

Church Contact List

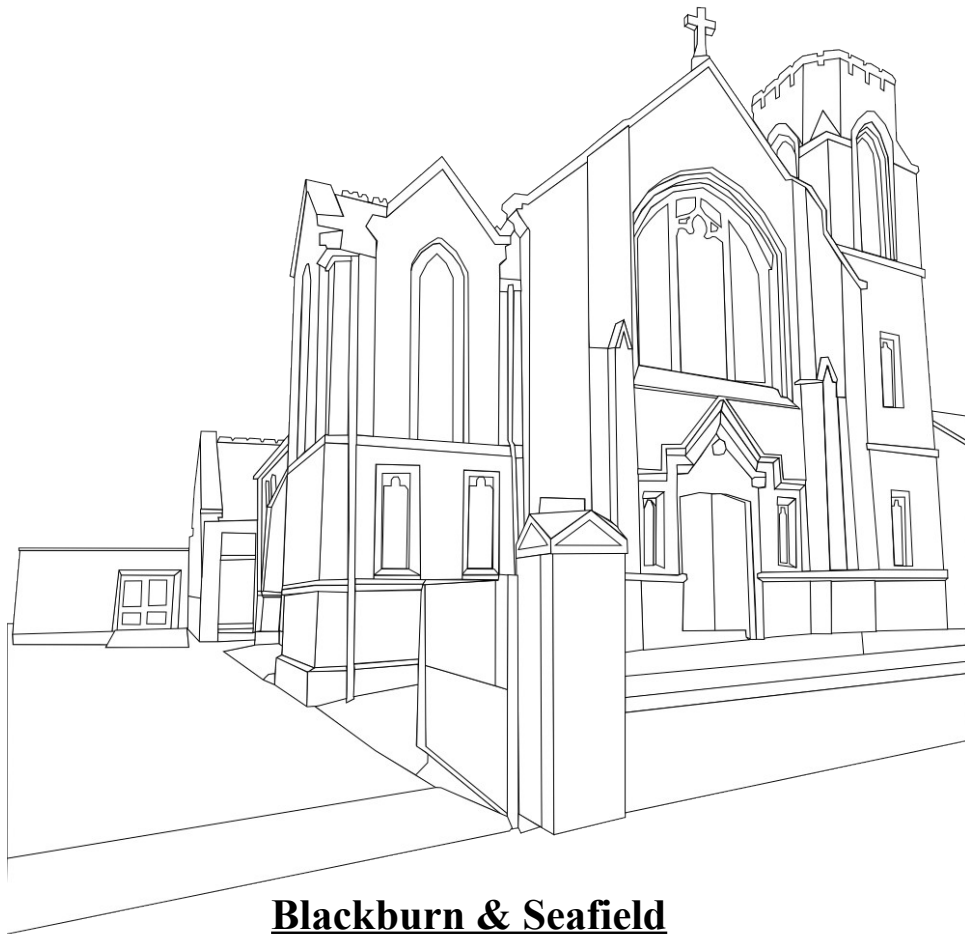
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Any contributions intended for the May Tally Lamp may be passed to the Editor, in writing, or emailed to carne.mcculloch@sky.com by Sunday 30th April 2017.

Blackburn and Seafield Church of Scotland
Scottish Charity No. SCO 24154
www.blackburnandseafieldchurch.co.uk



Blackburn & Seafield
Church of Scotland
Parish News
April 2017

Dear Friends,

It may be helpful for you to be familiarised with what happens next. On Tuesday 4th April West Lothian Presbytery will give Blackburn and Seafield Church permission to call a minister without restriction. This will be granted because the congregation is in a stable and peaceful state with good attendances, because the finances and properties are sound and because there is an excellent manse. Thus the process leading to the calling of a new minister can start immediately. The congregation will be put in the charge of an Interim Moderator. He will be our neighbour the Rev Robert Malloch of The Breich Valley Church. He will be a wise and helpful Interim Moderator. He will chair the Congregational Board and Moderate the Kirk Session. He will appoint a Locum to conduct Sunday Services and take care of pastoral duties. The Presbytery will appoint an Advisory Committee for the vacancy. The Kirk Session has the right under the 2013 Act of Assembly to express the congregation's right to call a minister who holds Christian family values. The Presbytery Clerk will ask for the Electoral Register to be produced for the purposes of electing the members of the Search (Vacancy) Committee. This election will be conducted by the Interim Moderator after worship on a Sunday in the near future. Thereafter the Search Committee will elect its chairperson and its secretary and proceed to advertise the vacancy and invite applications.

