

THE MUSTARD SEED

Summer 2021

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Trudi's Story

The lecturers said to me *“Please leave the meeting now, and we will discuss your presentation.”* That was it. The end of an oral presentation on my dissertation. The end of three years of studying a BD at St Andrews.

Five and a half years since I started on this process of training for Ministry...

Three years as a student minister drawing to a close...

But really, it all started over 20 years ago...

“I asked my minister when I was 17,

“How do you know you are being called for ministry?”

She replied,

“It’s like a feeling in your gut.”



I realise now, that we can know a call to ministry in many different ways, just as we can know that call to be who we are all truly meant to be in a myriad of ways. For me though, that was an apt description. You see, that feeling never went away.

I dipped into finding out about ministry almost ten years later, only to discover I felt more drawn to children's ministry. Several children's worker jobs in various churches followed, but that *feeling* persisted. Fast forward almost another ten years and I found myself at a vocations conference in November 2016. This was a chance to explore the different ministries and work within the Church of Scotland. After that followed a period of discernment, with Howe of Fife Church. I then had a Local Review and a National Assessment Conference. At that point I was accepted as a Candidate in Training for Full Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

And so the adventure began in earnest !!!

In two ways – first, my second university life began! My studies included biblical studies, theology, Christian ethics, pastoral care, church history and



a dissertation on children and communion. I learned much, some of which will be useful in my ministry, other things which taught me how to think theologically, and helped me assess what is important to me about my faith, and my view of the world and our place in it.

Better than the degree however, were the placements! I have been so grateful for the opportunities provided in my placements, to glimpse different ministries, to develop skills, to find out more about myself in the process, and what my future ministry may look like.

And so, now, I am ready to embark upon a new adventure. Probation! And I am incredibly excited about the months that lie ahead.

Trudi Newton

PASTORAL CARE

So far this year we've all done a lot of waiting.....

Waiting for the covid rules to change in our area, waiting to be moved into a different tier ,waiting for a particular restriction to be lifted, waiting to get a date for OUR vaccination and in a different aspect of our lives waiting for a decision as to who will govern Scotland for the next few years.

Generally waiting for reassurance or some kind of certainty and often left feeling out of control.

But PENTECOST came as it always does with the certainty of the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. This is the gift by which we know God's love is unchanging and reminding us that we are always loved with an everlasting love .It will never change and we don't have to wait for it!

It is the essence of what Pastoral Care is about...

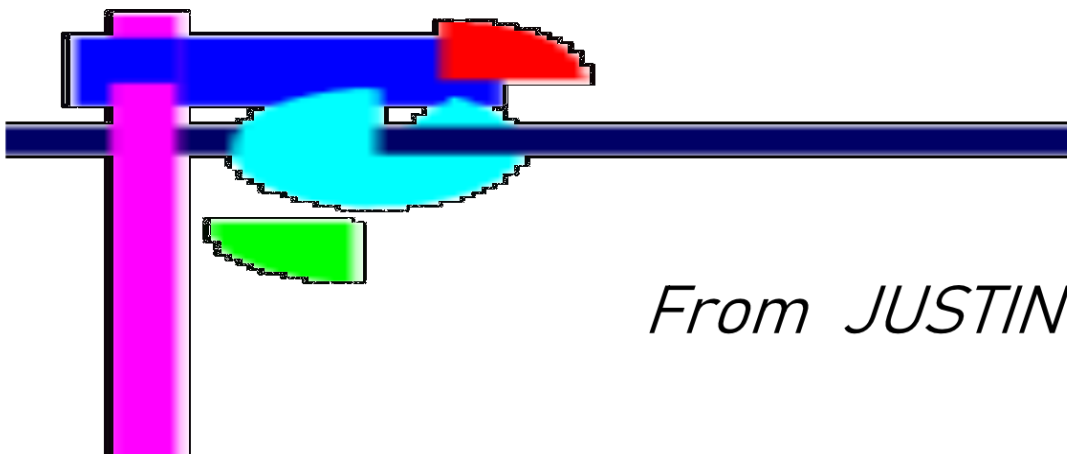
Unfortunately because of the remaining restrictions we are still limited in what we are able to do.

