

## Our next Communion is Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 11:30am

Please join us

Everyone welcome

Communion is held at Canonbie United Parish Church on the first Sunday of March, June, September and December.

### A letter from our Interim Moderator

Some of you may recognise the following from the sermon I preached at Canonbie recently, when Lindsay Thomson was unfortunately unwell:

'In 1935, comedian Jimmy Durante starred on Broadway in a stage musical Jumbo. In one scene, he led an elephant along the pavement. , a police officer stopped him and asked him, "What are you doing with that elephant?" Durante's reply, was "What elephant?". Not surprisingly it always brought the house down.

Nowadays we speak of the elephant in the room: The online encyclopaedia, Wikipedia, tells us 'The term refers to a question, problem, solution, or controversial issue which is obvious to everyone who knows about the situation, but which is deliberately ignored because to do otherwise would cause great embarrassment, or trigger arguments or is simply taboo.

For us here in Canonbie the elephant in the room is just as plain as the phrase implies. The elephant in this particular room is the departure of Steve and Chris Fulcher and more particularly the allegations that their departure was caused to a lesser or greater extent by problems at Newcastleton or problems with Chris's future as an Ordained Local Minister.

I am being totally honest with you when I say that I cannot comment on the extent of those problems and the merit of any allegations. However, what I can say to you is this: Steve and Chris have now left this Presbytery and it is for them to decide what, if anything they wish to do in respect of their grievances. We must now get on with the process of choosing a new minister and working with him or her to bring nearer the Kingdom of God here in this place.

Remember what Jesus says to Peter in the 18th Chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew: Peter came and said to him, Lord, if someone [another member of the church] sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times? Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, I tell you, but, seventy times seven.' What Jesus is saying is that we should forgive without limit, in the same way as God forgives us without limit. God, with his boundless mercy, calls us to exercise forgiveness in the same way.

And yes, that's not how the world operates. We live in a world run on judgement, revenge and at best conditional love. But as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are ordered to follow his example of unconditional love

And yes, that is totally irrational. Exactly like faith.'

I'm confident that we can move forward together.

Best wishes to you all,

Scott

**I. Scott McCarthy**

**Minister to Langholm Eskdalemuir Ewes and Westerkirk**

**Interim Moderator Canonbie United linked with Liddesdale**

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Canonbie United Parish Church  
We shall be holding our  
**Stated Annual Meeting**  
In church, after Morning Worship,  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2013

Please join us and hear about the life  
of your church in Canonbie

## Easter Services

At Canonbie United Parish Church

11:30am Palm Sunday – 24<sup>th</sup> March

10am Good Friday – 29<sup>th</sup> March

11:30am Easter Day – 31<sup>st</sup> March



This July, Canonbie United Parish Church Youth Group is going to Malawi for two weeks. Eight people are hoping to go, two leaders and six teenagers between the ages of 15 and 18. Five are past and present pupils at Langholm Academy and one is a pupil at Austin Friars in Carlisle. The group will experience and explore the historical links between this African country and the Church of Scotland. We are hoping that this will be a life changing experience for all involved.

A two week stay in the Ekwendeni area would involve a variety of work activities

which include: - holiday club type activities with children at a rural primary school, making connections with Malawian teenage girls, to establish a link between the Girls Brigade and our youth group, sharing life and culture with Malawian teenagers, and also to learn about HIV and health issues particularly in relation to women and children. We are hoping to further the links already started by our Minister between our church and Ekwendeni, and for young people there to visit us in the future.

Fund-raising for this expedition has so far been very successful. The estimated amount required for each participant is £1200, which covers Canonbie to Lilongwe travel, travel insurance, food and accommodation. We have received a donation from Faithshare (part of the Church of Scotland) to cover the cost of two flights and insurance, and donations from individuals. We also have sponsorship from several local businesses including BikeSeven, Border Vets and Border Cars, who wished to become involved in our expedition. The recent Safari Supper attracted over 70 people, and from that alone we raised over £500. A Quiz Night was held on 1st March which raised £300, and there are also plans for a ceilidh in May, which will be held in Longtown and is being sponsored by Border Vets. We will continue to raise money by other means, such as taking part in the Rotary Umbrella Walk on 23rd March, seeking support from local businesses and charities, and by baking for the monthly soup kitchen in Canonbie Hall.

Scotland has long had connections with Malawi. Until 1963, Malawi was a British colony, and had come under British influence due to the pioneering activities of the Scot David Livingstone, whose 200th anniversary of his birth is marked in March this year, and other Scottish missionaries. The Church of Scotland also exists in Malawi and we plan to visit an exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh to learn more of David Livingstone and the Church's involvement in the country.

If you would like to support us in any way then please contact either: -

**Ruth Foster (Youth Group Leader)**

or

**Lois Lane (Assistant Youth Group Leader)**

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[lois@yellowhouse.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:lois@yellowhouse.orangehome.co.uk)

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013873 71386

**We would love to hear from you!**

## **Other news**

Items discussed at the last Congregational Board meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013: - Annual financial statement for the SAM; Computer and projection needs; Paying for our use of Fairtrade goods; A noticeboard for our World Mission activities. The Langholm Orchestra Christmas Concert raised £426 - £150 was paid to the orchestra. Steve and Chris Fulcher's leaving collection raised £550 - a painting by Helen Irving was presented to them along with a monetary gift. We have 6 members ready to start work with Liddesdale Church on the Nominating Committee for a new minister - Ruth Gilbert, Daan van Belzen, Lois Lane, Liz Findlay, Ruth Foster & Sam Shipley.