

THE BRIDGE

Magazine of Ellon Parish Church



FEBRUARY
M A R C H
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Our Vision

Vision

In response to the love of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) we seek to be a people of meaningful faith, meaningful community and meaningful witness. *Matthew 22:34-40*

What it means

Meaningful Faith



Recognising our **identity** as the **family of God**, we worship God with **all** our heart, **all** our soul, **all** our mind and **all** our strength.

Meaningful Community



Managing our **resources**, using our **gifts in service** and **nurturing** our **relationship** with God and each other in **love** and **humility**.

Meaningful Witness



Teaching what **Jesus** commanded, **going** where **Jesus** tells us to go and **loving all our neighbours** in our church, parish, country and world.



ELLON PARISH
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

meaningful faith | meaningful community | meaningful witness

WORSHIP @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

ELLON PARISH CHURCH

Family Worship | 10am | Sunday | Fellowship afterwards including Fairtrade Tea & Coffee and butteries.

SLAINS KIRK OF ELLON PARISH CHURCH

Family Worship | 11:15am | 1st & 3rd Sunday | Fellowship before including Fairtrade Tea & Coffee and home bakes. | Collieston Community Centre

CONNECT

Contemporary Worship | 7pm | 1st & 3rd Sunday | video | discussion | praise band | Fairtrade filter coffee, tea and home bakes throughout.

CHILDREN @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

TWINKLE STARS

0 years – pre-school children | 10am | Sunday | games | songs | free play | snack

STAR SQUAD (SUNDAY EDITION)

Primary School aged children | 10am | Sunday | games | songs | crafts | puzzles | story | fun | friendship

STAR SQUAD (WEDNESDAY EDITION) (TERM TIME)

Primary School aged children | 3:30pm – 4:30pm | Wednesday | games | songs | craft | Bible story | snack | fun | friendship | Kirk Centre

CARDBOARD CAFÉ

Babies, toddlers, parents, carers | 9:30am – 11:30am | Friday | snacks | story | crafts | messy play | Kirk Centre

Call 01358 725690 for more info.

All leaders and helpers for our children's work have been approved by the Kirk Session and are PVG checked.

YOUTH @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

GSUNDAY

S1 – S6 | 7pm | Sunday | Kirk Centre | games | chat | friendship | fun

Call 01358 725690 for more info.

All leaders and helpers for our youth work have been approved by the Kirk Session and are PVG checked.

PRAYER @ ELLON PARISH CHURCH

FRIDAY MORNING PRAYER

Alternate Fridays | 7:15am | Ellon Parish Church | worship | liturgy | prayer
| all welcome | Fairtrade tea & coffee

SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER

Sunday | 9:45am | Ellon Parish Church | prayer for those leading the service
| all welcome to join in this prayer time

PRAYER BOX

Always available | Under the sign outside Ellon Parish Church building | drop a note in the box for someone or something you'd like the church to pray for | confidentiality is always respected

PERSONAL & PASTORAL PRAYER

If you or a loved one, or someone you know, would like pastoral or prayer support we will be delighted to offer this either through prayer on a Sunday morning, or by visiting your or their home to offer support. Please speak to Alastair, your elder or Edith in the Kirk Centre Office. Confidentiality is always respected.

CHURCH TRANSPORT

If you cannot get to church because of lack of transport, the BB CHURCH BUS could take you there and back.

For more details contact **Anne Milne** (01358 720040)

Please don't forget to let Anne know if you are NOT requiring transport on any one or more Sundays. Thank you.



MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER

Ellon Parish Church minister **Rev Alastair Bruce** muses about good teamwork and having our mistakes rubbed out.



When I had just graduated from University I got a job working as an Education Welfare Officer.

The essence of the job was to help families who for one reason or another were finding it hard to get their children to go to school. Sometimes this meant working directly with the young person and at other times it involved work more closely with the family. The majority of my time was based in Wester Hailes, and area of urban deprivation on the west side of Edinburgh.

Once the young person was referred (mainly through the Guidance staff in the school) it was my job to go out and meet with the family, and so it involved quite a lot of *cold calling*. So I would stand alone on a doorstep with my diary in hand and hope that the person answering the door was friendly, not too large and fully dressed!

As time went on I was more and more aware of the inherent danger of the situation - I was there on my own with little or no back up, not even a mobile phone.

In considering this recently it seemed to me that 2000 years ago a man called Jesus had a better understanding of how to protect those around him from danger.

When Jesus sent people out to tell others about what he was doing he sent them out in pairs. He sent them out with support. He sent them out so they could encourage each other, but also because they could share the experience and the journey. The American author Gina Greenlee once said this:

When we establish human connections within the context of shared experience we create community wherever we go.



Fellowship is a place of grace where mistakes aren't rubbed in but rubbed out...

Often the word we use in church for these deep, shared communities is **fellowship**. Fellowship is about being part of a community, part of a community that is built on shared faith in all that God has done. Fellowship is about being part of a community that holds devotion to Jesus' life, death, resurrection as it's highest principle and lives out it's shared life in response to that.

In our church we have developed a vision statement that says that in response to the love of God, we seek to be a people of meaningful faith, meaningful community and meaningful witness. Our vision as a church says that everything we do together as a church comes from the love of God and what he's done in Jesus. And one part of that is to be a meaningful community, which we've said is to manage our resources, use our gifts in service and nurture our relationship with God and each other in love and humility.

Fellowship is part of developing a meaningful community. And a meaningful church community is one that is built on our shared faith in Jesus.

Fellowship is praying together, encouraging one another, building each other up, teaching one another, setting an example to each other. It's about sharing life together, not just on the surface level, not just passing the time of day, or asking how the weather is. It's about being willing to enter into the other person's world, and about creating a community

where we feel confident enough to be vulnerable.

The pastor and writer Rick Warren describes it like this:

Fellowship is a place of grace, where mistakes aren't rubbed in but rubbed out. Fellowship happens when mercy wins over justice.

Fellowship creates spaces where real life can happen, and where real support through love and grace can

happen. That's what I pray for Ellon Parish Church. My hope is that Ellon Parish Church can be a place where that happens, not just with one person but with the whole community.

And for you my hope and prayer is that you have places where you find community and that in that community you have or find real, lasting, true fellowship where your mistakes are rubbed out and never rubbed in.

