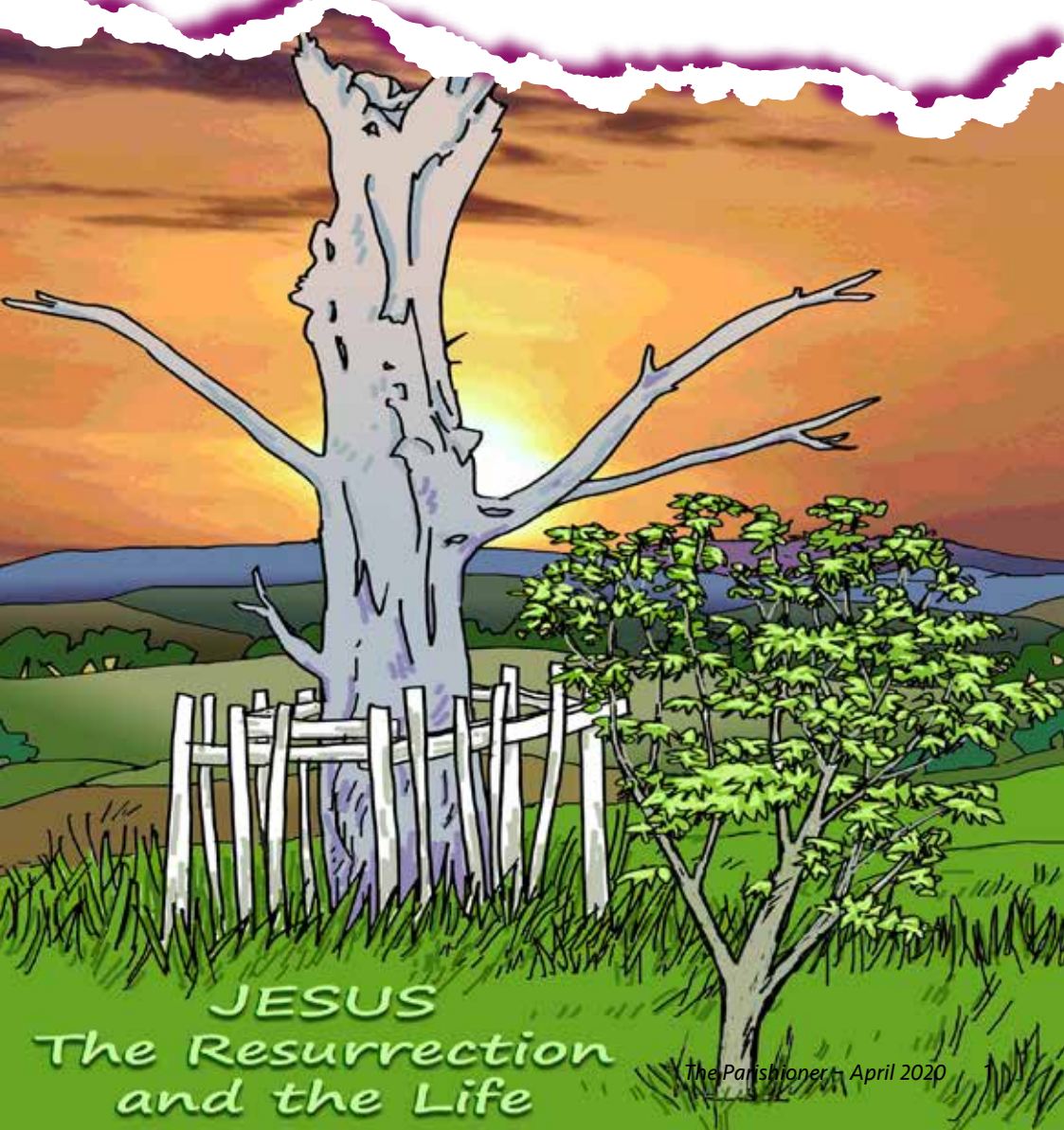




St Mary's Parish Church Kirkintilloch

April 2020

PARISHIONER



JESUS
The Resurrection
and the Life

The Parishioner - April 2020



St Mary's Parish Church

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We are doubly blessed this month, with our usual letter from our Locum, Rev Morris Dutch and an article from our Interim Moderator, Rev Ian Taylor

