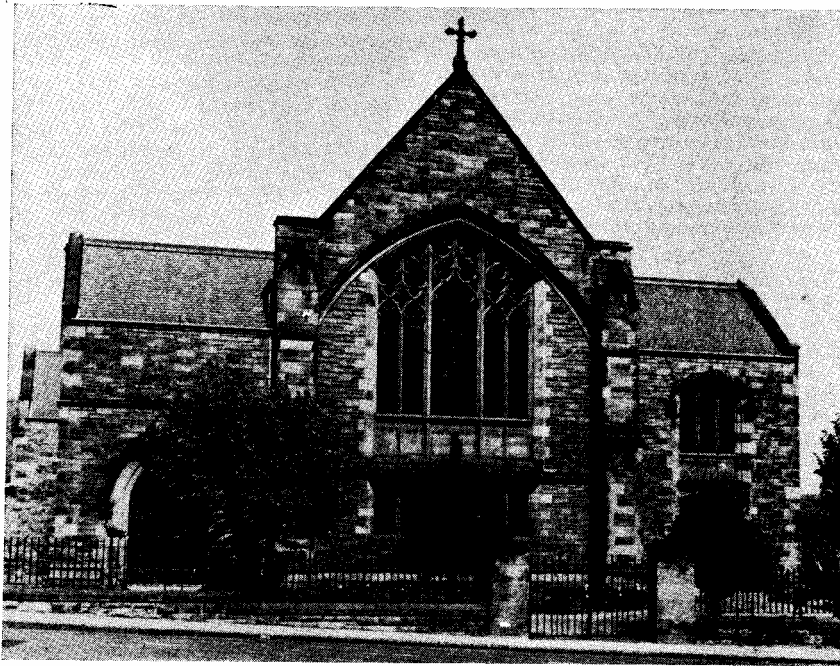


“ECHOES” OF ST. JOHN’S PARISH CHURCH

No. 9

KIRKCALDY

DECEMBER, 1971



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ECHOES FROM:

*St. John's Manse,
21 Townsend Crescent, Kirkcaldy.
December, 1971*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

YOU will perhaps have wondered why there was no publication of the Church Magazine in the month of September. We have decided to reduce the issues per year from four to three and the September issue always was difficult for news because of the summer period. The first edition of "Echoes" was well received and the Editor appreciates all the favourable comments that have been made and I feel that we have a most excellent Editor in Mr J. Chapman.

You will again be pleased to see photographic evidence of the work of St. John's Church and I am sure that this greatly adds to the interest of the Magazine.

Since this is the only edition before Christmas, I take this opportunity of extending to you the good wishes of my family and myself for the festive season. Many of the features of past years will again have their places in our Christmas festivities and there will be, no doubt, new features which I am sure you will welcome.

My work amongst the Christmas Cards has meant that the Christmas season has been with us for a long time at the Manse.

After Christmas, there is 1972, and I take the opportunity of wishing you well in the year ahead both as families and individuals and as a congregation.

All the organisations of the Church are well under way by now and most of them are in an even more healthy state than last year. This is something that is most satisfactory for us as a Church.

With these comments, I leave you to read with interest and profit the new edition of "Echoes."

With every Good Wish,

Your Friend and Minister,

G. M. GRAHAM.

All organisations of the Church should appoint a press secretary. When Mr Graham announces from the pulpit that copy should be handed to me by a certain date please see this is done. It is the only way we can make the magazine truly representative of all the activities that go on in St. John's Church.

J. S. M. Chapman.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

This Annual Service was held on the last Sunday of September. There was a plentiful array of produce and gifts and the Church was suitably decorated.

The Service took the form of a Service of Praise which was led by members of the Teen Church. This group also sang various choral items and Gwen Walker was the soloist. Mrs Joan Ferguson, the organist, was responsible for the training of the Teen Church Choir.

In the afternoon, the gifts were distributed amongst 150 homes in the congregation. The remainder was sent to Leslie House, Church of Scotland Home for the elderly; Denend House; St. Olaf's Home; Aberlour Home at Whyteman's Brae, a Home for young people run by the town; the Biblewoman of Kirkcaldy; and Simpson House in Edinburgh.

We were indebted to the people who put their cars at our disposal for the distribution together with others who helped both on the Saturday and the Sunday.

ORDINATION OF ELDERS

A Service of Ordination and Admission of Elders was conducted by the minister, Rev. G. M. Graham.

