



The Mustard Seed

Easter 2024

Dear Friends *at St Bryce Kirk*



I have now been your Interim Moderator for over two years and have enjoyed the opportunity to play a small part in your life, worship and witness. I have been greatly encouraged by the dedication of the office-bearers and immensely grateful to Anne Hunter for the incredible work she does as your Session Clerk. Anne is at the top of a pyramid of hard workers, including those who serve in the church office and those who serve in the church café; those who look after the property and those who are involved in the many organisations within the church, not to mention the community organisations which meet in St Bryce Kirk premises. Of course, there are just too many people to highlight. However, it would be remiss of me not to mention two names who have served their Saviour without desiring any particular gain, save knowing that they have served faithfully and without counting the cost...

I have greatly appreciated listening to your organist, Bill Cumming, who has graced the congregation with the magnificence of his playing for many years and who has stepped down from office. I also recognise the enormous debt of gratitude owed to Yvonne Sim, who has served so faithfully as your Treasurer. Well done, good and faithful servants! Your respective contributions to the kirk will always be appreciated.

Thinking about the contribution which individuals make to the whole, I recently preached at the Union of five congregations: Aberdour, Dalgety, Inverkeithing, North Queensferry and Rosyth to form the new charge of Forthview Church of Scotland. In my address, I cheekily remarked that it almost sounded like a roll-call of train stations! Be that as it may, my text for the evening was from the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians and how all the different parts of the body work as one. The truth of the matter is that we all rely on one another to do the work of Christ's Kingdom – and no-one can do everything on his or her own. Everyone has a part to play, everyone is valued, everyone has special gifts, everyone counts! I sincerely hope that message is taken forward when the united charge is formed, whatever its final name!

With the Review Panel of Presbytery having recommended that St Bryce continue to be used as a building, it now looks as if my tenure will be reaching its final months. {Please see **Presbytery Footnote**}

Though the process of coming together for the town centre churches has been frustratingly slow, I will also look back on my time with the good folks of St Bryce Kirk as a happy adventure. A time when I have got to know a few more faces along the way, not least your former helper the Very Reverend Dr Andrew McLellan and his dear wife, Irene, as well as the Revd. Trudi Newton, who is now in a charge of her own.

So God bless and God speed you all to a bright future,
filled with hope and promise.

Your friend and Interim Moderator, *Andrew Donald*

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### **Bill Cumming** – Organist and Choirmaster



Bill came to Kirkcaldy as Principal Teacher of Music at Kirkcaldy High School and was appointed as Organist and Choir Master of St Brycedale Church in January 1985. I would see Bill at School assemblies playing the piano for whatever hymn had been chosen and also working with pupils in orchestra and other groups so I was quickly aware of his abilities.

We were fortunate to get him. It was an encouragement to me to have someone who was open to a wide range of music, a breath of fresh air, capable and gifted. He came to a choir that was a bit like your tonsils, still there but not doing anything, merely a relic from the past. Bill changed all that. He set up a weekly practice and put us to work. Over a good many years he built it into something special and I was happy to be part of it. We sang at a number of Festival of Church Choirs events, Holy Week Services, made a recording and of course, he led us to make a valuable contribution to countless Sunday services with anthems, introits and leading the hymn singing, especially valuable for introducing new hymns.

As a choirmaster, he had to be patient, note bashing with singers of varying music reading ability, singing over every part, tenor, bass, soprano and alto, helping us all to learn together.

Over many years, choir parties were hosted after the Carol Tea, later that day, in the evening. Bill and Margaret did the organising, moving furniture, setting up, food in the oven, wine on the table, choir arriving with contributions of more food and wine, forty or more people. They were much enjoyed and much appreciated. Living round the corner, Agnes-Ann and I were fortunate -we could walk home.

Bill is a gifted composer and wrote scores of pieces specially for the choir and arranged many others. He moved into Jazz with cantatas based on Bible stories and also displayed a real talent for writing his own lyrics, something he had felt for many years he, was not his forte.

When St Brycedale Church was radically re-modelled, Bill embraced the challenge of finding a new organ and after initial scepticism, he warmed to the digital Allen organ and then went through the process all over again with the Old Kirk, this time a Makin which was eventually transferred to St Bryce Kirk.

On several occasions, Bill supported church fundraising with sponsored organ playing. There were special musical nights with choir and organ and in earlier days, he brought some of his musical contacts and indeed gifted pupils from KHS to the church also.

