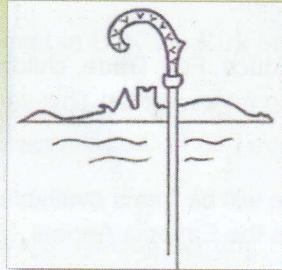


ST. FILLAN'S CROSIER



50 Years As A Deaconess



Anne Stuart Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of her commissioning as a Deaconess in the Church of Scotland, which took place in St Fillan's Church in March 1966

You can find Anne's Celebratory Word Search on [Page 5](#)

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Family Fun Week 2016: [Page 12](#)

Women and Girls of Ethiopia: [Page 11](#)



This year's Coffee Morning will be in the Church Hall on Saturday 14th May. Money raised will be split between the Ethiopia project and help to build flood proof housing in Bangladesh.

There will be the usual excellent baking in addition to stalls including bric-a-brac, plants

and home produce, Fair Trade, children's' tombola, books, bottles and of course, the raffle. In fact something for everyone! This year there will also be a house to house collection during Christian Aid Week from 15th to 21st May.

Also at this event there will be forms available to enable the setting up of a standing order for only one year towards the Ethiopia Appeal. More info will be available at the coffee morning.

FLOWER MINISTRY

It is easy to take for granted the flowers that grace our church each Sunday. We appreciate them but I wonder if we ever think about how they got there! Catherine Duncan has been organising the flowers in church for as long as I can remember. After my father died I found out that I could put flowers in the church in his memory. The idea delighted and scared me. I am not a flower arranger, but I did it all the same. Each summer I stand outside the church putting my flowers in vases and in the silence remembering. Often I find myself chatting to visitors, which can be very interesting. A number of years ago it was suggested that those of us who placed flowers in the church for a Sunday Service might like to take on another Sunday. As I was a 'summer arranger' I was given a winter date. Arranging flowers in the winter is very different from in the summertime. As many people know, standing in St Fillan's when it is empty is an amazing feeling. No wonder so many people write comments in our Visitor's Book. God is everywhere but in some places you feel you can almost touch him.

Over the years I have received church flowers for various reasons. This is very special and a thoughtfulness which is much appreciated.

I would encourage you to become involved with this important ministry – placing flowers in the church, or distributing the flowers after Sunday Service. Just speak to Catherine and she will give you the detail! Thank you to everyone who brings us joy through flowers.

Eileen Harper

CHERNOBYL CHILDREN – WEST FIFE LINK

Each year the local branch of Chernobyl Children's Lifeline brings approximately 12 children to Fife for a month's holiday. The most expensive part of this exercise is probably the air flights which are over £600 for each child. It is over 10 years since I started asking people to save one and two pence coins to help with this project. I was teaching the older children in Sunday School and I wanted them to learn that, although we can be daunted by the world's problems and feel that anything we do is completely inadequate, we can still, with God's help, make a difference. Many of the Chernobyl children who come for their holidays have long term illnesses resulting from the Chernobyl disaster, but their month's holiday here eating good food and breathing fresh air, does improve their health, even if it does not cure them. We can make a difference. Our small collection has continued and grown over the years. In a small way we have made a difference; last year we donated £300. Of course, it would be good if we could donate more, so please do consider putting some of your small change aside each week and giving it to me to pass on to the West Fife Link of Chernobyl Children's Lifeline. The collection was originally for 'coppers', but some people also save other small change, particularly those little fiddly 5ps! If you would like to know more, please speak to me (860151) or sophieharp@googlemail.com

Thank you - Eileen Harper

Sponsored Golf Week 30th May-3rd June

Supporting Christian Aid and Macmillan Cancer Relief

We have two new organisers this year

Eddie Travers 26 Dovecot Park & Walter Heggie 13 Inch Avenue

Please support them and help to raise money by golfing, sponsorship or donation. We also want to retain the David Rutherford Cup in our annual completion with Dalgety Parish Church

Lois Hutchinson

Letter from the Manse

On Sunday 20 March we celebrated with Anne Stuart and her Family, as we gave thanks for the 50th anniversary of Anne's Commissioning as a Deaconess in the Church of Scotland, which took place in St Fillan's Church.

The beginnings of the Diaconate lay in the late 19th century when that man of vision, the Rev Prof Archibald Charteris, through the Christian Life and Work Committee set up in 1869, looked at what was needed for the mission of the church in Scotland at that time. This led to the beginnings of the Woman's Guild, the Church's magazine Life and Work, and to the revival of the ancient and scriptural office of Deaconess.

