

# Link Magazine

Spring 2017

St Ninian's Stonehouse (LEP)



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*Just to say...* Welcome to the spring issue of Link! I know that many of you will be eager to read the news of our new minister so I will keep my introduction short.

You will have noticed that this issue is in black and white. Unfortunately the cost of printing in colour demands a surcharge every quarter of approx £640. Therefore we are supporting the Finance Committee in their endeavours to tackle budgeting and working within our means to keep the churches finances in order. The magazine (like the majority of church magazines) will be printed in black and white meantime, although we have permission to print in colour for special occasions!

Although this was disappointing to inform you, I was also encouraged that same week that I received the news; that it is not only the Link Magazine that is affected by printing costs. Many of you read another journal weekly and they too have had to add 1p to the cover price for their magazine. I won't mention which one this is but there are many ladies in the church who will know the weekly magazine I speak of. For the rest of you... Rising costs in printing are not only local but national I'm afraid.

Enjoy reading this magazine.

Margaret McM

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b> (Please note this is only a selection of events happening. Please check the Hamilton Advertiser for updates or visit <a href="http://www.keepitstonehouse.co.uk/events.html">www.keepitstonehouse.co.uk/events.html</a> for further community events)
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Guild AGM and visitor from the Maggie centre 7.30pm
Thursday/Friday 16 & 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Stonehouse Male Voice Choir Concert Paterson Church 7.30pm
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> March	Spring Fayre at Newfield Primary 10.30am - 12.30am
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> April	Hope Cafe 10 am -2pm
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> April	Good Friday * Please note at the time of going to print there were no dates available for local Easter services. Please check local press for details.
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Sunday Easter Egg Hunt in Stonehouse park 14.00 - 16.00
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Hope Cafe 10 am -2pm
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> April	The Guild featuring the Salvation Army Concert 19.30pm - 21.15
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> May	Final coffee morning before the summer break.

# *Alan's Message*

## Windows, wiring and the Kingdom of God

On the 5th of February 2017 we made history at St Ninian's. We called our first minister as a Local Ecumenical Partnership [LEP]. In June, Stewart Cutler will be ordained as a minister of the United Reformed Church and inducted as the minister of this united congregation, playing his part as a minister of Hamilton Presbytery of the Church of Scotland and a minister of the Synod of Scotland of the United Reformed Church. The vacancy began in October 2015, but the roots of this settlement began when the two congregations agreed years ago that the Kingdom of God, the mission of Christ's Church and the community of Stonehouse would be better served by sharing their resources and being the Church together. It was that vision of sharing in Christ's vision for Stonehouse that ensured our vacancy would be filled inside two years, while across Hamilton Presbytery the average vacancy exceeds five years. I want to commend to the congregation the work of the Nominating Committee. The production of a first class Church Profile and the thorough and conscientious approach to its responsibilities made the work of the Committee exemplary — and it was still one of the most joyful committees I have ever served on.

It has been a demanding year. As well as dealing with the vacancy we have had to upgrade the Manse, make safe the wiring in the church premises and replace the heating system for the Church and halls. The manse upgrade is virtually complete, we have a certificate confirming the safety of the wiring that is valid for another four years and, as I write, the new heating system should be getting signed off as complete. Huge efforts by office bearers and committees as well as massive support from you, the membership, from organisations and from the wider community have all contributed to successful outcomes.

Let us not, however, think we can rest on our laurels. Replacement windows are becoming urgent, rewiring is on the horizon, and then there is the fundamental reason St Ninian's exists in the first place — demonstrating the love of God for the world, here in Stonehouse. I have thoroughly appreciated my time here with you as Interim Moderator and Pastoral Locum and it has been a privilege to work in the faith context of St Ninian's. Look to the fabric and brace yourselves for your coming pilgrimage with Stewart and the new discoveries you will share about Christ's future for his Kingdom in Stonehouse.

Alan Paterson

## *From Margaret Macgregor*

Hi Folks, Well do I have some news for this copy of our magazine, first of all on Sunday 5th February we had Stewart Cutler preach as Sole Nominee, The Nomination Committee voted unanimously to propose Stewart and thankfully the congregation agreed.

Stewart cannot start until the end of May but I am very pleased to welcome him to St Ninian's and look forward to working with him.

