding out a bit more, Anne Gunn or Evelyn McCreight would be happy to speak to you. Please also remember those who come to the Food Bank and our dedicated team of volunteers in your prayers.

Anne Gunn, Food Bank Co-ordinator, Broxburn

Do we have your correct contact details?

If you are about to move or have recently changed address please remember to let us know so that we can continue to distribute this magazine to you. Also if your preference for a magazine and regular elder visit has changed then please let your elder or the minister know. Alternatively you can contact us via the e-mail address below:

rollkeeper@broxburnparishchurch.org.uk

 **The next Communion Services will be on** 
Sunday 10th March 2019 
at 11am and 6.30pm 

Who's Who



Minister

Rev. Dr. Jaco Boonzaaier 01506 337560

Session Clerk

Mr. John Macaulay 01506 852947

Clerk to the Congregational Board

Mrs. Anne Gunn

Treasurer

Mrs. Sue Sneddon

Gift Aid Convener

Miss Jean Weir

Roll Keeper

Mrs. Anne Gunn

Prayer Secretary

Mr. David Wilkie

Pastoral Care Group co-ordinator

Mr. Nat Beggs

Organist

Mr. James Lawrie

Church Officer

Mr. John Macaulay 01506 852947

Hall Convener

Miss Sally North 01506 200042

Property Convener

Vacant

Communications Co-ordinator

Mr. Hugh Brown 0131 334 1384

Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Social & Fundraising Co-ordinator

Mrs. Elaine Brown 07936 363939