

Lochgilphead Parish Church

LINK

May/June 2018

Volume 16 Issue 3

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MESSAGE FROM THE MANSE

The

May, 2018.

Dear Friends,

I watched a video recently produced by the Church of Scotland. It was from a Conference on an Initiative to hold a National Weekend of Invitation to Church from Friday, 15th to Sunday, 17th June, 2018.

The speaker, Michael Harvey spoke of how he had no interest in things that worked but rather in things that didn't work and so over a number of years he has been charged with running conferences around Back to Church Sundays, not just in England where he lives but throughout the western world.

Initially, he was charged with going to speak to Anglican Clergy at the equivalent of the Ministers' Fraternal, groups that not even the clergy wished to attend! All he heard was: "You'll never get congregations to do that.""That'll never work" and Michael was right in there.

He likes problems and realized that God also had to sort a problem. He had to intervene in our world by sending Jesus when nothing else was working. Our focus is often on the things that do work whereas Michael suggests that if we looked at the things that weren't working, we would find God staring straight back at us - maybe.

What Michael wants to see developed is a culture of invitation and he asks a question: Is the congregation, of which you are a part, 'welcoming' or 'inviting'?

The answer is probably 'welcoming' but how 'welcoming' can we be if we are not 'inviting'? We are welcoming, maybe, as long as people get themselves across the threshold of the Church building but how often do we take our welcome out in the guise of an invitation?

One of the things that happens when we think of inviting someone to Church is that we become frozen at the mouth, leaving us unable to offer the invitation. Something as simple as asking a question almost leaves us unable to speak.

In a survey that was carried out a few years back, it was noted that 70% of congregational members already had in their heads the name of someone that they could invite to Church but 80 - 90% had no intention of inviting anyone. When Michael asked the folk at the conference to think of why that might be, they gave a variety of answers.

The reasons were: Fear of rejection; Sunday is only day they can go shopping; welcoming is enough; we are embarrassed because we know they will say no; we might encounter aggression; they might give you a body swerve in future; we have asked once before; they might ask me an awkward question that I can't answer; we don't have any hope of them saying 'yes'; lack of confidence in ourselves.

Those were the reasons that 80 – 90 % don't invite their friends to Church. In Western Christianity, in twelve different countries in which this conference has been held, everyone said the same thing. Michael knew now why the National Weekend of Invitation wouldn't happen!

What are those thoughts, those reasons, saying to us?

Michael offered an example. Someone just moved into the area six or seven week ago and you are getting on ok with him. What are your reasons for not inviting him to Church?

I could invite him to Church but he may reject me. Sunday is the only day that Joe can do the shopping. I don't need to invite Joe. We're a welcoming Church with a big steeple. Joe knows where we are. He can come if he wants. I just know that Joe will say no. It'll be embarrassing if he says no. He's quite a hard man. Have you seen his muscles? He might get aggressive. He might blank me when he next sees me. I asked him before so I'm not asking him again. I have no hope that he would say yes, so what is the point? I'm not going to do it because, well, mmm, well, I just lack confidence.

A REMINDER

Please send any contributions for the July/August Link to Roberta Bowen by Wednesday 20 June

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Rotas and What's On What patterns are emerging?

We are mind reading and fortune telling. We are so Christian about the invitation, that we do the thinking for our friends. We answer the question for them so we don't need to bother asking them.

It's all about us. It is not about the people out there but about us.

We catastrophise. We look at the future and we come up with the worst case scenario. Fear runs right through all of the reasons that we give. The same reasons are given in the fastest growing Churches and there is still 80 - 90% who have no intention of inviting anyone.

Some say that confidence is the answer to the problem but when God calls people, confidence is not part of the equation. When God called Moses. Moses came up with all sorts of reasons for not going to Egypt: "There's an arrest warrant out for me in Egypt." am slow of speech. "Moses' motto was "Here am I. Send my brother!"

We have got ourselves into an easy Christianity. Everything has to be easy but God calls us into an uncomfortable situation. As soon as God comes into view, the first response of the human being is fear. We see that in the Bible.