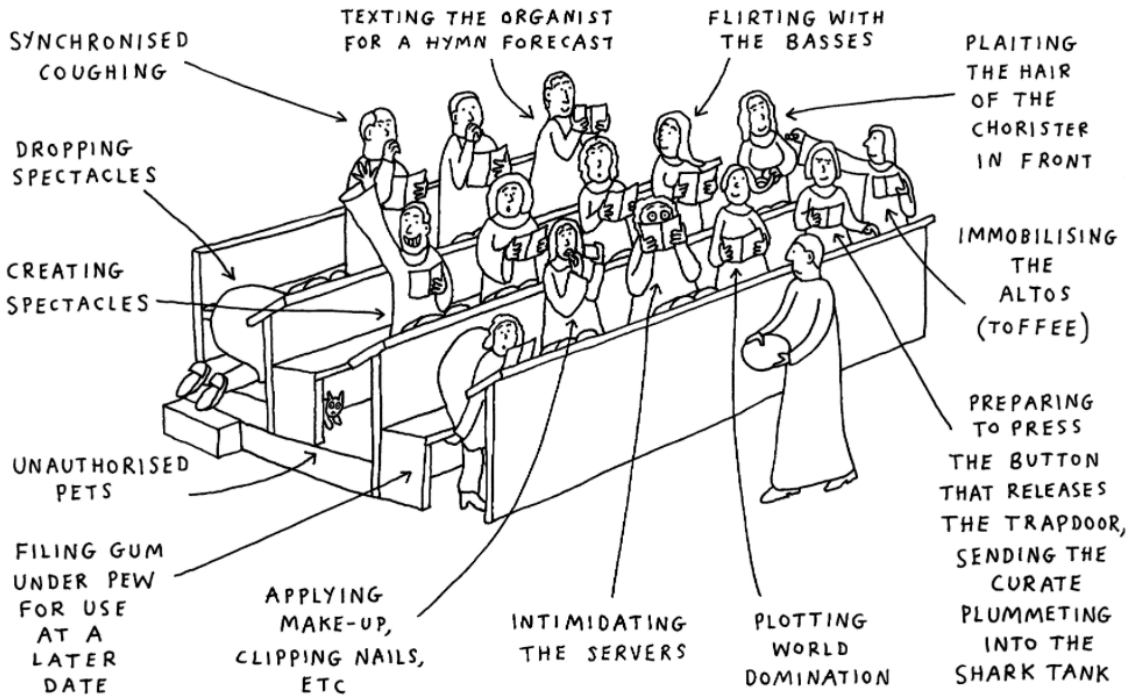
ELDERS' LONG SERVICE PRESENTATION



Pictured: Sheila Fraser, Peter Elrick & Rev Alastair Bruce

THE CHOIR

MINOR MISDEMEANOURS TAKING PLACE IN YOUR SUNDAY SERVICES



CartoonChurch.com

YOUNG PEOPLE

HOW TO STOP THEM LEAVING THE CHURCH



GET THEM INVOLVED



LET THEM LEAD THE SERVICE



ENCOURAGE THE CONGREGATION TO BE MORE YOUTH-FRIENDLY



ADJUST THE SERVICE TIME



SEND THEM ON A LIFE-CHANGING TRIP



LOCK THE DOORS

CartoonChurch.com



STUFF FROM THE SESSION

*Ellon Parish Church's Session Clerk **Sandra Beaton** gives a brief overview of the work of the Core Groups and the kinds of things discussed and considered in the Kirk Session.*

Our November Session meeting began our pilot of a new type of meeting to enhance the fellowship between elders and encourage greater discussion at a deeper level on topics. Fellowship over a cuppa, before the meeting began, was optional and following a warm welcome from Rev Alastair Bruce the meeting began joining our voices singing the Lord's My Shepherd and reading from John 10:1-18 entitled "The Good Shepherd."

As is now customary, reports were submitted by the Teams outlining their work since the last meeting and some points of interest for you may be as follows: -

Pastoral Care –are giving a lot of thought on how we can improve our care pastorally to those in the community.

Mission – are looking ahead to the In-Service Activity Days for primary school

children, the first of this year's occurring in February at the mid-term break.

Education – Star Squad Wednesday has attracted new attenders with a good spread of ages from P1 to P7. Three Life Groups are now also up and running and working through their chosen material. As 2018 is the Year of the Young People Ellon Parish Church will sign up to be part of this.

Finance – the necessity was highlighted for a fuller risk management section in our annual accounts which would require to be discussed by the trustees, with particular risks being highlighted and an explanation provided on how these risks are to be mitigated.

Following discussion, it was agreed there was a need to increase our income following a reduction on the amount given by members; reduce our expenditure; with renewed competition from other outlets for the let of our buildings and less usage of the coffee shop due to financial situations has meant our income is down; costs of the upkeep of the buildings including wear and tear have increased and the spaces to meet require to be

more inviting. The Finance committee have highlighted these problems over the last 5-10 years and Elders were encouraged to take a lead and think substantially about the outcome of the discussion.

At our **conference session** discussion ensued on the key aspects of being an elder which brought about some of the following responses - using individual talents and encourage others; support Minister / Session / Teams; developing a strong relationship with the members of your district as they will allow; to be seen as an acceptable leader – very approachable and establishing a relationship with folks; attendance at Church and the encouragement of members to attend as well; attendance at Session meetings; community outreach; keep our knowledge of Church up to date

to share with others; support all activities in Church,

On receipt of an email, in relation to the sale of Slains Kirk, from the Secretary and Clerk to the General Trustees an ad-hoc meeting was also held in December. The General trustees, in order to comply with General Assembly legislation, require to pass a “determination” authorising the sale of the building as well as to deal with a number of practical issues as decisions in principle are required before any sale.

Hopefully this has given you some more insight into the work of your Kirk Session and as we take the next step forward, involving as much of the congregation as we can, may I encourage you to get involved in an exciting future for Ellon Parish Church. God Bless,



Life Group Details

Daytime Bible Study

Leader: Alison / Nicola
When: Friday fortnightly (to coincide with Friday Prayers) 1pm - 3pm
Venue: Eileen Davidson's house,
The Haven, Station Road

Evening Video & Discussion

Leaders: Neil and Elaine Henderson
When: 2nd and 4th Wednesday
7 for 7:30pm
Venue: Henderson's @ 7 Davan Place

Evening Book Group

Leader: Andy Bruce
When: 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 7:30pm
Venue: Andy Bruce's house,
Strathnavar, Station Road

WE BELIEVE IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Join us as we **Engage / Participate / Celebrate**
during **The Year of Young People in 2018**

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp
#YoYP2018



Scottish Charity Number: SCD011353

www.churchofscotland.org.uk

 facebook.com/churchofscotland

 [@churchscotland](https://twitter.com/churchscotland)



ON THE SQUARE

ELLON PARISH CHURCH COFFEE SHOP

Set "On the Square" in the gorgeous Aberdeenshire town of Ellon, the Kirk Centre Coffee Shop is a friendly, modern coffee shop serving delicious hot & cold drinks from Lattes to Irn-Bru, lunches of soup, paninis, salads and more plus delicious homebakes not to be missed. All amidst inspiring local art and craft work.

Opening times:

Tuesday – Saturday | 10am – 4pm

Sunday & Monday | closed

For info or bookings call: 01358 723517

Tables with access to play materials can now be booked in the St Ternan's Hall.



ON THE SQUARE COFFEE SHOP LATEST

On the Square Coffee Shop manager Iris Murray gives an insight into the latest goings-on in the life of the coffee shop and some upcoming dates for your diary.



We were advised on our last inspection in December 2016 that in order to retain our Eat Safe Award we would all have to re-sit all our Hygiene Certificates

Jenni Paton had just done hers in November 2016 so she was okay, Joyce Dryburgh and Sandra Montgomery both passed their Elementary Food Hygiene Course in March 2016. Linda and I had to do the Intermediate Food Hygiene Course and I'm delighted that I passed with credit in May 2016 and Linda also passed with credit in September 2016.

Its now time for the volunteers so we have arranged a meeting with refreshments for all volunteers in Ellon Parish Church on **20th March 2018** at 7pm.

We will have Lorna Ross from Environmental Health just to refresh us on all the correct procedures we have to carry out in the Coffee Shop and Kitchen. This is a very important meeting and I hope all volunteers can all manage to attend.

We have to have these meetings and staff training in place to retain our Eat Safe Award which we were the first in Ellon to receive

We have had another successful year in the Coffee Shop which we are delighted with and look forward to another good year in 2018.

Thank you for all the hard work and dedication of all the paid and voluntary staff, as always we are always looking for more volunteers so if you have any spare time please come and see me and we'll get you on board!

LIFE GROUPS

Neil and Elaine Henderson talk about their video – based Life Group

Following the Alpha Course, this life group was set up to continue the exploration of faith.

We began meeting on Wednesday 13th September and have continued meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month.

There are usually between 6 and 8 people on a typical evening.

A typical evening starts with refreshments; tea, coffee and usually homebakes to break the ice and set us up for the evening. We then watch a DVD and then discuss the ideas and opinions raised in the programme.

We are watching a series called “Jesus the Game Changer” which looks at the foundational roots of many of the values our society holds as essential for a positive community and for people to flourish.

Some of these values: humility, servitude, helping the poor, needy and marginalised, the right for education, medical and hospital care to be available for all people did not

exist at the time of Jesus. If it were not for His life and teaching this world would be a very different place.

We discuss how the life and teaching of Jesus changed the world and why it matters.

Our wide ranging discussions have included equality, forgiveness, women & children, democracy, care and leadership so far – these have produced some interesting and thought provoking discussions.

