

Annan United Reformed Church

www.annan.urc.org.uk



October 2016 Newsletter





MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Luke 15:8-10

The Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸ 'Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

Many will remember that I preached on the 'Lost Parables' on 11th September. As part of the young people's address everyone was given a penny. We all agreed it was not worth anything, however, if each person present collected a penny a day for a year we would have approximately £180 – which is of some value.

There are two points to this:

- a. The first is, of course, financial. Each month we pay an amount to the URC known as Ministry and Mission, the cumulative amount from each Church provides for ministry across the United Reformed Church. This year we are asked to increase this by 1.75%. When asked to increase offerings many feel they cannot as they feel it may mean increasing by £1. The challenge comes from the penny. Do not think on £1 of an increase, but on an increase of 1.75% or approximately 2 pence in every pound you give. So, if you are currently giving £1.00, think on increasing this to £1.02 and if you give £5 then think on increasing to £5.10. It is not a lot, yet cumulatively it would cover the cost of the increase we face in ministry and mission (and remember we only ever paid between 50-60% of the cost of a full time minister over the last 5 years).
- b. The second relates to each person associated with our Church. One person missing from Church or who leaves the Church may seem irrelevant in the scheme of things, but the cumulative effect can be much more than we imagine and can affect us all. It is a challenge for the whole congregation (not just the elders), especially as the Church heads into a period of vacancy. It does involve visiting and speaking with those who are missing, some for perhaps a long number of years. Imagine our Church if all felt able to attend each week and take a full part in the life of this Church.

Then I think we could truly hear the word at the start of verse 10 of the above reading, how much joy would there be in heaven if those lost to us were encouraged to return.

God Bless

Alan

REPORT FROM SYNOD MEETING, 10TH SEPTEMBER 2016.

A very cosy hall and a new Moderator greeted us at the September Synod meeting, held at Coatbridge URC last month.

Among a packed and informative day's business, the following items were raised:

- We heard an address about the "Feasts and Festivals" theme for 2017. Lots of details about this can be seen at www.urch.org.uk/feasts-and-festivals. A reminder was given as part of this address about the 500th anniversary next year of Martin Luther's initiation of the reformation and the opportunities for celebration this raises.
- A new grievance, disciplinary, mediation and capability policy for lay employees, appointees and volunteers was adopted. We have copies if anyone needs to have it.
- The Church Life Committee led discussions about some challenging ideas for harvest services that move away from collections of food and focus on innovative ways of meeting the synod aspirations. These included: collecting underwear to donate to charities supporting women in parts of Africa; collecting dishcloths, toilet rolls and other items to donate to charities supporting homeless people to set up home; raising environmental concerns, and others.
- The past case review launches on the 4th October this year. This is to investigate and listen to the experiences of anyone who has been treated unfairly by the Church. More details will be released nearer the time both through church publications and national press.
- A long discussion was held about same sex marriage, clarifying next steps both for ministers and churches following the vote by General Assembly. Any church that votes in favour of same sex marriage on their premises have been asked to let the Synod Pastoral Committee know. This is so that appropriate churches can be identified for same sex couples who wish to be married in church but whose local URC church has voted against.
- All churches have been asked to increase their giving to Ministry and Mission by 1.75%. This is the approximate equivalent of giving an extra 2p for every £1 already given. The point was made that donations to ministry and mission do not buy a minister but instead contribute to the mission and ministry of the whole of the URC.
- The new Moderator expressed his thanks to all churches that had already invited him to lead worship and advised synod that he welcomes any such invitations.

Much of the day made reference to the National Synod of Scotland's Aspirations, and it seems appropriate to repeat them here: Celebrate in our worship and in our living God's **UNCONDITIONAL LOVE** as revealed in Christ; Respond to God's love through **INCLUSIVE** worship; Show that the love of God is **RADICAL**; Continue our **JOURNEY** towards church unity; Understand, and work with, people of **OTHER FAITHS AND NONE**; Work for **PEACE AND JUSTICE**; Act on our concern for all God's **CREATION**; Be committed to **DEVELOPING** our faith both personally and corporately.

Copies of the minutes of the meeting can be made available as soon as we get them sent to us. We are happy to answer any questions anyone may have.

