

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,
LARGS: ST COLUMBA'S PARISH CHURCH

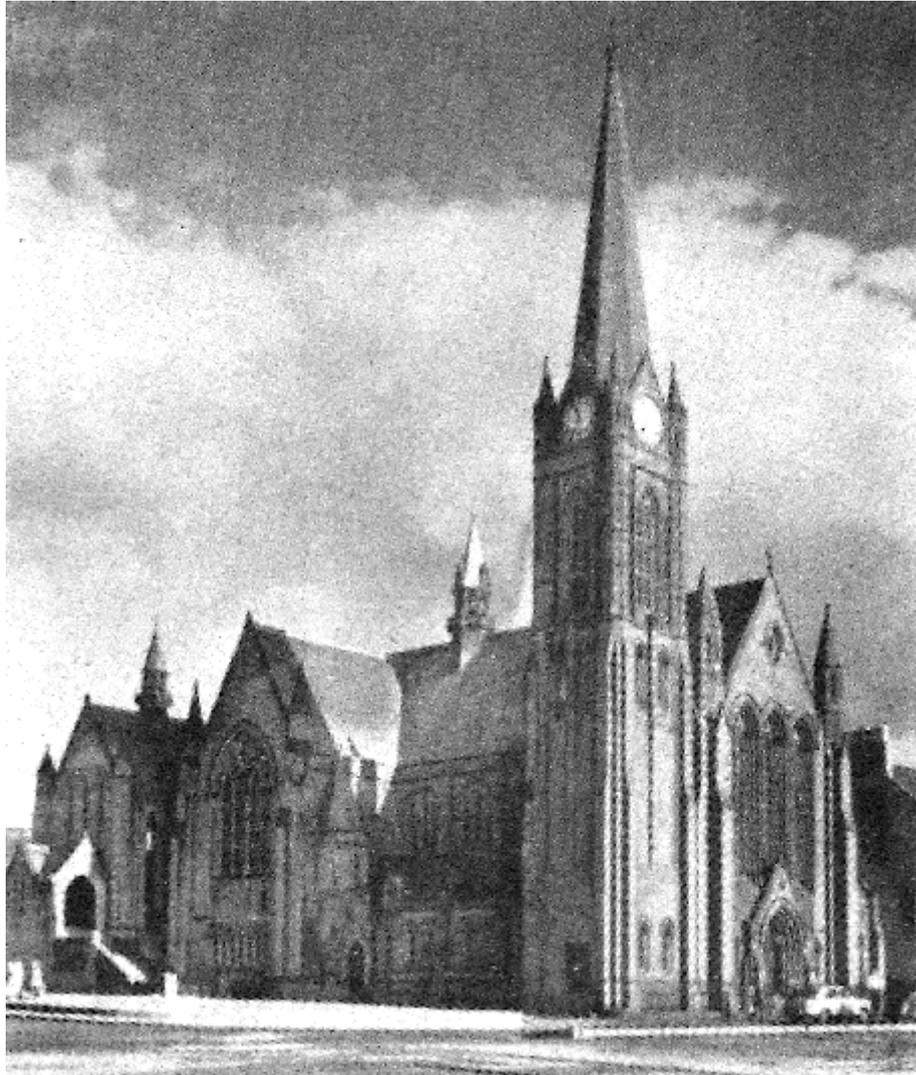
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MINISTER'S LETTER

“My Way” or a “Widow’s Way”?

Reflecting on the widow and her giving in Mark 12:38-44 this past week has made me more aware of how she counters much of our cultural thinking. Of all things valued in our culture and society, independence must rank very high. We are schooled to develop it, trained to maintain it, resist the loss of it; God knows we have even gone to war to protect it. We speak of fierce independence. It is a quality of life we will fiercely defend.

Another value of our culture is faith. We inculcate faith in our children, we encourage not only faith but faithfulness. “In God we trust” may be discounted these days, but it is still a motto for many.