Fear is endemic in society and it has walked into Church. We don't talk about it because the Bible says: **Do not be afraid.** There is a saying: Feel the fear and do it anyway. Michael says: It is ok for fear to be in the passenger seat but not the driving seat.

The reality is that fear is there, when God calls us. God takes us from one area of impossibility to the next area of impossibility and so on. He takes us to places of discomfort for our own sakes.

Seventy or eighty years ago, there was a new word came in: Stress. Stress is the body's reaction to fear and the Bible says: **Do not be afraid.** That is one of the greatest good news messages we are yet to deliver to a stressed out generation, that phrase from Jesus: **Do not be afraid.**

The Good News is not that command on its own but what follows it. Jesus says: **Do not be afraid because I am with you.** We assume fear has to do with what is out there and how others might react to us and because of that 80 - 90% of people have no intention of inviting anyone to Church, but fear has actually to do with what is going on in us.

In different pieces of research about how people come to faith, being brought up in a Christian home and being invited to a service other than a wedding or a funeral were the top two answers. If simply having more babies is out of the question, inviting people to Church is the other option.

We read in Matthew's Gospel that after His resurrection, Jesus commissioned the eleven disciples. He said to them: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

They must have been quite a splendid bunch of high fliers, people Jesus could rely on. On the contrary. What we often miss is the verse before the Great Commission. It says: The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 'When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.'

An invitation can make a huge difference in someone's life and it looks like there is an opportunity that weekend in June to become an inviting as well as a welcoming congregation. If we do, be assured that our doubts and fears will surface. Will we let those fears freeze our mouths or will we reach out knowing that God is in that conversation with us? I am with you always to the end of the age. Do not be afraid for I am with you.

There is much more to say on this topic, for example, on how we measure success in terms of mission, and on the difference between success and faithfulness but those subjects are for another day. In the meantime, if we sign up to this National Weekend of Invitation, who could you invite? Who would you invite? There is lots to think about!

Best wishes,

Hilda C. Smith

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Harvest Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve Offerings

I received letters of thanks some time ago from the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, thanking us for our donations to their **Every Life**Matters Appeal. All donations, received by EMMS, were matched by the British Government which will make a huge difference to the medical care of some of the most vulnerable people on our planet.

Below is an email I received the other day from EMMS updating us on how that Appeal went with a video link to Mwandida, a palliative care nurse in Malawi, who visited Scotland last December.

At the end, there is an appeal for cyclists to join them cycling round Nepal to raise more money for their work. Do you know of anyone who may be interested in doing this? If so, please pass on the email. Thank you.

Hilda Smith

Dear Hilda,

Appea

We would like to say thank you for your kind gifts to our Christmas **Every Life Matters Appeal** which raised over £840,000 in total. We are delighted with the amount raised which will support palliative care patients in rural communities in Malawi and give them care and comfort at home

We have a special thank you video for Lochgilphead Church from Nurse Mwandida, who visited Scotland last December. Please do share it with your members. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZvqZ8Ygmi0

If you would like a speaker to come and tell you more about our work, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you again for helping support people in Malawi in their hour of need.

Louise

P.S. We are still looking for participants for Cycle Nepal, so please do help spread the word.

FINANCE REPORT ANNUAL STATED MEETING 22ND APRIL 2018

(Please now look at the accounts)

Summary

Receipts & Payments Account: This only shows our income and expenditure for 2017 and does not take the starting bank balances into account. You will see that over **all** accounts we had only £1,311 surplus for the year.

Statement of Balances: self explanatory, with the bulk of the total balance being in Restricted funds.

Movement in Funds: Shows the accounts held in Unrestricted and Restricted respectively with income and expenditure on each account.

Analysis of Donations: This is a breakdown of what we took in and what we had to spend on keeping things going.

Budget Account: This shows that the projected forecast for 2018 between Income and Expenditure is a shortfall of £5,578. One extra expenditure this year is for the year 1 fees for the Path of Renewal Programme.

