



# GOOD NEWS

*News from and for local churches*

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## Local news

Send in your news to the media and communications team:  
[mediarelations@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:mediarelations@cofscotland.org.uk)

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[Click here to read more:](#)

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[Click here to read more:](#)

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The congregation produced a history book entitled "Growing together in faith", which was written by member Irene Hopkins.

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## Press releases

News from the media and communications team

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Mr Hewitt was joined by church leaders from the Roman Catholic Church, Religious Society of Friends, United Free Church, United Reformed Church and Methodists.

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On "Souper Sunday" churches held a simple soup and sandwich lunch after worship, supporting the work of The Church of Scotland HIV/AIDS Project's partners around the world.

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Pauline Weibye, currently vice convener of the Kirk's Central Services Committee and Session Clerk at Craigmillar Park in Edinburgh, will take up the post pending the approval of May's General Assembly.

[Click here to read more:](#)

## COUNCIL OF ASSEMBLY SECRETARY ANNOUNCEMENT

THE Church of Scotland has named the successful applicant for the new position of Secretary to the Council of Assembly.

Pauline Weibye, currently vice convener of the Kirk's Central Services Committee and Session Clerk at Craigmillar Park Church in Edinburgh Presbytery, will take up the post pending the

approval of May's General Assembly.

Mrs Weibye has been a member of the Central Services Committee since 2005.

With an active involvement in the voluntary service for a number of years, Mrs Weibye is currently a Director and Trustee of

Waverley Care, Scotland's largest HIV/AIDS charity, playing an active role in its governance and fundraising.

Mrs Weibye said: "I am delighted to have this new opportunity to serve the Church of Scotland.

"My job is simply to ensure that the central administration of the

Church runs smoothly and efficiently in order to free up our people to spread God's word and the Church's message of hope.

"We face some major challenges but we have members, ministers and employees with exceptional skills, commitment and faith in Lord."

## CUMBERNAULD FOOD BANK SERVICE OF RE-DEDICATION FOR ELLON CHURCH

FIVE Church of Scotland congregations in Cumbernauld raised over £750 for a local food bank at their annual joint service in November.

The Food Bank was set up by a social action group through churches in the area and has helped elderly people, young families and asylum seekers.

Recipients receive a box of groceries and some fresh food bought with the funds.

This is the latest venture for the church network and has been welcomed by local social workers and district nurses who refer those in need.

A CONGREGATION in Gordon Presbytery recently held a service of re-dedication for its new church building, which included an open day for the whole community.

On Sunday 24 January, Ellon Parish Church gave thanks for its renovated sanctuary during worship, following over a £200,000 overhaul.

Minister Reverend Stephen Emery reminded the congregation that "actions speak louder than fabrics" and as well as re-dedicating the upgraded worship, he said members were rededicating themselves in service.

The church was open until 2.00pm to allow people unable to attend the service the opportunity to view the building and learn of the church's wide variety of outreach work.



*Parishioners gather for the service at Ellon*

Organisations and groups had "set out their stalls" in a market place setting to showcase just how much they do in the church, in the community and abroad.

Guests included members of the Kirk's Committee on Art & Architecture, Gordon Presbytery, neighbouring churches, local politicians, Ellon Pipe Band and HM Forces Cadets.

Ellon Parish Church also publicly thanked the clergy

and congregations of St Mary on the Rock Scottish Episcopal church and Our Lady and St John the Baptist Catholic Church for the use of their church buildings during the refurbishment.

Among the improvements are new seating, ground-source underfloor heating, directional lighting, and a state of the art audio/visual system, and it is hoped it will serve as a venue for the entire community.

## WALLWASHING SUCCESS FOR MULL CHURCH

A CONGREGATION in Mull are continuing to look forward after installing a “wallwasher” between the old and new parts of their church building.

Salen Church decided to use a “wallwasher”, a lighting technique used to illuminate large surfaces, to brighten up its premises and it has proved most popular with adults and children alike. A controller can set the wall to one static colour or a variety of sequences.

The congregation are already enquiring about the possibility of using

similar lights to brighten up a long access path at the front of the complex.