Our discussions are good natured with lots of humour and laughter to keep us all going. We have three topics left to explore in this series and are already on the lookout for the next series as we are all keen to keep going.

If this is something which sounds appealing and you would like to come along, contact the Kirk Centre Office for more details or speak to Neil or Elaine at Church.



Members of the University of Aberdeen
Marischal Chamber Orchestra present

An Evening of Music

in Ellon Parish Church
www.ellonparishchurch.co.uk

Thursday 22nd February 2018

7:30pm

Tickets: £8 (concessions £5)

Refreshments

contact: info@ellonparishchurch.co.uk

01358 725690 for details

proceeds to the Orchestra tour & Ellon Parish Church



ELLON PARISH
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
meaningful faith | meaningful community | meaningful witness

POINT TO PONDER

*Session Clerk and leader of the new Welcome and Hospitality Team **Sandra Beaton** ponders taking the first step.*



At this time of the year as it's dark, gloomy, cold and frosty it's little wonder many of us find getting up in the morning more difficult. However, mentioned at Friday morning prayers recently was "I don't mind being up in the morning I just don't like getting up" and I thought I can relate to that. It's that initial thought of throwing back the covers and putting one foot on the floor but once you have taken that first step it is amazing how much can be accomplished.

As I step out of the door in the early morning, on my way to Church, I thank God that I am able to leave the house and appreciate another new day when all is still and the mayhem of the day has yet to start.

Prayer has never been more important, when I am overwhelmed, fearful and doubting, prayer is the exercise of faith and hope leaving me challenged, refreshed excited and inspired for all the future holds for me personally and for our Church.

Taking that first step may well be challenging but in the scriptures Noah took that first step when he started building an ark to survive the flood—and they'd never even seen rain. Can you imagine how crazy that must have seemed to everyone? But God had a plan for Noah's life.

David was just a young boy when he faced Goliath but he would never have slayed that giant if he hadn't taken that first step of faith and walked out to face him.

Numerous opportunities in your Church lie ahead for you to take that first step and your Church needs you. Take some time in thought and prayer to identify which of the new teams you would feel best placed to serve on with a remit which most closely matches the gifts, skills and interests God has given you and be challenged to use them.

You might consider signing up for an Alpha Course, a series of 10 weekly sessions exploring the Christian faith, sharing a meal, giving the opportunity to get to know the rest of your group followed by a DVD and discussion in small groups allowing for exploration and discovery in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. Maybe you could volunteer to help out on one of the teams at Cardboard Café with the mums and toddlers or to help out in the Coffee Shop serving our community.

So, in this New Year and as our Church moves forward offering many opportunities to be involved may I encourage you to take that first step in faith knowing that the God who calls you to the task will equip you with everything you need to accomplish that task.

Hebrews 13:21

Now may the God of peace...equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



ELLON PARISH CHURCH IS ON FACEBOOK.

Search for "Ellon Parish Church" and 'like' us to receive all the latest updates.

CEILIDH DANCING & GROWING FAITH

*Mary Paterson leader of the new Children and Young Person team describes her thoughts following the recent **Faith Formation** course organised by Gordon Presbytery and held in Ellon Parish Church.*



As one who can barely remember what she had for breakfast as she sits with her morning fly cup, my heart sank when the esteemed editor of this publication asked me on 21st January 2018 to write about something that happened on 18th November 2017. I am, however, a lover of all things stationery and I remembered that we each got a fancy wee notebook for our jottings on the day and I was certain that I wouldn't have thrown that out. And I hadn't – which is why this article

will tell you about much more than the soup we had for lunch (affa fine) and ceilidh dancing in the aisles. (Honestly, it will all make sense if you stick with it, I promise.) What I'm giving you is not a report on the day – which is probably what our Editors wanted – but what, with time to reflect, I now realise that I took from it. Sorry, esteemed editors.

The main theme of the day, I think, was to look at how we form or grow

faith; firstly as individuals and then within our own congregations or parishes but also in the wider world – God may not have made us to conform to a uniform type, but He does call us to unity with one another. And because we are called to that unity, it is virtually impossible to cultivate faith in isolation – participation is the key.

It follows then that, for a community of faith to grow, it needs something more than for us to do things to or for people; we must do things with people. We must share our common story, our common rituals and celebrations and we do that best by developing and inviting all to participate in a family-like community which does what all the best families do; it lives for the other family members and values the diversity that it finds within those members. Like all families, it has a thread or story running through it that all can tap into – in our case, that’s the Gospel and it gives our family a common authority to which we can all appeal in times of stress or trouble or pain. Families are generally made up of at least two or three generations and that’s what we need to aim for in our faith family. We grow in faith through worship, prayer, reading the Bible,

participation in rituals which often mark family milestones and in the seasons of the church year; in turn, this leads us to commit to the service of the church, to work for justice, care for Creation. The important thing is to share all these experiences of our faith with as many people as we can of whatever age – that’s what creates the family feel. Bairns naturally want to tell their grandparents and aunties and uncles of their discoveries;

grannies and grandpas have shed-loads of knowledge and learning and experience to pass on. Getting to that point in a faith family, that free sharing of experiences of faith, cannot help but deepen the Christian identity

of that family.

What I really like about this notion of a faith family is that it doesn’t pretend that ‘one size fits all’. It recognises that everyone travels their own unique spiritual journey; some will take the motorway, others prefer the country lanes; some drive to the limit all the time, others have a foot always on the brake pedal – and all of those and everything in between are fine. The important thing is that, through experiencing things within the faith



The important thing is to share all these experiences of our faith with as many people as we can of whatever age – that’s what creates the family feel.

family, we can then reflect on that experience with members of the family and live what we've learned.

Over time, families change. Members of the family go out into the wider world and meet new people; some get married, some find a partner, others set up home with a bidie-in. All of them will bring that new person back to meet the family. That has to be true for a faith family as well, but we can't just wait for

the occasional husband or wife to join our ranks – we need to set up a sort of two-way path whereby we get to know others and they get to know us. We have to reach out to the community in which we live. We are all members of Ellon parish but that's just our default setting; we need to get out into the community as members of Ellon Parish CHURCH and make conscious decisions to engage with people around us (who we may well have known for years) in a new way, a missional way – the way of a disciple. This, of course, is the bit that scares many of us witless – and that's sort of okay, but it's also sort of not okay. It's



If we are serious about our faith then we need to be serious about engaging with others, forming real relationships and providing pathways

okay to be shy, it's okay to stutter over finding the right words to say, it's okay if you need time to feel confident about opening up to people. But it's not okay to deny who and what you are and the news that you have to spread; it's not okay to deny your faith, to deny your involvement in and with the church, to deny the Good News of Jesus and his resurrection. If we are serious about our faith then we need to be serious about engaging with others, forming real relationships and providing pathways so that they

can consider for themselves what it is to have faith, what it is to live themselves in a supportive faith community, a faith family.

As I said at the beginning – participation is the key. If we live in the

life of God, we live out the life of God. You can't learn how to participate unless you participate.

And THAT'S where the ceilidh dancing came in. Even if we don't know all the steps to a particular dance, we join in because the music draws us and we're sure the caller will keep us right. And next time, we'll have the confidence ourselves to teach that dance to others

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Each arrangement depicted a different character from the Christmas story







SYRIAN NEW SCOTS

Ann Bruce gives an update about the work of the steering group in supporting our Syrian New Scot friends.

In December we went to the Ellon panto, which was great fun. Two of our Syrian families came too and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Abdullah, one of the dads, laughed and laughed, especially at the ghost! Odey, the youngest child danced in the passageway and two of the other children thought they'd like to get on the stage too! It just shows that panto transcends language and culture...who would have thought!

We had an appeal at church for Christmas decorations for our families and when we were visiting the families, they had decorations and lights strung round their houses and had written something in Arabic which they coloured in and pinned above the front doors. They had definitely got into the spirit of the Festive season.

