



The Herald
Castlehill Parish Church
Autumn 2023

Editorial

In previous magazines we have focussed on the youth within the church when looking for ideas for the front cover. This time around it is the turn of some of the older members of the congregation. The front cover features pictures from the Guild's trip to Auchincruive over the Summer where they had a tour of the grounds and ended with a pit stop at the Bothy café. The other pictures are from the Bowling club's outing to Girvan. It looked like an enjoyable day for all, you can hear more about both these events within the magazine.

This magazine is bursting at the seams with lots of activities having taken place over the Summer and all the usual groups starting up again for the Winter. There are many opportunities to start a new activity over the Winter.

Rachel Queen, Editor

Castlehill Parish Church, 1, Old Hillfoot Road, Ayr KA7 3LW

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Have your say

If you have any comments to make on the Magazine, please feel free to do so by letter or email to herald@castlehillchurch.org. We are always pleased to consider any articles for the magazine from members of the congregation. These can also be sent to the same email address.

From The Manse



Dear Friends

As I write this, autumn seems to have turned into summer and we have the delight this week of warm days and bright colours. Change is fast becoming a constant feature of our whole lives, whether it is Church change, community change, change in our country or the world at large, including climate change which confuses our long-held ideas of what is “normal” for each season. Change for us as individuals and as a congregation might at times seem not only confusing but threatening or even scary. In my work with the wider Church I have come across alarmingly many who might affirm just such a negative view of change at present. While I can both understand and empathise with that stance particularly in the in-between situations of life, I prefer to encourage a different approach: change can be challenging and can seem stressful. Stress is a strange thing though: it can be good stress which is positive, or it can be distress which is largely negative. Can we prefer to see change as challenging and perhaps demanding of us in a way that we may otherwise choose to avoid, but if it has been put on our agenda as it were, dealing with it together under God, being unafraid to voice any anxieties, but not letting timetabled change stop us from being faithful in our following or being adventurous as we move forward as a congregation open and welcoming to our community we can share hope and be there for each other. If we do that, we need not feel threatened or overcome by fears of an unknown future.

The diary for autumn and winter is filling up: share in as much as you can and extend our welcome to those you know in our community who might enjoy what is on offer – whether young ones or older. All are welcome at Castlehill: let's continue to demonstrate that!

I shall be on holiday from 3rd to 17th October but there will be both Sunday and pastoral cover in place. Meantime and afterwards, please keep me informed of any pastoral needs – I'd rather hear many times over than not at all.

Every blessing on you and yours.

Paul

CHURCH SECRETARY

Sandra Wyllie served as Church Secretary for the past nineteen years and intimated to the Kirk Session at the beginning of July that she wished to retire at the end of August. At a special meeting of the Session on 9th July, her intimation of retirement was received and accepted, with a recognition of the considerable volume of work Sandra undertook for the benefit of the congregation.

Sandra has brought her own unique stamp to the office of secretary over a period when the role and job description developed and changed beyond recognition from the position she began. Not only has the role of secretary become more computer-oriented but Sandra saw the development of greater community use of our halls and she was throughout the initial and ongoing congregational contact with the liaison people from the different groups. I know that her regular contact with them and her guidance was much appreciated by groups that have been with us all that time and more recent users. She was often the first point of contact for community groups such as schools who sought to visit the Church.

Sandra has been a resource for some of the Church organisations and regularly produced Sunday Orders of Service, Intimations and Rosters for various purposes. She was the guardian of the keys and the allocator of hall accommodation.

Although Sandra has worked with three ministers, two Interim Moderators and locums, I have only worked with her for four years. Over that period, I would particularly pay tribute to the way she was instrumental in the congregation responding to the challenges of the pandemic and meeting many new demands with efficiency. She also helped organise our transition to virtual and in person services which kept us in contact with the congregation in lockdown, in the slow progress out of it, and in our new pattern of worship since. For her willingness to become involved this way, I would like to thank her especially for her flexibility and diligence over that period. It contributed towards us being one of the congregations earliest in seeking a new normal.

