

March and April 2018
THE MESSENGER



***The Magazine of
St Michael And All Angels
Episcopal Church, Helensburgh
www.stmichaelhelensburgh.org.uk***



Service Details

Sunday

8:00am Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite) or
Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (1982 Rite) or
Service of the Word (2015 Rite)
Crèche and Sunday Clubs

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Tuesdays

10:30am Said Eucharist (1970 Rite) followed by refreshments

For dates of services please see Diary (Page 10) inside



ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, WILLIAM STREET, HELENSBURGH

Charity Registered in Scotland SC006468

The Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway

Bishop: The Right Revd Gregor Duncan

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From the Lay Reader

'For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.' Jeremiah 29: 11

I hope you have noticed the new blue banner in church. Naomi Lidwell has kindly loaned it for the remainder of the Vacancy, because it has a powerful message that is very relevant as we move towards appointing a new rector. We have been praying in faith for God's wisdom and guidance over the past few months. It is helpful to be reminded that God does indeed have a plan for us – we just need to trust Him. The season of Lent is a good opportunity for us to examine the strength of our faith and to focus prayer on the individual God is calling to come to St. Michael and All Angels. By the time you read this magazine the incumbency will have been advertised in The Church Times, Provincial channels and our own website. We may already have a number of applicants! Read Nick Davies' Messenger contribution to understand where we go from here.

The month of March sees further change, but in a sense a return to normality. We welcome Pat and Ian Smith back to our church. Pat has moved from the charge of Renfrew and Johnstone to provide a clergy presence here once more. This means we can return to a Eucharist every Sunday at 10.30am. Pat and I will be sharing preaching at this service, and she will also lead alternate Tuesday morning Eucharists. She has written elsewhere in this issue of The Messenger. As we return to a regular pattern of worship once more, I would like to thank everyone for their acceptance of the necessity for the varied pattern of 10.30am services since October.

MESSANGER

March/April 2018

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May/June Edition

Handing in Sunday	15 th Apr
Publication Sunday	29 th Apr
July/August Edition	

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For an email copy please contact the Editor.	

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From the Lay Reader (continued)

We celebrate Easter at the beginning of April, announcing the triumph of the Resurrection as Jesus was raised from the dead. The events leading up to Good Friday will be remembered on Palm Sunday and during Holy week, including ecumenical services and the Good Friday Walk of Witness. Easter is a time of hope and thankfulness as we rejoice that God has reconciled us to Him through Jesus Christ.

We look forward to a major milestone in the history of our church at the beginning of May when we celebrate our 150th anniversary. This will be an opportunity for friends and family no longer resident in Helensburgh to come back to join us in giving thanks to God for His faithfulness to the worshipping community of St. Michael and All Angels over these years. We hope too that Christians from other local churches will be able to join us in thanksgiving. For details of the programme for the weekend you will need to read on in the magazine. The Social Committee has been busy planning for this weekend. Please do all you can to attend the special services and celebratory events.

Looking further into 2018, who knows what will happen to our troubled world? Whatever uncertainties may surround us, we can be confident God has a plan for us individually and for our church, as He prepares the rector He has in mind to come to Helensburgh. What we must do is trust God, and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide, reassure and inspire us.

'But this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus'. Philippians 3: 13b – 14
Kevin Boak

News

Wow! What a fantastic response to my request for articles! This month we have masses of news from the Vestry; a reprint of an article about the Mothers' Union from the Helensburgh Advertiser; an introduction from Pat Smith as she joins us in the remainder of the Vacancy; and plenty of other articles.

So much, in fact that it won't all fit in the MESSENGER. Rather than disappoint anyone after making such great efforts, there is a special addendum inserted into the magazine. Please make sure you have one.

Please see the special Holy Week ecumenical services in the calendar. My apologies for the reduced size text this month.
Richard Smith, Editor

Notices

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNING The March Coffee Morning will be held at Sheila Baker's house, Westburn, 50 Campbell Street, Helensburgh at 10:30am on the 1st March tel: 674686 The April Coffee Morning will be held at Ann Packard's house, Kiloran, 14 Glasgow Street, Helensburgh at 10:30am on the 5th April tel: 672722 *Maureen Kyle*

SIDESPERSIONS' LEADER We are still in urgent need of a volunteer to take up the vacant post of sidespersons' leader. We hope that an existing sidesperson or another member of the congregation will come forward. Please contact Brian for details on 01436 672 951.
Brian Kyle

OPEN SPIRIT SERVICES. Open Spirit ran as a trial until Christmas and, although the services were generally enjoyed by those who attended, people left for various reasons. It did carry on after Christmas, but numbers have fallen and now reached a level that makes it unsustainable to continue. The last service was on 4th February. The new rector can decide on whether this format of worship will be part of St. Michael's in the future. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the services and, in particular, Csaba Barthos for his effort and enthusiasm.
Helen Gibson

PHOTO GALLERY. We would like to update the St Michael's Family Photo Gallery in the church hall. If we do not have a photograph of you and are happy to have your picture displayed, please contact us, either in the hall after the 10.30 service or 'phone 01436 675541
Sue and James Ashby

CONTRAFLOW is entering a team of people for this Year's Kilt Walk on Sunday 29th April 2018 – the Kilt Walk is 23 miles and we are currently looking for people who would like to join the team and raise money for Contraflow's 20th Anniversary this year. There are three distances in Glasgow's Kiltwalk you can choose from a Mighty Stride (approx. 23 miles), a Big Stroll (approx. 14 miles) or the Wee Wander (approx. 6 miles). Helen Buchanan has signed up for the LONG walk along with one other at present. Julia Dennison is going to do the Medium walk... If we could get as many as possible to join in and walk together it will make the time pass so much easier. Obviously 'Team Contraflow' will be looking for Sponsorship if anyone feels they can support us – forms available from the church representative or via the links on the Contraflow Facebook page.
Jane Worsfold, Admin to the Contraflow Youth Project

Contraflow is always looking for more volunteers to help run events in the local area – this could be a once a year event – Easter Code, Bubblegum & Fluff, or on a regular weekly event, The Hut, HD or even one of the school 'Scripture Union groups' - we could give people more information on the groups if they are interested - we even need people who could stand in at short notice... All our volunteers are PVG checked, and also SU Accredited and given appropriate training for the event they take part in. If you feel able to help in anyway, please contact myself for information on how to register with SU
Helen Buchanan, Contraflow Youth Worker

Vestry Report March 2018

The first Vestry meeting of 2018 took place on Monday 15th January.