Stewart comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge of both Church of Scotland and United Reformed Church, which will be very helpful in our way forward as a Local Ecumenical Partnership.

May God guide him in the way forward.

The date for his Induction and Ordination will be announced as soon as it's arranged.

I gave you an update last magazine on the heating or the lack of it in the church, I am very happy to say that as I write this the heating is up and running and I would like to thank all the organisations and the congregation for their patience over what has been a very difficult time

We will still require to organise some fundraising events to allow us to repair some damage to walls etc and we still need to replace the windows in the Gallery. The men in the congregation had a very successful Valentine coffee morning on Saturday 11th February when good fun was had by all.

Our Sunday services are still being led by Eric Hislop who is with us most Sundays; other dates will be covered by our Interim Moderator Rev Alan Paterson.

Our Congregational register has changed slightly,

Mr John Brown, Mrs Eleanor Haddow and Mrs Janet Sorbie sadly passed away and our sympathies are extended to all the families.

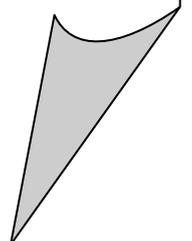
Well exciting times ahead for our church and village

May God bless you and your loved ones

Margaret     Session Clerk.

Lord, how I've longed for, anticipated,  
Prayed for this moment,  
Dreamt it in my heart,  
Even, oftentimes, stirred from my slumbers  
thinking of it  
and yet, Lord  
it doesn't feel easy  
standing on the threshold  
of this new beginning.  
Wavering on the threshold of this new start, Lord  
I think I want to thank you.  
I stand in awe  
Of the marvelous way you answer prayer,  
Although it's rarely how I would have thought,  
And never the way  
I quietly suggested you might answer it.....  
Forgive my impatience in the past, Lord  
Now that I have arrived here  
With clarity of hindsight  
I see that you were always close  
Through all those long, uncertain times  
When I was waiting:  
Waiting for the quiet, unhurried  
Unfolding of your will.  
Standing, poised,

On tiptoe as it were  
On the verge of this beginning;  
And as yet untrodden future  
Lying virgin, beckoning, before;  
I sense a moment pregnant with potential,  
Brimful of opportunity and hope;  
Another point where past and future meet  
and I may choose  
exactly which unchartered path to tread.  
And yet I'm nervous, Lord  
The nervousness is in the starting out.  
My eyes keep glancing backward  
To the comfort zone of my familiar past.  
I am somehow reluctant to begin, for fear I get it wrong  
Fail to fulfil the promise within me.  
But, thank you, Lord  
That you have brought me here,  
Albeit it by a route I never would have chosen myself.  
Just one more prayer, Lord, if I may:  
Stay close and lead me on  
By Pat Marsh



## Prayer and Reflection Group

The Prayer and Reflection group are still meeting in the Prayer Room Monday and Thursday mornings at 9.15am please come and join us, you don't need to attend every morning just pop in when you can. As you know we pray for a street in the village each week as well as praying for those in need and I will list below the dates so that if you are unable to attend the Prayer meeting you can still join in our prayers.

12/03/17 Members in Larkhall

19/03/17 Members in Strathaven

26/03/17 Members in Sandford

02/04/17 Members in Glassford

09/04/17 All the Farms.

16/04/17 Avonhaugh Nursing Home

23/04/17 Canderavon Nursing Home

30/04/17 Birksburn Ave

07/05/17 Blinkbonny

14/05/17 Burns Wynd

21/05/17 Gibb Court

28/05/17 Lanrigg View

04/06/17 Mainsacre Drive

11/06/17 Manse Road

18/06/17 McInnes Grove

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We wish to sincerely thank Reverend Alan Paterson for his spiritual comfort and support during our sad loss of John.

We would also like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their lovely gifts of flowers and cards and their helpful presence at the Church Service.

Sheena Brown and family

## *From Gavin*

Dear Friends of St Ninians, A treasurer's letter seldom makes welcome reading as, in the past year; I feel it has been all about asking for more donations and increased offerings.

On behalf of the Church I extend grateful thanks to all who have given generously over the past year both in Offerings and to the heating fund appeal.

