

**The Church
of Scotland**

Minister: Rev. Raheel Arif
Tel: 01324 819149

Session Clerk: Mrs. Sue Storrar
2 Cumbernauld Road
Longcroft
FK4 1QJ
Tel: 01324 840757

Presbytery Elder : Mr. B. Richmond
1 Hazel Rd
Banknock
Tel. 01324 840761

Beadle : Mrs Sharon Fenney
01786 470817

Web site: www.haggschurch.org.uk

[email: haggschurch1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:haggschurch1@yahoo.co.uk)

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The Link

The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church

Linked with Denny Old Parish Church

Autumn 2023

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” Genesis 2:15

In 2021, Scotland hosted the United Nations COP26 Climate Conference. The conference was the first since the Paris Agreement of COP21 that expected parties to make enhanced commitments towards justifying climate change.

In Glasgow, The Glasgow Climate Pact was aimed to turn the 2020s into a decade of climate action and support. The package included strengthened efforts to build resilience to climate change, curb the greenhouse gas emissions and provide necessary finance for both.

As we see the impact of climate change more and more on our home of living, everyone is needed to join in the efforts to make our home a place of beauty and nature to live in.

As stewards of God’s creation, Christians should more firmly than ever follow Christ in the years of crisis that lie ahead.

We need to be more open than ever to the creative leading of the Spirit in building our spiritual resilience as people of hope beyond hope, in which the hugely ambitious project of Net Zero is a response of faith, offered in dependence on grace.

We need to learn to join the shout of ‘Hosanna’, which means “God help us!” The droughts and torrential rain, extreme heat and cold,

Thank You

To the Higgs Church and Denny Old Church families, David and I wish to thank you for the many kindnesses shown to us, following David’s stroke in June. We really appreciated all the good wishes, thoughtful cards, beautiful flowers, and delicious home baking, during that difficult time. Importantly, we would like to say thank you to those kind folk who visited us, including Raheel, and to those who drove David to appointments and took me to church and church meetings. Above all, we thank you for your prayers, the power of which we can testify to.

David is recovering slowly and can drive short distances. He is most grateful for the kindness shown to him.

May God bless you. Best wishes,

Lorna Duncan

Deaths

‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord’

March Susan Swan, Higgs

June : Ann Aitchison, Banknock

August: Anna Gardner, Bankview Care Home

Money matters

As our Church Calendar moves into yet another season, I trust you have all enjoyed a break away (or if like me have still to go on holiday – enjoy) and are refreshed to face the next step for us all along the path on our journey with the Lord.

Thank you to everyone who gives their offering by Standing Order. This eliminates the need for weekly envelopes and is the preferred way of giving by more than half of our congregation. If this is an option you wish to consider, there is

Once again Haggs Church is asking for your support with the Shoebox appeal

To bring a smile to the faces of children in Eastern Europe who have very little to smile about is one way of showing our Christian love. These boxes are delivered to Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine, Kosovo and Moldova.

Join together with friends and relations to make up a box. Leaflets are available to show you the items that perhaps can fill your shoebox. Shampoo, shower gel, a notebook and pencil and a pair of socks given to someone who has nothing is like a dream come true.

The Shoebox should be at Haggs Church by the end of October.

Thank you

Moira Martin

Boys Brigade

The Anchor Boys will start on Tuesday 5th September 6 – 7 p.m. in the Church Hall

The Junior and Company Section will meet in the Church Hall from 6.30 – 8.30 p.m.

All boys are welcome to come along and join in the fun.

wild fires and floods are the signs to remind us that we have not been good stewards of the beautiful planet God gave us.

Moreover, Hosanna is not only a cry for help but also a joyful shout. If we commit ourselves to ‘positive action’ to reduce our impact on the environment, the God will help us.

One of the aims of the Mission Planning is to reduce our dependence on ill-equipped buildings, unable to be heated by renewable means, poorly insulated, too large for current or foreseeable congregation size and for much of the week closed or underused.

As cost of living still on rise and once again fuel prices are increasing, for many individuals and organizations, our aim should be “let’s do more than just moan!” Let’s each do our bit to be better stewards of creation. Waste less, spoil less, and try to be happy with less.

And as a community of faith, seek ways to support those unable to trim their expectations because they already live below the breadline.

What will your harvest offering be? May it be not just a thank you to God, but also an apology for past actions and a commitment to improve.

God bless you all.

Rev. Raheel Arif

Minister: Denny Old and Haggs Parishes

Tea and Coffee after Sunday Service

Thank you to everyone who comes along after the service at Higgs Church and who enjoy a chat over a cup of tea or coffee in the company of old and new friends.

Thanks must go also to the people who volunteer to serve these beverages. We are few in number and would appreciate some extra help to keep things going.

Can you help? Please speak to me on Sunday or phone me on my number below and I'll let you know what's involved. Please note there is no obligation to "Bake a cake".

Carol Richmond 01324 840761 or 07880603088

Kelpies Canter sponsored walk for Christian Aid on Saturday 16th September from 10.30 – 12.30

The organization of this event (the first since Covid restrictions were imposed in 2019) is now being done locally by Christian Aid volunteers as the focus for the reduced number of CA employees is now visiting churches and organizations to raise awareness of the work of Christian Aid rather than being directly involved in fund raising events. As the Bridge Walks are no longer taking place, we thought it was important to try to re-establish the Kelpie Canter Walk as an annual event in the Falkirk area. We continue to receive advice and support from C.A. to make this event happen.