One of our new mums is having a baby early in February so we had a church appeal for items for the baby. We were delighted at the generosity of the congregation, so many new clothes, blankets, pots of creams, baby shampoo, nappies, three baby baths and even some pampering things for the new mum. What wasn't needed here, duplicates for example, went to Inverurie for new babies born or expected there, everything will find a welcome home.

The week before Christmas we had a Christmas party with our families and some of our volunteers. The Syrian New Scot families from Inverurie, Westhill and

Kintore came along too and also some members of the Resettlement Team. Because there would be so many people, over 100, we decided to have the party in the church as none of the halls in the Kirk Centre would hold that number of people. Many thanks to the Minister and Kirk Session of Ellon Parish Church for letting us use the church for the party.

Baba Noel paid us a visit too. He was very well played by Lewis Cowie, the Pentecostal minister, quite an ecumenical gathering! Every child was given a present, these had all been donated by NorthSound. The presents were superb, from roaring dinosaurs to a pink Barbie car complete with Barbie, the children were delighted!

The ladies provided the food which was delicious as always. The children played games, organised by the teenagers, volunteers from Ellon Parish Church provided face painting and we even had a demonstration of Syrian dancing. In spite of the snow and ice it was a wonderful afternoon of food and laughter.

It was lovely to be having fun and relaxation as an antidote to all the hard work the families have been through; getting to grips with a new society, finding their way round the community and learning a new language. They seem to be settling in well, their language skills are coming on and they are becoming known around Ellon.

Holy Week

Ecumenical Services 2018
Monday 26th March - Sunday 1st April

MORE DETAILS SOON



NEW TEAMS

Rev Alastair Bruce gives a further update on the new team structure and how congregational members might be enabled to serve the church.

Over the last few months we've been exploring some potential structural changes to the organisation of our church here in the parish of Ellon.

The first stage of this was the move to Unitary Constitution. The most visible evidence of this is that we will no longer have a Congregational Board.

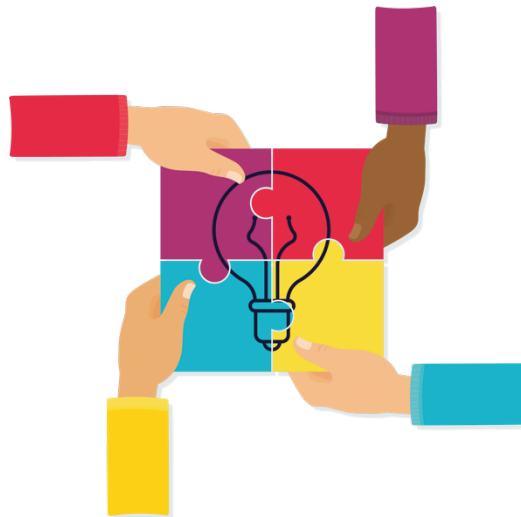
The second stage of this is an adaption of the current core group structure.

In November 2017 The Kirk Session agreed a new structure that it is felt would enhance and solidify the work currently being carried out, and attempt to fill some gaps in our current practice, most noticeably our financial situation, our work with young people and the 'missing generation' of those aged between 25 and 45. All this discussion resulted in a structure of ten new teams (which is a slight increase on the eight we currently have.)

Changing how we work and organise ourselves as a church is easy in theory. We can draw up endless, pretty charts and make it look all neat and tidy, but without the people to be part of it we won't succeed or build our church. Therefore,

we need to encourage the right people into the right teams.

The elders who serve on the Kirk Session and those church members who served on the Congregational Board have put their names forward for which of the new teams they'd like to be part of. However, it was always in the plan to open this up to others in the congregation who would like to be involved in the life of Ellon Parish Church.



So, we are now inviting those who are not elders or on the Congregational Board to be part of the new teams.

It is envisaged that people would serve on one (or two) new team(s). It's also important that we have a mix of those who have insight into or experience of a particular area as well as those who may be able to offer their skills in a more practical way i.e.

In order to help you in your prayers you may wish to consider the following questions:

- what do I feel I am good at?
- what do I enjoy doing?
- what do other people say I'm good at?

- what gives me energy or a sense of wellbeing when I do it?

The new teams and their aims are detailed below along with the gifts and skills most needed for those teams.

You don't need to be an official member of Ellon Parish Church to serve on a team. You just need to have an interest in the area and the eagerness to help the church.

It is imagined that the new teams will meet every two months for about an hour,

so there is not a heavy time commitment. Equally the Teams will be able to decide

when best to meet to suit the needs of the individuals in each team.

Therefore, I would encourage each person to:

1. Consider what gifts and skills God has given you to serve His people.
2. Think about which of your skills best link with those detailed in the aims and skills of the new teams.
3. Become part of a team (meeting times can be flexible.)

NEW TEAMS AND AIMS

Pastoral Care

Aim: The Pastoral Care Team, aims to enable Ellon Parish Church to be a community in which everyone is loved, cared for and cares for others. (This team will have guardianship of the Flower *Ministry* Team)

Skills: *Empathy, gentleness, listening, comfort with our own feelings, accepting of others, openness, co-ordination*

Areas of responsibility include: visitation of church members (including those in care homes and hospitals), bereavement care, evaluating the best ways to ensure our congregational members are cared for, the flower ministry, continued development of work with older people.

Mission and Discipleship

Aim: The Mission and Discipleship Team aims to empower the whole community of Ellon Parish Church to show and share their faith and deepen their relationship with God and thereby equip them to enable everyone in our parish to become a disciple of Jesus.

Skills: *Ability / willingness to talk about your faith, creativity, openness, empathy, encouragement, an interest in care for the local community*

Areas of responsibility include: Alpha, Kirk Fest, 20s – 40s outreach, Activity Days, community engagement, Life Groups, Men's Group, A Conversation With... and other discipleship events.

Young People

Aim: The Young People Team aims to enable Ellon Parish Church to be a community where all young people (0-25years) within our parish are known, loved and valued, encouraged to use their gifts and talents in service of God through the church, where faith is nurtured and grown and where they are encouraged to become a witness as a full member of the Christian church.

Skills: *Experience of working with young people, fun, ability / willingness to talk about faith, encouragement, insight into the issues / needs of young people, heart for young people to develop faith.*

Areas of responsibility include: Star Squad Wednesday and Sunday, Twinkle Stars, GsundaY, evaluating our current practice with young people and developing strategies to grow our work with young people, implementation of the Year of the Young Person in 2018.

The Welcome and Hospitality Team

Aim: As the representatives of Jesus in the world, the Welcome and Hospitality Team aims to enable Ellon Parish Church to be a community that is warm in its welcome and generous in its hospitality to everyone we encounter.

Skills: *welcoming, friendly, outgoing, listening, observant, warm, encouraging, catering experience, co-ordination, management, creativity*

Areas of responsibility include: developing ways to ensure the best welcome to Ellon Parish Church, (including all worship services), providing hospitality for church events e.g. Alpha meals, GsundaY meals, ensuring our physical environment is helpful for those who visit our buildings.

The Finance and Stewardship Team

Aim: The Finance and Stewardship Team aims to enable Ellon Parish Church to be financially sustainable to resource the growth and development of God's work in our parish and beyond through the maintenance and governance of Ellon Parish Church's finances.

Skills: *finance, organisation, good with figures, practical, creativity, care, experience in deployment of resources.*

Areas of responsibility include: Gift Aid, budget planning, contracts, accounts etc.

The Estates Management Team

Aim: The Estates Management Team aims to enable Ellon Parish Church to wisely manage, maintain and renew our church fabric (our properties and contents) for the growth and development of God's mission through Ellon Parish Church, whilst also caring for and managing those who maintain the Kirk Centre.

Skills: *practical, management, DIY, creativity, experience of property matters, co-ordination, health and safety, observant*

Areas of responsibility include: Health and Safety, looking after and developing all the

church's properties, management of the Kirk Centre etc.

Areas of responsibility include: covering care home services, development of worship, management of worship rotas.