Ten men were admitted to the Kirk Session of St. John's Church, Kirkcaldy, and at the service the right hand of fellowship was extended to them, on behalf of the Kirk Session, by Rev. G. M. Graham, Messrs E. Kidd, W. P. McAndrew and D. Winton.

The following were ordained to the Eldership:—Messrs. A. Archibald, J. Chapman, R. English, A. Mason, R. Kellock, J. Risbey, W. Stenhouse, J. Walkinshaw, B. Winton. Mr D. Scott, already having been ordained, was admitted to St. John's Kirk Session.

We all join in welcoming them to this high office and we pray that they will enjoy the service that they are able to give the Church.

THEY CROWD INTO HIS TEEN CHURCH

TWO years ago the Rev. G. M. Graham formed a Teen Church to replace the Bible Class at St. John's, Kirkcaldy.

It started off 15-strong. Now it has reached the 45-mark and is still growing.

RETIRAL OF MR KIDD

The resignation of Mr Edgar Kidd as Clerk to the Congregational Board was received by the Board when it met in September.

The record of Mr Kidd's service to St. John's Church is quite monumental. He became a member of the Congregational Board of this Church in 1928 and was elected to the office of Clerk to the Congregational Board in 1940. In this Office, he has completed some 31 years to say nothing of his service as Session Clerk to the Church.

Last year, Mr Kidd was honoured by the members and friends of the congregation on the completion of 50 years' service; 30 as Clerk to the Board and 20 as Session Clerk. Tangible expression of our gratitude was made then but on this occasion a special Minute of Appreciation was entered in the records of the Congregational Board and a copy of that Minute, duly signed, was sent to him. This Minute speaks of the great service that Mr Kidd had rendered to the Church during the past three ministries. No words of mine can ever do justice to the sterling service rendered by Mr Kidd over the past years.

Although Mr Kidd has resigned as Clerk to the Board, he continues in the office of Session Clerk and Elder and therefore continues to be a member of the Congregational Board.

THE NEW CLERK TO THE BOARD

On the retiral of Mr Kidd from the office of Clerk to the Congregational Board, Mr W. L. Aird, 3 Forth Park Gardens, was unanimously elected as his successor.

It was unfortunate that Mr Aird was in hospital at this time and more so that he had a close family bereavement in the death of his mother.

Mr W. L. Aird is a man who is well known in the church circles of St. John's. He has been a member of the congregation for the past ten years and some four years ago was elected to the eldership of this Church.

Some of the teenagers who joined will soon be 20 and they don't want to break their bonds with the Teen Church.

"Frankly, I don't know how we are going to get round this one," admitted the minister.

"Nowadays, when you hear so much about the Church losing numbers, this is a most unusual situation."

The Teen Church began in a small gallery-room, which was dingy and unattractive.

With the help of Mr T. Walker, one of the elders, they painted it up and turned it into a bright, attractive room.

Then they appealed to the congregation for chairs.

They got plenty of these and one member gave them a radiogram.

Mr Graham said the secret of the Teen Church was that it was not looked upon as a splinter group.

The members were involved in the everyday workings of Church life as well as activities to suit their age group.

They found plenty to do, for example helping at the old folk's drive.

At Easter, they climbed Largo Law for a service of praise, collected and distributed 1749 eggs to the old folk

All photographs for this article by kind permission of "People's Journal"

of the kirk and other needy organisations run by the Church of Scotland.

Now they are interested in the choir and at harvest thanksgiving led the praise and later took the gifts to the elderly and sick.

Among the forthcoming activities is a play, carol singing and a visit to the Church of Scotland's Simpson Home, Edinburgh, which deals with drug addicts and alcoholics.

No wonder Mr Graham, assisted by Mr W. Deans, is so delighted at the progress of the Teen Church.

The group meet on Sunday mornings at 10.30 a.m. and after discussion on various topical subjects they enjoy coffee and biscuits prepared by ladies of the Church headed by Mrs N. Darling.

J. S. M. CHAPMAN.



The Teenage Choir in action. On the left are the Rev. G. M. Graham, organist Mrs Joan Ferguson and soloist Gwen Walker.



The original gallery room which housed 15 is now overcrowded and newcomers have to queue to crowd in.

WANTED £5,000—

FOR THE FABRIC OF THE CHURCH

OVER the past two years, a new law of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has been implemented by the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. This is to ensure the preservation of all the buildings of the Church within its bounds. In the past, this oversight of buildings has always been undertaken by the Presbytery, but now, there has been a considerable tightening up of the regulations.

