



Associate Minister Appointment

For some considerable time, we have envisioned working with an Associate Minister as part of our Ministry Team. In January of last year, we thought we were there! A recruitment process took place and a number of potential candidates were interviewed. However, as everyone knows, we decided not to make an appointment at that time.

A year on, we are there! Since late summer of last year, we have been in conversation with Stuart Irvin as to the possibility of his coming to join us.

He had become aware that our post had not been filled and got in contact with us to enquire further. That led to a process of reflection and prayerful discernment – on both sides – which led, in the end, to the point where we, the congregation, and Stuart and his wife, Lynne, were sure that it was the right thing.

Stuart is a fully-qualified minister of The Church of



Stuart and Lynne Irvin

Scotland, having completed both his academic training and his probationary requirements. So he is coming to us ‘fully-fledged’ – not with his ‘L’ plates on! That said, one of the reasons that he has decided to join us is to continue to learn and develop his ministry skills – and St. Andrew’s Church provides an excellent environment for that.

Over and above his calling to ministry, Stuart is a keen climber and hill-walker – which, of course, makes him the perfect colleague for Martin!

If everything falls into place as we anticipate, Stuart and Lynne will join us on Sunday 10th February – a day we are very much looking forward to! Thereafter, The Presbytery of Angus will plan a Service of Ordination.

So, we have much to give thanks for and to look forward to. Stuart, himself, will write in the next copy of QUEST to further introduce himself.

Candace Laing

We are delighted to welcome Candace to the post of Church Administrator. Candace, and her late husband Eric, a Scotsman from Gullane, befriended Martin and Elaine when they were in Bermuda many years ago, and thereafter significantly supported St Andrew’s Church from afar.

Candace hails from America and has a quiet and lovely personality which is ideal for calming the sometimes frenetic office activity! With a great deal of experience in large corporations and smaller legal businesses, she is well used to dealing with routine administration as well as pressured

last-minute decision making - an inevitable part of working in a busy, thriving congregation.

Having taken up post in early January, Candace has very quickly settled in. However, it would be most helpful if members could continue to keep office requests to a minimum while she acquaints herself with all the varied procedures.

We wish Candace well in her new post and assure her of our earnest support.



Ready Steady Cook!

(See report inside)

Left:

Ken and Jane Miller

Do you think it's alive, Jane - it seems to be moving!

Right:

Lorna and David Searle

I know I said we could use something from your allotment - but this is ridiculous, David!



CONTACTS**CHURCH OFFICE : 431135****ADMINISTRATOR**

Candace Laing

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri
9 am to noon**MINISTER**

Rev Dr W Martin Fair, BA, BD

MINISTER EMERITUS

David Searle : 872794

SESSION CLERK

Jane Miller : 875235

TREASURER

Susan Godsall : 430862

FREEWILL ENVELOPES

Ian Robertson : 877519

CHURCH OFFICER

Janis Clark : 878594

PASTORAL CARE**CO-ORDINATOR**

Kim Marr : 430505

YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR

Sheila Dunphy : 873218

HAVILAH PROJECT**WORKER**

Tracey McLeod : 434088

ORGANIST

Jane Miller : 875235

FABRIC CONVENOR

Ray Reaney : 07803 235418

SUNDAY CLUB

Elaine Fair : 873238

SAFEGUARDING**CO-ORDINATOR**

Eleanor Mands : 01382 477318

FLOWER CONVENOR

Margaret McIntosh : 876993

PRAYER CO-ORDINATORS

Judy Spink : 872395

Anne Matthew : 876008

SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR

Norma Beattie : 873442

**ADMINISTRATOR and
BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER**

Candace Laing : 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR/CDs

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Parish Records****December/January 2012/13****Baptisms** - Decal; son of Fiona and Rachid Ryan**Blessings** - None**Weddings** - Fiona Boyd and Rachid Ryan**Funerals** - Betty Wilson,
Archie Black,
Jean McKenzie**IMPORTANT DATES****MARCH EDITION****Handwritten articles should be handed in to the office by the first date and not to the Editor.****Word Processed files, as attachments, can be sent directly to the Editor by the second date.****Please avoid embedding articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.**

Friday 15th February (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 19th February (Word-Processed file)

**Malawi
Fundraising****Sunday 3rd February
Soup Lunch**

A great way to enjoy some fellowship along with a warm bowl of soup. You can just turn up on the day and put in a donation.

