



Thank you Susan

(Extract from last month's article)

Susan, our Vocations Volunteer, has been an absolute delight from start to finish. Nothing has even been too much trouble for her. She has got so much to offer and has never been less than willing to get involved, wherever and whenever the need arose. She's had a taste of everything – from supporting the Toddlers Group and volunteering every week among the P1s at Ladyloan Primary School to doing a daily shift at Havilah and visiting some of our more elderly members. Whatever comes next, we wish Susan God's richest blessing as she journeys further into his purpose for her life.

(And now Susan reflects on her year with us)

Wow!!! Has it really been a year already? Some of you may not know the reason behind me starting my volunteering year, so I thought I would start by telling you.



After I left school I went to college for a year achieving my HNC in Early Education and Childcare and went on to become an Early Years Practitioner for North Lanarkshire. During this time, I was fortunate to be able to represent Girls' Brigade Scotland on a two week mission trip to George, South Africa. While there, I was able to strengthen my relationship with God and reflect on my journey with him. It was then that I knew that God had bigger plans for me. For the next few months I thought and prayed about the plan God had for me. This led me to attending a Vocations Conference on the 18th of June 2016. At the Conference I met Heather French who was telling us about the Volunteering Vocation programme. I was very interested to hear about it. That very night I emailed to Apply to become a Vocations Volunteer after the summer. On the 1st of September 2017, I started my Year as a VV (Vocations Volunteer) here at St Andrew's Church, Arbroath.

It has been a very busy year, but I have to say it has been absolutely amazing. The year started off amazing, getting to know everyone and forming relationships. However, some of you may remember the other Volunteer, Catriona, who unfortunately had to leave due to ill-health after four months. I found this quite difficult as I was losing my 'Partner in crime' and flatmate. It took a while to get used to being the only volunteer, but I have still had a great time being part of the VV programme. I have loved everything I have been involved with this year, from volunteering at 'Havilah', to working at the school, to undertaking evening services and so much more.

I believe in my heart that God sent me to Arbroath and I look forward to where he sends me next, as I move forward into my discernment into ministry.

Fiona Morrison

We are hugely grateful to Fiona Morrison, that she was willing to travel to Arbroath and share with us so honestly about her ongoing experience of cancer and the related treatment regime. Fiona's world was turned upside down when, just before Christmas 2016, she was given her diagnosis. On Sunday 18th June, Fiona spoke to us about the rollercoaster of emotions and about how she has sought to cope. And above all, she spoke of trusting in God – when the going gets tough.

We wish Fiona well with her ongoing therapy and with the surgery to come and we pray that her testimony will be an encouragement to others who find themselves in the same situation.



Cailin Smith and Rebecca Ramsay set off to Malawi at the end of June, along with Charis Bowie and Sheila, Fraser, Naomi and Becky Dunphy. (See update on page 6.)

We wish them all well and hold them in our prayers.

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ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Member Records - June 2017****Baptisms and Blessings** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - None

Martin and Ian, our pastoral assistant, conducted several other funerals in May though none were of members of our congregation. Nonetheless, we remember the bereaved families in our prayers.

Service Core Group**Eco tips****Saving Water**

Don't tap out. Teach children to turn off the water while brushing their teeth.

Leaving the tap running during the recommended two minutes of brushing can waste up to five gallons of water a day.

IMPORTANT DATES**SEPTEMBER EDITION (NO August edition)**

Handwritten/typed articles should be handed in to the **OFFICE** by the **FIRST** date and **NOT** to Editor.

Word Processed files, as attachments, can be sent **directly to the Editor or via office by second date.**

Please **avoid embedding articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.**

Friday 18th August (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 22nd August (Word-Processed file)

Summer Evenings

As previously advertised - and now to confirm - we'll be taking a well-earned break from evening services through the summer period. This will allow everyone who is involved in arranging and leading these services to take a much-needed breather.

To that end, the last service of this session will be on 18th June and the first of the new session will be on 3rd September.