The Presbytery Fabric Sub-Committee met together with representatives of our Fabric Committee in the month of June and a report has been submitted to us from the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. The Fabric and Finance Committees have met together several times to consider this report and they did not disagree with it in any great detail and it was then taken to the Congregational Board of the Church and it has been accepted in principle by that Court.

The number of items involved is a fairly lengthy one, but it should be said that some of these are minor items. The larger items include the dismantling and rebuilding of the boiler house chimney, the rewiring of the Manse, the external paintwork of the Church, the replacing of the floor in the large hall, the complete repointing of the Memorial Transept (due to faulty mortar) and the repointing of the Manse, the replacing of the west interior wall of the large hall and redecoration both at Church and at Manse.

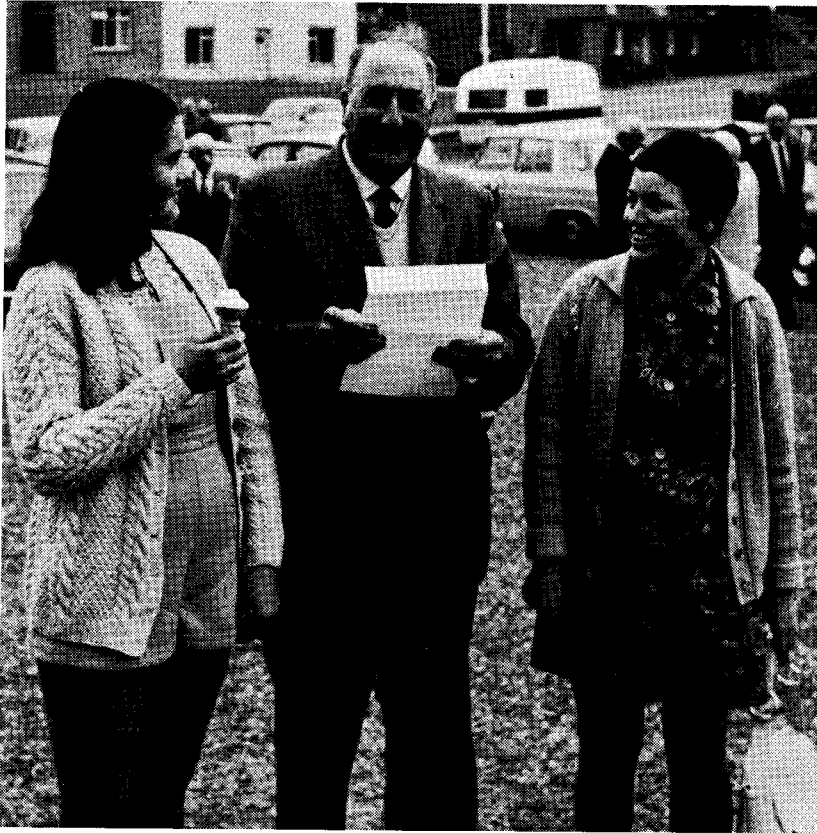
This work and other items has to be phased over the next five years. With rising costs we wish to put right certain items now and already a start has been made and the external paintwork of the Church has been completed and the rewiring of the Manse has been commenced. Emergency work on the roofs of both Church and Manse has also been undertaken.

You can see from this report that the Congregational Board of the Church is very much aware of the situation and the next logical step is to raise the necessary finance. Again this matter is in hand and the fund raising through the sale of Christmas cards and sundries is under way (see separate report), the first of the Retiring Collections at Communion has already been taken and there remains only the letter to all members of the congregation that will be brought to you by your District Elder. With this letter, which was written by a member of the Finance Committee, on the instruction of the Board, will come an envelope for your donation and this will be uplifted by your Elder at a later date. This appeal will be continued for the next five years.

It is an almost impossible task to assess with any great degree of accuracy the final figure that will be involved. It is not possible to have estimates for any work that will be done later in the five year period. Therefore, the Congregational Board can only give you an approximation of £4000-£5000 and it will be necessary to raise £1000 in the first year. That figure, when divided amongst the membership of just over 1000, suggests a modest £1 per member for the next five years.

In any Appeal there must be an incentive to give the Appeal the necessary impetus. The incentive, in this case, could not be greater. It is simply to keep our Sanctuary, with its suite of buildings, as lovely as it is today. As a congregation, we have entered into a glorious heritage in this respect, for none would deny the great beauty of our Church. We now have to see that this beauty is preserved for future generations to enjoy in the fervent hope that as we have diligently attended to the preservation of this building, others will be constrained to do the same in future years.