THE RECTORY. Vestry members inspected the empty rectory building at the start of the meeting and then discussed what needs to be done by way of upgrade before the next incumbent moves in. Taking into account the SEC guidance on 'Minimum standards for clergy housing' and being aware that this is a listed building, the following was broadly agreed.

1. Upgrade of the wiring is required (this is in hand).
2. The suggestion to swap the kitchen and study to create an office easily accessible to the congregation is a good idea, but not considered practical.
3. Kitchen needs a complete upgrade. We should provide cooker/oven and fridge/freezer. Space with power points to be provided for other white goods.
4. Creation of an 'en-suite' master bedroom incorporating bath/shower/toilet and a dressing room.
5. Upgrade of existing bathroom and downstairs toilet.
6. Improving access to 3rd floor stairwell by removal of the current plasterboard walls.
7. Opening up the front door which has been out of commission.
8. 3rd floor to be left as is, but safety bars to be installed across the full-length windows.
9. Redecorate throughout in white/neutral colour.
10. Sash windows to be repaired throughout. Although double glazing will probably be prohibitively expensive, we should establish a price.
11. Re-carpet throughout.
12. Install a gate and fencing to the rectory garden and get the trees cut back/pruned.

The possibility of improving access to the Lower Hall, including disabled access, by creating a fenced path through the rectory garden was debated. It was agreed to cost the project, and a quote was subsequently received for £7,000 + VAT. The vestry then agreed that this project should be put on hold as we had higher priorities with the rectory building itself.

PROPERTY MATTERS. The Property Manager made his routine report, and highlighted the following:

1. Servery in the Upper Hall. A plan was presented for a compact servery to be created along the middle part of the east wall of the Upper Hall. This would incorporate a water boiler, sink, dishwasher and storage for crockery. It would be contained behind folding doors for security and protrude significantly less than the piano. The vestry welcomed the plan which will now be costed.
2. Internal paintwork. The internal paintwork is already blistering badly, particularly

Vestry Report (continued)

2. (continued) along the lower walls of the nave. The Property Manager reported that the painters had said that the interior walls need to be at <12% moisture reading. It was agreed that this is unattainable. The way ahead for the interior paintwork is to strip off the worst areas where accessible and repaint later this year. This might involve a volunteer working party.
3. Rectory parking space. Someone had been making unauthorized use of the rectory parking space, which will therefore be chained off with a padlock to stop the public using it.

2018 SALARY REVIEW. The Vestry considered and approved the stipend to be awarded to the next incumbent together with an appropriate energy allowance. The vestry agreed that during the vacancy, the income from the endowment funds normally used to enhance the rector's stipend should be used as an ex gratia payment to those who have helped with leading services during the vacancy.

The salaries for the Admin Assistant, Hall Cleaner and fee for the organists were all agreed.

VESTRY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MOTHERS UNION. The Vestry debated a paper which had been submitted inviting the vestry to consider the status of the MU within St Michael's, and specifically how best to manage financial commitments incurred with MU events which have to be paid for out of church funds. At the end of a robust debate, it was agreed that:

1. The vestry wished to maintain the status quo regarding St Michael's relationship with the MU.
2. The vestry suggested that it might be appropriate for MU to consider a contribution to church expenses by making a small annual ex gratia payment. Vestry Secretary subsequently briefed the MU meeting that took place on 19th January.

ADVERTISING ST MICHAEL'S SERVICES. The possibility of advertising St Michael's services in the local paper was discussed. Other Helensburgh churches do this, however St Michael's had ceased doing it in 2015 because it was expensive, and the newspaper was prone to making mistakes. It was agreed that the website will increasingly be the primary means of finding out service details. However, we will place newspaper advertisements for Holy Week and Christmas-tide.

OPEN SPIRIT. The Vestry noted with concern the significant drop in numbers attending the 'Open Spirit' service. Recent services had a congregation of 4 which is dispiriting for the volunteer leaders. A call for volunteers in the Messenger had generated limited response. Intrusive behaviour during the services, probably unintentional, had not helped. Attendance then dropped still further and 'Open Spirit' services have therefore

Vestry Report (continued)

ceased for the time being.

The vestry confirmed the aspiration, which is reflected in our profile documents, that we wish to maintain traditional worship, but also to encourage different styles of worship as well. The vestry therefore remains supportive of 'Open Spirit' and we hope and pray that it may be revived in the future.

AUDIO SYSTEM. The choir had reported that they could not hear what was being said from the lectern. Contractors were subsequently called in and the problem has been fixed. A new amplifier has also been installed.

RECTORY INSURANCE. Our insurance company had been informed that the rectory is unoccupied, and they had wanted to charge us an additional £1293 a year! Following negotiation, a reduced additional charge of £151 covering November – March had been offered. It was agreed that this should be paid, but that we should investigate alternative insurance providers for the rectory, including 'Landlord Insurance' when the policy comes up for renewal.

150TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS. The provisional plan to mark the 150th anniversary of St Michaels, led by the social committee is:

1. Friday 4th May. Finger buffet bring & share supper followed by reminiscences by Alex Laing.
2. Saturday 5th May. Concert in church arranged by Mark & Janina Duncan.
3. Sunday 6th May. 1030 Eucharist led by Bishop Gregor Duncan. Evening, Ecumenical 'Songs of Praise' with hymn choices by long serving members of the congregation.

The plan is for any funds raised during the 150th celebration should go to church funds. In addition, there will be a photographic competition to find the best photograph of St Michael's church.

This year is the 50th anniversary of TASLA (NADFAS) and we will co-ordinate events where appropriate, and mutually advertise.

PAT SMITH. The Lay Reader reported that Rev Pat Smith would be available to conduct St Michael's services from March. The vestry welcomed this, which will bring an element of continuity during the 2nd half of our vacancy.

The next Vestry meeting will be on Monday 5th March

THE VACANCY – vestry meeting with Bishop Gregor 22 January

The Bishop kindly travelled to Helensburgh and met with the Vestry on 22nd January to discuss with us the way ahead for the vacancy, and to agree a timetable for the recruitment of our next rector. The following matters were discussed:

Vestry Report (continued)

ADVERTISING. With our Congregational and Rector Profile documents completed and approved, the next step is to advertise for our new rector. The content of the advertisement had to be approved by the Bishop. It was recommended that we advertise on the Provincial and Diocesan websites, and in the Church Times.

APPLICATION FORM. There is a standard SEC Application Form (a copy of which is on our website). Applications are confidential to the Vestry and the Bishop. The Bishop has the power of veto if an unsuitable candidate should apply.

INTERVIEWS. An interview panel of no more than 6-8 Vestry members needs to be formed. The aim of the interview is to prayerfully discern who has the qualities to be our next rector by getting to know the candidates as well as possible. A series of around 6-8 standard questions must be devised, largely based on our profile documents, but with some variance to reflect the differences in the candidates' application documents. Care is required to avoid illegal lines of questioning, e.g. regarding sexual orientation.

One candidate per day should be interviewed, interview format should include a tour of the local area, some sort of social interaction with the Vestry, and a formal interview of around 1 hour. We may have to provide overnight accommodation for candidates who have had to travel. Interviews should be conducted somewhere comfortable (e.g. in someone's home). The Bishop will attend the interviews in an advisory capacity.

Once all candidates have been interviewed, the bishop will meet with the interview panel to discern if they can recommend a candidate whom the Vestry will ask the bishop to institute as Rector. The selected candidate must be suitable, and there is no pressure to make a selection if there is no suitable candidate, in which case we would have to re-advertise.

Any appointment is dependent upon satisfactory PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) disclosure. The Bishop will also seek CCSL (Clergy Current Status Letter) clearance (endorsement of suitability from the candidates' local Bishop). The appointment remains confidential until PVG clearance is achieved.

APPOINTMENT. The Bishop will write an official letter on behalf of the Vestry to the selected candidate. A 3-month period of notice to leave current appointment is likely to apply, and the Bishop will choose a date for the Service of Institution of our new rector. The Service of Institution will be led by the Bishop.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE. The following timetable was agreed:

Mid-February. Advertisement placed. (This will appear in the Church Times from 16th February)

16th March. Closing date for applications.

19th March. Vestry meeting with Bishop to assess applicants.

9th/10th/11th April. Interviews.

Sunday 15th April. Vestry selection meeting with the Bishop.

July 2018. Earliest likely Institution time given that all goes well. Contd on Page 12/...

CALENDAR FOR MARCH

MARCH

Thursday 1st March

10:30am Monthly Coffee Morning

Sunday 4th March – Third of Lent

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Monday 5th March

7:30pm Vestry meeting in Trinity Chapel

Tuesday 6th March

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

1:45pm Mothers' Union - AGM

Friday 9th March

10:30am Eco-congregation Local Network meeting at St. Michael's Lower Hall

Saturday 10th March

Rambling Club – Brig O'Turk

Sunday 11th March – Fourth of Lent

(Mothering Sunday)

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Tuesday 13th March – Feast-day of St.

Patrick, Bishop of Ireland

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

2:30pm Bible Study at West Dhuill Drive

Wednesday 14th March

March Day of Prayer for Mission Action Planning, Trinity Chapel All Day

Thursday 15th March

10:00am Mothers' Union TBA

Sunday 18th March – Fifth of Lent

(Passiontide begins)

8:00am Communion from Reserved

Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Tuesday 20th March – Feast-day of Joseph of Nazareth

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

Saturday 24th March

9:00am Rambling Club – Canal Walk

Sunday 25th March – Palm Sunday

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Monday 26th March – Monday of Holy Week

7:30pm †Re-enactment of Passover at Helensburgh Parish Church

Tuesday 27th March – Tuesday of Holy Week

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

7:30pm †Stations of the Cross at St.

Joseph's RC Church

Wednesday 28th March – Wednesday of Holy Week

7:30pm †Reflective Service by Naval Chaplain Mark Dalton at United Reform Church

Thursday 29th March – Maundy Thursday

7:30pm †Eucharist (1970 Rite) at St. Michael's

†See Leaflets at back of Church†

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Friday 30th March – Good Friday

11:00am †Walk of Witness

7:30pm † 'The Last Words from the Cross' at St. Michael's

Saturday 31st March

10:30am-12:30pm Messy Church in URC

†See Leaflets at back of Church†

APRIL

Sunday 1st April – Easter Sunday

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Tuesday 3rd April

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

1:45pm Mothers' Union TBA

Thursday 5th April

10:30am Monthly Coffee Morning

Sunday 8th April – Second of Easter

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Tuesday 10th April

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

2:30pm Bible Study at West Dhuill Drive

Saturday 14th April

9:00am Rambling Club – Crarae

Sunday 15th April – Third of Easter

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

No Evensong Helensburgh Oratorio Choir Concert in Parish Church

Tuesday 17th April

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

Wednesday 18th April

April Day of Prayer for Mission Action Planning, Trinity Chapel All Day

Thursday 19th April

10:00am Mothers' Union TBA

Sunday 22nd April – Fourth of Easter

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Tuesday 24th April – Feast-day of St Mark, Evangelist