However as things gradually begin to be a bit more normal we are looking forward to having much more freedom in our Pastoral Care activities within the Church

Meanwhile if there is any way at all that we can be of help please do not hesitate to contact us.

Telephone:- 264456

Dorothy Murray



From JUSTIN

Now that summer has arrived, a little later than I would have liked, but it is here, I cannot help myself but enjoy it. I love summer - in fact it is my favourite season. I enjoy the long days and more time in the outdoors although Scotland does not always have the best summers to be fair. I think it was Billy Connolly who said "Scotland has two seasons: Winter and June."

As much as I love summer, I know that in a couple of months the seasons will be changing once more. I always wish deep down that summer would stay a little longer, that the heat would continue, and the foliage would hang on a little longer.

As many will know I am taking time off to work with burnout and stress. I did not see it coming and it arrived like a thief in the night. I am a private person and do not like my personal struggles being in the open for all to see but because of my position in the community, it often feels that people know things about me before I know them.

What is needed now is some time to work through what feels like a winter within me. I have for many years spoken of the need for self-care and if you need to seek help if you got to a place where it was needed. I am there now. I am extremely embarrassed to tell people and it still feels like a weight is on my chest every time I have to speak about it. Mental health still has lots of stigma around it, but this should not be the case.

So, I wish my mental health summer which was six months ago lasted a little longer. I wish for the days where things were manageable, creativity flowed, and life seemed easier. However, I am also grateful for this time to reassess, work on, and recalibrate my life once more. However difficult this winter will be, I am sure that new life will emerge from this.

May God uphold you all in the coming months.

P.S. In order to create space for myself I will not be taking any emails, phone calls, or answering the door at the manse during this period.



How Covid-19 has affected Lives

The downside of lockdown for me was missing out on holidays to my home-from-home - Lake Maggiore in Northern Italy.



However, the money thus saved I used to a) pay off the balance of my car loan and b) to bring Lake Maggiore to me! - in the form of a much-enlarged photograph of Isola Pescatori (the Island of the

Fishermen) a favourite place where my husband and I loved to sit and look at the peaceful lake and its beautiful surrounds. Heaven!

Anne Steward

Exercise



The hard part of lockdown for me was not going to my weekly exercise class. After a few weeks of not going out to it, the instructor sent an e/mail to everyone involved to tell us he was going to do the class by ZOOM. Right enough the ZOOM link by e/mail came through and that was the start of our virtual exercise class.

We got better after a few blips and the class continued until 19th May when we went to the gym at the swimming pool. The virtual class was good but it was actually better when we went physically to the class.

Diane Murray

**Your
Church
Needs
You!**



Now that our services are full on every Sunday, we really need more people on the rota for the technical jobs - operating the powerpoint, the sound desk and the camera for the livestream.

If you have any experience in any of these fields, please consider offering to help. There are currently four people on the sound desk and

camera rotas, but only three on the powerpoint, so these folk are not really getting many Sundays 'off', and there is very little leeway for holidays or illness.

If serving tea/coffee is more your comfort zone, please consider helping on the Coffee Bar during the week. It is currently open from 10 am till 2 pm offering two x two-hour shifts, Monday to Thursday.

Or you might like to offer your help in our new community venture "Clothes4Kids", which will offer good second-hand clothing for babies to teenagers, along with access to advice via a friendly chat and cuppa. It is planned to open this service on Monday and Wednesday mornings starting on Monday 2 August.

These voluntary posts are in the St Bryce Kirk building, but open to folks from any of the four town centre churches. ***Interested?***

Email office@stbrycekirk.org.uk or phone Ros on 640016 between 9 am and 3 pm Monday to Thursday to be put in touch with the right coordinator.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES



David and Irene Deas - Golden Wedding Anniversary - 27th Feb.

Iain and Judy Clark - Diamond Wedding Anniversary - 3rd April.

Jim and Cath Johnston' - Diamond Wedding Anniversary - April.

Bill and Anne Page - Golden Wedding Anniversary - 24th April.

Alan and Moira Hill - Diamond Wedding - June

If you are looking forward to a *significant* anniversary,
or know of another couple who is, please let us know.

Abbotshall Prayer Group

The Prayer Group continues to meet in the privacy of our own homes at 10 am on the following Sundays: -

13th & 27th June, 11th & 25th July, 8th & 29th August,
and 12th & 26th September.



