

The Church  
of Scotland

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Scottish Charity Number: SCO14536



## The Link

The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church

Linked with Denny Old Parish Church

## Autumn 2022

***Do you suppose that I came to bring peace to the world? No, not peace, but division. Luke 12:51***

Jesus uses all sorts of mood music in his teachings and his sermons. It is not always the 'Disney' plotline that gives everything at the end a touch of bright comforting colours.

Jesus sometimes has harsh words to offer his followers that were anything but soothing and challenge free.

Here, in this text we have a perfect example of such direct realistic teaching. Jesus does not promise an easy ride.

Two main elements might have been at the route of underlying 'divisions and tensions and these could have been the reason for Jesus taking the opportunity to speak about the divisions that could follow for the faithful disciples and followers.

For Jesus and his followers, the speed of change would have been a divisive issue.

In our experience, no doubt, we know about controversy and difference of opinion and even division. It is inevitably present in varying degrees within families, groups, businesses and organisations and in the family of the Church.

As the followers of God, we are no different from the early followers. In the Church of Scotland of today, with the changing landscapes of membership numbers, fewer attendees, and available volunteers, not to mention the changes being asked of us by our denomination in terms of the re-shaping of Presbyteries and allocation of Ministry posts, we have the breeding grounds of unrest and division in much the same way as the early followers of Jesus.

Church of Scotland is reshaping and restructuring whole of its Mission Plan to make Jesus' mission more suitable to contemporary challenges and demands. Presbyteries are merging together into big Presbyteries which are instructed by General Assembly of the CoS to create Mission Plan for their Presbyteries. The Mission Plan seeks to ensure that, by working together and pooling, congregations can engage with Christ's Mission within their community.

This will mean different things in different communities and areas. And most probably every congregation is going to be affected by this new Mission Plan and we may not be different from others.

Many denominations are facing similar difficult times at the moment. The 'present times' need no interpretation for the church. Change and courage are needed.

Jesus kindled the spark and with the Holy Spirit the energy of God burst into flame.

It is this energy of God that disrupts and shakes up the context of our own time in the church and calls on us to respond with faith and with conviction.

Our world presents us with clear signs too of what needs to change, and we are empowered as God's people to take the steps that are needed to put things right, even when this might lead to our discomfort. But we need to remember in all of this we drive on, knowing the unconditional love of God.

Raheel Arif  
Minister, Denny Old & Haggs

## **Sunday Club**

The Sunday Club will be starting soon when we change the worship times in October then we will welcome all young people to join us. We will have stories, crafts and a monthly games feature.

Moira Martin

## **Girls Brigade – Denny Old Church Halls**

The Girls Brigade meets in Denny Old Church Halls on Mondays from 6.15 – 7.30 p.m. All girls from P.1 to S.6 will be made very welcome.

Marion Reid, Captain

**June 2020** was a particularly sad month for us all here at Hags Church as we said goodbye to three of our faithful church members.

**Isabelle Shearer** died on 26<sup>th</sup> June. She married Thomas Shearer in June 1946 and lived in Glasgow Rd Longcroft before moving to Banknock. Thomas died in 1987. She finally moved to Margaret Avenue, Hags. She was a member of the guild, the carpet bowls, coffee club and the nifty fifties and supported the many church activities. She enjoyed watching her favourite football team and having a good blether with friends.

Isabelle who had almost reached 99 years of age passed away peacefully in Bankview Care home. The back row of the church seems vacant without her.

**Ivan Mochrie** passed away on 23<sup>rd</sup> June after a short spell in hospital. He was a quiet man who enjoyed the friendship at Hags. He had recently moved to Allandale from Cumbernauld and felt at home here in Hags Church as his family had originally lived in Longcroft, Banknock and Hags.