The first deaconess, Lady Grisell Baillie, was set apart in Bowden Kirk on 9 December 1888.

Anne has given great service to the Church, not least as the person in charge of the Commissioners' Boxes during the General Assembly. A fluent Gaelic speaker, Anne served in Coll & Tiree, and in many other Parishes, always providing hard-working support to the local Ministers.

More recently, Anne has been involved in 'pet therapy'; taking her dog 'Thruppence' into hospitals and schools. The dog even has her own visitors' badge!

The beginnings and endings of events, occasions and the natural ebb and flow of life present us with opportunities to enjoy, and learn from, as we go along the varying seasons of our lives. There are times of activity and energy, times to learn and nurture, a time to relax and go with the flow, and times to fade.

But the pace and challenges in our world today often demand that we ignore the reality that we are natural creatures and as such are affected by life's seasons, patterns and rhythms. Often we can feel driven to comply with those contrary expectations and demands. But we do so at great personal risk.

In short, our quality of life becomes impoverished, and we may run on 'empty' for quite a while before we realise what is going on. The expectations and demands of ourselves, and from others, often drives out the balance required by body, soul and spirit and we are gradually depleted and diminished. It's not a new experience.

Wise people have always known that the continual rhythm of seasons, beginnings and endings are there to remind us that the whole person is created to live in harmony with creation.

And that's the way we have been made by God, to be part of the whole of creation, something beautiful and unique and the seasons of life are to be embraced if we want to remain healthy and whole in body, mind and spirit.

When they are embraced, life can make more sense, be more mysterious and puzzling, be sweeter, be more challenging, and often, more fulfilling.

A passage from the Book of Ecclesiastes reminds us of this and invites us to take stock of our lives and the harvest we can benefit from personally and share with others; it begins, *'for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven'*.*

As we move forward into spring, let us seek to balance our lives in such a way that we find time for work, for others, for ourselves, and for God.

May God bless you and your Families.

Peter Gerbrandy-Baird
Parish Minister

*This may be found in Ecclesiastes 3: 1-15.

Notice regarding Data Protection

Data Protection is the current 'hot topic' in Churches. The provisions of the 1998 Data Protection Act have to be enforced within the Churches, and this has some important consequences.

For us to produce a new edition of the 'St Fillan's Handbook' we need the written permission of everyone whose details are to appear in the Handbook. The same will go for notices on weddings, Baptisms and funerals – written permission is needed.

One of the reasons for this is that such information is indicative of someone's religious affiliations, and this is classified as "sensitive personal data", which needs to be treated with greater care than other personal data. Kirk Sessions throughout the Church will continue to work closely with the Church of Scotland's Law Department on this matter.

The Cost of a Child

The government recently calculated the cost of raising child from birth to 21 and came up with £228,773 for Scotland.

For those with kids, that figure leads to wild fantasies about all the things we could have bought, all the places we could have travelled, all the money we could have banked, if not for our child (or children). For others, that number might confirm the decision to remain childless.

But £228,773 isn't so bad if you break it down; it's just under £30 per day for one child. So, does this mean that to be rich we shouldn't have children? It's just the opposite. There is no way to put a price tag on:

- Feeling a new life move for the first time and seeing the bump of a knee rippling across a soon to be mommy's tummy.
- Having someone cry, "It's a boy!" or shout, "It's a girl!" then hearing the baby wail and knowing all that matters is it is healthy.
- Counting all 10 fingers and toes for the first time.
- Feeling the warmth of a small warm body against your chest. A tiny heart beating next to yours.
- Cupping an entire head in the palm of your hand.
- Making out words from all the cooing and gurgling. Yes, that was ma ma, or da da.

What do you get for your money?

- Naming rights. First, middle and last.
- Glimpses of God every day in their innocence and wonder of life.
- Giggles under the covers every night.
- More love than your heart can hold.
- Butterfly kisses and never ending hugs.
- Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds and rainbows.
- A hand to hold.
- A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites, building sandcastles and skipping down the sidewalk in the pouring rain.
- Someone who will make you laugh silly, no matter what adult stuff happened during the day that made you grumpy.