When the congregation first looked at the possibility of a “wallwasher” it was deemed to be too expensive, but unexpected birthday gifts set them on their way.

Retired associate minister, Reverend Bill Pollock, explained: “I held an open house to celebrate my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and had let it be known that although I didn’t want personal presents guests were welcome to bring

something for the church garden.

“I was meaning something free like a cutting from their own garden but nearly everyone brought money.

“This pot of money stayed all summer looking for a use and in the autumn provided an incentive and an unrealistic expectation that it would pay most of the cost of a modest display.

“Fortunately, when it was becoming apparent that much more money would



*The “wallwasher” at Salen Church*

be required a major donor stepped in to help.”

Last June the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, officially opened a large suite of rooms and facilities to complement the old building at Salen.

## GALSTON CELEBRATES



*Author Irene Hopkins with associate minister Reverend John Taylor*

GALSTON Parish Church in Irvine and Kilmarnock Presbytery has just completed a year of celebration marking 200 years of worship in their present church building.

Special events included a Burns Supper, lectures for Lent, a flower festival and also a variety of visiting preacher.

Session Clerk Robert Murray said one of the highlights of the year was the bi-centenary service in June when the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt preached.

The congregation also produced a history book entitled “Growing together in faith”, which was written by member Irene Hopkins.

It has proved very popular and was also favourably reviewed by local newspaper, the Kilmarnock Standard.

## ABERNETHY APPOINTS YOUTH WORKER

The Presbytery of Abernethy has recently appointed their first-ever youth worker in a bid to reach out to more young people.

Gillian Orr, who had been working part time at Kingussie High School for the past nine years, has already begun to add to her existing contacts throughout the area, both among youngsters and within congregations.

The Presbytery stretches from Laggan to Ballindalloch, as well as up to Tomintoul, and includes 12 congregations, as well as churches of other denominations, and Gillian is open to working with anyone who shares the

desire both to talk about the Christian faith and to show it in action.

The Presbytery is keen to connect with the younger generation, and felt that someone with the skills, commitment and time could help them with their youth work. The post is being funded for three years.

Gillian said: “Teenagers are brilliant fun to work with and I really just want to reach out to them where they are and show God’s love in a way that is relevant to them and that may mean just being a listening ear when they need it!

“I look forward very much to the challenges ahead!”

## PICTURE SPECIAL – CHURCHES IN WINTER WONDERLAND

Although the “big freeze” in early January created treacherous weather conditions, it also made for some rather picturesque church photos. Here is a small selection from around Scotland.



*Cortachy Church in Angus Presbytery*



*Urray West Church in Ross Presbytery*



*Tarves Kirk in Gordon Presbytery*



*Longniddry Parish Church in Lothian Presbytery*



*Slain Kirk in Gordon Presbytery (credit: Ken Ingram)*



*Yetholm Kirk in Jedburgh Presbytery*

## KIRK WEB HELP FOR HAITI APPEAL

THE Church of Scotland has been named as the top referring Scottish Christian website following the launch of Christian Aid's online Haiti appeal.

Last week Christian Aid's media and communications manager Claire Aston personally wrote to the Kirk's web team to thank them for putting a link on the

Church home page, and for congregations' generosity.

So far well over 100 visitors have clicked on the link, which directly transfers them onto the Christian Aid website.

Ms Aston said: "Christian Aid has raised over £3.2 million for its Haiti Earthquake appeal so far

and is very grateful for those supporters who donated through a link on the Church of Scotland website.

"Although Christian Aid's Haiti office was destroyed in the quake, which measured 7.0 on the Richter scale, all our staff are safe and well and working extremely hard."

Glasgow minister Reverend Neil Galbraith is also assisting front-line aid workers in the country, through his charity Glasgow The Caring City.

As well as providing urgent medical supplies, the charity has set itself the long-term of rebuilding one of the schools on the island, at a cost of £10,000.

## FROM THE PULPIT – THE BENEFITS OF A WELL-KEPT SABBATH

This month Reverend Andrew Coghill praises the benefits of a well-observed Sabbath.