**Moira Walls** was born on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1949 in Falkirk and grew up in Camelon.

She was the third of four Siblings (Ricky, Betty and Sandra). Moira's first job after leaving school was at G. R. Stein in Castlecary working her way up from the typing pool to a Director's Secretary. She met Sandy Walls whilst living in Banknock in her 20's, a young handsome warm-hearted humorous lad with long dark hair and fantastic 70's style

Their time was cut short tragically in 1983 when Sandy was injured in an explosion at Forth Alloys, Cumbernauld and later died. As a young woman, Moira was widowed and left with two children. In helping herself and her children, she also sought to help and mentor others. Her patience and kindness evident as she became a church elder at Hags Parish Church, or by organising games and activities as a Sunday School Teacher and by writing humorous scripts for church and community events and Burns Suppers, of which she also took part in, while volunteering as a Girls Brigade Leader. She worked as a receptionist at Carronbank Medical Practice, Denny, for over 21 years. She understood and enjoyed meeting people. After retiring 13 years ago, she joined the Nifty Fifties as a committee member and secretary helping to raise money, organise trips and gain funding. She was a member of Denny Writers, producing stories and reading them aloud to her grandchildren, giving us lots of memories of funny events recorded over the years.

She was so thrilled to have had so many of her friends and family attend her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party a few years ago providing us with happy memories of someone who loved to sing, dance, give it her all, and be there as a listening ear for others, especially her friends.

## **'Look forward in Faith...'**

As we emerge from the Covid Pandemic and move forward to new future changes in the Church of Scotland's Mission Planning, I am reminded of the words of one of my favourite hymns: -

'Look forward in faith – all time is in God's hand. Walk humbly with him and trust his future plan.

God has wisely led his people by his power. Look forward in hope, he gives us each new hour'.

It was wonderful to be able to reconnect with our members, old and new, at our Cheese and Wine Social evening in April and to listen to Rev Raheel Arif tell of his physical and spiritual journey to take up his first ministry at Haggs and Denny Old churches. It made many of us present grateful for our own journeys to worship freely and without persecution in this place, and to be thankful for our safe church buildings and a minister to lead us forward.

Following the General Assembly of 2021, Presbyteries across Scotland have been instructed to create a Mission Plan which will consider the appropriate shape and resources for our congregations and parishes across the country, as well as where a total of 660 ministries across the Church of Scotland might be deployed to best engage with Christ's Mission within an area. Difficult decisions will therefore need to be taken to reduce the number of churches and ministries and to make sure they are in areas where mission and outreach work are most needed.

Change can be uncomfortable and un-settling but it can also be inspirational and challenging. We hope and pray that the decision makers will act wisely and move the life of Church forward so that numbers can increase, and more people can witness the love and comfort of Christ in their lives.

Your elders are continuing to work hard to put forward the case for a Church presence to be retained here at Haggs and we will keep the congregation informed of any developments in the autumn.

Unfortunately, we will need to continue this work without three of our most loyal and dedicated elders – Moira Walls who sadly passed away on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022, and Jack and Elizabeth Dunn who will be moving away to Renfrewshire at the end of September to be closer to their family. Our condolences go to Moira's family and our best wishes go with Jack and Elizabeth as they embark on this new, exciting chapter in their lives.

I would like to thank Jack and Elizabeth for the wealth of work they have undertaken at Haggs Church since November 1978. Their roles have been varied; Jack has been Presbytery Elder, Sunday School Superintendent, Magazine Editor, Session Clerk, Property Convener, Health & Safety Co-ordinator, Fire Safety Officer and COVID Co-ordinator while Elizabeth was also busy organizing the House Group, Church cleaning and Door duty rotas, Teas and Coffees as well as being a Sunday School teacher and an active member of the Christian Aid committee and Bible Society. Their musical talents and knowledge of Church procedures will also be missed by their fellow elders and the congregation. We wish them health and happiness and hope they will come back to visit us here at Haggs in the future.

We will be having a Special 'Thank you' Lunch after the Sunday service on the 25<sup>th</sup> September that everyone is invited to attend for Jack and Elizabeth.

So let us look forward in hope.

God Bless you all,

Sue Storrar

*(Session Clerk)*

## **To our many friends at Haggs Church**

You are probably aware that we have decided to move house, after almost 45 years in Banknock. It was not an easy decision to make but we felt that now was an appropriate time to move closer to our family (including our one year old great-grandson) who live in Johnstone.

