

**St James' Parish Church of Scotland, Ayr
Church Calendar of Events February 2020**

Thoughts from the Manse



Dear all,

A new year, a new beginning. Each New Year's Day I have a feeling of excitement, of chance and opportunity as well as a sense of dread. What will this year, what will 2020 bring for us all, as individuals, as a church, as a country? There are certainly changes afoot for everyone. Great Britain will now leave the European Union for certain, to some people's delight, to others' horror. Hardly anyone is indifferent about it. Changes are coming to our church. A new ten year plan is discussed in all presbyteries and almost all congregations are in a somewhat heated discussion about what it means for them. Some face being united with other churches, some must share their ministers, some fight bitterly to keep their current status. And of course as individuals we have to face changes all the time, good and bad. A new school for our children and grandchildren perhaps, moving house, a bereavement, a loss.

Whatever these and other changes bring to us as individuals or as a community – good or bad, change is always a bit unsettling – because we can never know for certain how they might affect us. And so it is reassuring that our faith can be constant in our lives, if we choose, that God's presence is something we rely on, when everything else around us in flux, as one of my favourite hymns puts it so eloquently:

“Thou changest, not, thy compassions, they fail not, As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be”. It is human nature that we want to cling to something, when nothing around us stays the same and I firmly believe God is the something we cling to.

The bible uses many images to describe God's constancy to us: a rock, a fortress, the house of the Lord. All speak of the same

February 2020			
Day/Date	Event	Organisation	Location/ Time
Friday 7th		Lunch Box	Hall – 12 noon
Sunday 9th	Congregation Meeting	Minister	Church after the service
Sunday 9th	Salvation Army Community Gospel Choir		Church Hall - 7.00pm
Tuesday 11th	Computer Club & Guides Off		
Friday 14th		Lunch Box	Hall - 12 noon
Thursday 20 th	Presbytery Committees		
Friday 21st		Lunch Box	Hall - 12 noon
Sunday 23rd	Guide Thinking Day Service		Church
Friday 28th		Lunch Box	Hall - 12 noon
Saturday 29th	Coffee Morning	Carpet Bowls Club	Hall - 10am



Cont/promise: that God will be with us through thick and thin, through the changes and all the difficulties we will face, now and in the future. Or as the prophet Isaiah puts it: You have been a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall and like the heat of the desert. AMEN

Every blessing

Barbara

Congregational Meeting

The Minister has called a meeting of the whole congregation to discuss the new presbytery plan and what this might mean for St James on Sunday 9th February after the service. I am hoping for a good turnout to discuss this important topic.

Fundraising Wheelbarrow

Sincere thanks to everyone who donates to the wheelbarrow. Since it started in March 2019 the total sum raised is £1521.01 a tremendous result. The barrow has not been emptied since 19th November but I hope to do this next week. You will be informed of new total via intimations or next Newsletter.

Moyra Smith
Fundraising Convenor



Change of Address

To help us keep the Roll as up to date as possible, Would you please use this slip to advise the Roll-Keeper, Mrs Gillian Cunningham of any change of address.

Please hand completed slip to one of the office-bearers on duty at the door, or place it in the offering plate.

Name :

Old Address:

.....

New Address:

.....

Tel Number:





8th Ayr Boys' Brigade Company

January has been a busy month for the boys with the normal Friday night activities. The Company Section also held their annual Burns Supper on Friday 31/1/2020, with our visiting Elders as guests.

There are also other events during February that the boys will take part in:

Anchor Boys – Games Afternoon on Saturday 15/2/2020.

All sections - Thinking Day Service in the Church on Sunday 23/2/2020.

Junior Section - International Team Games on Friday 28/2/2020.

Company Section - Top Team Challenge on Friday 28/2/2020.

Stuart Hyslop
Company Captain



Treasurer's Report

Offerings etc for 2020

	5 th	12 th	19th	26th
Freewill Offerings	269.00	328.50	363.00	487.85
Open Plate	42.50	50.00	28.00	38.00
Lunch Box		80.00	70.00	60.00
Donations			10.00	
Fabric				58.00

Our Organisations gave the Church donations at the end of the year and we thank them all very much. The donations gave the Accounts a healthier appearance for the Annual Balance.

Kids Time donated £350.00, Boys Brigade donated £350.00, Junior Church £200.00, Chit Chat Group £50.00, Ladies Badminton £340.00, Guides £50.00, Carpet Bowls Club donated £400.00, Computer Club £50.00 and the Concert Party gave us £2,000.00. Thank you to everyone.

Alison Hyslop
Treasurer



Church Roll

We have had a recent death of one of our members, Mr Ian Thomson. We extend our sympathy to his family and friends.