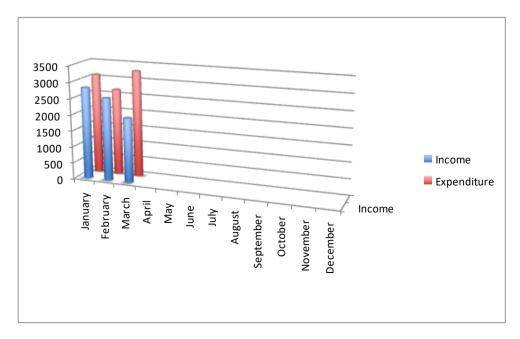
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You will see from the Accounts, that once again, the General Fund, which is our working account for the day to day running of the church, is in crisis, and that we are limping along just keeping our heads above water, mainly from the fundraising done through Coffee Mornings etc. and we are very grateful to all those who contribute and faithfully support these events in any way. Without this extra income over and above our regular giving, we would have a loss of approximately £1000 each month, which is, of course, unsustainable. All our expenditure on this account is essential, i.e. stipend and expenses, heat and light, insurance, council tax and everything else that we are all obliged to pay regularly. The only way in which we can improve this situation is once again to ask you all to consider your regular giving and I know that we are all in the same boat financially with rising prices everywhere and I am sorry to even have to mention it. Our shortfall for 2017 between income and expenditure on this account was almost £4000, despite the fundraising income, so if the present trend continues, by the end of 2018, our General Fund may very well have nothing left in it to continue to pay the bills. Only the one off transfer of £8000 in 2016 from restricted funds (ie the project fund), to the general account has kept us going and the balance of this is being eroded each month. This was initially to be a loan but the reality is that we cannot repay it.

Restricted Funds are those which have been raised for a specific purpose and should only be used for that purpose and the Fabric Fund and Project Fund fall into that category, being respectively for the essential maintenance and future renovation and development of the church buildings. They cannot be used to shore up shortfalls elsewhere.

I am sorry I am unable to attend today but if anyone has any questions regarding the Accounts or indeed LPC finances, I am happy to clarify any points raised.

Mary MacDonald Interim Treasurer



Finance Report for January – March 2018

Finances so far show that the trend is unfortunately continuing for the first quarter of 2018 and we are spending more than we are taking in. This is for essentials and not through choice.

We will continue to fundraise through coffee mornings etc in the hope that this situation will improve as the year goes on.

Please know that we are very grateful for the help and support that we get from the congregation at all times. We couldn't do it without you.

Mary MacDonald Interim Treasurer

A Thought on the Church's Mission

On 16th April, Rev Liz Crumlish, the Path of Renewal Coordinator with the Church of Scotland, wrote the following on her blog: **Luke 24:41-45**

While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.

One of my favourite all-time jokes is one told by a colleague – about a persistent rabbit who continually asks: "Got any carrots?" It's lengthy and corny – that's what makes it so funny!

Jesus asked his disciples after the resurrection: "Have you anything here to eat?"

When Jesus rose from the tomb, he did not immediately return to the father. He spent 40 days, restoring the disciples' confidence in themselves and in the mission to which they were called. All of Jesus' resurrection appearances were aimed at teaching the disciples, revealing the scriptures and opening their eyes to what was "hidden in plain sight".

Jesus met them in community and he met them individually, always anticipating and tailoring his message to their particular needs, be that forgiveness, reassurance, explanation, affirmation or re-commissioning. Those meetings, more often than not, involved food.

And they always involved transformation.

From fear to love.

From doubt to wondering.

From remorse to joy.

That painstaking work of restoration, of discerning need, of affirming gifts, of patiently exploring and explaining ancient texts, of putting skin on the bones of the resurrection is the same work in which we are called to be faithful today.

In our communities, where there is doubt, where there is scepticism, where there is remorse, betrayal, loss of confidence or purpose, our task is to be present, sometimes bringing understanding or reconciliation, sometimes restoring confidence or joy, sometimes bringing food and warmth and love - but, above all, being present in the ordinary things of life that become holy when shared with others around a table.

The work of renewal demands persistence in making connection with individuals and with communities that brings transformation as the risen Christ appears in our midst, asking:

"Have you anything here to eat?" before commissioning us as disciples in the work of the kingdom today.