As I write this, the final accounts for 2016 are with the external examiners, but I am delighted to be able to report that, although for most of last year our monthly outgoings far exceeded our monthly income in the General Fund, we did end the year with a very small surplus. This was only as a result of money being received from a bequest and we are now in a situation where we must look towards saving on future expenditure, having no unnecessary expenditure and the installation of the new heating system reducing our gas bills considerably.

The General Fund is where your offerings and all donations (except those designated for other funds, including the heating fund) are held and which is used for the running costs of the Church and Manse.

2017 will see changes all round the Church. Hopefully we will not endure as difficult a period again as we have in all areas of Church life in the last 12 months.

With God's blessing, a new minister to influence and lead us all, and your continued support, we can look forward to a new chapter at St Ninian's.

Gavin Ferguson Treasurer



### **Recycle your old Inkjet Cartridges** St. Ninian's

in association with The Recycling Factory are recycling your old Inkjet Cartridges with all the proceeds going to church funds. We receive up to £4.50 for every Inkjet Cartridge recycled. (Please note no longer accepting mobile phones).

Special drop off points are available at The Post Office and The Back Road Pub, where recycling boxes and envelopes available.

Recycling boxes and envelopes are also available within the church.  
Cameron Weir

P.S. the church is still looking for a 19" Flat screen monitor. If you have one you could donate to the church; please contact Brian Tel: 01698 791 006

# WEBB IVORY & CHURCH DIARIES

A big thank you to everyone who purchased from the Webb Ivory catalogue before Christmas. I have been able to give £400 to church funds, which includes £120 from the sale of church diaries. At this time when everyone is counting all their pennies I am very grateful for all the support that is given to our church. Hopefully we will soon be feeling the benefits of all the fund raising when the new heating is switched on ( though I'm sure the property committee has more plans afoot!) but onwards and upwards.

Personally I was a bit disappointed with the catalogue this year. It seemed to include a lot of large items and has cut down on the smaller gifts and stocking fillers which have always been popular. I have written to their customer services voicing my concerns but have not as yet had any response.

My sincere thanks again and God Bless  
Anne Law

Don't forget to save stamps from your post at home and in your workplace and pop them in the box in the vestibule.



## *Coffee Morning*

## *1977 - 2017*

Once again we had to adjust over the starting date for the Coffee Morning. Last year we had 'Henry' blowing us out and this year it was lack of heating. However we are back and open for business in our new-look comfortable hall, ready to hear all the news and views of our friends and faithful customers.

Last year we made £4,825.70. This is a wonderful amount, taking in to consideration **all the other 'needs' of the church at this time.**

A warm welcome awaits you each Tuesday from 10-11.30 until the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Peggy Anderson

# *Sunday School*

We continue to use 'Spill the Beanz' which is the Church of Scotland material for young folk.

During the Heating repairs in the church we have been able to continue using the hall – the children don't seem to notice the cold as much as the adults!

We visited Canderavon in January. This is always enjoyed by both Residents and the children.

We are looking forward to having the Puppet ministry again on 12th March – this is another popular event.

As we look forward to Easter the children will be getting excited about the Easter Egg hunt.

The team would like to thank all the families who bring their children/grandchildren along week by week to hear and learn the Bible stories.

The Sunday School Team

# *The Guild*      BE BOLD BE STRONG.

We had a really good Christmas dinner and fun entertainment in December. As the hall was closed in January we didn't have a meeting. On Monday 13th February a Street Pastor gave us a talk which was extremely interesting. March 13th is our AGM and again someone is coming from Maggie's to tell us about the work they do. Monday 24th April is a Spring concert with the Salvation Army which will be a good night. We will be selling tickets for this so don't miss out.

We will be going our annual day out in September, which is still to be arranged, so that will something to look forward to.

All the meetings start at 7.30pm and everyone is welcome. If you would like to come and don't have transport let us know and someone can collect you. See you all soon.

Wilma Johnston.



## **Goodbye & Thank you from Hope Cafe**

I hope you all had a peaceful Christmas and I wish you well for 2017.

As most of you will already be aware The Hope Café Lanarkshire charity is dissolving in April this year and some of the existing volunteers are currently in the process of establishing a new, similar organisation which shall continue to operate within St

Ninian's.

