

## Christmas and Malawi



The Thyolo children enjoy their chicken, rice and fizz!

### .... and Facebook Frenzy!

Looking back at my article for the December Quest, I mentioned that we were waiting for the arrival of the container in Malawi. Unfortunately, at the time, of writing we are still waiting. Before the container was loaded onto a ship in Durban, South Africa, a storm destroyed the dock meaning that we had to wait for it to be rebuilt. It is now on its way and we are expecting its arrival any day now. Although sad that it did not make it for Christmas, the children did have their Christmas party and will have another celebration on parcel day! As always on Facebook, we will post photos and information as and when we get it.

Facebook went a bit wild as we launched the Ulemu Project (see article from Pat Clegg on this). In 48 hours our post was seen by over 18,000 people, with folks as far away as the USA contacting us to get involved. We are continuing to collect packets of pants here at St Andrew's as obviously this

is an ongoing scheme - and also at RS Joinery (27 Lindsay Street). Facebook is our main way of sharing information - a website is on its way for those that prefer this option - so I would urge you to 'like' the page and to encourage others to do so, as we share ways to get involved and update you on stories from our centre.

Fundraising continues. A date definitely for your diary is the 28th April where we will be holding a concert with Jonathan Milne and friends. More details of this will be in the next Quest, but please do save the date as it's definitely a night not to be missed. Another date is our AGM on the 9th March at OBs. We invite you all to come along with exact details being available in church bulletin and on Facebook. There is much to be thankful for as we reflect on the last year that saw us celebrate 10 years involvement in Malawi and again an opportunity to hear what is to come. We thank you again for your continued support.

Charis

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**ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH****Member Records - December/January  
2017/18**

**Baptisms and Blessings** - None

**Weddings** - None

**Funerals** - David Waugh

Ian, our pastoral assistant, conducted other funerals though none were of members of our congregation.

Nonetheless, we remember the bereaved families in our prayers.

**Service Core Group****Eco tips**

If you've used an exfoliator, freshening toothpaste or deep kitchen cleaners, you may have unwittingly been using microbeads. But recent research has revealed the extent to which these miniscule balls are wreaking havoc on marine life - as highlighted in 'Blue Planet'.

How to help? - be vigilant when shopping and check the ingredients.

**IMPORTANT DATES****MARCH 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 DO NOT embed articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.**

Friday 16th February (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 20th February (Word-Processed file)

**Soup Lunches**

The following are planned for this year -

25 February	Guild
25 March	BBs
22 April	Dementia Drop-in Café
27 May	Havilah
23 September	Dementia Drop-in Café
28 October	Dalitso Project
25 November	Havilah

**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)

**THURSDAY**

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

2.00 pm – Friends Club : first Thursdays – J Lonie secretary (07712 538 306)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

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

7.00 pm – Church Prayer Group

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

## From the Session Clerk

February 2018

It is hard to believe that we are now well into our fifth month with Martin still being unable to resume work. Nearer the end of this month, he will return to see his surgeon and, hopefully, a definite decision will be made as to the next stage of treatment. Whatever this decision is, it will affect the timing of his return to work.

Whenever that might be, it will also require to be a staged return to work and we will need to be very firm about that to ensure that he does not have the full weight he is used to bearing descending on him all at once. We will all have to contribute to this and you will be kept informed as to what form this might take.

Martin says that he has been mightily heartened by the fact that we have marched on with the vision for St Andrew's, that we have dedicated specific times of prayer for him and the whole family, and that individuals have shown initiative in advancing aspects of our congregational life. This will be a good trait to see when Martin returns!

Now, of course, the family have been further greatly challenged and saddened by the death of Martin's father, Bill. A number of us were able to attend the service in Glasgow which was a celebration of Bill's life. Celebration it certainly was, and it has been an honour for us to have welcomed Bill and Ena as part of our family.

Now, we also ask God's comfort and love to enfold Elaine's side of the family as her father struggles with severe illness.

In the interim period, have we not been richly blessed with those who have led our services? We have had a variety of styles and format of services, but always with challenging messages. This will continue throughout February and, if necessary, beyond.

Jane Miller

## Prayers for Martin

Audrey and I have been so encouraged by all of you who are praying with us on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in the church. We ourselves have felt blessed as we gather together to pray for Martin, his family and others in our

fellowship who are in need of prayer at this time. We know, that as we claim the promises of God, that He hears us and things change for the better. We would be so encouraged if others would join us in this journey. We meet each Tuesday and Thursday evening in the church from 7.00 to 7.45 pm. We hope to see you there.  
Elaine Anderson.