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 - Adele Marr (07762 740 317)

Monday to Friday - 12.00 – 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 – Shona Kemp (878526)

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

WEDNESDAY

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

6.15 pm – Brownies – Rosie Hill (07977 790 528)

THURSDAY

9.30 am – Parent and Toddler Group – M Laidlaw (07840 966 438)

2.00 pm – Friends Club : first Thursdays – N Watson – J Lownie secretary (430053)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

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

7.00 pm – Church Prayer Group - D McColgan (07896 489 282)

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

July 2017

Dear friends,

I'm part way through what is considered to be a classic in terms of mountain literature – Nan Shepherd's, *The Living Mountain*. In this slim volume, Shepherd offers quite the most wonderful description of the Cairngorms. She does so from first-hand experience, having spent vast amounts of time wandering on the plateau and walking through the various deep passes, all the while observing every aspect of the natural environment; from tiny alpine flowers to the great corries and towering cliffs.

But having written her manuscript, Nan Shepherd failed to find a publisher for it and so put it in a drawer and thought nothing more about it for thirty years. After the passage of those three decades, she came across it in the midst of a spring clean and stopped what she was doing in order to re-read her words from all those years earlier. Thinking that her work still made sense, she again sought a publisher and this time around was successful. The book was published in 1977, four years before her death at the age of 88.

I wonder if some of you took part in our Pledge2Pray campaign – and as part of that committed to praying for five of your family members or friends? Our prayer was that those people would come to know the love of Christ for themselves. Has your prayer been answered yet? Have you seen any important changes? Have some of those people started asking about Christian faith or enquired about coming to Church?

If it took over thirty years for Nan Shepherd to get her book published, we should not allow ourselves to be despondent if our prayers aren't answered instantly. Of course God is more than capable of a lightning quick response but the Bible makes it abundantly clear that his people need patience and perseverance. Moses waited for forty years before assuming the role that he had been born for and Abraham waited for twenty-five years before the promises made to him were fulfilled. Sometimes prayer is less 'microwave' and more 'slow cooker!'

So if you've been praying for someone or for several people, keep on doing so! Don't give up! Oh, and I'd highly recommend, *The Living Mountain*!

With every blessing,

Martin and Elaine

mfair@churchofscotland.org.uk

Hillside & Dun

As the Church of Scotland, we are Presbyterian in terms of our polity and structures. That is to say that we are NOT congregationalist. Congregationalist churches look after themselves and have few, if any, responsibilities beyond their front door. As Presbyterians, we are inextricably joined to other congregations; we are part of something far bigger than our own congregation.

That brings many benefits but it also brings responsibilities. One of those has come into play at this time.

In the ongoing absence of their minister, Martin has been asked to serve as Interim Moderator of the congregation of Hillside & Dun (on the far side of Montrose.) That means that, for example, he has to ensure that there is someone to lead worship every Sunday. (To that end, he is hugely grateful to Keith Scott, one of our own members,

who is covering most of the Sundays.)

It also means that he has to chair meetings of their executive leadership team and Kirk Session, conduct baptisms and weddings and, where necessary, conduct funerals or arrange for someone else to do so.

If we were congregationalists, we could say, 'Such a shame but not our problem.' As Presbyterians, we say, 'Their problem is our problem; how can we help?'

In the light of this, we ask for two things.

Please pray for Fiona, the minister at Hillside & Dun, that she would be restored to fullness of health and well-being.

Please pray for Martin and understand, and make allowance for the fact, that he will be carrying this extra workload for the next period of time.

Ask Theophilus

Question :

In our home group there has been quite a bit of discussion about what is called 'believer's baptism'. Some think we should all be baptised as adults, even if we were baptised as infants.

Theophilus answers :

The reason for this discussion is that these are two completely different things. We can only deal with infant baptism in this article. Next time we will consider so-called 'believers baptism'.

The golden rule in understanding the sacraments, Baptism and Communion, is that the outward physical aspect points to an inward spiritual experience. Put it like this: the communion bread and wine can be taken without the communicant having any spiritual experience at all. Grace is never bestowed automatically like pouring milk from a jug into a tumbler. The outward physical act of receiving the bread and wine must be done in faith for Christ to be received in his renewing, cleansing grace.

This is made clear in the New Testament with regard to the Old Testament rite of circumcision. Read Romans 2:25-29, especially verses 28 and 29, where Paul is emphasising that the outward ritual is meaningless without the spiritual inward reality. Baptism is the New Covenant successor to the Old Covenant rite of circumcision. (See Colossians 2:11-12 where Paul makes this clear.)

