

Church Newsletter Committee:

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Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter can be handed to any member of the committee or to the Beadle (even while he is ringing the bell on a Sunday morning)





If you would like a visit from the minister will you please ask me rather than assume I will hear from some one else?

I regularly come upon situations where some one has been expecting and/or desiring a visit from me but as I was not aware of their need had not called and this often leads to disappointment and tension.

Contrary to popular belief I am not a mind reader and there are many times when the Aberdour grapevine doesn't reach me (and if it does the story is often contorted and quite different from reality). Also hospitals no longer inform ministers when our members are admitted and often members are admitted and then allowed home within a few days.

If you want me to visit the best way to ensure this is that you or a close friend or relative, phone me and ask me to call.

Peter Park 860349

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St Fillans Church, Aberdour

PUBLIC WORSHIP: Sunday at 10.00 a.m. June, July and August.
10.30 a.m. September till May
1st Sunday in the month 6.30 p.m. In Church Hall

1st Sunday in the month 6.30 p.m. In Church Hall ALL ARE WELCOME.

HOLY COMMUNION: Celebrated on the third Sunday of March, June and October.

June 1999 No 127

Dear friends and members,

A look back over the last 30 months

I have been your minister since Jan 1997 and have been casting my eye back over that period. Most of that time has been a joyous occasion, for example it is a pleasure to lead worship in a crowded Church and good to make new friends, but there have been times of sadness and tension. In looking back I think in particular of those members and parishioners who have moved on into the Kingdom of Heaven and I give thanks for their life and witness.

Every ministry is different, the Church of Scotland does not produce clones. Common to most new ministries however is change - and I have had to manage a considerable amount of this. Let me say that change must not be regarded as a criticism of the way St Fillan's used to do things. What the church did 50, 25 or even 5 years ago was right for that time - we the people of God in this congregation and parish should not condemn it but rather, guided by the Spirit, do what is right for this day and age. This involves reviewing- what we do, retaining what is good and still beneficial, but be prepared to introduce change where appropriate. Since my arrival I have been encouraged by many of you, aye and at times instructed and guided by God - who also called me here- to consider many changes. A number have been implemented as the following list, probably incomplete and in no specific order demonstrates.

- Session altered the times of public worship and Communion procedures. They decided to
 move the evening service and Remembrance Day service to the Hall, introduced services
 on Christmas Day and Maundy Thursday, and started a time of shared prayer on the 1st
 Sunday monthly. The scouts and guides reinstated the tradition of parading colours at the
 Remembrance Service.
- Sunday school now come to Church most Sundays then go over to the school. Our Bible Class, though low in numbers, has restarted. We also have a crèche in the vestry.
- The long running hall refurbishment project came to fruition in 1997, and the halls are very well used. In addition to retaining most previous users we also have new groups such as Babies and Toddlers, Lunch Club, Carpet Bowlers and Handbell ringers.
- Our Guild closed down and our choir numbers are considerably decreased.
- Aberdour Primary now come to church 3 times each year for their end of term services

- We ran an Alpha course and are now involved in services at Queen Margaret Hospital (3/4 times a year) and Henderson House (every 6 weeks)
- The Sanctuary has been the beneficiary of many gifts such as large print hymn books, a Clavinova and stool, lectern fall and bible markers, flower vases and chancel cushions. Through the legacy fund we have installed a new PA system and commissioned 2 new stained glass windows.
- We have extended the welcome area in the Church and the Church gardens are now well tended.
- The Worship content has changed. For example I follow the Lectionary most weeks and have introduced many new hymns. We now print a weekly Order of Worship and the current Order reflects my theology.

Whenever change is considered and/or implemented people react in different ways. Some see it as good, others as absolutely awful. Some support it at times but are against it on others. Some give me all the credit and pat me on the back, others blame me for everything and knock me on the head. Some see change as evidence of the Spirit revitalising the Church others see it as another cross to bear. As your minister I am of necessity involved in all the above changes but (other than public worship) I cannot take the credit for what has been achieved. Many people have been involved in making suggestions, taking decisions and implementing the above. I know that, and understand why, some of you find change difficult to accept and handle but alongside this I also appreciate why some of you consider changes are necessary if St Fillan's is to continue to grow spiritually and numerically. Where we position ourselves on the scale of change, either dead against it or all for it - or some where in between is however less important than how we respond to the opinions of others. We are one Church, all serving the Master, all walking the road with Christ towards the Heavenly Kingdom. It is important and essential that we do so in a Christian way respecting and loving each other and I say thank you to everyone who has done so over recent months. I encourage us all to continue in this way in the future.

