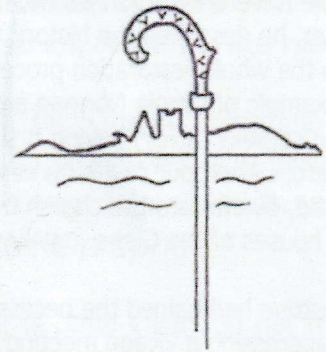


# ST FILLAN'S CROSIER



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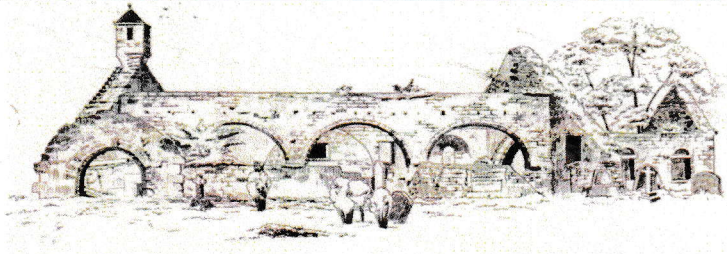
Christmas and Advent services

Catherine Duncan retired as Session Clerk after 22 years of service to St Fillan's Church in March this year.

As we all know Catherine will, with out doubt carry on working tirelessly within the Church in her dedication to the Lord.

*Proverbs 22:1*

*A good name is more desirable than great riches;  
To be esteemed is better than silver or gold.*



## The Dream came True

On Wednesday the seventh of July 1926 a service was held for the Re-Dedication and Re-Opening of our St Fillan's Church after its restoration, at which The Right Rev. J McCallum D.D. the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland officiated. For 130 years our church had lain unused and uncared for as a roofless ruin whilst the congregation worshipped in what is now known as the Church Hall in the High Street.

When the Reverend Dr Johnstone, first visited the ancient ruin in 1913 before his induction as Minister of our Parish a year later, he described the historic site as a "beautiful and peaceful spot". He was the man who conceived and carried through the whole restoration process to produce the church we have today. St Fillan's has been described as "one the finest example of simple Norman architecture in Scotland and has been referred to as "The Miniature Cathedral" (D W Rutherford 'St Fillan's Church') having first been built in the early twelfth century. It was a place of worship for perhaps 80 years before Aberdour castle (as we know it now) was built (Govt. Pub. Aberdour Castle). The original castle, it has been suggested, overlooked the church from the top of Whitelaw – the large knoll about a ¼ mile to the north on which now are the houses of the Glebe. ("Aberdour and Inchcolm' unpublished Dr R Johnstone).

Dr Johnstone had gained the necessary consents from the Presbytery, Local Council, and Lord Morton for the restoration before addressing a village meeting in the Institute (Community Centre) in August 1925 at which he gained overwhelming support for his idea. He explained to his large audience that an anonymous donor had offered to pay all the expenses for the whole project, and that finally made what had just been a wonderful dream a viable proposition to regain a beautiful church for our congregation in a quiet and lovely setting from the ruin within the old graveyard. (Dunfermline Press). The long delay to proceed since the beginning of his ministry here had been due, in no small measure, to financial considerations now happily resolved, the war, and his own military service during 1917 and 1918.

Following the public meeting, work proceeded with great care and detail to ensure that graves remained undisturbed. The people of Aberdour laid the path leading to the various entrances of the church while professional builders carefully carried out reconstruction within the old building. Relocation of the original entrances was made, and many generous donations enabled the building of a vestry and the purchase of chairs (that were later renewed in 1973 for the 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary) whilst the stained glass windows were commissioned by individuals or families, and the organ was given as a gift. Most of which we have within our church has been donated. The roof was tiled with Caithness stones and those found still lying about the old churchyard. (Reroofing in 2006 was completed with stone from Hexham, Northumberland); the bell which used to hang in Dalgety Old Church (St Bridget's) was given to St Fillan's; the font was found in the rubble during the restoration; and so this building which began as a simple but solid stone church, had been transformed into the place of worship we have today in spite of a minor fire in 1959 followed by another one in 2013 resulting in extensive interior cleaning and refurbishment.

The Misses Lawrie of Starley Hall were eventually revealed as the anonymous donors who made the Minister's conception of restoration possible. (Session Minutes 15<sup>th</sup> Nov: 1926).

Dr Johnstone continued as our parish minister until 1940. He died aged 71 years in April 1944 and his grave can be seen near to the castle entrance in the north west of the graveyard. In 1950, Mr Stalker, his successor, dedicated a brass memorial plaque (which may be seen on the north wall of the chancel) on which the inscription reads:

*"To the Glory of God this tablet is erected in memory of all the clergy who have served this parish, and especially to the Rev. Robert Johnstone, D.D..... by whose efforts this church was restored in 1926".*

## LETTER FROM THE MANSE

To paraphrase the Queen's 1992 *'Annus Horribilis'* speech: "2015 is not a year on which I shall look back with undiluted pleasure."