Canoeing the Mountains tells the true story of Lewis and Clark, explorers who led a team in search of the North West Passage, a waterway to the Pacific Ocean. The team is armed with canoes for the journey and all is going well until they hit an obstacle – the Rocky Mountains! There is no waterway. Suddenly they are faced with unknown territory and many challenges for which they seem unequipped. Canoes will not take them across the Rocky Mountains.

For centuries, congregations have been in familiar waters and our methods in ministry have served us well. Our 'canoes' have served us well. However, we are now facing unknown territory. We are living in what has become, pretty much, a secular society or at least a society whose needs are not met by traditional Sunday morning worship in the Church. That does not mean that there is no one with faith. It does not mean that no one is curious about spiritual matters but it does mean that those people are no longer wiling to come and sit in our canoes and explore faith our way, by listening to a sermon preached on a Sunday morning.

'e are faced with the equivalent of the Rocky Mountains and despite wanting to engage with others in our community, we are still sitting in our canoes desperately trying to cross the Rockies! It isn't working and it will never work. We have to change. I can change no one but myself. Nor can you but if faith matters to you and if what I am saying makes sense to you and you are ready for change, then please consider coming along to this conference in Falkirk on Saturday, 5th May.

TodBolsinger, who wrote the book, Canoeing the Mountains, will be speaking at the conference. I understand that he is an engaging speaker and I will certainly have the privilege of hearing him on the 3rd and 4th. I will also be present on the 5th in Falkirk and would really appreciate it if you would think seriously about joining me. If having a Christian presence in Lochgilphead in the future matters to you, this may well be for you.

nis conference is not just for people who are involved in the life of the congregation but for those who are on the edges perhaps because they realized some time ago that we had hit the Rockies and were going nowhere in our canoes. Please email Sandy Taylor on <a href="mailto:e



We really need some more volunteers to help in the cafe for a couple of hours once or twice a month.

The café is very busy at lunchtimes and extra hands would be much appreciated.

If you would like to help please contact Margaret on 603784.

LOCHGILPHEAD PARISH CHURCH **COFFEE MORNINGS**

10.00am-12 noon in the hall Saturday 26th May Organised by Phyllis and Niall Cameron

Offers of help, donations of home baking and raffle prizes will be most appreciated.



DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS May 31st June 28th

In the hall

FUN, FOOD AND WORSHIP

Exciting Crafts, Stories, Songs & Activities

Why not come along and give it a try. All children must be accompanied by an adult. DON'T MISS IT!

CHURCH PICNIC at ORMSARY BEACH

SUNDAY June 17th 2.00-5.00pm

Make your own way there and take your own food.





Let's get Knitting!

We meet fortnightly in various venues to knit, chat, laugh, learn new techniques and partake of a light supper.

New members, both experienced and beginners are welcome to come along and join us. For more information contact Margaret on 01546 603784.

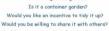


WHAT'S BEHIND YOUR GARDEN GATE?



Do you have a garden?

Is it a flower garden?
Is it a vegetable garden?



Could it raise some money for the Church?

Here is one way,

my of us spend a lot of time working in our garden and taking pleasure sitting out in
n and onjoying the fruits of our labours. Why rot let others do the same whilst raising
some funds for the Church.

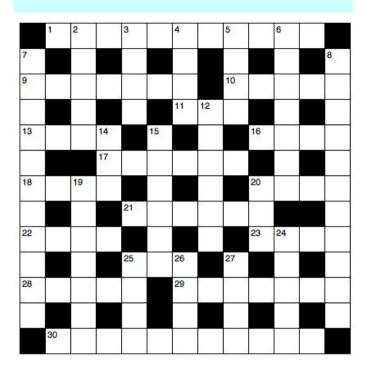
reposed to run an Open Garden Scheme over several weekends between May - July 2018
in willing volunteers open their gardens to the public. Your garden neadfit be large in
1 to take part. If you don't have a flower garden, perhaps you have a vegetable garden
ontiniers garden are project in progress. If desan't matter - just be prepared to show
a cravall and serve some tax, offer or refreshments. Two or three popel living class
outling in highir and sell some plants or home balang. The possibilities are endless.

ease be willing to consider taking part in this scheme which could give much sure to many who don't have a small patch of their own or just like being nosy

ou are interested in taking part, and I hope that many of you are, then please let rgaret know (603784) and she will co-ordinate and advertise the scheme so that everyone doesn't open over the same weekend.



