

Connecting the people of St. Mark's Issue 4 2017

Check out our HOLIDAY CLUB photos



St. Mark's Church Family gathers to say "Farewell" to Stuart and Lesley

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Farewell to the Rev. Stuart Davidson

On Sunday 16th July, the congregation at St. Mark's said farewell to Stuart, our minister of almost 10 years. Stuart was ordained and inducted to St. Mark's on 14th January 2008. In the intervening period, through the Church of Scotland's Chance to Thrive initiative and through his leadership, the congregation have undertaken projects such as the Raploch Fruit Barra, created new forms of worship such as the fortnightly informal St. Mark's@ Sainsburys service for all ages and have engaged in a meaningful way with the local communities of Raploch and Cornton.

Stuart was presented with a picture of the Auld Brig which joins the two communities in the parish and the Wallace Monument by David Russell, as Session Clerk assisted by Billy Darley, a member of the congregation. He also received a Leather bound Bible while Lesley was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

Stuart's Farewell Lunch followed our morning service and we were joined by members of local churches, schools and the community for a time of shared memories. It was testimony to the esteem in which Stuart is held that so many gathered.



Stuart and Lesley have now moved to Paisley. Stuart took up his role as Pioneer Minister in mid-August, building on his experience here in Stirling to help the church find new ways of connecting with local communities.

View from (another) Manse

I remember when.....

(introducing Ellen Larson Davidson)



Rev. Ellen Larson Davidson
Interim Moderator

I remember when my family brought home our first computer – an Apple II GS in the 1980s. I remember a time before mobile phones. But I don't remember a time without television, like some of you may. Our memories, our histories, our pasts reflect some of what has shaped who we have become. I cherish who I have become is a beautiful patchwork of me, my family's influence, life experiences, other people, the places I have lived and visited, my past, my present and my future dreams all coming together.

It's been two years since we came to Stirlingshire from up north. It's been 12 years since I was ordained as a minister. Almost 13 years since Mark and I were married back in South Dakota. Seventeen years since I spent a summer living and working in India. And 20 years since I graduated from high school. Time marches on, the world is a different place from where it was 2, 5, 10, 12, 20, 40 years ago. I'm different than I was at any one point in my past, but I'm also still the same to a certain extent. From the moment we are born - likely before - we have a unique personality like no one else.

In the Bible, a very long time ago, people who were trying to make sense of their chaotic world considering Jesus, who he was and what he had done in his life and resurrection received a letter from a church leader who wrote, *'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever'* (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus' life and teachings still have truth for today in 2017 and beyond.

While I am grateful that I am not the exact same person I was, I do believe there is a spark of me that God has known, called and loved that doesn't change. The world changes, we change fashions, we grow and learn, we make mistakes, we accomplish dreams, but I treasure the promise that God's love in Jesus is a constant through it all. The expression and experience may vary but the substance, the heart, the spark is the same.

There are many changes coming, that is just a fact of life. The world cannot stay as it has been. It is not possible to freeze time and live life in all the fullness of creativity and imagination. I remember as a child wanting to freeze time. I still want to especially as my children grow up and start school. The challenge for each of us is how do we embrace where we have been and where we are for where we are going. Our past has shaped us. The past of a community or church shapes where it is and where it will go, but it should never freeze a community nor a church in the past.

My prayer for our world, communities, churches and individuals is that we may all remember who we are called to be for the betterment of our collective future. I pray that we can all recognise how we are so much more than our past, present or even future. Each of us has special gifts and talents to make the world a better place.

God bless you individually and collectively as we journey together through this vacancy. May God inspire, encourage and enliven St. Mark's from the past through this present transition into the glorious future walking with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Guide.

May God bless you,

Ellen



An Event for the whole Community

Remembrance Service 2017

The Children of Raploch Remember

Friday 10th November

At 10.50 a.m.

At the Village Square, Drip Road, Stirling
(Beside Raploch Community Campus)



Supported by the Drip Road Churches:

St. Mark's Parish Church; St. Margaret of Scotland R.C. & the Salvation Army



Fun at the Beach



Dancing on the Beach with Lyndsay



We had so much fun with Peter, Lynne, Moira, Lyndsay and Lesley.
“We like to move it, move it!”

Crafts with Fiona



Fish Suppers



Perfect Prawns



Heather the Weather



Lyn the Bin finally gets ahead
— oops sorry, a hat!

Two special visitors came each day bringing a lot of fun and laughter with them.

Seaside Cafe



The Wise Man & the Foolish Man



6

From Café to Theatre, there was so much to see and do at Seaside Rock!



The Dream Team who kept us all fed and watered throughout the Holiday Club.



Human Towers – the Winner!

Learning in our groups and doing fun challenges kept us busy too!

Breeze's World: A Canine Partner in training

ADVENTURES OF BREEZE (Part 1)

A Canine Partner in Training.

Good morning one and all.

First of all I have been asked to say that Pippa was sorry she was unable to say goodbye to you all before she left.