The Fundraising and Fellowship Team

Aim: The Fundraising and Fellowship team aims to assist the Finance and Stewardship Team to make EPC become financially sustainable and resource its mission through various fundraising activities and avenues as well as seeking out opportunities for people to meet and build positive bonds.

Skills: *creativity, experience of fundraising, practical (ability / experience of filling in grant forms), organisation, encouragement, sociable, friendly, co-ordination*

Areas of responsibility include: looking for ways to bring in funds to Ellon Parish Church (grant forms, events, etc) and ways to bring the church community together for social events.

The Worship Co-Ordination & Support Team

Aim: Within the leadership of the Minister, the Worship Co-Ordination & Support Team aims to enable the whole of our church community to worship God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to be a community where people can use their gifts and skills in worship of God.

Skills: *creativity, ability / willingness to talk about faith, observant, openness, organisation, music, art, drama, experience of creative worship, encouragement.*

The Communications Team

Aim: The Communications Team aims to equip Ellon Parish Church to be a community that has good structures for clear, accurate information internally and to provide clear, accessible information to the community about the on-going ministry of Ellon Parish Church.

Skills: *organisation, creativity, design, art, computer literate, practical, observant, experience in IT, attention to detail, forward thinker and planner, organised.*

Areas of responsibility include: The Bridge Magazine, website, facebook and other social media, sound system, policy setting for publications and advertising, visual identity.

The Equity and Justice Team

Aim: The Equity and Justice Team aims to equip Ellon Parish Church to be a community with a concern for justice, peace and genuine respect for people throughout the world. And seeks to be aware of where Jesus calls us to go and serve beyond our parish into the wider country and world. (This team will have guardianship of the Fair Trade Team and the Syrian New Scots Steering Group)

Skills: *heart for justice and the poor, openness, empathy, communication, organisation, insight into how our faith and the world link together, interest in and a*

heart for world affairs, respect for others' differences, experience or interest in those with disabilities.

Areas of responsibility include: Fair Trade, Foodbank, Syrian New Scots Support, Eco-Congregation, charity work, local concerns, mission partners, overseas / world mission.

If you'd like to chat about your involvement in the new teams Sandra Beaton (Session Clerk) or Alastair Bruce (Parish Minister) would be delighted to speak with you.

The New Teams will meet for their first meeting in February 2018, at a time of their choosing. However, you can join a new team at any time by speaking with Alastair or Sandra (Session Clerk).

NEARLY NEW SALES

Sales begin again on Saturday 10th February in the Kirk Centre from **10am – 12 noon**

There is a wide selection of good quality nearly new clothing, footwear and accessories including costume jewellery. We also have bric-a-brac, books, CDs and much more. If you have any items to donate please bring them to the Kirk Centre on the **Friday** before sale day between **2-3pm**.

Thank you for your support last year – we look forward to seeing you again. Nearly New Sales are on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month.

Volunteers required.

Have you some time to spare?

Would you like to help out on a Friday or Saturday?

We'd love to have you join us, even if you only have an hour to spare.

If you would wish to volunteer or would just like some more information contact **Ann Gammack on 01358 720606**

We are in need of carrier bags. If you have some to spare please hand in to the Kirk Centre Office.



CHRISTMAS 2017 ROUND – UP

*Ellon Parish Church Parish Assistant for Mission Development **Nicola Bruce** gives us a round-up of all that went on over the Christmas period in Ellon Parish Church*

Lords a leaping, ladies dancing, mistletoe and wine, santa stuck up a chimney, silent night...Christmas 2017 in and around Ellon Parish Church I think ticked all those boxes and more!

We started celebrating the season with the **Ellon Christmas Lights Switch On**. A stall with crafts and fairtrade goods was manned in Neil Ross Square, a great opportunity to catch up with folks, advertise upcoming events, give away some free choccies to those waiting patiently to see Santa and test out our warmest hats, scarf and gloves...It was freezing cold! But a great atmosphere with all the different stalls and entertainment. This was followed by the wonder of

the parade. The crowds of those parading began to gather...just as the rain came on! Fortunately we were able to throw open the doors to the wee chapel and vestry to provide shelter for crowds and once the Faith Formation training day was finished in the church (**see Mary Paterson's article for details**) we were able to open up the warmth of the church and the people flooded in! Literally hundreds of folks huddled in for sanctuary!

Meanwhile outside volunteers were putting up a couple of gazebo's with lights, free hot drinks and of course donated baking to sustain the crowds. By the time the parade was starting the queue to the tent was down the street and the



church packed full! Dennis Chalmers of Ellon Fire Station got the crowd sorted and the various organisations found their leaders and took their places in the parade. What a great event to cheer the dark evenings and usher in the hope of Christmas. Lessons learnt for 2018....go bigger to serve quicker!

As we headed into December we had a lovely time at **Cardboard Café Nativity!** It was held in the church and for those who braved the snow and ice it was a lovely time, though Pam was sure to encourage folks not to take risks to be there! We had lots of dressing up, a re-telling of the Christmas story and some carols

throughout. Our James took the role of star very seriously indeed!

Moving through December we welcomed some of the older members of the community to our annual **Over 60's party**, again in the church (the floor is still sparkling from the glittery events of the season!). **Olive Murray** describes the party:

There was a buzz in the church as everyone worked on the quiz whilst enjoying refreshments. A different Christmas Carol was being hummed at every table with a lovely atmosphere – a good time was had by everyone.



It was a busy day as that evening we also held a well attended evening of **Christmas Quiz & Acoustic Café** in our coffee shop of which **Lynn Paterson** describes:

Having missed Acoustic Café first time round and had heard so many positive comments, I made sure I attended the 2017 version. Boy, am I glad I did! What a wonderful mix of people out for a fun night. There was fierce competitive spirit in abundance over the four-part quiz running throughout the evening and we James made a grand assistant quiz master (along with an American accent when required!); Christmas carols were enjoyed together but the

highlight for me was the sets of covers and original songs performed by the Triple A's and Nicola. Alastair's own compositions were amazing and very, very moving. Don't miss the next Quiz & Acoustic Extravaganza likely to be early July!

The following week saw our **Starsquad Wednesday Christmas Party** full of laughter and noise as our Primary age group celebrated. The party didn't finish there as that evening a group gathered for **Ecumenical Carol Singing** around our sheltered housing and care homes. Alison Young tells us about it:

This year's carol singing round our sheltered housing and care homes

took place on Wednesday 13th December and although there were fewer singers than previous years we still managed to visit all six places and sing carols to and with the residents. Everyone seems to look forward to us coming and we certainly enjoy singing with them. It is always worthwhile giving up an hour or so at a busy time of year to take the good news of Jesus' birth out to our community and it's fun! Of course we very much enjoy the coffee and mince pies back at the church too!

We would love to see some more folk join us this December so before December gets too booked up pencil in 12th Dec in your diary and join us for a lovely evening of visiting

members of our community with carols and sharing coffee and mince pies.

The end of that week brought us half way through December and into our **Family Film Night** which **Edith Walker** enjoyed:

The Upper Room was all decked out with a Christmas Tree and decorations. The beanbags were scattered on the floor ready for the kids to settle down on and the refreshments were going down a treat as was the Fairtrade stall full of goodies. Before it started they had a visit from Santa who had a gift for each of the Children.

The film being screened was "VeggieTales: Saint Nicholas – A



story of Joyful Giving!”. This gave us an entertaining look at Saint Nicholas’ life, why he started giving with a great line “I can love because God loves me, I can give because He gives”. A great message for us. I’m not sure who enjoyed it most the kids or their grown ups! And of course great fun was had with a “snowball” fight at the end...at one point dominated by Alastair, Dennis and some dads! A lovely festive evening.

This led into a weekend of Carols with a **Saturday afternoon request for carol singers at a fundraiser in the Co-Op.** A good opportunity to share some joy with the community, help raise awareness and funds for homeless charities in Aberdeen and for Choir members to warm up their voices for that evening as they hosted **Coffee and Carols.** **Ron Mackie** tells us about it:

The one Christmas event I managed to attend this year before the dreaded flu bug struck was a wonderful evening of “Coffee and Carols” held in the Kirk Centre organised by the Ellon Parish Church Choir and friends.