Yet I have observed from my work with people who are in the second half of life and thus more aware of ageing, that faith often grows in inverse proportion to independence. It is often as we lose the independence that made Frank Sinatra sing “My Way” that we are able to allow dependence on the Greater Self, the True Self what we call God, to emerge.

I am speaking here of course of faith as trust. The more common understanding of faith as belief in doctrines is an unfortunate translation of the Greek word “*pistis*”. Trust is often a fruit that grows in the compost of decaying independence. It is this abandonment of oneself to something deeper and less programmed and planned than our independence plans and investments which jumps out at me from the widow in Mark’s gospel. The story of the widow’s gift is a story of abandonment to God’s provision.

It is not a teaching for stewardship or any fund-raising drive for that matter. Would that the church could learn to trust God more for its sustenance. Whether I like it or not I am involved in the second-half my life. I would love to say mid-life but that would mean I am going to live to be one hundred and ten! My transition to be your minister has been a most exciting adventure as I decided to stop what I have been doing for the past thirty years, and then waiting for the flux that the decision created, to take form.

I have been astounded at the providence of God, and the doors and avenues that have opened that I could never have dreamt. But, only after I had thrown it all into the treasury! My “new life” that begun among you at Easter could never have been planned or strategized for by me acting independently. It seems after thirty years of ministry I will have to begin practising what I preached.

“My Way” may have been Frank Sinatra’s way. I prefer to advocate the “Widow’s Way”. Give it all to God and be surprised.

Rev. Chris Vermeulen

BLYTHSWOOD CARE

The collection van will be parked in the Clark Memorial Church grounds on Friday 11th September, 9th October and 6th November between 11.00am and 11.30am, to uplift suitable goods. The uplift of larger items of furniture and books can be arranged by telephoning the depot at Hillington on 0141 882 0585.

DATES TO NOTE

Sat 5 Sept	Doors Open Day 12 noon – 4pm
Sun 6 Sept	Doors Open Day 2pm – 4pm
Sat 19 Sept	Concert in Church “Funeral Care Band” at 7.30pm
Sun 27 Sept	Harvest Sunday
Sat 24 Oct	Fairlie Fairtrade Initiative in Session Room
Wed 28 Oct	Kirk Session Meeting at 7.30pm

PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Lord, we pray for the Holy Spirit’s power to come in a mighty way to each individual who attends our church. As we find personal revival, may it grow to light a mighty fire of passion for God in our church – then spread to our community, our nation, and our world. Please give us a heart to pray for revival and hands that put our faith to action with service to others.

Amen

WORSHIP CALENDAR

Sunday 6 Sep at 11.30am	Rev Chris Vermeulen Sacrament of Holy Communion
Sunday 13 Sep at 11.30am	Rev Sandy McCallum
Sunday 20 Sep at 11.30am	Rev Chris Vermeulen
Sunday 27 Sep at 11.30am	Rev Chris Vermeulen
Sunday 4 Oct at 11.30am	Rev Chris Vermeulen
Sunday 11 Oct at 11.30am	Rev John Purves
Sunday 18 Oct at 11.30am	Rev John Purves
Sunday 25 Oct at 11.30am	Rev Chris Vermeulen
Sunday 1 Nov at 11.30am	Rev Chris Vermeulen

PRAYER CORNER

Please remember in prayer:

- students and teachers returning to school, college or university and those beginning for the first time
- those who are sick or bereaved, especially any known to ourselves
- those who are unemployed, especially our young people
- all those who have left prayers, often poignant ones, on our Prayer Tree

CHURCH REGISTER

Deaths

8 Jun	Janet McKee, Moorburn Manor, Largs
5 Aug	William (Bill) Henry Berry, Chapelton Way, Largs
25 Aug	Sarah (Sadie) Alexandria Downs, John Clark Street, Largs

Weddings

20 Jun	Eryn Nyssa Coyle and David Forbes Stevens
17 Jul	Louise Mayes and Martin Beattie

MONDAY’S ALTERNATIVE CLUB

We started back at the end of August with a catch up meeting and discussion to plan our next events. Unfortunately only 3 of us could make it, so we are repeating our catch up on 7th September. Our minister Chris has kindly agreed to come and introduce himself to the group on 21st September and we are planning a Badminton/Table Tennis night on 5th October.