This was because she did not have a lot of time before moving on to the next stage of her training.

Now, a little bit about myself.

I am a Female Yellow Lab, who is now coming up to 14 weeks old. So far I have met a few of you, been to Sainsbury's and Tesco's and been at a couple of Church Services.

I was also away for a couple of day's, seeing some of my Puppy Parent John's Family. This was very good, as I also met their dog, a Chocolate Lab named Fin.

As to my training, I have been on a bus a few times, in a car, and I will shortly be going on a train.

I hope to get and see a lot of you in the next few weeks, but if you see me out and about, please say hello, as I love meeting old and new friends.

I must go now and catch up on my beauty sleep.

Love to you all

THE BEAUTIFUL BREEZE





Keep up to date with our Regular Activities

Tuesday 3rd & 17th October,
14th & 28th November

1-2-1 Home Group

5.30 – 6.30 p.m.

Session Room

Tuesday 24th October,
7th & 21st November

St.Mark's @ Sainsburys

5.30 in Training Room
just off the Café upstairs
followed by a meal together

Every Wednesday

6th Sept – 6th Dec

SUPERGROUP

6.30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Church Halls

Open to P3 - P7 children

£1 per week



St. Mark's@Sainsburys

COMMUNION

shall be celebrated on the
following dates during
2017

SUNDAY 1st October

SUNDAY 10th December

FRIDAY CLUB

Meets every second Friday

2 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

from September to June.

See local press for details

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

October 2017

Sunday 1st October

10.50 a.m.

Celebration of Holy Communion

2 p.m.

JOINT HARVEST

CELEBRATION

At FAMILY CHURCH

With our friends from Salvation Army

& St. Margaret's in the Church Halls

Harvest Gifts will go
to the Salvation Army

NO EVENING SERVICE

-

Tuesday 3rd October

1-2-1 Home Group

5.30 in Session Room

-

Thursday 5th October

Presbytery Conference Session

7p.m. Venue TBC

Sunday 8th October

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

Refreshments following service

6 p.m **Evening Service**

in Side Aisle

Tuesday 10th October

NO ST. Mark's @ SAINSBURYS

Wednesday 11th October

NO YOUTH CLUB

-

Thursday 12th October

Forthbank Service TBC

2 p.m. Forthbank Nursing Home

7 p.m. **CONGREGATIONAL BOARD**

Small Hall

-

Sunday 15th October

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

6 p.m **Evening Service**

in Side Aisle

-

Tuesday 17th October

1-2-1 Home Group

5.30 in Session Room

-

Friday 20th October

7 p.m. **150 years Celebration**

At Allan Park South Church

Guest Preacher:

Right Rev. Dr. Derek Browning,

Moderator of the

Church of Scotland

Sunday 22nd October

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

6 p.m **Evening Service**

in Side Aisle

(Please note START UP STIRLING
Retiral Collection is a week
earlier this month)

Tuesday 24th October

St.Mark's @ Sainsburys

5.30 in Training Room

Youth Club Team Meeting

7 p.m. in Sainsburys Café

-

Wednesday 25th October

SuperGroup TableTop Sale

Church Halls

In Aid of Church Funds

-

Saturday 28th October

St. Mark's is hosting

The Chance to Thrive

Local Meeting

More details to follow

Sunday 29th October

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

PLEASE REMEMBER:

CLOCKS GO BACK!

Boys Brigade Founders Day

Retiral Collection

In aid of Carronvale House

6 p.m **Evening Service**

in Side Aisle

-

Tuesday 31st October

NO 1-2-1 Home Group

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

November 2017

Thursday 3rd November

Presbytery

7p.m. Bridge of Allan Parish

Church

-

Sunday 5th November

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

2 p.m. Family Church

In the Church Halls

NO 6 p.m. Evening Service

LINK Deadline

-

Tuesday 7th November

St.Mark's @ Sainsburys

5.30 in Training Room

-

Thursday 9th November

Forthbank Service TBC

2 p.m. Forthbank Nursing Home

Kirk Session

7 p.m. Session Room

Friday 10th November

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The Children of Raploch Remember

10.50 a.m.

at the Village Square

-

Saturday 18th November

PRAYER PROMOTERS

10 – 12noon in Small Hall

-

Sunday 11th November

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

6 p.m. **Evening Service**

in Side Aisle

-

Tuesday 13th November

1-2-1 Home Group

5.30 in Session Room

-

Sunday 19th November

10.50 a.m. **Morning Worship**

6 p.m. **Evening Service**

in Side Aisle

-

Tuesday 21st November

St.Mark's @ Sainsburys

5.30 in Training Room

Youth Club Team Meeting

7 p.m. in Sainsburys Café

-

Tuesday 28th November

1-2-1 Home Group

5.30 in Session Room

-

Wednesday 29th November

Scots Night

6.30 – 8 p.m.

in the Church Halls

£3 per person/*Family Ticket* £5)

IN AID OF CHURCH FUNDS

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We need new stacking chairs!