9:15-9:45am Church Prayer Group

10:30am Eucharist (1970 Rite)

2:30pm Bible Study at West Dhuill Drive

Saturday 28th April

9:00am Rambling Club – Bridge of Weir

10:30am-12:30pm Messy Church in URC

10:30am Eco-congregation AGM at Augustine United Church, Edinburgh

Sunday 29th April – Fifth of Easter

8:00am Communion from Reserved Sacrament (1970 Rite)

10:30-11:15am Sunday clubs for children

10:30-11:30am Sung Eucharist (1982 Rite)

6:30pm Prayer Book Choral Evensong

Change of Timing

Vestry Report (continued)

GENERAL POINTS. St Michael's is a successful and thriving church with great potential and should be an attractive prospect. There are no guarantees that we will get a suitable candidate first time round, and we should not feel pressured into taking someone with whom we are not happy simply because they were the only person to apply. The progress of the rectory upgrade and when it becomes available for our next rector to move in will be a key factor. There is no standard duration of appointment, but 10 years is regarded as about average. We should embark on the recruitment process in a spirit of prayerful discernment, and with faith that God has identified the right person to be the next rector of St Michael's. *Nick Davies, Vestry Secretary*

From Revd Pat Smith

It will be wonderful to be back with our St Michael's church family, where my husband Ian and I worshipped for over 30 years until we left following my ordination five and a half years ago. For those who don't know me, here is a bit about my church life.

Although my grandparents on both sides were active Christians neither of my parents was a churchgoer, and I grew up with no interest in religion. It was becoming a parent that made me think more about the meaning of life. Ian (who had been confirmed in the Church of England) and I started attending St Michael's where we came under the influence of the Rector, Alex Laing, whom you will all know, and Barbara Thatcher, who at that time was a Lay Reader but subsequently was one of the first women to be ordained Priest in the SEC. One day Alex turned up on my doorstep asking if I was interested in being confirmed: in fact, I needed to be baptised as well, as I had simply been dedicated in my grandfather's Baptist church, but that was the beginning of my active Christian life. Like most mothers my first involvement was with Creche and Sunday School; but, amongst other things, I also was a member of a cleaning team, served on Vestry, joined an Intercession Group (which I ended up leading), and was St Michael's Child Protection Officer.

It was the combination of a few chance remarks that led me to realise that I was being called to a different form of service in the church, and in 2007 I started the long path towards ordination. After a two-and-a-half-year process of "Discernment" (the church takes its time deciding if one is suitable to train for ministry!) I started three years of "Formation". During this time my academic study was by distance learning with Aberdeen University, while specific church training came from residential weekends and summer schools with TISEC (the Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church), monthly diocesan sessions and various church and chaplaincy placements. Finally, I was deemed suitably prepared to be let loose on the church and was ordained in 2012.

Since ordination I have served at St Augustine's Dumbarton, St John's Johnstone and St

From Revd Pat Smith (continued)

Margaret's Renfrew, and for the past two years I have cared for St Margaret's as Associate Priest during its time of Vacancy. In addition to all the regular activities of weekly services, baptisms, weddings, funerals and administration, I have also prepared special services – including the Centenary Service at St Margaret's which should be helpful as we prepare to celebrate 150 years at St Michael's.

Now I am coming back "home" and, although you have had excellent spiritual care from Kevin, I hope that I will be able to play my part in the life of St Michael's. With the authorisation of Bishop Gregor, Kevin and I have agreed that I will celebrate the 10.30 Eucharist every Sunday (we will preach on alternate Sundays), and I will also take the Tuesday morning Eucharist every other week. Ian and I look forward to meeting friends old and new. *Revd. Pat Smith*

St. Michael's and All Angels 150th Anniversary

In the October 2017 edition of The Messenger, at the very beginning of the Vacancy, I mentioned the forthcoming 150th anniversary of St. Michael and All Angels, Helensburgh. Growing out of the original Holy Trinity Church of 1845, our present magnificent church building completed in 1868, has withstood the vagaries of our weather and two world wars. It is both a wonderful legacy of the people who had the vision and resources to erect the building and install the interior furniture and fittings, and a weighty responsibility for the present generation. We are custodians of a Grade A-listed building and also entrusted by God with the continuing work of maintaining regular worship and outreach. It has been decided that proceeds from events over our anniversary weekend will go towards the church, as we look ahead in faith to the next one hundred and fifty years.

The programme for the weekend is intended to mark this significant anniversary in a variety of ways. The church will be decorated suitably for the weekend, and we are planning for small displays or exhibitions about the church and its people over the years to be organised.

On Friday 4th May, starting at 6.30pm, a bring-and-share buffet meal is planned. Arrangements for contributions of food will be announced after Easter. The Rev. Canon Alex Laing has kindly agreed to speak after the meal, recounting some of his anecdotes and sharing his knowledge of our church history.

The highlight of Saturday 5th May will be a concert at 7.30pm, organised by Mark and Janina Duncan. Wine and nibbles will be available during the interval. Admission will be free, but with a retiring collection for gifts to the church.