If you would like to join us in prayer (no experience necessary) or you would like us to pray for someone, please contact.:-

Morna Scriven (268172) or **Anne Gardner** - Prayer Promoter (265876)

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## *Abbotshall Craft Group*

The group restarted on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May. We meet in the Kennedy Hall at 10am until 12 noon. If you have a craft hobby or a project you are working on (e.g. modelling, art, sewing, knitting etc.) please bring it along and enjoy fellowship and refreshments.

Covid rules apply.

For further information contact:- **Bett Duncan**

**Hello**, my name is *Catherine Millar*.

Earlier this year I was appointed to the role of  
'Roll Keeper' for St Bryce Kirk.

Unfortunately, due to the recent circumstances, I am concerned I may not have all the necessary information to enable me to provide an accurate membership list.

To enable me to check I have all the relevant information, can I ask you to contact me directly, by email or telephone, to advise me of any changes in membership you may know of?

[catherine.millar57@gmail.com](mailto:catherine.millar57@gmail.com)

07834537942.



**Good news from KART**

## ***Virtual Kiltwalk* for Kirkcaldy Area Reachout Trust**

Thank you so much for your support. Your donations of £2318 were topped up generously by 50% from the Hunter Foundation and so today (7th May 2021) we received in total £3477.71.

Chris did the marathon over the weekend with the help of his wife Laura and two girls.

I was accompanied on the marathon with my friend Margaret, cycled with my husband Dougie and joined Karen and Emily on a swim. It was a fantastic weekend, the sun shone brightly and the wind was behind us.

Due to Covid, our income has been affected and this has given us a much needed boost. We needed your support and you stepped

up to the challenge magnificently! We thank you for your encouragement, generosity and kindness over the years.

**Maureen Latto** KART. 16 East Fergus Place. KY1 1XT

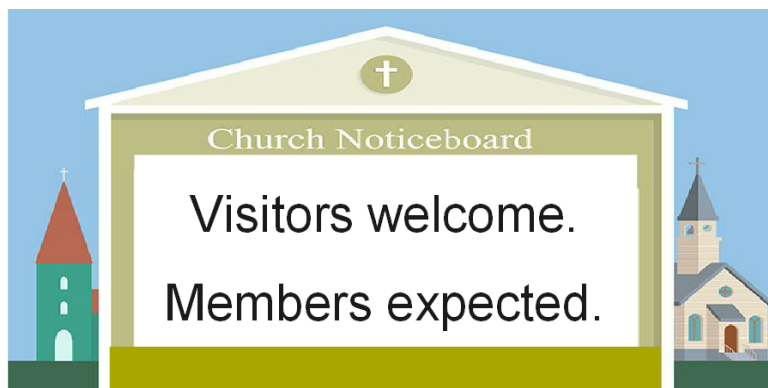
*Smile Line* Neighbourhood Watch

In one small rural village the local vet also led the local Neighbourhood Watch group. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, **"Is your husband there?"**

**"He is, but tell me, do you need him as the vet or the Neighbourhood Watch?"** the wife asked.

**"Both!"** was the frantic reply

**"We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it!"**



## ELDERSHIP

I became an elder in my late twenties in the church I had attended since a young child, St James's in Paisley. A beautiful church built with money from the Coats family, but now, like too many others, closed. Both my father and brother were elders in the same church, but I did understand that this was a serious and challenging commitment and involved much more than delivering communion cards three times a year.

It meant that I was committed to regular worship, to attempt to live as best I could according to Christian values and to try and support the

church in other ways. My theological position then and now was more radical than many in the church, but I believe that Christian values and belief are more important than ever in our unequal and divided world.

The role of the elder is now under much more scrutiny than ever before, but I think that there is still a need for elders to visit the members in their districts on a regular basis. I have been fortunate in that I have met with friendliness throughout in my district whether or not the members were regular church attenders. My visits usually included much general conversation, but I did try to include a mention of what was happening in the church. I am sure that, for some of my district, the fact of a visit and a chat before Communion prompted them to attend even if they were the only services, they attended apart perhaps from Easter and Christmas. The visits maintained a contact and a sense of belonging which I am not convinced any other kind of communication could.

