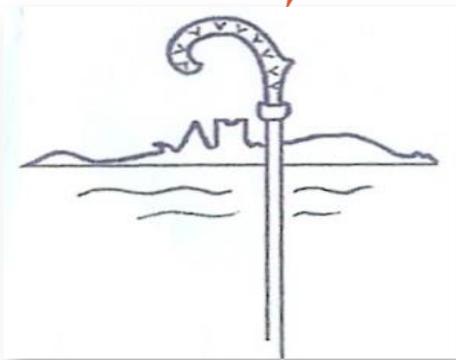


ST FILLAN'S CROSIER



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Beautiful postcards of St Fillan's Church
Drawn by Alex Harper in 2012
available from Eileen Harper 01383 860151
sophieharper@googlemail.com



I joined the Sporting Memories foundation Scotland in September 2018 as a part time Group Delivery and Practice Coordinator. At Sporting Memories we are dedicated to bringing together older adults to talk about and remember sport. At our clubs we provide social and physical activities where everyone can have fun and make friends with the aim of supporting well-being. Many of the adults who come to the clubs welcome the weekly company as they may have become isolated within their community or are living with low mood, dementia or other long term conditions, but above all everyone has one thing in common; a love of talking about and remembering sport.

As a passionate sports fan this was the perfect job to allow me to shallow to dive to retirement! All was going so well, I had managed to start community groups in Burntisland in conjunction with the Toll Centre, Kirkcaldy Rugby Club and St Columba's Church Glenrothes. In addition, I was also supporting sessions at Ostlers House and Napier House Care homes in Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes respectively. But this all came to a grinding halt in mid March unfortunately our involvement with the care homes has been paused indefinitely but I was determined to maintain contact with our club members in the community clubs. Initially this started off with me and the group volunteers putting in a weekly phone call, to check in with the club members and make sure everyone was okay. However, I felt that we should try and do more and see if it would be possible to organize a weekly on-line club meeting. So with the aid of family members and many phone calls spent talking people through the process of logging on I managed to get most of the members of the Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes groups up and running but unfortunately the capability didn't exist for the Burntisland club but the members there continue to receive a weekly telephone call.

The "virtual" club meeting started in mid April and here we are now approaching Christmas with the clubs as strong as ever running every Wednesday from 10:30-12:00 and 1:30-3:00pm. We have topical reminiscing, quizzes, and guest speakers from the world of sport and a bit of physical exercise. The beauty of course of hosting the club meetings on line means that members don't have to come from Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes and we now have people joining us from the west of Scotland as well as occasional visitors from down south. If anybody reading this likes the sound of what we do and fancies having a bit of fun on a Wednesday please get in touch, you can find out more about Sporting Memories by going into our website www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com

Gary Waddell 01383 860802

Letter from the Manse

At Easter, few of us thought we would still be in the Covid Emergency by the beginning of autumn. Things look up, and then the numbers falling ill go up, and we go back into a variety of Tiers of lockdown.

It is easy to criticise our politicians, who appear to chop and change their minds and their advice far too often. Criticism is easy, and perhaps we should take a moment to remember the awesome responsibility resting on their shoulders, as they have to decide matters of life and death, and the allocation of finite resources. Whether we like their policies or not, we should uphold those whom we have elected to govern us in our prayers at this incredibly difficult time.

-o0o-

It has been a challenge and also fun to record Church Services with Douglas Christie-Scott. He is a computer genius, clearly, as he mixes and joins a variety of different recordings to turn them into a real Act of Worship, which is being watched by people as far away as the USA and Thailand. We have shared hymns from across the world, with old favourites and new items as part of our weekly Worship. A big 'Thank You' to Douglas, and to the many readers who are taking part.

Thanks to the hard work by Catherine Duncan and David Graham, many of you have been able to worship in your own homes via the Website Service, or via email, and we owe them a vote of thanks, too.

The re-opening of St Fillan's Church for 'in person' Worship went very smoothly, thanks to those who volunteered to carry out the various tasks now demanded by the Church of Scotland, such as booking a place, checking names & phone numbers at the door, and allocating seats.

Some meetings have continued, mainly via Zoom. While a Zoom meeting with up to 10 people is manageable, the ones with over 50 people all Zooming together are nigh on impossible. 😊😊

But we are where we are, so perseverance is the maxim.