**Friday 15th March
Murder Mystery**
7pm in the Church Hall.

Cost of ticket £12.

This is a great night of fun and entertainment as you have to try and help solve the murder that has taken place. Your ticket also includes a 3 course meal.

Malawi Calendars

These have now been reduced to £2 and can be purchased at the end of a Sunday morning service or from the Church Office.

THANK YOU

The Friday morning gang are pleased to say that a cheque for £299 (raised in 2012) was recently sent to CHAS (Children's Hospice Association Scotland).

Our grateful thanks to our customers who purchase at our sales table, and especially to our helpers -

Doris, Fiona, Joyce, Norma, Rosslyn, Sheila and Val.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**Organisations will alert members when groups resume after holidays or when changes to venues are made.****SUNDAY**

10.15 am – Gathering for prayer.

10.30 am – Choir practice.

11.00 am – Morning service (with short communion on the third Sunday of each month. Tea/coffee after. Creche – up to age 3. Infants – ages 3 to 5. Juniors – ages 8 and 9. Seniors – ages 10 and 11
Sunday Club – Elaine Fair (873238). Teen Scene – S1 to S2

7.30 to 9.00 pm – Youth Group

9.00 pm – Senior Youth Group

Monday to Friday - 11.00 am – Havilah : Drop-in Centre – Community Spirit (434088)**MONDAY**

2.00 pm – Dorothy Dobson Over 50s Exercise Class

6.00 pm – Rainbow Guides – L Hadden (875379)

7.30 pm – St Andrew's Guild : Fortnightly – Margaret Stibbles (434075)

7.30 pm – Flower Club : Fortnightly – M McIntosh (876993)

TUESDAY

9.30 am – 1.00 pm - Mum and Me - K Marr (430505) and G Scott (879615)

WEDNESDAY

10.30 am – Midweek Meeting Point – M Fair (873238)

6.15 pm – Brownies – Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Guides - Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Women's Group – first Wednesdays – Elaine Fair (873238)

THURSDAY

10.00 am – Parent and Toddler Group – Joan Archer (876522)

2.00 pm – Friends Club : first Thursdays – L Smith – B Gerrard, secretary (434821)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

6.00 pm – BB Junior Section – W Ewart (876114)

7.30 pm – BB Company Section – M Clark (437758)

FRIDAY

9.30 am – Coffee morning

Intimations, changes of address, hall bookings etc., please contact the Church office, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon and for 15 minutes after Sunday Service, telephone 431135.

Martin Fair

Dear friends,

February 2013

What a great evening we enjoyed at the recent *Ready, Steady Cook!* event in support of our work in Malawi! Well done to the organisers and to Ken and Jane Miller and David and Lorna Searle for being such good sports ... and able chefs!

As part of her closing remarks, Sheila Dunphy informed the gathering that, in the six years since we started supporting Aquaid in Malawi, our congregation has gifted over £205,000. From one congregation? That's an astonishing amount of money – an astonishing level of sacrificial giving!! And the great news is that every penny of it is making a difference among the poorest of the poor in Malawi.

Research shows that in times of economic recession, charities tend to suffer as folks tell themselves that *looking after number one* is what matters most. Research also shows that committed Christians tend to buck this trend, recognising that supporting this kind of work is *even more* important in recessionary times. It would seem that, you, the people of St. Andrew's Church, understand this well. You have done much more than simply offer the crumbs from the rich man's table. You have given with real understanding and with true compassion.

I know that *pride* is considered one of the seven deadly sins. But in cases like this, I confess myself to be very proud of you!

Please keep up the good work. The issues being faced in Malawi will be with us for some considerable time.

With God's blessing,

Martin, Elaine, Callum, Andrew, Fraser and Flossie!

martin.fair@sky.com

The Early Service

Given that WORSHIP is the most important thing that the Church does, it's right that our calendar contains lots of opportunities for us to gather for worship AND that within that, there are different kinds of worship.

The Sunday 11am service remains our central service and is built around the preaching of God's Word and a blend of music, traditional and contemporary. But over and above that, there is our weekly 6.30pm evening service, which is wholly contemporary in style, and our weekly 10.30am Wednesday service; a forty minute service of praise, prayer and reflection. Oh yes, and on the last Sunday of every month, there's Messy Church for younger families!

Following Easter, we're going to launch a brand new service - which will take place on the first Sunday of every month. Wow! Another service? Yes.

