

The Magazine of: St Augustine's Scottish Episcopal Church, Dumbarton and St Mungo's Scottish Episcopal Church, Alexandria

Issue No 26 March 2017









# NO BANNER HEADLINE THIS MONTH?



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## **LENT GROUP**

# "A different way of praying through Lent"



Every Wednesday Starting Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March The Rectory, Alexandria 7.30 – 9pm Ied by Kenny *Come as you are, and enjoy an evening of exploration!* 



Sing a Song for Erskine with All Sorts Choir at St Augustine's Church



Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 7pm Ticket £5

from Community Hall or phone Ghislaine 0739 7988384

Money to Erskine Hospital

Kindness comes in many forms but always from the heart.

#### ...and the dish ran away with the spoon!

**YOUR KINDNESS CHALLENGE!** 

During the 40 days of Lent perform 40 kind acts

Then put  $\pounds 1$  in the jar /box at the end

of each day as a reminder of your

achievement

You should collect £40! Please return your money to St Aug's/St Mungo's on Easter Sunday (you might also pop in a £1 if you receive a kind act from someone else during a day)

All money to St Andrew's, Lamin, The Gambia

**GOOD LUCK!** 



But it's not just one dish that ran away, it's 12 white, china soup plates that have gone missing from St Aug's Hall. Please help Fran find them.

PS the spoons are ok.

Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time, and always start with the person nearest you.

- Mother Teres



## From Kenny...

As I came out of church recently, someone, jokingly, I hope, said to me that she was going to stop coming on Sundays because my sermons sometimes made her feel bad about herself or unworthy. It's certainly something that I've pondered since. Surely sermons

shouldn't have that effect on folk, and people should come out from the Eucharist feeling affirmed and loved.

The thing is, that mostly, I preach to myself, and talk about stuff that I struggle with personally, and I have never preached anything to target anyone personally. If I point one finger at you, I point three at myself! Then, it really gets down to, 'if the cap fits then wear it!'

I've pondered, too, about the fact that Lent is almost upon us, as I write, and there may well be things said that people don't feel comfortable with, but a wise priest once underlined that preaching was a bit like comforting the distressed, and distressing the comfortable!

A good few years ago now I was asked to bless a house. As I performed the blessing, the lady escorted me around her home. I noticed that not a thing was out of place. Everything was neat and orderly. Not a cobweb or a bit of dust was to be seen.

I sprinkled each room with holy water as she had asked, the living room, the study, kitchen, bathroom and bedrooms. We ended up at the door that led to the basement. Seeing me hesitate there, she said, 'Oh you wouldn't want to go down there!', so I left it like that.

Afterwards, I wondered why she had refused to take me to the basement! (As you might!). Was it that she did not want to be embarrassed by the mess, or the junk that she'd thrown down there? I doubt that there was anything more sinister down there. Who knows?

How typical her reaction was, though. The parts of ourselves and our society that are most in need of redemption are the parts we tend to hide, or are anxious that others don't see. We don't want the light to shine into the dark areas of our lives or our societies. However, the dark areas are the ones that have most need of the light!

Every house, indeed every person, has a basement area. In most houses it's usually a cupboard or two that stuff just gets thrown into and ignored. Attics are good for that.

But what are we to do with the grubbier parts of ourselves?

Lent gives us the opportunity to open them to the light of Christ, and the light of Christ comes to us as a friend. He did not come to judge us, but to redeem us, to show us how to live, to show us a way to the Father's Kingdom.

Jesus shed light through his teaching, but more especially how he treated other people. Many people came to him in darkness and went away bathed in light.

If a sermon, or a book, or a comment shines a light in a wee dark bit in your soul, just accept it and get to work on it, for it needs your attention, and Lent is a great time to seize on that. Clean up your inner basements, your inner-cupboards or your inner-lofts!

If you need, though, something else to try as a Lenten exercise, get to work on treating people as Jesus did, shedding a bit of light into **their** lives with a little act of love. We sometimes don't treat one another very well, you see.

The Lent Appeal this year is focussed on this performing of little acts of love. You will read more about it in this magazine. Think of the light, the power and the joy you can store up for yourself by putting someone else first, by saying something positive, by lifting a phone or sending a card. Work hard at building up community in both parishes by going out your way to be kind, gentle and loving, just as Jesus is.

