

The Church
of Scotland



The Link

The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church
Linked with Denny Old Parish Church
Spring 2018

Pen Picture: Rev Derek Gunn

I have grown up in the Church and as a youngster our local Church - Edinburgh:Richmond Craigmillar - was the centre of our activity with youth activities and particularly for me a life long involvement with the Boys' Brigade. I was ordained as an Elder in that Church at the age of 21 in 1971.

After school and university, I worked for Post Office Telephones (later BT) before becoming the full time BB Field Officer for North Scottish District for almost four years covering the old Highland and Grampian Regions, the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland leaving that to train for the Ministry at St Mary's College, St Andrews.

I served a probationary year 1985-86 at Edinburgh: Corstorphine Craigsbank before being Ordained and Inducted to Falkirk Bainsford on 28 May 1986. Having already been involved with the Scottish Prison Service as a part-time Chaplain, I was selected through their direct entry scheme to train and work in the operational grades as an Assistant Governor at Glenochil Prison. After working in a variety of roles, I took early enhanced retirement during reorganisation. I was called to be Minister of Airdrie Clarkston Parish in December 2009 on a reviewable tenure from which I retired on 30 September 2017 leaving them free to call a minister to an unrestricted single charge.

In addition to the Locum Post at Denny Old and Haggs I am also on Presbytery's Superintendence Committee and I am currently Battalion Chaplain to Airdrie, Coatbridge and District Battalion. On 10 February, I was honoured to accept the invitation of The Boys' Brigade Scotland Committee and become Chaplain for the Boys' Brigade in Scotland.

While working in Post Office Telecomms, I met my wife, Pat, and we will celebrate 40 years of married life this year. We have three children: David in Stockholm; Caroline married to Graeme with our two grandchildren, Alistair and Emily in Stirling; and Susan who lives in Grangemouth.

Derek Gunn

THOUGHTS FROM A FELLOW TRAVELLER

I am delighted, as your new Locum Minister, to share a few thoughts with you as I join you as a fellow traveller on the journey of faith. I write this just after being at several Burns Suppers and it struck me that some words of Burns are quite appropriate at this time.

Burns wrote, “O wad some power the giftie gie us, tae see oursels as ithers see us!” As I come to you as locum, I can take a fresh perspective of congregational life. The outstanding impression that I have is that of “welcome” not just for me but for all. I see two congregations who are seeking to look to the future but are perhaps a little disheartened after being in vacancy for a period of time. I see strengths in people who are working hard to keep things going and I feel a sense of challenge for myself in assisting that.

It is my hope and prayer that I can offer enthusiasm and desire to partner with you for however long I am with you. My hope is that I find myself redundant as you call a new minister. In the meantime, I promise to do all that I can to enthuse, encourage and share with you not as an outsider but as people together in relationship seeking to advance the work of the kingdom of Christ.

If you like what I do tell me: it might make it better! But if you don't like things that I do, please, please tell me before telling anyone else!!! I am not here to be THE minister, I am here to work with all of you in your own ministry in Jesus' name.

As we look towards Easter, let us not just talk about new life offered through Jesus risen from the dead, let us put our energies into more and more new life in our Church, our Congregation, our community, and into ourselves.

May we all be richly blessed with the Easter good news that Jesus lives and is made known through our love, commitment and service.

Trusting that I can become your Minister and friend,

Derek

Christian Aid

Christian Aid has more than 70 years of experience working in partnership to support communities to thrive. They tackle the root causes of poverty so that women, men and children the world over are strengthened against future disasters. And when disasters do happen they get people the help they need straight away.

Together, we raise money to support our poorest brothers and sisters around the globe, and pray for justice and witness at the heart of our community. In 2017, from Hagsgs Parish, we sent £2,585 to Christian Aid – the proceeds from the Door-to-door collection, lunches and donations.

Christian Aid supports people of all faiths and none, and would love it if you could join us in 2018 with any of our fund raising events:-

Soup & Sandwich lunch – Sunday 13th May following the morning service,

Christian Aid Week – 13th – 18th May with a Door-to-door collection

‘Kelpies Canter’ Sponsored Walk – Saturday 29th September at the Helix Park, Falkirk.

Thank you for your continued support.

(Speak to either Sue Storrar or Jean McCheyne for further information)

Carpet Bowls

The carpet bowls continue on a Wednesday afternoon in the Church Hall at 12.30 p.m.