There is a rumour abroad, saying that "*Christmas is Cancelled*". Well, it is NOT cancelled. How we will be allowed to mark the Nativity isn't clear yet, and things will be very different, but Worship to mark Christmas will happen on Christmas Eve & Christmas Day. Please see the St Fillan's Website for details in the weeks to come.

God's promise of a Saviour was heard in good & in bad times, as Prophets proclaimed that God had not, and would not abandon His creation, and that in God's own time, the Messiah would come on earth, to show God's love. Neither conquest nor the Exile was able to destroy God's promise, and so Our Lord was born in Bethlehem, to live out His Mission on earth. Through His life, Ministry, death & Resurrection, Jesus declared God's saving Grace, and He conquered sin and death for all people.

This is the Gospel of Christ, which has been proclaimed through times of warfare, persecution, plague, and oppression. At this time of Covid, God's promise still shines brightly, and the story of Jesus stands as witness to that Divine promise. As the Prophet Isaiah writes:

*"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;
and the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

Peter Gerbrandy Baird
Parish Minister

St. Fillan's Website

A worldwide audience and early risers are the surprise results from looking at the church website statistics. The website is being accessed by people in the local area but a small but significant number of users are from outside the UK including the United States, China, The Netherlands, Thailand and 22 other countries. Also most users are accessing the website between 6am and 11am on a Sunday morning.

The start of the Covid-19 restrictions coincided with the launch of the St. Fillan's website. We were lucky that planning had been ongoing for some time beforehand. The website was designed to give news of the church and its activities but currently it is mainly being used to view the online services. Douglas Christie Scott has done a great job recording and editing the services, these are recorded earlier in the week and are similar to the 10:30 live service.

As mentioned, the main use of the website has been the Sunday Services but other noticeable events have been Holy Week services, VE & VJ anniversaries, St Fillan's Youth Eggciting competition, Virtual Family Fun Week, Songs of Praise and Norman's Christian Aid walk. It has also been good to see different members of the congregation taking part in the services. There is also a significant history section provided by the Aberdour Heritage Centre.

The website is not static but constantly changing, so keep coming back and not just on Sunday mornings.

<https://stfillanschurch.org.uk>

PRAYER GROUP

Prayer Group meets every Wednesday at 2.30pm for 20/30 minutes. We used to meet in the Church, but after several interruptions from parties of visitors, we moved to the Vestry! After lockdown, we had to refrain from meeting and agreed that we would still pray on our own at home. Each week we agreed what we would pray for.

As summer progressed, the group decided to meet in St Fillan's churchyard, socially distanced. After a short discussion, we decide who and what we shall pray for on that particular day. Then we walk round the churchyard, socially distanced, and pray silently. We usually limit ourselves to 3 prayers; for example, for all those in care homes and hospitals, for all those in education, for those who have lost their jobs and are worried about their futures. We concentrate on one prayer at a time as we walk round the churchyard and at the end we stand and say together The Lord's Prayer.

During the winter months we shall probably have to revert again to saying our prayers at home. If you would like to join us, please get in touch. It is very easy and yet the discipline of regularly saying prayers together is, I believe, a good thing, especially in these strange worrying times. If there is something you would like us to pray for, please let me know.

Eileen Harper – 860151 – sophieharp@googlemail.com

Church Finance and Covid -19

Many years ago when I was Treasurer of a Methodist Circuit, which involved 23 Churches I was challenged to explain why we needed to keep reserves, I explained that it insured us against unexpected costs such as roof repairs or replacement windows. I also advised that we were expected to keep reserves to cover costs for say 6 months in case our income dried up. This was met with stunned silence until someone said surely this can never happen. I wonder if they remember saying that now we are faced with Covid -19 and all the restrictions we are having to deal with including empty Churches.