*Reverend Andrew Coghill is minister at Lochs-Crossbost in Lewis Presbytery.*

### The text: Isaiah 58: 13+14

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

*(Taken from the King James translation)*

WHEN a soul is converted and saved one major difference that takes place in their lives is that "God" replaces "self" at the centre of their lives and hearts.

Instead of thinking about the Lord as a kind of spiritual servant to provide our wants and smile benignly on all our activities no matter how self-centred, the converted, believing Christian now lives for Christ, to serve Him, to love Him and honour Him by all possible God-honouring means. "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord" or as John the Baptist said of Jesus "He must increase, but I must

decrease".

One of the most obvious ways of putting God first in our lives is to start putting Him first at the beginning of our week. I don't just mean going to church: I mean setting apart for the Lord that whole day, right at the beginning of the week, that day which bears His Name: the Lord's Day.

For our purposes here I am taking the Lord's Day to be the Christian Sabbath, and taking the general principles of the Biblical Sabbath as being applicable to the Lord's Day.

The most that space allows here is only a very

few brief and basic pointers as to why we should seek to reclaim the Lord's Day and a simple suggestion about how we might begin.

First of all: Love. We are under grace, not under law. But if we love the Lord we surely want to show that love by honouring Him, and the most acceptable way to honour God is by that which He Himself has authorised in His Word. Love for the Lord surely means we want to sanctify, keep holy, His own day.

"Call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord."... (Continued on page 6)

## FROM THE PULPIT CONTINUED...

(Continued from page 5)... The world of course wants to treat this day as any other, but whom do we serve? The world? Or the Lord?

If we love the Lord we will love His day precisely because it IS His Day, and not a day for doing the ordinary things of the world however pleasurable or indeed innocent on other days.

A “love” which prefers the newsagent and “Sunday” papers to the Lord’s house and reading of His Bible or other Christian material, needs perhaps to focus more on Christ and less on convenience, more on the Saviour and less on the self.

Critics of Sabbath-observance often trot out the mantra “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” but curiously fail to complete the quotation: “Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath.”

That is all that is being suggested here: that the Son of Man, who should be Lord of every part of our lives, is honoured especially on the day (and for the whole day!) that bears his title, and not just that portion of it occupied by church services.

Secondly: witness. By treating this day differently in a positive way, we make a quiet but dignified witness to our non-Christian neighbours that this day is special, and different for us because of the God we worship.

**“One of the most obvious ways of putting God first in our lives is to start putting Him first at the beginning of our week.”**

Reverend Andrew Coghill, Lochs-Crossbost

“No I’m sorry I don’t do my football/golf/swimming/shopping on the Lord’s Day – but how about next Saturday?” Would you have heard of Eric Liddell without the Christian witness evidenced by his Sabbath-keeping?

God is not a kill-joy; He wants us to have fun and to have time to work and rest, and yes play, but the Lord’s Day is a day for the Lord, so that our faith has time, and opportunity, and peace, to grow and develop.

When we do make time for the Lord, and when we do stand fast in our

witness, God blesses. Non-Christian neighbours and colleagues come to terms with our position, and however grudgingly at first, come to respect our stance, recognising that it is at least, not hypocritical.

God knows that it is hard for the flesh to let go of habits or activities which we may have come to regard as our “right” on this day, but if we set ourselves to keeping this day for Him, for worship (public and private), for reading, both the Bible and other suitable Christian material, and for resting, then God blesses both with greater refreshment and strength for the week ahead, and with blessing on our spiritual lives and relationship with Him.

It’s not rocket science: if you feed and nurture something, it is likely to grow and prosper. If you neglect it, it will wither and die.

How do we start? The biggest single difference we can begin with is language. The day doesn’t seem holy because we refer to it as any other day of the week. Every single day of the week is named after a pagan deity! Is it really asking too much that our God should have

His own day with a Biblical title: whether we call it the Sabbath or The Lord’s Day.

**“The Church of Scotland is not exactly renowned as Sabbath-keeping territory!”**

Reverend Andrew Coghill, Lochs-Crossbost

Choose one of these, and stick with it, because even in conversation it flags up the person using it, as one who honours the Lord of that Day, which in itself becomes a quiet witness. Sort the title, then you can begin to sort the contents.