Many of us can see what's going wrong in the lives of others; we are less good at understanding what goes on in our own. My breakdown in the opening days of this year came as an unwelcome bolt from the blue. Being unable to comprehend what's going on in your own head is a pretty terrifying experience. The doctor told me to get away from Aberdour, which I did. But I remember vividly standing on a platform in York Station unable to understand the journey-boards; scary.

Thanks to medication, counselling and the kindness of many within St Fillan's and in our lovely village I was able to return to work in May. I am most grateful to the many people who showed they cared, through prayers, cards and through giving me space to recover.

-o0o-

The world is going through a massive amount of upheaval. Not so much a time of change, but more like a change of the established world-order in a way few of us can yet comprehend.

The awful scenes played out in Syrian and Iraqi towns and villages falling to ISIL show the ugly face of religious and political fanaticism, leading to untold suffering, not only among the persecuted Christian communities there.

No-one would have been able to predict the massive movement of people across North Africa and the Middle East to Europe. These large migrations have led to many deaths along the way.

I do not believe that human beings drowning in the Mediterranean, or starving on the Croatian borders, or being killed by people-smugglers, are simply political problems –first and foremost these are *human* problems.

Those who died in the back of an hermetically sealed refrigeration truck in Austria, and the little boy found floating off the Turkish coast are human beings, like us, created in the image of God, with the Divine spark of God's love within their souls.

Two Biblical stories come to mind. The first is a reading we used during our Service of Holy Communion in June from the Acts of the Apostles. St Paul and others are shipwrecked: "*Once safely ashore, we found the island was called Malta. The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built us a fire and welcomed us all, because it was raining*".

The second is from the Gospel according to St Matthew, chapter 7: *So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.*"

Our Lord's teaching is quite clear: do not try and make distinctions, but treat all as you would want others to treat you. Such a way of living would avoid awful events like the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide, the Srebrenica massacre, and a whole host of other past and present tragedies.

In this season of Remembrance we would do well to remember past horrors, and the courage of men and women who fought for our freedom. But such remembrance would be a hollow gesture if we would not dedicate ourselves to living in a way that would prove worthy of the sacrifice made for us in time of war.

And for Christians there is the added call to live our lives as worthy of the sacrifice made by Our Lord on Golgotha, and through His glorious Resurrection, and do to others as He did for us: a life of service and love for all creation, made in the image of God.

*Peter Gerbrandy-Baird*

Parish Minister

## SPONSORED GOLF

Taking part; members and friends of St Fillan's and Dalgety Bay Parish Churches. Despite a slightly smaller entry and poor weather this year St Fillan's managed to retain the David Rutherford Cup by a narrow margin. The cup is awarded for the best 6 scores returned during the week.

These scores were returned by:

Maggie Christie	41 points
David Slater	40 points
Rosemary Scott	39 points
Jimmy Wilson	38 points
Elsbeth Miller	35 points
Norman Niven	34 points

Individual trophy winners were:

The Dovecot Trophy (best lady) Maggie Christie  
The St Fillan's Trophy (best gent), David Slater

A sponsorship total of £610 was divided between Christian Aid and Macmillan Cancer Support.

Our thanks go to all those who took part and gave donations over the years that this event has been held St Fillan's members and friends have raised over £30,000.

Lois Hutchinson

## St Fillans Annual Sale of Work on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November

Doors open 2pm; £2 entry to the sale includes tea/coffee, with homemade scone, pancake and fancy cake.

The stalls include; delicious baking and tablet, plants and home produce, new and nearly new gifts and jewellery, a Christmas table, and Art table, bric a brac with all sorts, a toy department, books, music and DVDs. There is also a bottle stall to try your luck and a superb Christmas hamper to be won.

Do please join us on the day to take advantage of the splendid fare and unrivalled bargains.

You might want to donate; unwanted gifts, items once loved but now forgotten, goodies for the hamper or bottle stall, baking for treats, to be sold, or served up on the day. Liberate your castoffs; make space on your shelves, start potting up your cuttings! All your contributions will be most gratefully received.

Hand in to the Church Hall late afternoon/early evening on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> or the morning of Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November.

## Parish and congregational register

### Bereavements

**2015** Mrs. Una Chalmers; Mrs. Sheila McMillan; William Hutchison; Mrs. Mary Dewar; Lewis Banks; Mrs. Mary Garvie; Mrs. Kathleen Fergus; James Wyse; Mrs. Mary Jackson; John Thomson.