Our group has now reduced to 8 due to one of our members moving away and one having other commitments so we would be keen to welcome new members. You do not need to attend St Columba’s, the group is open to anyone who would like to join us. We meet fortnightly on a Monday night at 8pm during term time and our aim is to offer friendship, fellowship and various activities to anyone who would like to come along.

Alison Tunnicliff

DUTY ELDERS

Elders on duty for the ensuing months are: -

6 Sep - **Mr Wallace (Convenor)**, Mr Currie, Mr Hewitt, Mr Lewis, Mr R Rae, Mr Welch, Mrs Anderson, Mrs McManus, Mrs Rae.

13 Sep - Mr Laurie, Mr Rankin, Mrs Bell, Mrs Butler, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Laurie, Miss McFarlane.

20 Sep - **Mr Boyle (Convenor)**, Mr Hendry, Mr Murdoch, Miss Black, Mrs Counter, Mrs Houghton, Miss McKellar.

27 Sep - **Mr McNaught (Convenor)**, Mr Jamieson, Mr D Jenkins, Mr I Jenkins, Mr Laing, Ms Gallettie, Miss Kennedy, Mrs Lyon, Mrs McEleny.

4 Oct - **Mr Wallace (Convenor)**, Mr Currie, Mr Hewitt, Mr Lewis, Mr R Rae, Mr Welch, Mrs Anderson, Mrs McManus, Mrs Rae.

11 Oct - Mr Laurie, Mr Rankin, Mrs Bell, Mrs Butler, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Laurie, Miss McFarlane.

18 Oct - **Mr Boyle (Convenor)**, Mr Hendry, Mr Murdoch, Miss Black, Mrs Counter, Mrs Houghton, Miss McKellar.

25 Oct - **Mr McNaught (Convenor)**, Mr Jamieson, Mr D Jenkins, Mr I Jenkins, Mr Laing, Ms Gallettie, Miss Kennedy, Mrs Lyon, Mrs McEleny.

2 Nov - **Mr Wallace (Convenor)**, Mr Currie, Mr Hewitt, Mr Lewis, Mr R Rae, Mr Welch, Mrs Anderson, Mrs McManus, Mrs Rae.

9 Nov - Mr Laurie, Mr Rankin, Mrs Bell, Mrs Butler, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Laurie, Miss McFarlane.

16 Nov - **Mr Boyle (Convenor)**, Mr Hendry, Mr Murdoch, Miss Black, Mrs Counter, Mrs Houghton, Miss McKellar.

23 Nov - **Mr McNaught (Convenor)**, Mr Jamieson, Mr D Jenkins, Mr I Jenkins, Mr Laing, Ms Gallettie, Miss Kennedy, Mrs Lyon, Mrs McEleny.

30 Nov - **Mr Wallace (Convenor)**, Mr Currie, Mr Hewitt, Mr Lewis, Mr R Rae, Mr Welch, Mrs Anderson, Mrs McManus, Mrs Rae.

K.I.T. CLUB

Just about at the end of another session of our K.I.T. CLUB which has been well attended by our faithful ladies (and men). A big thank you to you all.

We started on 13th April and hope to finish on 28th September. The remaining meetings for this session will be on: Monday September 7th, then Monday 21st September and the last meeting will be on Monday 28th September. We hope to have the details for the K.I.T. CLUB meal confirmed, and names of those wishing to attend before our last meeting. The meal is provisionally booked for Tuesday 15th December at the Woodhouse Hotel, time 12 for 12.30pm. Hope to see you all there that day.

Eileen Rankin

MINISTER'S RESERVED CAR PARKING SPACE

Members of the congregation will recall that we recently provided a reserved car parking space for the Minister, this is at the Nelson Street entrance and is clearly marked with yellow lines. The reserved space is required by the Minister as he arrives just before the start of our service at 11.30a.m., having just completed the service at Fairlie Parish Church. Unfortunately and in spite of intimations advising that this space **must** be kept clear, it has been used by other car owners resulting in the Minister having to seek out an alternative space elsewhere in the town and then arriving late at the Church for the service. Can we please request again that members of the congregation comply with this request.