By Easter, your Lent Box/jar will be full to overflowing!

Kenny





Last year a friend of mine decided that for the 40 days of Lent she would do 40 random acts of kindness. So on one day she bought a homeless woman on the street a cup of coffee... another day she had dinner all ready for her mum who got

home late... and on one occasion she even paid for a lady's shopping who was ahead of her in the queue in the supermarket much to the lady's surprise! That Lent for her was a time of thinking of strangers and friends alike....a time of seeing need, and doing something about it – not because she wanted thanks or recognition or a pat on the back... but doing it 'just and because'.

This year Anne and Morag have invited the congregation of St Augs (and St Mungo's if they wish!) to take on the challenge of 'doing daily acts of kindness'. The idea is to try and do an act of kindness to someone every day during Lent – and to put £1 into the jam-jar/Lent box when completed. When I gave out some jars this last weekend the reaction of some was 'I'll have to put £1 in for all the kindnesses shown to *me* instead – because people are so kind to me every single day!' And yes – you could do that instead/as well. What could be better than coming to the end of Lent with a more grateful and appreciative heart for all that is done for you?

Random acts of kindness - it's the being watchful during our day for opportunities to brighten someone else's day. It could be as simple as saying hello to those you don't know in the street... or giving a smile to those who serve behind the counters in the shops you use.... or texting a word of encouragement to someone who has been feeling low. It could be giving a compliment or saying a particular thank you to someone who does something for you. I heard a priest on the radio recently who said that last year she bought 40 thank you cards and stamps and posted a thank you every day to those who are part of her life but whom she often takes for granted - it included the woman who cleaned her office... her hairdresser... the receptionist at her doctors... the postman and binmen of her street.

You know, don't you, how it feels to receive a thank you letter out of the blue? Or to receive an unexpected text or compliment? It makes your day, doesn't it? Receiving such little acts of kindness instinctively touches a part of our hearts which makes us feel valued, warmed and precious. We recognise that such acts are a speaking of one heart to another... and we cannot help but respond with gratitude and wonder. Receiving such acts make us feel better and they make the day shine a little brighter.

I'm sure the doing of such acts also makes the do-er feel better... even if the act is not widely known or public. It is in the thinking and completion of such wee acts that the fires of generosity and compassion are flamed... and the smoke of selfishness and pride are doused. They strike one another out. They are opposites. And whichever polar opposite we practice most will be the one that wins the highest place in our soul. Doing wee acts of love will ensure that compassion and mercy and kindness become stronger within us this Lent.

One of the Proverbs says "Do not let kindness and truth leave you. Bind them around your neck. And write them on the tablet of your heart." What a wonderful picture to have before us. And St Paul writes: "Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." It has been the same God-focussed call for countless years.

So I hope you 'enjoy' Lent... and in being kind find some peace and contentment in your souls. I am sure that because of your wee acts many people will know a 'happy moment'...and perhaps through you experience the love of Christ for the first time. As Maya Angelou said, "At the end of the day people might not remember what you said or did... but they WILL remember how you made them feel." Go and make someone else feel good!

#### With love, Liz xx

"Ask yourself: Have you been kind today? Make kindness your modus operandi and **Change your world."** ~Annie Lennox



#### A Thought for Lent

It hardly seems any time since we were celebrating Christmas and now we are into Lent and looking towards Easter.

Lent is usually regarded as a time of waiting for the events of Holy Week and Easter and perhaps a time when we consider'giving up something for Lent.'

I am sure it can only be good for us if we deprive ourselves of something we enjoy but only if it has a purpose. There would seem to be little point in depriving ourselves just to prove how strong willed we are. If we stop eating sweets or chocolate for example, do we donate the money we might have spent to a charity?

But Lent means much more that simply depriving ourselves.

It is a time when we need to think about what Christ taught us through his life and ministry. A time when we might set aside some time to read again about the events that led to the Cross. A time to read about the wonderful events of Easter.

Lent may sometimes seem a dull and drab time with its talk of fasting and penitence but it can be a time of preparation for the great news of joy and gladness. When the dark night of the crucifixion became the bright dawn of Easter bringing hope and joy into the world for you and for me.

Lord God, with Lent we approach the springtime of the year when the face of the earth is renewed and life emerges out of death.