Although the Upper Room is quite a small venue I feel the singing was enhanced by the cosiness of the room, beautifully decorated with Christmas lights. We were treated to a great selection of Christmas music

and carols, some of which we were encouraged to join in and we did so with gusto.

Jenni Paton had a solo spot and provided some delightful music on the violin accompanied of course by Morag on the piano. We were treated to a very nice selection of ‘fine pieces’ and hot drinks.

All together we had a very pleasant “Christmas” evening and if the choir decide to repeat it this year, I would thoroughly recommend going along. Hopefully the flu bug keeps well clear this time.

If that wasn’t enough carols, Sunday morning brought a service of **Lessons & Carols** taking us through the Christmas nativity with a series of readings intertwined with Carols. **Margaret Cantlay** writes:

A well-known service that is presented every year in many churches. Our one was particularly special in that the readers read with compassion and clarity, the carols chosen were well matched and, as a lady told me when I met her afterwards, the congregation were drawn in completely and shared the joy and love it portrayed.

With so many festive occasions could there be anything left? Well the

season can be hard for some and so in the week leading up to Christmas **Joyce Dryburgh** attended our **Christmas Lights Service:**

On Wednesday 20th December, the "Christmas lights" service took place within the church. It was a lovely service, allowing people who find the festive season difficult for whatever reason to come together. There is no singing but the haunting sound of the clarsach added much to the reflective atmosphere. The ministry team led lovely readings and there were prayers. The church is a quiet sanctuary, with soft lighting,

allowing folks to remember, reflect, be upset, without feeling embarrassed. The lighting of tea lights and placing them on a cross shaped mirror was lovely and meaningful, allowing us to remember loved ones and friends. It helps being amongst people in similar situations as you, supporting each other.

The music continued that week this time out of the church building and into **The Tolbooth, Station Road for Beer and Carols.** **Ann Bruce** was there enjoying the atmosphere:

One cold Thursday evening, the 22nd



of December to be exact, a happy band of people met in the Tolbooth pub in Ellon for an evening of Beer and Carols. As the name suggests, we sing carols and drink beer or wine or lime and soda or whatever your favourite tippie happens to be. "We" are the congregation of Ellon Parish Church, the usual customers of the pub and this year many of the cast of Ellon Pantomime as well as the BB officers on the Christmas night out. Music was provided by Alastair on guitar and vocals, Alison on keyboard, Rachel vocals and Richie on cahon (drum). Pam toured the pub, bucket in hand, collecting for Music resources for local schools and Christian Aid. The money raised goes to these two charities. It lets us give music to the local schools and the Government has promised to double the amount churches raise to give to Christian Aid this Christmas.

At one point, it was feared the pub would have to close its doors as there were so many people inside, singing carols and Christmas favourites from White Christmas to Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer and Silent Night. All sung with great gusto with some wonderful descants and harmonies from the Panto group.

This is the second year we have met for this event. If you missed it last year, put Beer and Carols in your

diary now for this year. It's a wonderful way to start the Christmas festivities the Thursday before Christmas.

The weekend brought **Christmas Eve** which was an intergenerational extravaganza in Ellon Parish Church! We started the day with the **Twinkle Stars/Starsquad Nativity Service**. **Ryan Stott** and **Rachael Clark** did a stellar job of narrating our account of the first Christmas. Children took up all the parts, with the exception of the Inn Keeper which Alastair kindly stood in for and Herod's wise advisers which the Choir ably carried out at short notice! Our wise men toured the church zigging and zagging after the star, Mary and Joseph took quite the swift journey up and down the aisles, the angels brought good news to our shepherdess and the congregation joined in with the host of angels' three cheers for the happy arrival. Well done to our children and the support of the congregation.

At 6.30pm we assembled again, many already in **pj's, onsies and Christmas jumpers to collect a Christingle** (put together after the nativity service...turns out it's a dangerous business spearing dolly mixtures onto cocktail sticks as both Alison and Alastair needed some first aid!), make themselves comfortable

for the....special guests of the evening. Pam Adam in her PJ's interviewed Mr Little Donkey, the Angel Gabriel (who both had a sing off at one point!) and Ms Christingle as we explored what the first Christmas was about from first hand/hoof experience! **Calaidh Reid** came along with her family and says: *The Christmas Eve service was super special for us as it was our little boy's first Christmas! It was just the right mix of getting the message across and good family fun! Fab for all the family.*

Many went home and got tucked up into bed, while others returned later for the **Christmas Eve Watchnight Service**, a different tone to the hilarity of earlier bringing us thoughtfully and reflectively into Christmas Day. After some rest and

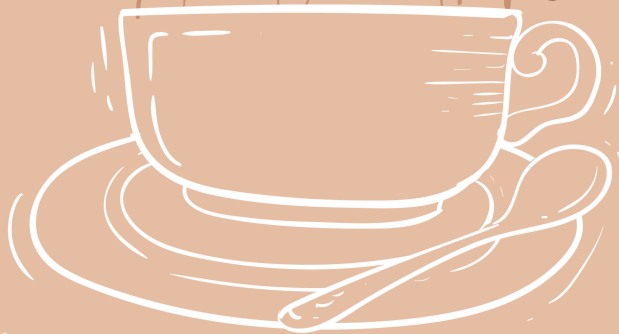
some presents we gathered once more for a **short celebration on Christmas Day**. Alastair enjoyed seeing some of gifts folks had received and shared one more time together the nativity story (involving a present being passed around and occasionally being clonked onto someone's head!), reminding us as we continued on in the day what we were celebrating: the gift of Jesus – God with us. On Hogmanay we had our traditional **Hymns of the Faith** service where we sang and listened to some hymns and songs that had special meaning for members of the congregation. These included; ***We Your Children, 10 000 Reasons, Lord For The Years, The Day Thou Gavest and many more...*** A lovely way to bring in the New Year.



Would you like to get back into the workplace but lack confidence?

Have you 2 hours to spare a week?

Perhaps you have recently retired and looking to keep active?



***Why not come and volunteer with us
at “On The Square” Coffee Shop at
the Kirk Centre?***

Iris our manager (723517) would love to
hear from you

Come and learn new skills
Keep active | Make new friends

COFFEE AND CRAFT

1st Thursday of the Month | 2pm – 3:30pm

Coffee and craft takes place in the Wee Chapel once a month on a Thursday at 2pm. It's an opportunity to get together to share what's been happening in the week and to do some craft work together. It's open to anyone who happens to like crafting projects whether they are young or just young at heart.

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COFFEE AND CHAT

Last Friday of the Month | 2pm – 3:30pm

Coffee and chat takes place in the Gathering Area at the back of the Ellon Parish Church building once a month on a Friday at 2pm. It's open to anyone who is in need of a bit of company and a cuppa.

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THE NEARLY NEW SALE ROUP

As you will be aware on the 24th November last year the Nearly New Team embarked on a new venture after deciding to hold a roup.

The preparation for this event involved a number of people of which we would like to give our thanks and appreciation as without them this day would not have taken place.

The viewing, which was held on the Friday evening, proved to be very successful and quite a number of people turned up to view what was on offer and choose what they would like to bid on the next day.

Dr Martin Pucci had agreed to take on the role of Auctioneer on the day and he undertook the proceedings with a good deal of fun and good humour. From the very beginning the place was buzzing with noise and a hive of activity with people bidding for items which was great.

The roup finished exactly on time and raised in the region of **£700**.

Due to the success of this event we have decided to hold one this year at the end of November so if you have any items which you can keep until then we will be delighted to accommodate you.

Again many thanks to all who helped either on the day or beforehand.

CARDBOARD CAFÉ TEAMS

We are delighted that there are now 4 teams to help with Cardboard Café.

