



# *Tidings*



*December 2018*  
*Christmas*

**MINISTER**

Rev Ross Blackman Bsc MBA BD(Hons)  
Parish Halls, Strathmore Road, Hamilton ML3 6AQ ☎ 01698 640185

**SESSION CLERK**

Mr Louis Munn JP DL

**DEPUTY SESSION CLERKS**

Mr Alistair Buttery  
Mr William Craig  
Mrs Linda Smith

**ORGANIST AND CHOIRMISTRESS**

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**CONVENER OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Mrs Marilyn Henderson

**TREASURER**

Mr Alan Blue

**PROPERTY CONVENER**

Mr John Downie

**Vice Conveners**

HALLS - Mr George Robertson  
CHURCH - Mr David Leishman  
MANSE - Mr Robert Smith

**SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS**

Mr David Young  
Mrs Wendy Hay

**CHURCH SECRETARY**

Mrs Andrea Davidson  
Parish Halls, Strathmore Road, Hamilton ML3 6AQ ☎ 01698 281905  
Tuesday - Friday 9am - 1pm

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Dear friends,

Throughout October and November our Bible Reading Challenge has included the book of Ezekiel. It was written when Israel was subjugated by the Babylonian empire, the remains of which can be found as modern Iraq. It contains strange visions and strong words for the people of God at that time. Condemnation for the way they had acted before their God; for those who had taken advantage of them; and promises of restoration.

This year we commemorate 100 years since the Armistice of 1918, which concluded “The Great War”, also dubbed “the War to End all Wars”. We remember our servicemen and servicewomen, and their support, including the families back home. We especially remember the fallen, on fields of conflict throughout Europe and beyond. Observing history, pre-War Britain had enjoyed a golden age of ever-increasing prosperity and growth. Post-War, globally, there have been few days of peace. Unresolved issues led to a Second World War, and other conflicts. Yet, despite their continuance, progress continues in medical and scientific advances.

This Year, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland noted and called for radical action to address the entrenched decline in the Western church. That decline has been observed since the high tide of 1959 and shows little sign of abating without the action of God and Christ’s church. It is a fact that has been jumped on by detractors of the Christian faith and religion in general. Post-World War II society changed, impacting families and institutions. How do we get out of the ditch? Might it ever improve?

Throughout scripture, the pattern among God’s people repeats: blessing, complacency, decimation, ridicule, repentance, restoration. Some buckle down while others claim it will all be alright if we carry on regardless. I am drawn back to a sentence found in Ezekiel 13:10-11. “Precisely because they have misled my people, saying, ‘Peace,’ when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash, say to those who smear it with whitewash that it shall fall!” Yet, Ezekiel proclaims that a repentant people shall be restored!

This year, when we commemorate an armistice rather than a true peace agreement, we might learn a few lessons from history. True peace, in the home and between countries, needs to be worked at. True peace with God, individually, as a church, and as a country, needs to be worked at, including appropriate repentance. This time last year I wrote, “Each of us need to play our part, large or small, for the success of God’s kingdom. Our king expects it of us”. Prayer and action go hand in hand. Consequently, we entertain the sure hope of restoration, personally and as a church.

While I cannot in good conscience declare that we are in a time of peace, I remain hopeful that together we might step up to the challenge of these times, to the glory of God.

Your Minister and friend,

*Ross*



## What's On

### November

Sunday 25	10.45am	Sacrament of Holy Communion & Sacrament of Baptism
	3.00pm	Afternoon Service - Sacrament of Holy Communion
	3.00pm	Woodburn Court

### December

Sunday 02		<i>First Sunday in Advent</i>
	10.45am	Morning Worship
Friday 07	7.30pm	Carols by Candlelight (in Church - teas/coffees and goodies afterwards in the Halls)
Sunday 09		<i>Second Sunday in Advent</i>
	10.45am	Lessons and Carols & Christmas Lunch
Sunday 16		<i>Third Sunday in Advent</i>
	10.45am	Nativity & Christmas Pie Sunday
Sunday 23		<i>Fourth Sunday in Advent</i>
	10.45am	Family Service - Christmas Jumper Sunday
	3.00pm	Woodburn Court
Monday 24	3.00pm	Afternoon Family Service
	11.15pm	Watchnight Service
Monday 25	10.45am	Christmas Family Service
Sunday 30	10.45am	Family Service
	3.00pm	Woodburn Court



### January

Sunday 06	10.45am	Morning Worship
Tuesday 08	7.30pm	Session Meeting
Sunday 13	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 20	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 27	10.45am	Morning Worship
	3.00pm	Woodburn Court

### February

Sunday 03	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 10	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 17	10.45am	Morning Worship
Sunday 24	10.45am	Morning Worship
	3.00pm	Woodburn Court



### Saffronhall Singers

Monday night rehearsals are well under way and I am pleased to say attendance has been excellent, averaging over forty each night. We were delighted to welcome three new members which takes our membership to fifty-five, a very healthy total. We have now reached capacity in the session room and so regrettably have had to say we are now closed to new members.