Peter Park

Does This Sound Familiar?

Oh, give me some pity, I'm on a committee, Which means that from morning till night, We attend and amend, we contend and defend, Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur, we defer and demur, And reiterate all of our thoughts. We revise the agenda with frequent addenda, And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose, And the points of procedure are fun! Though various notions are brought up as motions There's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but never dissolve, Since it's out the question for us What a shattering pity to end our committee Where else could we make so much fuss?

Author unknown

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION: This will be celebrated on Sunday 20th June at 10.00 am and 3.00pm.

To crapble parents of young abildren attend the morning service there.

To enable parents of young children attend the morning service there will be a crèche in the Vestry at the Church.

JUNE CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 6th Jun	10.00 am	Morning Service		
	6.30pm	Evening Service		
Sunday 13th Jun	10.00am	Morning Service		
Sunday 20th Jun	10.00am	Service of Holy Communion		
	3.00pm	Service of Holy Communion		
Sunday 27th Jun	10.00am	Morning Service		
Sunday 4th Jul	10.00am	Morning Service		
	6.30pm	Evening Service		
Sunday 11th Jul	10.00am	Morning Service		
Sunday 18th Jul	10.00am	Morning Service		
Sunday 25th Jul	10.00am	Morning Service		
An open invitation is extended to everyone to all Services				

PARISH AND CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Baptisms

Apr 4 - Serena Marion, daughter of Hamish and Elizabeth Purslow

Apr 4 - Eilidh Hannah, daughter of Andrew and Mairi Templeton

May 30 - Andrew Robert, son of Robert and Kathleen Duncan

Jesus said "baptise them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit"

Marriage

Mav 14 - Tobias Hain and Mairi Stewart

God is love, and those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

Changes to our membership

We bid welcome to new members

By Confession of Faith

Mrs Elizabeth Lloyd 1 Bellhouse Road

And hope they enjoy their time at St Fillan's

We say farewell to

By Certificate of Transfer

Derek and Barbara Anderson, 6 Bellhouse Road

David Stirling, 6 Niven Road, Inverkeithing to Cockpen and Carrington

Ross Taylor, Dalnacraig, West End to Alford

Mrs E Henderson, Sunnyside, Manse Street

And wish them well in their new spiritual home

Bereavements

Members of St Fillan's

Feb 27 - David Chalmers, 5 Bannerman Avenue, Inverkeithing

Mar 16 - Gavin Stirling, 1 Inch Avenue

Apr 29 - Mrs Elizabeth Carmichael, 12 Murrell Terrace

Others in the Parish

Feb 26 - John Houghton, Dovecot Park

Mar 7 - David Levein, Cullalo Crescent

Mar 29 - George Best, Couston Place, Dalgety Bay

Apr 29 - Lodwig Williams, Kirkçaldv

Things beyond our seeing, things beyond our hearing, things beyond our imagining have all been prepared by God for those who love Him. 1 Corinthians 2:9

If you know of anyone interested in joining the Church please ask them to speak to the minister.

Members of the Church moving into the area and wishing to join St Fillan's should obtain a Certificate of Transference from their previous congregation and hand it in at the Church door at any service.

Members moving away from the district should obtain a Transference Certificate from the Minister.

The Minister or Session Clerk should be notified of any change of address so that the congregational roll can be kept up to date.

Letter from France.

The 'Newsletter' received a letter from Marion Cavaye who forsook Scotland for the better climes of France and her husband who was working there. She made the move in September 1997 and the following is an abridged version of the letter. If anyone would like to read the complete letter please contact the editor. The scene is set in Avanches.

My older boy Robert was very happy to find "spotty" cows (Vache Normandie) grazing in our orchard and frogs in holes in the garden. Alisdair was 7 weeks old and didn't have much to say about it at all.

We quickly settled in but I found my '0 grade' French stretched so I joined a French class which brought me up to a level where I can now "get by". Most of the younger French people can speak English but feel it is up to us to speak French (quite rightly) and Rob's hairdresser insists on giving him a French lesson every time he gets his hair cut.

We have found a bit more bureaucracy here-even a simple visit to the doctor involves paying the doctor himself after the consultation, giving the chemist the full amount for the medicines and then fill out a form for the Social Security Office who in turn reimburse 65% of the costs. It has taken over a year to receive our "Cartes Sejour" which allows us to live and work in France.

