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LINK MAGAZINE

SPRING 2025

FREE

WWW.UAPC.CO.UK

Articles and letters

The Link welcomes articles and letters, which can be sent by e-mail to cafair-holm@outlook.com or by post (Claremont, Hartfell Cres. Moffat DG10 9AL). All communications should bear a name and, if possible, a telephone number. Anonymous contributions will not be accepted.

Copyright

May I ask you to ensure that any article submitted is either one you have written yourself or one that you have had permission to reprint.

Editor

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition of the Link Magazine— Local businesses, local organisations and of course our regular contributors. All the contributions make for an interesting and varied read.

May your Christmas and New Year, be warm and safe. The Spring/Easter edition of the Link is due out in March 2025. The Editor.



Please donate food items

Either bring items to
UAPC on Sunday

or

contact Laurie McVeigh.
Goods will be distributed
regularly by the school.

Or a packet of something



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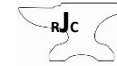
To eat in or take away, a large selection of filled rolls, sandwiches and hot pies.

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I am only one but still I am one
I cannot do everything, but still I can do something.
I will not refuse to do the something I can do.
Helen Keller



Christian Aid Week this year runs from 11th to 17th May. This is the week when we rely heavily on our volunteers to deliver those distinctive red and white envelopes through every door in Moffat, Beattock, Wamphray and Johnstone Bridge. We are always looking for new volunteers to help with this task, so please let us know if you are available to help during that week.

Since Covid, our collection process is quite different. We are asking those people wishing to donate to return the envelopes to us, by dropping them off at specific locations, details of these locations are printed on a label on the red envelope. We hope this year we can raise at least the same amount as last year, which was £2459. Every year Christian Aid, as a global organisation, is doing more than the year before, the times we live in are creating greater and greater needs.

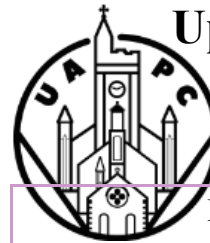
Guatemala is one region of particular concern for Christian Aid; half of all children are chronically malnourished, leading to stunting that permanently affects both physical and mental development. The indigenous farmers are severely affected by extreme temperatures, their crops fail for lack of water. There is a double injustice taking place for local farmers of Guatemala; they have done the least to cause the climate crisis, yet they endure its impact most. On top of that, Industrial plantations nearby are using up the river water and natural resources to produce food for the world's richest countries, while the locals go hungry. How can that be right? Something has to be done to fix this!

You would be forgiven for thinking you are too far removed from these people to be of any help, but that is not the case. By supporting Christian Aid in whatever way you can, you make it possible to touch their lives for the better. Christian Aid is providing training for farmers to change their crops to be more resilient and tools to help them make that change. Christian Aid stands side by side with the poorest communities at the front line of poverty and exploitation across the world.

This year's Christian Aid Week in Moffat will be launched with a **musical event taking place at UAPC on Saturday 10th May; a 30 piece band called 'Heart and Soul'** will perform between 3 & 5pm. Later in the summer we plan to host a Ceilidh, which is a great opportunity to socialise as a family. Look out for posters of this coming event.

Please consider going the extra mile to help Christian Aid do what it does best; reaching out in love and kindness to help those affected by injustice, poverty and war.

Fiona McLean



Upper Annandale Parish Church

(Charity registration number: SCO12236)

<https://www.uapc.co.uk>



MINISTER

Rev. Elsie Macrae



Elsie.Macrae@churchofscotland.org.uk

OFFICE BEARERS

Session Clerk: Helen Braid

Treasurer: Mrs Jackie Shuttleworth

Dear friends,

It is amazing how not long ago many of us were fed up with 2024 but who ever thought March 2025 will come by quickly and in a few weeks Ash Wednesday will be here and many of us will be observing Lent. Many people choose to fast by giving up a favourite past time like watching TV, eating chocolate or drinking alcohol. Many set aside a time to praise and worship the Lord; to read the Bible more, and to pray more often. But the truth is many anticipate deeper intimacy with the Lord or crave to feel Gods presence.

In the Old Testament, the recognised symbol of God's presence was the ark of the covenant- which sadly was taken from the Israelites. When King Solomon had finished building the temple he prepared the inner sanctuary where the ark of the Lord was placed.

King David with his abled young men went to Judah to bring the ark back, David had asked, 'How can the ark of the Lord come back to me'. Since, all efforts to bring it back had failed. Someone had suggested to use a cart, another suggested to get Uzzah (whose name signified *strength*) and Ahio (*Brotherliness*)- the two would Drive the cart- David did everything in his way, and everyone agreed and thought it was a great idea too. But the Lord's anger burned against Uzzah. When you read in earlier text God had already told the Israelites that the ark must be carried on the shoulders of anointed priests (those who knew how to). The ark was no common thing, just like Lent- we ought to know the real meaning and purpose of the 40days of lent- we need to truly realign our desires with That of God's we need to walk in Love, humility and obedience **Deuteronomy 30:9-10** *'Then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; if you obey the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.'*

.../cont

Whatever we practice in the coming weeks, let us seriously take a time of repentance - being aware that it is sin that is separating us from God, but we look to Christ for he endured the cross to save you from sin, death and the evil one. Let us be led to the gratitude of Christ.