Over the last couple of years the Property Committee has been reviewing the condition of the stacking chairs we own and has been making fairly regular trips to the tip to get rid of those that are no longer fit for use. The chairs that are left are generally in pretty poor condition and it is time for us to bite the bullet and buy some new ones.

I have asked our local supplier to provide us with some sample chairs and prices so that we can have a look at what is available, think about what would work in which parts of the halls and to give us prices for buying 20 or 50 of each type of chair.

The plan is to put the sample chairs in the church and to gather some opinions about what will work best for us. When we have decided what to buy we will be inviting everyone to buy a chair, or two, or however many they would like to fund.

Watch out for the chairs!

Fiona Russell

Treasurer



Probationer Deacon



(L – R) Claire Herbert (Probationer) Laura Digan (1st year student) Drew Gebbie (3rd year student)

Claire Herbert, a Diaconal student about to enter her probationary period will soon arrive at St. Mark's. She will begin her time with us on 2nd October. Claire is pictured above with another two students.

Claire is married with four children. She currently lives in East Kilbride although she has spent some of her life in the Stirling area and members of her family live in Dunblane.

We look forward to Claire's arrival and hope that you will get to know her over the time that she is with us.

Overleaf is a letter from the Ministries Training Task Group which explains further our role in providing a training placement for Claire.

To congregations about to receive a candidate on probation

The Training Task Group of the Ministries Council is delighted that you are going to provide a training placement for a candidate on probationary placement. Most congregations find this a stimulating, enriching and enjoyable experience, but it also means change, especially if you are having a candidate for the first time.

The Task Group thought it might be helpful to outline its hopes for the placement, and the thinking that underlies it.

The background

The placement is made by the Task Group in careful consultation with the candidate. The aim is to ensure that the candidate receives the best possible training, and is given ample opportunity to receive constructive criticism, and to reflect on the relationship between their theological education and parish life. All salary costs and travelling expenses are met centrally. The placement is normally for 15 months.

Changes for your deacon.

It might seem that your deacon will be having an easier time with a candidate to share the load. The task of training, however, is a major one, and will occupy a great deal of your deacon's time, energy and imagination. This work is largely unseen, but it is vital for the candidate to receive a well planned range of experiences, good critical feedback on the work that has been done , and time to discuss, reflect and ask questions.

Changes for the congregation

There will be a new face, a new voice, perhaps a new approach to some areas of parish life. On occasions where, in the past you would have seen only your deacon, now you may see deacon and candidate together, or perhaps the candidate on his/her own.

Please understand that if the candidate visits you at home or in hospital, or is asked to conduct a funeral, this does not mean that your deacon is not interested in you. These are important areas of work for the candidate to experience before going to his/her own parish.

The Task Group hopes that you will warmly welcome the candidate, and offer to her, and where appropriate spouse and family, support and encouragement. Each candidate brings a unique blend of skills and gifts, and these need to be used to the full; at the same time, however, it is important to remember that there is no guarantee that a replacement candidate will be allocated, so it is unwise for the candidate to develop too many new initiatives which cannot be sustained when she has gone.

Changes for the candidate

For most candidates this is an exciting time; it is full-time ministry, an opportunity to get to know a congregation well, the challenge of fulfilling their calling. Parish life is very difficult from university life, and time is needed to adjust.

Every candidate makes mistakes; so please be patient and understanding!

Conference programme

The Task Group arranges a series of four residential compulsory conferences for all candidates to enable them to work together on issues relating to ministry.

If things go wrong

Thankfully this is a rare occurrence; if there are problems, the Task Group will seek to deal with them in a caring and pastoral way.

Finally

The church's candidates represent the next generation of ministers and deacons, and this final stage of their preordination training is an exciting and vital task. The Task Group hopes that you will enjoy sharing in it.

At the end of the placement, your candidate will go to his/her first appointment. That congregation as well as the Task Group and indeed the whole church looks to you to prepare them as fully as possible.

We wish you God's blessing as you undertake this task.

Yours sincerely

Convener Training Task Group



Harvest Celebration For all the family

Sunday 1st October
2 p.m.

St. Mark's Church Halls

Children: Remember to bring your adult with you

Participating Churches St. Mark's Parish Church; St. Margaret of Scotland R.C. Church; Salvation Army

Office Bearers

MINISTER: Sought with God's Help

Deaconess: Mrs Jean Porter D.C.S. 0772 931 6321

Session Clerk: Mr David Russell 01786 470159

Clerk to the Congregational Board:

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Gift Aid Convener: Mr. Eddie Mann 0785 625 4101

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Please email any articles, news or celebration articles for inclusion in the next exciting issue of  to stmarksstirling1@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS ISSUE DEADLINE: November 5th 2017

Copies of the latest edition of  are available on the church website www.stmarksstirling.org.uk

For the latest news: follow us on Twitter or visit our Facebook page.

There are links from our website weekly news page.