

KNEC NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2022

Kirknewton and East Calder Parish Church of Scotland

Scottish Charity No: SC006973





FROM THE EDITOR

What does the phrase ‘Holy Ground’ mean to you? The Dubliners, an Irish folk band, had a song called ‘The Holy Ground’. It spoke of an exile’s longing to go home - preferably to the Dublin pub of that name!

Countries which have known mass forced emigration know that longing well, as diaspora Scots do. ‘The old country’ takes on a precious significance, frozen in time and air-brushed, more so with each generation, as the stories and songs are handed down. A brutal, impoverished way of life is idealised into ‘Granny’s Heilan’ Hame’.

In Exodus, God says to Moses: ‘Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.’ The presence of God has conferred holiness upon the very soil. Football fans sometimes talk of the pitch that their team plays upon as ‘holy ground’, and even take off their shoes before venturing onto the hallowed turf.

For me, it is the place of closeness to God; the place of being blessed; the place of prayer and worship. I find it in many places, and I love it.

There is holy ground to walk upon
Leave behind your heavy shoes
Come and stand
in the shadow of His hand
For He is calling you (Ian White/song)

May He bless you all as you seek and find your own holy ground.

Fran:




THE GUILD

It has been great to have the Guild back and feeling like a normal part of life. We have continued looking at how God works in and through us and how His guiding has led us to where we are in life.

If you would like to come once to try the Guild, you would be more than welcome. It is a real time of worship, fellowship, and learning on Tuesdays 2.00 – 3.00 pm, fortnightly, in East Calder Church.

- *6th Sept.: Robert Alexander will talk about the Vine Trust's Kazunzu Village of Hope. one of the Guild's 'partner projects.*
- *20th Sept.: Frances Young - 'How God has guided my writing'*
- *24th. Sept.: A fundraising concert for the Vine Trust. Rebecca Pennykid, the main attraction, is well known to many of us, a God-given talent developed through years of tireless practice.*



Invitation

From Kirknewton & East Calder Guild

Event: **Fundraising Concert** in aid of Kazunzu Village of Hope
(A Guild partnership project with Vine Trust)


Date: **Saturday 24th September** 2022
Time: **7pm** start
Place: **East Calder Church**

Our guest singer for the night will be Rebecca Pennykid


Following the concert, teas will be served in the Church Hall

A donation will be taken on the night for Vine Trust

Please let Elizabeth Pennykid know if you can attend by the 20th



Rebecca qualified
at the Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland
with a Bachelor of Music
with Honours of the First Class



Registered Charity No: Sc017386

Kirknewton & East Calder Parish Church of Scotland, Scottish charity Reg. No. SC006973

FROM THE MINISTER



It's starting to feel like autumn, days getting shorter, mornings and evenings cooler. The onset of darker, colder days may be depressing, but summer isn't over yet: in my garden, flowers have appeared on a plant which has shown no signs of life until now. No leaves, only flowers!

We are all affected by factors outside our control. The effects of the war in Ukraine have rippled across the world, contributing to global food and energy shortages. A cost-of-living crisis is upon us; many are feeling the pinch. Food banks busier than ever; people struggling to heat their homes.

With this in mind, our Community Listening Project is hoping to create a 'Warm Hub', where people can come for warmth, a free hot drink, and some company. You can read more about this idea on page 7. I pray that it may become a blessing of hospitality for all in our parish.

But what we all need most is to encounter the radiant love of God made known in Jesus. When we create opportunities for people to gather, the Spirit can reveal that radiant love,
Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them
(Matthew 18:20).

I'm thankful to be part of a church that serves our community and is a good, welcoming place to be.

Alistair:



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

O God, who is Love,
In our gatherings and in our solitude,
Remind us of your presence always with us.

Lord Jesus,
You show us the warm glow of God's love,
Teach us to receive it with joy,
And to radiate it out.

Holy Spirit,
Make your Church,
A channel of your radiant love,
Until your Kingdom comes.

Amen.



THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

A recent report by Professor Donald Hirsch of Loughborough University says the support being offered to low-income families will fall at least £1,600 short of making up for recent changes to living costs, plunging many families into poverty and debt.

The report has been commissioned by Gordon Brown. He says: "This is a crisis that Britain hasn't seen in decades. It goes far beyond politics. The new Prime Minister has a moral responsibility to ensure that everyone has enough to live on, through this crisis and beyond.'

The Church of Scotland has joined 56 faith groups, charities and politicians urgently calling on the Government to bridge this gap. The four main blows hitting millions of low-income families:

- *cuts in Universal Credit*
- *inadequate uprating of benefits*
- *accelerating inflation*
- *the rise in the energy cap*

'The Church's theological tradition is to speak truth to power and is committed to speaking up for the most vulnerable people in society.'

Rev Karen Hendry, acting convener of the Faith Impact Forum

WHAT CAN KNEC DO TO HELP THIS WINTER?



THE WARM HUB

WHY: The soaring costs of electricity and the cost-of-living crisis will see some of our community in cold homes this winter, possibly hungry or even homeless. Going cold and hungry is something no one should have to suffer.

WHAT: Our WARM HUB, in the downstairs church hall in East Calder, will aim to provide a space for people to come and sit in the warm. There will be a free bowl of soup, warm drinks, and biscuits; also, free WI-FI, which will allow people to sit in a corner and work if they need to. This will also help people who are isolated and lonely. Hubs will run on Mondays and Wednesdays from 11am – 3pm. They will be free, with a donation box available.

HOW: Possibly partnering with Mabitts Coffee Shop to make the soup for a fair price. Two volunteers and the Project Co-ordinator to be present at every Hub. Volunteer slots split in two, so four volunteers for each Hub.

VOLUNTEERS: will undergo a short training course to equip them with the do's and don'ts of the project, its aims and values; plus food hygiene and safeguarding training for some. All will sign a confidentiality statement and, for volunteers not already known to us, a character reference will be required.

FAMILIES will be welcome with some toys available for children. Parents to stay with their children and take responsibility for their safety, especially when hot soups/drinks are around. We will be happy to talk to and play with children, generally making them and their parents feel as comfortable as possible.

BLANKETS: anyone can take one to help keep warmer on cold nights.

FORMAL ONE-TO-ONE LISTENING: sessions to be available if/when needed, either during the Hub or arranged at another time.

The KNEC Community Listening Project
(Part of Kirknewton and East Calder Parish Church of Scotland - Scottish Charity No. SC006973)

OUR COMMUNITY LISTENING PROJECT



It is a great disappointment that the fund which supported us in our pilot year has been wound up. On the successful completion of our pilot at the end of October, we were looking forward to attracting continuation funding to develop into full-blown project. But we are not disheartened! We have lots of plans for the months ahead; so, we are actively seeking other funding sources. *Please stand with us in prayer* through this trial.

Our KoNECT Café has been running Monday afternoons 1pm-3pm with between 4 and 12 people attending. The small room in East Calder Hall is now ready that there has been a one-to-one session already. Please pray for all who use this service and for all who volunteer.

Our plans for a Warm Hub are on page 7. A lot of the time it is human contact that people need, and a buzz of chat can lift the spirits.

At our first Open Day, on Monday 5th September, we gave out more information about the project and we let people see the 'listening room' and our café.

Please pray for me as I co-ordinate and develop the project. Pray for good vision, an open heart, and the skills needed to serve the community in whatever ways God has planned.

Elizabeth Pennykid:



The living Church, though never neat, keeps God's world from complete disaster.

George MacDonald

Christ moves among the pots and pans. Teresa of Avila



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Our new session starts on Saturday 24th September.

Once again, a varied and interesting programme of speakers will give us insights into what it means to be a Christian man in this day and age, and into believers reaching out into the community, using their experience *and* working with other worthwhile organisations.

We plan to hold most of the meetings in the downstairs church hall in Eat Calder, hopefully in a hybrid form (in-person and online). We have breakfast at 8.30 am, start our meeting at 9.00, and finish by 10.00.