Elsie



Drop in Wednesday continues to offer an opportunity to “**drop in**” for a cup of tea or coffee a scone and most importantly a chat! We are very glad to continue to welcome

new folks to our lively group where chatter and laughter is always present.

It takes place on a fortnightly basis in the church hall between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. You will see the dates advertised on posters in the Church, Wallace’s the Butcher and Grieve’s Newsagents, the Sunday intimations and the internet.

It is great fun no matter your age and offers an opportunity to share and stay connected. To quote some of our regulars “It is an important part of my week!”, “ I really look forward to the chat and the scones!” There is no charge!” However as a result of the generosity of those wh have attended from December to February we were blessed to receive £216 in our donations box.

You can drop in and drop out and chat, listen, or just have a cuppa and a scone, active wellbeing. A very warm welcome awaits **You!**



This takes place on the last Saturday morning of each month between 8.30 a.m. and 9. 30a.m. It is an opportunity for the “lads” to meet to talk about all sorts of topics whilst enjoying bacon rolls, tea and coffee or if you prefer more healthy fare orange juice and cereal. There is no charge, but the men are generous, and the first two

breakfasts of the year have realised £149.50 for church funds. We have welcome one new member recently but there is plenty of space for more. If you would like to come along you will receive a very warm welcome. Please look out for the notice in the church notices or contact Mr. Jim Paterson for more details. We are keen to see our fellowship grow.

Resurrection

After rain there is a rainbow

After a storm there is a calm

After a night there is a morning

And after death a resurrection dawn

UAPC Teams

Team Leader

Vice

Session Clerk: Helen Braid

Vice- Session Clerk: Andy Shuttleworth

Worship

Elsie Macrae

Erin Bullard

Jeff Brown

Ann Gordon

Arthur Milton

Robert McVeigh

Peter Newsome

Jane Paterson

Hilda Saville

Andy Shuttleworth

Pastoral & Fellowship

Hilda Saville

Laurie McVeigh

Jeff Brown

Ally Kirkwood

Elsie Macrae

Linda McMinn

Peter Newsome

Team Leader

Vice

Mission & Outreach

Chris Poole

Jane Paterson

Mary Brown

Linda Lyons

Helen Moore- Poole

Fiona McLean

Fiona Paton

Janice Welsh

Finance

Jackie Shuttleworth

Anne Sanders

Mary Brown

Marion Little

Team Leader

Vice

Property/Fabric

Fiona Paton

Andy Shuttleworth

Hazel McDonald

Graeme Paterson

Jim Paterson

Gordon Smith

Fund Raising

Ann Gordon

Ally Kirkwood

Nicola Boggle

Caroline MacKenzie

Imogen Paterson

Jane Paterson

Fiona Paton

Apparently, if you listened closely, you could discern that it wasn't McCartney's voice, but he has been told that within a year not even he would be able to tell the difference.


In a complex and dangerous world where we can be fooled time and time again by those who would manipulate mankind for their own ends- through clever words, through the tricks of social media, by providing us with easy answers or ready-made enemies who will feed our fears; it is then that I like to return to the quiet place, to pay attention to the detail of the straightforward promise of Christ. "I am the way, the truth and the life". And the older I get, the more I realise that in an ever changing and fast-moving world, what He offers me is without doubt the real deal.

Andy Shuttleworth


We won't always know whose lives we touched and made better for our having cared, because actions can sometimes have unforeseen ramifications. What's important is that you do care and you act.
Charlotte Lunsford.

Local support services

Minister- Rev Elsie Macrae 01683225146	Samaritans. Tel. 01387 253555
DRI. Hosp. 01387 246246	Dr's Surgery Moffat 01683 220062
Citizens advice 01387 252456	Dumfries Council. 030 3333 3000
Social Work Dept. 01387 273660	Criminal Social justice 0303 333 3001
Dentist's surgery 01683 220753	Chemist Moffat. 01683 220024
Town Hall 01683 221102	Food train. 01556 288427
Alcoholics Anonymous 03301 596 494	Women's Aid. 07710 152772
Childline 0800 1111	Health Visitors 01576 205531
School Nurses 07795 291296	




Teens on Sunday



Come join a safe space where you can wrestle with your thoughts and share your faith opinions in a safe and friendly environment.

2024 Dates: [7th April](#), [5th May](#), [2nd June](#), [8th Sept](#), [6th Oct](#), [3rd Nov](#), [1st Dec](#)

UAPC Hall



The Thursday Message

The Thursday Message contains a short reflection on a related bible reading, a prayer and suggestions for a related hymn. It is a part of the Mission and Outreach of We send it out online or by hand to those who have indicated that they wish to receive it. If you would like to be included or if someone you know would benefit from this service either on a short/long-term basis, please feel free to contact Rev. Elsie, Evelyn Atkins, Jeff Brown, your District Elder or phone 07841073259 and

I am only one but still I am one
I cannot do everything, but still I can do something.
I will not refuse to do the something I can do.
Helen Keller

Dates for the Diary

What's on at UAPC Regular activities

The hall has been very well used for a number of groups and classes throughout the year. The listed are the regular activities going on, but the hall is often used for other activities including coffee mornings, ceilidhs, birthday parties etc.