For all that money, you never have to grow up. You get to fingerprint, eat jelly and ice-cream, play hide-and-seek, catch bugs and never stop believing in Santa Claus. You have an excuse to keep reading the adventures of Thomas the Tank Engine, Dora the Explorer, watch cartoons, going to Disney movies and wish on stars. You get to put pictures of rainbows, hearts and flowers under refrigerator magnets, and collect spray painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay for Mother's Day and cards with backward letters for Father's Day.

For all that money, you get to be a hero just for retrieving a ball from the roof, teaching your child how to ride a bike, removing a splinter, fixing the Lego that went wrong, or turning up on time to watch the school show.

You get to witness the first steps, the first words, the first excited Christmas, the first date, the first time behind the wheel. You also get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications and many other things society cannot teach you with book learning.

You just have to be there, and do it. You learn how to love your child without limits, love without counting the cost, so that one day they will also love without counting the cost.

John 15:12 This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is, Christ gave his life for us.

C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	S	S	O	R	C	S	A	A
H	H	O	P	E	F	O	R	F	U	T	U	R	E	G	O	X	N	F
R	O	A	M	I	Y	R	O	T	S	I	H	G	G	L	M	N	N	O
I	T	S	E	P	R	E	P	A	R	A	T	I	O	N	I	R	U	U
S	A	F	A	E	S	A	E	L	P	I	F	S	R	V	N	E	A	R
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E	A	G	E	R	S	G	I	G	I	V	I	N	G	D	O	M	G	I
V	L	O	A	F	I	R	E	E	T	A	L	A	V	I	T	S	E	F
E	A	S	T	E	R	L	A	R	I	T	E	R	T	A	E	R	T	M

There are 53 words to find all to do with celebrations and festivals of different kinds!!

Good Luck

Anne

CELEBRATIONS, EVENT, MEMORY, EASTER, CHRISTMAS, ANNIVERSARY, FIFTIETH, EIGHTIETH, TWENTY FIRST, COMING OF AGE, RETIRAL, PRESENT, TIMEPAST, HAPPINESS, GLADNESS, FESTIVAL, FEASTS, PREPERATION, FOURTIETH, PLANS, NEWBABY, PRIZETIME, REMEMBER, FORGET, FRIENDS, TOGETHER, LOVING, MARRIAGE, GIVING, HOPEFORFUTURE, CROSS, GIFTS, MEANING, HISTORY, SING, ANNUAL, FLOWERS, PLAYS, INTIME, SOLOS, SCHOOLS, THANKS, TREAT, DREAM, COSTS, PHOTOS, GOLF, PLEASE, SPENT, HOME, EAGER, FIRE.

HIZ KIDZ

EASTER CRYPTOGRAM

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
6	14	2	26	3	24	12	17	21	16	15	7	22	5	9	20	11	25	1	8	10	19	23	4	18	13

		21		6	22		8	17	3		
25	3	1	10	25	25	3	2	8	21	9	5
6	5	26		8	17	3		7	21	24	3

Q. What kind of man was Boaz before he married?
A. Ruthless.

Q. What do they call ministers in Germany?
A. German Shepherds.

Q. Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?
A. Noah. He was floating his stock while everyone else was in liquidation.

Q. What was the greatest female financier in the Bible?
A. Pharaoh's daughter. She went down to the bank of the Nile and drew out a little prophet.

Q. What kind of motor vehicles are in the Bible?
A. Jehovah drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden in a Fury. David's Triumph was heard throughout the land. Also, probably a Honda, because the apostles were all in one Accord.

Q. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?
A. Samson. He brought the house down.

Q. What excuse did Adam give to his children as to why he no longer lived in Eden?
A. Your mother ate us out of house and home.

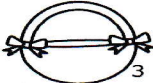



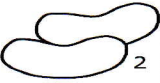
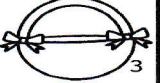




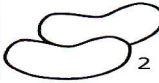
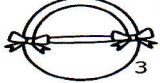
Q. Which servant of God was the most flagrant lawbreaker in the Bible?
A. Moses. He broke all 10 commandments at once.

Q. Which area of Palestine was especially wealthy?
A. The area around Jordan. The banks were always overflowing.

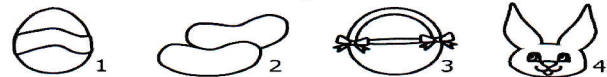
Q. Who is the greatest baby sitter mentioned in the Bible?
A. David. He rocked Goliath to a very deep sleep.