In every respect the significance of both rituals is the same. First, the word 'covenant' means 'to cut' in the sense of separating something off from everything else. Thus both circumcision in Old Testament days, and now baptism in the New Testament era, signify being separated from godless society, and becoming part of the people of God. Second, both rites signify new life: circumcision was performed on the physical organ of procreation, while baptism signifies being buried with Christ in his death and raised with him into newness of life. Thirdly, circumcision was performed for reasons of personal hygiene and so signified cleanliness, while the water of baptism signifies washing away of uncleanness. So it is clear that circumcision is succeeded by baptism, which typifies in all three aspects its original meaning.

Just as the Old Covenant was promised to the children of God's chosen people, so the New Covenant continues to be promised to the children of the Lord's people (Acts 2:38-39). But the outward act for both circumcision and baptism was, and is, only effective when the outward became an inward experience through faith.

What is symbolised in baptism is the covenant promise of God for the child, accepted in faith by the believing parent. That promise lies latent in the baptised child until it is confirmed at some time in the future. This is one reason why 'joining the church' is called 'Confirmation', for at that point the public profession of faith confirms the baptismal vows made on the infant's behalf by the believing parents.

We will think about 'believer's baptism' next time.

David Searle.

Clerk's Corner

The 'hidden team'!

We have many teams of volunteers in St Andrew's Church and in most cases they are visible as they go about their work. However, there is one team which is very much hidden but the work of its members can be both seen and heard!

Over the last couple of years a sophisticated lighting and sound system has been installed and this is used during every service and also in the streaming of the services on the internet. A team of people, led and organised by Iain Scott is hidden away at the back of the balcony. Without them there would be no words and pictures on the screens, no amplification of voices and much simpler lighting.

The people manning all this equipment every Sunday, at both the morning and the evening services work a rota system and have to arrive an hour before the service to set up

and check that everything is in place for the various speakers, for the band, the choir, speakers and any soloists. The preparation for the camera and sound work for the streaming to the internet is of particular importance at this time. Commitment is therefore needed for this area of service.

The team is made up of:

Leader - Iain Scott

Sound - Nathan Christie (team lead), Alan Marr, Neil McLean and Kenny Pannell.

Vision - Louise Ramage and Karen Reaney.

Camera and Lighting - Jim McLeod (team lead), Kev Burns, Ken Miller and Ray Reaney.

As a result of the expertise available, we are now able to offer additional technical support to some of the organisations who rent our premises for events.

Yet again we are blessed at St Andrew's by those who give of their time and their talents. Thank you Tech Team!

WORSHIP GROUP EVENTS

In May, 13 of us learned new skills in reading and presenting Bible readings. The session was led by the very able Rob Rawson (Mission Development Worker for The Church of Scotland). We learned techniques such as projection, breathing, timing, expression and tone.....the list could go on. We all left with our confidence boosted, feeling the session had been very worthwhile.

Rob will join us again on 23rd September when we have a Worship Day. He will lead a drama workshop. There

will be other workshops on that day which will cover many different expressions of worship. We will also be joined by Phil Mellstrom and his team from Edinburgh. Phil has supported worship at St Andrew's through music, and his team will lead us in a session called "Conversations in Worship."

On Friday, 22nd September Allan McKinley (and band) will be in St Andrew's for a great praise evening - more details of these events will be available nearer the time, but suffice to say that it's worth putting these dates in your diary now as we are in for a great weekend of worship.

GUILD NEWS

Well what a bus trip???? Can you have every type of weather in one day???? Yes you can!!!

It was a fine morning on 10/06/17 when I set off for church but by the time the bus left at 10.00, it had already started to drizzle. Then, all the way to Stonehaven rain, rain, rain. It eased off as we hit Banchory but we felt we were better to stay the few hours at the Garden Centre than chance going into town and getting wet. So after a cuppie, browsing, shopping and a 'gin & tonic' ice cream we set off for Stonehaven via the scenic route – over the Cairn o' Mount. Here we encountered more rain, sheep being herded to a new field, cyclers, badly parked cars, a lot of nice scenery but then dense fog!!!

Well done to James Cartney, the bus driver who drove with extreme care all the winding roads and poor visibility.