Robert, who is three, attends school full time 4 &1/2 days from 8.30 to 4.30 with 2 hours at lunch. Wednesdays are half days. This seems to be a long school day but the school holidays are longer with 9 weeks in the summer. The school day is well designed for working parents as the children can be dropped off as early as 7.30 a.m. and picked up as late as 6 pm. The French children are much more tactile than Scottish children even at this age and will rush over to comfort one of their class mates if he is upset. Older children, even boys, will go out of their way to make a fuss over babies. Kissing is, of course, an integral part of French social life, so all the children kiss their teachers in the mornings as they arrive and in the evenings when they leave. Robert now does this without thinking, but when we first arrived in France he would recoil in horror when strangers tried to kiss him. The youngest children in the school are a pityfull site to see. The wee souls toddling out of school at 4.30pm with their teddy bears under their arms and a dummy in their mouths.

Alisdair, the youngest, goes to a Halte-Garderie twice a week. This is a type of crèche where children can be left for between 1 & 8 hours. This allows me to go riding or shopping with friends.

The local people are very friendly and we were invited to the wedding of one of Rob's staff. We didn't know what we were expected to do so sat at the back of the church. We were soon ushered forward to fill the gap behind the brides family, all of whom entered the church behind the bride. The priest then proceeded to give the congregation a singing lesson - we had to repeat the first hymn 10 times before he was satisfied! We did our best to

make the appropriate responses and obviously didn't make too many mistakes as the couple were duly married and we celebrated afterwards with champagne and cake.

French television is a bit of a disappointment, mostly dubbed American soaps or quiz shows although they do show a few good films. It really makes us appreciate the BBC. At least the bad TV encourages us to get "out and about" and I'd recommend the area for a holiday. For children there are adventure parks, zoos and aquariums. For the fit The Mont St. Michael. Don't try taking a buggy up to the top as we did, there are hundreds of steps to climb. The old towns of St. Malo and Dinan are also worth a visit, while Rennes is an excellent centre for shopping.

We are still unsure as to our date for returning to Aberdour permanently-it will certainly be a wrench to leave France and all the friends we have made here.

Marion Cavaye



My Friends

Lord, I have friends that love you.

I respect them and I thank you that you are giving me such good friends.

Lord, I have friends that hate you.

I like them all the same.

Lord, you turned Paul's heart, let these friends learn to love you.

Lord, I have friends that smile about you.

I cry because of it.

Lord, you cried about Jerusalem.

Let not these friends sink in their ignorance.

Lord, I have friends that could not care less about you.

I sorrow for them, they are neither warm nor cold.

Lord, you care about all of us,

Give me strength that these friends might come to be living Christians and turn to you.

††††††††††

Would You Like to Help?

One of the ways in which St Fillan's reaches out into the wider community is by going along occasionally to help with Worship in the Queen Margaret Hospital and Henderson House.

We go because people in hospital and homes cannot always get to their own church but want to continue to be part of a worshipping society. If they cannot get to the Church we can help by going to them.

Our Church Pastoral Committee is involved in 2 schemes and although we have rotas of helpers for both there is always room for more. If we had more volunteers we could consider extending this service to other homes.

Members and non members only.

Sign outside Mexican disco. (Could be outside a church. Ed)

Teeth extracted by the latest methodists.

Hong Kong dentist



OM Patient to pew service

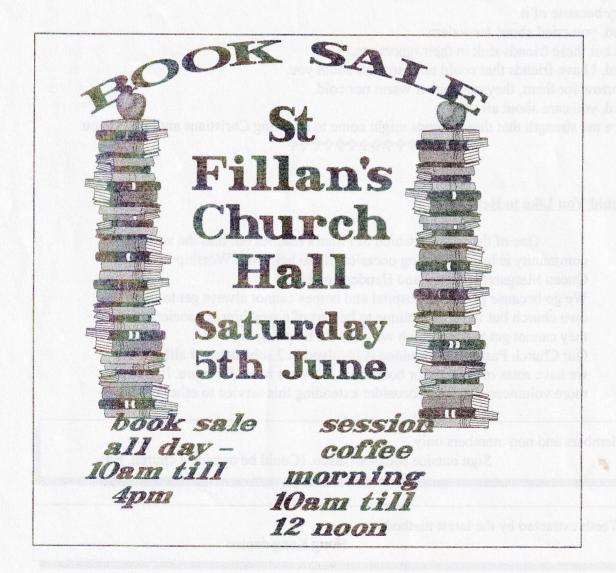
We are involved 4 times each year.