The new service will be different again from what we already offer. With a start time of 9.30am, it will run for some thirty-five minutes and will be wholly traditional in

style. The mood, overall, will be quieter and more reflective than what we are used to. While older children (who are able to sit throughout) will be welcome, there will be no provision for children within the service, and no crèche. The praise will be led exclusively from the organ with the emphasis being on well-loved hymns and traditional prayers. The sermon will be a shortened version of the one that will be preached later at the 11am service. And finally? The minister will be robed!

We hope that this new service will be a welcome addition for those who are more comfortable with the traditional approach. It may also suit those who have a commitment later in the day. Either way, it is our intention to trial this service throughout 2013 and thereafter to assess whether or not it has worked as intended.

We are grateful to the Worship Core Group who have worked on this idea and pray that - ultimately - God will be honoured through the worship offered at St. Andrew's Church, whatever the service and regardless of the style.

Community Spirit

It was in June of last year that we officially opened our new *Community Spirit* building, at 7a Fisheracre. Our intention is that *Community Spirit* will be the centre from which we operate a number of our outreach ministries.

To date, the building has been used primarily to house our *Havilah* project. This has meant that *Havilah* has been able to go to five days a week and to increase its range of activities. And the message is, *so far, so good!* On Monday (21st January) we had over thirty visits to the project – and each one was offered warmth of welcome, a listening ear, non-judgemental compassion... and lunch.

The Gospel makes it clear to us that Jesus spent much of his time among the excluded – the *sinner*s. It is good that our congregation takes this commission seriously.

But *Community Spirit* is about much more than *Havilah*. The building belongs to the congregation as a whole. It is no more than an annexe of our main buildings. And so as we go on over the next weeks, months and years, we will be looking for ways to fully utilise the building – so that it really does become a centre of community spirit.

Watch and pray – as Jesus invites his followers to do – that we might see this unfolding according to God's will and timing.

Ask Theophilus

Question :

What does Paul mean by 'coals of fire' in Romans 12:20: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head?'

Theophilus answers :

This is an excellent question and many answers have been given to it over the past 1600 years!

Going back as far as Augustine (born AD 354), we find him saying: 'Coals of fire, that is, good deeds, should bring those who have hurt us to repentance by grieving them.'

Martin Luther (born 1483) wrote: 'When anyone is converted by love, that person becomes very angry with him-

self for what he has been doing wrong and detests his sin with great vehemence. Therefore, good deeds shown to an enemy are "coals of fire".'

John Calvin (born 1509) agreed with Luther when he wrote: 'The believer's enemy will be stung and tormented by the testimony of his conscience, and so will feel overwhelmed by our kindness.'

Finally, John Stott (born 1921) quotes an ancient Egyptian ritual in which 'a penitent would carry hot coals on his head as evidence of the reality of his repentance'; he suggests that Paul's phrase 'burning coals on his head' was alluding to that custom and therefore meant 'a dynamic symbol of change of mind which takes place as a result of a deed of love'.

Have you a question for Theophilus? Hand it in and get his answer in the next issue of Quest.

Malawi Update

Christina (Kiri) and all her team, wanted to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thank-you for all your kind Christmas gifts as well as all your support throughout 2012.

Thanks to your support, the children at Thyolo certainly did have a lovely Christmas! The children loved their sweets and letters, so thanks to everyone for all the effort that was made to make their holidays extra special.

On Christmas day, as per Thyolo tradition, the children all went to church in the morning and then had a Christmas party in the afternoon. The children were treated to rice and chicken with vegetables- a real treat in Malawi! After the meal they were all given a bottle of fizzy juice (coke or fanta) and had some music and dancing. The daycare choir performed and many of the children did some individual songs and dances (Thyolo's got talent style!). They were giving their Christmas presents and they all received clothes. Kiri had also employed a tailor to make all of the children some clothes, like a uniform. The girls all received dresses or skirts and the boys shorts - Malawians love uniforms as it shows that they belong to something! The children all had a lovely time and went home very excited!!

Further news from the centre is that an early Christmas present came in the form of rain! The crops have now had a steady supply of rain, and though these rains are late, they appear to be good so far and the crops are growing well. Please pray that the rains slowly and steadily continue! Also our new teacher, Modesta has announced her engagement to McDonald, an electrician- they are to be married in May/June and we wish them all the best.