We arrived at Station Hotel and enjoyed a lovely high tea, served extremely efficiently. Back to Arbroath by the coast road this time and the weather was glorious all the way. We reckon the only thing we didn't have was snow!!!!Despite all that it was a good day.

Our next Guild night will be the fish tea and video night. Date should be 07/08/17 but it will be announced in Bulletin. Please hand in your menu requests to Shona or Joyce.

Guild year starts proper on 11/09/17 with our Dedication & Communion Service in the sanctuary at 7.30pm

Any other Guild information will be in bulletin or on Guild board in large hall over the summer.

Enjoy your holidays and hope you get better weather than the trip!!!!

“Whose we are and whom we serve”

Youth Work Update

Well the camping trip was a great success! We had so much fun playing, eating and reflecting together in the sunshine! The trip centred around team challenges such as dodgeball and making the highest spaghetti and marshmallow tower whilst our reflections were about the life of Joseph and his brothers. Our young people engaged especially well with the reflection stations that linked to our Bible story. Since we had such good weather, we rearranged the Sunday slightly to allow for more time to be spent in the pond. The young people had made rafts in order to see if they could float a cuddly toy in the water and thankfully there were no soggy teddy bears!

As the youth worker, the weekend was a joy and, during our games round the campfire, I laughed more than I have

in a long time. I'd encourage you to talk to the young people about the weekend to get a real flavour of the fun we had.

A massive thank you as always to the Skea family for hosting us again. To have access to such a fantastic area for camping is such a blessing. A further thank you to Susan, our VV, who has been a great asset to the youth work team over these last months. The youth group presented Susan with a card at the camping trip and wished her every success in her future with the church. (See picture on back page.)

And so, to the young people and the wider family of St. Andrew's church, have a great summer!

Blessings,

Adele Marr

Dalitso News

10 Years of Malawi

June 27th marks 10 years since the first group of young people visited Malawi. Since then we have built and are funding 2 day cares and residences, painted numerous buildings, built houses and playparks, provided maize, cared for babies and this year will open the Docas Health Centre. What a 10 years it has been!!

To celebrate this 10 years, The Dalitso Project is to hold a feedback evening with a 10th birthday 'party' twist. The main purpose of this evening will be to look back at the last 10 years and to celebrate all that has been achieved. It is hoped that as many of the supporters of the project will be able to attend. The event will take place in September with the exact date to be finalised very soon. Please keep an eye on the church bulletin, on Facebook and if you are signed up for the newsletter I will send specific details through

your email.

Before then a group of 7 (the Dunphy's, Rebecca Ramsay, Cailin Smith and myself) will travel to Malawi. As has become normal for these annual summer trips, we will deliver presents to all the children in our care and interview and create reports on their progress that will then be brought back to the sponsors here in Scotland. These visits provide a great opportunity to check on progress and to discuss next steps that can be fed back to the other trustees, management committee and yourselves.

I look forward to inviting you to join us in celebrating the Malawi links 10th birthday and thank everyone who has been involved in making the last decade one which has seen lives in Malawi and here in Scotland transformed. The name Dalitso meaning 'blessing' has never seemed more appropriate as when you reflect on the work achieved together over the last 10 years.

Charis Bowie

One Of Scotland's Greats

Robert Bruce c. 1554 - 1631

Descended from King Robert the Bruce, Master Robert was born in Airth Castle in the parish of Larbert, Stirlingshire. His mother, Mary Livingstone of Callendar House, Falkirk, had royal blood in her veins, and was an ardent supporter of Mary, Queen of Scots. Sir Alexander Bruce sent his son to St Andrews University to train as a lawyer, and then on to the continent for further studies. But while studying in St Andrews, young Bruce had come into contact with John Knox and Andrew Melville and so he forsook his mother's Roman Catholicism in favour of the Reformed faith.

To his parents' disappointment, he decided to return to St Andrews to study Divinity with the intention of entering the ministry of the Kirk. So in his late twenties, at his mother's insistence, he gave up the wealthy barony of the Kinnaird estate near Airth, sold his horses, before setting out for St Andrews on foot to train for the ministry and with hardly two shillings in his pocket.

