

Blackbraes and Shieldhill
Parish Church
linked with
Muiravonside Parish Church
Autumn 2014

To celebrate 150th Anniversary of
Blackbraes & Shieldhill Church

A CABARET EVENING

with Robbie Williams & Michael Bublé
tribute acts

to be held

on Friday, 7 November 2014
at 7 for 7.30 p.m.

at The Three Kings,

Wester Shieldhill

Ticket (incl. 2 course meal) £15

In aid of Blackbraes & Shieldhill Church & local charities

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**From the Manse
August 2014**

*'As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night,
will never cease.'*

Genesis Ch7, v22



Dear friends,

As I write this the wind is blowing outside and the rain is pouring down. I am aware that the evenings are getting cooler and soon we will have to put on our fires and central heating as we herald the arrival of Autumn.

Each season has its blessings and I for one always hold Autumn close to my heart. Autumn holds strong memories of my childhood - a new, crisp school uniform, wearing cosy jumpers, favourite TV programmes starting, apples in season, and my favourite bramble jelly which the ladies made and sold at church coffee mornings. There was also the fun of conkers, collecting autumn leaves for collages, hearing once again the story of Guy Fawkes, and of course Brownie Halloween Parties. I recall my friend Julie's mum dressing her up as an Egyptian mummy and Julie was head to foot in bandages. They were so tight she could barely walk into the school hall! She did win the first prize though for most original costume.

As a child growing up in church I was always aware that Autumn was not only the start of the school year, but also the church year. I often went with my Granny to the Guild meetings in the evenings. Sunday School starting back was a chance to meet friends and learn more about Jesus and God's love for me. Social and fundraising activities were planned and there were always lots to look forward to.

There is so much to look forward to in the lives of Blackbraes and Shieldhill and Muiravonside Parish Churches this Autumn. In September the Muiravonside Choral Society resume their practices under the direction of their new conductor - Mr David Malloch, who is also the conductor of Falkirk Caledonia Choir which I was privileged to be a member of for 12 years. Following a successful Spring Concert, they will be practicing for a Christmas Concert sometime in December.

Blackbraes and Shieldhill Choir continue to enhance Sunday worship and we have been blessed recently with a new member. An evening of favourite hymns is planned later in the year which will be led by our organist Ailsa and

Blackbraes and Shieldhill choir. The Shieldhill Brownie Butterfly Garden Project is now established and we look forward to the community and church groups being able to enjoy the barbecue areas and the newly planted shrubs and flowers in the church garden next summer. In November there is a meal and entertainment at The Three Kings to celebrate Blackbraes and Shieldhill's 150th anniversary.

The Guild, Rendez-Vouz and Banner Group resume in September and our young people's organisations and Sunday Schools resume when the schools go back. The prayer group has continued to meet during the summer and is a great source of strength and comfort to people within our congregations and wider parish.

Over the last few years we have been blessed to have several ministry students share in the life of our congregations and at the end of this month Kay Brown will be ordained as an ordained local minister at Trinity Parish Church. Monica MacDonald has also almost finished her training for Ordained Local Ministry and will be ordained sometime in the Autumn. Liz Orr will be set apart as a Reader early next year. Liz is returning to share worship with us at the end of August and we look forward to hearing how she is getting on.

And of course our probation minister Amanda will finish her placement with us on the 30th November and we look forward to celebrating with her as she too is ordained at the end of the year.

And so it is with a full heart that I can say we have a lot to look forward to in this new Church year. So many new ventures, special services and causes for celebration. So let us continue our journey of faith with hope and joy, knowing that God goes before us to prepare the way, and he will give us the strength we will need, to serve him and his church so that others may know something of God's unending and unconditional love for them.

May God's abundant harvest of blessings rest upon you all this Autumn.

***Your minister and friend,
Louise***

Website - Our magazines are now available on our website www.bsandm-church.org.uk. If anyone would prefer to access them this way, instead of paper format, please let your Church Elder know.