The new classroom building has also got underway - the foundations have already been laid and we are now beginning on the walls, as money allows. This is a very exciting development and much needed to provide for our ever expanding bunch of orphans. It also means that the older children can learn in peace away from the noise of the younger ones which will hopefully allow them to learn better and perform better in their exams, providing them with the best possible chance to work their way out of their poverty.

The children are all back at school now, and working hard again as the countdown begins to the end of year exams. The standard 8s especially have been putting in a lot of studying so please continue to pray for them, that they can do well in their primary school leaving exams.

The lack of maize is really causing hunger in Malawi now but Angus, who is in charge of Aquaid Malawi, sent an email to thank us for all the maize that we sent as a church. It has meant that they have not only been able to ensure that the orphans under their care and their extended families have had food, they have been able to feed the many extra people who have been coming looking for help. I realise that it may seem a long time since you gave to our Maize for Malawi appeal but just to encourage you that it has all made a huge difference and is saving lives!

Thanks once again for your continued support. Becky.

Fundraising Figures!

Soup Lunch - The sum of £203 was raised.

Ready, Steady, Cook - A sum of £550 was raised.

Alternative Gift Catalogue - The sum of £1560 was raised and will be spent on the various gifts that people chose. Thank you to all those who helped or participated in all of the above. **(Please see page 2 for future events!)**

Christmas Prayer Chain

A big thank you to all who contributed to making life easier for families in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Eritrea and Vietnam. Also to those of our young people who shared true stories of persecuted children with the congregation. £95.00 has been sent to Release International who will divide the money between the following causes:

* Medical care and trauma counselling for Nigerian Christians suffering violent physical attacks.

- * Practical and spiritual support for persecuted pastors and their families in Sri Lanka.
- * Prayer and practical support for families of those imprisoned for their faith in Eritrea.
- * Prayer and practical support for prisoners of faith and their families in Vietnam.

In Matthew's Gospel Jesus said: "I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of My brethren, you did it to Me."

Easter Code and Holiday Club



As always, we'll be hosting a Holiday Club for primary-aged children during the first week of the Easter school holidays. This year, the club is entitled *Space Academy* and features the exciting story of

Daniel! Next month, we'll publish registration details and ways in which you can support the club.

But this year, we've got more in store! With fewer and fewer families choosing to bring their children to traditional options, like Sunday Club, it's essential that we be as creative as possible in finding ways to engage with 21st Century

children. Therefore, during the week *before* the holidays, we're going to be running a one-session programme called, *The Easter Code*. This programme is specifically for p6-7 children and fits perfectly with the Religious and Moral Education part of the school curriculum. It offers us a wonderful opportunity to welcome lots of children into our buildings and to present them with the background and meaning of the Easter story. Already we have definite interest from some local primary schools who are expressing real enthusiasm for bringing children to St. Andrew's for the day!

Given that our holiday clubs run during school holiday time, we're fortunate to be able to use senior school pupils and students in our teams but, since **Easter Code** is taking place **during term time**, we will be relying for our team on other folks who can make themselves available for time during the week **25-29th March 2013**. Please speak to the minister to let him know that you'd be interested in helping out at Easter Code. As with the holiday clubs, we'll need people doing a range of different jobs. In all likelihood, therefore, there'll be something that YOU can do!

Ready, Steady, Cook!