We pray that this season of Lent maybe as a springtime for our souls so that our lives, quickened by the breath of the Spirit and warmed by the sunshine of your love, may bear abundant fruit and be made radiant with the beauty of holiness.

#### Vacancy Report

There is little progress to report at this time: the Profile has been accepted by the Moderators

Meeting and the Vacancy notice will circulated to all ministers.

The financial details still have to be arranged between the two churches and this involves ongoing discussion.

<u>John Clark</u>

#### Let me keep Lent

Let me keep Lent; Let me not kneel and pray. Forego some trifle every day Fast- and take Sacrament – and then Lend tongue to slander, Hold ancient grudge, deny The very Lord whom I would glorify.

Let me keep Lent; Let my heart grow in grace, Let thy light shine till my illuminated face Shall be a testament read by all men That hate is buried, Self crucified – new born The spirit that shall rise on Easter morn Author unknown

## **Gentle Thoughts**

A penny saved is a government oversight

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

He who hesitates is probably right.

Did you ever notice that the Roman numerals for forty are 'XL'

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight because by then your body and your fat have become really good friends.

Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about you age and start bragging about it.

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything.

They just make the best of everything they have.

Lord, keep your arm round my shoulder and your hand over my mouth...Amen





'And then there were none' The birthday cake didn't last long – but the birthday girl did get a piece!

FRIENDS OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S COME WITH US ACROSS THE SEA TO IRELAND... FOR.... ShamroCks AND

*On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm.* 3 course Irish Meal with drink and entertainment. Raffle.

Cost: £11 (£10 members)

### St Aug's MAP Year 4 signed, up and running! (St Mungo's next!)



Mirrin may have made a picture – but she had also danced and danced during Sunday School!

## SMILE LINES

#### The taxi

The passenger tapped the cab driver on the shoulder to ask him something. The driver screamed, lost control of the car, nearly hit a bus, went up on the pavement, and stopped inches from a department store window. For a second everything went quiet in the cab, then the driver said, 'Look mate, don't ever do that again. You scared me half to death!'

The passenger apologized and said he hadn't realized that just a little tap could scare him so much. The driver replied, 'You're right. I'm sorry. Really, it's not your fault. Today is my first day as a cab driver. I've been driving a hearse for 25 years.'

#### Walking

If walking/cycling is really so good for one's health, the postman would be immortal.

#### Letter to God

A Sunday School teacher invited her children to write a letter to God. They were to bring their letter back the following Sunday. One little boy wrote, "Dear God, We had a really good time at church today. Wish you could have been there."

#### **First things first**

A Sunday School teacher had just concluded her lesson on the Atonement. 'So, can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?"

There was a short pause and then, from the back of the room, a small boy put up his hand. 'Sin?' he said.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT & LENT

January and February have been very different this year with Food for Thought being much busier than usual with another agency referring to us, making the total 53. Sadly the increasing number of referrers and referrals mean that more people are living with little or no money and need our service.



To replenish the cupboard we were invited to take part in a "Supermarket Sweep" in Aldi although sadly it was without the presence of the gorgeous orange Dale Winton! From the mad dash around the shop we have received food vouchers to the value of £293. Many thanks to Alicia Clyde who did the running around the shop and collecting for us!

Thinking of the weeks of Lent ahead of us, my Lent challenge will be slightly different from Anne &

Morag's appeal for St Andrews, Lamin. I am again asking my facebook family and friends to donate to the Nursery in Gambia. Personally, I am giving up Greggs (breakfast bacon roll and huge coffee) and the evening Whisky (!!!) for the 40 days - so that should easily fill my jar!! At Easter I would like to give Sulayman, the Nursery's headmaster, enough money to buy the kids another experience day out and maybe some more toys and games. So if anyone wants to help out by giving me money to encourage me and benefit the kids, that would be great.

On a more personal note, you may know that I had a 2 week absence from work due to my mum's illness and subsequent passing. Food for Thought volunteers made me feart for my job as they brilliantly carried on the day to day running of the project... but, thankfully for me, gave me my job back on my return! To all who helped I thank you. Many would have gone hungry without your support and daily turning up.

To the many who sent cards and gave hugs can I say that the support I received and continue to receive is incredible and so much appreciated. *Caroline Marsland* 





Children at our Nursery School enjoying the resources which the money you gave to Caroline provided. It is all appreciated, very much, every day.