I would like to once again thank all the volunteers and customers who have supported the project for nearly 3 years and acknowledge the positive impact The Hope Café has had on the community of Stonehouse and beyond.

I brought the Hope Café to St Ninian's 3 years ago as a one off coffee morning and the response we received was overwhelming! This was then followed by several conversations between Paul Grant, Margaret McGregor and myself discussing how The Hope Café could be incorporated within St Ninian's on a regular basis as Paul & Margaret's vision was to open up the church building and make it more accessible to the community beyond prayer and worship.

I literally jumped at this opportunity to establish The Hope Café within the community of St Ninian's and with a handful of dedicated volunteers we began operating a community café once a month. It became clear early on that people wanted the café opened more than once a month so we increased the opening times to twice monthly where we have created a warm, welcoming space for people to meet and connect.

The community café has had regular, popular fixtures including alternative therapies to sooth the mind and body, expressive reading and writing groups and relaxation sessions. Some volunteers tried to get a walking group off the ground but the customers and volunteers prefer to stay within the café environment listening to all the chat and get involved with the activities on offer.

As the café has been self-sustaining we have been able to provide a variety of free, formal mental health training courses to the community of Stonehouse out with café opening times. These courses have included 3 safeTALK suicide awareness courses, a 2-day Wellness Recovery Action Planning course and Scottish Mental Health First Aid training resulting in 16 newly qualified mental health first aiders.

The Hope Café has been a comforting presence in the community of Stonehouse providing connection and opportunities to its many supporters. I wish to thank you all for allowing us to be part of this special community and I wish the volunteers of the new organisation well in all they go on to do.

If anyone has any questions regarding The Hope Café Lanarkshire I can be contacted on 07851823683 or [lisa@hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk](mailto:lisa@hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk) until April as this is when my employment contract ends. Please direct all enquiries regarding the new organisation to Bob Miller.

Lisa Cameron Project Co-ordinator The Hope Café Lanarkshire



### Remaining Hope Café Dates for 2017

23rd February      9th March      6th & 20th April

10am – 2pm

Hope Café, Promoting Positive Mental Health & Well-Being

Focusing on what's strong, not what's wrong

## CONGRATULATIONS TO GEORGE

I would like to thank everyone from St Ninian's church and the people of Stonehouse and elsewhere for their congratulations. The ones who sent me congratulation cards for being Honoured in the New Year's Honours' List, it was much appreciated. I will receive my M.B.E. in the near future. I would like to also thank the Flower Committee for the lovely flowers they sent me. It was very much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,  
George Gray



Dr Lisa Cameron, MP for East Kilbride and Lesmahagow nominated George Gray for his achievement in donating blood. She was delighted when he was mentioned in the New Year's Honours List.

A BEM award is the British Empire Medal for hands on service, such as a long term charitable or voluntary activity.

George has donated an incredible 140pints of blood. He gave his first pint in 1948 and continued until 1999. He received his name in the Guinness Book of World Records when he gave blood for 51 consecutive years. 'He has no doubt saved countless lives over the years with his donations', says Christina McKelvie MSP for Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse.

I am sure everyone will say 'You deserve this great honour George for what you have achieved and for the difference you have made to so many lives. We are so proud of the great things you have achieved.'  
May God Bless you

## *Link Committee*

Thank you to all our distributors for getting their collections to us. As usual we are always very grateful when someone gives us more than we expect. To those of you who give so generously to the magazine – we thank you very much. We pass on our monies to the Finance team as required for church purposes.

Margaret, Anne and I are going to be spending time looking at the Distributors' Districts to check they are up to date and in organised routes. So we might be looking for some new distributors shortly as some areas become too large and others shrink.

One area that will require a new distributor is Camnethan Street and Boghall Street as Agnes has had to hand in her notice due to personal circumstances. We thank Agnes for collecting so well in her district and wish her strength for the path ahead as she cares for her mother and balances her workload. God Bless you Agnes at this time.

If you are interested in becoming a Link Distributor then please speak to Anne Frew. Margaret Murray or myself will be in the vestibule on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March'17 for distributors' collections.