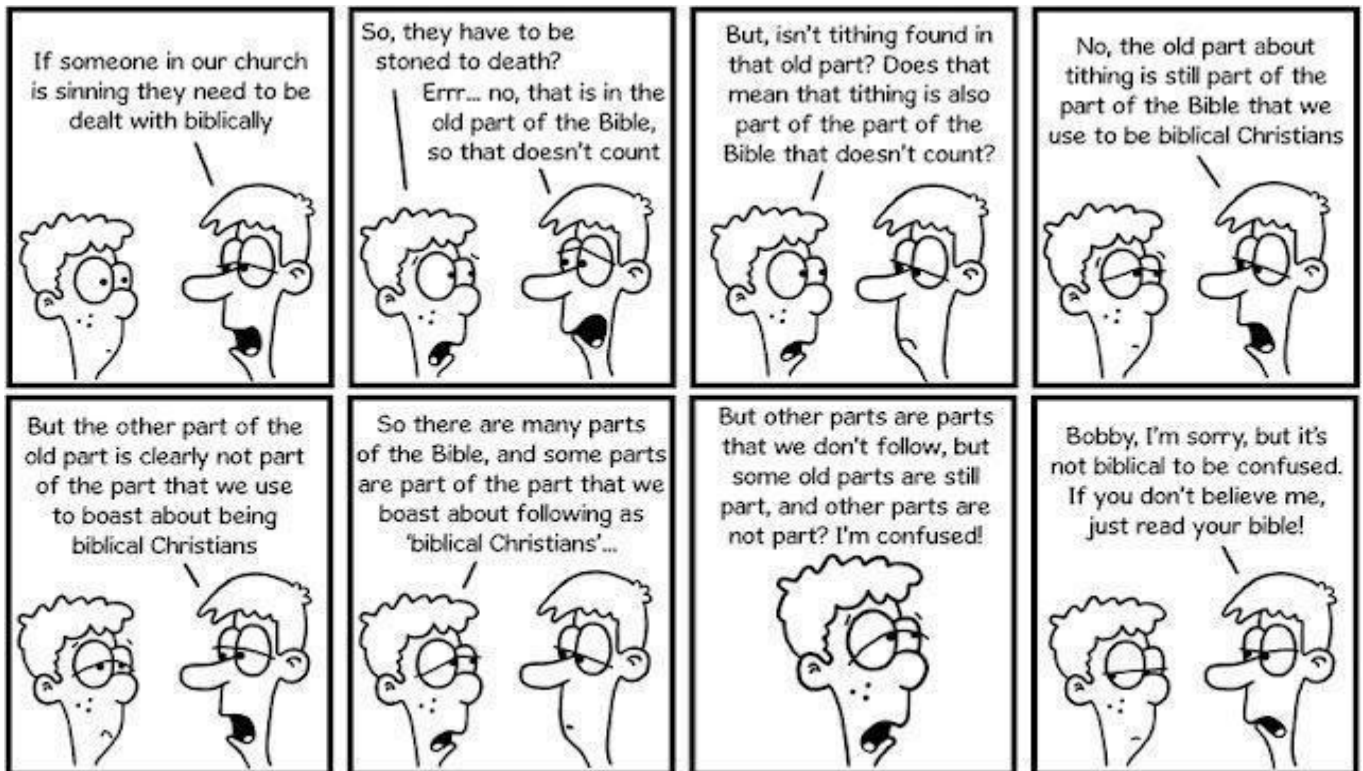
The very-well-guarded secret of the identity of the cooks for this event was finally revealed and the M & S turned out not be representatives from the well-known store but the Millers and Searles from our own ranks!

After the ingredients were discussed the cooking commenced and it became clear immediately that as well as cooking, there would be chat, comedy and commotion. The latter was provided by the antics of Ken who was, in terms of his accent, a refugee from 'Allo 'Allo. This helped to disguise his general lack of culinary skill although he did make an artistic job of fancy cutting of tomatoes and beetroot. David began with an unconvincing declaration that he

did not know that he was to take part and then went on to prepare a range of vegetables with skill and as one would expect, accompanied by erudite comment!

Jane and Lorna coped admirably with the task of getting on with the more refined elements of the meal being prepared while the two comedians vied to outdo each other. The ladies were also able to multi-task as they responded to Naomi Dunphy's questions on the progress of the dishes.

The voting by the audience resulted in a win for the Searles and an opportunity to taste the dishes was given. The entire company then enjoyed a wonderful two course meal prepared by our own master chefs in the kitchen. The wonderful sum of more than £500 was raised for the projects in Malawi.



Comic Title: Being A 'Biblical Christian'

SearchingforGrace.com © Mick Mooney

Youth Group

Our Christmas Outing was a trip to Edinburgh to visit Winter Wonderland on Princess Street. After a quick stop for food we spent most of our 3 hours visit on the outdoor ice rink or on some of the rides.

Although it was a terrible night in Arbroath with high winds and torrential rain it turned out to be quite pleasant in Edinburgh. We all had a great time with one of the highlights being playing 'The Bus Game' on the train home!

Guild News

Our Christmas party consisted of a buffet that was enjoyed by all, followed by party games. Shona and Doris then did a turn "We're a couple of swells" and members ended the evening with the singing of Christmas Carols.

The first meeting of the New Year was a talk by Sue Pritchard telling us about her life and work in Senegal with her husband Bob.