Wait Till I Tell You.....'

Janette welcomes the coming of the meteorological Spring in this unpredictable month of March, arriving on Ash Wednesday as a lamb. Will it time to blow our Easter

go out like a lion in time to blow our Easter bonnets away?

IT WAS MURDER FOR ALL AT THE CIVIC!

And this was the venue for our Friends' February event when, after supper in the Community Hall, we assumed the roles of Private Eyes and tried to solve the heinous crimes to win a Prosecco nightcap. But, our members are much more adept at identifying who left dishes in the sink or who dripped soup on the cooker- oh yes! At unveiling a killer they struggled and only two of our party solved the Agatha Christie murder mystery 'And Then There Were None'. Dot Russell and Helen Reid were our 'Miss Marples' – but it was difficult. At least one of our fiercely competitive group still had the wrong killer when discussing the event next day at the Friday soup!

But Friends' events are primarily about eating, so for most, the highlight was the supper. It had been billed as 'Pizza, Plonk and a Play' though the organisers feared a poor attendance when winter appeared with snow, rain, wind and the threat of a visit from Doris. No - our Friends are made of sterner stuff and know a bargain night out when they see one. They all turned up for their Italian delicacy served with salad, garlic bread and a glass of vino. Even the 'never eat foreign stuff' brigade were delighted with their substitute – a Gregg's sausage roll!

In keeping with the Agatha Christie atmosphere, the supper had a surprise ending -a delicious ice cream cone with flavoured adornments.

Then it was out in the cold to find the killer – ten bodies had been promised. The strange thing about the audience that night was that they laughed whenever a victim was bumped off. Oh, ladies you are so cruel - and after all those sermons from Kenny about being nice to each other! There was more dismay and consternation shown when Irene Telford was served a slice of burnt Pizza!

#### THE FORTY SHADES OF GREEN

Yes, outfits are being planned for the next Friends' event -'Shamrocks and Shillelaghs' to be held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March starting off at 6pm. An Irish Stew main course with appropriate accompaniments will be served before an entertainment of Irish Songs, Dancing, Verse and the usual Friends' nonsense. Everyone will be wearing one of the forty shades of green and I know of at least two respectable wee *wifies* who have shillelaghs in their homes! What on earth do they use them for? A notice will shortly be appearing in the Community Hall – cost will be £11 (£10 with Friends' discount) – fully inclusive. An Irish Raffle will be extra, of course, and contrary to popular belief, it will not include a night out with Phil O'Ryan as first prize!

#### OSCAR GETS 'A BIG RIDDY'.

'Whit a stushie at Hollywood's social event of the year! Such 'ongauns' would never feature in a St. Auggie's bunfight! Oh, yes – we've had our very own OSCARS – impeccably organised by Friends. And so, '*They couldnae run a menage*' was heard at Dumbarton bus stops on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February – the morning after. '*And the winner is....*' announced erstwhile heartthrob Warren Beattie who looked as though a visit to Specsavers was long overdue. Then, a pregnant pause before the buck was passed to co-presenter Faye Dunaway who told the world, posing like a haddie with the wrong card, '*La La Land'. 'Naw, hen – that's mince!*'

What followed was drama on a larger than life scale when a big baldy guy who had been unable to keep his hair on any longer, interrupted the proceedings. *'This is not a joke, Moonlight is the best picture!'* The jubilant cast of La La Land were already clambering on to the stage, difficult in six inch heels and skin tight frocks, only to be overtaken by the exuberant cast of Moonlight. *'Jings, crivvens and help ma Boab!'* There had been a mix up in the cards – profuse apologies bored us all day! Then a scapegoat was identified who also apologised, flashing his Hollywood gnashers at the cameras. At least this was one national disaster we couldn't blame on 'the Donald!'

# WILL THE NEW TARTAN TV CHANNEL EXCITE SCOTTISH VIEWERS?

Coming to a telly near you in 2018 – a new channel for Scottish news, views and culture. On a scale of one to ten how excited were you about the Director General of BBC's big announcement on the last week in February? At 9pm, after the watershed, when punters in the rest of the UK are settling down with a glass of wine to enjoy some violence, drama, sizzling sex and a daud of escapism, it would seem we shall be treated to an hour of whatever happened in Holyrood and its associated town halls, starring all the usual suspects, many of whom can bore for Britain. But they're spending money on Scottish culture so bring it on! That'll be right! Sounds like a certain cure for insomnia!