Joseph & Benjamin Kidd-Bentley

TIME AND RESOURCES

A leaflet produced for the URC Stewardship Committee quotes Rev Richard Church narrating how he was on a pilgrimage through Northern Spain and at one of the hostels a meal was provided for the pilgrims staying there that evening. When they asked about the cost, they were told that contributions paid by pilgrims staying there the previous evening had purchased the food. In the same way, money paid today would provide for the needs of those pilgrims who came afterwards.

On a pilgrimage, things are shared as well as the journey – it's being part of a supportive community. Sharing time and money which would otherwise remain private is Sharing the Way of Christ.

The leaflet concludes: "As the United Reformed Church embraces a fresh emphasis on being a community of disciples, let us encourage one another in this partnership, freely and generously releasing resources so that those around us and those who come after us may be blessed in the gift, just as we are blessed in the giving."

A PRAYER OF THANKS

Loving God, you have chosen us to be your partners in sharing your love,
we thank you for this privilege.

As we continue on our journey of life with you, we thank you that you continually allow us to share in your resources so abundantly.

Help us to be generous with your gifts.

Amen.

Haydn Higton

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## FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

As you all are aware, our Women's Union had to finish owing to lack of numbers attending.

However, to give the entire congregation an opportunity of a time of fellowship together, the Women's Union committee have decided to introduce, periodically, meetings which everyone (men and women) is invited to attend.

The first of these meetings will be on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016**, in the church hall at 2:00pm, when the speaker will be Mr Duncan Ford, Ranger at Hoddam and Kinmount Estate, who is an excellent speaker.

The committee would be grateful for your support in this new venture.

Marion Kerr

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CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Would those people kindly knitting squares for one of the trees, please stop now, completing the square you are currently making, and deliver to Edith as soon as possible.

Edith Woodman

1ST ANNAN GIRLS' BRIGADE

The company has made a good start to the new session for 2016-2017, with about 30 girls registered in the company. For this year, the leaders and helpers are:

Explorers:- Lyn Higton and Helen McNairn with Suzanne Fergusson

Juniors:- Rebekka Woodhouse

Brigaders:- Captain : Paula Mitchell

We are still looking for volunteer helpers on a rota basis, please speak to Captain if you can volunteer.

The Enrolment Service for the 2016-2017 session will be on Sunday 2nd October at 10:30 in the church, when we look forward to seeing all involved - and extended family members are very welcome too. The family service will see the girls receiving their Certificates of Enrolment. Full uniform must be worn by every girl.

For the rest of the autumn term, each section has its own programme as follows:

The Explorer's Programme has as its theme Healthy Eating

Date	Activity	People Involved
02.10.16	Enrolment Service	Everyone
06.10.16	Stars & Stripes	Lyn & Helen
13.10.16	Halloween Prep	Lyn & Helen
20.10.16	HOLIDAY	
27.10.16	HOLIDAY	
03.11.16	Burning (Up the Fat)	Lyn & Helen

The Juniors Programme for the next part of 2016/2017 is below:

02.10.16	Enrolment Service
06.10.16	Leaf collages / games
13.10.16	Stone painting / games
20.10.16	HOLIDAY
27.10.16	HOLIDAY
03.11.16	Halloween/bonfire night crafts / games

The Brigaders have chosen the following subjects to complete their badge work:

Educational- Butterfly Tee and In the Frame

Spiritual- Bioethics and A Matter of Perspective

Service- Fundraising and Life Live It

Physical- Teenage Body Basics and Fear & Respect

Date	Activity	People Involved
02.10.16	Enrolment Service	Everyone
06.10.16	Butterfly Tee	Paula Mitchell
13.10.16	Teenage Body Basics	Paula Mitchell
20.10.16	HOLIDAY	
27.10.16	HOLIDAY	
03.11.16	Teenage Body Basics	Paula Mitchell

THE FUTURE OF MINISTRY

We are wrong if we restrict 'ministry' to what "the minister" does. Ministry is what Jesus fulfilled in his own person and brought the Christian Church into being to continue. Ministry involves the whole people of God – everyone has a part to play.