The Church of Scotland is not exactly renowned as Sabbath-keeping territory! The slide downhill was easy: the trek back up takes longer. Changing attitudes from lazy indifference to loving obedience is part of the spiritual warfare to which we are each called – and it is a Long War.

Don’t be discouraged. Keep at it and be prepared for it to take a long time. After all, time, specifically time for God, is one reason the Sabbath was given in the first place.

## MIGHTY MODERATOR! OOR WULLIE MOCK-UP FOR KIRK FIGUREHEAD

CRIES of “jings, crivvens, help ma boab!” are unlikely to be heard any time soon from a Church of Scotland pulpit, but it appears the Moderator has found a new seat of learning.

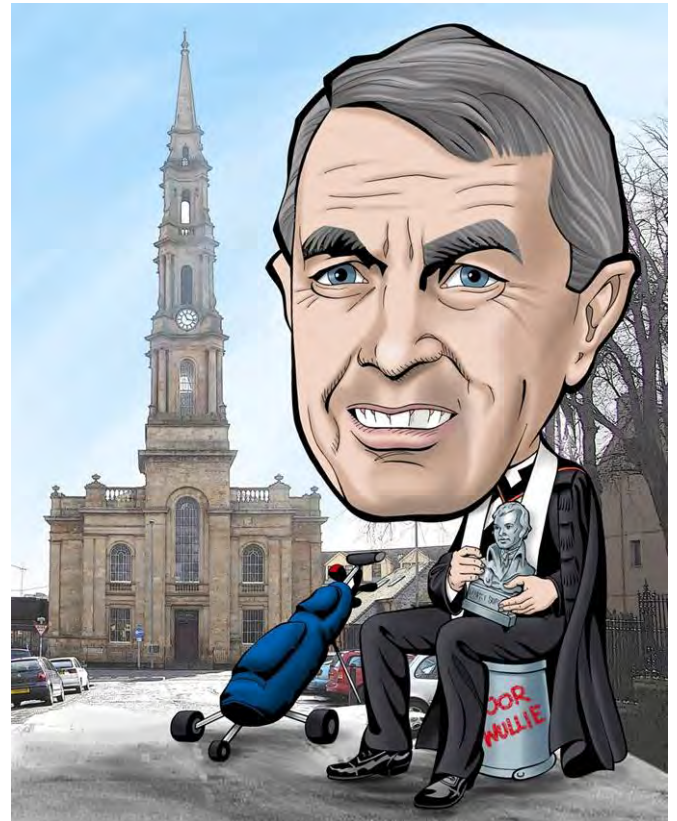
As part of his visit to Dundee Presbytery, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, met workers from DC Thomson at their Kingsway East site.

And following a tour of the building, staff presented him with a special caricature (*see right*) to mark the occasion –

depicting the Moderator sitting on Oor Wullie’s bucket, with his home church in Greenock (Westburn) in the background.

Mr Hewitt said: “In Mark’s Gospel Jesus says unless we become more child-like in our faith we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, but I don’t think this is what he had in mind.

“I will be hanging the sketch in my office and perhaps the Moderator’s new seat of learning will prove inspirational when it comes to writing sermons.”



## DUNDEE PRESBYTERY RAISES £13,000 FOR HIV CHARITY

DUNDEE Presbytery has answered a personal plea from a former Moderator by raising £13,000 for an HIV project.

In May 2008, Very Reverend David Lunan, then Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, urged every Presbytery to raise £10,000 for its HIV/AIDS Project – branding it the “Moderator’s Challenge”.

Tayside churches have risen to the call and a cheque for £13,000 was

presented to the current Moderator, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, during his recent visit to Dundee Presbytery.

Fundraising activities included a “big sing” on Pentecost Sunday, a joint carol service and a sponsored cycle across the Tay Bridge with participants from 15 congregations taking part.

After receiving the cheque during a special ceremony at McManus Galleries, Mr Hewitt said: “It is excellent

to see the imagination which Dundee’s churches have brought to their awareness-raising and fundraising for the Church of Scotland HIV/AIDS Project.

“It is clear that everyone involved worked very hard and it is a tremendous amount of money which will go to the project.

“I hope the congregations involved can better understand the issues around HIV in Scotland and this would allow the church to care and support more

effectively”.

