



# The Proclaimer

The Magazine of Burnhead Parish Church

November 2019

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## Message From The Manse

As Christmas fast approaches we see the annual return of classic films like ‘Miracle of 34th St’ and classic quotes like:

‘God bless us one and all’ (Scrooge),

‘Every time a bell rings, an angel gets its wings’ (It’s a Wonderful Life),

‘Okay, this is extremely important, will you please tell Santa that instead of presents this year, I just want my family back’ (Home Alone),

‘If you look for it, I’ve a sneaky feeling that you’ll find that love is actually all around you’ (Love Actually),

‘It’s Christmas Eve. It’s the one night of the year when we all act a little nicer, we smile a little easier, we cheer a little more. For a couple of hours out of the whole year we are the people we always hoped we would be’ (Scrooged)

I have a journal in which I keep a note of quotes that either make me smile or make me think and I’d like to share some of the ones I have found that relate to Christian life.

‘The will of God will never take you, where the grace of God will not protect you.’

‘Every saint has a past – every sinner has a future.’

‘Do not ask the Lord to guide your footsteps if you are not willing to move your feet.’

‘Stop telling God how big your storm is, instead, tell the storm how big your God is.’

‘Being a Christian is not a badge you wear but a love you share.’

Catchy sayings like these can help us to think deeper about certain aspects of being an active, witnessing Christian – but in the same breath they can also challenge us personally.

The same can be said for many quotes from the Bible and I’d like to challenge you to let me know the words of scripture that make you smile or make you think. Please write them down on a piece of paper with your name on it, place them in an envelope and hand them in to the Vestry, post in my dookit in the Session Room or pass to an Elder to forward them on to me.

In the next few issues of the Proclaimer, I will share all the quotes I receive, including my own favourite words of scripture

Further on in this issue of the Proclaimer you will find my final report on my Study Leave in the mountains. I’d like to thank all the members of the congregation who have shared similar experiences with me and those who have said how much they have enjoyed the reports.

I have also included a poem that I hope will encourage you to be more active in your witness for Christ both in the Church and in your everyday life, it’s called ‘You Have a Part to Play.’

In finishing I’d like to wish you all a merry Christmas and a blessed New Year

Yours in Christ, Les Brunger (Minister).

## **You Have A Part To Play**

Each one of God's children has a special part to play,  
Whether it be great or small, we are needed every day.

If your part seems very little, with hardly any significance,  
Don't feel you can't offer much as it wouldn't make a difference.

Though you're tempted to give up and let another take your place,  
Remember, God gave you your gifts and you cannot be replaced.

And these gifts that God has given, he longs for you to share,  
You're just as important as anyone, so don't be in despair.

The only one who matters most is watching for your part,  
With much anticipation and excitement in his heart.

So do not disappoint him by not taking your cue,  
Though you think it unimportant, this part is made for you.

Don't let God walk away with a disappointed heart,  
Because you felt so unworthy of your very special part.

The part that we've been given isn't based on size at all,  
But rather on our willingness and the gifting of his call.

For each part is important to give the Spirit birth,  
So do your part with enthusiasm and know that you have worth.

The Master needs what you have to offer whether big or small,  
For he works through his children, so give your best, give your all.

## **God in the Mountains**

### **Biblical, Physical & Spiritual**

In September 2018, I took three weeks Study Leave and include in this magazine the fourth and final part of my journal. It was for me the first time I had taken Study Leave and it gave me a chance to spend some quality time with the Lord.

**Objective** - To examine why the mountains were so significant Biblically; to explore the benefits we can receive from meeting with God in the mountain today; and to discern where God wants me to take my ministry in the future.

### **Ben Nevis - 1,344m (4,409ft)**

#### **Day Fifteen - Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September**

Drove to caravan at Lochgoilhead; gentle walk late morning and swim in afternoon

#### **Day Sixteen - Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September**

Due to the predicted arrival of Storm Ali and the issuing of an amber warning for Wednesday, I decided to drive to Fort William and see if the morning rain had lifted enough so that I could climb Ben Nevis one day earlier than my original plan.

The weather forecast was for less rain in the afternoon and so I chose to attempt the climb, as it would have been foolhardy to attempt it on the Wednesday when the forecasted storm hit.

I drove to the Glen Nevis Visitor Centre and started up the tourist trail at 12 noon. Five to six hours was the estimated time for a regular hill walker to ascend and descend - I hoped for 6 to 7 hours allowing for my slower descent.

Visibility was poor but it was dry enough to start climbing without

waterproof trousers - I made good progress, but later realised that in all the rush and change of plans I had not prepared myself spiritually for meeting God on this highest of British mountains.

I may have been climbing solo, but I was not alone as there were others making their way up the mountain, most were well equipped, but some were obviously not. One couple I met seemed to be going very slowly, taking great care about foot placement. As I passed them on one of the many water soaked rocky parts, my foot slipped and I took a wee tumble. My weak shoulder jarred and the pain shot down my arm. As I got to my feet the couple asked if I was alright, which I confirmed was the case - gingerly moving my left arm I moved off to see the couple come to a decision to give up their ill-equipped ascent and start to go back down the mountain - I pressed on as the pain in my shoulder eased off.

Further up the mountain the wind grew stronger and it brought some driving rain with it - time to put on the waterproof trousers as visibility dropped to only a few metres.