We have gained permission from Falkirk Council to run this event in the Helix Park on 16th September and hope that lots of people will show an interest and take part in this fund-raising event. If you would like to be sponsored and need a form please see Sue Storrar, or if you would like to donate to this event, please see Sue or me. Jean McCheyne

NEEMA PROJECTS - TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES ONE LIFE AT A TIME.

On Sunday 16th July Jayne Lamont joined our special Higgs 183rd Birthday celebrations service to tell us about the work of the charity NEEMA, the Swahili word for Grace, that she set up in 2018 to support vulnerable women and children in Kenya.

Jayne gave a moving testimony about how on a visit to Kenya she saw families living in need of medical care, school provision and a regular source of income, along with the conviction that God was calling her to do what she could to raise funds to support this work.

Jayne made a commitment to send financial support on a regular basis to partners who were working in Kenya on local projects to provide basic health care, support widows to start a business and to help young people in schools with textbooks, PE equipment, clean drinking water and even basic essentials, like soap, and feminine hygiene products.

Sometimes Jayne was unsure if she would be able to continue making these regular financial contributions and she is so grateful for God's gracious provision, through the partnership of all who have contributed to this vital work with prayer, financial support, and other material gifts. NEEMA is now providing feminine hygiene products for 100 girls each month and in December 2022 began supplying drinking water to Kosogo Primary School, each month, saving the children a walk of several miles each day.

Following the service, a delicious 'Birthday Tea' was provided for the congregation and our friends from Denny Old Church. The fellowship, sandwiches and cakes were enjoyed by everyone and our guests, Jayne and her family, were able to talk informally about the work of NEEMA and share photos of the families being supported in Kenya.

Jayne was overwhelmed by the warm welcome and generosity shown towards her and the NEEMA Kenyan Projects. The amazing donation of £691.65 given by the joint congregations will go a long way, touching and changing lives. (Proverbs 19:17)

The Sunday Club

The Sunday Club will restart after Communion in September.

The theme for the first few weeks will be “In the beginning” as we explore the story of Noah and the animals aboard the ark.

All children are welcome to come along (under 3s should have an adult to accompany them)

SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB

The holiday club at Denny Old was a week of fun, laughter and noise.

It was good to see children from Hags there, enjoying meeting up with other young people.

The balloon water fight was the best according to some but most of the activities were great fun. I believe ice cream vouchers were won by two members. Well done to you, I hope you shared it.

It was a lot of work for the organizers and our thanks to those involved from Hags.

Moira Martin

Readers

If you would like to read the Bible passage in Church on a Sunday morning, please see Jean Proffit to add your name to the list.

Flower List

There are a few vacant dates on the flower calendar. Please see Jean Proffit if you would like to supply flowers to adorn the chancel.

Jean Proffit

Yoga 4 All

Yoga sessions have restarted, following the summer break, on Thursday evenings from 7.00 – 8.15pm in Hags Church Hall.

Yoga is a way of keeping the body flexible, keeping the mind focused and keeping the emotions calm. Yoga is accessible to all levels of fitness and there is no pressure in the classes to ‘do a perfect yoga pose’.

Please contact Sue Storrar at sue.storrar@hotmail.com for more details. All will be made welcome.

Snowdrop Café

There are a number of people who meet at the Café in the Church hall on a Monday afternoon from 1 – 3.00 p.m. If you are looking for somewhere to go and would like company come along and join in.

A warm friendly welcome awaits you.

New Beginnings

As someone whose career was spent in education, I always see August as a time for 'New Beginnings'. All those fresh unused jotters, perfectly sharpened pencils and stiff (if somewhat uncomfortable!), new uniforms and shoes were a sign that a new school year had started, and new possibilities were beckoning. This time of the year therefore always offered exciting new opportunities but also the frightening unknown.

This is where we are now in the process of putting into practice the 'Mission Plan' for this area that was negotiated between representatives from Bonnybridge, Denny, Dunipace and Haggs churches over the past months.

We are excited by the prospect of eventually amalgamating five churches into one large parish, with more people and finances to take forward the work of the Lord in this area, and to build stronger links to the wider community. However, the thought of losing buildings and firm relationships within our own 'church family' here at Haggs is a scary prospect for many of us.

When Presbytery endorse the plan submitted from this area, then a Steering group will be formed to represent the congregations from each church. They will take the process of change through at a steady pace with consultation with members and elders at each step. They will need everyone's support and prayers as they take forward future developments for radically changing church worship here at Haggs.

We will all need to remember the words of a well-known hymn that we all sang as children:-

The Church is wherever God's people are praising, Singing their thanks for joy on this day.

The Church is wherever disciples of Jesus remember his story and walk in his way.

The Church is wherever God's people are helping, caring for neighbours in sickness and need.

The Church is wherever God's people are sharing the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.' (Carol Rose Ikelor)

The Church is therefore us, the people, and how we live our lives in this community, showing our faith through our work and actions.

God bless you all during this time of new beginnings,

Sue Storrar

(Haggs Session Clerk)