As you know there is an acute lack of ministers in the Church of Scotland at the present time. It may be a short or a longer time before a minister can be called. Sincere and continuous prayer will be important and influential.

Vacancies can be good for congregations. The Presbytery Advisory Committee will ask about the hopes and vision for the future of the

Blackburn & Seafield Parish Church of Scotland
Scottish Charity SCO 24154

February Parish Record

Baptism

Maci Connell Paton (30 10 16) 16 Strathyre Place Stoneyburn
- 12th February

March Parish Record

Funeral Service

Margaret Purvis, Heatherfield C.H. - 30th March

April 2017 Calendar

Sun 2nd Apr – 11 00am – Sacrament of Baptism

Wed 5th Apr – 7 00pm – Mid-week Service in the Manse

Sun 9th Apr – 11 00am – Palm Sunday

Wed 12th Apr – 7 00pm - Mid-week Service in the Manse

Thu 13th Apr – 7 30pm – Maundy Thursday Holy Communion

Fri 14th Apr – 7 30pm – Good Friday Service

Sun 16th Apr – 11 00am – Resurrection Day Holy Communion

Sun 23rd Apr – 11 00am – Morning Worship - Sadie Elliott

Sun 30th Apr – 11 00am – Morning Worship – Elaine Wood

Elder's Rota

2nd Apr – E. Stockman, E. Younger, W. Gilfillan, J. Mitchell, E. Wood

9th Apr – A. Gilfillan, I. Brown, I. Milne, J. Robertson, C. McCulloch

16th Apr – R. Dunlop, A. Simpson, M. Brown, F. McLennan, K. Burnett

23rd Apr – J. Muir, A. Muir, D. Anderson, T. Stockman, M. Savage, M. Mason

30th Apr – J. Lumsden, J. McAloon, J. Ewart, G. Todd, C. Naylor

Tea Rota

2nd Apr – J. McAloon, I. Ross, M. Savage, L. Thomson

9th Apr – E. Stockman, K. Younger, M. Brown, S. McGowan

16th Apr – A. Gilfillan, C. McCulloch, M. Mason, S. Merry

23rd Apr – G. Anderson, E. Brown, M. Millar, M. Todd, M. Boyd

30th Apr – I. Culpin, S. Milligan, S. Stevenson, I. Henderson, M. Shields

Flowers for the Sanctuary

2nd Apr – Flower Fund

9th Apr – Flower Fund

16th Apr – Mrs. K. McSherry

23rd Apr – Mrs. M. Bell

30th Apr – Mrs. S. Burns

Isobel Brown (to Minister) – “Your sermons are wonderful now that you’re leaving”.

After almost two decades of ministry, it will be with heavy hearts that we say goodbye to the Minister. Robert has been a wonderful and reliable source of inspiration and faith for our own family and countless others too; we would like to wish Robert and Christine a Happy Retirement and all the best of luck in their future endeavours together.

- Editor & Family

O taste and see that the Lord is good, happy is the man who takes refuge in Him.

Psalm 34: 18

congregation. Elders and others can hold everyone and everything together. What is essential is that there is unity and that faithful folk continue to attend.

It is very hard to give up the calling of being a parish minister. However, Christians must be positive of disposition and full of Faith. There is a good ministry here awaiting the right person. Our Lord Jesus Himself said, *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid...I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete...I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die.*''

Robert Anderson

The Beatitudes

Beatitude means supreme blessedness, happiness. When I was Chaplain to Shotts Prison I conducted a Bible study on The Beatitudes. I was interrupted by a sturdy, bald, tattooed middle-aged inmate who said 'I'll tell you what happiness is – it is sitting on top of the Cuillins with a bottle of whisky and £10,000 in your pocket'.

The Beatitudes are not about the future – they are about the present. Jesus was saying 'You are very happy – you who are poor in spirit'. The beatitudes are a kind of congratulations. All advertising is about connecting happiness with possessions, pleasures, well-being and financial prosperity. Christian spiritual blessedness is much deeper. It is not dependent on things and not even on people. It is a state of the inner being, of the soul. It is serene and untouchable. It is a

fortress and a castle. The Beatitudes are expressions of this lasting Godly joy.

