



Broxburn Parish Church

Bridge Newsletter - Edition 10

FROM THE INTERIM MODERATOR

Rev. Derek Henderson



Dear friends,

Since I last wrote to you, things within the Church of Scotland have continued to change in radical ways. The old concept of one parish, one congregation and one minister is no longer feasible within the resources available to the Church, both in terms of people and finance. The new reality will be one of unions and linkages and a sharing of ministry posts, supplemented by increasing lay participation and new ways of working.

In our area, the draft plan for the former Presbytery of West Lothian envisaged the shape of ministry in this area as a union between Strathbrock and Uphall South and a linkage with ourselves in Broxburn. The Session Clerk and I have been having preliminary conversations with these other churches to see how they feel about this way forward. Your Kirk Session and Congregational Board are now considering how we might go forward.

The plan for the new Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian is in its early stages but is required by the General Assembly to be finalised by the end of this year. The Deployment Group of the new Presbytery, which is tasked with developing this plan, has asked all the congregations in the West Lothian area to develop a "mission narrative" setting out how they see the mission of the Church being taken forward in their area. This they can do individually or in conjunction with their neighbours.

The Kirk Session and Congregational Board have submitted a joint mission narrative in conjunction with Strathbrock and Uphall South, as its submission to the Deployment Group of the Presbytery. The implications for us of both linkage and union have been explored, and the Board and Session were strongly of the view that linkage was the right way forward at this time.

FROM THE INTERIM MODERATOR

(continued)

The Deployment Group have now been advised of this. No final decisions have been, or can be taken at this time. By the time you read this, the Deployment Group will have started to visit congregations, and the way forward may have become clearer and there will be opportunities for wider discussion.

I recognise that these are difficult and uncertain times for the Church both locally and nationally but things are moving forward and gathering momentum. I look forward to the time when the relaxation of Covid regulations will enable us to have wider face to face meetings when we can explore these important issues in more depth and all members of the congregation can make their contribution.

May God bless you all this Easter time,

Derek



As many of you will be aware, as from 4th April, it is no longer a legal requirement to wear a mask in places of worship in Scotland. We realise that this change will have brought mixed emotions within our

Congregation, and we have looked to find a way forward which acknowledges this.

We are retaining the 1 metre distance between seats in Church for the foreseeable future.

Regarding masks, although you no longer have to wear one, if you do still wish to, then you are absolutely entitled to do so. Similarly, you can exercise the choice not to wear one.

We will continue to have the doors open to ventilate the Church before and after the service, and we will leave internal doors open during the service.

Please show consideration to those around about you who may still be feeling apprehensive. Thank you.

Treasurer's Update

As we go through 2022, I remain thankful for all the standing orders and payments continuing to be made into the church account. This, together with the envelopes and cash given on a Sunday, helps boost our Church coffers at a time when not everyone yet feels comfortable in coming back into church to worship face to face.

January was our last 'free' month, with no ministry and mission payment due to Church of Scotland central funds. As a result, our income of **£4,478** exceeded our expenses of **£3,945**.

February marked the start of our monthly payments to central funds again, resulting in our income of **£4,658** being outstripped by our expenses of **£6,712**.



March so far looks a bit closer, helped by receipt of our tax claim rebate of **£2,274**, although expenses are expected to slightly outstrip our income by the month end.

We now have income coming in from hall lets and are looking forward to being able to offer hospitality again in the not too distant future. It will be lovely to be able to welcome you to share fellowship over a cuppa, and maybe even some fresh baking when allowed.

Finally a huge thank you to those who generously contributed to the retiring offerings held in March to help support the Ukraine appeal. We raised a magnificent **£633!**

I look forward to being able to share fellowship with you again when you feel able to return to Church. Until then, stay safe.

Sue Sneddon

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Elders and Board members recently heard a presentation from John Russell, Debt Centre Manager for CAP.

We invited John to write an article for The Bridge Magazine explaining the help and advice that CAP offers – and how church members might be able to help.

West Lothian Foodbank in partnership with award winning charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP) are now running Money Management Courses and offer a personal Debt Help service throughout West Lothian. Myself, along with a team at the foodbank, run the popular CAP Money Course which teaches a simple, cash-based system that helps people build a household budget, save for future events and unforeseen circumstances, and spend within their means. This course is run over three consecutive weeks, each lasting around 90 minutes and can be delivered face to face or online. One lady who attended said: "I have found the CAP Money Course a great tool to help with budgeting. It has helped me have control over my finances rather than them having control over me."

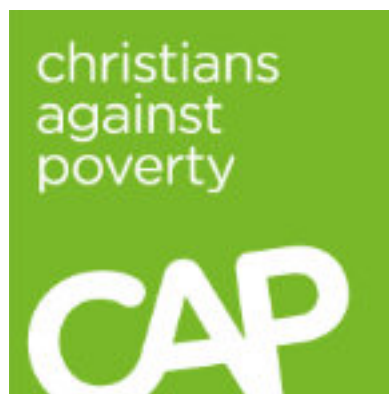
75% of the people who turn to Christians Against Poverty for debt help across the UK say they had problem debt partly because they didn't have any tuition in budgeting and money management. CAP would rather people in our area have the skills to avoid serious debt problems and the best thing about the CAP Money system is that it's flexible, so as your income or outgoings change, it can help you stay on top.