Gillian Cunningham
Roll Keeper



Junior Church

A belated 'Happy New Year' from the children and staff of the Junior Church. We had a great time at the Farm Park on our Christmas Outing.

The lessons at the moment are from Paul's letters but we will be returning to 'Spill the Beans' shortly. Always something different to do.

Any new children will be made most welcome.

Gillian Cunningham



Kid's Time Community Playgroup

Since we returned after the Christmas break we have had more "new recruits" resulting in us thinking of re-instating the waiting list.

We would be happy if we could persuade a couple of new helpers to come along on a Thursday morning. Helpers arrive at 8.30 am to set up and of course are last to leave because there is quite a bit of tidying up needed. Please contact me if you can help.

Otherwise all is well at Kid's Time.

Moyra Smith
Playgroup Leader



Cont/

We held our Unit Burns Supper on 21st January. Our Guests for the evening were our visiting Elders Jean Jamieson and Duncan Rout and our Session Clerk, Bill Mackie. The girls recited some Scottish Poems (apologies to Robert Burns) and did a Scottish Country Dance "Johnny Groats House" and we all joined in some community singing!

We are looking forward to a visit from some UWS Student Nurses on 4th February as part of their Course - this is becoming an annual event!

On Thinking Day (22nd Feb.) we have the opportunity to go to Nether Auchendrane for "Thinking Day on the Air" when members of Ayr Amateur Radio Group will try to connect us with Guiding/Scouting groups around the world! In the afternoon there is a chance to go to a Fun Event in Newton Wallacetown Church Halls and have a go at international activities.

On Sunday, 23rd February we will attend our Annual Thinking Day Service at 11.00a.m., in our Church. All Parents, families and friends are invited to join us for this special Service. Hope to see you there!

Ina Mackie
Assistant Leader



Cont/Watch this space!

Brownies love badges!

Louise Dunn
Brown owl



12th Ayr Guides

"Happy New Year!" everyone.

Is it really the end of January, 2020, already? We had a very busy end of year 2019 activities starting with our "Snowman Drive" on 10th December which was a great success and great fun! We raised £121.50 for Unit Funds - thank you to everyone who took part! If you missed it, why not come along next time?

On 15th Dec, we attended a special viewing of "Frozen II" at the Odeon Cinema. This was arranged by the Girlguiding Association, hence the reason we did not attend the "Gift Service", however, the girls handed their Gifts in on 10th December! Thanks, Girls!

Our new term started on 7th January, 2020 - it was good to get back into a familiar routine! We were delighted to welcome four new Guides on 14th January. They are Rachel and Lilah from our Brownies and Maya and Megan from 4th Prestwick Brownies - hope you all enjoy Guides as much as you did Brownies! We still have places for any girl aged 10+. If you know of any girl in this age group why not encourage them to come along to join in the fun?

Session Clerk's Message

Friends,

It's hard to believe that Christmas; Hogmanay and New Year celebrations are a dim and distant memory. Time seems to pass so quickly. We remember fondly those members who are no longer with us.

We now have to face the challenges of 2020. With the decisions made at the General Assembly and Ayr Presbytery where a plan has to be prepared for the next 10 years. Change is inevitable! Presbytery has to plan for a reduced number of ministries, and the Church of Scotland has to reduce its building stock, with many buildings no longer fit for purpose. Different types of Ministry will have to be considered to cope with the challenges ahead.

As a Kirk Session and Congregation we have serious decisions to make over the next few years.

May I extend my personal appreciation to Office Bearers; Leaders of Organisations, and of course you the members for your continued commitment to all that is happening here in St James.'

God Bless

Bill Mackie.
Session Clerk



Fundraising/Social Committee

Christmas: The congregational Party went well and thanks are due to everyone who helped with the setting up, preparing the food, serving and clearing up.

On 9th February the Salvation Army Community Gospel

Choir will be in concert here at St James all proceeds for Church Funds. Please support the committee in their efforts to raise money for our church by attending this event. Tickets are on sale at £5 for adults and £2.50 for children, or payment can be made at the door. The price includes a light supper. If you were not able to get a ticket the choir's Christmas concert why not come along and enjoy them on the 9th February at 7pm. If you can help with the catering by making a tray bake please speak to Moyra or Agnes.

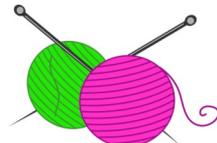
A date for your diary: Our annual Quiz Night is on Thursday 2nd April at 7.30 pm

Future Events: We hope to have Silent Auction in June but you will be advised of the date in due course. Please start saving suitable items.

Moyra Smith Fundraising/Social Convenor

Wanted

Do you have any unwanted balls of wool? If you do please hand them in and we will use them to knit garments. Any money raised from the sale of the garments will be donated to the foodbank.