St Fillan's Income and expenditure are both down for this year and although we are doing remarkably well thanks to everyone's generosity we will be faced with a shortfall at the end of this financial year. We are not alone in this and many of the other Churches in the Presbytery are faced with larger shortfalls and do not have the reserves that we are very fortunate to have. We make a monthly payment to the Church of Scotland which is based on our average income for the last three years. This is by far our biggest expense and covers such things as Ministerial Stipends and the cost of running 121 George Street. We have recently received word from the Church of Scotland that there is to be a reduction in the amount we will pay for next year. This will go a long way in replacing the deficit for this year. All Churches are to receive similar reductions which is a great reassurance to us all. This will of course make a huge impact on the income of 121 George Street which of course may affect jobs in the long run. I would ask you to keep their staff in your prayers.

We are faced with unprecedented problems not only in the Church but nationwide as well. We can only pray that a vaccine can be found so that we can all return to some sort of normality soon.

Bill Henderson
Finance Convenor

Chernobyl Children's Lifeline

Sadly, there was no holiday for the 'Chernobyl Children' this year. What a disappointment for that little group who didn't get the opportunity to have their holiday adventure in Scotland. It's not just a holiday for them, it's also an opportunity to enjoy good food and fresh air, which hugely improves their long-term health. Also, they go home with new clothes and shoes, and lots of precious memories. The Chernobyl Children's Group in West Fife is hoping that next year they will be able to welcome again a group of children. So, yes, they want us to keep supporting them!

I know loose change is in short supply, but please try to keep saving when you can, so we can boost their funds. I have just sent the Chernobyl Treasurer £130 – a lot less than usual – but hopefully we shall do better next year. Please bring any money to 6 Hewitt Place (leave in the porch if I am not at home), or contact me if you need me to collect. (860151, sophieharp@googlemail.com). Thank you.

FAMILY FUN WEEK

Our Summer event, 'Watt-a-lot' Castle was to have been from Monday 20th July - Thursday 23rd July, using scenery kindly given to us by Newcraigs Evangelical Church in Kirkcaldy, when we'd hoped to welcome Boys and Girls Primary 1 - 7. Sadly that was not to be as, yet again, covid-19 restrictions were still in place.

What could we do to let the youngsters know we had not forgotten them and that we would all be missing out on meeting again for our fun learning week? It was decided we could put some games, puzzles etc. onto the website and hopefully address the sad situation in that way.

Reverends Peter and Carol, plus some of the Team, recorded little messages; word-search puzzles, baking recipes, and craft were created and two or three videos of Jesus Calming The Storm were all cleverly linked together by Sara and David then kindly posted the link on the website. We were very happy to be told there was a goodly number of 'hits'.....whether all were children remains to be seen. (I think some of the adults too may have had a wee peak!) Anyway, we do hope you all enjoyed taking part and found it fun!!

At the moment current restrictions would suggest we will not be able to have our Advent Fun Morning, so hope and pray we can put some similar fun items together for the website at that time.

Catherine E. Duncan (Fun Group Secretary)



Special Commission

As many of you will remember, the Presbytery set up a Special Commission to re-allocate Ministries across the Presbytery, and to recommend the closure of Churches, and the Church of Scotland struggles with reducing resources.

St Fillan's is to have discussions with the Congregations in Dalgety Bay, Inverkeithing, and North Queensferry, about closing buildings, and losing half a Minister post. To date, there has been little progress on starting these conversations, which will be facilitated by 'Place for Hope, and independent charity trained in conflict resolution and arbitration.

The Discussion Team representing St Fillan's is chaired by the Session Clerk, John Gordon, working with Lesley Gordon, Daphne McFarlane, Bill Henderson, and the Rev'd Maureen Stirzaker, with the Minister in attendance. We will keep you informed of progress.

Presbytery of Fife

As the bells toll to mark the beginning of 2021, the Presbyteries of Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy, and St Andrew's will merge to become the Presbytery of Fife. The new Presbytery will employ full- & part-time staff to support the work of Congregations.

Our two Elders who serve on the Presbytery of Dunfermline, Catherine Duncan and Bill Henderson, have both indicated they wish to stand down from their duties during 2021. I want to thank them for their commitment and support over the many years they represented St Fillan's, during some very challenging moments in the work of the Presbytery.

Parish and congregational register

Bereavements

2020

Mr. Robin Rennie;

Mrs. Helen Caldwell;

Mr. Ken Jeffs;

Mr. Andrew Walker;

Mrs. Barbara Trentham;

Mr. William Chalmers

Things beyond our seeing, things beyond our hearing, things beyond our imagining have been prepared by God for those who love Him
Corinthians 2:9

n.b. Due to Covid-19 restrictions no Weddings or Baptisms were permitted.