Our calendar is on the front page of the website www.uapc.co.uk org -Any enquiries for bookings should be sent to bookings@uapc.co.uk or new enquiries please complete the booking form on the website

<p>Monday 5:30-6:30pm Exercise Class</p> <p>6:00-7:00pm Pilates</p> <p>Tuesday – 11:00-12:00 Exercise Class</p> <p>12:30-1:15 Active Lives</p> <p>5:00-7:00 Slimming World</p> <p>Wednesday – Drop in Wednesday (Usually 1st & 3rd Wed) 10-11</p> <p>6:30-7:45pm Yoga</p> <p>Thursday 11:00-12:00 Exercise Class</p> <p>1st Thursday each month—Masons</p> <p>2nd Thursday each month—SWI</p> <p>3rd Thursday each month—Moffat Crime Writers</p>	<p>Fridays – 10-11.30am Toddlers</p> <p>Saturdays - 8-9am Circuit training</p> <p>Men's Breakfast club 8.30-9.30am (last Saturday of Month)</p> <p>Sundays- Teens on Sundays 6-8pm (once a month) check calendar for dates</p> <p>Tea/Coffee after service at 11:30</p>
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Togetherness

7 colours make a rainbow

7 days make a week

7 continents make a world

7 letters come together to make

GOD ONLY KNOWS- The trouble with recognising the 'real deal'.

If someone asked the question, 'Who is the most listened to keyboard player of all time?' probably a range of answers would come out- everyone from Liberace to Elton John, Franz Liszt to Rik Wakeman, perhaps even Jerry Lee Lewis. No-one can say definitively, but a name that would certainly be close to the top of the list might come as a bit of a surprise. The name is Greg Phillinganes. 'Greg who?' I hear you ask.



Greg Phillinganes is an immensely talented multi-instrumentalist who has toured and recorded with a broad array of artists including Stevie Wonder, Eric Clapton, David Gilmour and Toto. But what probably makes him the most listened to keyboard player of all time is the work he did with Michael Jackson on 'Thriller', the biggest selling album of all time.

The other week I heard something that took me aback. Running through the album's title song is a very recognisable bass line- actually played on a keyboard- by Greg Phillinganes. The whole song is a very complex production with many different parts all expertly crafted into one by the late great Quincy Jones. But running pretty much throughout is that bass riff, underpinning the whole tune. A riff that only has five notes in it. Those five notes are repeated over and over again throughout the piece and totally underpin the track.

What surprised me was not so much that such a simple line of music could have such an impact simply by being repeated throughout the whole song; rather, it was the response from Phillinganes himself in an interview when he was asked whether he played throughout the song or whether the five notes had just been recorded and then replayed over and over on a 'loop'. Apparently, he gets asked that a lot and his answer is an emphatic 'No!'.

The interviewer pointed out that it takes tremendous discipline and focus to play those five notes in that sequence in exactly the same manner, over and over again- he plays the riff over 90 times. But Phillinganes tells us- and I quote- "the more you play it, the more the groove settles in on you.... You get into a zone. There's no need to cut and paste- any cutting and pasting would rob you of the joy of grooving for the five minutes". The joy, he says, is in the reality of the moment. I question whether any of us would have known the difference between him playing and recording every note throughout the song as opposed to playing the riff once and then pasting it a further 90 times. But for Gregg Phillinganes as an artist, his part in the creation was just as important as the end product. And it is part of what makes the end product real and worthwhile.

I contrast that with the fears expressed by Sir Paul McCartney on the Laura Kunesberg show a few weeks ago. He, along with others, has real concerns that the government appears to be planning to allow tech companies to 'harvest' all forms of art, without paying royalties to their creators, to use them in their artificial intelligence development. He mused on a recording that had been played of him singing the Beachboys' track 'God only knows'- a track he has never recorded. It was all done by Artificial Intelligence- A.I. to you and me

.../cont

CHURCH FLOWERS - UAPC—Moffat

The flower list is now displayed in the church vestibule and you can enter your name against any of the vacant spaces if you wish. One of our team will contact you in the week prior to your chosen date to remind you and provide any assistance.



UAPC—Wamphray

2nd March	Moira Hogarth	1st June	Laura Forrester
9th March	Sandra Johnstone	8th June	Elizabeth Jane Wilson
16th March	Sandra Laidlaw	15th June	Ann Braid
23rd March	Gayle Lamont	22nd June	Helen Braid
30th March	Linda McMinn	29th June	Sheila Thomson
6th April	Fiona Richardson	6th July	Rosemary Cowan
13th April	Kirsty Scott	13th July	Helen Harrison
20th April	EASTER	20th July	Karren Currie
27th April	Lynn Scott	27th July	Denise Dempster
4th May	Margaret Shearer	3rd August	Elizabeth Harper
11th May	Lorna Sloan	10th August	Moira Hogarth
18th May	Mary Starkey	17th August	Sandra Johnstone
25th May	Flora Stewart	24th August	Sandra Laidlaw
		31st August	Gayle Lamont

Celtic Blessing

Bless to us O God the earth beneath our feet.
 Bless to us O God the path whereon we tread.
 Bless to us O God the people whom we meet.