This is especially so if there are problems or illness in the home. That is why I welcome the development of pastoral care in Abbotshall and why I hope that it becomes an essential part of the plans for the churches in central Kirkcaldy. It requires sensitivity, training and an understanding of what help is required and where it is available, but the church has to be seen to be of help to those in need. The fact is that most people need support of some kind in their lives, particularly as they age, and the church should be there both to offer and facilitate assistance where required and as circumstances dictate.

The visiting elder is in many instances the only church contact who can alert pastoral care that a member needs support. I have had other roles in Abbotshall, helping to run the Junior Sunday School, the Bible Class, Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Minute Secretary to the Session, but attending Kirk Session and being a visiting elder has been the basis of my commitment and one I have found to be very rewarding.

*Gordon Houston*

# Town Centre Church Steering Group Update

(Meeting - 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021)

Decisions made at this year's General Assembly will impact on the work of the Town Centre Groups.

*"The Assembly passed a new Presbytery Mission Plan Act which will see the number of ministry posts in the Church cut to 600, plus 60 vacancies, by 2025 - a number the Assembly was told was both financially affordable and also reflected projections for the near future, with over 35% of ministers reaching retirement age within five years. Until new Presbytery Plans have been approved, churches will only be given permission to call a minister with the approval of both the Presbytery and the Faith Nurture Forum, and where both parties deem this to be a strategic priority. Churches already given permission to call have until December 31 for a nominee to preach, after which the Forum must be consulted before the process is allowed to continue. All new calls during this period will be on the basis of reviewable rather than unrestricted tenure."*

*"It also agreed to the establishment of a new Pioneer Mission Fund to support local church growth, with a particular emphasis on church planting and the establishment of new worshipping communities"*

This may delay the timescale we had originally planned. Fife Presbytery meet in June so we hope to have guidance as how to proceed after this. There will be a consultation process on buildings, ministries and readjustment. We have already begun looking at these subjects so we are in a better place than some. Building Group- the group have completed their task using the toolkit from the Church of Scotland. They have submitted their report but until the steering group have had a chance to discuss the findings with members of the group at the next meeting (July 14<sup>th</sup>) the findings will remain confidential.

Community Audit- one representative of this group from each church will be invited to meet with the steering group in August to discuss how we move forward, and air any concerns, with the project.

## **Joint Working Group**

It was agreed that the work of this group would sist in the meantime.

**Summer Services** : - It was decided that because of continued Covid restrictions and as we have only recently started worshipping in our buildings that each church would hold their own services in July.

## **Pastoral Letter**

*from the Moderator of the Presbytery of Fife*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We have recently celebrated Pentecost, the Day of Fire and tempestuous wind.

The outgoing Moderator of the General Assembly, Very Rev Dr Martin Fair described his year in office as, *a year like no other*. His words are startling, because experiencing strange and disrupting times can be paralysing. In the teeth of such a violent gale, being cruelly tossed and turned is frightening, overwhelming. However, Martin's repeated mantra in his barnstorming General Assembly sermon offers a different way - less paralysis and a call to loving arms, "*We have work to do!*"

This year's General Assembly has taken decisions like no other. Assembly has agreed the numbers of ministries each presbytery can call. Fife Presbytery's callings have moved from our current status of 58.5 FTE ministries to an allocated 44.5 FTE which includes Mission Development Staff, Deacons and Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Of our current 65 churches we have 15 vacancies and 11 guardianships.

Presbytery Planning will be called Mission Planning and all presbyteries must agree and submit their new Mission Plan to the Presbytery Planning Task Group (PPTG) and have it accepted by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022. The July ***Life & Work*** will contain a summary of reports given and decisions made across the wider Church and I commend it to you. Two further critical changes agreed at Assembly are that by 2025 the Church can afford 600 ministers (Not the current 700) and 60 vacancies at one time (not the current 299). We have work to do, which I suggest is work to make us ship shape for Gospel mission.

The Convener of the Faith Nurture Forum Rev Rosie Frew said, *“We are draining the resources of the church - people, morale, finance - just to keep this broken system going. Our report offers us a chance to thrive, to lay down the burdens that are exhausting us”*.