As well as saving paper, and trees, you would receive the magazine in colour. It could also be enlarged if you need to see it in large print.

Weddings

**'Meanwhile these three remain -
faith, hope and love. But the
greatest of these is love.'**

Blackbraes and Shieldhill Parish

Wendy Harbinson and Ross Morton
at Lecropt Kirk, Bridge of Allan
on 14/6/14



Funerals

***'The Lord will protect
you as you come and
go, both now and
forevermore'.***

Blackbraes and Shieldhill
Parish

Mrs Helen Ferrie

Muiravonside Parish

Mr Robert Ramage
Mr William Hardie
Mrs Agnes Hill
Mrs Maureen Montgomery

Minister's book recommendation

If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat
By John Ortberg

On Sunday 10th of August I preached on the well-loved passage in Matthew Ch14, v25-32 where Peter walks on the water. Much of my inspiration for this sermon came to me from one of my favourite devotional books written by John Ortberg - 'If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat.' Zondervan:2001.

When I was thinking about applying for ministry this book helped me a great deal in that it gave me the courage to take the plunge and risk the unknown. I have given a copy to all the students who have been placed with me over the years and this book is now one that the Church of Scotland Ministries Council recommends to those thinking about applying for ministry.

I recommend it to those who feel called to a new venture, a new job, or feel called to a deeper and more personal relationship with Jesus.

Christian Aid Week 2014

Shieldhill and California raised the sum of **£1800** in the door to door collection during Christian Aid Week this year – a considerable increase on last year's collection. Thanks are due to everyone who contributed towards this sum.

A further £140 was raised from the small change collected by members and friends of the congregation. Together with £91 raised from the Christian Aid lunch and other donations, the **overall total this year is £2066**. The breakdown of the total is as follows -

Door to door collection	£1800
Money boxes	£ 140
Lunch	£ 91
Other donations	£ <u>35</u>
	£2066

Thanks are due to everyone who donated and to the volunteers who helped to collect, count and bank the money. The figures below show a continued generous response from our villages to help Christian Aid change peoples' lives for the better.

2012	2013	2014
£1977	£1827	£2066

Marion Zacks
Christian Aid Organiser

Thank you for the kind wishes, cards and gifts I received in hospital and at home. I would like to say a big thanks to Louise, Amanda, Elsie, Jim, and Andrew from Muiravonside for their kindness. God bless you all once more,
Love from Robert Paterson



Drew's
view

A Driving Force

Everyone has fond memories of their very first car. I am no exception.

There is something very special about the first time you get handed the set of keys which are actually keys to freedom. They unlock a magic doorway to faraway destinations that you could only dream of. Before this, you would be standing for ages, frozen in the triste winter gloom of a cold and windswept bus station, having just missed your connection by a few seconds! Then all of a sudden, once you have a car, you are transformed into a world of warmth and comfort, as the little car effortlessly lets the miles slip by. You almost get the impression that it is laughing up its sleeve as it purrs along past bus and rail stations, leaving them behind while it chuckles away to itself!

My very first car was a Fiat 500L. Although similar in appearance, it was different from today's version which is a superb wee car. My 500 was just as much fun though! The one I had was an early version. It had a very small 499cc engine which was situated at the back. When the engine was started, it sounded just like a motorbike and occasionally did some spectacular backfires when it was warming up as it only had two cylinders. I would start it up by lifting a small lever beside the handbrake. The engine would tick over fine for about a minute.

Then – BOOM! You would be treated to what sounded like an artillery shell going off! I lived in Brighton's at the time and the boom was probably heard all around the village. The neighbours seemed to get used to it, or perhaps they just looked at each other shell shocked as the echoes gradually receded and the smoke dissipated. Amazingly, I never received a single complaint!