At the time of writing we are just one week away from our first engagement of the season – we are singing for the Link Committee here in the North Hall (on the afternoon of Saturday 27th October). I would like to record my thanks to everyone for agreeing to give up time on a Saturday afternoon to support this worthwhile event in the church calendar.

Once again we are hosting our Carols by Candlelight in the church on Friday 7th December at 7.30pm. The Singers will perform a variety of styles of Christmas music and the audience will be given the opportunity to sing traditional carols and to learn some newer ones. We are always well supported by friends in the congregation and the wider community and the proceeds of this event are donated to church funds. We look forward to a joyous evening. (Some of our previous nights are available to listen to on the church website, under publications.)

Our final meeting this session will be on Monday 10th December (with some Christmas goodies) and we will start back on Monday 7th January 2019.

Best wishes to all for a peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year.

*Campbell Barr*



### Guild One Journey - Many Roads Seeking the Way

The session commenced with a meaningful dedication service held in the Church on the theme led by the Minister. Thanks to members of session and friends who joined us to help swell numbers.

There are six new projects to challenge us. (More later).

#### 2015/2018 Projects - totals as follows

Street Pastors	£132837.54
Care for Family	£114489.26
Christian Aid	£113206.97
Feed the Minds	£148179.66
Mission International	£126117.86
Prospects	£119051.82
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£753833.11</b>



A warm invitation is extended to join us on 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month.

With best wishes to all for the festive season.

*Avril Boothroyd*  
*Coordinator*



### Crèche

A crèche is held in the Church Halls every Sunday from 10.30am until the end of the Church Service. If you would like to have a baby or a young child looked after during this time please come and see us in the room next to the Office.

*Catherine Southgate*



## Sunday Live Nativity!

Our Sunday Live are hard at work preparing this year's nativity, which will be part of the church service on Sunday 16th December.

This year, our young people have taken the lead with nativity preparations in a new way. In September, we had a visit from the minister encouraging everyone to remember how much the congregation appreciates the effort that Sunday Live put into the nativity. After Ross had scarpered back to church, we had a session where we looked at four nativity scripts and discussed the pros and cons of each. The leaders were very impressed with the maturity and enthusiasm with which our young people approached the task.

One of the scripts ("The **Simplest** Nativity Play Ever") was felt (at 27 pages) to defy the trades description act. We also looked at a Tearfund script but our young folks wanted to bring a fresher approach to a familiar tale.

I'm not going to give away the name of the script chosen...let's leave that as a surprise for nativity Sunday. But rest assured, the script they have picked is charming and funny. I am sure you will be delighted with it.

As well as choosing the script, they also selected the roles they would play and are helping write lyrics for a song for the nativity.

It is wonderful to see their talent and commitment demonstrated in this new way. I know the congregation will give their full support to Sunday Live as they depict this familiar story in a new way. Oh, and by the way....the congregation will get to sing the song too....



## Choir

The new session of choir is well underway and we have been working on a variety of new Introits and Anthems to support Sunday worship week by week.

Several folks have enjoyed late autumn breaks and A N other has been coping with a self inflicted arm break. Hoping by the time the Newsletter is in print you are back to full capacity.....Elspeth.

At the time of writing, we are preparing to change the clocks as Autumn moves into the Winter season, and I appreciate the turnout of choir each Wednesday evening as the weather becomes less favourable for travelling.

Our last meeting of this year will be on Wednesday 19th December when music from September forwards to 16th December, should be returned for filing. We will restart our new session on Wednesday 9th January...weather permitting!!

May you all share the blessings of the Christmas Season with your family and friends.

*Helen C Simpson*  
*Organist*



## Old Kirk Dancers

Our new session has resumed with good numbers attending each week.