In my early days as your minister, Sandra proved extremely helpful for her encyclopaedic knowledge of the congregation past and present. Her communication with me was regular and thorough and made my role very much easier over my years here.

We wish Sandra well in her retirement and have expressed our thanks by a presentation on Communion Sunday.

Paul



NEW SECRETARY

We were fortunate to receive three applications for the post of Church Secretary, the remit of which post was altered significantly before it was advertised. After interview and reception of references, we were very pleased to offer the position to Alfred Reid who comes to us with considerable administrative experience from his working life as a civil servant with the Army where he previously served in the ranks. Alfred lives within the Parish and will be working in the Church Office five mornings a week, Monday to Friday, 09:30-12:30.

Members of the congregation and the community can contact Alfred directly by the existing email address and by a new telephone number that is noted elsewhere in the magazine. We would ask you to limit in person visits to the office to the hour 11:30-12:30 each day, if you wish to introduce yourself to Alfred, pass on information of any kind or ask him to complete some work for you or a congregational group. This will allow Alfred to become acquainted with the significant volume of work which is involved in the role for the first two hours each day while at the same time ensuring that communication is maintained at a high level.

We welcome Alfred to Castlehill and look forward to working with him. He has already met a number of the congregation: please tell him who you are when you first meet him. I look forward to working closely with Alfred in the time ahead and am sure he will prove a real asset to our team here at Castlehill.

Paul

Let's Ride – with Breeze

Last year I found myself looking for avenues to keep active but to also meet people, so I had been attending the local Active Hub for walks and cycles. Through this I met Tracy Moynihan and she mentioned joining a free training session with British Cycling in order to become a Breeze Ride Leader. So, this time last year I completed the Ride Leaders Course in Dumfries alongside Tracy and a group of other likeminded ladies from the Southwest Regions of Scotland.

As it was close to the end of 2022, we did not get the Ayrshire rides up and running until April 2023. We facilitate women only rides in and about Ayrshire, all of which are free. We set the rides up to be on a couple of Saturday's each month and have over the year added a few different routes to keep it a bit more interesting for those joining us on those rides. We promote these rides through the British Cycling website Let's Ride, as well as Facebook through our designated Ayrshire page. You just need to ask to join our group 'Fun and Free Rides for Ladies in Ayrshire', but we also post in 'Walk it bike it Ayrshire' or 'Breeze Champions Scotland' These are geared around encouraging women to go out in a group and feel comfortable at the pace of the ride and also to tie in the social aspect of a wee coffee and cake stop either along the way or at the end of the ride. We ensure that no one is ever left behind and although there might be some sections on the road, we try to use a lot of the existing off road or designated cycle paths.

A couple of the recent rides include return ride from Ayr to Auchencruive with a stop off at the Bothy and a return ride from Ayr to Troon with a stop of at one of the local café's. A new ride we have added, that will take place on the 16th September, is a return ride from Irvine to Saltcoats, with a coffee stop at Saltcoats. We like to ensure that our start points are in or around Train Station's should you be coming from a different area.

British Cycling - Lets Ride is here to enable all of us to get back into cycling on free rides. This can be done through community, guided or women-only led rides.

These rides can take place all around the UK and are accessed via British Cycling's website, www.Letsride.co.uk all we ask is that you book onto the ride so we know who is going to join us that day, so I look forward to seeing some of you or your family on future rides in and about Ayrshire in the near future.

Sheelagh Whitton

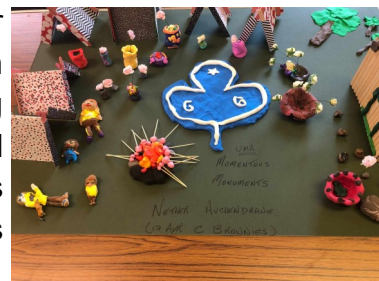


All units are looking forward to starting the new session.
We are welcoming some new volunteers and a returning volunteer.