WHEN	WHERE	WHO/WHAT
Friday 7th March 2pm	St Johns	World Day of Prayer 2025
Tuesday 11th March, 7.00pm	St Johns	Rev David Maylor - St Johns
Tuesday 18th March, 7.00pm	St. Johns	Sunday Night Live
Tuesday 25th March, 7.00pm	U A P C	U A P C
Tuesday 1st April 7.00pm	St Johns	St Lukes
Tuesday 8th April, 7.00pm	St Johns	Sunday Night Live
Sunday 13th April 6.30pm Palm Sunday	UAPC	" Songs of Praise "
Tuesday 15th April, 7.00pm	U A P C	with Fiona and Gillian
Friday 18th April - 8.50am Good Friday	" The Boat " next to Station Park bridge	Youth - Led Event - U A P C
Sunday 20th April 7.00am Easter Sunday	Station Park Pavilion	Walk of Witness
		Open air Easter Morning Service



ANNANDALE CHURCHES TOGETHER

LENT TALKS & ECUMENICAL EVENTS 2025

Our theme this year is - " Let us build a house "



Donald Walker



The joy of the approach of Christmas was tinged with sadness for all members of Upper Annandale Church as we coped with the shock of the loss of our Session Clerk, Donald Walker, who passed away suddenly, but peacefully at home on 18th November. Donald was dearly loved and appreciated by all who knew him in his Church capacity and more widely as a friend to all within the community.

The respect in which he was held was clearly evidenced by the numbers who attended his funeral service which saw the former St Andrew's Church filled to capacity. Our Minister, Rev Elsie Macrae, conducted the uplifting service with sensitivity and compassion. Donald's close friend and former Minister, Adam Dillon spoke movingly of his friendship with Donald and Ann and the contribution which Donald had made in his time, as a member of the Kirk Session. If any further evidence was needed it was clear from the volume of letters, cards and messages of condolence received by Ann and the wider family. The common thread was one of deep Sympathy and regret at the loss of such a fine gentle man who never spared himself in demonstrating his care and concern for everyone he met. His deep and abiding faith was at the core of his life - an inspiration to all.



Donald was a Moffat man through and through by birth, education and as a member of the farming and business community. At the funeral service his brother Brian spoke warmly of their family life and of the distinctive path taken by Donald in broadening his career overseas in Zambia where his strength of will and character at that time underpinned his success as a leader and skilled farm manager in a demanding environment. His love of Africa, its people, landscape and wildlife remained with him throughout his life.

Engagement with the outdoors and the countryside had been important to Donald from his own early days when as an enthusiastic Scout he progressed to Queen's Scout level. He recognised the influence that youth organisations could play in the development of young people and was privileged to return to local Scouting as Chairman of the local Scout group - a role in which he demonstrated his characteristic energy and enthusiasm.

His service as Session Clerk of St Andrews in delivering its redevelopment and rebirth as Upper Annandale Parish Church was exemplary. His was a constant presence and his leadership, resolve and faithfulness steered this demanding project to successful completion.

Readers : We are truly grateful to Jeff Brown, Arthur Milton and Bruce Edenson who help us out very regularly with church services . We are also very indebted to our Session Clerk who leads us in Worship as well. Marlyn Mailey plays our organ on a Sunday which we are grateful ☐.

Whist Drive held in November raised £80.00, January £103.00 and February £85.00.All very sociable evenings.



Wamphray Topper for Letter box at Christmas

The **WAMPHRAY Hub** is still meeting on a Monday morning between 10am and noon. It is being well supported Laughter and Chat is always the aim. Dominoes, cards on offer. Everyone is welcome so come along and enjoy the camaraderie at the hall in WAMPHRAY.

WAMPHRAY Carpet Bowling is held every Thursday 7.30pm Old and New members always welcome. From October to March..2024/25.At present we have twenty four members.

SWI meet monthly 2nd Tuesday of the month in WAMPHRAY Hall. New members always welcome. Last session we had over 25 members. If you feel you want to lean new skills come along from September – May.

KNIT and NATTER September-May held once a fortnight in the Wamphray village hall 7pm-9pm.Come along and join us if you feel it's for you. We have around 20 people at present.

On a sadder note Mr. Gordon Coupland from Roughlake died mid November 2024 Gordon had been in Burnfoot Nursing home for sometime. Sadly his wife Marilyn died shortly after on 8th December. They only had one son Jonathon, Our thoughts and prayers go to Johnathon his wife and family at this difficult time.

We also lost Mr. John Sanderson. John farmed at Wamphray Gate Farm for a number of years and retired to Lochmaben with his wife Maureen. Maureen died a number of years ago in Lochmaben, John passed away on the 9th of December 2025.Our thoughts and prayers are with Helen, Philip and Stephen and family at this sad time.

Jesus left the glory and splendour of heaven to become a man to reveal God the Father to us but also, and this is the bit we don't like, reveal that we are all sinners! But He didn't leave us there without any hope or direction and we can see for ourselves in the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John that it was for OUR sin He died, giving us a chance to have eternal life.

This is why He was able to say, "It is Finished". He had completed the work of what we call Redemption. He had won the victory over death and Hell through His undeserved sacrifice. He died on the cross in OUR place, and therefore made the way for Us.