His brilliance was soon recognised, and by the time he was thirty he was preaching regularly in St Andrews. The high esteem in which he was held caused him to be unanimously elected to be moderator of the General Assembly in 1587! Thereafter, he received the call to be minister of St Giles in Edinburgh and was inducted at the age of thirty-three. He had been reluctant to accept this call, for, as he said, 'I know the court

and I will never agree'. King James VI regularly attended St Giles, but in spite of his youthful age, Bruce was fearless in rebuking the Scots nobility for their selfishness and lawlessness, and in urging the King from the pulpit to take care to administer justice.

At first, Master Robert (as he was called) was a favourite of King James, but then, because of his fearless integrity in the pulpit, he displeased the King who in 1600 had him banished, initially to France and then to Inverness. When Charles I became King in 1625, he gave Bruce permission to return to his estate of Kinnaird. From there he preached regularly in Larbert Kirk, and when he died in 1631, he was buried at the foot of the pulpit of the old church, the remains of which still stand in the Larbert churchyard. His influence in Scotland was immense and is still felt to this day. Lord Elgin, his kinsman, still owns Bruce's own copy of the Geneva Bible, published in 1560, fifty-one years before the King James Version in 1611!

Six of his sermons on Hezekiah's sickness have been translated and edited by myself, and were published in May this year. I am presently working on a further series of his sermons on Hebrews 11, transcribing them from his original scripts, written using the mediaeval Braid Scots alphabet, and then translating and editing them. I hope to have them published some time in 2019.

David Searle

Malawi Update

(Malawi sponsors receive regular updates from Becky Dunphy, but there is not always room to include these in Quest. This update is from May and much of it is still relevant.)

Hi all,

Thank-you to everyone who has handed in their summer gift for their sponsor children- we all really appreciate your generosity. For those of you who haven't handed in your parcels, please allow me to gently remind you that the deadline for this was Sunday 21st May. If you are having any difficulties with these, whether they be financial or logistical, please do get in touch. We want to ensure that all children get a present when we see them in June and it makes our lives easier if we don't have to rush out to the shops hours before we fly to Malawi! So if you let us know in advance of any issues- that would be very helpful. If not could you please get the parcels to my mum at 4 Princes Street, Arbroath DD11 2BL by Monday 5th June.

In terms of Thyolo and Kambilonjo, the centres are continuing to do well with the Kambilonjo crops now ready for harvesting. The centre at Thyolo have grown a few fields of crops in Kambilonjo this year as the rains tend to be better and more reliable there. The Thyolo gardeners have therefore spent the last two weeks in Kambilonjo, harvesting their fields and are now back in Thyolo ready to begin the Thyolo harvest in a few weeks.

It should be noted on a very sad note that Wiseman Nota, one of the gardeners based at Thyolo, sadly lost his daughter this month. The young girl took ill very suddenly and was admitted to Thyolo district hospital with an unknown illness and unfortunately was unable

LOOKING AHEAD

JULY

Sunday 2
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 9
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 16
11 am - Worship Service;
with guest preacher,
Andrew Kimmitt

Sunday 23
11 am - Worship Service;
including infant blessing

Sunday 30
11 am - Worship Service

AUGUST

Sunday 6
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 13
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 20
11 am - Worship Service;
inc. interview with guest,
Richard Lloyd.

Main service is followed by
short Communion

Sunday 27
11 am - Worship Service;
including probationer
minister, Lynsey Brennan,
sharing her life story

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 3
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 10
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 17
11 am - Worship Service;
Main service is followed by
short Communion

Sunday 24
11 am - Worship Service;

**N.B. As well as the services
above there are -**

**Midweek services every
Wednesday at 10.30 am**

**PLEASE NOTE
that the final evening service
of the session is on
18th JUNE.**

**After a 'summer holiday'
break, they will resume on
3rd SEPTEMBER.**

to pull through. We offer our deepest condolences to the Nota family at this time.

On a brighter note, both centres received material for school uniforms in the container and their hardworking tailors got straight onto the huge job of making uniforms for the 300+ children. (See back page.) We hope that this material which was sourced from fabrics in Glasgow at a discounted price, will be far superior to the cheap and thin material available in Malawi, which tends to break very quickly.