Years later, I saw a film called "Uncle Buck" and was amazed to find that the kindly uncle drove a much larger car which made exactly the same sound. I had never laughed so much as I watched the people in the film diving for cover each time his car backfired with a large puff of white smoke! At least I didn't have anyone diving for cover, although who knows? I was mostly just sitting in the drive as the engine warmed up and maybe this rather spectacular event would have happened if I had been driving in a town while the engine was still cold!

How I came by the car was that a colleague of my dad had driven the Fiat 500 into work at the large bus engineering depot one morning and had parked it round the back of the workshop in the yard. It wasn't in the way of anything,

but very close to all the buses and was absolutely dwarfed by them! The car actually belonged to his mother in law who was on holiday and she had asked him if he could possibly drive the car each day to “heat it up.” She had found the car tended to have trouble starting if it was left for a couple of weeks. However if it was driven every day, it would run just fine.

This little car soon attracted an audience of fascinated vehicle mechanics, coach builders and coach painters. They were used to working with huge double deck buses and probably had never seen a vehicle so small. The mechanics would marvel at the size of the engine. They normally maintained engines that were larger than the whole car! Cylinders and gaskets were carefully examined and every inch of the tiny engine was inspected.

“What a superb wee engine!” one of them exclaimed in awed tones. “Does this thing actually go out on the road?” a more cynical colleague asked. As the days passed by, the car soon gained a cult following and became very popular as more and more employees came to have a look as it sat looking very lonely and out of place beside such large vehicles.

My dad also found out that his colleague’s mother in law was thinking about selling the Fiat 500, as she was going to buy a new car once she returned from her holidays. I had just passed my test and he thought what a great wee car this would be for someone who was just starting out. My dad worked as a foreman coach painter, but he also happened to be in the right place to get advice about cars, in a garage full of mechanics, trimmers and coach builders.

He knew the very man to ask. There was a mechanic friend who often gave him a lift home and happened to own a very old but larger and more luxurious Fiat car. “Are these engines any good?” asked my dad. This mechanic was very skilled and my dad knew he would go into a really technical description about the pros and cons. This time though he simply replied something that was music to my dad’s ears –

“You have to shoot them to stop them!”

Smiling, my dad happened to glance behind at the floor of his friend’s car, as he could feel a draft. He soon found the source. Just in front of the rear seat, there was a six inch diameter hole in the floor with strands of frayed carpet dangling down. You could actually see the road rushing by below.

“They’ve got really good air conditioning too!” his friend added with a wry smile.



A few weeks later, the mother in law had returned and the deal was done. I was now the proud owner of a Fiat 500L complete with a trendy canvas sunroof which opened without much protest at all. The car remained parked in the bus yard for a few days thanks to a kindly foreman while the insurance and paperwork were all sorted out. In the course of those few days some really good things happened.

My dad's mechanic friend had taken a shine to the car and during his spare time, he checked the engine and gave it a small service, changing the oil and spark plugs. He also fitted a modification which was probably not recommended by the manufacturers but was great fun. One of the buses had recently got its windscreen washers replaced with a new set. The old washers were still working and were destined to be thrown out. You can guess what happened next! The mechanic wasted no time and fitted them on the Fiat 500!

A large black button was fitted to the dashboard and when this was pressed, the windscreen on the 500 was not the only one that got washed. The washers were after all designed for a bus and when the button was pressed the water not only washed the windscreen like a carwash, but also jetted over the roof with a tremendous force.

If you happened to look in the rear view mirror at that moment, you would see the windscreen wipers of the next two cars behind coming on as well! It was a bit like having the "Old Faithful Geyser" at your disposal but being able to use it to order! When the car later went through its next MOT test, someone with a sense of humour who carried out the inspection put two ticks in the box beside "Effectiveness of windscreen washers" rather than one!