As always, a warm invitation is extended to all men in KNEC Church to come along and enjoy the uplift of fellowship and friendship.

For more info, contact John Young:

Email: [REDACTED] or phone him on [REDACTED]

BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY 18TH SEPT

⌘ *Could I go back? After all this time, after all I've done; the places I've been, the wild living and the wasted years. Could I go back?*

⌘ *Would they let me in, would he want me at all? Is it possible, even now to turn round and simply go home?*

⌘ *From the coming to my senses, comes decision, comes risk-taking, comes turning ... and a danger of rejection, after all.*

⌘ *But when I'm still far off and searching, the way beckons like a beacon. And there He is, arms wide in welcome. running out to bring me in, to the still place of the love that is my Father, and my home.*

(Going Back by Daphne Kitching)

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO MIGHT LIKE TO COME BACK?

THE REUSE AND THRIVE SHOP

aims to recycle all household goods except electrical items, from clothes to crockery, from toys to tambourines!



Situated on the main street of East Calder, across from the Partnership Centre and the Health Centre. Please do drop in and browse, find irresistible purchases, and bring your own unwanted clothing, books, bric-a-brac, whatever, to donate to us.

**Open Thursday, Friday, Saturday,
10.00 am – 2.00 pm.**

If you would be interested in volunteering for a two-hour shift 'behind the counter', please come into the shop and make yourself known.



This is a community project. The church has joined with other community activists to get it up and running. It runs on a non-profit making basis: all the money taken in (apart from essential running costs) is ploughed back into the community. Please do come and make yourself known to us. We don't bite!!

*We were not put on this earth to see through each other....
But to see each other through.*
(Peter de Vries)

*Happiness sometimes comes through doors
you didn't even know you left open*
Anon

SERVICES, MEETINGS, FUNERALS, SESSION DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS ...

(Report from our Session Clerk)

New Session Clerk

Elizabeth Pennykid has been elected by Session, following the retirement of Andrew Coutts. Grateful thanks to Andrew for an excellent job in extraordinary times.

A Unitary Constitution?

This would mean no Congregational Board and Session as the sole managing body. A discussion and a vote resulted (by 14 votes to 9) in agreement on retaining the status quo. (Board AND Session continue)

Streaming Services

We will continue with live streaming rather than pre-recording. About 40 people watch the live stream and about 70 access the recording.

Face-to-Face Meetings - resumption

Robert Alexander restarting House Groups in Sept. IN FOCUS under review

Safeguarding

Session members to have refresher training by June 2023 Everyone doing work that requires PVG needs to have it refreshed every 5 years.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

We have become a 'partner church': we will publicise CAP, pray for the work, and possibly have a regular CAP Sunday when they would supply a speaker. A small number of our members is already involved as volunteers.

FUNERALS: Dr Dick Anderson, Charlie Miller and Carole Arrand

BAPTISM: Eilidh Morrison in East Calder Church on 26th June

WEDDINGS: Claire and Neil Cowper at Harburn Barn on 2nd July; Lydia Forbes and Ido in East Calder Church on 1st August

THE FUTURE OF OUR BUILDINGS

- By the end of 2022 there needs to be a Presbytery Plan in place
- We cannot justify keeping all three buildings in the future
- We must dispose of one or more
- A ***feasibility study*** to be commissioned by the Board
- We want to keep a physical presence in each of our villages

EAST CALDER IDEAS

- priority is disabled access for both hall and church
- convert church into a multi-function venue (remove pews)

KIRKNEWTON IDEAS

- priority to improve disabled access
- replace the kitchen and toilets **or**
- demolish them and form a new entrance to church and hall incorporating new toilets, kitchen and disabled access
- remove 25% of pews (those rarely used)
- remove pulpit and all pews to form a multi-function space.

OTHER IDEAS

- dispose of all buildings and use public spaces (village halls, etc)
- build a new worship centre.
- dispose of East Calder halls and develop both churches
- close Kirknewton make East Calder the congregational hub
- close both churches and develop East Calder Hall
- pool resources with surrounding churches

Significant issues need to be addressed before our buildings can be classed as “well equipped and in the right place” (as in the *Presbytery Plan*). The feasibility study will help us decide the way forward.