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*I would like to take this opportunity to thank family and all friends for the lovely cards, gifts and flowers I received on the occasion of my special birthday.*

*They were all very much appreciated.*

*Thank you*

*Mary Hamilton      Mclean Gardens*



# World Mission

## Kitega Community Centre Uganda.

The Ramsay family and the Kirkwood family continue to liaise with Kitega. Peter and Sarah Jane are considering a fundraising campaign for a chicken project at the centre. They are also involved in discussions for further folk from Stonehouse to go out and visit the school for children with learning difficulties. Ally Kirkwood is giving a talk to the Guild in Lanark in March, spreading awareness of the need for education for children with disabilities in underdeveloped countries.

On my visit to Malawi in 2007, I still remember vividly how our guide nearly ran his car into a boy with epilepsy as he explained how his life had no worth and his parents had to live on the edge of the village in shame for having such a child. It is for this reason that I have included the two introductory letters from the Community's annual report to remind ourselves of how we as Christians need to respond to others' plight. After reading the letters may you be stirred to support Kitega in some way. Please speak to Pete or Sarah Jane if you wish to learn more about how you can help with this project either through visiting, sharing resources or skills or donating.

Margaret McM

## Extracts from the Annual report 2017

I *like* to walk in that still silence before dawn when there is just yourself and God. As I live in the Highlands of Scotland the path I usually take is rough and winds its way over rivers, rocks and tree roots over which the unwary might stumble, especially in the still dim light. I often think how it would help if the path were smoothed and made straight, perhaps with a good surface and fences along the sides to make it safe. Such a smooth path would indeed be nice and easy but... would we learn anything, would we be changed without the challenge of overcoming the rocks and roots along our path? Are our lives like that?

Many people long for an easy life with no challenges and nothing to upset them along the path of life. Both smooth and rough paths may end at the same destination but those who come by the rough path will have been changed by adversity – changed for the better to serve God.

Of course it's not as simple as that for none of us can really choose which path we must walk. Yet one wonders at times. It would have been nice if the roof of the main building at the Kitega Centre had not collapsed in June. We thank God that no one was injured but why did it have to happen? A lot of scarce money and effort had to go into the repairs. But on reflection, you wonder what that catastrophe said to the community and to those further afield. I know that it touched many hearts, hearts that were warmed in compassion to help, hearts that saw life and God in a new way.

We might ask the same about the Kitega children themselves, why the suffering they and their families often feel? There is no easy answer but somehow suffering can open a window onto the Kingdom of God. Blessed are those who suffer. Jesus is unique in telling His disciples that following Him will not be easy – the narrow and not the wide path, the rough and not the smooth path through life. But Jesus also promises that He will be with us

till the end of the age – even in those times when we walk through the dark valleys of life and we feel He is not with us. Only when we look back on such dark times do we see that was when He spoke most lovingly to us. And then, when we arrive at the end of the rough path, we will have the joy of hearing Him say to us ‘well done good and faithful servant!’

Blessings and Shalom to all those who serve with the Kitega Centre

**Nicky King**

**Chairman of the Kingserve Trust and Patron of the Kitega Community Centre  
Scotland, January 2017**

## **Chairman Board of Trustees**

Looking back over the last year, I believe that 2016 would have marked a turning point in global history with some key decisions and experiences that may have had some far-reaching implications. Through it all, we made it through to 2017, because of you. Thank you and may God bless you.

The world today is full of many questions. Why? What? When? Who? Name it. It is also true that a huge bulk of our time on this planet is spent looking for the answers to these questions. We seldom find any. In 2016, more questions were asked that might have given us a cause for a concern. We continued to see with our own eyes people living in utter despair both near and far, a wanton disregard of human, civil and political rights, as such civil and political wars raged on in both our local and global communities, young people died, old people lived on poorly and helplessly, we experienced both a long drought and a slew of floods. Similarly, abhorrence, injustice and sleaze all grew to full bloom.

Amidst these questions we are reminded of Jesus’ ministry. One day as He went along his work, he met a man who was born blind. His disciples sought to know the cause of his predicament. They wanted to know whether his blindness was a result of his or his parents’ sin. Jesus answered them that neither of them sinned for the man’s blindness but that he was blind that the work of God might be displayed in his life. Indeed the work of God was displayed in his life when the man’s blindness was healed. Not surprisingly, the questions even increased after his healing. Are you the one? Who healed you? Why did he heal you, How did he heal you, Where is he? etc.