Q. Which Bible character had no parents?
A. Joshua, son of Nun.

Easter Sudoku

	 3	 1	
 1	 4	 2	 3
	 1	 4	 2
 4	 2	 3	

Each row, each column and each of the large four squares should have one of each image. Fill in the blanks!



HIZ KIDZ COMPETITION TIME

Draw a picture and/or write about your favourite Easter story or tradition at home and win an Easter egg.

Ask your parents to scan, or take a picture of your entry, and email to aberdourchurchesfun@outlook.com

By April 30th

World Mission Stamp Appeal for 2016 – The Church of South India's Othara Eco-Spirituality Centre.

God created all living and non-living things to coexist in a rhythm and equilibrium, which we often call ecological balance. Ecological disasters befall us when this balance is lost', Bishop Thomas K. Oommen, Deputy Moderator of the Church of South India.

Thank you to the many of you who collect stamps and bring them to me. Last year's World Mission Charity was the Church of Scotland's HIV programme. This programme supports partners both in Scotland and overseas to help those infected and affected by HIV.

This year (2016 – 17) the Stamp Appeal is for the Church of South India's Othara Eco-Spirituality Centre. The World Mission Stamp Project will support some of the Centre's ecological innovations including the harvesting and re-use of rain water, the establishment of a biogas plant to power the kitchens and the development of a small dairy and chicken farm for native breeds.

The Church of South India (CSI) has recently opened the Othara Eco-spirituality centre near Thiruvalla in Kerala. It is a place where people can come to learn about climate change and the importance of conserving the earth God has given us. Through retreats and conferences, CSI hopes that the knowledge people gain at the centre will inspire them to live sustainably and encourage others in their community to do likewise. They want to encourage people to appreciate and understand that caring for the earth is not only a calling but a lifestyle.

• 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 of the World Mission Stamp Project to collect it personally. Please contact him by email - keithscott143@gmail.com
- Catherine Duncan very kindly takes our 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

Just a Minute

One man's peek into the literature, and early minutes of St Fillan's Kirk Session*

(WAR)

The end of 1650 was a time of anxiety in Aberdour. Charles the second had come to Scotland to be crowned at Scone, and Cromwell was speedily overpowering any opposition in our country. The earliest known record of our Church is dated 1649, before this important visit, and in the same year as the execution of Charles the First.

Recruitment of men to oppose the threat of invasion by Cromwell's forces was a priority. On one day it is recorded that the Session in Aberdour had '*no time for discipline*' as they are so busy taking a vow of the men who have been enrolled. On another occasion the Session '*handle no discipline*' as they are so busy going about the village pressing on the inhabitants the necessity of keeping up a nightly watch, lest there should be a '*surprise*'. The soldiers in the castle are noted as exceedingly insolent and troublesome, so much so that the people could hardly get past the Castle gate to go to church.

By the end of the 16th century, the Protestant Church of Scotland had developed into a Presbyterian Church, with a system of courts (today the General Assembly, presbytery and Kirk session), and a strong tradition of preaching and Scriptural emphasis. The signing of the "National Covenant" in 1638 by the majority of people in Scotland who became known as 'The Covenanters' led to fifty years of unrest in our country, with first the covenanters opposing the King's attempted religious impositions, then the Scottish royalists endeavours to negotiate with Charles 1 (the Engagement) whose English parliament (led by Cromwell) were becoming rebellious, and finally after the King's execution in 1649, the invitation from the Scots (royalists) to Charles the second to return to claim the throne hence his visit to Scone (referred to above) to be crowned.

The Ministers in both Aberdour and Dalgety were awkwardly placed as the Earl of Morton was a royalist. The Marquis of Argyle, a leading nobleman among the Covenanters, was Morton's son-in-law whilst the Earl of Dunfermline another son-in-law was a royalist.

With these facts in mind Mr Bruce, our minister in Aberdour, was first opposed to "Engagement" but later turned to Royalist whilst Mr Donaldson minister of Dalgety remained a Covenanter. As the Earl of Morton was so keen a royalist and was the owner of a castle, accommodation was available for royalist troops. This fact had its ramifications in our village which was indicated by one of the very first notices in our Kirk Session minutes that stated that David Stevenson, one of our elders, "*to go to Couper, and see if he could get Aberdour freed of the burden of soldiers*". A certain Lieutenant Graham was the cause of a great deal of mischief in the village at this time. He was on the point of taking his departure, in April 1650 and applied to the Session in vain for a testimonial (often now called 'a good reference'). The Session '*took it to their consideration; and considering the great injuries that he had done with the parish, thought fit not to grant him one until he redresses three wrongs, and make mention how many men he has quartered here, and how long*'.