During those years we have made many friends in the community, especially at Haggs Church which has been the hub for many of the things that we have done. We have shared many happy times with you at worship and at many social events and gatherings and we have taken part in numerous requests from Falkirk Presbytery to help reorganise/downsize the number of churches in our local area. There have been many happy times, there have been many frustrating times but throughout we have always felt the love, support and friendship of everyone we have come into contact with.

As Elders, we have visited many of you in your homes over the years. It has been a privilege to have been a small part of your lives and to have shared some of your experiences with you.

It has been a pleasure and privilege to have known you all and to have had the opportunity to worship in Haggs Church from which we will take away many wonderful memories.

We wish you well in the years ahead and pray that, with God's guidance, there will continue to be a Haggs Parish Church in this community.

God bless you all.

Our sincerest thanks and best wishes,

Elizabeth and Jack Dunn

## **CROSSREACH**

We have received a Certificate of Appreciation as a token of thanks for all the hard work Haggs Church congregation has put in supporting Crossreach.

CrossReach workers are encouraged by things they see daily in the number of individuals whose lives have been changed by the love, care and support provided by the services of CrossReach which would not be possible without our support. Thank you.

### **Yoga 4 All**

Yoga Sessions have restarted after the summer break on Thursday evenings from 7 – 8.15pm in Haggs Church Hall. The classes are led by Sue Storrar, a qualified and registered yoga teacher with 'Yoga Scotland', who has over 20 years of yoga teaching experience.

Yoga aims to exercise the body, still the breath and lift the spirit. If you would like to come along for some gentle exercise with a friendly, non-judgmental group then contact Sue for more details and to book a place. Phone or text: 0770 9263588.

### **Christian Aid**

Earlier this year we had a "Big Brekkie" after church and along with the Christian Aid envelopes the sum of £858.14 was raised. This was sent to Christian Aid to help with their never ending work of helping others less fortunate than ourselves.

On 8<sup>th</sup> October we are having a sponsored walk which will start at 2 p.m. from the church car park. If you would like to take part you are welcome and sponsor forms will be available shortly from Sue Storrar.

## **Zumba Classes**

There are two classes which meet in the Church Hall – Monday evenings at 6 p.m. and Zumba Gold on Fridays at 11 a.m. Please come along – you will be made most welcome. For further information contact Liz Heeps.

## **Forthcoming events**

Here is notice of a few events to come but the dates have not yet been decided – a Silent Auction and a concert. We hope you will be able to support these when they are finalized.

## **Driving Force - reminder**

I am sure most people are aware of the service from Driving Force for cancer patients appointments. If you know of anyone who would benefit from this service, please ask them to be in touch with their GP to make arrangements with Driving Force, who relieve the strain and worry of getting to appointments and parking.

## **Food Bank – Basket in Church**

Your generosity in giving donations to the Food Bank is to be commended. Without your contributions there would be a marked difference to the help the Food Bank can give. Please keep giving it is much appreciated.

## **1<sup>st</sup> Haggs Boys Brigade**

Good News we have started back. Anchor Boys (Primary 1 – Primary 3) Tuesday between 6 – 7 p.m. Junior Section (Primary 4 – Primary 6) and Company Section (Primary 7 – Secondary 6) Friday 6.30 – 8.30 p.m. all in Haggs Parish Church Hall. If you have a boy or girl who wants to come to the Boys Brigade and would like more information, please contact myself phone 01786 470817 or 07799145121 or email [johnfenney72@outlook.com](mailto:johnfenney72@outlook.com).

We are looking for more helpers/Officers. If you are interested, please contact me.

John Fenney, Captain 1<sup>st</sup> Haggs Boys Brigade

## **Deaths**

### ***'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'***

**June 2022** Moira Walls Dennyloanhead

Ivan Mochrie Allandale

Isabella Shearer Bankview Nursing Home

**August 2022** Tom Dickson, Coneypark