

Yester Bolton & Saltoun



Parish Newsletter

September 2019

Dear friends,

Can you remember what it feels like to discover something for the very first time? To look at something with completely fresh eyes, without preconceptions or expectations? To appreciate the shape of a leaf, the colour of a blossom, the smooth surface of a stone, the cry of a bird, the touch of a rolling wave washing over your feet?

Our son is just at that wonderful stage where he makes such new discoveries every day, where he learns more about the world each day, and where he is simply delighted by these encounters. Watching him in his delight reminds me of the beauty and intricacy of the world around us, of the little miracles in whose midst we live, and which so often we don't even see anymore. Often, when I'm getting impatient, waiting for him to draw himself away from the joy promised by a puddle, or a dandelion, or a beetle, I'm reminded that our life ought to be more than chores and to-do lists, that there's more to it than running to a schedule all day.

We're often so absorbed in everything we've got to do that we can easily forget just to be, and to enjoy the beauty by which we are surrounded – in our gardens and streets, in the people whose lives we share, in the fulfilment we find in following a favourite pursuit. Children can teach us to simply be, to look at life with a delight and an openness that many of us have forgotten as we have grown up.

As they commence a new school year, I'm sure many new experiences and discoveries are awaiting them. In some of his letters, the apostle Paul urges us to be mature in the way we connect to each other. This maturity results from what we have learned, and what we understand about the world and each other. Nevertheless, Jesus reminded the disciples that it is the children from whom we ought to learn, too: that it is a childlike openness and excitement, a readiness to look at the world and to be amazed, that will bring us closer to God. In our Holiday Club, it was certainly refreshing to see the children interact, and to explore the themes of love, hope and peace.

There is much we can learn from them. Have a good autumn!

Anikó

New Bibles in Yester

We are very grateful to a generous donor who is providing new Pew Bibles and a Lectern Bible for Yester Church. After much consideration and comparison between the currently used Good News translation, and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible, the Kirk Session decided to change to the NRSV translation in Yester Church. In the churches in Bolton and Saltoun, we will continue to use the Good News translation, to honour the recent gift of Bibles for the new lecterns there. Once you've had a look at the new Bibles at Yester, it will be possible for you to purchase personal copies if you wish, at a reduced price of £11.99 (which includes a 20% discount through our bulk order).

Sheila Clark

As many will now be aware, Sheila Clark played the organ and accompanied the singing for the last time on Sunday 14 July, at the Communion service in Bolton Church. Sheila has been our organist on a regular basis for nearly twenty years at services in Bolton, including many weddings, funerals, Watchnight services and other special occasions, but she has also deputised for others at services in Saltoun, Yester and Humble Churches for many years. We are hugely grateful to Sheila for her service and her contribution to the life of the congregation. To mark the occasion, Sheila was presented with a bouquet of flowers and – much to her delight – some mugs portraying racehorses, a memento that acknowledges her great love of, and contribution to, the equine world! We look forward to seeing Sheila from time to time at services and at our church discussion group which meets throughout the winter, when her pithy views and observations are very much appreciated and enjoyed! *Alastair Wyllie*

Session Clerk handover

After serving Bolton and Saltoun Church, and subsequently the united church of Yester, Bolton and Saltoun, for nine years as Session Clerk, Alastair Wyllie has decided to retire from these duties, and we are very grateful for his diligent and committed service over this time. At the Kirk Session meeting in November, John Macfarlane will succeed Alastair as Session Clerk, and will be assisted by Depute Clerks Wendy Thomson and Paul Sales, by their request all serving for an initial four-year term.

Harvest Thanksgiving

Our Harvest Thanksgiving Service will take place on Sunday, 20 October, at 11am in Saltoun Church, to which all – and especially all farmers – are very welcome. Donations for the East Lothian foodbank would be appreciated.

Visiting team

As some of our members are largely housebound and would appreciate seeing a friendly face, we are looking for people who would like to be part of a visiting team. If you'd like to hear more, please contact Anikó.