I had so much fun that year. I had just passed my driving test but still had a lot to learn. I spent the whole summer driving along the quiet country roads that we have around here, honing my driving skills and building up my confidence. I drove many times past Wester Shieldhill, then on to Slamannan. I would then explore the roads beyond Greengairs and Fannyside Loch. I also had hours of fun driving along what local people will know as "The Loan" and "The Coal Road" near Maddiston. Many a time I would drive to Muiravonside Cemetery with the little car hardly taking up any space in the approach road past the church.

Many funny things happened too. As I got to know the car better, I learned that Fiat 500 owners with the early version should always be ready to expect the unexpected! There was one



occasion when I was driving up Glenbrae after leaving Falkirk to head up past Glen Village. The little car could only manage about fifteen miles an hour where the hill is at its steepest and this time, I was aware of a shape passing by me on the inside. I was being overtaken by someone on a bicycle no less! To make matters worse and to add to my embarrassment, he was also leaving me standing!

Another time, I was driving down Grahams Road in Falkirk when the car's bonnet suddenly flew up, making it absolutely impossible to see where I was going. By this time however, I was a bit more experienced and simply pulled into the side of the road, got out and nonchalantly pushed the bonnet closed, as if these things happened all the time!

It was all part of a learning process. It would be easy to use an old pun and say that the little car became a "driving force" and boosted my confidence as I learned the necessary skills to consolidate and perfect my driving. Even after all those years, it has made me reflect on how I am still learning new things each day in so many aspects of my life. We all do of course. How many times has it been that every one of us has probably remarked

"You learn something new every day." In a religious sense this applies all the time and it is one of the wonderful aspects of the Bible. No matter how often we read a piece of Scripture, something new will manifest itself. It could be a new understanding of God's love for us. It might be a sudden revelation which provides that elusive answer to a problem we are trying to solve. It may take the form of a phrase or concept which brings immense comfort or perhaps strikes a chord which resonates deep within our soul and lets us know that God is with us and we are not alone.

Each time these sacred words are read or reflected on, so much is learned and some new aspect is discovered even if we have been reading the Scriptures for a lifetime. Some people compare the revelation of all these different aspects by using the analogy of the Russian dolls which are all slightly different sizes and fit into each other. One by one each doll is revealed as the doll on top is pulled off, whereas in the beginning only a single original doll was visible.

The most well known "learners" in the Bible were of course the twelve disciples. The word "disciple" originates from the Greek *mathetes* which means a learner or an apprentice. The Latin form is *discipulus* which again is a learner or student. They later became apostles or envoys spreading the Gospel.

It is so fascinating when new levels of understanding about Jesus and his teachings are revealed in Scripture. Soren Kierkegaard, a 19th century

Danish theologian and philosopher, once made an observation that sums up how we never stop learning, no matter how in depth our studies are.

“To be a teacher in the right sense, is to be a learner, I am not a teacher, only a fellow student.”

This is now my main driving force – to learn more as a fellow student by exploring new levels of understanding in the Scriptures and rejoice in what they reveal.

I know I will never be disappointed.



Poetry Corner

God is with us

God is with us

Our protector

Day and night

In good times

Shares our joy

Watches over us

In bad times

Tells us that

He is beside us

Unlimited love

Such a comfort

By Drew Robertson

Poor, but blessed, in the Old days

We met and we married a long time ago,
We worked for long hours when wages were low,
No TV, no wireless, no bath, times were hard
Just a cold water tap and a walk in the yard.
No holiday abroad, no carpets on floors,
We had coal on the fire, and we didn't lock the doors.
Our children arrived, no pill in those days
And we brought them up without any state aid.
They were safe going out to play in the park.
Any old folk could go for a walk in the dark.
No Valium, no drugs, and no LSD,
We cured most of our ills with a good cup of tea.
No vandals, no muggings, there was nothing to rob,
We felt we were rich with a couple of bob.
People were happy in those far off days
Kinder and caring in so many ways,
Milkman and paper boy would whistle and sing,
A night at the pictures was our one mad fling.
We all got our share of troubles and strife,
We just had to face it - that's the pattern of life.
Now I'm alone and look back through the years
I don't think of the bad times, troubles and tears,
I remember the blessings, our home and our love,
And that we shared them together, I thank God above.