#### GREAT PUT DOWN LINES.

I know it's nice to be nice and that my zodiacal sign highlights righteousness as one of my qualities but I can't help envying a really memorable put down line – one that leaves the recipients speechless. There was a real cracker thrown by the Tory MSP, Murdo Fraser, during a debate on the Scottish budget at which the Greens supported the SNP to get their proposals through. Murdo was not too keen on Derek Mackay's financial plans so he vented his wrath on the hapless Greens, referring to them as 'lentil munching, sandal wearing, water melons!' I'll never look at wee Patrick again without checking what he's got wearing on his feet!

#### FLY ME TO THE MOON.

We are currently receiving exciting news about a private company that is offering trips around the moon. And these are not cheap, with big deposits to secure a seat on the spaceship. However, Space X has sold the holidays to two well-known people who are currently planning what to put in their suitcases for the experience of a life time as early as 2018. The identities of the lucky travellers are being kept a close secret but one wouldn't be disappointed if the luggage labels read May and Sturgeon. A chat could be held without any atmosphere and perhaps we could all look forward to some referendum and Brexit bashing relief.

#### **BOYS WILL BE BOYS - OR WILL THEY?**

February also brought us the final of BBC's 'Let It Shine', a talent contest to find a new boy band. Oh, the boys were all fantastically cool with the right image until the results were announced. Then the 'greetin' started. Indeed, they were still frenetically dabbing their red eyes at their interview the following morning! These millennial boys seem to be a different breed from the lads of my youth. Think back to the days when maniacal teachers wielded the tawse - six of the best - but never a tear, at least not in front of the lassies. An emotional outburst would have produced comments like 'he's jist a big Jessie', 'a big girl's blouse' or 'his knittin's hingin' oot his poacket!' So it seems like, in today's world, tears are OK for both sexes. And why not? But, when confronted with the cameras, members of a girl band would be much more wary of jeopardising their mascara!

# PREPARE TO BE IN THE BUSIEST END OF THE HIGH STREET.

The sight of all the rapidly rising scaffolding behind the Burgh Hall is a daily reminder that the area surrounding St. Aug's will soon be swarming with *'cooncil workers'*. Weekday parking may well be compromised and our Friday lunches may see a queue for the soup! TBag O'Neill will have to turn up every week and not take time off for hairdressing appointments. Aye, Dumbarton is certainly getting a long awaited face lift and more shoppers will mean a prosperous town centre with no more hard board shop fronts. Is it too much to hope that soon we'll have a shop where we can buy a fashionable frock – even a new one?

#### FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD PHILIP!

But will it still be Sir? The *sowl's* had a lot on his mind recently but what a way to start Lent? No giving up chocolate or booze for this philanthropic fat cat. He is handing out a cheque for a cool £363 million to sort out the BHS pension scheme. That's a lot of yacht, but what a lot he's got! Let's send him a Lent jar while he's feeling in the mood.

# FRIENDS ARE PLANNING A SPRING EXPEDITION.

This year's outing is taking up more planning time than the Brexit negotiations but soon Friends will be able to present details of a plan to see the Kelpies in the Gloaming in all their glory. This will be preceded by visits to other tourist delights in the area but, sorry Roberta, the charity shops of Falkirk are not included. The favourite date is currently 30<sup>th</sup> April so watch this space for further developments.

#### AT THE EASTER PARADE.

Remember when everyone went to Church on Easter Sunday wearing a new spring outfit? How things have changed! And how dull! Mother Nature makes a big effort at this time of year so it seems scathing to huddle around in padded anoraks and crumples jeans. Some of the hats that used to appear were well worth a look and I remember laughing at the silliest. But then we didn't have the telly, chocolate eggs, Easter getaways to Benidorm and all that stuff. Ask Maggie about the fashion– she had a hat for all seasons before they ended up at DPT!

#### AND NEXT MONTH...

The mad March hares will have turned sensible again – more than can be expected of the politicians. The '*cooncillors*' will be revving up for the May elections and we shall be back with 'By the Way Together' watching all the shenanigans. Don't miss your copy.