Smarties Challenge

Enormous thanks to all who collected 20ps to fill Smarties tubes. 60 people took up the challenge and together raised the grand total of £850. As agreed, 20% of this sum will be donated to Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees. Hope you also enjoyed the contents of the packets before you started refilling them!

Refugee Holidays

After an invitation by Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, the Kirk Sessions of our linked parish have agreed to support a pilot programme for New Scots Holidays. In October, we'll be therefore welcoming a family of Syrian refugees, who have settled into Aberdeenshire, for a long weekend in our parish. If you would like to get involved by supporting the programme and/or invite our visitors for an activity or a meal, please get in touch.

Getting connected

Would you like to help us stay connected with the wider community? And report on the life of our church? We are looking for help with editing our website and facebook page? Both are very straightforward, and training can be provided. The task would amount to roughly 30 minutes per week. If you would like to hear more, please contact Anikó.

New members

Over the past few months, six new members have joined our church – we're very happy to formally welcome them in our midst, and affirm their belonging to our congregation. If you would like to start thinking about joining our church, please contact the minister. Over the winter, we will also offer a faith exploration course, for all who would be interested in discussing our beliefs and how they shape the way we live. If you'd like to participate, please also speak to Anikó.

All Age Service

Children are welcome at all our services, however our service on Sunday, 27 October, at 11am in Yester Church, will be a dedicated All Age Service for people from all generations, at which we'd be especially glad to see younger folks coming along. There'll also be a baptism, and coffees and teas will be available before the service.

Messy Church

Our next Messy Church takes place on Sunday, 8 September, 4-6pm in Humble Village Hall. This time, we'll have visitors from Fostering Compassion, an East Lothian charity that supports children in care and helps rescue animals. We'll also have local pets - possibly a dog or two, a kitten, a budgie, and perhaps even ferrets and a pony - and a vet visiting. Please contact us if you'd like more information. The afternoon will have a slightly different format, but children of all ages will be able to join in with the activities, and we'll have a song and prayer, and supper together, as usual. All children are very welcome, and must be accompanied by an adult.

Holiday Club

Cabin crew please take your seats for take off!

We have had a very exciting few days at Holiday Club flying to three wonderfully exotic countries – Jamaica, Italy and South Korea. Every morning we have boarded our plane (mercifully not affected by strikes and power cuts) to take us to our new destination, singing songs along the way to keep our rather dozy pilot awake. We have learnt a little bit about each country as we visit it and Anikó has been helping us engage with the themes of love, hope and peace within these countries. With the help of Jenny's brilliance we have made some beautiful crafts including love clouds, hope/love/peace bracelets, hanging baskets, a fantastic flame filled burning bush, and doves of peace. Margo's magnificent meals have kept us all going as we listened to Cress tell us stories about Moses in relation to our themes. We also have managed to get outside to play and dance around the church despite the tempestuous weather! We landed safely back in Scotland after 3 packed filled days – and are much looking forward to new adventures next year! See some of our pictures on the Facebook page and the back of the service rota sheet.

A Radical Assembly

At the General Assembly, attended by Finlay and Anikó on behalf of our congregations, a Radical Action Plan has been agreed, with a potential to reshape the Church of Scotland at every level. The reform process is aiming to help our Church meet its purpose better. With thanks to Life and Work, here is a summary of the decisions taken:

- Up to £25m to be spent on projects aimed at church growth, with particular emphasis on church planting
- 100 new worshipping communities to be established
- Focus on engaging with people under 40
- Cost of central administration to be cut by up to 30%: four councils to be merged into two
- Number of Scottish presbyteries to be reduced from 43 to about 12, focused on supporting local congregations in their ministry and mission
- Networks, hubs and other new local church structures to be developed
- Kirk Sessions to be reduced in size and focused on 'leadership and strategic decision-making'
- Decision-making and resources to be devolved from the central administration to regional and local levels
- No congregation to pay more to the centre after next year until new arrangements are agreed
- Land and buildings plan to focus on 'well equipped spaces in the right places'. Money from sale of redundant buildings to be shared between congregations
- Improved training and support for all ministry and leadership roles
- General Assembly to be made smaller
- Encouragement of a season of 'prayer and preparation' across the Church from September to December 2019

As part of the plan, a new body of Assembly Trustees has been formed, to drive these reforms, and alongside eleven others, Anikó has been elected – as the only parish minister – as one of the Trustees.