We are meant so to live in our congregations, caring for one another and for those outside our faith, that on both counts people enquire the reasons for our lifestyle and give us opportunity to talk about Jesus and what we believe. We gather for worship to be equipped for our ministry in the world, and this is a shared ministry.

In the Old Testament, Elders were important as people who would lead, equip and enable Israel to fulfil its God-given calling. In the New Testament, many forms of leadership developed as people exercised various God-given gifts – prophecy, teaching, care of the poor, administration, leaders of leisure and house groups and so on. Every congregation in the New Testament was looked after by a variety of people from all walks of life.

Several people in our congregation have been asked to consider helping to lead in terms of our church fellowship (its ministry to each other) and its mission (its ministry to the world). The appeal is made now again at this important time in the life of the church family. There is no manual to train an Elder, it's not about intellectual standing or being able to chat easily, and there is no list of duties that every Elder has to perform. The only qualification required is a willingness to try to put your Christian faith into practice in serving the congregation and the community. There are no age limits, no gender barriers – we just need team players.

If anyone wishes to explore being an Elder, please speak to any current Elder (Jim Murray, Robin Richardson, George Holliday, Mamie Lamont, Mary Stuart, Christina Beattie, Helen McNairn, Lyn Higton).

Haydn Higton

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### **From John 21:15-17**

Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my sheep" and "Follow me".

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SUNDAY SEEKERS

Over the past weeks at Sunday Seekers we have been finding out about Jesus calling the fisherman and others to be his disciples. We also heard the story of the Lost Sheep and our one member that day enjoyed creating a very woolly sheep. The last Sunday in September found us hearing the story of Jesus walking on water and the surprise that the disciples got when they realised it was Jesus walking towards them. We did activities related to the stories.

Sadly, there have been very few children attending Sunday Seekers this month.

Fiona Glass

PALESTINE & ISRAEL

The Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel passed in September, but it is not too late to share this prayer written for that week and based on Ephesians 2:14:

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility. God, loving Parent of all humankind, you are our Peace. In Jesus Christ you embodied peace with justice – and you still do – peace at its most down-to-earth, peace, which can still prevail in the face of all the walls we build. We confess our helpless anger, confronted by concrete cutting across the daily lives of your children: limits imposed on travel, study, healthcare, work, worship, family connections, celebrations. We confess our complicity in maintaining barriers of ignorance, fear, privilege, prejudice, ‘us’ and ‘them’. Our world is crossed by razor wire that tears at flesh and draws blood. But you are our peace, with power to cut this wire for good, to break down all our walls. You are present now in the women of Machsom Watch standing at the checkpoint, where they can be seen, speaking out about what they see: God of Peace, we thank you. You are present when former combatants, with courage, stand together to denounce violence: God of Peace, we thank you. You are present in the patience of people under Occupation who stand their ground, embodying sumoud: God of Peace, we thank you. You are present in Ecumenical Accompaniers, bearing witness. God of Peace, we thank you. Loving Parent of all humankind, help us to share with our sisters and brothers in Israel, Palestine and nearer home, your work of breaking down the walls of separation, your vital work of peace. Amen

Jan Sutch Pickard 8.5.16

FACTS ABOUT THE DEMOLITIONS IN PALESTINE

- Since 2012, 2401 Palestinian homes and other structures have been demolished in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), including East Jerusalem.
- In 2015, 544 demolitions were recorded by the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA), displacing 757 people.
- So far in 2016, 769 demolitions have been carried out, leaving over 1000 Palestinians homeless.

Condensed from Commitment for Life: Moving Stories 196

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## CHRISTIAN AID QUIZ

Two teams from the United Reformed Church enjoyed the annual Christian Aid Quiz held in Annan Old Parish Church Hall on September 21st. It is always a fun evening.

There was a varied selection of general knowledge questions with everyone racking their brains to come up with the answers. Do you know who the last king crowned in Scotland was? or what is another name for the fruit granadilla?

A lovely savoury supper was provided by the Christian Aid Committee and an excellent amount of money was raised to support Christian Aid.

Fiona Glass.