The Kirk Session

HOME COMMUNION

Since coming to Fairlie Parish Church and Largs, St Columba's I have conducted several home communions. These have been very special and sometimes very emotional for all those participating. Home Communion is a way of extending the table of Communion to those who are unwillingly absent from the service through illness, housebound, or for some reason the recipient can't be in Church on Communion Sunday. After Communion Sunday I try to encourage your elder to offer you Communion in your home. Some of you are so nice and kind and don't want to make a fuss or feel that the minister is too busy. Truth be told I find the services very rewarding and get a lot out of them. It is a simple service where I, along with an elder, serve you with a morsel of bread and a sip of non-alcoholic wine. All those present in your home are invited to participate in the service. These services are arranged either through your elder, by contacting the office or me directly. Your elder will then arrange a mutually suitable time for us to celebrate Communion with you. Please do not feel excluded or hesitate to ask. I hope that in the future we will develop a routine where everyone is able to share in this meal by establishing a rota. So if you would like to be on this list, please let your elder know.

Rev. Chris Vermeulen

YOUNG CHURCH

We had a great attendance for our welcome back party after the summer and we were pleased that some of the congregation were able to come upstairs and join us after the Service. If you look up the stairs you will see our new tree we were busy making with all our names on it. Hopefully more "leaves" will be added as our Young Church expands.

Our food bank collection is still ongoing. The items listed as urgently needed are the items that are least donated in general and so we would like you to continue to donate these items in particular. We took another 223 items down to the food bank at the end of July and plan to continue taking donated items down monthly. Your ongoing support for this project is really appreciated.

Alison Tunnicliff

ST COLUMBA EXPERIENCE

The Heritage Centre continues to host many visitors despite the inclement weather this year. Paula Gallagher and Linda Kennedy have grown into their jobs hosting all visitors with a smile and warm welcome, ably supported by our band of volunteers each day. The centre will close at the end of September before hosting a concert in September with the Cooperative Funeral Care Band. We also hope to welcome Largs Academy for a special concert in October.

Ken Welch

THE GUILD

I trust that all our members have had a good summer break despite the weather!

We are indebted to Jim, Eileen, Irene and Sheena for keeping us in touch every fortnight in the K.I.T. Club. Thank you for providing the tea and coffee, the eats and the chat.

The new session of the Guild starts on Monday 5th October at 1.00pm in the Session Room when, after our opening lunch, our minister, Chris, will talk to us on our Theme for this year 'Be Bold, Be Strong – Go in Peace.'

We look forward to welcoming friends, old and new, to our meetings each week in the Session Room on Mondays at 2.00pm. We have a varied programme of speakers, which can be viewed on the church notice boards. A very warm welcome awaits you if you would like to come along.

Christine Gallettie, Convenor

LARGS CHURCHES TOGETHER HOLIDAY CLUB

That's our 21st annual holiday club completed and what a resounding success. This year's club was entitled "Polar Explorers" and with the willing participation of average of 58 children, 42 adults and Teen team, we explored the lives of 5 bible characters; Peter, Stephen, Philip, Paul and Timothy using a mixture of drama, crafts, challenges, games and quizzes and Bible lessons. We were blessed with dry weather and a great team who portrayed the journey so well. Our thanks go to the Pastor Gordon and congregation of Brisbane Evangelical Church for allowing the use of their hall, grounds and resources. We would like to thank all the willing volunteers, the local clergy; Revs Andrew Taylor, Markus Thane, Chris Vermeulen, David Watson and Pastor Gordon Weir for supporting us with daily devotions, the congregations from the town for their support, and also for the parents sending their children and young people along; finally thanks to everyone who attended, who all worked together to make it so much fun.