The following is an article from our Locum, Rev Morris Dutch

My dear friends,

As you will all be so aware, we are living through times of great uncertainty and challenge brought on by this evil virus! So much so, many of us may be asking big faith questions such as: 'where' is God and, 'what' is He doing and saying to us in the midst of these unique days? I believe God through His Word is not silent about our dilemma and would encourage us reading from Bible passages such as Psalm 91 and Romans 8.

No matter what, He is alongside His pilgrim people as Psalm 23: 4 reminds us, 'Even though I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me'.
Yes, where is God? He gives us the assurance that our journey in life

and faith is not alone, 'and that nothing in all creation is able to separate us from His love and care in Christ Jesus our Lord'. Romans 8: 39. God is with His people!

What is He doing? I do not believe that God has caused this global crisis, but, I do believe that He can use it to bring good from bad! Romans 8:28 tells us, 'We know that in ALL things God works for good with those who love Him, those He has called according to His purpose'. As I look around my neighbourhood I am observing people caring for one another and regaining that long-lost sense of community!

Incredible 'good will' and the sacrificial serving of others in our Health and Social Services to many in need! With the closure of Church buildings, I see the Church very much open and alive with people coming together to pray and do Church through social media etc. On the News, it was

reported that 44% of Americans believe God is using the evil of this virus to focus minds and remind folks of their own frailty and mortality as well as getting them to turn to God for help, mercy and seek the assurance of His salvation through His Son Jesus Christ. Yes, God is doing much and I am sure you can add a lot more to my observations from your own experience!

On a more practical note, with most of the country, including all the places of worship in 'shut down', many Churches and institutions are being forced to address the challenge of limited income with the possible long term effects. St Mary's like many churches at this difficult time is understandably also concerned that the monetary givings to the church will drop off substantially during this period of church closure.

This need not necessarily be the case. The reason being that the income of many church members, will not change during this period, either because they will continue to receive full pay or their income

comes from sources such as pensions which will be unaffected.

As St Mary's has just recently been involved in a Stewardship Campaign, I feel this could be an opportune time to present the Biblical case for Tithing. Some may think that this is an old-fashioned concept, but personally, I see it as the baseline for giving to God's work. OUCH and mair OUCH!!!!

The book of Malachi (last book in the Old Testament), in chapter 3 verses 8 to 10 speaks of the importance of bringing the WHOLE tithe into the house of God and states that we are robbing God if we do not do so. Strong words indeed but words I believe we should take seriously! These verses also talk of tithes AND offerings, implying that the tithe is the starting point!! The good news - you get to keep 90% for yourself and God promises that if we obey in this matter He will pour out so much blessing that we will not have room for it. Sounds good, doesn't it? YOU CAN NOT LOSE!!

The reason why I write this is that I passionately believe and have personally found this to be the case. My desire is to SHARE the blessing! Since we were married Maggie and I have given a tenth of our income to God's work. Sometimes this was not very much, during for example times of studentship or unemployment. Sometimes the sum was much larger when we were both earning a good wage. However, regardless of the amount, honouring God in this way has brought nothing but blessing to our lives and we have never wanted for anything. "Taste and see that the Lord is good" Psalm 34:8

If you are not already giving to God a tithe of your income, I exhort you to give it your prayerful consideration. We all have plenty of time to do so just now! Having worked out what sum your tithe should be, I strongly recommend you set up a monthly Standing Order to the church. This is what I did as soon as I came to St Mary's and have also done at every church I have served at. If you have internet banking, all you need is to ask the treasurer for the

Church's sort code and account number, press a few buttons on your computer and that's it done. Easy peasy!! For folks not on internet banking, get a Standing Order form from the Church, fill it in and send it to your bank.