A short service is held every Sunday morning in the hospital chapel and this is led by the hospital chaplain. Each Sunday a team of volunteers goes along to transport patients (using wheelchairs) from their ward to a pew in the chapel.

Henderson House worship time

We go along every 6th Tuesday for a short service at 2.30PM. This is led by our minister, failing whom, someone from our congregation. In addition to whoever is leading we ask 5/6 others to come along and say hello to the residents. We sing some hymns and hold a short service. You do not need to be a good singer to take part, a smiling welcoming face is much more important to this occasion.

If you would like to be part of one or both our teams please speak with Norman Macdonald who organises the rotas or Bill Cochrane who heads up our pastoral committee. Either will be delighted to give you more information



Wheelchair Access to the Church Hall

We now have a portable ramp for wheelchair access to the hall. It is stored inside the front door and easily carried out and assembled as required. Details are available from the leaders of all organisations and or Bruce Drever, our Halls convenor.





Some thoughts from the minister on marriage - or non marriage

June sees the start of the main marriage season in St Fillan's and is a good time to reflect on and affirm the meaning of Christian marriage. The Church proclaims Christian marriage as being the will of God and promotes Christian marriage as good, exciting, and helpful for couples wishing to live together. As parish minister I am delighted to discuss marriage with anyone and, in pointing others or perhaps yourself, to me you might find it helpful to know my policy

on marriage. As parish minister I am obliged to solemnise the marriage of parishioners and members, and allowed to solemnise the marriage of others. As a general rule I will solemnise a marriage unless circumstances dictate otherwise, and this means I will consider marriages of couples living apart or together, whether or not resident in the parish. I also consider marriages where one party is Roman Catholic or of another religious persuasion, or where one or both parties is divorced. This letter however focuses on the marital or non-marital issues, confronting many Christians today and touches on some of the pastoral issues and concerns, which I know many of you reading this letter, are involved in and/or affected by.

The tradition in the UK for many years was that man and woman "left the parental home", married in a religious or civil ceremony, then set up home together. Many still regard this as the ideal and there are many families where this pattern is followed. For others however, living together seems best for them and many do so. Some of these couples never marry, others decide when the time is right to make their relationship legal according to the law of the land and permanent through their marriage vows. This year for example St Fillan's will host 10 weddings with 7 already booked for 2000 and 2 for 2001. If anyone is thinking of a St Fillan's wedding then please ask to see me and arrange a date, sooner rather than later, as the diary is filling up very quickly.

We all know however, some from personal experience, that we live in a society where marriage is no longer the norm. It is also well established that many non-marital relationships are just as, sometimes more than, loving and longer lasting than marriage itself. Although we Christians may have our own beliefs, thoughts and values it is right and proper that we recognise and respect decisions made by other adults as to how they want to live their lives. Problems can, and often do, arise where there are unresolved differences of opinion between traditional values and current practise and these difficulties often manifest themselves in tension, argument, criticism and dissent. Whether or not we as Christians approve, the bottom line is that our country is becoming increasingly diverse in its structures and beliefs with the result that many long-term relationships do not conform to the familiar patterns of the past. We witness an increasing incidence of couples living together out-with marriage, children born and brought up out of wedlock, separations, divorces and so on, and our own parish and membership is a microcosm of the national picture. As Christians today we are regularly confronted with relationship issues vastly different from those of 50, or even 25 years ago. The question we need ask ourselves is how do we handle these issues?

In dealing with the reality of the day it is tempting for some to take the moral high

ground and heap criticism on those who do not conform to their values. For example how many do you know who criticise the behaviour of others, either to their face or behind their backs, and pass moral judgement on their life style without teasing out all the facts. May I ask that you, on every occasion you hear unjustified and unsupported criticism, especially from someone professing to be Christian, that you point the outspoken towards scripture and show them how Jesus Christ dealt with life situations. Fortunately there are alternatives to criticism, such as that proposed by the editor of Life and Work (the Church of Scotland monthly magazine) in Dec 98. He suggested that, whilst upholding what we know to be right, we should not condemn the shift away from wedded bliss as a sign of moral decline. Rather we should avoid any self-righteousness that so readily discourages and alienates the very families we should be supporting in our challenging times. I commend to everyone how essential it is that we, the people of Christ, meet with, accept and love people as they are. Sometimes we know the details of their circumstances, sometimes not, but that is not important. It is our duty to step forward holding out the hand of Christian love and friendship because that is what Christ commands us to do. We might find it uncomfortable and might even have to retract previous comments. This accepting of people in Christian love does not and should not however stop us from retaining, professing and indeed sharing with others, in a loving and gentle way, what we believe to be the way of God. As I said at the start of this letter and repeat now, the Church proclaims Christian marriage as being the will of God and promotes Christian marriage as good, exciting, and helpful for couples wishing to live together.