Shortly thereafter I came upon a young couple from India - they had started their climb at 11:30am. After chatting for a bit they encouraged me to go on as they did not want to hold me back - I wished them well and wondered at their chances of reaching the summit with just an umbrella to stop the rain

As I continued to climb I began to meet people on their way down. At one point I asked a group of fit looking climbers if the lake was much further (there is a plateau about half way up which holds a body of water and was the point I had reached in a previous climb. It was also the point I had planned to stop for a break and refuel). The climbers pointed back down into the mist and said I had already passed the lake. I was pleased that I was higher up than I thought I was.

There are a lot of zigzags on the path and at the end of one, I found a wee bit of shelter from the wind and rain and managed to eat a sandwich and drink some water.

After my ten-minute rest I continued into the driving rain and wondered about the biblical heroes of the Old Testament, Abraham and Moses - what was their climb up the mountain like? Was it a casual walk or was it a challenge? Did they get soaked to the skin or were they blessed with sunshine?

As I continued up the second part of the climb I met many people going down - they had obviously set off much earlier than I and I wondered if they had been sensible to ignore the weather forecast.

The thought came to me that people often ignore the warnings they are given and this applies to warnings from God as much as warnings from weather forecasters.

As I neared the summit I reflected that there were no feelings of giving up on this climb compared to climbing Scafell Pike. Was this due to the fact that this was Scotland's mountain and my national pride would not let me consider giving up? Was it because I had come to realise that some paths to reach God are not easy to take, each step may be painful - but each step must be taken. As I climbed on, I said to myself one more step - keep saying and doing that until there are no more steps to take, for then you will have reached your destination.

By the time I reached the summit, 3:45pm, I was soaked, tired and cold. The wind was very blustery and visibility was reduced to just being able to see the outline of the next cairn on the trail (about 10 metres).



The summit brought many surprises - there were cairns all over the place - a war memorial which made me wonder about an Armistice service and confirmed in my mind that I would never apply to be the minister of Fort William if it meant climbing to the summit to lead the service.

There was also a remarkable shelter on the top of the mountain - a small metal door opened to reveal a place of sanctuary from the storm around me.

I was alone, there was no one else on the summit as I crawled into the shelter to escape the wind and rain. It was a small space, roughly two metres square and not enough height to stand up in. There was however a wee stool, which I gratefully sat on as I removed my soaking gloves and wrung out as much



water from them as I could manage. I ate the rest of my late lunch and drank some fizzy juice. I was too tired and cold to bother taking many photos, especially as the visibility was so poor.

I left the summit, thankful to have found the shelter and glad to be heading back down the mountain.

As I walked down, taking great care to protect my weak left knee, I suddenly realised that I had felt alone on the summit - in my exhausted state of mind, I had not thought about God's presence. As I thought this over in my mind I realised that I had not prayed very much before starting and indeed during my climb - hardly surprising then, that I was not prepared spiritually to meet God on the top of the mountain. I realised that all the things I had been praying about previously, the questions I had about my continued ministry at Burnhead Church and the direction God wanted me to take that

congregation all came down to me, and my personal relationship with God - nothing could be done unless that was right.

I paused in my thoughts and prayed from my heart to God, asking for his forgiveness for all my shortcomings and my sins, asking for his mercy and for his guidance.

A few steps later out of the mist came this bird, the first sign of life I had seen in over an hour and a half. It soared on the wind a few paces in front of me - then floated down the path before disappearing into the clouds.



The picture to the left is not a photo of the bird I saw, but one I created to give an idea of what I saw.

Many people will call this a coincidence but I believe that people of faith will call it a God-incidence. For me, that was what it was. Out of the mist God sent me a sign.

If you talk to any mountaineer they will tell you how busy the summit of popular mountains can be (especially Ben Nevis), so for me to be alone on the summit for ninety minutes was remarkable (something I later came to appreciate).

As I continued down the mountain, taking one careful step at a time, I met a couple of athletic guys jogging up. I marvelled at their fitness and recalled my youth when I took part in cross-country mountaineering. We would be based at the Scout Activity Centre at Lochgoilhead and over the course of a weekend we would, in pairs, compete in a race around the local mountain peaks. With rose tinted glasses I recall myself running across the mountaintops, but in reality I remember trying to keep up with my friend Alasdair Beveridge - he was the racehorse - I was more of a carthorse - the plodder who gets there in the end.



I thought about the challenges facing Burnhead Church over the next 5 years or so. I want this congregation prepared to face the future - this means releasing control and empowering them. As we journey into the unknown of Unitary Constitution I appreciate that this will take time - small steps - this is not a sprint race, this is a marathon.

As I neared the base of the mountain, I said goodbye to Ben Nevis, thinking in my mind that this was farewell, not just to this mountain but to all mountains. I could not foresee the desire to go through these painful descents again.

Reached car park at 6.45pm - hope the hotel room has a bath.

### **Day Seventeen - Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

Spent the day in hotel, taking advantage of the leisure pool to relax while outside Storm Ali lashed down.