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

### Marriages

**2015** Louise Coutts and Paul Licznerski; Margaret Watson and John Aitken

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder

### Baptisms

**2015** Iolanthe Zia Macbeth; Isla May Louise Hutt; Poppy Belle Walker

Jesus said "Let the children come to me"

(NOTE: Please advise editor of any omissions from above – these will be included next time)



## Flower Ministry



Sincere thanks to all who in the past have responded (by coaxing or otherwise) to the request to "Adopt a date" to contribute, or supply and/or arrange flowers in time for Sunday Worship. There are still a number of dates available for 'adoption' if YOU would like to become involved (see rota in Welcome area). Please don't be put off by thinking floral art standard is needed.....suffice just to put some flowers in water in vases which are kept in the Session House.

Our sincere thanks are due also to all who so generously contribute to the St. Fillan's Flower Fund itself throughout the year, enabling provision of blooms for the Flower Festival, special events, Christmas decorations and small "in our thoughts" arrangements. Any donations for, or enquiries about Church Flowers should be addressed to the convener, Catherine Duncan - Tel. 860611.

### St Fillan's welcomes two new elders

Two new elders, Sally Sheail and Gavin Hay, were admitted to the office of eldership at a service held on 23 August

Sally said "After being on the periphery of the church for a number of years before joining St Fillan's, I was delighted to find such a kind and caring community. It renewed my faith and restored my sense of belonging. As your elder, I hope to be able to help build on this sense of community."

Gavin was brought up in Dalgety Bay and has carved out a career in Financial Services over many years, having spent the last 8 years as an Agricultural Bank Manager. He lives in Dalgety Bay with his wife, Sara, and his two young daughters.

**Kathleen Fergus**

As most people will know, Kathleen Fergus passed away in New Mexico on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October. She was involved in many activities in the church and in the village. This tribute is a very personal one, but I hope it reflects the thoughts of many.

Although Kathleen had lived in Aberdour for many years, I only got to know her well when she invited me to join her in the Link group which was formed to bring St Columba's and St Fillan's closer together. Having lived opposite St Columba's, Kathleen had formed a good relationship with the congregation in that practical, faithful way that she tackled all things. The Link group only met twice a year with two from each congregation, but those evenings in Kathleen's house formed the basis for a relationship which I came to value hugely. Kathleen became an elder in 1998 and she 'took off' as someone said to me recently. She was willing and able to help in all kinds of ways. Open Door was founded by her in 2002; the idea was to have a social gathering linked to the church, but open to all, during the winter months. I well remember her saying to her first committee 'well, I shall be there for the first and the last meetings, but the rest is up to you!' Kathleen was an amazing organiser – focused and clear – and able to 'spread the load' far and wide. I remember when she started the Family Fun enterprise for the children, initially with Scripture Union, she was going down the list of things that needed to be done, and I volunteered to do something. She turned to me and said, 'no Eileen, you are already giving hospitality to some of the group and that is enough'. She wanted to involve as many folk as she could. If you wanted to do something, Kathleen would find something for you to do, but she wouldn't keep piling the tasks on to a handful of individuals. Her enthusiasm was infectious and it was all about the event, not about her. She had a vision, she followed it through and if there were any obstacles, they seemed somehow to melt away.

Kathleen had a deep faith which showed in everything she did, but she was not ostentatious at all and I never heard her raise her voice or get annoyed with anyone. She had a good sense of humour and always a twinkle in her eye. She instilled in me a feeling that I must do my best, but that God was in control, and we should trust him to help us. She also led the Sunday School team for a while, setting out a curriculum to give the children a good foundation in the Christian faith. She taught the older children and they responded well to her. Of course, Kathleen was a teacher by profession and was always well prepared, but also interested in her pupils whether they were children or adults like me! I was always sad for myself, but happy for her, when she went away to New Mexico in October each year. It was lovely to receive her e-mails with news of her children and grandchildren and always a special one at Christmas. She knew instinctively how to keep life in perspective. What a gift!

The last time I saw Kathleen it was with the expectation that she would return again to Aberdour, even although she had no address here anymore. She had always prayed and trusted God for guidance and she felt the time had come for her to set up home permanently in New Mexico.

I shall always remember Kathleen for her friendship, for all the good things she did in our church, especially for the young folk, for her amazing vision, enthusiasm, energy, sense of humour, her organisation and attention to detail, together with a deep powerful faith.

A very special lady.

Eileen Harper

### World Mission Stamp Appeal for 2015- 16.

This year the Stamp Appeal is supporting the work of the Church of Scotland HIV Programme which supports partners both in Scotland and overseas to help those infected and affected by HIV.