A wonderful sight reader, Bill could play complicated things never seen before. He was happy to play children's songs or popular tunes but he still wanted music. If it was missing, he would write out the melody line five minutes before the service and nobody would know that he didn't have the music. He loved the grand piano donated some years ago which fills the church.

There was much more that many didn't see, other services, Presbytery, Town Centre, Holy week, the occasional evening service, afternoon communions, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, weddings (maybe 15-20 a year) church funerals, always done with great ability and sensitivity. In all of this, we worked together well as friends and colleagues serving the congregation for eighty years between us.

Bill was ably supported by Margaret, also a musician and organist. She sang duets with my wife, Agnes-Ann, and Bill and I sang duets at various occasions, light hearted social events and at Sunday worship. There can be few if any churches where the Organist steps forward to stand alongside the Minister to sing together, nor will there be many where, with utmost professionalism, the organist and his wife play duets.

Over the years and indeed on any given Sunday, the congregation would spend more time listening to Bill than they did to me so his contribution was invaluable.

When, before Christmas, Bill first announced to the choir that he intended to retire and his last Sunday would be the 18<sup>th</sup> February, I quickly contacted Rev Andrew Donald and said "I want to take that service." It was a privilege so to do and to ensure that he played some of his favourite hymns to finish with. There was a great turnout and a huge amount of appreciation, admiration and affection expressed for Bill by so many, not least of all, by me.

And to you Bill, in your retirement, please reflect on how well you are thought of, loved and valued. Thank you for everything.

*Ken*

Well, for me the big day has come and gone!

I most certainly had not been looking forward to it as that last service was the culmination of 55 years as an organist, 39 of them in St Bryce. As it turned out, you, the congregation of St Bryce Kirk made sure that it was a service that I will remember. So many well known people came to church to be part of the service and to wish me well for my “retirement”. For this I thank you all and for the generous gift to speed me on my way! I haven’t yet decided what to spend it on but I suspect it will be something photographic.

I will miss you all, choir and congregation, but I am sure my successor will carry on leading the praise. I wish you all the very best as the four town centre churches go through the process of merging into two.

Please do not hesitate to speak to me or Margaret if our paths should cross down the High Street or elsewhere,

Affectionately yours,

**Bill**

**Fellowship Team**    The Soup Lunch on 18th Feb., after Bill's last Sunday, raised £380 for Cancer Research. UK , the charity chosen by Bill and Margaret.

A big **Thank you** to all who supported and helped in any way.

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Easter News



As I write this the House of Commons is in chaos with a demand for The Speaker to stand down following a debate on a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. There appears no end in sight for the fighting in Gaza, while the Russian invasion of Ukraine has moved to the inside pages and has been going for two years now, while we could point at other locations where fighting and suffering seems a way of life. Living in a world of uncertainty is not easy.

As we approach Easter, we journey through a period of deep uncertainty from the mountain top of Transfiguration through the wilderness of temptation along the dusty roads into the city of religious and political upheaval. Along the way people reach out to Jesus for answers but clarity seems elusive, and we are not sure if Jesus withholds that clarity on purpose or if even he was uncertain where the road would end. Perhaps he was sure what the outcome would be as a result of his words and actions and wanted to shield people from the pain until it was all over. For only once it was over would the people receive that clarity. Only through conflict, suffering, and death comes the rising to new life and without that how could they bear the suffering on its own?

We are post-Easter people, holding to a belief that in suffering there is hope and through conflict there is purpose and out of the darkness comes light. So, the Christian faith does not avoid struggle, suffering, conflict, pain, darkness or death ... but it does hold on to hope and is certain there is always the possibility of new life. There will be clarity though we may not yet see it. As the letter to the Hebrews says in verse 11.1, **“To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see”**.

As we continue this journey of Interim Ministry together there has been much uncertainty, and yet there have been many signs of hope amidst the questions, conversations, difficulties and glimpses of answers even if we do not yet have full clarity.

However, we are Easter people living through a Lenten journey in the knowledge that clarity breaks through when that stone is rolled away. As we sit and wait for clarity, perhaps you may be able to help give that stone a push.

{Please see **Presbytery Footnote**}
Stewart McPherson, Interim Minister

Presbytery Footnote

The item concerning the Review of Buildings Report was withdrawn by the Presbytery Business Committee from the Agenda of the Fife Presbytery Meeting on 17th Feb.

The Presbytery of Fife will now *meet in person* on Thursday 7th March 2024 from 7pm in the Kirkcaldy Hope Church (former Torbain Building). This will be a **Special Purpose Meeting** to receive the Report from the Kirkcaldy Town Centre Churches Review Group

The 4 Town Centre Churches have been cited to attend. Presbytery Meetings are “Open” to all but only full members of Presbytery may speak and vote.