The Moderator spent nine days in Dundee as part of his official Presbytery visit.

During that time he visited Ninewells Hospital, met with officials from the digital industries and also proposed The Immortal Memory during a Burns Supper at Fintry Church.

Mr Hewitt preached at Broughty Ferry New Kirk, Chalmers Ardler Church, Fowlis Kirk and Balgay Church.

## KIRKS WORLDWIDE HIGHLIGHT HIV/AIDS PANDEMIC

LAST month Church of Scotland congregations around the world highlighted the global HIV and AIDS pandemic during their morning services.

On “Souper Sunday” (January 10), over 250 churches held a simple soup and sandwich lunch after worship, with all proceeds going to support the work of The Church of Scotland HIV/AIDS Project’s partners around the world.

Participants included the most northerly mainland parish in Scotland, Keiss, Dunnet and Canisbay in Caithness Presbytery, stretching down to Dunscore in Dumfries and Galloway. Kirks in Sri Lanka, London and Israel

also pledged their support.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, said: “By equipping parish leaders at local, regional and national levels, we hope congregations can better understand the issues around HIV in Scotland and would allow the church to care and support more effectively.”

A recent UNAIDS report showed that although globally over 30 million people are living HIV, new infections over an eight-year period were down 17 per cent, with partnership programmes focusing on prevention.

Discrimination and stigmatisation towards

those with the virus remains a real challenge, even in Scotland. Findings from The People Living With HIV Stigma Index 2009, published last month, show that almost two-thirds of people with HIV and AIDS in the UK have low self-esteem, and a quarter have said they feel suicidal.

Mr Hewitt continued: “Churches overseas have already begun to realise the pivotal role they can play in their own communities in the areas of education, counselling, care and support, and I hope that the Kirk can begin to grapple with this.

“While congregations are always generous in supporting work abroad, there may still be a lack of awareness about what lies



*Right Reverend Bill Hewitt*

on our own doorstep.

“Souper Sunday can help to raise money as well as this awareness”.

As of last week, the current figure for Souper Sunday stood at just below £30,000, with donations in from 87 congregations.

An update on the total will appear in next month’s Good News.

## SOUPER SUNDAY – YOUR PHOTOS



*Mark Ross, an elder who suffers from Brittle Bone disease, led the service at Invergowrie*



*Mohammed Khatib from the Galilee Society with Colin Johnstone in Tiberias*

## SOUPER SUNDAY PHOTOS CONTINUED...



*Serving soup at Larbert East*



*Very Reverend John Miller (middle) preached at Tron St Mary's in Glasgow*



*Carricknowe Parish Church in Edinburgh*



*Renfield St Stephen's in Glasgow*

## KIRK CONVENER: RECLAIM THE SABBATH AS FAMILY DAY

A SENIOR Kirk convener has urged the Church of Scotland to reclaim Sunday as a family day.

Reverend Ian Galloway, convener of the Kirk's Church and Society Council, questioned whether people's hectic lifestyles were full of meaningful accomplishments or just busy activities to the detriment of personal relationships and family life.

He believes that designating Sunday as a day for family time, and not work, would benefit the whole nation.

Speaking on his blog, the convener said: "I've often spoken about poverty. But there is another kind of poverty, the lack of time spent with friends, family, and others you could be with.

"A couple of months ago I was in Germany and one

Sunday I visited a town where not a single shop was open. People were out and about with their families. That is a value on Sunday that is above money.

"The truth is busyness does not guarantee fruitfulness. It is the quality of what our lives produce that determines whether or not we are truly fruitful.

"It's time to be with those we care about and reclaim the Sabbath for what it is."



*Reverend Ian Galloway*

## KIRK'S PRIME DIRECTIVE AGAINST NUCLEAR WEAPONS

THE MODERATOR of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, and members from the Scottish Clergy against Nuclear Armaments (SCANA) pressure group last week launched an initiative at Holyrood placing nuclear weapons and Trident at the heart of the general election campaign.

Mr Hewitt was joined by church leaders from the Roman Catholic Church, Religious Society of Friends, United Free Church, United Reformed Church and Methodists.