### **Day Eighteen - Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September**

Drove to Lochgoilhead - carefully (due to aftermath of storm Ali)

### **Day Nineteen - Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September**

Rest and reflection, light walking and swim

### **Day Twenty - Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

Rest, reflection and studying 'Canoeing in the Mountains'

### **Day Twenty One - Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September**

Drove home

## God In The Mountains - Reflections

To all parish ministers who find themselves without an idea for Sunday, take a walk up a mountain - a flood of analogies will descend upon you

Is God to be found in the mountains? Of course he is. But before you lift your eyes to the hills, be prepared for what might happen. Many people meet God in the mountains - seeking God is something quite different - *"You will seek me and find me when you seek for me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord* (Jeremiah 29: 13-14)

The absence of noisy distractions can help our openness to listen to God's still small voice. *"Be still and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10)

Tod Bolsinger's book, 'Canoeing in the Mountains' would be very useful for any church facing change, especially for its leadership. Although the book assumes you know American history, there are many useful quotations that translate to today. E.g. *"Leadership into uncharted territory requires and results in transformation of the whole organisation, starting with the leaders. If we want the organisations and communities we serve to thrive, focus on what God needs to do in you, change in you, makeover in you so he can use you in his mission. Focus on how you need to grow in technical competence, relational congruence and adaptive capacity, and especially focus on what you need to leave behind, let go and die so your church can become more and more effective at fulfilling its part in God's mission ... keep your focus on being transformed into the leader God can use to transform his people for his mission."*



## Pre-5 Praise

It' s a joy! Every Tuesday, I get to spend the morning with some fantastic children, who, (nearly always,) have a smile on their faces as we spend time, singing, playing, creating, etc., all in the name of Jesus!

We have recently learned of the wise and foolish men building their houses, of Jesus walking on water and how He tells us to share.

By the time you read this article we will be preparing for Christmas. We will use our parachute whilst singing *Away In A Manger* and hopefully Santa will come to our party.

If you know of any child who would like to join us they will be made most welcome. We meet 10-11.30am, Tuesday mornings, (term time).

Can I take this opportunity to thank all the ladies of our congregation who turn up every week to help set & clear up, do the arts and crafts, make the tea/coffee etc., the list is endless. Without you the group just wouldn't exist. Thank you!

Carol Brunger



Lord God, only you can see into my heart and know that under all the busyness of my life, there is a deep longing to make this Advent one that welcomes you more deeply into my life.

My heart desires the warmth of your love and my mind searches for your Light in the midst of the darkness.

Help me to be a peacemaker this Advent and to give special love to those who disagree with me.

Give me strength and courage to forgive those who have hurt me.

Help me to free my heart from the prison of my anger and hurt.

All this I ask in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

## SONHOUSE REPORT

Our new session started back in August when we welcomed a couple of wee ones who moved up from the crèche.

The future of Burnhead Church relies on the children of today but sadly our numbers are down with attendance varying between 6 & 16 each week. With so much competition (football, dancing, sleep-overs, etc.) we are now following the trend of so many other Sunday Schools. More & more children are growing up never hearing the wonderful stories in the Bible, learning of God's love for them or even knowing who Jesus is!! Seeds need to be sown early to allow them to take root & grow strong & healthy. I hope & pray that with your help we can turn this trend around. If you know anyone age 3 years or over why not invite them along to join us and learn about God in a fun way through stories, quizzes, crafts, songs & games.

Recently we re-vamped one of our SonHouse display boards. As you can see from the photo the children have created a masterpiece!!



We get regular updates on Archie, our sponsored guide dog. His training is going well & he takes each new challenge in his stride.



Our nativity is on Sunday 15th December with rehearsals starting shortly. It would be great to see as many of you as possible come along and support the children on this day.

The day before is our Christmas party where we all have a great time. The children look forward to the games, food, drinks and of course the special guest who makes an appearance at the end.

After the nativity service we shall be on holiday for 3 Sundays and will start back on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

Once again many thanks to the parents, grandparents and guardians who bring along the children each week – without you we wouldn't have a SonHouse

We would like to wish each one of you many blessings at Christmas and throughout the New Year.

God Bless

Anne Morton



**Burnhead SonHouse**

we do singing, quizzes

Bible stories and games

it starts at 11am until 12noon

Come and join the fun

**let's go!**

**All children ages 3-11 are welcome**

Come along whenever you can - we'd love to see you - Sundays at 11am

Contact: Anne Morton (Phone: 01698 815981 Mobile: 07443416017) or Email: [annemorton2@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:annemorton2@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Burnhead Parish Church**  
92-94 Laburnum Road, Viewpark, Uddingston [www.burnheadchurch.com](http://www.burnheadchurch.com)

## **THE GIRLS' BRIGADE**

The numbers have remained steady in the Girls' Brigade from the start of the session with us averaging just under 30 girls throughout the different sections and our usual officers / helpers.

It's great to have Fiona back with us from working abroad.

We have had our fancy dress party, with lots of fantastic costumes and a great time was had by all.

Our Brigaders had a DVD night where they watched "Edward Scissorhands" while the rest of the girls had their party.

We have already attended the Dedication Service and will be attending The Remembrance Day Service, and as always The Family Service.

Daniella, Alana and Stephanie have all completed their Trainee Leadership during the summer, so we look forward to working with them within the company.

We will be putting on our own version of "The Nativity" on Wednesday 27th November, so please come along and support us. The girls have been practising really hard and they are doing really well, so please join us on the night if you can.

The nativity will then lead onto our own Christmas activities which will include parties, cinema visits, pantomime etc., so as always a busy time of the year for us.