The Lord had earlier answered these questions by stating to the disciples that as long as he is in the world he will be up to the task for which His master sent him. “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” John 9:5

Jesus is the answer for the world today. He has been our answer in 2016; he has been our guide, our light and our sustainer. As members of Kitega Community Centre, be encouraged to continue doing the will of the Lord amidst the incessant questions around us, in times of darkness and despair be sure of an ever present light in Christ Jesus and in despair be encouraged by the hope that his works shall be displayed in our World.

We have been able to achieve great things in the past 12 months. Be encouraged to serve even better in 2017 because Jesus is the Answer!

God’s Blessings and love to you all our esteemed stakeholders.

**Rev. Canon Silas Musoke**  
**Chairman Board of Trustees**

# Prayer Focus

God of power, we come to you in our weakness.

God of love, we come to you in ambivalence,

God who believes in us even when we doubt, we come.

Through your eyes we see the world in a different way. We see the hurting and the fearful and those trapped and controlled by others.

Through your eyes we see the love that you have for each person. We see their potential.

We see their important place in your Kingdom.

Jesus, we know you are able. Help us to be able too.

Give us faith in you, hearts that long for change and hands that are willing to be your change.

Amen

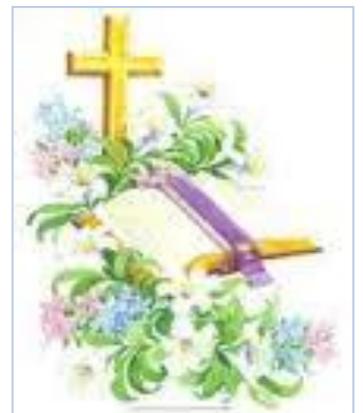
**Support Fair-trade Fortnight 27<sup>th</sup> February – 12<sup>th</sup> March.**

**Look out for further details in the local Co op**

## Church Register

**Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May the souls of all the faithful departed, through  
the mercy of God, rest in peace.**

Mr John Brown, Mrs Eleanor Haddow and Mrs Janet Sorbie





## Spring Church Flower List



March 5th	Sheena McLean, Jean Stewart, Mary McKay	All In Memoriam
12th	Marian and Jack Clark Norma Johnstone	Wedding Anniversary In Memoriam
19th	Margaret Cranston	Gifted
26th	Isobel Hamilton	In Memoriam
2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Sheila Lindsay, Mrs Margaret Murray	In Memoriam
9 <sup>th</sup> April	The Flower Committee	
16th	The Flower Committee	
23rd	Christine Milne, The Plenderleith Family	Both In Memoriam
30 <sup>th</sup> April	Myra Pate, Laura Wilson	Both In Memoriam
7 <sup>th</sup> May	Liz Ingram, Margaret Lambie	In Celebration In Memoriam
14th	Anne MacLeod	In Memoriam
21 <sup>st</sup>	Janette Brownlie, The Summers Family (Strathaven)	Both In Memoriam
28 <sup>th</sup> May	The Smith Family	In Memoriam
4th June	Dave and Rosemary Middleton	In Memoriam

In January our church was adorned by flowers donated by: Ann Golder, The Cowper Family, Jean Grant, The Summers and Anderson Family. (All in Memoriam)

In February: K Plenderleith, Mrs Richmond, Mrs Margaret Mair, Jean Roberston (All in Memoriam).

**Our Flower Arrangers and Helpers for the spring**

Mar	Jillian Storrie	791414	Rosalind Blake	207676
April	Greta Struthers	791507	Christine Blackwood	793405
May	Susan Whitelaw	01357 521224		
June	Joyce & Bob Millar	792736		

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*Flower Committee*

I can't believe that we are into February. It seems such a long time since Christmas which as usual was busy.

I would like to thank all the people who came to help decorate the church. It is a time of fellowship and we all work together to get the job done. I hope everyone enjoys it as well as the tea, coffee, mince pies and shortbread.

We also thank everyone who gives flowers and money each week. This means that we can give our flowers to anyone we hear about who is in need of comfort and also happy occasions.

I would like to thank the ladies and gentlemen who faithfully deliver the flowers and arrange them.

This is really an important ministry and very much appreciated by all who receive them.

God Bless you all for your hard work.

Ann