May this be the best Easter you have ever had by giving your heart to Jesus who is just a prayer away. As it tells us in Romans Ch 10 v 9 "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved".

And, after that, to celebrate, can I suggest you go and buy the biggest Easter egg you have ever had!

Contributor- Gordon Smith

UAPC Wamphray News Round up

A Community Prayer

Let us always be generous,
In thought, word and deed.
Sharing a smile with a stranger,
Or helping a neighbour in need,
Treating all others respectfully.
May we keep an open mind,
Leaving no place for prejudice
And plenty of time to be kind.
Let us hunger for understanding,
To grow in wisdom each day,
And where there is grief and conflict,
May we help peace find a way.



He never failed to give thanks for the support and love of his beloved wife and partner, Ann, who sustained him in that role as she did throughout the time of their life together. He always gave full credit to the special contribution of his good friend, Adam Anderson, former Session Clerk and the members of the Kirk Session who contributed their skills and time in full measure.

Upon her arrival he formed a ready bond with our Minister, Elsie, their obvious friendship and lively good humour contributing to the warmth of church worship and outreach. His friendly welcome at the opening of the Church services unfailingly embraced everyone present in its warm glow.

Donald was at heart a family man who loved his daughters and their families and cared about them deeply. His relationship with his young grandson, Hamish, brightened his life and brought them both joy as fellow spirits.

He now lies at rest. We have been fortunate in having known him, having shared his friendship and witnessed his faith and commitment.

Our thoughts are with Ann and all his family. God bless you, Donald.



I wish to say a big thank you to the whole community and Church family for all the support they have given me.

We all miss him in our different ways, and have special memories of being with him.

I met him when I first came to Moffat for tennis week in 1965. It was his smile that I first noticed, and it never left him. That is what most people remember about him, along with his special attention to anyone he spoke to.

I thank everyone who contributed to the tremendous £2000 that was donated to Upper Annandale Parish Church in his memory. He would have been very humbled by all the out giving of love for him. It was a privilege to have been married to him.

Thank you again for all your care.

Best wishes

Ann

We won't always know whose lives we touched and made better for our having cared, because actions can sometimes have unforeseen ramifications. What's important is that you do care and you act.
Charlotte Lunsford

Fundraising Upper Annandale Parish Church Fundraising Team

2024 was a busy year but productive year for the fundraising team. Through our many varied events over £7,000 was raised for church funds. Our thanks to everyone who supported the events – we couldn't have done it without you.

We started 2025 with a concert by **Crescendo and The Wednesdays**. Despite it being a typical January Sunday afternoon the concert was attended and £160 was raised in donations which was split between the church and the choir.

The next major event for the fundraising team is our **Spring Craft Fayre**. The date for your diary is **Saturday 12 April 2025 between 10am and 3pm**. Crafters from around the district will be present and tea/coffee and home baking will be available for tired shoppers. Entry to the fayre is free, however, a small charge of £3 will be made for refreshments. If you can help with providing home baking or would like to volunteer with the running of the event please let one of the fundraising team know.

In June we look forward to welcoming the Budapest Café Orchestra to the church – watch out for more information on our website, church noticeboards and via the intimations.



If you're in or near the Church Building of UAPC you just might be aware of the new notice. The Disability Confident scheme is designed as a continuous learning journey, encouraging employers to evolve and improve with every step. It embraces a mindset of growth and adaptation. It allows us to be better equipped to nurture a workforce where every member feels valued and empowered to contribute their unique talents.

To enable us to be Disability Confident we aim to achieve at least one of the following

1. **Ensure our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible**
2. **Communicate and promote vacancies**
3. **Offer an interview to disabled people (if they meet the criteria for the job)**
4. **Anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments as required**
5. **Support any existing employee who acquires a disability or long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work**

As a Disability Confident Organisation, we aim to offer activities to provide employment related opportunities for disabled people such as work experience, work trials, or job shadowing opportunities.

UAPC received the disability confident certification in February. If you wish to learn more about the scheme, go to Website: www.theusualplace.org

Editor

Three Little Words - The most important words ever spoken!

Whether we turn on our TV or radio, scroll through our social media apps or simply read the daily paper, everyone is out to grab our attention. Billions of pounds are spent each year on advertisements, slogans and musical jingles that get stuck in our heads, to try and attract our attention and grab our money.

Our favourite advert from the past can be visualised instantly when we hear just a note or two from its theme and how just hearing three little words can transport us to an event in history, a familiar place or recollect a song or film or an event in our lives. Here's a few to think of: -

“Dr Livingstone I presume”

“One small step”

“I'll be back!”

“Shaken, not stirred”.

As we enter this Easter time, even more slogans and catch phrases, little words, will be thrown at us from every direction to try and grab our attention and especially our wallets. The real loser though, in all of this, is Easter itself, in that its true meaning gets lost.

Ask most people what they think of Easter, and they will say such things as: -

“The easter bunny”

“Cadbury's chocolate eggs” (other brands available)

“Time for holidays”.

So, let's get back to our Heading, “the most important words ever said.” Now I understand this is quite a claim but let us return to the reason why we celebrate Easter in the first place.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus was crucified on a cross and just before He took His last breath he uttered these most important words ever spoken: - “It is Finished”

He didn't say this because He knew His end was moments away but said them to confirm that the work, the reason for His mission, was complete.