Brownies

Tuesday Night: A steady number of Brownies has been maintained with 6 new enrolments. The girls have worked hard on their badges and skillbuilders with unit leaders working on UMAs with them from January to June. Girls have worked hard on their awards with 3 collecting their Gold, 1 Bronze and 6 completing Silver Awards soon. There have been a lot of activities and crafts from valentine plaques to Easter bonnets. They made a model of Nether Auchendrane camp site which is fantastic and available to see in the North Hall. The girls are looking forward to their camp at Nether Auchendrane in September and anything else that will be planned. They will continue to work towards their awards. Huge thank you to everyone who helped and made this an enjoyable year.



Monday Night: This unit has also maintained steady numbers and has worked on badges, skillbuilders and UMAs with badges being presented at our end of session picnic at Rozelle. One Brownie achieved her Gold Award and 3 girls will be moving up to Guides. The rest of the unit will be continuing to work toward their awards when we start up again. We had two visits, one from the Fire Fighters with their fire engine The girls had an absolute ball going into the engine and trying to soak everyone that went by with the fire hoses and found it hilarious when the Leaders had to put on the gear. The other visit was from the RNLI Lifeboat Station, the girls again had a great time learning about water safety and playing games. One of our Brownies had her hair chopped and donated her hair to the Little Princess Trust. We are looking forward to the new Rainbows moving up.



Dalrymple: This Unit has been working on their badges and UMA activities. They spent a day at Nether Auchendrane and had a Unicorn Challenge. A new Rainbow Unit is now opening in Dalrymple with a lot of interest. There are spaces available in both the Rainbow Units and Brownie units. The Leaders are involved with the Dalrymple Community with regard to saving the Church Hall. The use of the hall is vital for the units.

Rainbows

Both Rainbow Units have been busy welcoming new friends and playing games and learning a lot about energy, charities, space and astronauts. They have had activities around Shrove Tuesday, Valentines Day and Easter. The girls have achieved multiple awards and badges and



Prime Cuts Butchers

Unit 2
49 Maybole Road
Ayr
KA7 4SF
01292 443445

new Rainbows have taken their promise at the end of the session. The girls had a night of fun at Kidz Play where their presentations were made.

Guides

Tuesday Night: This Unit has been working on badges, unit UMAs and having fun. Numbers are down this year at the start of the session so spaces are available.

Monday Night Guides: The weather may have been disappointing but Monday Guides have had a very busy Summer with outdoor fun games and badge work.

May saw us heading to Hannahston Alpacas on a very warm and sunny Sunday afternoon. We were able to get up close, walk the Alpacas and learn about the species and breeding programme. It was an amazing experience for everyone and we shall certainly be back.

Our next Summer adventure was to Little Acorns Forest School in Auchincruive, again on a very warm evening in June. The activities were aerial tree climbing, archery, wood whittling and fire lighting and we all had a campfire snack in the woods. A fantastic resource and the girls enjoyed the challenges on offer.



Dailly was next for a weekend of fun for our residential experience with lots of walking out in the countryside exploring the nature walks and heritage trails that Dailly has to offer. On the Saturday we hosted an afternoon tea for Dailly Parish, free of charge. The girls served nearly 50 people afternoon tea in the hall and enjoyed hearing how the community has changed over the years. This was for part of the biosphere badge and it was wonderful to be welcomed by another community and bridging the age gaps. Thanks to all who came along and to the girls for their hard work.



We then broke for the Summer holidays returning on 14th August for a nights paddleboarding with Prestwick Sailing Club providing all equipment and instructors. A very good night and once again the sun shone as the girls learned to paddle board and to use the giant boards providing lots of laughter and impromptu wild swimming in Prestwick Bay.

Guides provide a safe, nurturing space for our young members, friendship fun and laughter and achieving awards and badges through meaningful activities. There is the chance to challenge yourself and be outdoors as much as possible, improving their resilience and mental well being and giving them a love of the outdoors at an early age, a break from peer pressure and the digital world.

My thanks to a dedicated team of leaders who give up their time to make things happen. Angela and Trisha give up their time freely along with myself with support from Linda and Rachel, DCs . I hope you all enjoy the photos and get the feel of what we have been doing with the girls.