## Holiday Club Jungle Kids

It is that time of the year again and the plans for this year's holiday club are well underway. After the success of Rock Hero last year, the team are once again writing our own club, this time with a Jungle theme.

We will start the week by looking at how God created our beautiful world and then go on to think about what's gone wrong through the stories of Noah, Daniel and Jonah. The week will end with us thinking about Jesus and how God sent Him to sort things out once and for all.

The club will run from

**2nd to 6th April  
from 10am – 12pm.**

We will have all of our usual favourite activities: games, crafts, stories, songs, snack and GUNGE! Information about registration will follow soon.

As always we will be looking for a team of enthusiastic volunteers to help with the running of the club. If this is

something that you might be interested in please speak to Amy, Jennie or Adele to find out what is involved.

A meeting for leaders will be held on Wednesday 21st March at 7.30pm for all those who wish to be involved in this way.

Don't want to be a leader but still want to be involved? Chocolate biscuit Sunday will be on 25th March. This year we are looking for animal themed biscuits but any other chocolate biscuits will be gratefully received and consumed! To help set the scene for holiday club we will also be looking for some large toy animals to give the halls a jungle feel. If you have any, please look these out but keep at home until nearer the time. We will let you know when we are ready to start collecting them. Alternatively, if you wish to give a straight donation to help finance this mission then you can just pop that into an envelope marked "Holiday Club" and hand it in to the office at any time.

In the coming weeks please keep the plans for holiday club in your prayers. There's a lot to think about in the lead up to the club but, of course, the most important thing in amongst the fun and games is that the children leave knowing a bit more about God and how much he loves them.

Amy Scott

## Ask Theophilus

### Question :

Does the Bible teach that divorced persons may not remarry?

### Theophilus answers :

This is a huge subject, and a full answer could end up being a book of at least 100 pages! To try and summarise in some 450 words what the Bible teaches is almost impossible.

We must begin by admitting that an unhappy marriage can cause great pain and discord, as a union, which God intended to be fulfilling and loving, degenerates into rows, bitterness and alienation. Nothing can be so tragic as such an outcome for a couple who once professed to love each other for ever.

The Old Testament had permitted divorce on the grounds of there being some 'indecency' in a spouse (Deut. 24:1). If the divorcee then remarried, but her second husband then also divorced her, her first husband may not remarry her, for she had been in a second union and ought not to return to her first broken union (24:4). What the Law meant by 'indecency' was a matter of debate in Jesus' day. There was the strict view which said it meant 'marital infidelity', but there was also a very lax view that said it could mean almost anything from a wife burning the Sunday roast, to her losing her former good looks. The Pharisees adopted the lax view, so divorce on the most trivial grounds was common. Women were constantly humiliated and treated as mere chattels.

Jesus' teaching on two occasions sided with the strict

view: 'Everyone who divorces his wife, except on the grounds of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery [sc., if she remarries], and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery' (Matthew 5:32; see also 19:9 where this teaching is repeated).

The 'exceptive clause', except on the grounds of sexual immorality, makes it clear that Jesus' teaching was that adultery severed the marriage bond, and so meant the 'innocent party' (if there was genuinely an 'innocent party') was free to divorce the one who had committed adultery and remarry; the 'the guilty party' ought not to remarry.

However, we must not forget that the whole context of the Sermon on the Mount is reconciliation and the restoration of broken relationships, both between us and God, and us and our families, friends and neighbours. Moreover, the Old Testament is replete with metaphors of Israel's 'spiritual adultery', by turning from their loving God to foreign idols; yet God welcomes his 'adulterous' people back into his embrace and, as it were, 'remarries' them. In the Matthew passage I have just quoted (19:8), Jesus states that God's concessions over broken marriage unions were permitted because of our human failures and hardness of heart. The apostle Paul seems to be correctly understanding the mind of Christ when in his teaching on marriage he states that where there is what today we would call 'irretrievable breakdown', the innocent party (in his example, the wife) is free [sc., to remarry].

I apologise for the inconclusive nature of this answer. Maybe the person who asked this question should order a copy of the Falcon Booklet, *Divorce — the biblical teaching*, by John Stott. It is available from Amazon books uk; also by Stott, *Marriage and Divorce, When is Divorce Permitted: What about Remarriage?* **David Searle**

## Youth Work Update

Happy New Year! I am looking forward to a great Year of Young People with our youth group!

Andrew, Euan and I started the year with a great weekend in Aviemore for Deep Impact, a conference for Christian youth workers. It was an inspirational event which provided a place to connect with the Lord and learn practical tips for working with young people. I particularly liked the seminar entitled 'Young People and Mental Health', led by a Christian mental health nurse who does youth work within her own church. She provided ideas to help young people who are struggling but also warned of our boundaries and when to point people to more specific mental health ser-

vices. The icing on the cake of this weekend was the beautiful snowy weather! If you'd like to hear more about the conference please come and talk to one of us.