It is this ‘work or mission’ that is at the Centre of all that's important, and the reason for this piece. ...cont/



We have been busy working away restoring a few small bits of furniture etc and are getting ready for Spring when, hopefully we can start getting out and about a wee bit more.

But the big news is that we have been awarded a grant from ANCBNC and Foundation Scotland which will ensure that we have enough funds to pay our rent etc for up to 2 years which will make a massive difference in how we are able to run the shed without the wor-

This will mean more time to concentrate on helping out in the Community and more time helping our members.

If anyone would like more information regarding the shed etc, please get in touch by calling 07731896813.

Many thanks Mark Burton.



The Masons at Upper Annandale Parish Church



Well, here we are into another busy year.

Other than was stated in the last Link magazine we presented Prostate Buddies in Dumfries with a cheque for £400. This is a charity that supports men and their families who have or are recovering from prostate Cancer, a unique charity, the only one in Scotland.

We also presented a cheque to Riding for Disabled children in Sanquhar on 28th November and believe me it was a bitter day, the wind just cut through you, but the children there didn't seem bothered by it one little bit, in fact they were just enjoying being around the horses. The money was gratefully received and will allow them to provide extras for the children.



We also took part again last year at the service in December and presented the children present with book tokens. Again, Santa made an appearance, sorry no reindeers were available, Rudolph went A.W.O.L.

We are still looking for charities for children to spend the money raised at the Zip Wire. Suggestions so far have been for the Queensbury Learning Centre in Dumfries, Riding for Disabled at Annan and a couple of other charities. We will be making up our minds where the money will be going at our next meeting but would ask if anyone has a children's charity that needs equipment, etc. please let us know.

This coming year we are going to be doing White Water Rafting on the River Tummel in July to raise money for T.L.C. Teddy Bears for children being admitted to the Accident and Emergency Department at Dumfries Hospital. This gives the child something to cuddle in a frightening atmosphere, something they will need.

We have several other events later in the year, but they can wait till the next edition.

We are exceptionally grateful for the union we have with Upper Annandale parish Church, long may it last.

Bill Wells

PRESBYTERY REPORT

Presbytery met on 3rd December 2024 online (via Zoom) at 19.00.

The meeting was constituted at 19.00hrs by the Moderator, Rev Andrew Morton and key points of note are as follows:

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE: A lot of discussion in the committee was regarding the forthcoming change in legislation in relation to the PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme). This has necessitated the Safeguarding Office conducting a deep cleanse of congregational registers. (SG7s). This has involved all congregations and has highlighted just how out of date some registers have been

Congregations should submit their Congregational Safeguarding Registers and Congregational Safeguarding Audits by 31st March each year, either to the Presbytery Office or direct to the Safeguarding Officer.

The Safeguarding Committee continue to request help to find people willing to become Safeguarding Trainers to deliver the ever increasing requests for training.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Presbytery dues for 2025 will need to rise to 2% of available income based on congregations 2023 accounts. This would raise in the region of £176,400. Presbyters may wonder why we need to raise so much money. The reason is that Presbytery needs to boost its reserves in order to ensure that they are sufficient to cover future salaries and expenses once core funding ends.

ORDER OF THE DAY: The Overture and explanatory notes thereon having been previously circulated the Presbytery Clerk explained the procedure prior to the Moderator inviting comment and discussion prior to the vote.

Presbytery Approved the Overture without amendment by 122 votes to 12

MISSION COMMITTEE: There is a project to develop new worshipping communities across our Presbytery. Brian Devlin, our Mission Facilitator, leads this project working closely with Rev Gavin Niven, the Convenor, and Rev Neil Urquhart, Brian's line-manager.

[Update: A Learning Community will start on 28th February 2025. There is still room for other churches to send a team on this. Interested parties should contact Neil Urquhart \(nurquhart@churchofscotland.org.uk\) or Brian Devlin \(bdevlin@churchofscotland.org.uk\).](#)

Churches are encouraged to send a team on the Learning Community, which starts on 28th February.

PRESBYTERY REVIEW COMMITTEE: The report of the Presbytery Review Committee was presented but, after a vote Presbytery declined to receive it in its current form. The votes were 74 (61%) against receiving the report and 48 (39%) in favour of receiving it. The meeting closed at 21.40hrs

Andy Shuttleworth- Presbytery Elder.

Session Clerk Report

Fellow members and friends,

As we come to terms with Donald's passing, I would like to say that we must all be strong and remember that we must carry on for that would be his wish, I am sure.

I felt privileged when the Session approved that I become the Clerk, and Andy Shuttleworth, Deputy Clerk.

We will work together alongside our Minister, Elsie, the Session and members of the Teams to continue the work started with Donald at its helm.

The Redevelopment of the building has now reached its conclusion which will allow us to go forward and plan the next stage, bringing all the members and supporters of the Upper Annandale Parish Church together- all those who live in the parishes of Johnstone Bridge, Kirkpatrick-Juxta, Moffat and Wamphray- and welcome them to join us.

As we look forward to spring, summer and what the new year will bring us, we also make our plans for our church for over the coming months. The latter part of 2023 and 2024 were times of great change for our new congregation, in a 'new' building, with new facilities and possibilities. Some of the things we had hoped for have not come to fruition in the way we might have expected, while others have been hugely successful.