If you would like a pleasant afternoon come and join us and you will be made most welcome. A cuppa and a chat are also on the agenda for the afternoon.

Elma Findlay

Vacancy Update March 2018

We now have Rev. Aftab Gohar as our Interim Moderator who chairs our Kirk Session and Congregational Board meetings and guides us through procedural matters relating to our linkage with Denny Old Parish church. Rev. Derek Gunn leads our worship with our service time this year at 9.45 a.m. and also caters for pastoral needs in the community.

Our linkage with Denny Old has developed over the past year through joint meetings and services. We have a new manse but as yet we do not have a new Minister to live in it. But we keep searching and we are sure our prayers will be answered in the fullness of time.

As our Nominating Committee actively seeks a minister for our linked charge the life of our church continues. We thank everyone who supports our church at Haggs and also contribute to our outreach projects including Christian Aid, Vine Trust, Church of Scotland HIV project, Food Bank and many other worthy good causes. Haggs donated over £4100 to charities last year.

As ever, we must all rise to the challenges that come before us in our journey of faith for our linked churches of Denny Old and Haggs. Please do continue to support your church by coming to our services and taking part in church life. Everyone is very welcome.

Murray McCheyne, Session Clerk, pro-tem

Welcome

He is in the sunrise above the trees
He is in the wind in the warm sweet breeze
As you look to the rivers and their eternal flow
Open your heart and His presence you will know
If you stand and you watch a child at play
You will feel his nearness in the brightness of day.

by Sandra Mack (sister of Angus Johnston)

‘Let us Build a House’ - Visit to Nepal

Just before noon on Saturday 25th April, 2015, a devastating earthquake struck Nepal – it lasted for just 45 seconds – the time it would take to sing one verse of the Hymn ‘Let us Build a House’. Those destructive 45 seconds caused over 8,000 people to lose their lives and over 6 million families to lose their homes.

Following this tragedy, the representatives attending the General Assembly in 2015, were encouraged to return to their Presbyteries and congregations and commit to a 3 year initiative to support the long term rebuilding of communities in Nepal. The aim was for each Presbytery to raise £500 (enough to rebuild a house) – in fact Falkirk Presbytery sent £2,163 (exceeding their target by over 300%); with Haggs Church making their contribution to this total.

Since 2015 – 2017 communities in affected areas have been supported as they try to rebuild their lives. As well as receiving initial emergency relief, Nepalese survivors have been given agricultural tools and seeds so they could plant crops and the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) has completed the training of the first 125 stone masons who will rebuild the damaged houses and to develop the area around them, e.g. footpaths, bridges and community buildings. UMN has concentrated on rebuilding schools to a quake-resistant standard, to make sure

that schoolchildren will be protected and the communities will have at least one large building for shelter post-disaster.

In the autumn of 2017 I became aware of the opportunity for interested representatives from congregations to apply to participate in a visit to Nepal in April 2018, to see the work of UMN and to meet the people affected by the earthquake and who have benefited directly from the Church of Scotland funding. With Kirk Session approval I applied for a place on this visit and I heard in November that I had been successful!

So from 7th – 17th April 2018 I will be visiting Nepal on your behalf, as part of a 20 strong group from throughout Scotland, to witness the work that has been completed, and the projects that are still in progress. I am looking forward to this trip and will share my experiences with you all when I return.

I am organising a fund raising event at Denny Old Church halls on Saturday 28th April from 2.00pm-4.30pm – with all proceeds going to ‘Let us Build a House’ charity in Nepal. I hope we can relax, have fun and share some of my experiences from Nepal at this event.

Sue Storrar

Help Us to “Build a House” Spring Clean your Wardrobe

From now until the end of April we will recycle the following items:

Clean Clothes

Shoes in Pairs

Curtains/Bedding/Towels (Please don't mix with clothes etc.)

Bring to Church on Sunday or see Carol Richmond to uplift 01324 840761. Money raised will go to the above project.

Carol Richmond

HAGGS KNITTERS

Just before Christmas two large boxes and numerous bags of beautiful knitted and crocheted jumpers, hats and blankets were passed to the charity for distribution by the Orphan Care programme in Livingstonia, Malawi. Word was received early in January that everything had been taken to Dundee for loading into the next container going to Africa.