Peter Park Parish Minister

Sunday Scripture Readings

I have listed the scripture passages that I plan to use and preach on for the next few months at morning worship. A number of people have asked me to give advance notice of these and I hope you find them useful. If anyone wants an exposition or explanation of the theological or historical issues pertaining to any of the passages please speak with me and I will try to help.

Jun 6	Hosea 6: 1-6	Sep 5	Ezekiel 33: 7-11
	Matthew 9: 9-13, 18-26	,	Matthew 18: 15-20
Jun 13	Exodus 19: 1-8	Sept 12	Genesis 50: 15-21
	Matthew 9: 35-10:8	•	Matthew 18: 21-35
Jun 20	Jeremiah 20: 7-13	Sept 19	Jonah 3:10-4:11
	Matthew 10: 24-39	•	Matthew 20: 1-16
Jun 7	Jeremiah 28: 1-17	Sept 26	Ezekiel 18: 1-4, 25-32
	Matthew 10: 40-42	,	Matthew 21: 23-32
Jul 4	Zechariah 9: 9-13	Oct 3	Isaiah 5: 1-7
	Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30	Α.	Matthew 21: 33-46
Jul II	Isaiah 55: 6-13	Oct 10	Isaiah 25: 1-9
	Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23		Matthew 22: 1-14
Jul 18	Isaiah 44: 6-8	Oct 17	Isaiah 45: 1-7
	Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43		Matthew 22: 15-22
Jul 25	1 Kings 3: 1-12	Oct 24	Leviticus 19: 1-2, 15-18
	Matthew 13. 31-33, 44-52		Matthew 22: 34-46
Aug 1	Isaiah 55: I-5	Oct 31	Revelation 7: 9-17
	Matthew 14: 13-21		Matthew 5: 1-12
Aug 8	I Kings 19: 1-18	Nov 7	Amos 5:18-24
	Matthew 14: 22-33		Matthew 25: 1-13
Aug 15	Isaiah 56: 1-8	Nov 14	Zephaniah 1:7, 12-]8
	Matthew 15: 10-28		Matthew 25: 14-30
Aug 22	Isaiah 51: 1-6	Nov 21	Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24
	Matthew 16: 13-20		Matthew 25:31-46
Aug 29	Jeremiah 15: 15-21		
	Matthew 16: 22-28	Readings from A	Advent to come later

Matthew 16: 22-28 Readings from Advent to come later If you would like to be on the Scripture reading rota please tell the Minister.

Bible Classwhat do we do next?

Our year runs from September to May and we meet most Sundays during term time. Apart from our Sunday half hour in the primary school, we also have other activities. During the last session we had a Christmas outing to 'Joseph's Technicolor Dreamcoat', took part in the Lessons and Carols Service at Christmas, attended the concert/lunch for 'Amigos', helped at Queen Margaret Hospital on a Sunday morning and baked cakes for Easter. The church has always recognised that the young like to be active and practical so we need to address this.

If you are interested in coming to Bible Class then I would like to hear from you. At present we are meeting on Sundays at 10.30 am, but perhaps there is a better time. I should like to see more young people at Bible Class and would be pleased to review the time and the venue to suit.

Bible Class is open to all whether or not you have a church connection at present. If you have been to Sunday School in the past, or have never been at all, it doesn't matter. Perhaps you'll come along and decide this isn't for you. We are all different and have different ways of expressing our faith.

Please don't read this and put it aside. If you have any interest, whether as a young person or a parent, then please do get in touch.

Eileen Harper (860151)

THE SHAPE OF WORSHIP TO COME

The Panel on Worship report to this year's General Assembly says of a recent study that while some worship was "cold, formalistic, dull and lifeless and failed to engage people," there was also "much that was rich, meaningful, vibrant, liberating, exciting and enriching."

Whether worship was dreary or exciting seemed to depend on the minister's personality, attitude or sensitivity or on the congregation's willingness or unwillingness to give up deep-rooted and cherished ideas and practices.