Of course, we still face several challenges, the most obvious of which is financial. Like everyone else, the last few years have put a strain on our budget with a decline in giving and fewer members- challenges which are faced by congregations throughout the Church of Scotland. But we are blessed with a great Fundraising Team who continue to do sterling work. They display amazing ingenuity in thinking up and developing new events where we can use the great space we have in the church and halls, not only to provide much needed income but, just as importantly, to develop our ties with the local community.

One of the challenges we recognised from the very start of our new church was that of maintaining links with those in the former parishes of Johnstone Bridge, Kirkpatrick Juxta and Wamphray. We made a real start on that in January last year with the first of our 'praise evenings' in Beattock Village hall, and these have gone from strength to strength. A very different style of worship to our typical Sunday morning, these lively praise events give us a great opportunity to worship God in songs, old and new and to really let our hair down (at least those of us who still have it!).

In addition to those who have attended over many years, it has been great to see so many 'new' faces coming on a Sunday morning to join in worship and fellowship. There is a real 'buzz' about the church on a Sunday morning, with fellowship enjoyed both before and after the service, the latter being over a cup of tea or coffee and often home baking.

.../cont

Eye Care Project 2024

An eye care health clinic in collaboration with Kawolo Hospital was carried out with the support of a team of eye surgeons from Spain in November who provided treatment and performed surgeries for various eye conditions. Our dedicated team and volunteers worked hard to raise awareness and ensure the community was ready for the health camp.

Umoja House:

The centre has been cultivating community over the years, this facility is expected to provide more community space for our work, and will also offer the opportunity to house some of the social enterprises we hope to have like a bakery, a tailoring classroom, a community library, a proper sign language section for our deaf community and above all a community hall that will facilitate community conversations .

Harmony of Hope Concert.

The concert celebrated 25 years of the Centre's dedication to the community, featuring an orchestra band that uses music to inspire social change. A group of 42 volunteers from Spain recently visited the Kitega Community Centre in Uganda, where they made a wonderful impact with their work and made the Harmony of Hope Concert possible in Kampala. It was attended by the Spanish consul to Uganda, adding to the event's significance. During their nearly two-week stay, the volunteers participated in various projects, learning about the Centre's mission and experiencing everyday life in Uganda. The time spent at Kitega left the volunteers feeling grateful and inspired. Many described their experience with words like hope, joy, love, and community. Their visit not only strengthened ties between the two communities but also highlighted the power of music and volunteer work in creating positive change.

New Development at the Centre.

Our community football pitch remains a lively gathering place, fostering connections and serving as a resource for local schools and residents as well as being an income generating project for the centre.

Thank you all and many blessings James , Kitega Centre manager!!!

Ps Thanks to everyone who contributed towards our appeal to pay the doctors salary at the new health centre, in last issue of Link- We haven't reached our target yet and anyone who feels able and wants to donate on a regular basis can do so at Bank of Scotland-Friends of Kitega 80-22-60 account 1928 3869 or for gift aided donations through stewardship. Your small contribution can help thousands of people in rural Uganda access much needed medical care



Kitega Community Centre 2024 Activity Highlights.

Update on everything that happened in the year 2024.

The Centre Children:

Five new students have started at the centre, increasing our numbers to 40 regular students which is just a fraction of the many who are still waiting to be admitted. The team supported by local

and international volunteers has done a great job supporting learning for children with disabilities and closely looking at their livelihoods

Project porridge:

This continues to have amazing results and because of this one of our partner schools has maintained a high number of school attendance. After increasing the attendance by more than 100% in the previous year, the school now has a higher pupil daily attendance rate. This is attributed to the project porridge provided to the whole school. Often this will be the only hot meal these children have in a day Over 400 pupils can now happily attend school every day and look forward to learning.

VICOBA Plus

Through the self-awareness created by the model – many community groups are now looking at the individual and community sustainability of their initiatives. The excitement is real, people have been released from the odds and VICOBA Plus continues to present so many possibilities. Over the past months, the executive visited most of the members in different communities and recorded several success stories that highlighted the power of collective dreaming, what real community means, and reinforced by the definition of resources Individuals now have the confidence to lead their development and work towards achieving their dreams.

The VICOBAplus camp 2024 was yet another opportunity to witness the impact of VICOBA plus, the camp. Joy and gratitude summarised the camp in a testament of the power of community and what can get done when we all decide to work together for our communities.

Volunteers

Our local, virtual, and international volunteers continued to contribute tremendously to the work that we do. The centre received over 60+ international volunteers last year and it was exciting working with them as we built several communities.

Silver Jubilee – 25 years of the Centre.

The climax of the VICOBA camp was also the beginning of the 25-year celebration party for the Kitega Centre. Several activities were tagged to the celebrations for the Harmony of Hope event that happened in Kampala, Eye Care project that took place in different communities. We were grateful to various friends and supporters of the Kitega Centre for spearheading this.

The health centre in Katungulu:

Our community health initiatives are moving forward as we prepare the hospital for its upcoming opening. Structural work is almost complete, and we are now focused on getting the necessary equipment to register the health centre. The excitement in the village is clear, We are especially proud to have created a maintenance job for Kizito, one of our graduates with disabilities, who enjoys taking care of the hospital grounds. The health centre will make it possible for hundreds of community members to access quality healthcare.