ELDERLY CITIZENS NIGHT OUT



“SUMMER OUTING”

by James Morgan

This event took place on the evening of 3rd June and was organised by the teenage group and also by Elders and members who very kindly used their own private cars.

Leaving the Church in convoy with the young folks as guides at different points of the chosen route, we were taken away from the usual busy highways to where no public transport operates. This I am sure was a delight to us all.

We had a break at Ceres where the young folk handed us all ice cream.

Then on again through the Howe of Fife where one gets a different view of Largo Law and that area.

Then followed a tour of St. Andrews. Then back to the coast to Leven and over a now very different Standing Stone road en route to the Church for another happy surprise.

The Church hall was set for supper which was served by the ladies.

An evening, I am sure, that we shall remember as a happy one. So, as a member of the Senior Group, I would like on behalf of us all to say a very big “Thank you” to the young folks, our drivers and the ladies at the supper table.

“ICE CREAM SURPRISE”

by Isobel Davidson

On arrival at Elgin Street it became apparent that practically every motoring member of the Church was present for what was to be a very well organised and pleasurable evening from the driving point of view.

We drove to Ceres and then on to St. Andrews through some of Fife's most beautiful countryside — not to mention some most interesting corners!

It was unfortunate that the weather changed on the journey home but the

pleasant companionship of my passengers made the evening slip away very quickly and it seemed no time till we were once more looking for a parking place in Elgin Street.

"A CHECKER'S LOT"

by Patsy Curran

On Wednesday, 2nd June, shortly after 6.15 p.m., fleets of cars set off from the Church at ten minute intervals and the cars numbered forty in all.

There were twenty-four checkers and eighty elderly citizens.

The first cars carried the checkers and they were "deposited" at various points en route. They directed (stood at a corner, leaned against the nearest signpost) and pointed the way for the oncoming cars.

It must be said that checkers, all members of the Teen Church, were very good at waving. Of course there were two types of waves—the friendly wave given to the occupants of the passing cars and the rather wild gesticulations made when a car flew past, going in the wrong direction.

We reached Ceres at 7.15 p.m. and had ice cream there. On finishing their ice cream, served by Mr Slater and delivered to the cars by the checkers, the old folk continued on the road to St. Andrews.

Checkers were placed at strategic points in the town.

The return journey took a different route, providing a great deal of interesting scenery.

In Kirkcaldy, a car broke down, but eventually the entire party was assembled in the Church Hall at 9 p.m.

A hasty check was made on the number of checkers to make sure that they had all been collected. None had been taken for hitch-hikers or potential drinkers.

Well, I ask you! What does someone standing outside a public house in St. Andrews or Strathkinnes waving to a lot of cars really look like?

Supper was served by the ladies of the Church and everyone felt it was a very fitting end to a most enjoyable evening. The noise coming from the Church Hall was very gay and the loudest laughs came from the top table where Mr Graham and his associates seemed to be in high spirits!

Thanks must go to all the drivers who made the outing possible, to the ladies of the Church who prepared a welcome supper, to the Teen Church members who acted as checkers, to the "old folk" themselves and, finally, to Mr Graham who made this year's outing an even greater success than last year's.

Sale of Christmas Cards and Sundries

The Finance Committee gave its blessing to the scheme and in the middle of September it was under way.

As minister, I agreed to the ordering and co-ordinating of the scheme and I was assured of every support.

That promised support has most certainly been given and the scheme is proving most successful. Although it is difficult to give figures at this time, around £300 of cards and sundries have been sold and the profit that should be made by the Church is in the region of 25% of the total. By any standard this is good.

I have been particularly indebted to about a dozen people who have acted as agents for the delivery of their entire Order List. I am most certainly indebted to all who have ordered thus helping us to reach this total. I must also express my indebtedness to the various organisations who have given me the facility of a Sales Table at their various functions.

The venture has meant the ordering and the eventual uplifting of the order (almost once a week) from Glasgow. On one occasion, the order was so great that it was impossible to see out of the rear window of my car. On return, this had to be checked before individual orders could be made up.

My dining room was turned into a cross between Woolworths stationery counter and John Menzies at the Christmas rush. The great conglomeration of items defies any kind of description and Mrs Graham's long-suffering patience has been sorely tried. Not to mention any friends who could no longer be entertained in the dining room.

The midnight oil has been burned on many occasions and the efforts of all members of my family made the task easy both in ordering, in distribution and in that all important aspect, the collection of money. Without them, the task would have been totally impossible.