Aberdour came close to the "front line" on 20th July 1651 when the Scots were defeated at the Battle of Inverkeithing by one of Cromwell's best generals, General Lambert who claimed the capture of 1400 and the slaughter of 2000 Scots. Another result of this "*alarming*" conflict was that the Kirk Session did not meet from then until the 4th November—a space of four months. The minister Mr Bruce "*took flight*" at the English approach, and so, on his return, the first minute following the battle the elders requested reports of what "*enormities*" had occurred in his absence. The enormities consisted of reports that "*two millers had been grinding flour, and Katherine Balfour had 'gathered pease' on the Sabbath, whilst John Anderson, the quarrier, had been heard to say 'thank God that the enemy had come to this side*". Perhaps a more significant discovery was that the '*Englishes*' had broken open the Aberdour's poor box, as well as that of Dalgety, and appropriately the minute later recorded two cups purchased '*for 119lb. Scots, with two basins £10.6s.8d*' as replacements for two communion cups that had also '*disappeared*'.

From notices of collections made both in Aberdour and Dalgety, it seems that the prisoners taken at the Battle of Inverkeithing were taken to England. Also an English garrison appears to have been billeted in Aberdour. An English soldier presented himself before the Kirk Session desiring marriage to an Aberdour girl. This request was referred to the Presbytery whose decision was that '*she marie not the Englishman, by reason of the unlawfulness of their invasione*'

Several Aberdour men fought in the Battle of Worcester on the Royalist side (on the third of September 1651), among which were John Reverence, Robert Cusing, and William Alexander. Within the Session Record it states that Reverence was struck by a musket ball which pierced his right shoulder; he also had an injury in his left shoulder and on his back. The other two men mentioned above were taken prisoner, eventually to return to Aberdour but Reverence was one of '*the unreturning brave*'. Not all the wives of the men who marched off to war were distressed by their departure. Margaret Gray, somewhat indiscreetly, expressed her wish that her husband would never return! She was summoned to appear before the Kirk Session to give an account of herself, whereupon she acknowledged her fault; '*wherefore the Session thocht fitt that shee sould sit down on her knees, and crave God mercie, quhilk (which) she did accordingly*'.

Bill Cochrane

Acknowledgments/Bibliography

History of Scotland by P Hume Brown, M.A., LL.D. '*Aberdour and Inchcolm*' (unpublished) by The Revd. Dr R Johnstone, D.D.

St Fillan's Recorded Session Minutes, Register House, 2 Princes Edinburgh '*Aberdour and Inchcolme*' by Wm. Ross, LL.D.

* To those unfamiliar with the Presbyterian Church, a Kirk Session could be described as the committee in each Church of Scotland parish which attends local business of its church. Members of the congregation who serve on these Kirk Sessions are called "Elders".

St Fillan's Church Hall

It may not be known by everyone that the hall was never constructed as a church hall. It was originally constructed in 1790 as a church and converted into the hall in 1926 when the original St Fillan's Church in Hawkcraig Road was restored. The church hall is a fantastic asset to the village having a large hall, kitchen, tables and chairs, sound system, staging and meeting rooms.

The usage of the hall embraces very many voluntary organisations which use it on a weekly or regular basis: Hand Bell Ringers, Mucky Pups, Carpet Bowls, Scouts, Brownies, Guides, Baby & Toddlers, Cubs, Country Dancing, Open Door, Lunches, Beavers and Keep Fit. It would be a real scrum down if they all pitched up on the same night! It also is the venue for the Family Fun Week and one of the venues for Aberdour Festival activities. A church service is held on the last Sunday of the month which also incorporates Young St Fillan's and the Kirk Session meet every second month.

In addition to the above regular usage it acts as a venue for fund raising and directly or indirectly raises approximately £20k per year for village groups and charities. Last year there were 28 coffee mornings or fund raisers. The village loves a good get together and chat over coffee and home baking.

The annual village Service of Remembrance is held here and Aberdour's war memorial is built on the south elevation.

It can also be rented for children's parties, concerts and village meetings.

St Fillan's Church owns the hall and covers all costs: heating, lighting, insurance, maintenance, cleaning and provisions of supplies (you would not believe how many toilet rolls we go through!). Fife Council empties the bins and cuts the grass but that is their only input into the running of the hall. However, after an impassioned plea they did recently cut back the foliage coming in from the old graveyard.