We will also support the church at their Christmas Fayre by providing the bottle stall – every ticket a winner so well worth a visit!

Please continue to keep our company in your prayers – our numbers are healthy at the moment and we have a good bunch of girls – please pray that the girls and officers continue to attend and enjoy what they are learning.

Michelle Miller

Captain

## **THE GRADY MEMORIAL GARDEN**

Well here we are again, approaching the end of another year and what a year it has been. Time seems to have flown past despite all the rain we've had.

It has been a strange year in the garden. Some plants have flourished, especially the fruit bearing trees. I don't remember having to sweep up so many beechnuts, hazelnuts or acorns. Other plants just didn't do well at all. Then there was the army of slugs and snails that seemed never ending no matter what I tried. It was a constant war and I think they won a few rounds! We also had at least half a dozen different varieties of wild mushrooms which I felt guilty at having to pick them and put them in the bin. Some wee animal had been nibbling at them and was probably disappointed to find them all gone. Not to worry, they were back the next day. Hope none of them were the much sought after Chanterelles.

When the month of September started it was like someone had flicked a switch and the leaves on one of the big trees started to fall. So, hey ho, here we go again. I always feel sad when the leaves on the trees start to change colour, which creates a wondrous sight and then fall leaving everything so bare. Then I remember, spring is never far away, when the shoots of the early flowering bulbs start to show. No matter how hard the ground is, they fight their way through. That always amazes me, life regenerating, a miracle but not everyone realises that.

Fortunately there is a lot of evergreen shrubs in the garden to keep some colour in it during the winter.

Two new water taps were installed this year. One outside the kitchen on the manse drive and the other in the memorial garden outside the extension. They may not have been used very often this year but when I did, I was really grateful they were there.

Thanks once again to those who give me donations towards the upkeep of the garden. There are many unseen expenses and because of these donations I don't need to ask the treasurer for money. I like to think I have put your gifts to good use.

ROLL ON SPRINGTIME!

*Ann Russell*

## **WELCOME TEAM**

The Welcome Team continue in their work to improve on how we at Burnhead can welcome people who come here to worship and try to make feel they are among friends.

The Welcome Leaflets have been completed and are now being used. The one intended to welcome people who move into a new house in our community has been delivered to all the new houses occupied at the Cruden Development at Laburnum Lea and as the remaining houses are occupied they will receive one. The Visitors Leaflet is now handed out to visitors to our church.

The Notice & Information Board has been erected and in use. Anyone who wishes to have a notice displayed should contact either Les Brunger, David Green or myself.

Members of the Welcome Team have been on duty at three recent Baptisms providing additional support and providing assistance when required to our guests.

The Welcome Team have compiled a list of ideas/suggestions for making our church more appealing and welcoming, building on the good work we as a congregation do at the moment. Hopefully, the congregation will support our commitment and work when these ideas / suggestions are brought forward. They will be introduced at appropriate times in the coming months.

David Combe  
Welcome Team Convenor

## **PROPERTY**

The property is in good order. The disabled toilets are being upgraded from 4th November 2019 so all going well, by the time you read this they should be completed.

Douglas Pearson  
Property Convenor



## SOCIAL & WELLBEING TEAM

On Sunday 22nd September we had our Soup & Sandwiches in the Church Hall in aid of the Macmillan Nurses charity where a total of £351.50 was raised. Thank you to everyone who attended and donated to this great cause. A massive thank you to everyone in the Social Team who made the soup, sandwiches and helped make sure the day went well without any hitches.

The next big thing on the agenda is the Christmas Fayre on Saturday 16th November. At time of writing, we are still looking for volunteers for several of the stalls and the tea-room, but I'm sure that will all be sorted on the day when the people at Burnhead pull together as always to make this such a special day for the Church and the Community - I look forward to seeing you all there. A special guest has been known to make an appearance at the Fayre so all being well with the weather and his transport, I'm sure he will do his best to join us again this year... if you've all been really good!!

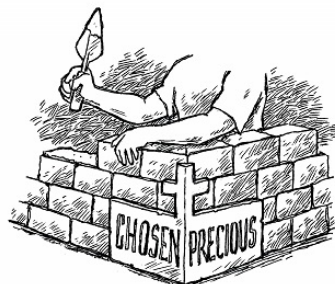
On a personal note, I'd like to say a big thank you to the members of the Social Team, who have worked so hard this year to bring something different to the members and friends of Burnhead Church and helped everyone get to know one another a little bit better.

We have a few things in mind for next year and as soon as we get them arranged, we will let you know and hopefully you will be able to join us in Fellowship and Worship of The Lord.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

God Bless

Liz Lacey  
Social Team Co-ordinator



## Financial Report

### **July 2019**

Income: £2908.87                      Expenditure: £4171.23                      Deficit: £1262.36

We had the ministers expenses of £371.40 this is usually a quarterly bill covering travel expenses.

Apart from that it was the usual monthly bills of which the biggest is our Ministry and Mission of £3215.20. This is paid over 10 months.

### **August 2019**

Income: £3554.50.                      Expenditure: £5217.75                      Deficit: £1663.25

The extraordinary expenses for August were a new Hoover which was £119 we had expenses of £459.64 for the summer club. Crafts tee shirts, juice and carpet protector were purchased for this. We are given a reduction of £1000 on our ministry and mission to cover these expenses.