You may know that 2018 is the Year of Young People. With this in mind please look out for opportunities to support the young people of St. Andrew's in the bulletin, on social media and in future editions of Quest. For now, please pray that in a world of pressure from social media, peers, school etc that our young people rely on the Lord for guidance but also feel able to speak to a family member, youth worker or teacher if the stress becomes overwhelming.

Blessings,

Adele

## Thank You

### Toiletries

We delivered 60 bags of toiletries to the Women's Refuge in 2017. A big thank you to everyone who left donations of toiletries in the cupboard in the small hall. The

Women's Refuge is always most grateful to receive the bags.

It would be wonderful if we could, once again, reach our target of 60 bags in 2018.

Thank you,  
Pam Drever, Service Core Group

## GUILD NEWS

Our guild meetings started on the 8th January with a talk from Linzi Dear who works with TCA in the old Manhattan property. The work she is most involved in is with 'The Witches Project'. Here she informs the young people in Angus schools, along with the police department, of the temptations that surrounds them with alcohol, drugs, substance abuse and the like. It was so refreshing to listen to a young woman clearly passionate about the work she does and also easy to see that she would be approachable and a great listening ear to teenagers who have questions and concerns on these topics.

Last night we enjoyed our 1st Burns supper in 8 years!!! The hall, beautifully decorated, was filled with over 50

people. The haggis was piped in by Jack Newth, addressed by Rusty Smith, with the toast to lassies and reply ably undertaken by Ken and Jane Miller. After supper Shona Kemp sung beautifully, accompanied by Jane, and, other poetry recitals were by Rusty Smith and Sheila Stewart. The evening was compered by Roberta Brand. A wonderful evening rounded off with 'The star o Rabbie Burns' and Auld Lang Syne.

Our next evening is a change to the syllabus and will be 'Love to sit and still keep fit!!' on 5th February. Why not come along and join us?

Always remembering,

**"Whose we are and whom we serve"**

## Messages From Our VVs

Wow! Hasn't time flown. We have just reached half way in our time here at St Andrew's Church with about five months left.

Coming back from the new year both Euan and I are getting back into the swing of things with all the youth work programmes starting up again and Havilah running as normal. We are both planning and taking part in services on Sunday evenings and mornings, as well as Messy Church and the men's weekend. On the weekend of the 19th-21st of January Adele, Euan and I went to a youth workers conference up in Aviemore focused on encouraging and equipping youth workers in all areas of their ministry - particularly relevant as this is the Year of Young People. Although it finished early due to weather we can all agree that it was a great weekend spent learning and having fun.

### A thought -

Imagine if I had a book sitting on my desk, I started pushing it toward the edge and, because I didn't want it to fall, I prayed out loud "O God, stop this book from falling!". I continued to push until BANG! The book fell on the floor. I now can be angry with God because he let the book fall. Right? More likely you'd think I was a bit stupid. Sadly, this image can represent much of our Christian lives, we wander closer and closer to the edge asking God to do something then all of sudden we are gone.

This simple image throws up a lot of questions about our prayers and God's answers. Is it really fair to expect God to stop the book from falling when we ourselves make no effort to change? Is it really fair for us to ask God to stop us lying when we continually put ourselves in situations where we know we will? Is it really fair to ask God to mend discord in a relationship, in the church when we ourselves make no effort to reconcile the situation? God is all powerful, yes, but he is not an all-powerful Santa Claus safety net. God gave us the Holy Spirit to empower us to make the change needed in the world, not so we could sit back and without doing anything find the right path but so we can prepare ourselves and others for the coming of Jesus!

**Andrew**

As many of you know, Eveline has returned home to the Netherlands. Andrew and I are obviously saddened by this news, but we are both hopeful that she will find the right place for herself.

We have managed to get ourselves back into the swing of things for the new year. So far we're back to attending the various youth groups that punctuate our week, planning and attending meetings for upcoming events like the men's weekend and the Church's Holiday Club (both of which will be great fun to be involved with!) We're still involved with services both Sunday morning and evening.

Recently we had the chance to attend the Deep Impact conference, an event for those involved in youth work in the Church. The weekend gave us the chance to hear fantastic speakers and it gave us plenty to draw from in the rest of the year!

### A thought -

This week someone made a claim to me after what looked to be a hopeless shot in a game of pool. They told me confidently that it was only a degree out and as I watched the table settle, I couldn't help think about the difference that that single degree must have made.