For our second meeting in January we had a good attendance despite the weather where we donned our dancing shoes and were guided through our moves with the help of the St Vigeans Scottish Country Dance Group. We then enjoyed oatcakes and cheese with our cup of tea and a slice of fruit loaf.

Monday the 4th of February is our theme night "A Faith to Proclaim". Members are asked to bring along anything for sale all proceeds going toward our Guild Projects.

On Monday the 18th of February we are delighted to have as our speaker the Rev Stewart Lamont Minister of Arbirlot Church.

Eco-cycle

Mobile phones, batteries, chargers and accessories are not biodegradable and should not be thrown into landfill. They contain a variety of metals and plastics, including potentially hazardous materials. If these are thrown away they can leach into the environment.

Over 90% of the materials in mobiles are recyclable and are reused to make new products such as stainless steel, plastic fence posts and even jewellery. One tone of circuit boards can yield about the same amount of precious metals as 110 tonnes of gold ore, 123 tonnes of silver bearing ore and 11 tonnes of copper sulphide ore. Cadmium and nickel can also be recovered from the batteries.

Typically 80% of mobile phone users keep their old phone when they upgrade. As a result there are millions of unused mobiles sitting in cupboards and drawers, ready to be refurbished and reused, or recycled. By recycling your old mobiles you are:

- * avoiding future greenhouse gas emissions
- * saving energy
- * protecting the environment
- * saving scarce natural resources

An extra advantage of digging out your unwanted mobiles is that you can donate them to our Malawi project, helping to raise funds for our children's centres. If you have a more valuable phone, you can sell it and give the cash to our Malawi project, which also gives us the chance to reclaim Gift Aid on your donation. How many old phones can you find lying around your house?

Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight 2013 is happening this month (25 February – 10 March). This is the annual call to all of us to look after the food we love and the people who grow it. Fairtrade Fortnight is the nationwide effort to promote awareness of Fairtrade and urge people to buy products carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark. It unites all Fairtrade supporters, bringing together retailers, manufacturers, producers and consumers.

Farmers in developing countries face a difficult and uncertain future, and they need our support. Smallholders are increasingly hit by fluctuating commodity prices affecting their income and the prices they pay for the food they buy themselves, rising global food prices, rising production costs, and climate change.

As members of a Fairtrade Church, we need to make a stand to ensure small farmers can achieve sustainable livelihoods and play their full role in building fairer, better food

systems for the future. Choosing Fairtrade is one way to help secure a better deal for millions of people in developing countries, so make it a priority this month to take a step further for Fairtrade. Here are three ways you can do this:

1. Take a look at the food items you buy on a regular basis and swap to the Fairtrade brand of at least one more of these. Already drink Fairtrade coffee or tea? Add Fairtrade sugar as well. Already buy Fairtrade bananas? Get hold of Fairtrade oranges too.
2. Come along to the Fairtrade coffee morning at our church on 2nd March, enjoy a natter and pick up some Fairtrade home baking or a craft item from the Fairtrade stall.
3. Provide some baking for the coffee morning, using as many Fairtrade ingredients as you can.

LOOKING AHEAD

FEBRUARY

Sunday 3
11 am - Worship Service
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 10
11 am - Worship Service
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 17
11 am - Worship Service;
Main service followed
by short Celebration
of Communion
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 24
11 am - Worship Service;
2pm - Thinking Day /
Founder's Day Service with
District Guide and Scout
movements
4 pm - MESSY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

MARCH

Sunday 3
11 am - Worship Service;
with traditional Communion
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 10
11 am - Worship Service
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 17
11 am - Worship Service;
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 24
11 am - Worship Service;
Palm Sunday Special!
4 pm - MESSY CHURCH

Sunday 31
8 am - Sunrise Service
11 am - Easter Day Family
Celebration with
all-aga Communion
6.30 pm - Resurrection
Evening Praise Special

N.B. As well as the services above there is the following:

**A 40 minute service every
Wednesday morning
at 10.30 am.**

Minute of ASM 2012

(Main text given here to allow approval at 2013 ASM)

Finance Report: The Financial Report was presented by Scott Anderson, leader of the Finance and Administration Core Group. He began by thanking the treasurer, Susan Godsall, for the considerable amount of work required in both transferring the accounts to the electronic format, and in her efficient work involved in her first year in the post. He indicated that the accounts had been scrutinised by the Finance and Administration Core Group, inspected by the professional accountant and then approved by the Kirk Session at its meeting on 1st March 2012.