We had gas and electricity of £647.95 for the last quarter.

Anything else was just the usual monthly expenses.

### **September 2019**

Income: £4126.50                      Expenditure: £5266.72                      Deficit: £1140.21

We had quite a few extra expenses this month namely a new dishwasher for the manse at a cost of £369 there was also a cooker repair of o£100. The annual fire extinguisher check cost £204 and our music licence was £436.60.

Another couple of bills for the summer club of £118.67.

Our deficit for the year to date is £4540.06

We haven't yet received our rebate from HMRC for gift aid. We are now due 6 months rebate so this should reduce our deficit a bit.

We only have another one payment to Ministry and Mission so that makes for less expense in November and December 😊

Retiral offerings were £59 to St Andrews Hospice in August and £59 to Mary's Meals in September. There was no retiral offering in July.

*Margaret Muir*  
*Treasurer*

*giftaid it*

If you are a UK taxpayer, Gift Aid offers a simple way to increase the value of your gift to charity by allowing the charity to reclaim the tax on your gift. Currently, charities are able to claim an additional 25p from every £1 donated by UK Tax Payers.

To qualify for Gift Aid the amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) must at least equal the amount of tax that all the charities that you donate to will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year. Other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

You can calculate the amount of tax the charity will reclaim by multiplying the amount you give by 20/80 (20% being the basic rate of tax).

Uddingston Burnhead Parish Church Gift Aid Report 2018/19...

• Contributions	£29,141.42
• Tax Recovered	£ 7,285.33

Remember, the amount of tax to be reclaimed must not exceed the amount of tax paid by you.

The following is an example of how to calculate the amount you are entitled to Gift Aid:

Donations made by you on which Gift Aid has been claimed...

• Church Offerings	£520.00
• Chirstmas Appeal	£ 30.00
• Other Charities	£ 50.00
• Total	<u>£600.00</u>

Income Tax Paid By You...

• PAYE (say)	£300.00
• Other	£ 15.00
• Total	<u>£315.00</u>

Tax Recovered By Charities...

• Church	£550 x 25%	£137.50
• Other	£050 x 25%	£ 12.50
• Total		<u>£150.00</u>

Therefore, Income Tax Paid is more than Tax Recovered ✓

***For more information, please speak to David Green, our Gift Aid Convener.***

*And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus*

*(Philippians 4:19)*

At the age of 5, I could not wait for Christmas. “What would you like Santa to bring you?” The answer was simple, “A bride doll.” No matter how often and no matter who did the asking the answer remained the same, “A bride doll.” I had no desire for anything else.

My mother, standing by my side and listening to my answer, would smile. Her smile did not betray for one second the sadness and anxiety she felt deep within her heart. Watching the beaming face of her youngest child as she told one and all that, this Christmas, she would be getting a bride doll became hard to bear. How could she make this happen?

With little money and with 4 other children, who also deserved a happy Christmas, an expensive bride doll was out of the question. The hope and child-like faith she saw in her daughter’s eyes cut her to the bone. The nearer it came to Christmas, the heavier her heart felt. She started rehearsing what she would say to soften the blow of disappointment when no doll appeared among the presents. Faith had always played a key role in her life but a bride doll somehow seemed impossible.

Two days before Christmas the local Brethern church held a Christmas party for the neighbourhood children. They provided fun, food, singing, games and, of course, a visit from Santa. Every child received a present. I carried mine home with great care. I placed it under the small tree ready to be opened on Christmas morning.

Christmas morning came and we opened our gifts. I only have memory of one – the one from Santa given to me at the church party. When I opened it, my eyes lit up, my heart sang and I was the happiest girl in the world. I held in my hands the most beautiful bride doll ever. Six inches tall, with blue eyes and blonde hair. She wore a white brocade dress and a net veil. A painted band with a sparkle in the middle adorned the ring finger on her left hand.

I never noticed the tears of thanksgiving trickling down my mother’s face. Years later as an adult I learned her side of the story. That Christmas, my mother knew for sure that God had met her needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.

God has no favourites. His promises belong to **all** His children. He is Jehovah Jireh, our Provider.

*From: ‘Journey to the Manager with St Patrick & Friends –  
A 6 week Celtic Advent Devotional’ by Jean McLachlan Hess  
Thank you to Isabel Oswald for submitting this article.*

## Twelve Hours of Advent Prayer

On Saturday the 30th of November, the prayer team will be hosting 'Twelve Hours of Advent Prayer'. An opportunity for us all to put God first this Christmas.

In the McFarlane Prayer Room, between the hours of 9am until 9pm, as a member of our congregation, (individually or with a friend,) you will have the opportunity to book a half hour session in which to use some or all of the 12 prayer stations provided to spend time in conversation with our Lord.

From Sunday the 17th of November, a sheet will be made available for you to book your session, this will be situated on the table in the vestibule.

If you can't manage to participate on the 30th or simply want to enjoy the experience further, the prayer room will be open for use every, Tuesday 10:00am -11:30am, Wednesday 10:00am – 11:30am and Thursday 10:00am – 10:00pm until Christmas.