One of the great aspects of our church is the variety of worship we can enjoy. We are grateful to Cheryl and her team for the advances that have been made in the provision of audio-visual and streaming facilities which contribute hugely to our services and other events. In particular, the ability of those who are housebound to watch services live, or recorded, is a real benefit.

Towards the end of 2024 we said goodbye to Kate Durran who had been our organist and, before that, the organist in St Andrew's for several years. However, we are delighted to have the services of Erin Bullard and, more recently, Charlotte Gibson to play for us on Sunday mornings. We thank them for sharing their gifts with us and look forward to hearing them on Sunday mornings (and perhaps other times too!). Music is a key aspect of worship, and it was great to receive the kind donation of the new baby-grand piano which now occupies its place at the front of the church. Between this, the organ and, of course, our praise band, we can enjoy a wide range of sacred and other music, both traditional and modern.

We encourage all to bring their talents and skills, whatever they are, to the furtherance of God's work in the church and the community.

As Andy and I learn how to hone the skills needed for our new roles, we encourage all to join us, "Many hands make light the work." There is a place for everyone so, please, do come along.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Braid



The sun is shining and there is warmth in the air as I write this. Spring is coming! Our new Church has now had its first full year and I have had my first year as its treasurer. A role that I could not have taken on without the invaluable support of the Finance

Team and our much missed Donald Walker. I owe my thanks to them all.

Our Church is much changed and its transformation is now complete. The snagging is all done and the final bills have been paid. The changes are reflected in many more ways than how it looks inside, including in its financial profile. Our buildings are now warm and comfortable for worship, fellowship and for those individuals and organisations who use them on a regular basis. Obviously, that comfort comes at a cost and the combined fuel costs for our two centres of worship have increased. However, this is more than compensated for by the much increased use of our buildings. In 2024, we saw them used regularly for the toddlers group, keep fit, yoga, pilates, art, pottery and glasswork classes, the Dark Skies Choir, Slimming World, Citizens' Advice and more. It is greatly rewarding to see the Church and its buildings being used by and for the benefit of the local community in turn generating valuable funds. On the subject of funds, the fundraising teams in both Moffat and Wamphray have worked hard throughout 2024 bringing new and exciting events to our Church.

From the ever well supported Wamphray whist drives to Hamza Yassin and the Eagle Festival, the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra, the Budapest Café Orchestra with many more besides. The flexibility of our spaces has opened new doors for raising funds and it is my belief that there is a great deal more potential there still to be untapped!

Perhaps one of the biggest changes we have seen is in the nature of how we give to the Church. After making adjustments for the fact that St. Andrews was closed for much of 2023, there is little change between 2024 and 2023 in givings directly banked or given via the freewill envelopes. However, offerings made by open plate and donation have increased significantly in 2024. This is of course really good news and perhaps a reflection both of the many new friends that now worship regularly in UAPC, and increased numbers of visitors. One downside is that the Church is very limited in how much Gift Aid it can claim on open plate givings and donations. So I would urge anyone who currently gives by putting money in the open plate to please consider arranging to bank directly or to use Freewill envelopes. Both are easy to set up and confidential and for every £1 given, the Church would receive £1.25. That very quickly adds up!

The end of 2024 saw our Church's finances in a reasonably healthy position but we can never rest on our laurels. Fuel costs are set to increase again this year and we need to stay ahead of the game. However, I believe there is much to be positive about and I would personally like to thank everyone for their contribution to keeping our Church alive and at the centre of our community.

God Bless, Jackie

Forgiveness

Forgiveness when it happens, is able to remove the dead weight from our past and give us our lives back. The real beauty and power of forgiveness is that it can deliver the future to us. Richard Holloway

Without forgiveness there is no future. Bishop Tutu

Enlightenment

The three phrases I should let go from my mind if I want to be serene are:

"What if....?" "If only...." "Why me...."



PASTORAL CARE AND FELLOWSHIP GROUP OF U.A.P.C.

This group relies on receiving prompt, accurate information about members who have become ill, lost loved ones and also those about to celebrate significant birthdays and anniversaries. We are able to make contact, provide a listening ear, send cards, and give flowers and offer comfort and prayers. Please provide information in confidence to Rev. Elsie Macrae, Hilda Saville, Helen Braid, Jeff Brown, Laurie McVeigh, Peter Newsome, Linda McMinn, and Alison Kirkwood.



CHURCH FLOWERS: A much appreciated "Thank you", to all of you who provide flowers to decorate the church each week. Flowers may be provided to commemorate a special event or in memory of a loved one. Or, a donation can be made to the flower fund and we can put flowers in church for you on a day of your choosing.

Do give us a ring to "save your day" in advance. After the service, the flowers are promptly delivered to someone to "brighten their day".

The flower list is now displayed in the church vestibule and you can enter your name against any of the vacant spaces if you wish. One of our team will contact you in the week prior to your chosen date to remind you and provide any assistance.

Hilda Saville Pastoral Care Team Leader

Email: pastoral@uapc.co.uk

I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud (v1 & 2)

By William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.