My tribute and thanks to Lottie Condie for starting this class 27 years ago here at the "Old Kirk". Lottie was a lovely person and a very enthusiastic "dancer".

She is sorely missed and as Bruce Forsyth would say "keep dancing" and we will give thanks to you Lottie.

God bless you.

*Irene Mathieson*



## Boys' Brigade Company Section

Since starting back after the summer holidays the Company Section has hit the ground running – quite literally.....



### **Battalion Cross Country**

The Battalion Cross Country was held at Stonehouse on 6th October. On a bright and clear morning David Chisholm, Euan Davidson and Cameron McIntosh all ran in the Seniors' race, and Colin Davidson and Lewis Chisholm ran in the Juniors' race. The fitness and experience David has gained from his running club was very evident, and he won his race by a considerable distance. Lewis had only come along to watch the races but was "encouraged" (possibly pressganged) to run so we could enter a full team. Not only did he come second in his race, it meant that we won also the team event. As was announced at the Church the next day, we were the only Company to put in a full team so the competition was less than fierce. However that does nothing to detract from the achievement, since it was only through the attendance and participation of all the boys that we went on to win. They deserve great credit, and it gives us a solid platform now on which to build for the other sports events this year.



### **Enrolment Service**

The Company's Enrolment and Dedication Service was held on 30 September. As always we are grateful to Ross for conducting such an important and meaningful Service. Following the Service we had our Coffee Morning with baking and craft stalls. It was very successful and we raised just over £500. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed baking and supported the Coffee Morning itself. The funds raised will help promote activities in all sections of the Company. We have been able to earmark already some of the funds for paying for training courses for the boys. Euan Davidson and Cameron McIntosh are due to attend a "Build Your Skills" course to encourage and develop their leadership skills within the Company. This is an essential element of their continuing work for their President's Badges and Bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards. David Chisholm, Euan McIntosh and Euan Baird will be attending a residential "Enhance Your Skills" course at BB Headquarters as part of their work towards their Queen's Badges and Silver Duke of Edinburgh awards. It is a significant part of the work we do with the boys that they can go on to achieve these awards. Some schools using private companies now run Duke of Edinburgh programmes, but I understand in some cases parents have been asked to pay up to about £750 for Bronze and Silver awards. We will always aim to provide the boys with access to these awards just as part of the Company's programme (though the few of us who do the DoE work within the Battalion on a voluntary basis, and see what these private companies are charging, do wonder at times if we are in the right jobs !)



### **Company 10 Pin Bowling**

The combined Junior and Company Section World Championship 10 Pin Bowling Night took place at Cosmic Bowl on 10th October. After a close contest the winner of the Company Section event was Euan Davidson with Lewis Chisholm second. In a hotly contested officers' competition Gordon Scott retained his title from last year. It was a good night rounded off with the boys misspending their youth even further by enjoying time oan ra' puggies !

*Alistair Buttery*  
*Captain*



## Anchor Boys and Bluebells



The new session got off to a good start with Aaron, Blair, Caleb, Elliot and Gregory returning and Kalan and Kyle joining for the first time.

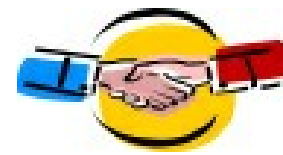
Last session we had no Bluebells but are happy to welcome Hollie and Molly as members.

At the time of writing, preparations are under way for our Hallowe'en party, the Christmas party and film show.

The Anchor Boys took part in the Company enrolment service and it is hoped that there will be a good turnout for Remembrance Sunday.

Boys and girls in p1 to p3 are warmly invited to join us for stories, games and lots of fun on Wednesdays at 5.30pm. In 'The North' Hall.

*Nanette McLean*  
*Leader in Charge*



## Monday Club

Our first two meetings of the new session have been very well attended by the membership with both speakers being well received.

Our first speaker Sheila Bond introduced us to her "Hums and Hummels". Each ornament had a special story and also a hymn which was sung by all present. Sheila, being a retired infant headmistress also shared a few memories, which in turn reminded some of us about our own school days!!

The second speaker, Graham Steven gave us an insight into the work of the Glasgow City Mission. The Mission works with adults and children who are vulnerable and disadvantaged in Glasgow, people that are leading chaotic or difficult lives and helps them to break free from their oppressive situation. Compelled by the love of Christ, Glasgow City Mission's vision is to see Glasgow and its people flourish, where people are accepted and can experience real change in their lives.