Assembly First-timer

Most of the time Anikó and I sat together, but when an item on the Order of Business was due to come up for which Anikó was responsible, she left and sat with her fellow committee members for the duration of the Session in which her committee's Report was to be presented. She was not with me, then, when a rather large gentleman sat down beside me. I should, at this stage, mention that the Moderator's task in chairing the Assembly is not an easy one, having not only to get through all the business in the time allotted, but also having to deal with proposed amendments to motions to approve the delivered Reports, and perhaps too frequently, proposed amendments to proposed amendments! One such amendment to an amendment arose. The amendment was subtly different from the original motion and the debate to decide between them could have lasted some time. The amendment to the amendment was, frankly, rather ridiculous, in my opinion. The vote between the amendment and the amendment to the amendment went ahead without debate, rather naturally, but to my surprise the ridiculous amendment won! This amendment then went up against the original motion, again without debate, and this time was roundly defeated. Thus the time consuming debate I had envisaged, time that was hardly available, was avoided. I turned to my next door neighbour, and said "The Commissioners seem to have rather more sense than I had, a moment ago, given them credit for.", and received in return an enigmatic smile worthy of the Mona Lisa herself. When the next session began, seats were again changed, the large gentleman had moved elsewhere and Anikó re-joined me, greeting me with the observation that I had appeared to have enjoyed my conversation with the Archbishop.

No "report" would be complete without a heartfelt thank-you to Anikó for all the help she gave me, a newcomer to the Assembly Hall precincts, and to the customs and procedures of the General Assembly. I would urge everyone who can attend the Assembly to do so at least once.

Finlay Marshall

Coffee Mornings

Twice a month (on the second Wednesday and the fourth Tuesday) we have drop-in Coffee Mornings in East Saltoun and Yester: an opportunity for a chat over a lovely cup of tea and coffee, and delicious baking.

Coffee Morning Dates

Yester 11 Sep	Saltoun 24 Sep
Yester 9 Oct	Saltoun 22 Oct
Yester 13 Nov	Saltoun 26 Nov

Parish Register

Baptisms	3 June 2019	Miranda Hogg, Longyester
	28 July 2019	Mila McCormack Stewart, daughter of Ashley McCormack and Gary Stewart, Haddington
	4 August 2019	Alice Elizabeth Hogg, daughter of Miranda and James Hogg, Longyester
	11 August 2019	Charlie Roy Reay, son of Stephanie and David Reay, Haddington
Marriages	25 May 2019	Alissa Balding and Neil Henderson, in Yester
	25 May 2019	Fiona McDougal and Robert (Johnnie) Barnett, in Saltoun
	15 June 2019	Amy Riva and Alexander Peace, in Yester
	27 July 2019	Katie Yarrow and Michael Alexander, in Yester
Deaths	19 May 2019	John Redpath, Haddington
	31 May 2019	Allen Bathgate, East Saltoun
	3 July 2019	Margaret (Meg) Macdonell, Gifford
New Members		Miranda and James Hogg, Longyester (by Profession of Faith)
		John Hogg and Emma Pate, Longyester (by Profession of Faith)
		David Simpson, Tynninghame, Dunbar (by Profession of Faith)
		Mary Davidson, Gifford (by Certificate of Transfer)

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Gift Aid Treasurer (Bolton and Saltoun)	Paul Sales	01620 811260	paulsales457@btinternet.com
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Deadline for next newsletter: Wednesday 13 November 2019

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