Many of you will have seen the beautiful health clinic that we now have in Malawi. The land for this clinic was donated by an 'old widow' - how disappointed my Mum was when she realised that the 'old widow' was much younger than my Mum! This lady kindly gave up her land, her source of income and her mud thatched home because she believed in the project. We decided that although we were paying her for her land, we wanted to gift her something extra to reward her for her generosity. We therefore built her a small, 3 roomed, tin roofed, brick built house. This house is very exciting because it also has electricity, a bathing space, a cooking area and a toilet (pit latrine - this lady did not previously have a dug / built pit latrine). You can see her newly painted house and kitchen in the first picture and her bathing space and toilet in the second. In the background you can also make out her neighbours' mud thatched houses.

The clinic at Kambilonjo is now open for business and has been named the Dochas medical centre. 'Dochas' is Gaelic for 'Hope'. It is our hope that the Dochas medical centre will bring hope in times of despair in the community of Kambilonjo. In the foreground of our picture is our very own doctor in training, Chifundo, who has just completed his second year of his medical training at Malawi College of Medicine. Chifundo is a local boy from Kambilonjo and one of the many orphans that we have supported through school and into further education. Maybe one day Chifundo will come back to Kambilonjo and work with us here! For now he is assisting the trained staff in any way he can.

A team consisting of 7 people (Cailin Smith, Rebecca Ramsay, Charis Bowie, Sheila Dunphy, Fraser Dunphy, Naomi Dunphy and myself) will be heading out to work with our two centres from late June to late July. We will be able to provide a much more detailed report and update on our return!

Until then, thanks for your continued support and please keep the centres and our children in your prayers.

Many thanks,

Becky

General Assembly 2017

The first day of the General Assembly starts in a ceremonial way with the arrival of the Lord High Commissioner, HRH Princess Anne Princess Royal, the Queen's representative. The new Moderator, Right Rev. Dr. Derek Browning, is formally elected and sworn in. I found this a very moving ceremony.

The General Assembly commenced each day with worship led by the Moderator.

As a member of the World Mission Committee of the Presbytery the report from the World Mission Council was of particular interest. The report focussed on Women in the World Church and the many women missionaries who have gone out from the Church of Scotland. There is a special conference in Edinburgh on 16th September entitled Women in the World Church. The Principal Clerk Rev. John Chalmers urged the members of the Assembly to continue to pray for the people of South Sudan.

The next report was the Joint Report from the World Mission Council and the Church and Society Council on the Centenary of the Balfour Declaration. In their report the Council asked that any Government commemoration should be done sensitively recognising the pain and suffering being felt by Palestinians and Israelis in the continuing conflict in this region.

A very encouraging Report was from the Church of Scotland Guild and the National Youth Assembly. The report was presented jointly by the National Convenor of the Guild and by a member of the National Youth Assembly on Intergenerational work and ministry. A definition

quoted in their report "Intergenerational practice aims to bring people in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations". I found this report particularly relevant to our Church today.

These are highlights of just 2 reports but I found reading the "Blue Book" and attending all the Sessions of the Assembly both uplifting and inspiring on what the Church of Scotland is doing throughout Scotland and around the world. The number of young people attending and speaking during debates was very encouraging.

All the debates took place in a respectful manner acknowledging differences in opinion between the Commissioners.

I met and spoke with many people from all other Scotland and it was lovely to hear what is happening in their Churches and sharing news of what was happening in St Andrew's Church, Arbroath.

I attended two Fringe meetings - Cross Reach Grey Cakes - their Mental Health Awareness Campaign and I also went to hear Sally Magnusson speak about Playlist UK and how the use of music can be an excellent way to connect families with a loved one suffering from Dementia.

As a first time Commissioner I thoroughly enjoyed my week at the General Assembly.

I would suggest everyone views the Webcast of the Assembly to be encouraged by everything that is happening in the Church today.

Joan E Hainsworth
Commissioner at the 2017 General Assembly

More In Pictures

Top - The Youth Group presented a 'thank you' card to Susan / Water fun
Middle - The Guild ladies enjoyed their outing to Banchory and Stonehaven
Bottom - Malawi pictures showing the new uniforms and building progress



These are some of the classes at Thyolo (first two) and Kambilonjo (second two) and their swanky new uniforms!



The widow's new house and toilet block



The clinic at Kambilonjo is now open for business