CAP can also help clients who are struggling with debt and despite their best efforts, can't seem to get free of this burden. The Debt Coaches liaise with the trained Debt Advisers at head office in Bradford where a plan is formulated for the client along with a personal budget to advise them on the best route to becoming debt free.

CAP supports the client all the way through the journey which can last in some circumstances over a few years and most visits are conducted in the safe environment of the client's home (where appropriate).

2,500 clients per year are becoming debt free as a result of the help they receive from CAP. More than 30% of CAP clients have considered or attempted suicide as they can't see a way out. We can help change this by making people aware of these life changing services. If you, or anyone you know, needs help in this area please don't delay and get in touch.

How can you help? Well, CAP is a Christian based charity and always asks the clients if they can pray with them and where an opportunity arises, talk to them about the love of Jesus. Very often the client is introduced to the local Church by a befriender. This is someone who will accompany the debt coaches on visits and will be on hand throughout the journey to assist and often just be there for the client. Could you be that person?



If you would like to know more about CAP, or how to become a befriender or more about their services in general, visit: **www.capsotland.org** or call John on: **07861 905125**. You can also e-mail him at: **johnrussell@capuk.org** and he will be delighted to have a chat.

Plaque for John

A slate plaque marking John Macaulay's years of service to Broxburn Parish Church has been erected in the vestibule. John was Session Clerk for 39 years from 1980 until 2019.



○ ○ ○ **POINTS to PONDER** ○ ○ ○

In a time of change, it's helpful to think about what the Bible might have to say about this issue and the difficulties around it. This passage from Luke's Gospel has something to say to us that is well worth pondering.

Text: Luke 5:33-39

And they said to him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink." And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days." He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"

Points to Ponder:

In the Old Testament, fasting was linked to humbling yourself before God. However, what had happened in Jesus' time was that fasting had become another part of religious practice, like the ritual washing of your hands and of pots, which had been built onto God's word. There is a tendency for religious people to create artificial standards by which people are made right with God and sadly sometimes, to judge each other. Some people think that by doing these things God will be pleased with them. Fasting can be a worthwhile discipline, as a way of reminding ourselves that our food comes from God but, also that "man does not live by bread alone." Nevertheless, the religious leaders in this passage have completely missed the point, that the person who stood in front of them was God's fulfilment of all that he had promised – a fulfilment that would see the end of so many rules and the sacrificial system, as Jesus' perfect sacrifice on the cross was made. What Jesus was saying to them was that the new reality that he was bringing could not be contained within the structures of the Old Testament law and the practices, which had grown up around them. The problem, Jesus said, was that people love the old wine – in other words they will not give up their religious practices, their comfortable way of doing things easily. Some people will continue to view the old ways as better, more valuable, more sophisticated than the new wine which Jesus has brought. And there are still people today who cling to the old ways even when it is clear that they are no longer adequate or relevant!

Prayer:

Loving Father, in these times of change help us to be open to seeing the way ahead that you would have us go. Help us to walk in your paths and not to cling to the past. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Action:

Think about your own spiritual life. In these times of change, what bits of religion – what bits of the old - are you hanging on to, or turn back to, instead of rejoicing in the fresh new wine of the gospel? How will you change this?

PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

The situation in Ukraine has been much on our minds in recent weeks and my wife was telling me of an item on the internet where children of that country were each reading a verse of one of the psalms in turn.

The psalm was Psalm 31, the first five verses of which are set out below. Perhaps we could all make this a basis for our prayers. Indeed, it is worth reading the whole psalm and reflecting on it.

Derek

31 In you, O Lord, do I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me!

² Incline your ear to me;
rescue me speedily!

Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me!

³ For you are my rock and my fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;

⁴ you take me out of the net they have hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.

⁵ Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God. **(ESV)**

The Throne Chair



Have you ever looked at the three chairs behind the Communion table on the chancel? The largest of them in the centre - known affectionately as 'the throne chair' - is thought to date back to before the First World War.

After the church improvements, the Board took the decision to have the chair re-covered in blue material to match the new colour scheme in the sanctuary.

Irvines Upholsterers in Edinburgh were given the specialist job. When the old red velvet was removed it was discovered that the supporting webbing underneath was in a very poor condition and would need to be replaced. This was done and now that the chair is back in position it is likely to last for another 100 years! Special thanks are due to one of our church members who kindly offered to pay for the cost of the chair's restoration.



Hugh Brown

Recipe Corner...Recipe Corner

Easter Chocolate Cake

This cake can be made and eaten at any time of year – it's how you decorate it that makes the difference. For Easter you'll need some mini Easter eggs and/or fluffy chicks and some crushed chocolate flake bars for added decoration.