## OCTOBER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

|                                             |                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sat 1 <sup>st</sup>                         | Vestry Day – Church open 10:00am – noon                                                                         |
| Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>                         | Girls' Brigade Enrolment Service                                                                                |
| Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>                         | Airdrie Park leave their building this Sunday – please include them in prayers as they move to a community hall |
| Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup>                         | Floral Art – 7:00pm – All welcome                                                                               |
| Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>                         | Tea and Natter Group – 10:00am – All welcome (every Tuesday)                                                    |
| Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>                         | Games Afternoon – 2:00pm – All welcome (every Tuesday)                                                          |
| Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>                         | Rainbow Tribe and Spectrum – 6:00pm (every Tuesday except school holidays)                                      |
| Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>                         | Girls' Brigade – 6:00pm (every Thursday except school holidays)                                                 |
| Thu 6 <sup>th</sup> to Fri 7 <sup>th</sup>  | The minister is attending a Mission Committee Meeting in Windermere                                             |
| Fri 7 <sup>th</sup>                         | Fridays in Faith – 7:00pm – The Community Hub, Ednam Street                                                     |
| Fri 7 <sup>th</sup> to Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> | The minister is on holiday. Anyone in need of pastoral care should speak to their elder                         |
| Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>                        | The Synod Moderator is meeting with the elders                                                                  |
| Thu 13 <sup>th</sup>                        | Soup & Sweet Lunches from 11:30am to 1:30 pm – All welcome                                                      |
| Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>                        | The minister is attending a Commitment for Life Reference Group meeting in London                               |
| Fri 21 <sup>st</sup>                        | Exploring Church Membership – 10:00am                                                                           |
| Tue 25 <sup>th</sup>                        | The minister is attending a training day in Rutherglen URC                                                      |
| Tue 25 <sup>th</sup>                        | Last date for material for November Newsletter to reach Ruth & Robert                                           |
| Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>                        | Friday Fellowship – 2:00pm in Church hall – All welcome                                                         |
| Sat 29 <sup>th</sup>                        | Clocks change back to GMT this weekend                                                                          |
| Sun 30 <sup>th</sup>                        | Church Anniversary                                                                                              |
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| Sun 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov                     | NB Church meeting                                                                                               |

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Minister's phone number: 01461 206988

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR OCTOBER

Date	Old Testament	New Testament
Sat 1 st	Zechariah 8.14-end	John 20.19-end
Mon 3 rd	1 Kings 3.3-14	1 Timothy 3.14 - 4.8
Tue 4 th	Proverbs 27.11-end	Galatians 6.1-10
Wed 5 th	Isaiah 51.1-6	2 Corinthians 1.1-11
Thu 6 th	Job 26	1 Corinthians 11.17-end
Fri 7 th	Job 19.21-end	Mark 15.33-47
Sat 8 th	Isaiah 44.21-end	John 21.15-end
Mon 10 th	1 Kings 6.2-10	John 12.1-11
Tue 11 th	Proverbs 31.10-end	Luke 10.38-42
Wed 12 th	Jonah 1	Luke 5.1-11
Thu 13 th	Exodus 12.1-20	1 Thessalonians 4.1-12
Fri 14 th	Isaiah 64	Matthew 27.45-56
Sat 15 th	2 Samuel 7.18-end	Acts 2.22-33
Mon 17 th	1 Kings 8.22-30	John 12.12-19
Tue 18 th	Ecclesiastes 11	Luke 13.10-17
Wed 19 th	Hosea 14.1-7	2 Timothy 4.1-8
Thu 20 th	Isaiah 49.1-7	John 19.16-25a
Fri 21 st	Proverbs 24.3-22	John 8.1-11
Sat 22 nd	Deuteronomy 6.16-25	2 Timothy 1.1-14
Mon 24 th	Isaiah 42.14-21	Luke 1.5-25
Tue 25 th	1 Samuel 4.12-end	Luke 1.57-80
Wed 26 th	Haggai 1.1-11	Mark 1.1-11
Thu 27 th	Isaiah 35	Matthew 11.2-19
Fri 28 th	2 Samuel 11.1-17	Matthew 14.1-12
Sat 29 th	Isaiah 43.15-21	Acts 19.1-10
Mon 31 st	Esther 3.1-11, 4.7-17	Matthew 18.1-10