Yours In Guiding

Christine, Angela and Trisha

M L Williams Funeral Directors		 Funeral Partners
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Our annual enrolment BBQ was held on Friday 25th August. We had a very good turn out of boys and their families.

The Anchor Boys have enrolled 13 boys, mostly made up of boys who have returned - Craig McGeachin must have done a good job in his first year in charge!

Colin Reid reports that 25 boys have enrolled for the Junior Section this session.

In the Company Section we have enrolled 13 boys.

The total for the whole Company, by today's standards, is very healthy. With the numbers in the Anchor Boys and the Junior Section, it gives us great hope for the future.

Since the last magazine we have had our Summer shut down which means there is a limited amount to report.

The Company Section and Junior Section finished our last session with an awards ceremony in the church on May 12th which was attended by parents as well as boys. The Anchor Boys held their awards on Tuesday 9th in the Church Hall with their parents in attendance.



Our weekend "camp" this year is to Dumfries House Outdoor Activity Centre, also known as the Tamar Manoukian Outdoor Activity Centre. This centre is where we get spoiled. A chef from the "Big Hoose" comes over and cooks breakfast, lunch and dinner for us! Sharon gets to relax. There are a number of onsite activities in which we can participate - archery, a climbing wall, team building activities, obstacle course etc. We are looking forward to the weekend.

Something else we are looking forward to is our next trip to Romania. We are going back at the end of July 2024. We have already been talking to the Foundation in Targu Mures about our return. We have also been discussing with them about helping to fund a project. We had offered to help with the conversion of one of their buildings into a Day Care Centre. Ibi explained their focus has moved to insulating Iona House. The bedrooms are very cold in the Winter and the heating costs are extortionate. She asked if the money we had earmarked for the Day Care conversion could be used for the insulation project instead. We of course agreed. The insulation project will cost approximately £12,000 and we are able to contribute £2,000 towards this.

You will hear more about our Romanian trip in the coming months. We will be holding fundraising activities to help with the cost and to fund another project, perhaps the Day Care centre. When details are known we will share them with you.

Our first event of the new session is our annual dedication service which is on Sunday 29th October. This will be followed by our Soup and Sweet lunch. We will have the pleasure of presenting Ryan McGeachin with his well-earned Queen's Badge.

This October will mark the 140th anniversary of the founding of the Boys' Brigade by William Alexander Smith. To make this dedication service special we are inviting any former members or anyone who has had an association with the 17th Ayr to join us for the service and stay for the lunch so we can catch up with old friends. I would appreciate if you could spread the word because I don't have contact details for everyone.

Ian Queen

Our first ever church sleepover

Our aim was to have this event for our junior boys, some of them haven't been to a Winter camp as they are unsure about being away from home. This was a chance for them to experience camp in a familiar environment. We ran our mini camp with the same format of Winter camp. Friday night, after their arrival, we had a chippy tea from Dinos on Maybole Road - the boys enjoyed their chippy tea and nothing was left!



Friday night activities



The boys recorded a news report with the help of the senior boys. We then watched the videos on the big TV. All the boys took part and enjoyed it. This is something we do with the Company Section on a Friday night. We also played some dodge ball and the boys watched a film and had some free time.

Saturday morning after breakfast (all food was generously donated by Spar, Hillfoot Road - a big thanks to them) we headed up the woods and the boys completed nature bingo - this is from the BB website. Back to church for lunch and then the boys in their squads built some dens in the woods. The old faithful spaghetti and marshmallow tower was a hit with them. The senior boys ran some activities with the juniors. They played heady handball, a football tournament and the famous GaGa ball which they all love.

All the boys participated in all the activities. They all seemed to enjoy their mini camp. A few of the boys who haven't been away from home before have already said they can't wait for Winter camp, which was great to hear as that's the reason we ran the sleepover. The hope is we can make this an annual event and encourage the boys to come along in June for this and then they will be less anxious for their first Winter camp. Our seasoned campers looked after the newbies and it was a great success.