Ingredients:

6oz. SR Flour
2oz. Cocoa Powder
8oz. Caster Sugar
8oz. Margarine
4 Eggs

Equipment:

2 x 8" sandwich tins, greased and lined

Preheat oven to 180C/350F/Gas Mark 4

Method:

1. Cream the margarine and sugar until light and fluffy
2. Add in the eggs and beat together
3. Gradually add in the sieved flour and cocoa powder and beat together
4. Split the cake mixture evenly between your 2 prepared cake tins
5. Bake in your pre-heated oven for about 15-20 minutes until the tops spring back when you touch them
6. Turn onto wire racks and leave to cool while you make your chocolate icing

Chocolate Icing

8oz. Icing sugar
5oz. Margarine
2oz. Cocoa Powder

Method:

1. Beat the margarine until slightly soft
2. Sieve the icing sugar and cocoa powder together and add gradually to the softened margarine
3. Continue to add and mix together to form your chocolate icing.
4. Use about half to sandwich your cakes together.
5. Use the rest to pile on top of your cake for the Easter flourish, leaving more icing around the edges to make a nest. Add the crushed chocolate bars on top and then place your mini Easter eggs and/or fluffy chicks in the middle of the nest.



You can substitute other decorations at other times of the year to create a different look e.g. edible flowers for a summertime treat. Enjoy!

Sue Sneddon



The season of Lent has us thinking about how the Church all over the world is trying to understand God's call and to seek the insight of the Spirit in reading the times and

how to move forward. Is this because of the pandemic, or the war in Ukraine, or the 'world' taking over and occupying our focus day to day with us not listening or not hearing God's message as it is drowned out in the loud background noise? But it is also the link to the position of the Boys' Brigade Company here in Broxburn and also in Uphall as they both, in different but similar positions, think about the future.

2nd Broxburn Company has continued to meet most Mondays for their parade nights #virtualBB or face to face. There have thankfully been no Covid breakouts and we have continued to develop our Christian fellowship and knowledge while having open discussion and lots of fun. We broke in June concluding the 2020/21 session of #VirtualBB and returned at the beginning of September for the new session with #face-to-faceBB. We now meet in the church complex between 6.30 and 7.45 on Monday evenings. With work changing from home/virtual working to hybrid or full time return we have had staffing problems as shift work affects us. Thankfully we haven't had to postpone many parade nights due to the support of our registered helper Mr. Muir who is the parent of one of our previous Queen's men who is now at University. This allows Mr. Borland and myself to work with the boys in our mission of advancing God's message and Kingdom in their lives. After Easter and into session 2022/23 we will have to bring in new staff members to allow us to better run the Company on a regular parade night, and to to grow again.

The pandemic did not close Church or the Boys' Brigade; it took it online and into other forms, but it has made it harder to meet face to face. While technology and other outreach helped keep us together, the technology has also split our congregation between those meeting virtually and those in person, which provides challenges to make sure we stay integrated as one. However, the Boys' Brigade is always up for a challenge!

Douglas Leiper
Captain, 2nd Broxburn Company

KIDS EASTER WORD SEARCH

S I N S O X R E S U R R E C T I O N G
P R E M E M B E R A S U N D A Y S X
P A S S O V E R G A L S H S P I R I T
R F A J F O M X V F M I D Y K R H C I
O G U E Q Y D Z S A I P L O V E G H X
M V K S E G D K A T G T O M B I O R Z
A S L U Z H O M C H H U R D X A O I S
N M A S O N L D R E T H D G K C D S K
S I A V I F I F I R Y O P D I A F T M
M U P R P Q V O F U Q L I F N L R S B
B A L S Y E I R I C W Y S S G I I D S
V C E I Q Z N E C I R S V A Y V D C A
Y R N P W P G V E K K O Y P V E A M L
U O T E A S T E R M M P W E H I Y G V
H S T H C A T R U G D E H N D K O D A
D S Y C O P Y S H X F R I S E N H R T
F W A X G R C R U C I F I X I O N S I
Q L A M B N N P F A S T I N G I F I O
E K X S E L A S T S U P P E R K Q P N

FATHER
SPIRIT
HOLY
CHRIST
CROWN
THORNS
ROMANS
SACRIFICE
SINS
LIVING
TOMB
ALIVE

LORD
GOD
CRUCIFIXION
SON
FOREVER
SALVATION
SAVIOR
LAMB
LOVE
JESUS
EASTER
CROSS

RESURRECTION
ALMIGHTY
MARY
FASTING
GOOD FRIDAY
SUNDAY
LENT
LAST SUPPER
PASSOVER
RISEN
REMEMBER
KING

Task Group members:

Rev. Derek Henderson
Anne Gunn
Andy Carter
David McWilliams
Sue Sneddon
Hugh Brown

We are all members of our church family. So if we can help you in any way, or you have a Prayer Request, or perhaps you just need a listening ear, please telephone: 07934 073349. Calls will of course be treated confidentially.

An Irish Blessing

May God grant you a sunbeam to warm you,
A moonbeam to charm you,
a sheltering angel so nothing can harm you.
Laughter to cheer you, faithful friends near you
and whenever you pray, heaven to hear you.

Broxburn Parish Church of Scotland
broxburnparishchurch.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SC 017180

FRIENDLY ○ FAMILY ○ FELLOWSHIP