Crossword



CLUES: Across

- 1 Overpowered (Deuteronomy 11:4) (11)
- 9 'The are mantled with corn' (Psalm 65:13) (7)
- 10 'Each man—a sword to his side' (Exodus 32:27)(5)
- 11 On the death of Jesus the curtain in the temple was torn from—to bottom (Matthew 27:51) (3)
- 13 Stagger(Isaiah 28:7)(4)
- 16 'Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought—and doesn't do it, sins' (James 4:17) (2,2)
- 17 Stir up or provoke(Acts13:50)(6)
- 18 Burden(Luke11:46)(4)
- 20 'As far as the east is from the -, so far has he removed our transgressions from us' (Psalm 103:12) (4) 21 Sign(Luke23:38)(6)
- 22 'After that, Jesus poured water into a basin and began to-his disciples' feet' (John 13:5) (4)
- 23 The nature of the seven ears of corn which swallowed up the good ears in Pharaoh's dream (Genesis 41:23) (4)
- 25 Has(anag.)(3)
- 28 'This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth,—sons' (Genesis 10:1)(5)
- 29 'I will...make them drunk, so that they...sleep for—and awake' (Jeremiah 51:39) (4,3)
- 30 Paul said of him, 'he often refreshes me and is not ashamed of my chains' (2 Timothy 1:16) (11)

Down

- 2 Worth (Matthew 13:46) (5)
- 3 'A bruised he will not break' (Matthew 12:20) (4)
- 4 'Suddenly a great company of the heavenly appeared with the angel' (Luke 2:13) (4)
- 5 Slip (anag.) (4)
- 6 'Take an awl and push it through his — into the door, and he will become your servant for life' (Deuteronomy 15:17) (3,4)
- 7 Bountiful (2 Corinthians 8:2) (11)
- 8 'Therefore, as we have —, let us do good to all people' (Galatians 6:10)(11)
- 12 Acquire(2Timothy2:10)(6)
- 14 Container cover(Numbers 19:15)(3)
- 15 'He...became obedient to death, even death on——!' (Philippians 2:8)(1,5)
- 19 Refrain(1Peter2:11)(7)
- 20 'She began to—his feet with her tears' (Luke7:38)(3)
- 24 One who worships Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva(5)
- 25 'Give to everyone who—you' (Luke6:30)(4)
- 26 'I lift up my eyes to the hills; where does my—come from?' (Psalm 121:1) (4)
- 27 One of those whom the Lord said would be taken from Jerusalem and Judah as judgment on them (Isaiah 3:2) (4)



THE GUILD REPORT

February 13th The Guild met on Tuesday evening in the Church Hall at 7.30pm. Our speaker was David Bowen who gave us a talk on mending cane chairs. This turned out to be an interesting evening. David brought along samples of cane for us to pass round. He mends cane chairs in his spare time—so you know who to contact if you need any repairs! February 27th This meeting was a talk by Belinda

Braithwaite on 'Humanist Beliefs'. (So very different from the last meeting). Belinda proved to be such an interesting speaker and we also enjoyed this meeting. It is good to hear different views.

March 13th The Guild's AGM and Bring and Buy for the Guild project. Ishbel was in the Chair for this evening. From the beginning to the end this was a very happy meeting—as you know, an AGM can be difficult! Business was dealt with and no problems arose. The money raised from the Bring and Buy went to the Guild project Breaking the cycle of FGM'.

March 27th Our closing evening. It had been decided to go to The Argyll in Lochgilphead for a meal. We were made very welcome and had a lovely meal and lots of blethers.

So our meetings have finished until we start again in October 2018. Meetings will be advertised nearer the time, but the 'work' of the Guild continues:

- In May we have the Guild outing information to follow.
- July we have our coffee morning information to follow.
- July August syllabus to be arranged.
- Lochgilphead Guild along with Cumlodden Fyneside are the new Leadership Guild for 2018-19 the Church of Scotland Guild South Argyll Presbyterial Council. This involves arranging the October 2018 and March 2019 meetings which are held in the Templers Arts and Leisure Centre, Tarbert, 1.30pm-3.30pm.