Voluntary groups with children are only charged what it costs to heat and light the building. Other groups kindly donate more as finances allow.

The Church has one part-time employee – Sharon Johnston who has faithfully worked for the Church since October 1994. In nearly 22 years of service she has never phoned in sick and without her valued input on a daily basis I would not be able to carry out all the tasks of running the hall.

Willie, the newsagent, very kindly holds the key for the hall and again we could not manage without his efforts. He kindly phones me up and says 'that's the lavvies choked and there is loo roll all over the garden'. On that subject please refrain from putting hand towels down the loo!

In normal years it costs approximately £10,000 per year to run and maintain the hall. Money raised from the rent of the hall does not cover all of this cost. Maintenance and the upkeep of the property can be a significant cost, for example, this year we are planning to do a major roof repair which will incur costs of approximately £50k. We are in the process of applying for grants to help with this.

Getting the Best out of the Church Hall for the Village

The hall can be booked through Karyn Crowe (karyncrowe252@btinternet.com), Andy Bastow (a.bastow@btopenworld.com) and Sharon Johnston (sharon.johnston1@sky.com). We have a Google Calendar which we can all view.

It is important to think well ahead as you will be surprised how quickly the hall gets booked up, sometimes up to a year in advance.

When booking the hall remember to allow time for setting up and clearing away at the end. Also to help Sharon we would ask your cooperation in sweeping up, emptying bins and making use of the recycling facilities at the side of the hall. The landfill bin gets filled up very quickly and many items could be put in the plastic or paper recycling to reduce the landfill.

The hall has a fully equipped kitchen. Users are welcome to borrow tea towels and tablecloths but please bear in mind there may be another coffee morning the next Saturday so these need to be laundered and returned as quickly as possible. If you can't work to this time scale please supply your own. Tea towels disappear regularly so please check your drawers at home and return any stray ones.

We have recently upgraded and laid new flooring in the back hall, where the tables are kept, and the small hall next to the toilets. The carpet tiles had been down for over 20 years and were past their sell by date. We are not sure how the Altro flooring will stand up to wear and tear so please do not drag tables and furniture across it.

We purchased new children's chairs and Babies and Toddlers gave a very generous donation towards this. Thank you for this. Unfortunately one chair has already been broken and we don't know if this is accidental damage or a manufacturing fault as no information has been left. In the last year 4 tables were broken and they cost £87 each. Please leave a note on any damaged items so that we know what has happened.

Three of our tables were missing from the hall for about three years. From a tip off locally (my lips are sealed) they were liberated from a wooden hut and returned to the hall under cover of darkness.

We would ask that people respect this facility by checking that all heaters, immersion heaters and taps are off before leaving the building. It could be several hours before the next group is in.

We are currently waiting for Scottish Power to renew the incoming electricity cable as it is over 80 years' old.

I have a close relationship with St Fillan's Church Property Convener (unfortunately he is my husband) and he helps with fabric repairs and gives lots of advice – if he is not out golfing!

St Fillan's Church wants the whole village to take full advantage of this great central facility and encourage village fellowship.

Karyn Crowe

Hall Convener

Summary of the Trustees Report and Accounts for 2015

The annual accounts were approved by Kirk Session on 8th March and copies are available on request. The report gives an outline of the main Church activities during 2015, and also sets out what the priorities are for 2016, as well as giving a summary of the financial performance over the year to December 31st 2015.

The detailed accounts show all the sources of Income and Expenditure in 2015, and a statement of the assets held by St Fillan's at the end of the year. A brief summary of the overall 2015 numbers is shown in the table beneath with 2014 figures given for comparison:

		<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>			<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
<u>Total Receipts</u>	Donations and Offerings	£53,494	£73,999	<u>Total Payments</u>	Net allocation to '121'	£40,724	£42,274
	Gift Aid Tax refund	£12,719	£11,929		Parish Assistant and Presbytery	£2,308	£7,419
	Weddings and Funerals	£543	£1,597		Property Insurance	£3,994	£3,920
	Use of Church Hall	£6,686	£6,481		Local Salaries plus Organ/Pulpit supply	£8,301	£7,905
	Fundraising Events	£4,729	£4,734		Heat and Light	£3,291	£3,068
	Associated Orgs (St Fillan's Lunches, etc)	£3,286	£2,930		Normal Fabric Maintenance	£2,717	£5,783
	Investment Income	£2,745	£2,535		Ministers Expenses, Printing and Manse Council Tax	£4,148	£6,735
	Other Miscellaneous Income	£1,830	£2,722		External Donations	-£350	£350
	Legacies	£795	£5,600		Other (incl betterment)	£6,121	£9,123
	Totals	£86,827	£112,527		Totals	£71,254	£86,577