HIV and AIDS does not often make the headlines these days. Many people think that the problems caused by the global epidemic are things of the past. Unfortunately, it is still an issue, particularly for our partner churches in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

There is still no vaccine against HIV, and while retroviral treatment is available for those lucky enough to access it, there is still no cure. Each year over 1.5 million people die of HIV- and AIDS- related illnesses, and over 2 million new infections are recorded. There are still a huge number of children who have lost one or both parents to HIV, and who are reliant on the extended family or community to care for them.

For over 12 years, thanks to the generosity of church members and their fund-raising, the Church of Scotland HIV Programme has been able to offer support to partner churches overseas as they engage with the reality of HIV and AIDS in their communities; nearer to home, we also support local organisations in Scotland who are reaching out to families infected and affected by HIV.

The projects we support at home and overseas run education awareness programmes, support orphans and vulnerable children, train volunteers to provide home-based care, facilitate support groups for people living with HIV so that they can live positively in every sense of the word. They also challenge the stigma and discrimination which so often accompanies an HIV+ diagnosis.

#### How to contribute

- Post your stamps to World Mission Stamp Project, PO Box 9191, Wishaw, Lanarkshire, ML2 0YB or
- Hand-deliver to Susan Morton, 4, Manse Street, Aberdour
- or leave in the basket to the right of the door as you enter St. Fillan's
- or leave in wooden box on the first windowsill as you enter into the Church Hall
- or give to Gordon in the Post Office.
- If you believe your stamp collection is valuable please arrange for Keith Scott to collect it personally by telephone - 01698 351323

Catherine Duncan then very kindly takes the stamps to Presbytery where they are uplifted and taken to Wishaw.

Thank you very much for taking the trouble to collect and then deliver the stamps. Each stamp counts.

Susan Morton

*This article should have appeared in the current edition of The Village News, but unfortunately got lost between Dalgety Bay and Aberdour!*

It is often said Spring is a time of start-ups and reawakening but in church life the same equally applies to the month of September.

Whilst some of our organisations such as Parents and Toddlers, Mucky Pups and Lunches continue throughout the year, September sees the start of many others who have enjoyed a break over the summer months.

Aberdour Scottish Country Dancing Club starts again on 16<sup>th</sup> September and anyone interested in joining should speak with Sandra McSkimming on 823454. Open Door begins on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October and continues through to March. Carpet Bowls, Church Club and all our activities for the youngsters such as Guides, Scouts, Brownies and cubs all re-form in September.

We have our annual trip to Inchcolm on 13<sup>th</sup> September and tickets are available from Willie's and The Purple Shop. We have a coffee morning on 19<sup>th</sup> September in the church hall and our annual sale of work on 21<sup>st</sup> November.

But what of the summer moths just past. We held a very successful Family Fun Week with our friends at St.Columba's starting on 27<sup>th</sup> July for four days and a total of 65 children attended. Tuesday of that week saw the hotly contested Quiz and on Thursday evening we had our BBQ (and it didn't rain this year!). The Flower Festival in St.Fillan's raised £370 and as with all these events, the minister and kirk session are ever grateful for the efforts of so many willing helpers.

On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August we were delighted to welcome two new elders on to Session and we are sure Sally Sheail and Gavin Hay will contribute to the work of the church here in Aberdour.

It is very easy to get out of the habit of going to church on a regular basis so if you haven't been for some time, if you haven't seen our beautifully refurbished building and perhaps you think you will not know anyone, take that step and come and worship with us one Sunday morning. You will be assured of a warm welcome and if entering the church building is a bit daunting, join us in the church hall on the last Sunday of every month for worship and a welcome tea or coffee at the end of the service.

Ewart McSkimming Tel.No.823454



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

### Christmas and Advent Services, 2015, in St Fillan's Church

- Sunday 29 November    Advent Service in the Church Hall, 10.30am
- Sunday 6 December    Advent Service in St Fillan's, 10.30am  
Advent Evening Service, 6.30pm
- Sunday 13 December    Informal Dvent Service in the Church Hall, with participation from "Young St Fillan's", "The Sketchies"; the St Fillan's Bell Ringers; afterwards Mulled Wine & other goodies. 10.30am
- Sunday 20 December: Festival of Lessons & Carols, St Fillan's, 10.30am  
Meditative Advent Service, St Fillan's, 6.30pm
- Christmas Eve            Informal Advent Service for the young & young-at-heart;  
Carols, short story, gifts from under the Christmas Tree, 6.30pm
- Watchnight Service, 11.30pm  
(community Carol Singing from about 11.15pm. Bring a torch).
- Christmas Day            Christmas Family Service of Holy Communion, 10.30am  
Showing of Christmas presents.
- Sunday 27 December    Music & Readings for the season, including the  
Sacrament of Holy Baptism, 10.30am, St Fillan's Church