Later that day I felt the need to do some research. I learned that being a single degree off course would take you over 250 metres off course after 10 miles. By the same logic if we were travelling 1000 miles, all of a sudden, we would be almost 15 miles away from our destination. If we set off from London to Australia and were a single degree off course, we could pass well over New Zealand and end up somewhere in the water!

This has really got me thinking. At a time of year when we love to set targets, maybe we should all be thinking more about course correcting rather than fresh starts. Maybe we should all decide that whenever we end up a degree off course, we correct it before we end up in the water! As Christians, we are people on a journey. Let us all try this year to keep adjusting and stay on the right course.

Happy New Year everyone and all the best,

**Euan**

## Clerk's Corner

**The ANNUAL STATED MEETING for 2018 will be on Sunday 18th March after morning worship. In order to speed the process, the minute of last year's meeting is printed below. Please read this in advance of the meeting.**

The Kirk Session met on 12th March 2017 in the Sanctuary for the Annual Stated Meeting and was constituted with prayer.

Moderator: Rev Dr W Martin Fair BA BD

Sederunt: 38 members attended

Minute: The minute of the Annual stated meeting held On 15th March 2016 was approved on the motion of Alan Marr seconded by I Sim.

The Presentation of the Accounts: The accounts for 2015 were previously scrutinised by the Finance and Administration Core Group, approved by the Kirk Session, and finally examined and approved by the independent examiner and presented to Presbytery.

Scott Anderson, leader of the Finance and Administration Core Group presented the detail of the figures for 2016 using both an extract and the relevant sections from the main accounts as they are prepared for OSCR. The full version was made available for those who wished to have a copy. In addition, those present were given a paper which showed the overview of Financial Activities for 2016. The figures were displayed under headings which included; The Big Picture where the total funds of £391,238 were carried forward into 2017; What do these funds represent? which showed that the unrestricted and designated funds totalled £142,342; Key movements: 5-year trends showing comparative income over the last five years for the various headings under the voluntary income in the General Fund, Havilah revenue, and legacy details.

The key messages are: There is a surplus on the General Fund of £9,750; WFO, Gift Aid offerings and donations and tax recovered on GA down £9,924 on previous year; Open Plate up £5,996 on previous year; Evening Service up £549 on previous year; use of premises up £2,402 on previous year.

£5,000 of the surplus has been allocated to the Fabric Fund, together with the same sum from the income on the letting of the premises. Some detail of different practices in the recording of depreciation to the manse and key equipment was mentioned.

While there was no rebate to our £98,000 allocation to the M and M fund for 2016, Presbytery has indicated a £15,000 rebate on this for 2017.

The year has been a successful one financially for Havilah and the transition of the Malawi financial affairs to the Dalitso Project has been carried out.

The procedures for the statutory requirements of the new Auto-Enrolment Scheme for pension provision for our employees and the adoption of the Scottish Living Wage have been put in place.

Thanks were expressed to Susan Godsall, Treasurer, Scott Anderson as leader and all members of the Finance and Administration Core Group, for their considerable commitment to the very complex area of the management of our finances.

Moderator's Comment: The Moderator commented on the fact that having accounts which are in the black thanks to the generous giving of the congregation reminds us to be grateful for God's provision for us. Our ministry and mission can only flourish if our accounts are in order and so we remain in a blessed position. The need to be prudent is always with us, but we are not a bank and must continue to use our available finances to further our work.

Thanks to Moderator: Joan Hainsworth, Deputy Session Clerk thanked the Moderator for his skill in the teaching of the word, and the challenges he gives us to be at work in the community. We were encouraged to be as supportive as possible to Martin as his National Church work adds additional burdens. She also thanked Ian Gray for the success in his work in pastoral care. Blessings were extended to all the manse family.

Closure: The meeting closed with the Benediction.

### LOOKING AHEAD

#### FEBRUARY

Sunday 4  
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 11  
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 18  
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 25  
11 am - Worship Service  
Messy Church

#### MARCH

Sunday 4  
11 am - Worship Service  
with Holy Communion

Sunday 11  
11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 18  
11 am - Worship Service;  
Followed by  
Annual Stated Meeting

Sunday 25  
11 am - Worship Service  
Messy Church

**N.B. As well as the services above  
there are -  
Sunday evening  
services at 6.30 pm**

**And  
Midweek services every Wednesday  
at 10.30 am**

## Eveline Verburgh

Sadly we had to say goodbye to Eveline, one of our VVs, early in January. Due to ill health she has had to return to the Netherlands to recuperate from a debilitating health condition.