Our celebrations will conclude on Sunday 6th May with special services. At 10.30am there will be a Eucharist with Renewal of Baptismal Vows, at which Bishop Gregor will

St. Michael's and All Angels 150th Anniversary (continued)

preach and preside. Later, at 6pm an ecumenical service in a 'Songs of Praise' format will take place. We hope other local churches will join us, as longstanding members of our congregation share memories of people and incidents associated with St. Michael's, as well as choosing a hymn. If you have an interesting story to tell and would like to choose a hymn for this service, please speak to Kevin Boak before Easter. We are delighted Martyn Marshall will be returning to St. Michael's to play at both services.

We hope as many as possible can enjoy participating in these special events and services. Further information will be available soon.

Kevin Boak

Mothers' Union

Excerpts from the Helensburgh Advertiser Edition of 7 January 2018 feature (with permission gratefully acknowledged).

THE Helensburgh branch of Mothers Union is looking for new members to help them transform communities locally – and worldwide.

The Mothers Union's Helensburgh branch, which currently has 28 members and meets in the Church of St Michael And All Angels, believe they have outgrown the charity name but keep the charity's ethos, welcoming people of any age and gender.

The members work both within the local community and fundraise for projects worldwide.

Joan Thompson, 68, who has led the group up until last month, told the Advertiser that the group organises respite holidays for families in need of a break. Joan said: "We call them 'Away From It All Holidays' and try and make sure that people in need of a break are put forward for a short holiday with their family."

The group also combine their efforts to help the wider community and often send items to the local hospital. Joan said: "We try to help people who may need something. We knit bonding squares which we send to maternity hospitals. They get handed to mums and their babies if they need to be separated for any reason. "We also make up emergency packs for people who might be taken into hospital in short notice, it takes a little worry away of they have the basics they need." The emergency packs, containing shower gel, a razor, a mini soap, a comb, a toothbrush and tooth paste and deodorant, will this year be sent to the stroke ward at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley.

Joan continued: "It's just a little thing that will help people and hopefully make them smile."

The group also took time to write a Christmas card to prisoners at Low Moss prison near Glasgow, some of whom won't get any cards because their families have left them.

As well as trying to make small changes locally members have a campaign called 'smalls

Mothers' Union (continued)

for all', sending bras and underwear to girls and young women in Africa. And the group's Africa support also extends to helping young women receive an education and, if they wish, to start up a business to support their families.

Joan said: "Because we are an international group we raise money to send overseas. It goes to women in countries where women are considered to be disadvantaged or not receiving equal treatment. "The money goes towards educating them and giving them the tools to start a local business making jewellery or weaving boxes. "Once they are taught and set up the idea is that they then teach someone else and everyone is better off."

Despite being a Christian organisation the members don't push the Christian aspect and there is no obligation for anyone to join straight away.

The group's members meet on the first Tuesday and the third Thursday of each month at the Church of St Michael And All Angels, Helensburgh.

The group are keen to make people aware that they are there to help if need be and ask that Anyone interested in joining can contact Joan on 01436 423451.

With thanks to Danielle Lapin – Helensburgh Advertiser

Eco-congregation

Friday, 9th March - Local Network Meeting here at St Michael's Lower Hall at 10:30am.

Saturday 28th April - Annual Gathering PASS THE PLANET at Augustine United Church George IV Bridge Edinburgh EH1 1EL

This year the focus will be on the International Year of Young People. The Green MSP Ross Greer will be speaking. There is a £50 prize Photography Competition with ten categories. See me for details.

Two items for your attention:

1) We are now in LENT. If you, by any remote chance, have not thought of a useful discipline may I suggest the Church of England Environment Programme which will be displayed at the back of the Church and in the Hall for you to peruse at your leisure.

My colleague at the Parish church Liz Lambert has a sister who with all her family have undertaken to have a Plastic Free Lent, by following the Programme. I shall give it a try because if we carry on using plastic as we do today by 2050 there will be more plastic in the sea than fish (and they and the birds will be dead).

2) The Helensburgh Seafront Development Project as shown on p.28 of the February Community Advertiser, has been awarded nearly half the required amount of £20,000, towards the feasibility study. The Project is to save and regenerate Helensburgh Pier and provide pontoons to attract visitors and small craft and dredge the Pierhead to three metres to allow ferries, the Waverley Paddle Steamer and other small craft to berth at the pier at all stages of the tide. This is a very GREEN project because anything going on the water rather than the road is a huge saving in CO2 and it is also traditional and a healthy way to spend time. So, do support this vital project with any fun ways of raising money for it or just get people interested.

Selina McGeoch

ST MICHAEL'S RAMBLING CLUB

WALKS MARCH TO MAY 2018

Walks are on Saturdays and start outside St Michael's Church at 9 am unless otherwise indicated by the leaders of the individual walks.

DATE	GRADE	WALK	LEADER
10 th March	Various	Lendrick Hill and Stuc Odhar (Brig o'Turk)	James 675541
24 th March	Easy	Canal and Antonine Wall from Achinstarry	Maureen 674763
14 th April	Moderate /Easy	Ardcastle Wood and Crarae Garden	John 675010
28 th April	Moderate	Houston Gryfe and Bridge of Weir	Maureen 674763
12 th May	Various	Ben More Gardens and A'Cruach	James 675541
15-18 th May	Various	May Break to Pitlochry	James 675541

The grades shown are subject to change following a recce, but walks will normally have an easier and harder options available which may not have been fully investigated.

Queries about individual walks to the Leader.

Bishop's Lent Appeal 2018

I have decided that this year's Appeal will be for MND Scotland in memory of our late Diocesan Secretary, Chris Zochowski who died from Motor Neurone Disease earlier this year.

The Appeal will be launched at this year's Synod at Kilmarnock on 3rd March.

In 1981, MND Scotland was founded by John Macleod, a 32-year-old Strathclyde police officer, who had Motor Neurone Disease (MND). Together with his wife, Peigi, their family and friends, they started the charity to help those with MND in Scotland.