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. On the face of it this seems an extraordinary contradiction. The word poor here does not mean poverty as politically calculated in our society which is an income below £16,000 for a single person and £22,000 for a couple. In this beatitude it is abject poverty that is being described. But this is an example of poverty to lead us to the idea of spiritual poverty. It is a spiritual state that is being mooted. The opposite of spiritual arrogance and spiritual pride. It means having to depend upon and trust in God. It is poor people who live closest to God. Some words from Burns's *Cottars Saturday Night* illustrate the point.

Then, kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King, The saint, the father, and the husband prays: Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing," That thus they all shall meet in future days, There, ever bask in uncreated rays,

There are some here who remember this wholesome goodness – this being poor in spirit. It's only one generation away. One of our former members was described by her son-in-law as being 'completely unmaterialistic' - a contrast to his own drive and ambition. Jesus was not validating poverty. Christianity has done more than any other agency in human history to alleviate poverty. Spiritual poverty is having a humble heart before God. That is a condition of inner blessedness which nothing and no-one can destroy.

Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted This is more understandable and closer to human experience by its association with bereavement. The depth and pain of bereavement is

Please pray for...

The protection of Christians who have been unable to flee Iraq and Syria.

For our Christian brothers and sisters who continue to experience on-going and devastating trauma as a result of the conflict in the Middle East.

Also, for the work of the Bible Society staff in Iraq as they continue to distribute God's word.

Please pray for their safety as they continue to work in dangerous conditions.

Happy Easter

Wishing everyone a wonderful and joyous Easter! May the Lord Bless you and your families and keep you safe. May we remember the holiness and significance of this time as Christians and, with hope, may we pass this on to our Children and Grand-children. Peace and goodwill to you, me and the world.

- Editor

Easter Sunrise Surprise

He is not here; he has risen! Luke 24:6a (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 24:1-12 (NIV).



Y L X Y P K W G P R X I F L W
D B A R H V N E S P I C E S K
P W V S L I P U E F Z S Z U T
A R W A N U S V T K Q A E F N
G D O R C K T Z O W T J O N A
Y R O L T Q O K M B O D Y L Z
G M O W L D N E B S S T B Q J
Y D B U G E E V N R T H K E Z
W L Z O N Q D U L T W H J M T
F O I Q W D J U F O E R X S C
R R M V R E M E M B E R R S I
J D I E I U D P R E C I E P K
G F E G N N N B D D F C G D O
O D D A H S G C Q A A I X I V
L A T F D T M P J F Y Z T F L

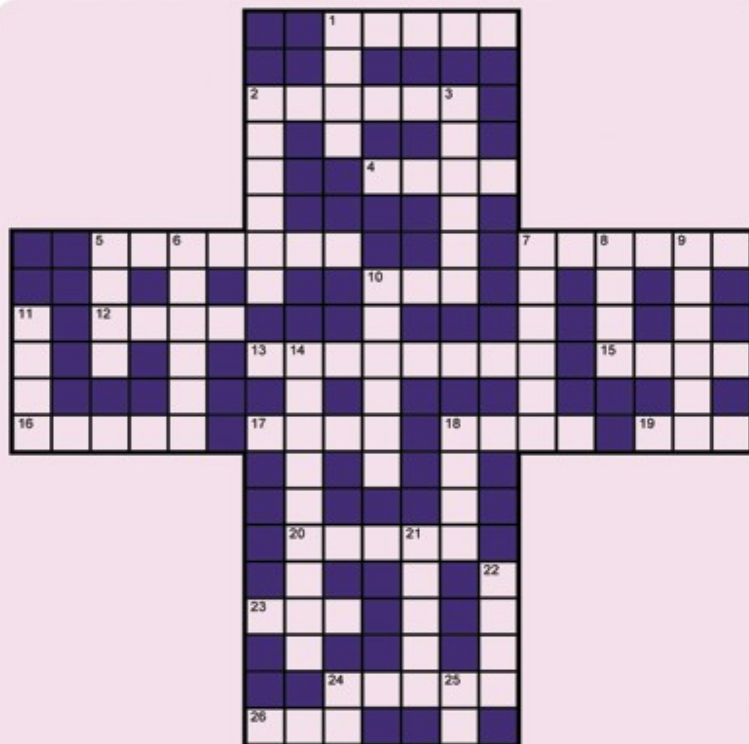
living	tomb	rolled	risen	dead
women	first	spices	away	bowed
faces	stone	entered	ground	remember
morning	week	body	fright	day