Looking forward to next year on 14th January we have Joanne Whitely on "Chocolat Blanc" and also our Financial A.G.M. Jill Scott will do a presentation on "Glasgow's Central Hotel" on 28th January. Jim Vasey on the "Sound of Music" will be on 11th February and on 25th February we will be entertained by the "Saffronhall Singers", who are not to be missed! On March 11th Russell Crawford will advise us on "Malawi Fruits" and our annual AGM will be our final meeting on 25th March. On Monday 8th April we intend to have our spring outing to Dumfries House, further details will be announced nearer the time.

Finally our Christmas Lunch will be served in 'The North' Hall on Monday 26th November at 1pm and on this note, on behalf of myself and the committee, can I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Guid New Year.

*Charlie Duguid*

Just a few words of thanks for all the cards, phone calls and visits during my spells in and out of hospital. It was quite a shock to my system to have to learn to walk again and not fall at the smallest pitfalls.

Regards

*Frank Gardiner*



The local group of MacMillan Cancer Support would like to thank everyone who supported us at our Coffee Morning which raised over £900.

Dear Ross, Elizabeth & Kate

My sincere thanks for arranging to send me the Church flowers which were waiting for me on my return home. They have given me great pleasure and were very much appreciated.

*Lila*



### Fellowship Committee

Since the last Tidings, we held the bowling afternoon on Sunday 16 September, a day which did not produce any rain, thankfully. The winning triple consisted of Gavin Robertson George Hamilton, president of Hamilton Bowling Club and Jeanette Duguid. Commiserations to everyone else who took part in the day, and thanks go to Hamilton Bowling Club for the use of the green. Thanks also go to the caterer who provided an excellent buffet after the game.

The annual charity lunch was held on Sunday 7 October. Thanks at least in part to Tesco, Rutherglen, to Henderson the butcher in Hamilton and to Iceland, each of whom provided goods to help with the catering. Of course without the support of those who gave donations and to those who attended the lunch, it would not have been possible to raise the sum of £770 to send to Poppy Scotland. This is the highest sum we have ever raised.

The next thing on the calendar is Carols by Candlelight, to take place on Friday 7 December in the church on that evening. As usual it will be followed by tea, coffee and goodies in the halls, and is a bargain at a cost of only £5, payable on the night or by tickets available on Sundays following the service. Then, on Sunday 9 December, the congregational Christmas lunch will be held in the North Hall after the morning service. Arrangements will be in place shortly to allow you to pick your menu and pay for the meal. Please book as soon as possible to allow the caterer to get the appropriate orders in place.

Can we take this opportunity to wish everyone the happiest of Christmases and a very health New Year.

*Iain McLean*  
*Convener*



### Christmas on Canvas

This year the Passion Play team are delighted to have the opportunity to take the nativity story out into our community. The cast is once more drawn from our own and neighbouring churches and it is wonderful to have the opportunity to work together on something new for our local community. Our script is “Christmas on Canvas” a very visual piece where works of art, depicting scenes from the nativity, come to life to tell the Christmas story.

We’ve had to do a wee bit of re-writing to ensure our shepherds are locals, they were originally written in broad Yorkshire. However, this was fine with the writer as the script has been performed all over the world – the shepherd scene has even been done in Maori. I am sure Big Tam, Shug and Jimmy will bring a fresh perspective on the shepherds to Lanarkshire.

Our main performance will be on Saturday 8th December at the top cross at about 1.30pm. This will be as part of the town reindeer parade, when Santa arrives at the bottom cross and is pulled on his sleigh to the top cross. If you’ve never been, it’s a really charming event, attended by families with younger children who meet Santa and pet the reindeer. How wonderful that, amidst this secular celebration, we have the opportunity to tell the real story of Christmas!

“Christmas on Canvas” will also be taken to nursing homes as part of their services over the festive season. We will also be performing alongside the Heart and Soul Swing Band in St Johns on 1st December.

I am delighted to have the involvement of many in taking the story out to the heart of the community. Please do support them and keep the company in your prayers. It is going to be great festive fun for us all but is also important mission and outreach for our churches.

*Liz Blackman*

Heavenly Father,  
You are always willing to hear your children.  
Even when our actions or attitudes put us in the wrong,  
Your ear awaits the strains of repentant prayer.  
At the centenary of Armistice,  
the cessation of violence but not full peace,  
we are reminded of our need  
to be at peace with you.  
Forgive us our errors.  
Forgive the church its missteps.  
Forgive our country its misdeeds and where it lacks justice.  
Help us to make today the first step on the road  
of a true restoration in Christ.  
Amen.