So thank you for all your efforts, please keep up the good work and keep those fingers active! We will collect in the finished work twice a year in the future – at the end of June and December.

So.....keep knitting!!

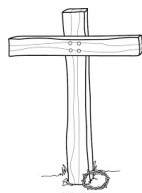
Haggs Girls Grigade

We have settled well into this session, and the company is in good spirits with numbers around 14 split 7 explorers and 7 juniors. We give our thanks to Chloe Currie as she helped out as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Awards work, and left us after Christmas. We have a lot of new faces as well, and we launched our G Bees campaign. We have all settled well into the company with me Shona Laird as Captain and Shirley-Anne Hobbs & Alan Hobbs as lieutenants. If you want any more information or would like to join us in a more active role with the GB's please contact Shona on 1sthagsgirlsbrigade@gmail.com

Explorers have been learning about celebration, St Andrews Day, Christmas, St Valentine's day to name a few, the girls incorporated bible readings and art & crafts whilst covering the topics. It is very clear the explorers love the games the best and we have introduced games that were played in years gone by, as well as new games we have all had to learn.

Juniors have been learning some Mindfulness which involve the girls' learning to take a break from the hectic life around them. There has been fun with Lego, building using their imaginations and learning about listening skills as well. We have also been talking about the Parable of lost sheep and the lessons that can be learned. A big thank you to all the girls and parents for their continued support.

As my first year as Captain I thank everyone for their continued support and look forward to our GB's continuing to flourish in the future. We will end our year in May '18. Shona Laird Captain



Denny: Old linked with Haggs Easter Services 2018

Evening Services during Holy Week are held jointly with other churches in the area at 7.30pm

March

- 25 Palm Sunday 9.45am Haggs and 11.15am Denny Old
- 26 Monday: Denny Baptist Church Rev Norman Graham
- 27 Tuesday: Denny Westpark Rev Kipchumba Too
- 28 Wednesday: Haggs Rev Derek Gunn
- 29 Maundy Thursday: Dunipace Rev Dr Jean Gallacher
- 30 10.30am Walk of Witness – Denny Baptist Church
- 30 Good Friday: Bonnybridge Rev George MacDonald

April 1 Easter Sunday

8.30am Open Air Service at Denny Westpark followed by breakfast

9.45am Haggs Easter Sunday Family Service

11.15am Denny Old Easter Sunday Family Service

Easter Services will also be held as follows

March 19 1.30pm Easter Assembly in Head of Muir Primary School

March 22 2pm Denny Primary School Easter Service (in Denny Old Church)

March 28 10.45am Bankview Home Easter Service

March 29 9.30am Bankier Primary School Easter Service (Haggs Church)(weather permitting)

The Sunday Club



LOST DOG!

Black and tan dog of Poodle and German Shepherd descent.

Flea-bitten

Missing left hind-leg and part of right ear.

No hair on rump.

Going blind.

Too old for tricks.

Might bite if cornered.

£300 reward for return of dog.

Answers to the name of "Lucky"

This notice was pinned to a tree.

Lucky! I had to chuckle to myself. How could anyone call a mongrel, flea-bitten, three-legged, mangy, nearly blind, old, and dangerous dog "Lucky"? And who would be silly enough to pay three hundred pounds reward to get that dog back?

Then I stopped laughing and a big smile broke out across my face. Just think of it, this may be one of the luckiest dogs in town. This lucky dog belonged to a family that loved him no matter what. It didn't matter where he came from or what he looked like. It didn't matter whether he could perform tricks or

was getting old. All that mattered was that he belonged to the family, and he was lost.

Jesus came to our world because we were lost. He left his home in heaven and offered His life as a reward to get us back and reunite us with God's family. It doesn't matter where we come from or what we look like. It doesn't matter whether we are smart and clever, young or old. All that matters is that He created us and He wants us as part of His family forever and that makes us very "lucky" too.

A story telling us that God created us and wants us as part of His family forever.

We began the New Year looking at the Old Testament.

Solomon was given wisdom by God. Have a look in the MacLean hall at our owls.

We designed our own canvas bags and will show them to the congregation soon.

Thank you to everyone for the support and assistance given to the young people of Hags Church and of course to the leaders who make my task a lot easier.

Moira Martin

Baptism:

“suffer little children to come unto me”

January Bethan and Blaire Taylor

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