*The Prayer Team*



## The Narrow Gate

*Jesus, Thy road is narrow  
A path without a single bend,  
But with our prayer and bible reading,  
We drive with Jesus as our friend.*

*The wide roads are so fast and busy  
We have no time to think of God.  
For as we take the fastest highway,  
We miss the path our Saviour trod.*

*The narrow road that goes to Heaven,  
The straight path that leads to Him.  
The narrow gate we all must enter,  
Where praise to Him we ever sing.*

*So as we travel through our lifetime,  
Our Saviour safely guards our way.  
We thank Him for His love and kindness,  
That leads us to Eternal day.*

*The Narrow Gate was written by Gordon Dungey of Bothwell and taken from "Thoughts", a book of poems in aid of "Tak Tent" Cancer Support Group, Scotland.*

*Thank you to Molly Russell for submitting this poem..*

## The Guild

Although there are only eight members, the Guild continues to meet in the Church Extension on Monday nights from 7:30pm to 9:00pm. In our meetings we worship together, listen to a speaker and have fellowship over a cup of tea and a scone (often made by Ann).

This year we continue our three year theme 'One Journey – Many Roads'. This second year concentrates on 'Companions on the Road'. We hear of some of the Biblical journeys like Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, Ruth and Naomi, Mary and Joseph, Paul and Barnabus, Jesus and his disciples. We learn about companionship with people and especially with Jesus and God. The Guild members seek to share companionship within the Guild, the Church and our neighbourhood.

At the time of writing we have enjoyed fellowship with Bellshill Central Guild. We attended a joint communion service in Bellshill Central Church which was mostly ably led by their minister the Rev de Beer. After the service we enjoyed refreshments in their hall. Some folk loved the meringues! I'm told they were to die for! A fortnight later we attended Bellshill Central's Guild Guest Night. We were highly delighted with the entertainment provided by the musical group 'Octave'. Again, we enjoyed a lovely tea and more meringues!

My thanks to Ann Russell and Moira Stevenson for taking us to these meetings in their cars, it was much appreciated.

We have had two very interesting speakers. Firstly we heard Susan McAuley talk about the work of Viewpark Foodbank. It was good to hear of the fine work that group does but very sad to know that its really needed in this area.

Secondly we heard Charanne Fenn tell us of the Women's Shed in Viewpark Gardens where women can go and find companionship and try out different crafts including knitting, sewing, woodwork etc. Again this organisation seeks to help the lonely people who often have gone through separation, divorce, trauma, ill-health. Charanne and her companion,

Maureen had brought along some samples which were for sale.

The Big Shed is open on Wednesdays. It costs £1.50 per day. Tea and a listening ear are always available. It's uplifting to hear of good things happening near us.

As I write, we're looking forward to our own Guest Night on the 11<sup>th</sup> November with the singing group which meets on Monday nights in the Big Hall. Please come along and support us. There is no charge that night. We plan to have our Christmas meal in the Redstones Hotel before Christmas itself.

We thank Ann Russell, our Treasurer for looking after our finances. Thank you also to the ladies who provide and serve the teas. Lastly a big thank you to all the ladies for their faithful attendance and help. May we be good companions to each other as we journey on the Christian Road. With Christ before us, Christ behind us we have the perfect companion to encourage and sustain us.

Come and find out what we do!

S Roy

## Reflections Service

A short service takes place most Thursday mornings in the Jubilee Hall at 9:30am. This service is open to anyone who wishes to enjoy fellowship with others, for a short time. Tea and biscuits are served afterwards.

At this service prayers are said for the sick, lonely and all in need of spiritual comfort or healing. A small, but faithful group come each Thursday. However all are welcome, even if it's just to find out what happens. May the Lord bless, encourage and uplift all who attend lending their support to one another.

*"Where two or three are met together in the name of Jesus,  
the Lord is present."*

## BURNHEAD PARISH CHURCH – A BRIEF HISTORY

### PART THREE

Following the departure of Rev. Gavin McFadyen Hamilton Presbytery appointed Rev. John Cowan, minister at Whifflet Parish Church, Coatbridge as interim moderator. As with previous interim moderators Mr Cowan provided great support to the Kirk Session and congregation. It took the Church Extension Committee almost 2 years to fill the vacancy.

Rev. James M Grady was appointed minister to Burnhead in 1973. He had previously been minister at Fauldhouse Parish Church, West Lothian. The 3 previous ministries had lasted a total of 15 years. Jim Grady's ministry was about to last 18 years.



*Rev. Jim Grady – Minister at  
Burnhead from 1973 to 1991*

Mr Grady was born in Glasgow and brought up in Medlock Street – ‘a stone's throw’ from a very well known football stadium. He was educated at Bellahouston Academy and had a particular interest in sport. He won the Glasgow schools high jump championship and played for the Glasgow schools cup winning football team - very talented in sport.

On leaving school Jim had various jobs and had a great time working as a ‘bus conductor’. Not a job that seems to exist today.

He made a decision to serve his Lord and Master and undertook some difficult studies to eventually become qualified for the ministry of the Church of Scotland. He was an assistant in King's Park Church, Glasgow. His first charge was in West Lothian before being appointed to Burnhead.