#### **ROTAS FOR ST MUNGO'S**

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March

Reader/Intercessions Sidesperson Music

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March Reader/Intercessions Sidesperson Music

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March Reader/Intercessions Sidesperson Music

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March

Reader/Intercessions Sidesperson Music

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April Reader/Intercessions Sidesperson Music

#### CLEANING

5th March/2 AprilMargaret12th March/9 AprilLynn T19th March/16 AprilFinella26th March/23 AprilIona and Mary

#### NO FLOWERS DURING LENT

Clergy Ian Marshall Andrew Baxter

Lewis Kennedy Ian Marshall Carol Meacham

Clergy Ian Marshall Phil O'Ryan

Pat Brooks Ian Marshall Andrew Baxter

Lewis Kennedy Ian Marshall Lynne Harvey

### ROTAS FOR ST AUGUSTINE'S

#### Sunday March 5th

ReadersLinda Macaulay & Sharon RowattIntercessionsDavid RowattChaliceMargaret Hardie & Janette BarnesSidespersonsMargaret Swan & Maggie Wallace

#### Sunday March 12th

ReadersMargaret Hardie & Ghislaine KIntercessionsSharon RowattChaliceDavid Rowatt & Maggie WallaceSidespersonsDavid Ansell & Barbara Barnes

#### Sunday March 19th

ReadersMaggie Wallace & David AnsellIntercessionsEvelyn O'NeillChaliceFran Walker & Barbara BarnesSidespersonsLinda Jenkinson & Cathy Hoatson

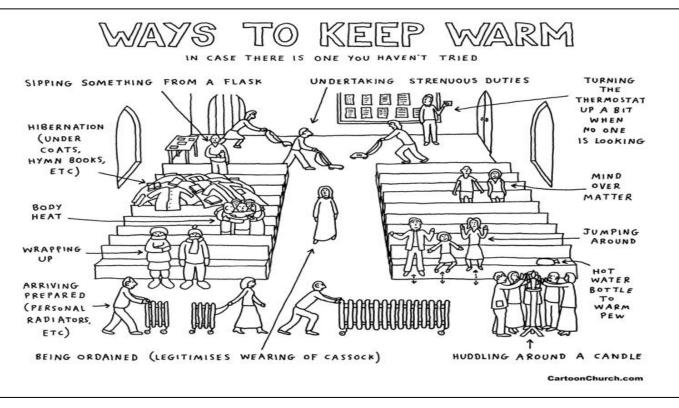
#### Sunday March 26th.

ReadersJanette Barnes & Evelyn O'NeillIntercessionsMaggie WallaceChaliceSharon Rowatt & Kirsten WigginsSidespersonsChrissie Ashman & Roberta Mailley

#### Sunday April 2nd

ReadersFran Walker & Kirstin WigginsIntercessionsMargaret HardieChaliceMaggie Wallace & Janette BarnesSidespersonsMargaret Swan & David Ansell

#### NO FLOWERS DURING LENT



#### St Mungo's, Main Street, Alexandria G83 OBN Tel: 01389 513365 www.stmungosalexandria.org.uk

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Friends of St Augustine's: lindaymac@sky.com	Linda Macaulay 01389 513365	
Mission Action Planning Group: The Rector; Anne Dyer; Morag O'Neill; Fran Walker Gavin Elder; Caroline Marsland; Rev Liz O'Ryan		
Freewill Offering:	Margaret Hardie	

## Happy News from Dumbarton Nursery School!



Thanks to your generosity these toys and educational resources were able to be purchased and are now being enjoyed by the children in the Nursery School:

- 1. NUMBER GAMES
- 2. TAMBORINES AND MALLETS
- 3. WALL CHARTS
- 4. TOYS
- 5. PHONICS LETTER SOUND BRICKS
- 6. SAND MODEL UPPER CASE LETTERS
- 7. JIGSAW PUZZLES
- 8. MAGNETIC LETTERS UPPER AND LOWER CASE
- 9. FOOTBALLS
- 10. TENNIS BALLS AND BATS
- 11. SHAPES
- 12. MODEL HOUSE



This is the school kitchen (left) as it was in January 2017 where lunch was prepared for 90 children every day. Notice the blackened walls where the smoke from the fires filled the room and made it very difficult to work in. Below is the kitchen as it was being transformed – and how it is now – much healthier for the cooks and easier to use!