Our registration/information evening gave parents a chance to register their son with us; or to meet us and get some further information.



Our first official night back was on the 26th of August. We were delighted to have 40 boys -6 more than last year. With a few regulars from last term returning, too, it looks like we are in for a busy year!

Some of our boys and their families attended the joint Boys Brigade/ Girls Brigade fun day held at Howden Park on the 27th of August, a great event, very well attended by the community of West Lothian.

As a leaders' team, we are excited by the session ahead, looking forward to enjoying many a happy and fun-filled Friday evening.

Please pray for:

- the boys in the company as we start our new session
- the new members and their families as they start the BB adventure
- our leaders' team as we engage with the boys through games, badge work, Bible classes, and other activities

Calum Pennykid
(for the BB Leaders Team)

You can contact Calum at



PRAYER MATTERS

Do you wonder what we find to pray about for an hour on Monday evenings? Well! We do many things apart from pray, but all in the Spirit and in the presence of our Father. We chat together as we light the candles and make the tea. We read some scripture, listen to a praise song, and commit our prayer time to the leading of the Holy Spirit.



we prayed for Achamma - her mum has died

Some weeks, people in our families, neighbours and villages need our prayers.

Some weeks we focus on our own faith journeys, on the gifts we have and the gifts we lack.

We pray for each other with love and compassion.

We support and challenge each other.

Often, we pray for: our minister, his family, his health, his leading of us, asking God to favour him with blessings and wisdom; for the work of the church being done by the congregation; for our Session and Board members, all they do, discuss, and decide.

We pray into any requests for prayer that come to us in person or via phone/notes/texts/emails.



we prayed a blessing on Penny's new great-grandson

We pray for anyone and any situation the Holy Spirit brings to our minds. We laugh and sometimes we weep. If we are tired, we listen, relax, and recover in God's presence.

Janette faithfully brings the milk for our cuppa and, in the cold weather, puts the heating on in the afternoon. She tidies the prayer room and lays out the bibles. She is a door keeper in the house of prayer, and we thank God for her. It is a beautiful part of the week and some Mondays it's hard to leave...

It's not scary or strange and we would welcome you warmly if you would like to join us. You don't have to come every week – just whenever you can.

SOME CURRENT PRAYER POINTS

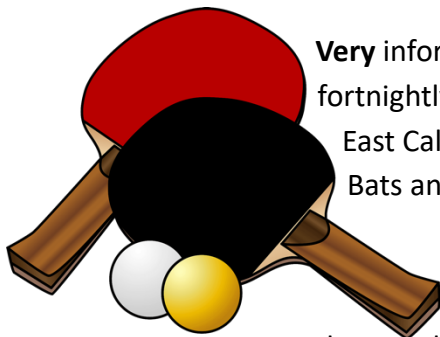
- the fuel crisis/cost-of-living emergency
- drought across Europe
- Kirk Sessions across Scotland as they discuss the way forward with parishes and buildings
- Alistair and his family
- those undergoing surgery in the next few weeks
- our Boys Brigade as the new session begin
- all those praying at home, in schools or businesses
- an increase in new families in our fellowship
- a warm welcome to them

Lord, hear our prayers. In Jesus name, Amen

Dora Bennett, Prayer Secretary:



ANYONE FOR TENNIS?



Very informal group – all ages – meets fortnightly on Saturday afternoon at 4 pm in East Calder Upper Hall. Everybody welcome. Bats and balls supplied

Any and all skill levels! No worries if you haven't played for years. Come and have fun - and a wee bit exercise too

SUNDAY SERVICES

ALTERNATE WEEKS IN

EAST CALDER AND KIRKNEWTON

AT 10.30 am

11th September: Kirknewton

18th September: East Calder

25th September: Kirknewton

2nd October: East Calder

9th October Kirknewton

16th October East Calder

23rd October Kirknewton

etc., etc., etc.