Special thanks to Mr Russell for supporting us and coming along on Friday night to see the boys and to our senior boys for giving up a Friday night and Saturday to help us - we couldn't have managed without them.

They worked hard and kept the boys entertained., told them about when they first started going to camp etc and how they felt. The senior boys were Benn Houston, Callum Smith and Matthew Doolan.

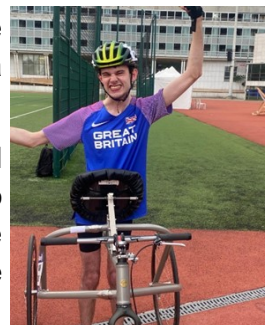


Sharon Reid

World Champion Queen's Man

It has been around two months since I successfully defended my World 100m Frame Running title at the 2023 World Para Athletics Championships in Paris. I am now a double world champion. I am still getting used to saying that!

Going into these Championships as defending champion was slightly nerve-racking. I had not raced internationally since the last World Championships four years ago, so there was some trepidation about returning to the global stage. However, the overriding feeling was one of gratitude. I was more grateful than ever to be representing my country doing something I love, especially after the last few years.



For the first time ever, all 8 lanes were full in my race with athletes from 6 countries represented. I used to dream of competing in these kinds of races when I was younger, and it certainly lived up to expectations. It turned out to be the most thrilling race of my life! I did not get the best of starts and had to chase my GB teammate Rafi all the way, who by contrast got an excellent start. My speed endurance at the end of the race was something my coach and I worked on a lot in training beforehand. All that hard work was worth it when I crossed the line and retained my title. Only 0.12 of a second separated us.

Paris 2023 was an incredible experience with lots of special memories to treasure. I would like to thank everyone for their amazing support.

Gavin Drysdale

Holiday Club 2023

Roll up for the Circus was an amazing two days of fun, games, experiments, competitions and a special appearance of Magic Malky. The story centred around two circus owners and their performers. Well done to those who acted out their parts so well. To our congregation, thank you so much for all the donations of cardboard boxes, clothes and probiotic bottles. To all the volunteers who assisted at the Holiday Club, you made a lot of kids very happy.



Special thanks to the team who have worked tirelessly since April – Isobel Miller, Linda McClurkin and Paul Russell. It was well worth all the time spent.

We look forward to working with the children again next August maybe we will be Secret Agents OR Zoo Keepers OR Explorers.



NOTE FOR THE DIARY

Young Church will resume after the summer break on 10th September at 11am. All are welcome (Primary 1 – 7).



Pause for Thought

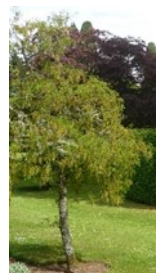
I hired a plumber to help me restore an old farmhouse, and after he had just finished a rough first day on the job: a flat tyre made him lose an hour of work, his electric drill quit and his ancient one-ton truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he sat in stony silence. On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family.

As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands. When opening the door, he underwent an amazing transformation. His face was wreathed in smiles, and he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss.

Afterward he walked me to the car. We passed the tree, and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier. 'Oh, that's my trouble tree,' he replied 'I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, those troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and the children. So, I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home and ask God to take care of them.

Then in the morning I pick them up again.' 'Funny thing is,' he smiled, 'when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there aren't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before.'

We all need a Tree!



Look up Matthew Ch.11 v 28 - 30

Fabric Report

We have been very busy over the Summer. The office has been completely renovated with a new carpet, new blinds, new desk and a new light and it has been painted and is now ready for the new secretary. The team worked hard with all the painting being done by Jim McClurkin.

We had a big clean up in the lounge and the quiet room. Outside we got the last drain cleaned out, William Graham did the guttering and he also put anti slip tape on the ramp to the office. We are going to have an outside clean up in October to get the grounds ready for winter I hope you will come and give an hour of your time on Saturday the 7th 10-1. All are welcome. We hope if you see something needing repaired that you will let us know .

The Fabric Team

Social Report

We are having a Beetle Drive on the 27th September, tickets are on sale now.