At the time John was diagnosed, services were limited, and health professionals had little or no knowledge of the condition. John's aim was to help change this and the Scottish Motor Neurone Disease Association was born.

You can visit the MND Scotland website for further information:
<http://www.mndscotland.org.uk> +Gregor

LECTIONARY – MARCH/APRIL 2018

Sunday	Eucharist	Evensong
4 th March Lent 3	Exodus 20:1-17 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22	Exodus 5:1-6.1 Philippians 3:4b-14 Psalms 11, 12
11 th March Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	1 Samuel 1:20-end Colossians 3:12-17 John 19:25b-27	Exodus 6:2-13 Romans 5:1-11 Psalms 13, 14
18 th March Lent 5 Passion Sunday	Jeremiah 31:31-34 Hebrews 5:5-10 John 12:20-33	Exodus 7:8-24 Romans 5:12-21 Psalm 34
25 th March Lent 6 Palm Sunday	Mark 11:1-11 Isaiah 50:4-9a Philippians 2:5-11 Mark 14:1-15,47	Zechariah 12:9-11,13:1,7-9 Matthew 21:12-17 Psalm 31:9-16
1 st April Easter Sunday	Acts 10:34-43 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 John 20:1-18	Ezekiel 37:1-14 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 Psalm 66
8 th April Easter 2	Acts 4:32-35 1 John 1:1-2:2 John 20:19-31	Isaiah 26:1-9,19 Romans 4:13-25 Psalm 143:1-11
15 th April Easter 3	Acts 3:12-19 1 John 3:1-7 Luke 24:36b-48	Deuteronomy 7:7-13 Revelation 2:1-11 Psalm 142
22 nd April Easter 4	Acts 4:5-12 1 John 3:16-24 John 10:11-18	Exodus 16:4-15 Revelation 2:12-17 Psalm 81:8-16
29 th April Easter 5	Acts 8:26-40 1 John 4:7-21 John 15:1-8	Isaiah 60:1-14 Revelation 3:1-13 Psalm 96

The 'eagle banner'

The applique banner hanging on the North Wall was created by Naomi Lidwell, and she has kindly lent it to St Michael's during our vacancy period. The banner is based on Deuteronomy 32:11-12 and depicts the adult eagle teaching the eaglets to fly by pushing them from the nest. The eaglet starts to learn and to soar by riding the thermals, but when it becomes exhausted the parent bird is there to catch, succour and give rest. *Jeremiah 29 v 11: "I alone have plans for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for"* How appropriate to our vacancy.
 Nick Davies

READERS' LIST – MARCH/APRIL 2018

DATE	8:00am	10:30am	6:30pm
4 th March	Henry Douglas	Michael Blake	Janet Hardy
11 th March	Penny Johnston	John Hanks	Angela Russell
18 th March	Liz Sanderson	Chris Packard	Maureen McCormack
25 th March	Nigel Allan	Julie Siemens	David Ronald
1 st April	John MacCallum	Helen Gibson	Jill Braid
8 th April	Chris Sanders	Richard Smith	John Sadden
15 th April	Selina McGeoch	James Ashby	Joan Sadden
22 nd April	Henry Douglas	Jill Braid	Penny Johnston
29 th April	Penny Johnston	Trevor Quickfall	Margaret Gilbert

Beacon Trust

All of us can feel a little down in January; the weather is cold and grey, and the bills seem to come flooding in after Christmas.

At the Beacon Trust we are feeling a little gloomy too; there are not many visitors to the shop as extensive work is taking place to the pavements in front of the shop. Pavements on both sides of E. Princess Street are being renewed. We have cones everywhere and the carpark where we kept our van has been closed so it can be extended. At present we have no alternative but to park the van in the main carpark at the sea front.

If all this was not enough to contend with, the clutch has given out in the van and it has to go into a garage for replacement. Without the van we can do nothing, can't collect nor deliver so this repair becomes our priority.

Yet with all the gloom, we all remain positive and committed to our goal, to show God's love in a practical way in the community. When times are tough we remember the Beacon Trust motto; "We don't work miracles but, we work for someone who does!"

Miracles still happen, and we know we will weather this storm. *Trevor McGrath MBE*

Church Group Leaders

Contact People/Organisers

Sunday Club		
Crèche	Pauline and Ray Williams	673944
Infants, Juniors Plus	Joy Boak	676852
Sidespersons	Vacant	
Bellringers	Kitty Fleming	676963
Reading (Lessons) Rota	Nigel Allan	671875
Cleaning Co-ordinator	Barbara Hoey	671718
Visiting Co-ordinator	Vacant	
Flowers	Sue Ashby	675541
Intercessions Rota, Laundry, Soft		
Fabrics and Chief Sacristan	Joan Sadden	672422
Sunday Coffee Rota	Margaret Horrell	676936
BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship Notes)	Marion Blake	673960
Mothers' Union Branch Leader	Joan Thompson	423451
USPG	Marion Blake	673960
Keep Fit/ Hall Convener/		
Monthly Coffee Morning Rota	Maureen Kyle	672951
Eco Congregation	Selina McGeoch	676074
Hill walking and Rambling Club	James Ashby	675541
Traidcraft	Jo Scott	01389 849145
Vale of Leven Hospital Tea Bar	Judith Adams	672477
St Michael's Art Group	John MacCallum	673521
Magazine Editor	Richard Smith	831644
Website	Henry Douglass	674763
	Jo Scott	01389 849145

Ask how to join or help. Perhaps bring new ideas for new activities
You will be welcome. Please let the editor know if any changes are needed.