Dementia Friendly update

Prior to lockdown as many of you will already know, I have been working alongside Ruth McCabe from Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, to encourage Aberdour to become a dementia friendly (DF) community. Various DF programmes were delivered in the village and were well attended. Various businesses have also gone through the programme and have been awarded the dementia friendly badge and certificate. Two thirds of our village have now been through the programme.

The aim of these programmes is to raise awareness of dementia in its many forms in order that as a village we can help support those living with dementia and their family and friends.

We were about to deliver a programme to the primary school just prior to lockdown and this will be picked up when it is safe to do so.

To the future, it was thought that an information station could be set up somewhere central and accessible in the village where information will be made available about local services and sources of help around dementia.

Ruth McCabe has been tasked with a 2 year project to make as many towns and villages around Fife dementia friendly, raising awareness throughout the Kingdom. She has been an inspiration to everyone who has worked with her with her wealth of knowledge and great enthusiasm. Our village now has a greater understanding and awareness of dementia and we are now in a good position to be of support to those in our community, now and in the future who are affected by dementia.

Christine Waddell

CHURCH FLOWER MINISTRY



All the ribbons and wrappings were bought, then all I had to do was to go for the flowers and cut some greenery to prepare the wee Mother's Day buttonholes to be handed out at our Mothering Sunday Service.....but ALAS and ALACK.....Coronavirus had other ideas and we were SHUT OUT!! and not permitted to attend Church from 24th March (Mother's Day) !!!

It has been a long, strange and sad time, being unable to take our turn of arranging flowers in the Sanctuary (whilst relishing the peace and quiet) and equally in giving them out as tokens of support or celebration. At least I was able to send out some virtual flower arrangements by e.card on a few occasions. Unfortunately it is not possible to smell the roses that way!!!

Talking of distributing flowers after the Service we must say a VERY BIG THANK YOU to Eleanor Morrison, who has, for many years, been responsible for the preparation of the distribution roster, but now feels the time has come to step down. Happily she has found someone to take over the duty and I would like to give a very warm welcome to Mairi Waugh who has agreed to take on the task.

Although we are now allowed back to Worship there are still many restrictions and I think it may be some time before we can resume the Flower Ministry as we know it. Under normal circumstances the new Rotas to put flowers into the Sanctuary and to distribute them would be coming out soon, but, until we know better what is happening, I fear they will have to be put 'on hold'. We will of course keep you informed.

In the meantime, to enable us keep our records up to date - if you would like to 'adopt a date' for arranging/help distribute flowers (once a year) or would like to ask anything, please don't hesitate to contact us - Catherine (860611) for putting flowers into Church or Mairi (860208) for distribution. Thank you.

Catherine E. Duncan (Flower Convener)



Home Communion

The Church of Scotland has agreed with the Scottish Government that Ministers may visit homes for Prayer and/or for the Sacrament of Holy Communion. A maximum of six people may be present, and must all belong to the same household. If you wish to receive the Sacrament, please contact the Minister on 01383 861522, or via pgerbrandy-baird@churchofscotland.org.uk.

A Poet visits Aberdour....

In the early 1970's a Poet holidayed at the Woodside Hotel.
She was Kate Y.A. Bone (1896-1985) Although originally from Kirkcaldy, lived in Colinton in
Edinburgh, and published "Thistle By-Blaws" in 1956
She used to visit The Pharmacy and chat about art and poetry and how she enjoyed coming to
Aberdour. She presented a copy of this poem to the Rev. John Scott, who passed it on to me.
Although the subject of the poem may not be St. Fillan's Church it captures the spirit of a small
village Kirk in by-gone days, in the genuine language of the Fife dialect
I feel that it is worth re-reading at this time of uncertain changes to our lives, and to our Kirk.

GAITHERIN' PSAULM

As I gaed up the Kirk Wynd Bray
The bells were ringin' in
I took tae rinnin' syne, for fear
That I would be ahin'.

I passed an auld man on the brae,
His step was slaw and calm,
"Dinna be rinnin' lass, he said,
There's aye the Gaitherin' psaulm".