The Christmas fayre will be on the 25th November 10-12 - a great place to start your Christmas shopping and have a tea/coffee and chat. We are hoping to have new ideas for the sale tables and if anyone would like a table please contact us .

The Social Team

To enable us to replace items in our main kitchen we will be holding a donation fund raising soup lunch on the 1st Sunday of each month (September to March). Tea/coffee will be available as usual.



It's that time of the year again when Summer is coming to an end, the Winter organisations are getting themselves ready to re-start and the Guild is no exception.



The Guild managed to arrange two events over the Summer. The first being an evening meal at the Chestnuts Hotel and, secondly, an afternoon visit to River Garden, Auchincruive where we were given a guided tour around the grounds followed by afternoon tea. Both occasions were well attended and enjoyed by all.

The Guild starts again on 4th October with our opening social. The entertainment is by "Just Three Guys". We will also be celebrating during this session 65 years of the Guild at Castlehill Church. Quite an achievement considering the ups and downs of today's world.

We have arranged a full syllabus of interesting and varied talks for everyone to enjoy, so why don't you give us a try? We meet in the North Hall every Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm where you will be made most welcome.

See you there.

Dorothy Jack, Secretary

MONIN'

MINNIE

"Hello Jean, Ah hivna seen ye for a while"

"Nah, Minnie, Ah have been away. Whit are ye moanin about the day?"

"Me moanin!! Never."

Mind you Ah wis at the Kirk on Sunday an' the soond wisnae very guid. Maybe it wis where a wis sittin. There's some bits where ye canna hear much. Maybe that's a blessing in disguise. Ah really shouldna say that. I heard they were gettin it sorted, maybe before Ahm back it'll be done.

"Another thing Ah noticed, a wee picture o' the Minister come up in the corner when they're shown ither things an' scoots aboot. Shairly they could tak a rubber and rub it oot. That's whit Ah wid dae."

Ah've said before ye should come along, Jean"

"Weel maybe yin o' these days"

"Ye get a great wee cuppa tea efter the service. See thae lassies in there, they are aye servin' teas. They should get some help really. Ah said tae somebody aboot that and they said "A' they do is jist bile a kettle" and Ah said back "but they have got tae BE THERE tae dae that."

"Whit dae ye mean Jean, Ah could help, well mibbe Ah'll think about it".

"Its gie busy some Sundays, in fact Ah couldnae get mah usual seat the ither week, an' had tae sit wae somebody Ah didna ken. Actually, Ah fund oot her sister kent ma mither and we had a richt guid chat. Maybe Ah should sit beside ither folks every week instead o' bein in the same group talkin' about oor peels".

"Ye should come along Jean really".

"Ah think ye should be a missionary wae ah yer talk about comin tae the Kirk".

"Dae ye mean Ahm soundin' like a missionary?"

"Aye jist that, Ah hear they ca'd a wee village in Fife efter you"

"Whit dae ye mean?"

"Aye its ca'd St Monans."

"Acch, away wi' ye. An' mind whit a said"

On our doorstep there are lots of places that we know nothing about and are well worth a visit. George Neill, a member of St Leonards Church and President of our Castlehill Bowling Club discovered exactly that.

"Hannahston Alpacas in Drongan is not just for children, us adults had a brilliant time. I was treated to this by my daughter for an early Father's Day gift and boy was I in for a treat. We all had a fantastic time; we got to feed and pet lots of alpacas and of course take lots of selfies with Dougall and Blackjack and we took them on a short trek. Angela was very knowledgeable and gave us loads of information about the alpacas which was great, you can tell she has a real passion for her alpacas and knows every alpaca's name. If you are looking for something different to do, I would highly recommend a visit."



Bowling Club

What a great day we had. Weather was perfect, almost too warm at times. Everyone enjoyed the afternoon - good company and lots of laughs.



Girvan Club did us proud again with tea and scones on arrival and a lovely high tea after the games. While there were 22 bowlers, 11 spectators also enjoyed the day out.