The figures above show that there was a healthy overall surplus of £15573 in 2015. Comparison with 2014 is interesting because while total receipts in 2015 were some 23% lower, at the same time costs were also about 19% lower too. Detailed analysis between 2014 and 2015 is not helped by the financial aberration caused by the effects of the Church restoration during 2014, but the main reasons for the higher receipts in 2014 was a very large single donation, and a generous legacy.

In 2015 the overall surplus was made up of £11.2k from the General Fund (day to day operating surplus), while the Church Fund also increased by £1.5k and there was also a small Legacy and the regular investment income to the Fabric and Reserves Funds.

Regarding the operating surplus, in general regular income held up well despite a gradual decline in membership. However costs fell, partly because of the departure of the Parish Assistant (Alastair Campbell) last February, but also due to a reduction in Fabric Maintenance costs, and through careful cost control.

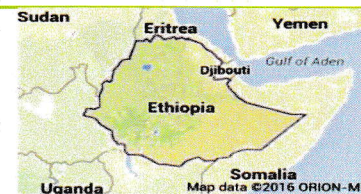
Because there have been successive surpluses in 2014 and 2015, it has been possible to increase the overall level of financial reserves to £108K, and this has proved a timely provision because the Church Hall roof has now been found in need of major attention, which will be a challenge to put right over the coming months.

Andrew Bastow (Treasurer)



A Challenge to our Congregation– please support

“Healthier futures for women and girls in Ethiopia”.



Where? Ethiopia –

Ethiopia is Africa's oldest independent country and its second largest in terms of population. It has a mostly rural population of 86.5 million. Its major religions are Christianity and Islam. It is the home of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, one of the oldest Christian churches. Coptic Christianity was introduced to Ethiopia in the fourth century.

It served as a symbol of African independence throughout the colonial period as, apart from a five-year occupation by Mussolini's Italy, Ethiopia has never been colonized. Ethiopia was a founder member of the United Nations and the African base for many international organisations.

Why?

Ethiopia has suffered periodic droughts and famines that led to a long civil conflict in the 20th Century and a border war with Eritrea. Christian Aid has worked in Ethiopia for more than 30 years, initially responding to emergencies, but gradually building a long-term development programme. Its work has focused on food security, secure livelihoods, health, economic justice, energy and climate change.

The Christian Aid web-site states that “Despite significant economic gains and improvements in access to essential services like health and education, it (Ethiopia) still faces major challenges such as food insecurity, cyclical disasters, population pressure, unemployment, disease and natural resource degradation.

Natural disasters, particularly droughts and floods, occur frequently in Ethiopia, with over 2 million people requiring humanitarian assistance every year. Natural resources, especially water, land and vegetation, are under severe pressure from overpopulation and overexploitation.

Around 1.3 million people are living with HIV in Ethiopia, one of the largest affected populations in the world. Christian Aid's HIV work has now expanded into a wider community health programme, incorporating TB, malaria, and maternal and child health.”

Ethiopia also has some of the highest rates of maternal, neonatal and child mortality globally. Lack of access to clean water and sanitation facilities are a major cause of preventable illnesses.

According to the United States Agency for International Development 20 million young people and 30 million adults in Ethiopia lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. Many children do not attend school.

Christian Aid's work in Ethiopia is predominantly in the south and south-west, which has seen particularly slow rates of development. Its focus is on working through partners to support groups within society who are often neglected. “

What we can do to help –

The project – “Healthier futures for women and girls in Ethiopia”.

Christian Aid and its partners will be working to improve women and girls' wellbeing through better access to reproductive health services and the information necessary to make informed family planning choices.

The project aims to increase women's knowledge of and access to contraception while improving child and maternal health, to boost the economic prospects of the whole community.

St Fillan's Church is participating in this ambitious Christian Aid project. The initial event will be the Christian Aid Coffee Morning on Saturday, 14th May, followed by a concert in the Church Hall at the end of Christian Aid Week. The aim of the support group in St Fillan's is to raise **£5000** by October 2017. This total will be match funded by the EU at a ratio of 5:1 resulting in a total of **£30,000**.