Commending the section 'Worship 2000' to Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and congregations for study and action the report states:

- Though responsible for worship, this is not a minister's sole prerogative and others should be involved in its preparation and practice.
- Each congregation should carry out an 'audit' to develop worship to become more fully the expression of the whole people of God responding to the whole Gospel of God in Christ.
- Emotions can be 'doorways to encounter God' and traditional worship may have developed so as to suppress emotions or suggest feelings do not count in recognising what is spiritual.
- Multi-media worship is 'highly relevant' not just for the young; videos, computer graphics, atmospheric lighting, contemporary music and Internet material can all be used without sacrificing the theological integrity of the message.
- Congregations should budget annually for resources, equipment and materials to prevent worshippers 'drifting into passive (and somnolent) activity.'

WHY DO WE NEED MINISTERS?

The Board of Ministry is calling on the Church to come to a fresh understanding of why it needs ministers. A Committee on the Theology and Practice of Ordination has been set up under the convenership of Will Storrar. It will ask what kind of ministry the Church requires to meet the challenges of a post-modern society and how we identify the special role of minister or deacon within the ministry of the whole people of God. Its findings will set the agenda for the Board for the next decade.

The drive to come to an understanding of ordained ministry comes against a background of declining numbers of candidates and applications. George Whyte, the Board's Convener, believes that the trend is not cyclical and that the issue has to be addressed now. A smaller and older Church means less potential candidates and student finances may also account for the present trend. But George believes that the Church has a confused and ambivalent attitude to the ordained ministry which stems from the slack theology of maintaining that nothing which a minister does needs to be done by someone who is theologically educated, specifically trained or held responsible. He believes this to be a distortion of what he calls our pet phrases, "the priesthood of all believers" and the "ministry of all God's people". A Church which does not value the distinctive contribution of its ministers sends the wrong signals to potential

recruits. He also says that we are trying to recruit people to lead the Church forward whose members prefer things to remain the same - even if that means extinction.

The Board also plans to offer a new enquiry process for those who feel that they have some kind of call to ministry which will allow them to explore different kinds of service before they apply for one of them. But the Board has no intention of dropping their standards to make up the numbers of candidates.

George Whyte believes that ordained ministry, properly understood, is an exciting and fulfilling vocation which should attract gifted people from the pews. But if a shortage does develop, he believes that the Church will need to look at a changed role for ministers which will involve leading teams, and



that attention will also have to be given to the ecumenical dimension.

There is no doubt that, regardless of present recruitment trends, radical changes are on the way in regard to ordained ministry. The traditional working practices of the parish minister are no longer seen by many as appropriate as we move into a new millennium. But what will take its place? This is the challenging and exciting question facing not just the Board of Ministry, but the whole Church.

GIVE PRESBYTERIES FREEDOM, CASH AND A HUMAN FACE

Tom McWilliam Contin

As one of those who has "presided over 30 years of boredom and decline", I begin by owning up! I have to go on to say that I have sympathy with Ian Meredith's crie de coeur for bishops. But not, I think, for the same reasons as his.

I am a Presbyterian, that is, I believe in the ability of Presbyteries to develop the life of the local church. I strongly hold that the 'aping' by Presbytery of the committee structures of the General Assembly has killed the vision of Presbytery. Instead of seeking to help its constituent parts, i.e. its congregations to develop missionary strategies and activities, the Presbytery has been busy with responding to the requirements of Assembly Boards, forms, statistics, etc. The Presbytery needs to be released to fulfil its intended task of parish development and mission.

In practical terms, I believe that two things are needed for this. First, the large amounts of church cash gathered, accumulated and spent by Assembly Boards should be re-allocated to give Presbyteries seed corn, some money to experiment and develop work locally. "Locally" is the important word, and that local enterprise should not be subject to the dictates of what a central Committee or Board thinks worthy. Let's take the risk of being wrong occasionally at Presbytery level - the Boards have had years of doing this already!

So, first, a cash injection.

Secondly, a human face for the Presbytery's endeavours. This is where my bishop, boss, overseer, would come. This person would encourage vision and develop mission along with the Presbyters of the bounds. He or she would care for and support ministers and manse families and Kirk Sessions in tandem with the Presbytery.

Perhaps it's only from "the top of the Kirk", whatever that really means, that it is possible to see how wobbly the present edifice is, and although I don't think my ears would suit a mitre, there may be some wisdom and insight even amongst those of us who have "presided over 30 years of boredom and decline."