As indicated in Part One of this ‘Brief History’ a Church Extension church is required to repay a percentage of the total cost of the



buildings. When this is achieved the church is granted 'Full Status'. This could be described as 'independence' and creates new situations. The procedure is that the church attends a meeting of the General Assembly in Edinburgh and makes a formal application to be granted 'Full Status'. The minister and session clerk addressed a very full General Assembly in May 1977 and were unanimously granted 'Full Status'. We were accompanied by an elder, Andrew Armitage. Three very happy people returned to Viewpark from Edinburgh on that day. A significant event in the Kirk Session took place in December 1976. Mrs Nancy Hill became a member of the Kirk Session. Nancy had been ordained to the eldership when a member of Easterhouse Church, Glasgow. Moving to Viewpark with husband Tommy, they joined Burnhead with Nancy being the first female elder in Hamilton Presbytery. Changed days now!

The demands on a minister in a Church Extension are many and different. In a discussion with Mr Grady I discovered he had recently conducted 10 funerals in 14 days. He admitted to being physically and mentally exhausted. To assist ministers a deaconess was allocated to the church. From 1987 first Mary Anderson and then Lorraine McKirdy provided great help and support to the minister and congregation.

A member of the congregation, who was an alcoholic, made an approach to start a branch of AA in the church premises. This was very quickly granted. Many years later AA and Al Anon meet weekly in the church extension and is a great example of the church serving the community.

The start of AA meetings created a severe space problem. To resolve the situation it was decided to build an extension to the hall. This was an 'act of faith' since the financial situation was not too healthy. However, thanks to the generosity of the congregation and many members of the community the extension was built and provides much more space to the organisations.

Some of the highlights in these times were the pantomimes. There were highly popular and involved all age groups in the church. The young to the old. There are so many happy memories with every performance being a 'sell out'. Edith Ferguson was music director of The Pantos and a high standard was achieved. In one scene in

'Cinderella' the minister and session clerk played the 'ugly sisters'. Some thought they were 'type cast'. One great memory, Rev. Dave Hall, complete with his guitar, dancing across the stage singing 'happy days are here again' – really happy days at the Panto.

On 24<sup>th</sup> September 1986 the much beloved wife of Mr Grady, June, passed away after a lengthy illness. June was a young, lovely woman whose passing caused great grief and sadness within her family, friends, the whole congregation and the wider community of Viewpark.

June's funeral service was held in Burnhead. The service was conducted by Rev George Barr, Minister at Viewpark Church.

Jill and Stewart Grady are 'eternally grateful' for all the love, compassion and support shown to them by members of the congregation during their mother's illness and after her passing.

Mr Grady continued his ministry as a friend and counsellor to his congregation and community. He had re-married to Mrs Janette Wallace from Dumfries. Sadly Jim was diagnosed with a terminal illness and retired from the ministry. It was the end of a quite remarkable and outstanding 19 years service to his Lord and Master. He passed away in a Glasgow Hospital.

On 6<sup>th</sup> January 1994 Mr Grady's funeral service in Burnhead was conducted by his friend Rev Martin Johnson, Minister at Orbiston Church, Bellshill.

Bill Wood - Former Session Clerk



*The Jim Grady Memorial Garden was opened in 2013 – present during the opening were pictured, Councillor Jim McCabe, Stewart Grady, Jill Radigan (née Grady), Rev Les Brunger and the congregation of Burnhead Church.*

## **The Crochet Club**

Congratulations to the Crochet Club which will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

This friendly club meets in the Church Extension on Wednesday mornings from 9:30am – 11:30am.

The club was started by one of our elders, Mrs Agnes Wood. Those who were beginners soon learned from Agnes' tutoring. She also encouraged Special Needs Ladies with their Companions to join in aswell. Despite a few ups and downs the group has continued. In fact, the number attending has grown. The ladies who are more gifted share their expertise with those who are learning or are struggling. It can be at times a noisy but happy group where friendships are made.

Our thanks to our Treasurer, Mrs Louise Morrison for looking after our funds and arranging our meals. This is a community group which thanks Burnhead Church for allowing us to meet in their premises. We're sure Agnes would be glad she had the vision to start this club. May the Lord bless us as we go into the future together.



### **GIVE ME A BREAK**

An atheist was spending a quiet day fishing when suddenly his boat was attacked by the Loch Ness monster. In one easy flip, the beast tossed him and his boat high into the air. Then it opened its mouth to swallow both.

As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out, 'Oh, my God! Help me!'

At once, the ferocious attack scene froze in place, and as the atheist hung in mid-air, a booming voice came down from the clouds, 'I thought you didn't believe in Me!'

Come on God, give me a break!!' the man pleaded. 'Two minutes ago I didn't believe in the Loch Ness monster either!'

### **BEST INTENTIONS**

After the church service a little boy told the pastor, 'When I grow up, I'm going to give you some money.' 'Well, thank you,' the pastor replied, 'but why?' 'Because my daddy says you're one of the poorest preachers we've ever had.'

## **Love Actually**

Every Boxing Day people across the land resolve that next Christmas will be different. In January, when the bills arrive, they promise that next Christmas will be simpler, less indulgent and cheaper. According to Money Supermarket, almost 10% of people will still be paying for Christmas well into next year. Perhaps next year, by refusing to conform to every tradition and everyone's expectations, we will recapture the wonder, the magic and the awe of Christmas and 'remember what it's all about'.

November magazines include articles on how to approach Christmas – 'Twenty Six Ways to Simplify Christmas'; or 'Five Reasons Why I'm Not Simplifying Christmas'. There are some radical work-saving, stress-busting, money-saving strategies out there. One woman recommends leaving the Christmas tree fully decorated all year. Her's has been in the corner of the sitting room, festooned in tinsel, baubles, lights and all, for *sixteen* years. It's true. For most of the year it is wrapped in sheets with the reminder, 'Do not open until December'.