a mirror of the loving relationship which preceded. It is also the case that after time has passed the raw cutting heartbreak of bereavement lessens and a measure of comfort returns in its place. That said, people react differently to loss. Sometimes over the years when I have gone back to visit a family after conducting a funeral service I have felt distinctly unwelcome. 'What is he after' seems to be what the facial expression is saying. One elderly man actually asked what it was I wanted from him. In other cases, the family has already moved on and does not want to be reminded of the bereavement even if it is only a few days or weeks since. Mostly, however there is just a sense of emptiness and disbelief that the loved person is no longer here. Often if there has been suffering there is accompanying relief of not having to watch such weakness and discomfort or pain. This beatitude is saying that it is beautiful to mourn. It means more however. It means having sympathy and empathy for the condition of humanity. It means identifying with those who are suffering. It means not hardening our hearts against the troubled of the world. And this beatitude also means having feelings of sorrow for personal fault, sin and failing towards God. None of us are exempt. And sometimes we indeed need to be sorry and have a lot of confession to make before God. But it is good to do so, healthy for the mind and soul. It is a search for peace and forgiveness and we are assured that that is freely offered to us in Jesus Christ. That is what is meant in saying 'they will be comforted'.

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth This is the opposite of what appears to be the case in the human community. The world's wealth is held by a small percentage of earth's population. There is only a handful of really powerful national leaders in the world. Multi-national companies dominate business, commerce and society. Being 'meek' is never associated with status and power. What was Jesus getting at? Meek is not a good word in our language. It suggests being submissive and ineffective. William

Barclay former Professor of New Testament at Glasgow University - I was one of his students – used the Bible words in their context to tease out their meanings. 'Meek' he says can mean having your emotions and impulses under control. The difference, say, between a domesticated animal and a wild animal. The difference between a socialised teenager and a feral teenager. The difference between a gentle-man and a wife abuser. The difference between a considerate woman and one who is argumentative and difficult. Meekness further can mean not being proud or arrogant. It does not mean being a doormat. It means being balanced in relationships and judgement. It means being open to ideas and being teachable. Some people give the impression that they know everything. But how can 'the meek' inherit the earth? It was said of Moses *Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all men that were on the face of the earth*. Moses, we know, had one of the very greatest lives ever lived. Those who are of humble disposition leave humanity the best examples and live long in the memory of the human community. Jesus Himself more than anyone. He inherited the earth through his own meekness even though he was the Son of God.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Real physical hunger and thirst are not things we ourselves know much about. But the poor labourers and families of Jesus' time did struggle in this way as some refugees do today and people in places hit by drought and famine. This is an illustration of having a desperate need to be a good person. It is not wishful thinking that is meant but a serious craving and want to be just and fair and kind and helpful. I remember our Jack when he was younger and in trouble crying and saying 'I want to be good – but I can't'. Paul said the same thing. *For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing.* (Romans 7:19). This beatitude offers the promise that if you seek God you will find God. If you want to be a good Christian – seriously – then you can



Across

- 1 Goes with error (5)
- 2 Caesar + Pontius pilate (6)
- 4 Had a little lamb (4)
- 5 Name of play (7)
- 7 From Amsterdam? (6)
- 10 Has a shell (3)
- 12 Supplied money to (4)
- 13 Cross? (8)
- 15 Anno (L) (4)
- 16 Chocolate one (5)
- 17 Signed with (l o) l? (4)
- 18 Do for lent (4)
- 19 King (L) (3)
- 20 Light a candle with (5)
- 23 Of a kind? (3)
- 24 Focus of Easter (5)
- 26 Son of (Gaelic) (3)

Down

- 1 Grave (4)
- 2 Pull out of a hat? (6)
- 3 Firm, as in faith (6)
- 5 Emblem of victory (4)
- 6 Day of rest (6)
- 7 Made a crown from (6)
- 8 Of the valley? (4)
- 9 Procession (6)
- 10 Holidays (6)
- 11 Meal for passover (4)
- 14 The reconciliation (theo) (9)
- 18 Goes with chips (4)
- 21 Easter symbol (5)
- 22 Service (4)
- 24 His Initials (2)
- 25 Risen (2)



1st Blackburn Girls' Brigade
01506 631833



Hello everyone,

It's hard to believe that in a few weeks we will be getting organised for our annual badge service.