The new strategy for Guilds is 'One Journey Many Roads'. Each of us is on a 'Journey of Faith' and it is exciting to explore together the different roads we walk as we 'seek the way'.

Kids Corner





Rotas for May/June 2018

	Door Duty	Prayers	Flowers (Contact - E Armstrong)	Readers	Tea/Coffee Duty (Contact - M. Davidson)
May 6th	M MacFadyen & E Munro	J Morrison	tbc	M MacFadyen	A & J Barclay
13th	S Stankey & I MacArthur	I Davidson	tbc	S Stankey	S Morrison & T Cameron
20th	I & M Davidson	M Davidson	tbc	I Davidson	F Elder & L Mochrie
27th	F Fleming & S Morrison	M Jacobsen	tbc	F Cameron	A Person & E MacCallum
June 3rd	N & P Cameron	M Taylor	tbc	M Davidson	S Stankey & M Jacobsen
10th	J Kirk & K Thompson	S Taylor	tbc	K Thompson	S & M Mac Fadyen
17th	D & R Bowen	J Morrison	tbc	R Bowen	I MacArthur & E Munro
24th	M Jacobsen & I McMillan	I Davidson	tbc	M Jacobsen	J MacAulay & I MacMillan
July 1st	J & R Morrison	M Davidson	tbc	J Morrison	M & I Davidson

If you are unable to carry out any of these duties please arrange a replacement.

Services (all at 11.00am except where stated)

	and the second s
May 6th	Rev. Hilda Smith
13th	Rev. Hilda Smith
20th Service followed by Pentecostal Picnic	Rev Hilda Smith
27th	Rev Hilda Smith
June 3rd	Rev Hilda Smith
10th	Rev Hilda Smith
17th	Rev. Hilda Smith
24th	Rev. Hilda Smith
July 1st	Rev Hilda Smith

Other Events	
Every Wednesday	Drop in Cafe, 10.00am - 3.30pm
May 2nd, 16th, 30th June 13th, 27th	Knit and Natter Group, 7.30pm
May 31st June 28th	Messy Church, 4.00pm-6.00pm Messy Church 4.00pm-6.00pm
May 26th	Coffee Morning
June 17th	Church Picnic, Ormsary Beach 2.00-5.00pm

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

stain. 20, Wet. 24, Hindu. 25, Asks. 26, Help. 27, Hero. DOWN: 2, Value. 3, Reed. 4, Host. 5, Lisp. 6, Ear lobe. 7, Overflowing. 8, Opportunity. 12, Obtain. 14, Lid. 15, A cross. 19, Ab-

Thin. 25, Ash. 28, Noah's. 29, Ever not. 30, Onesiphorus. 16, To do. 17, Incite. 18, Load. 20, West. 21, Notice. 22, Wash. 23, ACROSS: 1, Overwhelmed. 9, Valleys. 10, Strap. 11, Top. 13, Reel.

..... and for your diary

August 25th	Coffee Morning
August 30th	Messy Church

Who's Who in LPC

Minister	Rev Hilda C Smith	01546 602238
Session Clerk	Sandy Taylor	01546 606218
Interim Treasurer	Mary MacDonald	01546 602087
Gift Aid Convenor	Edna Armstrong	01546 602600
Roll Keeper	Frances Fleming	01546 602270
Fabric Convenor	Ian Davidson	01546 603784
Social Convenor	Margaret Davidson May Taylor Fiona Elder	01546 603784 01546 606218
	Roberta Bowen	01546 606151
Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Cathleen MacDonald	01546 603108
Worship Group	Margaret Jacobsen Rev. Hilda Smith Ian Davidson Kirsten Thompson	01546 606914 01546 602238 01546 603784
Finance Committee	Mary MacDonald Edna Armstrong Elma Munro	01546 602087 01546 602600 01546 602857
Guild Contacts	Anne Hunter Jessie Cranston May Taylor Chris Stevenson Nannie Ward Mary MacDonald	01546 603141 01546 602866 01546 606218 01546 600259 01546 602343 01546 602087

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