(Author unknown)

Tales From a Shieldhill Garden



Isaiah 41:31

But those who trust in the Lord for help will find strength renewed. They will rise on wings like eagles; they will run and not get weary; they will walk and not grow weak.

Over the past week I have done no more than walk around the garden and water the needful plants because, as you no doubt will be aware, The 20th Commonwealth Games were held in Glasgow: July 23rd to August 3rd; and some of my time was filled with the excitement of these Games. Glasgow was buzzing with excitement. As a city, Glasgow knows how to put on a party and that is what it did.

The tongue in cheek beginning to the opening ceremony gave the promise of fun in the days ahead. The dancing Tunnock Tea Cakes were just grand. Tunnocks is an old Glasgow company and a Tunnocks wedding cake was a very fine thing-so I am told. It was inspired to link this and the following days with a charity-The Commonwealth Fund for Children.

The entry of the athletes can be tedious, however, Scottie dogs and their owners led in the athletes. The Scottish Terrier was an excellent choice, amber listed by The Kennel Club due to a decline in its numbers. The Scotties has been adopted by Scottish food producers as their logo on food produced and packaged in Scotland. Scottie brand Lanark tomatoes and Ayrshire potatoes are two foods that have this label.

Local food was evident in the streets and squares that lay between the venues. There were stalls selling food and crafts that were part of a city wide festival. There was some very good street food, well made and using fresh products. The Fruit Market was a venue for The Merchant City Festival. There were places to eat, drink and shop and had a stage that had a band, mainly rock, playing music for most of the day.

Glasgow Green had a stage, big screens and entertainment, and also the Hockey Centre. (We had a ticket for the hockey on the first day of the games.) There was a very fine choir on the large stage that day, a choir that was made up 60 or so Clydesiders-the games volunteers. I guess that the conductor had come from one of Glasgow's many choirs. She certainly had presence, controlled her large and fine choir and cajoled the audience to join in with some of the songs.

Without a great army of volunteers, games such as The Commonwealth Games would not run so smoothly. The Clydesiders took on all sorts of jobs. Medically trained people provided medical cover. Others drove officials

around between venues. They helped people who were lost, checked vacated venues for things that had been left behind, they checked that people had the correct ticket for the event, they scanned the tickets before we joined the cue for security.

The press showed long queues at security checks but we found that the queues moved very quickly. Our longest queue was on Sunday afternoon when it took 15 minutes to get into Glasgow Green. That was the day of 'The Big Sing'. There had been a competition held amongst the local primary schools to write a song for the Commonwealth Games. The winning school performed their song on the big stage. It had a catchy tune and plenty of actions.

Not very far from Hamden there is a First Bus depot. There is construction work in progress there and the usual fence surrounding it. This fence has been painted dark blue and all the local primary schools have provided drawings of buses to decorate the fence. It was such a joy to look at them and they brightened up an otherwise very dull area.

The Paraplegic Games were included as part of the main games. We saw heats for the 1500 wheelchair event for both ladies and men. These guys go fast. Some of you will remember David Weir from London 2012. We had the pleasure of seeing him leaving the other competitors behind as he whizzed on to win his heat. The Commonwealth Games is small enough for the organisers to include paraplegic events. This will never happen in an Olympic Games because both Olympics are too big.

Glasgow was very busy. Queen Street Station on Sunday 27th July had in excess of 1million people passing through its doors. Many of these people were in George Square or Glasgow Green. George Square had the ticket office and the main souvenir shop for The Games. It was the hub for all the festivals that were on.

Glasgow was buzzing. It was noisy. Every little space had a pop up stall or stage.