The girls have all been busy in their sections and have made lovely Mother's Day and Easter crafts, especially the wee explorers.

The Juniors have been learning First Aid with Stefan from West Lothian First Responders. Their efforts at bandaging each other raised much laughter! Super efforts though.

The Brigaders had a super night in Lanark at "Whuppity Scourie" on 1st March. They made paper balls tied with string and took part in the ancient annual event by running 3 times round the Parish Church before taking part in the Scramble which followed. This was for the Myths and Legends part of their badge work. We then proceeded to the top of the town for chips from the famous Valerio's chip shop. The girls and Elaine and I thoroughly enjoyed our "night out". ☺

We wish you all every blessing for Easter.

and will be. If you want forgiveness and salvation – they are freely offered for the asking. It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ that is the offer and the prize. It is His righteousness that makes us righteous and fulfils our spiritual hunger and thirst.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy This makes sense. We realise that we can hardly ask to be forgiven if we ourselves do not forgive. We appreciate and value human compassion. But many are hard of heart towards others. Successful business people have a hard edge to their personalities. We know the phrase ‘cut throat business’. When I was 16 I worked on a building site as a summer job. Bert Palmer was one of the owners with his brother Bill. Bert was a character. One day he passed one of his labourers and noticed that the top of the front of his boot had come away and was flapping about. ‘Can you not get a better pair of boots than that?’ he asked. ‘Times is hard, I can’t afford a new pair’ was the reply. ‘That’s terrible, I’ll help you’ said Bert. Bert put his hand in his pocket and took out a large wad of notes held together by a thick elastic band. He took off the elastic band and gave it to the labourer. ‘Put that round your boot’ he said and walked on. In Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* Portia says *The quality of mercy is not strained; It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:* Being merciful means thinking about things from the other person’s perspective. To take everything into consideration before making a judgement. It is God’s mercy that we seek and our Lord asks us as we receive mercy ourselves to be merciful.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Can anyone actually be pure in heart in our society today? Every one of the seven deadly sins is paraded in front of our eyes on television 24/7. Pride, Lust, Gluttony, Greed, Laziness, Anger and Envy. But the beatitude is more about personal integrity and inner consistency. It is about having good motives for actions. It is about self-understanding in relation to God. Elijah challenged the people of God with the image of the prophets of Baal whose ritual dance – like those of American Indians – involved hopping from one foot to another ‘How long will you limp between opinions?’. Are you for God or Baal? He asked. Are you for Jesus Christ and/or someone else? Jesus said ‘No-one comes to the Father except by me’. No-one offers us the one to one personal relationship with God as Father that Jesus does. Is our devotion to the Lord 100%? Do we look for answers elsewhere? Focussing on Christ is the way to see God at work.

Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God Children reflect the values of their parents at least as they grow up, whatever they may do in adulthood. Peacemakers on earth reflect the nature of God. Jesus Himself did so. There is a difference between being a peace-lover – a peacenik – and being a peace maker. Actively seeking peace and reconciliation can be a difficult task. In politics, lots of compromises are required and underhand deals are made. No-one knew that Tony Blair’s much hailed peace accord for Northern Ireland involved a secret guarantee that IRA members would not be pursued for their crimes. Large amounts of cash are transferred to bank accounts before apparent international peace agreements are announced and signed. The Church of Scotland has a process called *A Place for Hope* to bring peace to troubled congregations. Family life can be fraught with tensions and quarrels. Family businesses are notorious for lifelong fallings out and permanent enmities. Are you even at peace with yourself? Are

you at peace with God? If so – you may indeed become a peace-maker.

Children

Ailie (aged 3 – mixing up her t's and k's) – “My Uncle Alan has got girlie books”

Blair (after the first Hymn at his Baptismal Service) – “Do I get a sausage roll now?”