Far from being paralysed and fettered, however Assembly heard a defiant and determined response and call in our new moderator’s sermon near the end of Assembly week. Lord Wallace’s text was from the Book of Acts 11, which describes the twin horrors of persecution against the Church following Stephen’s death, and a prediction of famine which went on to devastate the Empire during the reign of Claudius. Jim highlighted how Barnabas, Saul, Agabus and other disciples set to, and energised and enabled by the Lord’s hand upon them, they thrived because they responded kindly and compassionately. They supplied food and help, sacrificially, ***“Each as they were able providing help for brothers and sisters living in Judea.”***

We too have been assailed by twin horrors. The devastating decline in the numbers of people attending church, or seeing the Church as relevant. Is this not a modern day form of persecution, a form of passive attack? Then the pandemic ravaged the earth, which is not dissimilar to the 1<sup>st</sup> Century famine plague. The message from scripture, the message from our two moderators is to shun paralysis and dismay in their vicious wake, to get busy, to discern new and on-going needs, and with the Lord’s hand upon us dream dreams and do greater things than we can imagine. Good news stories of fresh thinking and new practice are already *growing locally. In the coming months it will be good to share these as living stones, living examples of what we may do. Building on the conversations and consultations which have taken place in past years,*

*further opportunities to meet with congregations and work with you towards new goals are being planned: With the Lord's hand upon us we will surely thrive!*

*Dear Friends we are in the teeth of the gale, which is not a new thing for the Church of Jesus Christ! How we reform our mission and our love for God's world together, is an old care and now it's in our hands! Now, we are being trusted to harness the wind and feed the scorching fire already gifted for cleansing and refining. With such power, it is our calling to help re-new the earth and all God's people, in the guise of the new Fife Presbytery family.*

***Blessings and peace in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,***

***Rev Jane Barron*** - Moderator, Fife Presbytery

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A Prayer for a Spiritual Harnessing

Creating God,
You made everything, you are making everything.
Everything which breathes is a work in progress.
We are a work in progress.

Newly Born Christ,
A storm whips up and disturbs the comfortable sea.
We are afraid.
You are surprised.

Risky Wild Spirit,
Your energy fired a Genesis beam and lit the
universe.
You are miracle.
Blaze the same in us, we pray. ***Amen.***

BEREAVEMENTS

We were saddened at the passing of :-

Maisie Russell - December 2020

(not Maisie Ritchie as shown in the last newsletter)

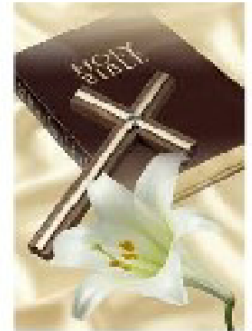
Betty Davidson - March;

Margaret Reekie - April

Alexander (Sandy) Marr - May

Dave Smith, Abbotshall's oldest member - May.

James Thomson - June



Gardening really is good for you

According to a recent study conducted by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and two universities, people who garden every day have well-being scores 6.6 per cent higher, and stress levels 4.2 per cent lower than those who do not garden at all.



Dr Lauriane Chalmin-Pui, RHS well-being fellow and lead author says, "The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the more frequently you garden, the greater the health benefits.

"In fact, gardening every day has the same positive impact on your well-being as undertaking regular, vigorous exercise like cycling or running."

"Gardening is like effortless exercise: it doesn't feel as strenuous as going to the gym, but we can expend similar amounts of energy."

Where are our birds?

British birds are in big trouble. 80 per cent of our most popular species are in severe decline, according to recent data from the RSPB's annual Big Garden Birdwatch..



The world's largest wildlife survey has found that 16 out of the 20 most spotted garden birds have been in decline since 2020. There are now concerns about the greenfinch and chaffinch, which were seen in their lowest ever numbers this year.

The top five birds seen in people's gardens were: house sparrows, blue tits, starlings, blackbirds and wood pigeons. Only robins, blackbirds, carrion crows and the song thrush grew in number in 2020.

Reflected Faith: *Sit and be Still*

How do you 'sit' in church? I am a wriggler and change my position on the seat often. I cross one leg over the other, then swap them over, stretch them out, then cross them at the ankles. I do the same with my arms. I lean one way and then the other.

In other words, 'I'm a fidget.' But having been absent from a church building for so long, I wanted to think this month about simply *sitting and being still* before the Lord.