Each team has a Team Leader who is responsible for making sure things run smoothly on the day and for arranging to have enough helpers for the sessions they are on. The Team Leaders are **Pam Adam, Nicola Bruce, Ros Mackie and Sandra Beaton.**

The teams are on once every four weeks and if you'd like to help out on one of the new teams the Team Leaders would be delighted to chat with you about it. This can be everything from helping set up and clear up, to welcoming on the door, getting down to play with the kids or just chatting with the parents.

If you think you could give a bit of time on a Friday morning then either ring Edith in the office or email info@ellonparishchurch.co.uk

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Safeguarding training is to be held in the Upper Room, Ellon Parish Kirk Centre on Saturday 17th March from 10am – 12:30pm. Anyone who is interested should contact Edith in the Kirk Centre Office on 01358 725690

NEARLY NEW SALE

The Nearly New Sale takes place on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month from 10am – 12noon. The next is **10th February**. Donations of **nearly new** goods can be dropped off anytime before.

PANTO GROUP SUCCESS (AGAIN!!)

The panto was a great success again this year. Lots of fun was had by all the cast, crew and audience members. The fantastic total of **£4435.63** was raised for Ellon Parish Church. Many thanks go to all involved for their tremendous effort and hard work.

WALKING GROUP

Walks will restart again in the spring of 2018.

RAG BAGS

Please continue to bag up any old clothing, shoes and handbags for recycling. The church receives 40p per kilo for these

We will no longer collect household linens but if you have good quality linens, please offer them to the Nearly New Sales Team.

There are also outlets for linens at the Red Cross and the Fire Station.

Eileen Davidson

THE BRIDGE MAGAZINE

If you'd like to contribute to the Bridge Magazine we'd love to hear from you. We're looking for people to write articles about faith and books and what's going on in the church community as well as in Ellon. Contact Edith in the Kirk Centre Office, Lynn Paterson on ianlynnpat@aol.com or Rev Alastair.

GIRLS' BRIGADE QUEEN'S AWARD

*GB leader, church member and one part of the Triple As **Ashleigh Grant** writes about her experience doing her Queen's Award.*



The Girls' Brigade Queens Award is the highest award to achieve in the organisation. I first started my journey on this award back in March 2013. Still at school, I thought I would have the award completed in the 2 year minimum time frame, but here I am in 2017 still going.

The Award is designed to challenge girls in their personal commitment and faith whilst inspiring them to greater endeavour in service in their community and worldwide within

the organisation and we are all warned that it is hard to achieve, is not an easy task and requires a lot of time and dedication. Furthermore, everything else that happens for a young person aged 16-25 often means that your work for the award must take a back seat.

Personally for me I have faced challenges of bereavement, university, teaching practice, moving home and work have all been hurdles I have had to overcome. But

now as I write this and prepare for my final pieces of work to be sent off to HQ, the end is in sight and I will finish my award in March 2018 and be presented my award in June at the 125th year celebrations for Girls' Brigade.

In total the award consists of eight modules, each of which must be assessed and reflected upon.

I started with one of the biggest tasks, voluntary service. For this I was required to give a minimum of 48 hours over a year, and I chose to spend my time working with the local music centre youth orchestra in Mintlaw on a Friday after university. I spent the year working alongside the other string tutor to help the school pupils learn how to play the music for their Christmas concert and spring concert at the Music Hall in Aberdeen.

I then tackled my first Initiative task, where I led our Brigader section (S1-6) in a bible study session where we looked at the parable of the talents. For both initiative tasks, we are given 2-3 weeks notice by our divisional commissioner to complete it.

In early October this year I sat my "GB, Citizenship and Me" written paper. The study paper involved studying for the following topics: The Royal family and line of succession, National flags of the home nations, national and local governments, GB knowledge and Citizenship today. Having not sat a written exam since 2015 I was quite apprehensive about this, but was delighted to have passed with 82.5%.



I chose to spend my time working with the local music centre youth orchestra in Mintlaw

The creative project is one of the biggest parts of the award and my original project proposal would have seen me finish this in September 2018, as I was documenting 365 days in photos from the date of approval. But, as I was sitting at home enjoying my October holidays, I got a phone call from Hazel McCallum at GB HQ. She wanted me to amend my project title and have it submitted by the 3rd November. So, my holiday became a frenzy of activity getting my photographs for the previous 6 months edited and printed before being sent off to Glasgow at the end of October. This now awaits marking

to determine if I will get my award next year.

I then tackled my second initiative project also due on the 3rd November, writing this article all about my experience of the award.

Over the next few months before my final deadline of 31st January 2018, I will be finalising two modules that run for the duration of the award: My Faith Journey and GB Commitment and Service. The Faith Journey requires a minimum of three years church attendance before starting the award and then sees a monthly entry showing how your faith is developing. Given my passion for music I have chosen to focus on how different hymns and Christian worship songs have affected my developing faith.

The GB commitment and Service, requires 2 years commitment where we attend weekly meetings on a regular basis as a commissioned

officer whilst developing our responsibilities within the organisation and this module will be assessed by Calaidh, my Captain.

Once all of these modules are finished I will attend a residential weekend to meet other young women who have also completed their awards. At the weekend we will spend time discussing our award journeys, GB international, and ideas for the future of GB Scotland before learning about how we can become mentors for younger girls completing the award.

Although its been a long 5 years working

on my award and there have been lots of challenges it has also been great fun and I look forward to meeting new people at the residential award and then being presented at the big birthday celebrations awards dinner in June.



Given my passion for music I have chosen to focus on how different hymns and Christian worship songs have affected my developing faith.

Ellon Parish Church Presents

WEDNESDAY EDITION STAR SQUAD

3.30-4.30pm

Ellon Parish Church Kirk Centre
P1-P7

• GAMES | ARTS & CRAFTS | BIBLE STORIES | SNACK | SONGS | FRIENDS | FUN •

Registration

www.ellonparishchurch.co.uk

01358 725690

Ellon Parish Church of Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland No. 008819

PosterMyWall.com

IN SERVICE ACTIVITY DAYS



13th & 14th February | 10am – 3pm each day.
register free online at ellonparishchurch.co.uk/activity-days or
contact the Kirk Centre Office





BLETHERS FROM THE BOARD

*Ellon Parish Church's Clerk to the Congregational Board **Mary Paterson** gives a brief overview of the work of the "temporal" side of the church's work.*

The last meeting of the Congregational Board of Ellon Parish Church was exactly that – the last ever meeting of the Congregational Board. It was a very ordinary meeting with all of the usual sort of business needing our attention, but each matter on the agenda had to be referred to one of the new teams to progress the Board's decision as the Board won't be around to do it itself. (By the way, I wonder how long it will be before we start talking about 'the teams' instead of 'the new teams'...)

Because the new teams are soon to be up and running, there were no new matters on the agenda but

there were quite a few which came under the category of 'Matters Arising'.

Waste water may not be the first thing that springs to mind as a subject for scintillating conversation, but it has been occupying the minds of Board members for quite some time now and does always lead to debate. The church estate gets its water from Scottish Water, but it has to be paid for and we have a choice of which company collects our money. Alex Gray has put a power of work into insuring that we get the best deal that we possibly can. It's a matter that is complicated by many rules and regulations (and, if I'm

perfectly honest, if I didn't have to take the minutes it might well be one of those matters where my eyes glaze over,) but Alex does seem to have arrived at a good deal just in time to hand this matter over to the Estate Management team.

It won't happen *very* soon, but we have been told of a grant to the value of £5000 that is available to help cover the cost of replacing the plastic chairs in the Kirk Centre.

These are being phased out in many halls and meeting places and replaced by new seating which is better in terms of meeting Health and Safety and fire regulations.

There were also matters to be dealt with referring to the actual buildings.

The bell is ringing on a Sunday again after the bell tower was examined more closely. The skylight in the St Ternan's hall is to be blocked off and slated over to prevent it from either leaking or dripping excess condensation on anyone unfortunate enough to be standing under it.

Most importantly, the roof on the Wee Chapel is to get a good overhaul. The felt roof will be stripped and replaced, as will the

guttering, fascias and soffits. This work can go ahead thanks to us being granted a reduction in the money we have to pay to the Church of Scotland in Ministry and Mission contributions this year.