Town Centre Churches Social Team

This Team was set up in November 2023 with 2 representatives from each of the 4 Town Centre Churches to organise social events which will help bring together the four congregations.

In December, just before Christmas, a Carols and Pints Evening was organised at The Duchess in Kirkcaldy. Music was provided by Richard Michael from Abbotshall Church. It was a very successful evening with over 60 church people attending, as well as members of the public joining in with the festivities. The Duchess hopes to host this event next Christmas too!

At the end of January 2024 a Scottish Night was organised in Abbotshall Church Hall. The format of the evening was a “Haggis Drive”, followed by Scottish refreshments, followed by Bruce Davies from Bennoch Church entertaining everyone with Scottish songs. Once again this event was well supported by over 80 church people.

The next event is to be a joint Soup Lunch, raising funds for Christian Aid. This will take place in St Bryce Kirk after the joint Sunday service on 28th April. Look out for details of this popular lunch in the coming weeks. It is hoped that it will be supported well by all 4 congregations.

Andzia Wilson & Kate Lindsay

Finance Report for Newsletter March 2024

Sunday Offerings

2023	Open	FWO	2022	Open	FWO
Oct-Dec:	£297.75	£2,019.30	Oct-Dec	£555.10	£1,870.10
Jan-Dec:	£1,362.37	£6,652.85	Jan-Dec:	£1,878.56	£7,221.80

S/O

2023 Oct-Dec:	£9,867.00	2022 Oct-Dec:	£10,582.00
2023 Jan-Dec:	£40,493.00	2022 Jan-Dec:	£42,993.00

Gift Aid - Tax reclaimed for

2023 Oct-Dec:	£2,600.83	2022 Oct-Dec:	£2,791.78
GASDS	340.19	GASDS	311.28
Repayment Interest	<u>5.15</u>	Repayment Interest	<u>8.07</u>
	£2,946.17		£3,111.13

Tax reclaimed for year

2023	£11,681.47	2022	£12,449.60
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You may feel that we are always harping on about money here in the Church, however, your offering is our main source of income and is required if we wish to continue as a Church in and for the Community.

We are extremely grateful for all those who are already giving, especially if you contribute through the Gift Aid Scheme. This Scheme is for money received from individuals who pay UK tax. The church can then reclaim the tax from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

EVERY £1 YOU GIVE IS WORTH AN ADDITIONAL 25P. TO THE CHURCH.

If you are a tax payer and have not already signed up to this scheme, please consider doing so. All that is required is the signing of a simple form and your offering can be made by Freewill Offering Envelope, Bank Standing Order or a cheque payable to the Church. This is called the audit trail for Inland Revenue purposes. We don't need to know your personal situation just that you are a tax payer.

However, if you are already signed up but now no longer pay income tax, please inform me on 265808

Listed Places of Worship Scheme

VAT reclaimed for repairs, maintenance work, High Level Secondary Glazing, Glass Cleaning and replacing broken windows to the church from the above Scheme was £10,326.25.

Dorothy Smith, Convener

DATE	Theme	Group
March		
5	Sing along	F G
12	Growing Kirkcaldy	Guild
17	EasterCraft	F G
26	Erskines	Guild
April		
2	Selfcare & Relaxation	F G
5	Quiz Night	G A
9	Road to Mandalay	Guild
16	Beetle Drive	F G
24	AGM & Entertainment	Guild
30	Movie	F G
May		
3	Sugar Craft	G A
7	Bingo	F G
14	Lunch	Guild
21	Craft - Painting Stones	F G
June		
4	Shopping with Fay Smith	F G
7	Film & Fish Supper	G A
17	Quiz	F G



We welcome any
“ girls ” to join !



We meet at
1.30 pm.
Join us and
enjoy a nice cup
of tea / coffee
and chat,



1.30 pm.
Meet, mix,
have fun & learn
together

"Whose we are and Whom we serve."

St Bryce Guild

Here we are again ,well into the second half of our syllabus, how time flies.

We've heard of Life and adventures of the East Neuk of Fife, and of Poppy Scotland which were very interesting. We shared screen memories of Scotland with some old and well-kent faces among the stars.

New members very welcome at 1.30 pm on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.



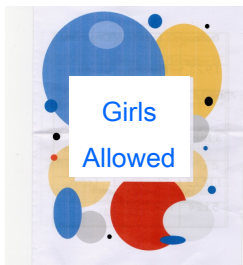
Jennifer Wilson.