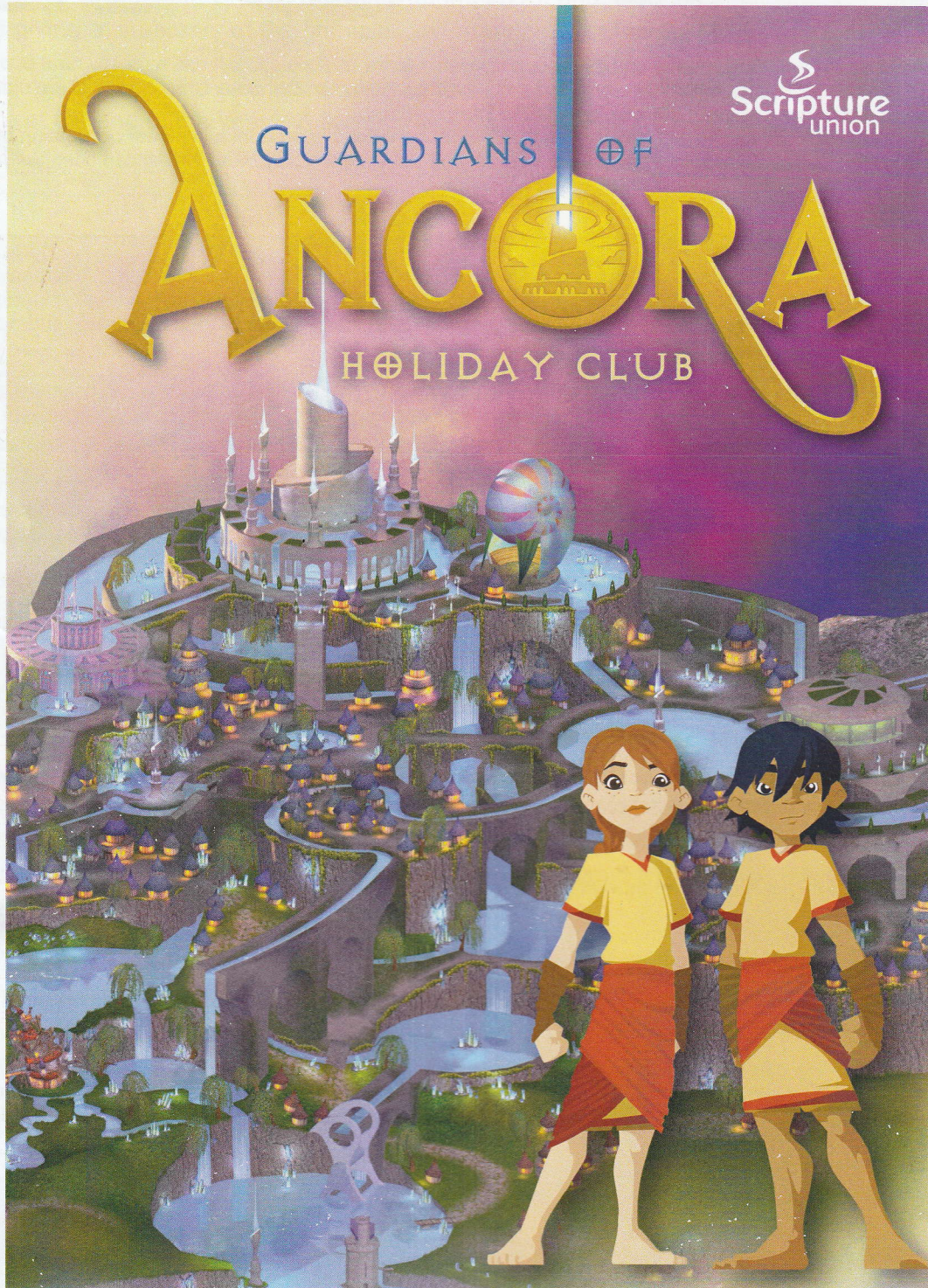
Further fund raising ventures will follow –

- A race night
- A clothes auction
- A gin tasting
- An Ethiopian information evening



If you are interested in helping us or wish to know more please contact either Lesley Gordon on 860030 or Sue Farrar on 860851.

Coming To A Church Near You.....



Family Fun Week 2016!

ST FILLAN'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, ABERDOUR, SCOTTISH CHARITY No SC005851