After the practical side of the agenda was completed, we took time for a break; a cuppa and a fine piece – although some had more than one! But it was December and so we took it as an opportunity to get our tummies prepared for the over indulgences that were to come.

The final item for discussion was the new teams.

Previous to the meeting, all the

Board members had received information leaflets detailing the team names, the aims of each and the skill sets most likely to be required of members of that teams. Each Board member was given a 'choice' leaflet on which they were asked to write the names of three of the new teams on which they might like to work. Most folk, of course, will only join one team, but those with an excess of energy and/or time on their hands will be very welcome on more than one. The same leaflets and choice cards have been handed out in the kirk, but if you haven't



The bell is ringing on a Sunday again after the tower was examined more closely.

seen one yet, please feel free to enquire about them through all the usual channels – Alastair, Sandra, or Edith.

Before closing the meeting, Alastair took time to thank all Board members, chairpersons and Clerks over the years for the time and commitment they had given and

then, as usual, we all stood to say The Grace. It wasn't sad, no-one shed a tear, but it was a solemn wee moment. I'll miss my Board duties, but look forward to working on a new team and wherever else my particular faith journey takes me.

Best regards – as ever,

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

On Friday 26th January 2018 at our regular Friday morning prayer gathering we were delighted to be joined by three members of the Roman Catholic Fellowship here in Ellon to take part in a short act of worship and prayer for Christian Unity. We drank coffee, chatted, worshipped and prayed. It was simple and wonderful.

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COUNCILLOR ISOBEL DAVIDSON

We have asked each local councillor to give a brief update of their job and what is going on in the area for them.

I am Isobel Davidson and have been one of the 4 Local Councillors for the Ellon and District Ward of

Aberdeenshire Council since 2007.

I am currently Chair of the Formartine Area Committee which make decisions on planning applications, our Area Budget and other local topics for an area which

stretches from Turriff to Balmedie and Collieston to Potterton. Since the beginning of 2017 we have had a greater role in the scrutiny of local services and we can now make recommendations to any other appropriate Committee on any matter or policy which impacts our Area.

We had a difficult time with snow and ice in December. At times like these we realise how much we need to look after our elderly friends and neighbours who struggle to get out to do their everyday things. The Council will look at what happened and what improvements to the gritting regimes can be made but it is



I have helped a group ... to support local businesses and promote the town as a business location

difficult to clear the whole of Aberdeenshire in one go. We hadn't had any severe weather for around 7 years so justifying the

expense of a lot of snow clearing for occasional use is difficult. The Council is looking for local people to volunteer as Snow Wardens if they are willing and

able to help with gritting paths and pavements. Signing up means that folk are insured and get some basic equipment and

training. <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/roads/maintenance/winter-maintenance/#resilience>.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is also looking for volunteers with skills or equipment to help during emergencies. SFRS.CommunityAssetRegister@firescotland.gov.uk

Ellon is a growing town, however I get regular complaints about the lack of facilities. Local Councils run

swimming pools and sports centres but don't normally run other types of leisure facilities. I have helped a group get together to look at skatepark and biking tracks and another to support local businesses and promote the town as a business location. It is early days but I hope these projects get up and going.

Ellon Castle Gardens is a fantastic asset to our town and, with summer on its way they are developing their programme of volunteer days and events. As the gardens develop more and more people will come and visit so we need to ensure that the town is a welcoming place. Ellon Civic Pride look after the town centre flower beds and hanging baskets. They must be commended for all their hard work and they always welcome more volunteers.

You can report any compliments or complaints about the Council or

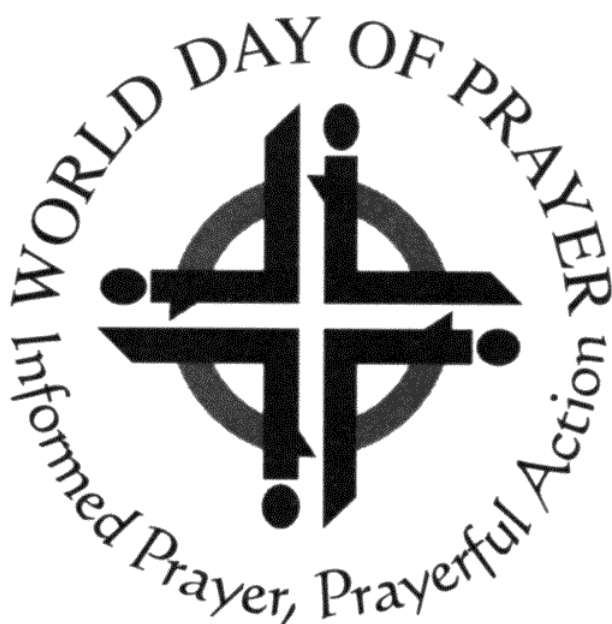
services such as roads, streetlights, missed waste collections, location of invasive plants, dog fouling and any other Council related topic through the Council

website. www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

There is a 'report' button near the top left corner or contact the Service Centre on [03456 08 12 00](tel:03456081200). There is also a national online reporting system called 'Fix My Street' www.fixmystreet.com and they will forward your complaint to the relevant Council.

You are always welcome to contact me on:

cllr.i.davidson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk, 01358 723926 or any of the other local Councillors for Ellon and District who can be contacted through the Service Centre or Aberdeenshire Council website.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

FRIDAY 2ND MARCH

See www.ellonparishchurch.co.uk nearer the time for more details

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Jesus says: "I am the way and the truth and the life"

Funerals

Cyril (Sid) Gray Adamson

James (Hamish) McIntosh Tocher

George Donald

Harold Kindness

Maura Moir

Mary Bartlet

William (Bill) Fraser

Dr James (Jim) Anderson

Sheena Carmichael

Dorothy Aiken

Erle Morrison

Douglas Blair

Dorothy (Dot) Robertson

Herbert (Hebbie) Will

Mary Birnie

Isobella (Isobel) Cruickshank

Alexander (Sandy) Milne

Lena Milne

Catherine (Cathy) Gibb

Elizabeth (Mary) Burr

John Riddle Milne

Harriet Bell

Baptisms

Riley James Neri (son of Heather and Kevin Neri)

FLOWER MINISTRY

Many thanks to the following for providing flowers in November and December to enhance our worship and to bring the comfort of the light of Christ to those in our parish in need of support.

Mrs T Moir, Mrs E Gollan, Mrs E Mackay, Miss A Stephen, Mrs L Paterson, Mrs E Duncan, Mrs E Henderson, Mrs R Mackie, Mrs J Wallace, Mrs J Rennie, Mrs J Shearer, Mrs K Milne, G. Burgess & Son, Mrs L Clark, Mrs M Clarke, Mrs I Mutch.



CURRENT SERMON SERIES



Current Sermon Series
January & February 2018
Ellon Parish Church

CONTACT DETAILS

MINISTRY TEAM

Rev Alastair JS Bruce | Parish Minister | c/o The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | t. 01358 723787 | e. abruce@churchofscotland.org.uk | Days off: Saturday and Monday

Pam Adam | Parish Worker (Children and Families Development) | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. padam@churchofscotland.org.uk | t. 01358 725690 | Working days for Ellon: Thursday, Friday & Sunday

Nicola Bruce | Parish Worker (Mission Development) | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. nbruce@churchofscotland.org.uk | t. 07513 183074 | working days: Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday

Alison Young | Director of Music | c/o The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | e. assanyoung@hotmail.co.uk | 01358 721196

KIRK CENTRE

Edith Walker | Administrator | The Kirk Centre, 4 Station Rd, Ellon | info@ellonparishchurch.co.uk | t. 01358 725690 | Working hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 12noon & 12:30pm – 2:30pm



ELLON PARISH
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

meaningful faith | meaningful community | meaningful witness

www.ellonparishchurch.co.uk

Ellon Parish Church of Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland No. SC008819
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