Perhaps, after all, even on Christmas Day, reflecting on how simple or how lavish it has been is to miss the point. Maybe, as we approach Christmas, we do not need a to-do-list and a credit card so much as a Grinch-like revelation:

'Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!

What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store?

What if Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more!

(Dr Seuss, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*)

A German proverb goes: 'The main thing is that the main thing remains the main thing'. That seems a pretty good definition of

simplicity to me: recognising the extraneous and superfluous for what it is and focusing on 'the main thing'. Authentic simplicity has to be an inward reality before it bears the fruit of an outward lifestyle. Attempts to create the outer beauty without the inner actuality are doomed to legalism and frustration.

'The main thing' is to recognise the significance of that first Christmas, the Nativity. The birth of Jesus Christ was marked by astonishing simplicity. The highpoint of history, the climax of eternity, was not marked with grandeur, pomp and pageant. Rather, a pregnant teenager had no option but to deliver her child in the stark and smelly surroundings of a stable, the only warmth provided by the body heat of sheltering animals. The first visitors were shepherds, who were considered the lowest of the low. Jesus, the Bible tells us, did not come with majesty and opulence, but 'full of grace and truth', to reveal God – a God who is love – and to bridge the gap between us and that lavishly loving God.

Christmas is ultimately about love... actually. As Christina Rossetti's carol puts it, 'Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine; Love was born at Christmas.' Perhaps, as we make our plans, we should be less concerned with how simple or extravagant our Christmas will be. Perhaps the touchstone of all that we do should be love: and how we respond to the extravagant love of God and how we love those around us.



## **Confession of Faith**

*"If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9*

Did you ever wonder what made the early Christians willing to confess their faith in Jesus even when it brought persecution and death? Some Christians in the first century were stoned to death. Others were crucified. Still others were thrown to the lions. Yet they died praising Jesus, confessing him as their Lord and Saviour.

In the centuries that followed, believers in Jesus continued preaching and teaching about him even at the threat of physical harm. One such man was Martin Luther who lived in Germany back in the 1500s. Luther boldly preached and taught about Jesus and became one of the most prolific writers about the Christian faith who has ever lived. When the authorities pressured him to take back what he had written, Luther firmly replied, "Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen!" As a result, he was labeled an outlaw and it was open season for anyone who wanted to take his life.

How could Luther and many other Christians confess their faith so boldly even at the threat of physical harm and death? Because they knew that something much better was waiting for them after this life. They knew that Jesus died for their sins and rose from the dead. Jesus' resurrection meant that God accepted his sacrifice for their sins and they too would rise to live forever in heaven.

Christians still have this hope today. We know this life is temporary. Nothing in this life is going to last. It will all eventually decay and perish. But those who trust in Jesus and confess him as their Lord and Savior will enjoy a perfect life with him that will never end. This changes the perspective and priorities of believers in Jesus. Confident in their eternal salvation through Jesus, Christians confess their faith in the Lord Jesus even to the point of death.

Come worship together this Christmas season and learn more about what confessing Christians throughout the ages have been willing to die for. Jesus is your Saviour who came into this world to die and rise again so that you might live with him forever.

## **Christmas Services**

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December:

- 11:00 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent Service of Worship & Holy Communion
- 18:30 – Evening Service of Worship & Holy Communion
- 19:00 – Advent Reflections

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December

- 11:00 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent Service
- 19:00 – Carol Party

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December

- 11:00 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent & SonHouse Nativity Service

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

- 11:00 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent Service of Worship

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December

- 18:30 – Christmas Eve Family Service of Worship
- 23:30 – Watchnight Service

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December

- 11:00 – Christmas Day Family Gift Service

## **Week to Week at Burnhead**

- Sunday: 11:00 – Service of Worship  
18:30 – Communion Service (*1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month*)  
11:00 – SonHouse, Bible Class & Crèche  
19:15 – Youth Fellowship  
13:00 – AA  
19:00 – AA
- Monday: 19:30 – Women's Guild  
19:30 – Choir
- Tuesday: 10:00 – Pre 5 Praise (*During School Term Time*)  
13:30 – Recycled Teenagers (*1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month*)
- Wednesday: 09:30 – Crochet Club (*till 11:30*)  
10:00 – Vestry Hour (*till 11:00*)  
10:00 – Citizens Advice Bureau (*till 13:00*)  
13:00 – AA  
18:30 – Girls' Brigade
- Thursday: 09:30 – Reflections Service  
11:00 – Rock Café (*till 14:00*)  
19:00 – Girl Guides  
19:00 – Al Anon  
19:15 – Bible Study
- Saturday: 09:30 – Mens' Breakfast (*2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month*)  
19:00 – AA

Hall lets are available for birthday parties, etc. Please contact Rev Les Brunger (01698 813716) or Douglas Pearson (07480 928597) for more information.



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The Proclaimer is the magazine of  
Uddingston Burnhead Parish Church, 92-94 Laburnum Road, Viewpark, Uddingston, Glasgow, G71 5DB.  
Scottish Charity No. SC010039  
Church Website: [www.burnheadchurch.com](http://www.burnheadchurch.com)