I am well aware we've done little else this last 18 months – but if you manage to get into a church building, for whatever reason I'd like to encourage us all to just sit still and breathe in the place. To relish being 'back'!

To sit 'heavily' in that spot. To feel the solidity of the surface you are sitting on. Lean into it. Feel how it supports you. Feel each part of your body where it is touching the chair or pew.

Look around you at all the distinctive seating set aside for the different participants of the church: the choir, the worship leader, a deacon or curate, the priest and so on. In an Anglican church there will be a chair especially dedicated for the use of the Bishop.

However plain or fancy each piece of furniture is within your building, they all have the same purpose. To hold the person and keep them safe.

Now :-

As you sit in the church – or at home if you are not able to do so – think of all those people in the Bible stories who sat with Jesus. The number of times He taught in the Temple or in a synagogue, or to crowds gathered on a hill. Recall the Last Supper and His friends gathered together, sitting with Him to eat and share the Passover meal, and then recall the meal with the men from the Emmaus Road. So many meal times with the bold and the weak, the saints and the sinners. With you and me.



“IT IS LIKE DRIVING ON THE MOON”

Smile Line

Some of our British roads are beginning to resemble “the surface of the moon”, according to the RAC. It has recently reported that an average of 52 drivers a day are breaking their cars on potholes and needing to be rescued.

More than 4,000 drivers have needed assistance since January, despite the fact that lockdown has meant many fewer cars on the road.

After years of underfunding and patch-up repair jobs, and despite the fact that councils are currently filling a pothole every 19 seconds, the RAC says that the Government and local councils face an ‘**enormous task**’ to get our roads “anything like reasonable” again.

Potholes are nasty to cars and YOU! They can break your suspension springs, distort your wheels, and damage your shock absorbers, among other woes.

Out to Graze

A group of elderly British tourists were touring Holland by bus. They stopped at a cheese farm where a young guide led them through the process of making cheese from goat's milk. She showed the group a lovely hillside where many goats were grazing.



"These," she explained, "are the older goats put out to pasture when they no longer produce." She then asked, "What do you do in Britain with your old goats?"

A spry old gentleman answered,

"They send us on bus tours!"

Next Issue of - "MUSTARD SEED"

The deadline for the Autumn newsletter will be :-

Sunday 18th September.