For a long time the Christian community has led the way in challenging the morality of nuclear weapons.

This upcoming general

election offers an opportunity in a way that has rarely been seen before to challenge the philosophy that nuclear weapons are necessary for modern warfare.

Mr Hewitt said: "There is a real chance that the renewal of the Trident system, which is due very soon, could be overturned if enough political pressure is applied.

"Especially, at a time when voters are asking hard questions about how we best use our tax revenues for the benefit of the maximum number of citizens."

The initiative also includes a specially produced post card for members of congregations to send to prospective candidates and MPs in the run up to



*The Moderator (middle) with other SCANA representatives*

the election urging them to put nuclear weapons and Trident at the forefront of their campaign.

Pictured is the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, and representatives from

SCANA, Father Chris Boles of the Roman Catholic Church, Leslie Stevenson of the Religious Society of Friends, Reverend John Fulton, General Secretary of the United Free Church, and Dr Bill Reid from the Methodist Church.

## POPE PRAISES PIONEERS OF EDINBURGH CONFERENCE

THE Pope has praised the pioneers of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh 1910, as well as looking forward to this summer's centenary celebrations.

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Pope Benedict highlighted the centenary of the World Missionary Conference.

Pope Benedict said "a century later, the intuition

of those brave pioneers is still relevant, in a world marked by religious indifference, and even by a growing aversion to the Christian faith.

He said that differences between the Christian churches remain but he added that "hopefully they can be overcome through prayer and dialogue.

The Pope concluded by calling for "a new, intense,

work of evangelisation, not only among people who have never known the Gospel, but also among people for whom Christianity is part of their history".

Edinburgh 2010 is a coalition of world Christian churches and mission organisations inspired by the memory of the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference.

A five-day international, multi-denominational summit



*Pope Benedict XVI*

will take place from 2-6 June in Edinburgh, where it is hoped new perspectives for Christian mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will emerge.

## RESOURCEFUL BORDERS MINISTER BEATS “BIG FREEZE”

WITH over 12 inches of snow, sub-zero temperatures, icy roads and treacherous pavements, you could understand why parishioners in the Borders did not make the trip to church during the height of the “big freeze” at the start of the year.

But one resourceful minister ensured his flock did not miss a thing – by holding worship on the church website instead.

Reverend Robin McHaffie, minister at Linton,

Morebattle, Hownam and Yetholm in Jedburgh Presbytery, explained: “At the beginning of January we were due to hold a joint service at Hownam – well into the Cheviots.

“I was told the snow was over the boots and there was no roadside left to park. Our other churches were becoming hard to access too so we had to cancel.

“I circulated all members whose email addresses I hold with the service – including typed hymns.

“We advised Radio Borders, and on that announcement pointed people to our website, [cheviotchurches.org](http://cheviotchurches.org), where I had posted the service.

“This received quite a few hits and I know from feedback a number of members went online or downloaded the file at church time and read through, or sang through, the service.

“The website is part of our mission work, and part of our outreach to others.”



*Yetholm Kirk on 6<sup>th</sup> January*

Although the service on the web was a successful alternative, Mr McHaffie also said he and his congregation were delighted to be worshipping in the church together again.

## PRIORITY AREAS LAUNCH YOUTH STRATEGY

OVER 100 people from across Scotland gathered in Glasgow’s southside last month as the Church of Scotland launched its new strategy for working with marginalised young people.

Entitled, An Option for the Young, the scheme aims to create the next generation of young leaders and was developed by the Kirk’s Priority Areas Committee, which is responsible for work in Scotland’s poorest 58 neighbourhoods.

It asks if the Church of Scotland, especially in the most deprived areas of the country, is doing



everything it can for and with these young people.

The new strategy will support the work and hopes of local churches and church-related projects as they seek to improve the quality of life for some of Scotland’s

most vulnerable citizens.

Pollokshaws Church, Shawbridge Street, Glasgow, was the venue for the launch and many of the visitors remarked on the vibrancy of the sanctuary following extensive renovation works.

### CONTACT US:

*If you have a story or photos of church life from your congregation, please get in touch with one of the members from the media and communications team.*

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### NEXT EDITION:

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