The accounts are presented in the format required by OSCR and the full version of these was available at the meeting. Because of the complexity of the format required for accounting, a commentary document was issued which, by focussing on the main areas, enabled the lay person to see the salient features of the accounts. (This document is lodged in the Session minute book.)

The opening Statement of Financial Activities provides the overview of all funds and the second section showed the monies within the individual funds. From these, the surplus for 2011 was £13,000 with that of 2010 being £17,500. Key differences in income between 2010 and 2011 showed that the WFO showed an increase, but the income from Gift Aid offerings had decreased as had ordinary and open plate

offerings. Expenditure in 2011 was £10,672 up on that of 2010, although the heating bills were considerably reduced and there was a reduced cost in the payment for an Assistant Minister. The use of the surplus has yet to be decided but may be used to support future staffing requirements.

Scott indicated that further encouragement needs to be given to more people joining the Gift Aid Scheme. He also stressed that although we received a huge legacy - a very large proportion of which has already been spent - it does not absolve us from our commitments to the continued giving of appropriate offerings.

Thanks for a very clear presentation were expressed to Scott.

Moderator's Comments: The Rev Martin Fair spoke of the personal value of his period of sabbatical leave, where he particularly appreciated having his evenings free. He thanked those who had contributed to maintaining the work of the congregation. Looking forward, rather than standing still enables the congregation to continue its mission. He indicated that evidence for this can be seen in that we have given over £100,000 to date for the work in Malawi, the Fisheracre building for Havilah and other outreach work is nearing readiness for use, a Mum and Me Group was successfully launched and there was further development of the Alpha courses. The importance of our three aims of Welcome, Worship and Witness should remain at the forefront of our commitment to St Andrew's Church.

Our Community Services - A Decade On

Ten years ago, St Andrew's and Old & Abbey churches both asked the Church of Scotland for money to help pay for 2 Community Outreach Workers. Work began, and as a result we have a Food Parcel Service based at Old & Abbey and Starter Packs Angus based in the old Ladyloan School, both of which have been running for eight years.

We also have two other organisations that were started as a result of our churches working together with other community organisations: the Furniture Recycling Project Angus (FRPA), founded in 2004 and Angus Credit Union (ACU), which began in 2007. Both are still run largely by people from our two churches.

FRPA collects good quality, unwanted furniture free. If you have something you don't want, call them on 437438, and they will take it away for free! Some of this goes to homeless people who are offered flats by Angus Council and local Housing Associations, but have no furnishings. Without furniture, they cannot take up these offers. Each year, through FRPA we help about 150 households in this way. FRPA is also a great source of affordable furniture for those on low incomes, and by collecting and redistributing unwanted goods it diverts many tonnes each year from Angus landfill. FRPA also offers a carpet cleaning service to Angus households at very reasonable rates.

FRPA provides another community benefit in addition to recycled furniture. It operates with a mix of five employees and fifteen volunteers. Some FRPA volunteers are unemployed and need work experience to get into paid jobs, and some have mental health problems which would make it difficult for them to find paid employment.

ACU provides savings accounts to people who have small and erratic incomes, and who cannot get a normal bank account. It also offers its savers small loans, to tide them over domestic crises (e.g.) the breakdown of a washing machine, or extra Christmas expenses) at 1% per month – a much better rate than they get from doorstep and pay-day lenders! ACU also provides Funny Money workshops in Angus primary schools, teaching children about the wise use of money and the value of saving. ACU has grown to 800 members and is a valued service across Angus.

But both ACU and FRPA could do more. Their services are not as well known as they could be, so they have opened a joint shop in the High Street, where they take bookings and membership applications, answer questions and promote their services. They need volunteers to help staff the shop for one or two hours each week, or to do some leaflet drops in various areas of the town. Please will you help? Call Andrew Dawson on 873941 or call in at 242 High Street – it's in the pedestrianised area, on the corner with Lordburn.

Both organisations also need to strengthen their Boards of Directors. If you would like to help run either ACU or FRPA, please speak to Andrew. Directors are volunteers, and meet once each month to make strategic decisions about each organisation. There are people in both the Old & Abbey and St Andrew's who have the necessary skills and experience.

Our churches were instrumental in creating these successful community services. Please give some prayerful consideration to how you can help them survive and thrive; by using their services, telling others about them, and perhaps offering some volunteer time.

A Christmas Montage Round-up