## Finance and Gift Aid

Once again we have received a letter from the Stewardship & Finance Department of the Church of Scotland thanking us for our support of worship, mission and service of the Church through our Ministries and Mission allocation in 2018. 83.5% of our payment has gone towards the costs of providing 750 ministers and other parish workers throughout Scotland and further afield. This contribution also assists with the costs of recruitment and training. The other 16.5% is used to support the Church's work in Christian education and outreach; providing social care services; accompanying partners around the world as well as providing central day-to-day service work in administrative, financial and legal matters, which are just a few of the things this contribution pays for.

Throughout the year we receive donations from the various organisations who use our suite of halls. These are all acknowledged when received but I would like to publicly thank all those organisations for their donations which help to pay some of the bills associated with the use of the halls. We have had a few hefty bills recently and these donations are very welcome indeed.

As we come to the end of another year I will soon be submitting our claim for Gift Aid. Can you please remember to tell me if you have moved house during the year, have stopped paying tax or there has been a change in your circumstances which might affect the claim.

Can I take this opportunity to thank each and every member of the congregation for your financial support and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Marilyn Henderson*  
Finance Convener



## Rededication of the new plaque for the Covenanters' Heads Memorial



### Flower List 2018/2019

December	02	Mrs MacLean
	09	Mrs Macintyre
	16	Mrs Wilson
	23	Mrs Kinsman
	30	Mrs Garrett
January	06	Mrs Maxwell
	13	Mrs McLuckie
	20	Mrs French
	27	Mrs Hunter
February	03	Mrs Simpson
	10	Mrs Scott
	17	Mr P Murphy
	24	Mrs Renwick
March	03	Mrs Laird
	10	

Thank you to everyone who has gifted flowers over the past year.

*E Gardiner*

01698 427852



### Flower Delivery

December	02	Mrs N Barr
	09	Mrs M Henderson
	16	Mrs A Henderson
	23	Mrs N McLean
	30	Mrs N Naismith
January	06	M Richardson
	13	Mrs A Cunningham
	20	Mrs K Shearer
	27	Mrs A Gibson
February	03	Mrs A Smart
	10	Mrs R Downie
	17	Mrs S Samson
	24	Mrs B Smith
March	03	Mrs H Simpson
	10	Mrs G Keir

Flowers are usually delivered after the Morning Service. If the date is unsuitable, please try to re-arrange or contact:

*Kate Morrow*

01698 420748

### Rose Bowl List 2018/2019

December	02	F McIntosh
	09	E Reid
January	06	H McGreevy
	13	J Henderson
	20	F Young
February	27	L Munn
	03	A Girasoli
	10	M McCartney
	17	J Mathie
	24	M Wilson
March	10	E Reid

### Flower Circle

Thank you to all who helped with the preparations for Harvest. It is much appreciated.

### Christmas

Will the flower circle members and helpers please meet on Friday 30 November at 9.30am to decorate the Church for Christmas.

*Elizabeth Gardiner*



### Safeguarding Training

Please note that any organisation leader or Kirk Session Elder who has still to attend the required Safeguarding training that there are upcoming dates at various churches.

Please let myself or Wendy Hay know if you wish to attend and we'll arrange places.

*for Leaders*

Tuesday 7th March 2019, Newmains  
Coltness Memorial, Wishaw, 7pm - 9pm

*for Elders*

Thursday 22nd November 2018, Strathaven  
Avenale Old & Drumclog, 7pm - 9pm  
Saturday 16th February 2019, Motherwell St.  
Marys, 10am - 12noon

Thanks

*David & Wendy*

*Safeguarding Co-ordinators*





***Entered into Eternal Life.***

*"I am the Resurrection and the Life"*

*God of grace and peace, in your Son Jesus Christ  
You have given us new birth into a living hope.  
Strengthen us now to live in the power of the resurrection  
and keep us united with our loved one  
from whom in death we are not divided;  
for You live and reign forever and ever. Amen*

*15 August 2018  
Caroline Goodship*

*17 August 2018  
Susan Donaldson*

*15 September 2018  
Anne Dickson*

*30 September 2018  
John Watson*

*24 October 2018  
John Laird*





*Wishing you a  
Merry Christmas*



*and a  
Happy New Year*