Please send your contributions to :-

Diane Murray dianemurray953@btinternet.com

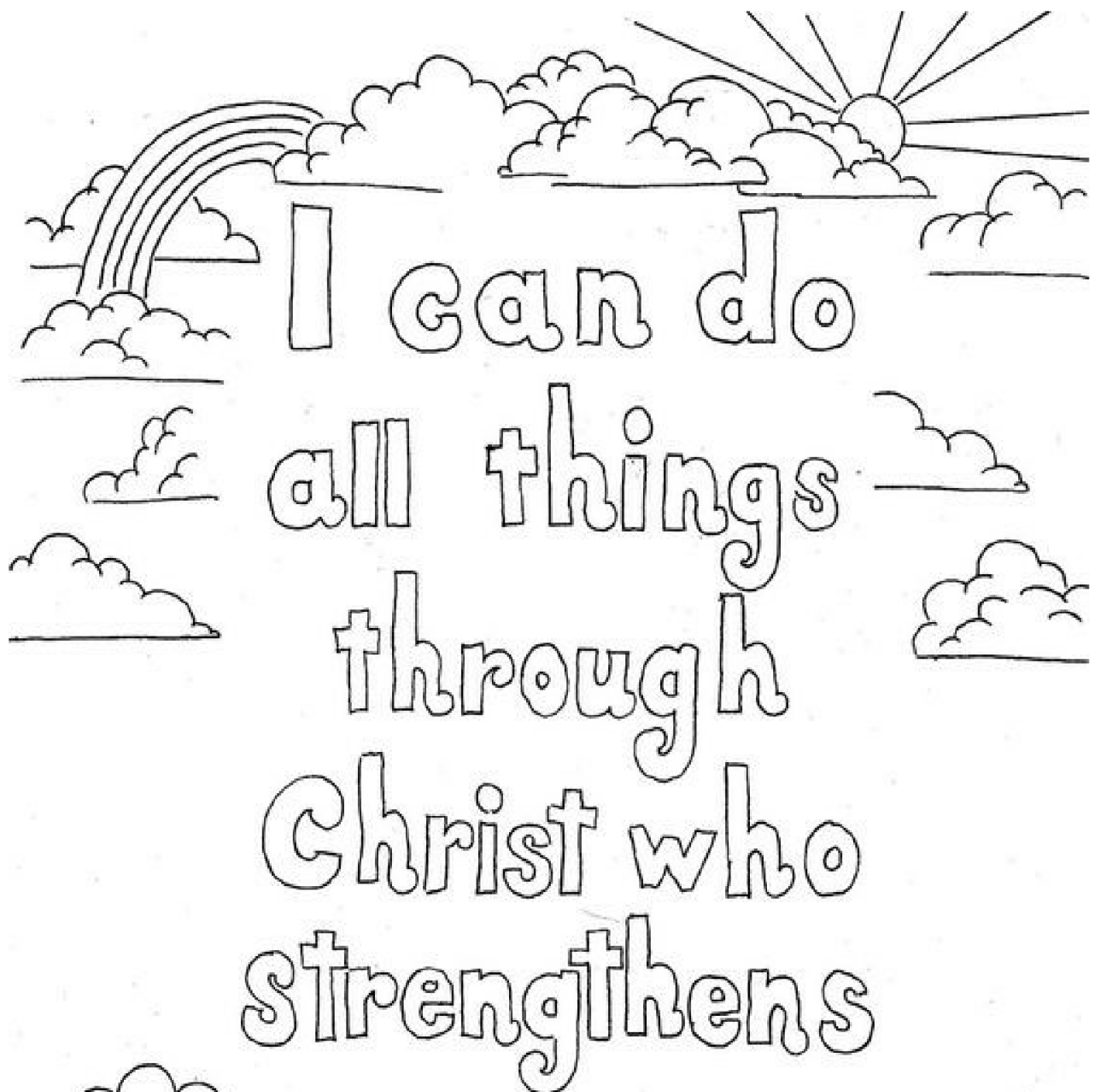
97 Mellerstain Road, Kirkcaldy, KY2 6UD

or

Isobel Greenaway isobelg300@gmail.com

14 Glenbervie Road, Kirkcaldy, KY2 6HR.

THANK YOU - NEWSLETTER TEAM



I can do
all things
through
Christ who
strengthens
me

Philippians 4:13

Pause & Meditate as you *Colour*

Younger Colourists do not need to pause or meditate

“Think on these things “

... the fruit of the Spirit
is



Everyone can try to develop these qualities.

Clothes 4 Kids

What can we do to help?

Difficult year and a half

For some people it has been life changing especially if they have lost their jobs.

There are 4 churches in the centre of town and we're asking them to join us in ***Clothes 4 Kids***.

We thought as most of us have children in our families maybe we could organise a clothes bank for children's clothes so we are asking for clothes from birth to 16 years old which are still of good quality, it is not a jumble sale.

We ask that they are laundered and ready to be given out as we do not have laundry facilities.

When you do your shopping could you buy a pack of pants or socks - no-one wants second-hand underwear and let's not forget the babies who will need nappies.

The "***Clothes 4 Kids***", starting on the 2nd August, will be open on a Monday and Wednesday morning in the St Bryce Kirk building where we will also be offering a cup of tea or coffee and a chat. People need to reconnect with people.

Please consider supporting **your** project to support **your** local community either by raiding the kids clothes cupboard or by handing in new underwear or with a donation so that we can buy things that are needed.

We would also like to invite people to come and help either by helping to sort the clothes or having a chat with the people who come in.

Clothes and donations can be handed into the St Bryce Kirk building Monday – Thursday between 9am – 2pm.

And that brings me to the next piece of good news.

The Centre office is open Mon – Thurs 9 – 3pm and

Coffee Bar Monday – Thursday 10 - 2pm Tea/coffee / home baking.

There is a timetable on the St B noticeboard with spaces for café volunteers. Please add your name to a space

Clothes 4 Kids



WHEN
Where &
Where

MON
10—1PM



WED
10—1PM

CHILDREN'S CLOTHES

**TEA / COFFEE AND A
CHAT**

St Bryce Kirk, St Brycedale Avenue