

# *Parish of West Linton St Andrew's*

May 2018

Church of Scotland



Scottish Charity No SC003938

Interim Moderator: Very Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald

Locum Minister: Rev Nancy Norman

## ***From our Interim Moderator***

It's many years since I learned to drive but one lesson I do remember is that, before moving forward, I should check my rear view mirror to see what's coming from behind.

Looking back while preparing to move forward is perhaps an apt description of where our congregations are at the moment. I am writing this the morning after a meeting of the three kirk sessions with representatives from the Presbytery and 121 George Street. The last eighteen months have not been easy for the congregations and a large part of the difficulty has been due to lack of information. While the reason for this may be recognised intellectually, emotionally it has still been highly frustrating all round. I am glad to say, therefore, that many present at the meeting took the opportunity to ask questions and share concerns with the

Church officials attending.

In terms of moving forward, one option under consideration is interim ministry, introduced in the Kirk some twenty years ago. This has been used successfully in a variety of situations where it is felt that an experienced and specially trained minister might help congregations re-focus following a period of uncertainty. Interim ministers can serve from six months to two years, after which the congregations call a new minister in the normal way. A presentation on Interim Ministry will be made to the kirk sessions and congregations in early May. Thereafter decisions will be sought as to whether this is the way forward for our churches.

Grace and Peace be with us all,

***Finlay***

## Present Vacancy ...

The purpose of this short article is to give an overview of the events that were summarised at the St Andrew's Stated Annual Meeting in March 2018, bring this up to date and outline the positive steps in decision taking planned for the weeks ahead, to move us closer to finding a replacement minister.

In 2016 Presbytery received several complaints made against Dr Dunbar by a number of individuals and in response they appointed a Special Committee to investigate the complaints. In December 2016 Dr Dunbar was placed under administrative suspension for the duration of the investigation. Following investigation, the Special Committee found Dr Dunbar to be in grave breach of trust and they sought removal of her status as a minister. A Presbyterian Commission was set up to hear the case. The Commission interviewed Dr Dunbar and others including legal representatives and on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017 decided unanimously to uphold allegations made in the complaints and confirmed that the status of minister should be removed from Dr Dunbar.

Following the lodging of an appeal by Dr Dunbar, a Judicial Commission was appointed to hear the appeal. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018 the Commission dismissed the grounds for appeal, however it was persuaded that the appropriate sanction should not be the removal of status. They determined that there should instead be substituted a censure of suspension without limit of time, subject to a minimum period of

suspension of three years from 11<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 there was an opportunity for the members of the three linkage kirk sessions to meet with representatives of Presbytery along with the Principal Clerk to the General Assembly and the Solicitor of the Church. The purpose was to understand the process laid down by the Church of Scotland that had been followed in the investigation of the complaints.

The present situation is that the linkage is vacant; Very Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald is Interim Moderator and Rev Nancy Norman is Locum Minister. Presbytery is considering the business of seeking a replacement minister, with thoughts currently focusing on the appointment by the Ministries Council of an Interim Minister who would normally serve a period of between 6 months to 2 years. A provisional application for this has been accepted by the Interim Ministries Task Group of the Ministries Council. A presentation to members of the linkage congregations is planned by IMTG for 3<sup>rd</sup> May. This will be followed by a discussion within each of the three kirk sessions in the coming few weeks to determine the preferred way forward. In the event that all three kirk sessions agree on Interim Ministry, this will be then referred to the three congregations after their morning services on 20<sup>th</sup> May.

***Tony Hoskins – Session Clerk***

## ***What's on this Month ...***

### ***THE GUILD ...***

The Guild's winter season has now ended and we look forward to our Summer Rally and Evening Meal along with members of the other Church of Scotland Guilds in our area. This will be on June 6<sup>th</sup> in St Boswells Church at 3 pm. Newlands Guild will be having its own evening out on 30<sup>th</sup> May.

### **BARGAINS TO COME!**

Look out for the Bric-a-brac stall which the Guild will be organising at the Whipman evening on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June. We are hoping to raise more money for our Church of Scotland Guild Projects.

We are very proud of the fact that over £600,000 has already been raised by the Church of Scotland Guild for the 6 chosen projects over the past 3 years. Another 6 exciting projects have already been chosen, and these will be hoping for our support from September.

Any donations for our stall will be very welcome.

***Margaret Habeshaw***

### ***Heart and Soul Festival ...***

#### **Princes Street Gardens - Sunday 20th May 2018**

This great Church of Scotland event in Princes Street Gardens will have a particular focus on children and young people. There will be a Family Village with stage events, a family picnic area and lots going on. There will also be an evening music event for young people. Do plan to come!

Many of us have attended *Heart and Soul* in previous years and would recommend the event to everyone.

***Colin Herd***

### ***From the Editor's keyboard ...***

There has not been enough material submitted this month to fill 8 pages so I have retained some material to include in the June Newsletter. If any-

one has a particular interest which might be of interest to others please write about it and submit it for publication. This is your Newsletter. Please help to make it better.

Services			
	West Linton 11.15 am	Carlops 10.00 am	Newlands 10.00 am
6th May	Rev Jim Wallace	Very Rev F J Macdonald	Rev Jim Wallace
13th May	Rev Jim Wallace	Rev Jim Wallace	Mary McElroy
20th May	Murray Campbell	Rev Chris Levison	Very Rev F J Macdonald
27th May	Very Rev F J Macdonald	Sheena Livingstone	Murray Campbell

### Drivers

May     **Driver 1** Neil Calvert  
01968 660807  
**Driver 2** Steven Whalley  
01968 661158

June    **Driver 1** Colin Herd  
01968 661785  
**Driver 2** Pat Graham  
01721 752205

### Door Duties

May     Kate Dykes     Choir  
Ann Lyon     Main  
Michael Knott £ Gallery

June    Neil Calvert     Choir  
Jimmy Dripps £ Main  
Mary Turnbull Gallery

### Welcome and Readers

May    6th   Helen Dry  
13th   Robert Higgins  
20th   Robert Higgins  
27th   John Dykes

June   3rd   John Dykes  
10th   Pat Graham  
17th   Pat Graham  
24th   Christine Leith

### Flower Donations May

Mrs N Gordon & Mrs M Gray  
Mrs Audrey McIntosh  
Flower Fund

**Flowers Arranged by Susan Scott**

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### Flower Donations June

Rae Bell  
Flower Fund  
Marianne Jack  
Pat Graham

**Flowers Arranged by  
Chris Whittemore**

**Material for the June Magazine should be submitted to the editor by Friday 25th May 2018. The April issue will be available on 3rd June.**

**Copy to Colin Herd: email: [herd.carradale@btinternet.com](mailto:herd.carradale@btinternet.com)**

**Please include the word Newsletter in the subject line of your email.**