

## **REPORT FROM CHAIR**

During the year 2008-2009 we said good bye to Rev Calvin-Thomas of St. Luke's Church and they, together with Christ Kirk and Leslie Baptist Church, now await the appointment of new leaders. We pray these appointments will be made soon and we can once again have a full compliment of clergy in the town.

We have had a very full year once again and this started in September with a visit from Ann Teye from Age Concern who gave us a fuller picture of the work they do in Glenrothes. Ann told us there are 12 day centres operating in Glenrothes and there is a waiting list of clients who would benefit from their services. Ann also said volunteers were always needed and anyone interested in joining them would be made very welcome.

In October the clergy were once again especially invited to join us so we could discuss other opportunities where we could work together. It was suggested we could possibly join with other agencies working in the town, in particular with H2O where we could have an 'all age' time of worship. H2O is the Youth Fellowships in the town coming together for worship and fun and was started by Gwynneth, our GROW youth worker. You may remember GROW was an initiative of Churches Together and if we could have a joint venture with them it was felt this would be a good way to support Gwynneth and the young folk in our churches. During our discussions it was suggested we could include a short Bible reading during our annual carol singing in the town centre and it is planned to include this in 2009. A suggestion we could contact the Town Centre manager was made, with a view to having a prayer or blessing tree in the centre and although the tree was not a possibility, Mr Forrester agreed to a prayer box being on the information desk over the Christmas period. He also kindly agreed to having the box at Easter time too. This was felt to be a good outreach to the people of the town and 14 prayers were received which were shared with all the churches. Hopefully this will grow over the years.

Also in October a Mission evening was held in St. Luke's church where five churches presented photographic displays and explained the mission work being undertaken in their churches.

Trish O'Brien, the Gilven Project Manager, visited at our November meeting and explained how this project operates and also gave us useful information regarding their joint venture with Bethany Christian Trust. Trish asked us to pray for this project as it is an essential part of the work going on in the town with the homeless folk. The project gives these young people the opportunity to come off drug and alcohol dependency and gives them, possibly for the first time in their lives, an experience of loving support and friendship.

Our Advent service in December was held in St. Ninian's church and we had our usual Carol singing in the town centre. This was quite well attended, although more singers are most welcome to join us. It was felt there was an especially good atmosphere this year possibly because we were singing around the Christmas tree and not to the side as previously. We were pleased to be able to give the donations received at the carol singing to the Glenrothes Bible Society Action Group.

In January the Week of Prayer for Unity of Christians lunchtime services were once again held in St. Luke's Church. The theme this year was 'Reconcile Your People' which drew on the experiences of the Korean church. The material was well received and we thank those who led the time of worship each day. It was good to have a chat with friends during lunch and thanks to all those who provided the lovely sandwiches. The Sunday service was held in the United Reformed church in Coaltown and we thanked Kathryn for the very meaningful and peaceful time of worship. Our annual fellowship meal was hosted by Christ Kirk and was once again an excellent success. This occasion is always well attended and the variety of the entertainment provided by Christ Kirk was first class and gave us another memorable evening.

This year is the 200th Anniversary of the Bible Society and in February we were delighted when Allan announced that the Glenrothes Action Group had enough funds, over £1000, to send 2 schools from the Glenrothes area to the Bibleworld exhibition in Edinburgh. This was a great achievement made possible by the hard work and dedication of Allan and his colleagues.

Also in January the YW/YMCA requested sleeping bags for the homeless. These prayers were definitely answered as so many sleeping bags were received the staff at Y were able to give some sleeping bags away to the other projects one of which was the Wash. These extra sleeping bags will be used by the residents themselves or will allow them to have a visitor stay over as they only have one bed in their flat. Also in the Y the Gravy Train now has seven groups of volunteers taking it in turns to prepare and serve a hot meal for the Big Issue sellers and homeless people. This is very much appreciated and there is always a happy atmosphere amongst the volunteers and recipients.

The Lent Study material used by most this year was Scripture Union's 'Ram to Lamb' which was excellent material and very well received. The United Reformed church used the material 'Sense Making Faith' which was also very good. There were five groups throughout the area and although quite well attended it was thought the attendances at some groups were lower than previous years so we hope to build on this in the future.

It was also noted in March that the Christian View Point was no longer appearing in the Gazette. Two of our clergy had an interview with the editor of the paper but it would appear that her decision was final. However we all know prayer can change things and we have invited the editor to come and talk with us at our October or November meeting.

During Holy week there were many times of worship intimated which were open to everyone to attend. On Palm Sunday the Ecumenical Stations of the Cross was held at St. Mary's in Leslie and a Labyrinth walk was held in the evening at Christ Kirk. This payer walk was repeated on Monday evening after a service of worship. All churches had various services during Holy week including communion on the Thursday evening and meditations and vigils on Good Friday. On Easter morning two services were held, one on Falkland Hill and one in Balbirnie Park where our risen Christ was celebrated. It is hoped possibly next year we can have a joint service of worship and this is to be discussed by the clergy.

Also in April we were given notice that the mission ship 'Logos Hope' would be visiting at Leith and dates and times when the ship would be open to the public, were given.

In May we once again manned the Christian Aid table in the town centre as well as individual churches doing door-to-door collections in their own areas.

Constance Robertson has given us information on a session she attended regarding Restorative Justice and reported that there was the possibility of an Ecumenical Group being formed to deal with the issues of Justice and Peace. A meeting for this topic was held in St. Columba's on the 4<sup>th</sup> April led by Very Rev. Andrew McLellan, chief Inspector of Prisons and Rev. Dr Graham Blount, formerly Churches Parliamentary Officer. We have also been asked to prayerfully consider the subject of Justice, Peace and Integrity with Creation with a view to starting a group locally. We thank Constance for the work she is doing and for bringing this information to our meetings.

Constance has also informed us that Fife Interfaith Group will be holding a Big Tent event during the summer.

During the year 'Hope 08' invited us to plant wooden stakes throughout our area to claim the land back for our Lord. Two or three stakes have been planted and the short prayer times held were very moving and thought provoking.

We have also been kept up to date with issues being dealt with by the Futures Group. These issues affect us all in Glenrothes and the surrounding area and need our prayerful support.

During the year there have been a lot of opportunities for us to meet together in fellowship and worship and, with prayer, we can only go from strength to strength in serving our Lord here in Glenrothes and the surrounding villages.

I thank each one of you for all the work you do throughout the year, mostly unseen, and look forward to next year when we can continue to work for God in each of Churches and throughout the communities we serve in His name.