After an initial promising start to her work with us, she contracted flu which exhausted her. A period of complete rest enabled her to partially recover and she began work, mainly in Havilah. This was the area which she particularly enjoyed and she showed patient care for the clients there, playing games with them and assisting in craft activities.

She then contracted a prevalent stomach bug and her recovery from this was again slow, although she did man-

age to widen the range of activities available to her.

It was hoped that the Christmas break would provide the necessary rest and restore her health. However, this was not to be, and Eveline realised that she was not going to be able to complete the course.

She is very disappointed at this turn of events and wishes to thank all those who helped her and welcomed her into the life of the congregation. She feels a great affinity for Scotland, feels that she has learned a lot in her short time here and hopes that she may return here at some time in the future.

We wish God's blessing on her and a restoration of her full health.

## INTRODUCING THE "ULEMU"\* PROJECT (\* Chechewa for "Dignity")

When Sheila and Fraser touch down in Malawi in February, 2018, they will be unpacking material which previously arrived ahead of them in the container sent out in autumn 2017. They will then begin the process of delivering the skills and training to help set up the second business and income generating initiative in Thyolo (the first of these being the Wedding Dress Project which will undoubtedly provide the basis of many happy stories in the future.)

The hope is that a skill base will be quickly established and enable young people in setting up a business which will benefit the whole of the local community.

So, how did we get to where we are today?

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This story goes back to 2004 and the publication of "The Hospital by the River" - the inspiring account of the fistula hospital set up in 1959 in Addis Adaba, Ethiopia, by Australian Christian Gynaecologists, Catherine and Reg Hamlin. Over the following decades, Catherine and Reg and their team went on to operate on over 25,000 women all of whom would have otherwise suffered a lifetime of physical degradation and being shunned by society. Such infirmity was often the result of young women becoming pregnant before their bodies had matured sufficiently to cope with childbearing and then having an obstructed labour far away from any professional help.

The charity Ethiopiaid grew out of the above and works across that vast country, bringing hope to sufferers of Noma, Blindness, Elder neglect, and a host of other ills.

More recently (and this is where our local link begins its journey) Ethiopiaid partnered with the burgeoning Mariam Seba Factory in Addis which manufactures re-usable washable sanitary products and created "Dignity Period" by assembling the Dignity packs to include pants and soap bars - and thus overcoming a serious barrier to girls' education. According to recent statistics, around one in ten girls across Africa ceases to attend school once puberty sets in.

Over the years, I have been watching this project evolving and growing across Ethiopia and changing the lives of young women - and pondering how such well-established know-how and skills could be translated to Malawi and I had it on my "to do" list after discussing the various issues

with Sheila. This also coincided with the desire by Dalitso to set up small business / enterprises in Thyolo and Kambilonjo. Replicating the Dignity Packs to sell on to the wider community seemed a great idea and would not involve a big financial outlay or technical equipment. But how to get the idea off the ground?

So, some months ago, I phoned Ethiopiaid's UK office and they put me in touch with Actionaid who then forwarded my query to their fieldwork division in Malawi. In a village called Namalusa, Ruth, mother of two, has set up a home workshop making low cost sanitary towels and has made over 3000 pads for over six hundred girls. In commenting on her not inconsiderable achievements to date, Ruth said "I felt good in my heart because I never expected to make such a difference."

So, back in Arbroath - and, in the meantime, finding templates and information online, Sheila and I reckoned we would have time to send templates, fabrics etc with the container in September (sewing machines being already there!)

Then, one Sunday, Sheila waylaid me and said, "Just listen to this! These ladies have the know-how and templates etc ..... which is the theme for crafting tomorrow night."

So a project which seemed, on the face of it, difficult to get off the ground will hopefully be up and running in 2018 - and making a difference to young (and not so young) lives in Malawi and, with luck, bringing benefits for communities in that part of Malawi stretching way beyond the immediate Dalitso project!

Prayer arrows across Africa and Scotland. Amazing.

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So, what part can we as supporters of the Dalitso Project play in support of the new project?

At the time of writing - and Sheila may well wish to refine the list of needs and wants when she rejoins us after her travels - at this stage, we estimate that the Ulemu Project will need continuous supplies of women's and young girls underwear in sizes 8 and 10, small soap bars, and fabric to make pads and the drawstring bags to contain the Ulemu packs. This manifest will then go out, as usual, in the container in the autumn.

So, watch this space for the next chapter!

**Pat Clegg**

# More in pictures - Christmas Past

At the morning service on 24th December, our Sunday Club children created a lovely tableau. Three narrators read the Christmas story very well as the children processed in and gradually formed the scene - complete with a real baby Jesus, courtesy of Amy and Iain Scott! The congregation sang single verses from well known carols and hymns.