March and April 2018

THE MESSENGER

Addendum

An Outing to the Scottish Parliament

On Thursday morning 18th January, a crisp but sunny day, 26 members of the congregation boarded the hired coach for Edinburgh. At the kind invitation of Maurice Steuart-Corry MSP we were going to be shown round the famous Parliament building, given a light lunch, and ushered into the visitors' gallery to see and hear First Minister's Questions, and later hear a speech by Maurice himself introducing the debate recognising the contribution of women to Her Majesty's Armed Forces in this centenary year of their being allowed to join, and receive the recognition for their contribution which they had hitherto been denied.

We were dropped off at the bottom of the wide and steep steps leading up to Planet Earth and had a brisk five-minute walk round to the entrance to the Parliament building. No vehicles are allowed to approach this entrance which has a policeman on duty at all times and has not one but three separate pools of water along its frontage, to inhibit those who for whatever reason might wish to attack the building. The entrance, which I would describe as round the back, is via a single glass swing door which was for me, a disappointment. It felt like entering a branch of Debenhams. I did not get that hoped for sense of being awe-struck by a grand edifice, immense worldly authority, and supreme self-confidence, which former centuries achieved so effortlessly in their public buildings. When we are told that we will not let terrorism have an adverse impact on our lives, I look at the frankly unimpressive front of this building, the long walk from the dropping-off point, the explosion-deflecting devices that have been built into the contours. I think of the cost of making the roof of the building bomb-proof (for the price of at least three hospitals), and I see a great loss of confidence and a sense that our

fear has already had a huge and costly impact on public life. Of course, the building has many award-winning architectural and environmentally helpful features which are impressive, but I know my reflections are not mine alone and that we need to be bold and resolute.

After refreshing ourselves in the spacious cafe, we were greeted warmly by Maurice who outlined the plans for the day, and we received our dog-tags and proceeded to the first floor where guests enter the visitors' gallery. A good view and comfortable (though wooden) chairs helped us to concentrate on what various MSPs and Nicola Sturgeon herself, were saying during First Minister's Questions. Among the topics were the treatment of the Chief Constable of Police, who seemed to have been made a scape-goat for some blunder or felony (not unusual for someone in his position), and the NHS, (hardly a surprise, this one). I was a little distracted by a couple who struggled at the door to bring their baby-buggy, with baby, into the visitors' gallery! The stewards on duty seemed very helpful, and I was impressed by their acceptance of such an inappropriate arrival. There was a rather unsettling amount of coming and going even during debates and questions, and I felt sorry for the active participants who may have worked long and hard to prepare for their brief moment of glory, but who could not always be heard in the gallery, in spite of 'state of the art' microphones. After FM's Questions, we adjourned to one of the well-appointed committee rooms, with our lunch, and after the break, Maurice told us about the workings of the committees where the serious work is done, the high-spec tech with which the rooms are equipped, the press room, and indeed the whole tower block part of the building devoted entirely to the press. After this we resumed our seats for Maurice's speech, and afterwards he showed us round the building and upstairs to the MSP offices (known as dog-kennels). A detailed description of these and indeed of the whole building is available on the website, but it was fun to see people actually at work in this area, and the library-cum-information centre which is a vital part of the ongoing research work of every member.

Maurice had spoken eloquently and elegantly to the floor of the House, which by the way, is not adversarially designed, but is in the amphitheatre shape or three quarters of a circle. Maurice's description of the activities in which he is engaged

on a daily basis made me feel quite exhausted, but also deeply impressed with the good work he is doing in so many different spheres: from helping an individual family set up in a new home in Oban after many difficulties, to schemes to help ex-servicemen back into civilian life. AND he had to suffer the loss of his constituency office through a fire which broke out in a nearby restaurant. Happily, order has been restored and his helpers no longer have to work from home! RESPECT! Grateful thanks to Maurice, and to Maureen Kyle who shepherded us all there and back safely and on time. It was a great day.

Selina McGeoch

Mary Bannister

Having spent a lovely afternoon with Mary hearing about her life, and making notes, Mary took over and, on her old typewriter, has produced the following story of her life.



1 Mary is the Third patient from the front along the row on the right

Mary was born in 1926, at Scarborough where her parents had a 10-bedroom boarding house on the North Cliff. Life was full of interest with the beach and cliffs as a playground, a dog, and visitors during the summer. But for Mary this stopped in 1934, when she developed osteomyelitis, a feverish infection of the bone, in her case the left thigh. In Scarborough Hospital, her mother was told there was no hope. The G.P. called in the surgeon from the Yorkshire Children's Orthopaedic Hospital (YCOH).

The infected area was drained and cleaned, and a second operation performed to remove part of the infected thigh bone. Mary was then transferred to the YCOH for 18 months' recovery time to allow the bone to sit within the hip. Parents' visits took place only once a month as the open-air hospital at Kirbymoorside was not very accessible, but for the child patients time passed happily enough with daily lessons, each working at his or her own pace through a maths and grammar book as the teachers moved from bed to bed. They sang, did art and there was the occasional film. Mary returned home in a wheel-chair, a condition expected to be permanent, but after 6 months further surgery was performed to reset and straighten the leg which then was followed by 6 months more in the YCOH, this time learning to walk again with a zimmer, and then unsupported. This was 1936 and Mary remembers the abdication crisis being announced on the ward radio.

Then back home to Scarborough in time for the Second World War. By then Mary was enrolled in Scarborough High School. Her father returned to his first job as a clerk in the Sheffield steel works filling a man-power gap as younger men were called up for the Forces. He was able to lodge with his widowed mother, while Mary and her mother remained in Scarborough. Air-raid sirens sounded on several nights each week, as German bombers found the castle headland jutting out into the North Sea, a convenient landmark on their way to bomb Hull or the Newcastle area to the north. Her mother's first improvised 'air-raid' shelter fitted with camp beds and candles under the basement stairs was written off by the local 'air-raid' warden as a 'death-trap', and she transferred the equipment to a stone-walled larder at the edge of the house, more accessible to rescuers if the building collapsed. Fortunately, it was never put to the test.