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## ***Girls Allowed***

Welcome ladies, we are back after the Christmas Break and are looking forward to meeting everyone to catch up. On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, we had our annual College Lunch - always a firm favourite. We are keen to welcome new members and encourage everyone to bring along a friend and enjoy a night of fun and laughter. We meet at 7 pm on the first Friday of every month.

Margaret Nikolic



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Friendship Group

We meet at 1.30 pm on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. So far this year we have Celebrated Burns, had a film, played dominoes, and made pancakes.

We look forward to a varied programme and hope some "new faces" will join our merry band.



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## **Pastoral Care Team**

Having all enjoyed our Christmas Afternoon Tea, we are now planning our next gathering on Palm Sunday.

**AN EASTER TEA**

Details to follow.

## Centre & Property Update

The Café continues to grow in popularity, often running out of tables at lunchtimes. The Kitchen and Centre Staff would like to thank all of our volunteers, who help out in the Coffee Bar, for their continued hard work. We would also like to thank the members of the congregation who support us by using the Café regularly.

The Small Hall has had new curtains fitted. They were bought with the money from Guild fundraising efforts last year. The curtains look wonderful and will help lower energy costs over the next few years. A "spot washer" has been purchased (Guild donation) to do seats and patches of the floors. The Guild are also purchasing a new microwave and trolley.

The Graduation Ceremonies and the Fife Festival of Music both went very well again this year and the Office received thank-you cards from both organisations.

The Coffee Bar was open during the Antiques & Retro Fair held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February and it was quite popular so will be opening again for the next Fair which will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. If you would like to help out please get in touch with the Office.

Girl Guiding Fife will be using the Centre on the occasional Saturday.

The Choral Union Concert is on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March.

Details of another on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April still to be confirmed.

Miscellaneous other matters -

Property Register updated for Fife Presbytery Attestation.

PAT testing is completed.

Kitchen deep cleaning - to be rebooked for October when Daycentre not in.

The café has been thoroughly cleaned - tiles, grouting, shelves

Outside bell for Hall / Back Door lowered to be *disabled* friendly.

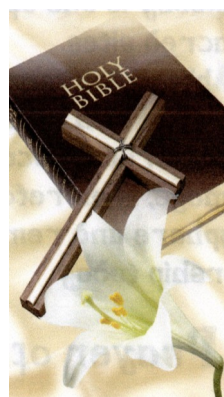
Grit spreader has been used as required.

Staffing - The current minimum wage is £10.42 an hour. It will increase to £11.44 an hour in April 2024.

### **Church Register - Deaths**

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish." John 10: 28

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| David MacDonald         | 4.11.23  |
| Joyce Mathieson         | 29.11.23 |
| Effie Grieve            | 2.12.23  |
| David Reekie            | 15.12.23 |
| Margaret (Rena) Stewart | 17.12.23 |
| Irene Pow               | 17.12.23 |
| Jim Dall                | 11.01.24 |
| Sheila Clacher          | 20.02.24 |



# Services

March 3<sup>rd</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Lynda Wright  
24<sup>th</sup> Brian Porteous

## Town Centre Churches **JOINT HOLY WEEK SERVICES**

All begin at 7.00 pm

|                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup>   | Linktown                           |
| Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> | Abbotshall                         |
| Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup>  | St. Bryce                          |
| Maundy Thursday            | Communion - Rev. Stewart McPherson |
| Friday 29 <sup>th</sup>    | Bennochty                          |
| Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>    | Bennochty at 11.00 am              |

(Linktown and Abbotshall have chosen  
to celebrate Easter in their own buildings.)

## **JOINT SUMMER SERVICES**

|                                                                |            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 28th April                                                     | St. Bryce  |
| This will be followed by a joint soup lunch for Christian Aid. |            |
| 26th May                                                       | Abbotshall |
| 30th June                                                      | Linktown   |

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A New Name for our New Congregation **Langtoun Central Kirk**

Following a process where all members were invited to submit a suggested name for our new congregation after the union, your Strategy Team, then each Kirk Session, drew up a short list. This was then refined by the Strategy Team with two names emerging as the strongest and most favoured candidates: *Kirkcaldy Central Kirk* and *Langtoun Central Kirk*. All members were then invited to select their preference, resulting in a majority decision for Langtoun Central Kirk.

The name expresses a fondness for the intimate friendliness of the *Langtoun* name while also indicating the geographical location for the new congregation's ministry and mission. *Officially, it will also include something like (Church of Scotland, Kirkcaldy) in brackets on official documents.*

Stewart McPherson, Interim Minister



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