"The gaitherin' psaulm --we a' jine in,
While waiting for the ithers
Wha hae slept in --or lost their keys,
Oor sisters an' oor brithers"

"I'll hae tae rin, kind sir, I said,
The organ will be playin'
I've never heard o' gaitherin' psaulms,
I dinna ken the sayin' ".

"The organ – tuch ! he said wi' scorn,
Some whistles in a kist.
They a' cud be dung doon the morn,
An they'd never be missed.

But psaulms like Eastgate, Martyrdom,
Strathcathro, Invocation;
Devizes tae – Their names
Are hafted in oor nation

"When as a lad, I used to rin
As you are rinnin' noo,
I hurried up another brae,
An' paused upon it's broo.

"Then on the gentil simmer air,
As I stood on the hill,
The notes o' Wiltshire hung like gems,
An' a' the warld stood still.

"An I hae often felt sin syne
That moment douce and calm,
When I stude at the Kirkyaird wa'
An' heard the gaitherin' psaulm.

I hurried up intae the kirk,
The organ played a chord,
I took my place, an' rose tae sing
"Give thanks unto the Lord".

But in my hert I stude outside
A wee kirk on a hill,
An' harkit tae the gaitherin' psaulm,
While a' the warld stude still."

Kate Bone.

Farming at Parkend during lockdown and beyond

Who would have thought at the start of 2020, with so much planned and so much to look forward to, that we would be facing a world health pandemic and that a new coronavirus (COVID-19) was about to dramatically change all of our lives.

By the end of March 2020, the country was in lockdown and we have all had to adapt to a "new normal" way of living.

More than 6 months on and here is an insight into how coronavirus has impacted us as dairy farmers and as a family.

With many businesses ordered to close and many millions of workers furloughed, we considered ourselves fortunate in many ways in that the milk we produce is contracted to a supermarket and so we as "key workers" were able to continue our daily work to help feed the nation.

Sadly, for many other farmers who supplied the large coffee chains, cafes and restaurants, it was a much different story. With these outlets no longer open, their milk was surplus to requirements and they were not paid by their processor. This consequently resulted in huge financial hardship and some of them have had to make the heartbreaking decision to sell their pedigree cows and to give up dairying.

As a result of this unprecedented situation and a huge oversupply of milk, the market had to be stabilised and so we then had to cut our milk supply by 3% for a short period of time. In the grand scheme of things, this was a small price to pay.

One of the biggest disappointments for us during the pandemic was the cancellation of not only the small local shows but also the Royal Highland Show, Scotland's largest outdoor event and the premier showcase for the food, farming and rural industry. For many farmers this is the highlight of their year and this is only the second time since World War 2 that it has been cancelled, the last time being in 2001 following an outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease. Most farmers work very long hours and are often by themselves for long periods of time so events like the Highland Show are hugely important from a socializing perspective and for their mental health.

On a personal level, we as a Family were all very much looking forward to celebrating Amy and Ollie's wedding in St .Fillan's on Saturday 12th September followed by a marquee reception at Parkend. Sadly this too has had to be put on hold and has been rescheduled for the Autumn of 2021.

However, we have much to be thankful for. We have all stayed safe and well throughout. Our thoughts and prayers must go out to the many families who have lost loved ones and to all those who have lost their jobs or their businesses and who face an uncertain future due to this life-threatening virus. The search for a vaccine continues around the world and we are all hoping for a breakthrough soon.

Brian & June Weatherup

Armistice Day

As in previous years, there will be a brief Act of Remembrance to mark the 1918 Armistice, on Wednesday 11 November, at 10.55 at the War Memorial. If you wish to attend, please observe the rules on distancing.

I am not a badge of honour,

I am not a racist smear,

**I am not a fashion statement to be worn
but once a year,**

**I am not glorification of conflict or of
war.**

I am not a paper ornament or a token,

I am more.

I am a loving memory of a father or son,

**A mother, a sister or daughter each and
every one.**

I am paper or enamel,

I am old or shining new,

I am a way of saying thank you,

To every one of you.

**I am a single poppy, a reminder to you
all,**

**That courage, faith and honour will
stand where heroes fall.**