The winners are shown below and to avoid embarrassment the Booby prize winners' photo has not been shown, not that George Johnstone, Ann Finlay, Liz Hunter and Alex Smith would have minded.

Now looking forward to next year which starts 4th Sept.

Wellwood Grierson



The Winning Rink: Rita Macey-Lilley, Allan Jack, Christine Telfer



President George Neil presenting Christine Telfer with prize for the "first toucher".

Winter Activities Afternoons

Castlehill Church is involved in the Warm Space Initiative, to support any member of our local community who may feel lonely or isolated over the Winter months while also helping to support energy costs by reducing the need to put heating on during the day.

Every Thursday afternoon from the end of September to the end of March we meet in the main hall of the church between 2.00pm and 4.00 pm. We offer the opportunity to enjoy socialising and making new friendships while being involved in a number of activities. Currently, we have craft/crochet tables, jigsaws, games tables and a library area. During the afternoon tea, coffee and biscuits are available. There is no charge. Our aim is to make everyone welcome in a warm comfortable space. We resume on September 28th. Please come along to enjoy the fellowship and perhaps learn a new skill.

Liz Hardie, Lead



We would like to thank everyone for their continued support of the South Ayrshire Foodbank. Your donations of food and money is very much appreciated and helps families and individuals cope with the rising cost of living which is facing everyone.

With the monies donated to Castlehill Foodbank we buy extras such as eggs, cheese, butter, apples and oranges which are very much welcomed.

At the beginning of the school holidays we were a bit quieter but we are now getting busier again.

We had a representative from South Ayrshire Advice Service on two occasions, one in July and one in August, who spoke to several clients on the day and had follow up calls with others. The Trussell Trust are hoping to have their own advisor in the near future.

Forehill school donated the money from their summer service in church to our Foodbank. The total was £113.13 which was gratefully received. Once again thank you for your support.

Margaret Gerrard and Andrew Graham

Finance

Regular expenditure by standing order and direct debit is £3,259.27/month. This does not include gas and electricity charges which to date were £2,757 for gas and £1,989 for electricity.

Fabric expenditure to date was £8,483.47. There have not been many major repairs but a water leak under the tarmac outside was repaired at a cost of £4,240 and the church office has been completely refurbished.

Our Property Group work hard to keep the buildings and grounds in good condition. They carry out tasks themselves where possible but many jobs need the expertise of tradesmen which comes at a cost. Clean up days are organised and anyone who is be able to help would be made welcome.

Our Giving to Grow payment was assessed as £50,512 for the year with a payment of £4,209.33/month for 12 payments. The Stewardship & Finance department agreed we could reduce this to £2000/month and so far we have paid the shortfall of £6,628 at the end of each 3 month period. We hope to have paid all the money due by the end of December.

If you are a tax payer and use a standing order or FWO envelopes or the Wee Kirks to give money to the church we could claim 25% of the amount given back from HMRC if you sign a Gift Aid Declaration form. Contact Margaret Devlin Tel. 01292 445118 for a form or it can be downloaded from the church website www.castlehillchurch.org under the publications section. Completed forms should be returned to Margaret.

Margaret Devlin

Funerals

April

Betty Rodger Caledonia Road, Ayr
David Grant Windy Hall Care Home, Ayr

May

Ronnie Fisher Briar Grove, Ayr
Annie Hay Dalmellington Road, Ayr

June

Nettie Hamilton Hillfoot Crescent, Ayr

July

Mary Howat Crofthead Road, Ayr

Baptisms

May

Oluwasola Jackson Babalola

July

Lana Mary Lyn Cowan

Our thanks goes to the following people for donating flowers to the church between May and August:

Alex Smith, Eileen McGilp, Margaret Gerrard, Choir, Liz McAdam, Joan Macfie, Brian and Jackie Christie, Brenda McCrone, Margaret Graham, Elza Anderson, Jean Hunt, Allison Smith, Hamish Wilson, Marion Reid, Liz Reid, Liz Hardie and Moira Alexander.

Thanks also to the flower arranging team and delivery team:

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