Colum Findlay – “My Gran does her baking in a bikini”

Joe Faulkner – “What page are the jokes on?”

Minister to Rachel (aged 6) – “Did you get 50p for that missing tooth?”

Rachel – “No, I got £5”

Married Strife

Prospective Groom – “With your carpet down they'll no hear the call and chain being dragged along as I leave the Church”

Willie Gilfillan – “She's got a new cooker so that she can burn things faster!”

George Smith (describing his wife's health) – “She's improving – she's moaning the face aff me”

Lizzie Topping – “If the pill had been oot earlier – the last three widnae be here!”

Centenary Quips

Characters

Kate (on Sandy's Bell-ringing) – “When he goes up, his trousers fall down!”

Kate Younger – “I cadged some clunk junk from June Muir”

Ruby Nelson – “I'm no worth a curdy”

Margaret Ramage – “You should go and see the line dancing outside the Post Office on a Monday morning at 9 o' clock”

Eddie Younger – “I came out of Harrods with a *Scotsman* in a Harrods bag”

Irene Milne (tidying up Church gardens) – “Here comes Groundforce!”

Isobel Brown – “Geordie said my new hair-do made me look like Barbara Cartland. I'll need to get a sticky out pink frock”

Annie Davis – “Oor Steven – whit an appetite – he's like Desperate Dan!”

Doreen Brown – “Annie can eat an apple with her teeth oot!”

Cissie Baird – “I’m not saying a word – I don’t want to be in *The Tally Lamp!*”

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven Jesus warned his followers often that they would suffer persecution for his sake. And we know that today some Christians suffer persecution for Christ. Jesus assures any that they will know his presence and his blessing in their persecution. And that has been the case. Paul sang his heart out in prison. Martyrs went joyfully to their deaths. Blessed spiritual fulfilment accompanies faithfulness to Jesus in any age. Ours today is no great persecution but it is opposition to and rejection of our Lord. Let us never be afraid to name Jesus as Saviour and to know the blessedness that Christian courage brings.

John & Sally wish everyone a Happy Easter and the Lord’s Blessing to all in our Church. We are donating the money from our cards to the Sudan Appeal.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, with thanks we come to you for again you have helped us, again and again you have let your light shine out on us so that we could be glad and know that our lives are in your hands. Protect us where it is so necessary. Protect us that the light of true life may shine more brightly and we may praise your name with our whole heart, be with us morning and night Lord, and touch our hearts with your Spirit. Amen.

Follow us on
Facebook!



Dear friends of Stepping Stones,

March is another month that has whizzed past. We have had lots of fun though and I have to say a big thank you to Moira and Agnes for helping out so much, allowing me to go and watch Cameron & Skye play basketball some Sunday mornings.

During March, we looked at the 'Am I being unfair to you' theme from the World Day of Prayer, have made some lovely crafts and finished off March making Mother's day cards and bags, which I have to say all looked great - I love how the children all made their own unique designs!

We are now on holiday for the school break, the first three weeks of April and will return on Sunday 23rd April as normal. 10:45am in the church hall. All children will be made welcome ☺

Now, I can't write this little article without mentioning our great Minister, Robert Anderson and his wonderful wife, Christine. I think we are all pretending (myself especially), that he is not really retiring and that they will always be here! However it is true and they will leave us in April ☹️ I would like to thank them both on behalf of Stepping Stones for all their help over the years. Robert has allowed me free reign to run Stepping Stones over the last 6 years and has never chased me when I have told him our plans or the sometimes alternative ideas the children have for our nativity! He has been brilliant to work with and Christine has always been an ever willing helper, loved by the children. Robert has also faithfully supported my family in both our happiest and saddest of times and we will be forever grateful for this. Robert and Christine will be truly missed by myself, my family and Stepping Stones. We wish them all the best for their new adventures and I can honestly say that they will never be forgotten - Godspeed.

With best wishes for Easter too!

God bless, Tracy

April Stepping Stones Rota

Sunday 2nd April - Stepping Stones is on holiday
Sunday 9th April - Stepping Stones is on holiday
Sunday 16th April - Stepping Stones is on holiday
Sunday 23rd April - Moira Brown
Sunday 30th April - Elma Stockman
Sunday 7th May - Agnes Muir