Mary's love of reading had been encouraged by the amount of time she had spent being laid up. During her High School years, she was expected to lie flat for part of the lunch break and could only be a looker-on during tennis, netball or hockey periods, the fear being the limp caused by her shortened left leg would hinder the proper growth of her spine. A book of history or fiction became a regular companion at such times. During her teens she also changed her allegiance from the Methodism of her upbringing to the Anglican Church, its historical links being the primary attraction. Historical fiction introduced Scotland, more appealing to romantic teenagers than the world-scale triumphant narrative of Empire presented in British Schools in the 1930s. Mary read John Buchan, R.L. Stevenson, Sir Walter Scott, D.K. Broster, and J.M. Barrie. Even her ever-Best-Beloved-Rudyard Kipling was a MacDonald on his mother's side!

Librarian ship seemed an ideal career once her parents accepted that this would not involve a lifetime of 7-hour days spent replacing armfuls of books on shelves. Despite a built-up shoe and no left hip movement, Mary's walking and standing were now almost as good as normal. Sheffield had one of the best public library systems in Britain, and 1949 saw her beginning 7 happy years first as a trainee in a suburban branch library, later moving to the Central Lending and Reference departments and finally to the charge of a small branch. She lodged with a Sheffield family friend and joined a choral society. Mary had also begun to study for a degree, by correspondence course as an external student of London University. Her subjects were History and English, with Theology as a new interest. This involved reading Church history and doctrine, while gladly omitting the Hebrew N.T. and Greek required for the B.D. course. After a modest B.A. came professional exams: Book cataloguing and classification, Library administration and design, and more English Literature.

By 1956 she was fully qualified academically and professionally. That year saw her mother's sudden death, and the pull of Scotland became irresistible. Edinburgh and Fort William had been her holiday choices, but the first library vacancy was in a place spoken of by her English friends 'Mill'n-gavvy'. This turned out to be a friendly small town near the Campsie Fells, with Glasgow (hitherto unknown) readily available. Mary found lodgings and settled well, finding Glasgow,

university city, birthplace of the Saltire society, well-supplied with museums, art galleries, adequate to all her Scottish interests. In 1959 the Templeton Library in Helensburgh was seeking a librarian, with the offer of a flat accompanying the post. Mary took it and became from then on, a resident of the West of Scotland, though often, as an East Coast child, missing the more bracing air of the east.

The only break occurred when in 1965-67 she went to test her vocation in an Anglican Benedictine Sisterhood at Laleham-on-Thames. She had come to know the Sisters through visits to their Retreat House at Walkerburn near Peebles. It seemed possible, since marriage had never attracted her, that God meant her for a nun. At Laleham Mary enjoyed the routine of the Divine Office, Spiritual reading, and the simple work of baking communion wafers to supply several churches, plus cooking, cleaning and laundering for the elderly ladies in the residential homes in the convent grounds. But the very fact that it all seemed like an idle holiday by the peaceful Thames, in contrast with the demands of a busy public library, suggested it was not God's intention for her life. It seemed truly Providential that soon after she left, a Helensburgh friend who had kept in touch, wrote to tell her that her successor in the Templeton Library had accepted a job elsewhere. Mary applied for her former job and was accepted.

In 1974 Helensburgh ceased to be an independent small burgh and was incorporated into the Dumbarton County, changing Mary's status from Burgh Librarian to one of 5 Branch librarians under a County Librarian. This brought her the companionship of colleagues, the pleasure of weekly meetings to discuss the purchase of new stock, a more realistic book fund, and occasional trips to large stockists. She and the others would travel to Preston by a morning train, transfer to a Library Supplier for lunch on the staff canteen and an afternoon spent happily filling a trolley with books, philosophy to cookery, foreign travel to film stars. After dinner, bed and breakfast in a small hotel, next morning would be passed in further buying, returning to Glasgow by an afternoon train. Helensburgh readers were varied in their tastes and Mary enjoyed speculating on what might please them, outside her own interests.

Retirement was reached in 1991, and she has remained contentedly resident in Helensburgh.

Maggie Sheen

Climate Change

I found the following article in a USPG (United Society for Partners in the Gospel) prayer diary. It comes from the Church of South India.

"Though climate change is a global problem, all people are not equally responsible for it. The industrial nations, representing less than 20 per cent of the world population, account for nearly 90 per cent of annual greenhouse gas emissions over the last century, mainly through the burning of fossil fuels (coal, gas, oil)

Hence, we make a distinction between the 'luxury, emissions of the rich,' and the 'survival emissions of the poor'.

We resist the claim that anything in Creation is merely a resource for human exploitation. As a church we conserve energy water, educate the congregations to ensure energy is used efficiently, encourage the increased use of renewable energy, and prevent pollutants from entering the drainage system.

A fossil-fuel based, automobile-centred throw away economy is not a viable model for the world. We have to build an economy that will support, not undermine, future generations."

A recent Countryfile programme warned of the presence of 'superbugs' in our seawater. These endanger those involved in water sports particularly. The suggested cause is the overuse of antibacterial products and environmentally unfriendly chemicals in cleaning preparations.

Ann Packard

Donkey Work

One day a farmer's donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally, he decided that the animal was old, and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbours to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first the donkey realised what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone's amazement there was silence.

A few shovel-loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up.

As the farmer's neighbours continued to shovel dirt on the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up.

Each of our troubles is a stepping stone, we can get out of the deepest wells just be not stopping, never giving up. Shake it off and take a step up.

Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

1. Free your heart from hatred - forgive.
2. Free your mind from worries - most never happen.
3. Live simply and appreciate what you have.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

Gerry Quickfall