Fitted in between two rows of houses-just off The Saltmarket- we found a band-oh-oh You will know about Karaoke. Well, this band-oh-oh had a band and there were two boards that the performers registered on. We heard two girls-both singers. They were very good. I stopped there for a while before heading back into the throngs.

Yes! Glasgow hosted a VERY GOOD Games.

Rena Moore





Cabaret Evening

As part of our church's 150th anniversary celebrations, we are arranging a cabaret evening to be held on Friday, 7th November 2014 at 7 for 7.30 p.m. in The Three Kings, Wester Shieldhill.

There will be Robbie Williams and Michael Bubl  tribute acts and a 2-course meal included in the ticket price of  15.

To buy a ticket or book a table, please contact Yvonne (tel. 617008) or Marion (tel. 716472). Proceeds from the evening will go towards Blackbraes and Shieldhill Church funds and local charities.

***Welcome In Committee
Blackbraes and Shieldhill Church***



Church of Scotland Guild October '14

"A World to Serve" is the final theme in the three year strategy "Whose we are and Whom we serve". We are co-workers with all God's people in the world and we can offer service and devotion to others.

The topic is "How to share". We have so much to share in this undivided often confused world but the greatest gift we have to share is the good news of the love of Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

Guild Diary October to December 2014

1 October	Mrs Amanda MacQuarrie
15 October	The Gideons - Peter Brown
29 October	"Hairspray" at FTH
5 November	"From Milkpans to Bedpans" - Mrs Duncan
19 November	Salvation Army - Margaret Ross
6 December	The Panto
10 December	Christmas Party

First Guild evening is Wednesday 1 October in Shieldhill Church Hall at 7.30pm.

Everyone is welcome and a cup of tea is always on offer. Friendship is an added bonus. See you then!

Sweet Potato and Ginger Soup

On a recent holiday in Northern Ireland, we spent a delightful warm sunny day visiting villages on the North Antrim coast, Carne Lough, Cushendun and Cushendall.

Arriving in Cushendall at lunchtime, on the recommendation of a local shopkeeper, we visited a local hostelry. The dining room was cosy, comfortable and friendly. The food was really tasty and we sampled the sweet potato and ginger soup. The soup was delicious especially when served with the local Irish wheaten bread. This was a real treat and a recipe to be shared. Try it and enjoy!

Ingredients

1 large onion	450g sweet potato
2 tsps fresh ginger	900ml veg stock (stock cubes)
+1 tsp chopped to garnish	lemon juice
1 large apple cored and chopped	2 pinches sugar
Small bunch fresh coriander	yogurt, sour cream or crème fraiche
1 large desert apple	

Method

Fry onions in 2 tablespoons of oil for 5 mins.
Add ginger and sweet potato. Cook for another 6 to 8 minutes
Add apple. Stir and cook until tender.
Add stock.
Simmer, half covered for 15 to 20 mins.
Liquidise to get a smooth soup.
Add lemon juice or sugar to taste.
Add yogurt, sour cream or crème fraiche if desired.

Garnish

Fry desert apple and ginger gently in butter until tender.
Chopped coriander can be added before serving.

Lorna Coulter



Sequence Dancing

I've started sequence dancing,
I havnae got a clue.
My pal said she would dae the man
And she wid show me what to do.

The music started playing ,
so we both got on the flair
But my legs got in a fankle
And my flipping feet were sair.



She birlled me to her left
But it should have been her right
It should have been a tango
It looked mair like a fight

Noo I wis nearly greetin
When she said just do a check
I wish I had a bit of rope
I'd squeeze it roon her neck

We pulled oorsels thegither
Again we hit the flair
She's trying a the fancy steps
She thinks she's Fred Astaire



A man came to my rescue, Walter was his name
He says "I'll do it slowly. You try and do the same.
My confidence was oozing as he birlled me to the side
In anither fifteen minutes I'll try the electric slide

Noo it was really magic
I was floating in a trance
I don't care if it kills me girls
I'll learn to sequence dance.