Margaret Whyte

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12th Ayr Brownies

We hope you all had a good Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Since returning on the 7th January 2020 we have been working hard.

Our first night back was a games night and we played 'getting to know you games' to introduce our 2 new Brownies.

We have decided to cover two themes this term and next. These are 'Be Well' and 'Explore'. This gives us lots of fun with our Unit Meeting Activities but we also learn skills with the other section of the programme called 'Skill Builders'. They give us a topic to discuss and relevant activities to ensure that the Brownies understand the aim of the challenge.

A new layer has been added to the New Programme that means that Brownies can work towards a Bronze or a Silver Award.

(Previously only a Gold Award was available and to achieve this they had to complete all 6 Themes, including Interest badges.)

The two new levels mean that each year in Brownies, depending on attendance, the girls should be able to gain 2 Theme Awards.

Hopefully we should start seeing the Brownies working at home to gain Interest badges in order to be awarded with their Bronze Award by the end of the term.

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Sound Desk

It would be helpful to have an additional person to cover the sound desk. This is simply due to my commitment at Dalmellington and Patna Churches. If you feel you can help please contact me. The work is not honerous.

Bill Mackie
Session Clerk



Rainbows

Everyone at Rainbows hope you all had a lovely Festive Season! December was a busy month with the girls all making Christmas decorations such as door hangers, gingerbread men, and Santa and Reindeer for their trees. Our Christmas party at KidzPlay was much enjoyed by all, and the girls were delighted to have a visit from the big man himself ahead of his busy night!

We started back on the 8th January with a fun night hearing all about what the girls got for Christmas and what they did during the holidays. We played some fun games too. They have been learning about telling the time and made clocks from paper plates. This is all working towards their badges.

We have one new Rainbow and she settled in very well on her first night. We now have a full house!!

Fiona Auld
Adult Helper



Outreach Group

Christmas Card delivery: Sincere thanks to all those who delivered the parish Christmas card, as far as I am aware they were all delivered on time (before the Christmas Fayre) and I believe this helped swell the numbers of non-church folk who supported the Fayre.

Christmas Messy Church: This was well attended and enjoyed by the kids who came along. Our next Messy Church is on Saturday 22nd February from 1.45 till 4pm. Please encourage all children you know to come along.

Christ in Action Foodbank: Our Christmas arrangements worked very well. At Newton School we handed out parcels twice on the week the school went on holiday 16th and 20th December and we were able to give all the children involved a selection box and the parents were given Christmas food items e.g. Christmas pies, shortbread or cake. The hostels were given emergency bags to hand out if needed on 25th, 26th December and 1st and 2nd January, they also received cakes and shortbread etc. We tried our best to ensure that no one did without. The Women's Refuge received their usual butcher meat plus chickens and vegetables etc. for their Christmas Dinner. At New Year Hamilton Family Butchers donated steak pies for their New Year Dinner. They were also given sweets for kids and Christmas pies and cake etc.

Next month I hope to let you know how the foodbank started and how long we at St James have supported it by giving food, money and supplying volunteers. I will also report on how much it costs to keep the foodbank going on a weekly basis.

Cont/

To all our regular supporters, I thank you all on behalf of all the Trustees and Committee Members at Christ in Action and God Bless you all.

Moyra Smith
Outreach Convenor and Foodbank Trustee

The Concert Party

Exciting News, the Concert Party hope to hold a surprise fundraiser on the 18th March, more information will be given in next months Newsletter.

Joan Kirkland



Carpet Bowls Club

An Invitation is extended to join the members at their Annual Coffee Morning on:

**SATURDAY 29th FEBRUARY
FROM 10.00AM TILL 12 NOON
IN THE CHURCH HALL**

Tickets £2.00

Donations for the Baking Table would be appreciated.

Bill Mackie
Secretary



Ministry of Flowers

It's difficult to believe we are now into the month of February – How time flies.

Thank you to all who committed themselves to a certain date in the calendar over the past year.

The new 2020 Calendar is now in the Vestry with still a number of vacant dates. If you would like to add your name to a certain date – perhaps to commemorate a special event in your life please speak to Christine Fitzsimmons who is the Treasurer of the Flower Fund.

Thank you also to those who make donations via the Flower Fund Basket. All of this is very much appreciated and enables us to have 2 floral arrangements which are divided into 6 bunches after the service then distributed to those unable to attend Church, due to health problems or those who are deserving of flowers.

Please contact me if you know of someone by phoning 283613.

Lilian Kerr



Thank You

To the Congregation and Elders of St James, Thank you so much for the lovely flowers and cards on my special birthday.

Myra Bicket