Fulton Murdoch



SUMMER FAYRE 2015

We are delighted to report that our annual Summer Fayre held on 8th August was a wonderful success. The day dawned dry and bright, confirming that our prayers had been answered. The stalls in the Stewart Memorial Hall were brimming over with an abundance of goods. It never ceases to amaze us that every year we receive such a variety of donations and we cannot thank you enough for your wonderful support. In addition, each stall was manned by an army of willing and enthusiastic helpers which brought about an amazing atmosphere of fellowship and commitment. Sincere thanks to Chris for his words of encouragement and thoughtful prayer before we opened the doors. The tearoom in the Session Room was literally 'going like a fair' however the fantastic team of servers coped admirably and appeared totally unflustered!! Outside activities proved very popular and particular thanks must go to all the people who worked outside all day, although it was dry it was not always very warm, but we never heard them complain once!! At the end of the day the amount raised was £4,000 which really was a terrific total and one which has made Mr. Wallace very happy! However, just as important as the money, was the fantastic team spirit showed by everyone in St. Columba's. Without the donations of goods, the people who manned the stalls, the people who set up and tidied up, none of it would be possible, so please accept our heartfelt thanks.

Gillian McEleny, John Lewis



CHOIR

Calling all shy choristers and crooners: St. Columba's Church Choir beckons you! The choir will meet on Thursdays at 7pm to rehearse a variety of worship music. A weekly practice may not suit everyone due to work or other commitments but don't worry, there is always a shorter run-through on a Sunday at 10.45am for the chosen music for that particular Sunday. Having a Thursday rehearsal will also tie in with the Fairlie choir rehearsal which will allow us to join each other as and when required. So if you think you can "sing with all your soul" come and join us on Thursday 10 September. Everyone will be made very welcome.

Rhona Gourley

SATURDAY TEAROOMS

The Tearooms have had another enjoyable season with new and old customers enjoying the wonderful home baking and home-made soup. We are very grateful to those volunteers who have provided baking each week and/or made soup, acted as servers or attended the doors. We could not forget our famous "patter merchant" Alex Chestnut and his "Patient wife" Elizabeth! Finally those of you who simply joined us any Saturday, thank you for your support. A final total will be included in the next issue of landmark

John and Lizanne Lewis, Jane and David Logan, Gillian McEleny

PEREGRINES

Our first stop was at the Village Inn in Fairlie where, as is our habit, we enjoyed scones and coffee before the serious walking began. We were especially pleased to welcome our minister along with two of his parishioners from Fairlie who were joining us for the first time. Then we all drove to the car-park at Portencross, donned the walking gear, checked packed lunch supplies and set off on an anti-clockwise circular route which would take us by Ardneil Farm, on through the picturesque fields of the area known as the "Small Holdings", passing Thirdpart Farm on our left before heading on towards a brief stretch of the A78 then turning left off the main road again and making towards the lands of Hunterston.

Untypically for this Summer, the weather had been very kind to us on the day, we noted the full fresh greenery of the majestically mature trees lining the avenue as we approached the gates of Hunterston House and we enjoyed the associated views so much that we decided that this would be a good spot to linger, just to take it all in, and of course to take some well-earned lunch.

Now being suitably rested and refuelled we moved on again, coming out of the woodlands and following the shore road skirting Hunterston Power Station and taking the narrow path past the impressive cliffs which form the Western face of Goldenberry Hill. The seaward views from this stretch of the walk were nothing short of magnificent. Millport seemed so clear and so close by you could almost smell the chips(!), the Wee Cumbrae shore beckoned across the sparkling blue waters of the Firth and way, way in the distance the great Sleeping Warrior of Arran stood out proudly against a cloudless sky.

By the time we passed the newly renovated Portencross Castle and completed our circular tour back at the car-park we were tired but very, very satisfied. We had covered about eight miles while enjoying the sheer beauty of God's creation and, as ever, enjoying good company, mutual support and stimulating conversations.

Sandy McCallum

LANDMARK

Please note Articles for inclusion in the October edition must be submitted to the Church Office by Monday 21st September 2015 at the latest. The October edition of Landmark will be available for uplift on Sunday 4th October.

Linda Beveridge, Church Secretary