We have always found setting up a standing order to be the best and easiest method of giving which ensures the Church gets a regular income. This is particularly important at the moment when we are unable to attend Church in person to hand in our offerings. I offer this encouragement for you to consider tithing, not in the form of any judgment as I am sure many of you are already giving generously to the Church, but I want you to experience the blessing that comes to all who ensure that God gets his full portion.

***Wishing you all much blessing,
good health and peace during
these days!***

Your Locum Minister and friend,

Morris

The following is an article from our Interim Moderator, Rev Ian Taylor

Often when parishioners are having a hard time I will end by saying something like, “Hang in there, keep the faith, and breathe!”

Now I am wondering if in these unusual and uncertain times I should simply be saying, “Take a deep breath and pray”.

That’s what I say to myself often these days. It is not a time to panic, but it is a time to be prudent and prepared. We are in uncharted water. Leadership in faith communities, educational institutions, hospitals, government, and our local community face difficult choices about how to address the complex challenges that the COVID-19, corona virus brings. Please pray for wisdom and courage.

Our anxiety rises with the spread of the corona virus and we worry. We are concerned about the impact of this disease on healthcare workers, vulnerable adults, the physically fragile,

and the livelihoods of people. Our world feels uncertain, and it grows smaller, lonelier as we follow health protocols, practice social distancing, engage in self-isolation, and exercise necessary quarantine measures. I also want to acknowledge that we all have things we are grieving, large and small, life-altering or inconvenient. It all feels uncertain and unsettling.

Take a deep breath and pray.

In these uncertain times, we can, at this moment, recognise how connected we are to one another – a body of many members. Do you recall the Apostle Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 12:26 when he says, “If one member suffers, we all suffer together..”? This realisation shapes our actions in ways that foster goodness and compassion to expand our caring networks. Another realisation is our faith community isn’t found in a building but grounded in the love of God found in Jesus Christ. So, even though we can’t gather in-person, we will discover new ways to worship and minister together.

To that end, the Church of Scotland has arranged for on-line worship Services(www.churchofscotland.org.uk). For the moment – we can't worship in-person, but we can worship in Spirit from our collective homes. Information will be placed on our website (<https://stmaryskirkintilloch.org.uk>). You can expect a short worship Service with prayer, Scripture, and a message.

The circumstances around this pandemic are ever-evolving. We have not been through anything like this before. We will need your help along the way, please – the way forward will take all of us.

Since Morris can't physically be with you on Sundays, in your home, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., he will try and communicate with you more frequently through email messages, newsletters, our website, and other social media platforms – keeping St. Mary's community connected.

- ◆ Based on the current recommendations of the Church Offices at 121 George

Street, Edinburgh, the Church building is now closed.

- ◆ Worship Services are suspended until further notice. Limitations relating to Weddings and Funerals are likely to be applied in the near future, but this is an ever fast changing picture.
- ◆ Payment for all staff and steps for their health and safety will continue.
- ◆ Our Church membership is encouraged to continue to support St. Mary's with their giving and offerings by mail or ideally standing order (see our website for further details on how to do this).

So, please take a deep breath with me and pray and act as though you bear the love of Christ into the world for others—because you do.

Rev Ian Taylor



Church Flowers

While the church building continues to be closed there is no opportunity to display flowers on a Sunday.

We wish to thank everyone who has continued to donate to the flower fund at this time. Please be reassured that your donations will be put to good use once we return to normal business. In the meantime please know that we continue to think about and pray for all those who would benefit from church flowers at this time.

Fiona Leishman, Sandra Burns, Ruth Poynton, Elizabeth Walker
The Flower Committee



THE PARISHIONER

In these uncertain times, I would like to think that enough material could be gathered to produce a magazine in May, once again it would only be on the Church website.

If anyone has anything they would like to contribute, please send copy by e-mail to sandraburns.me@gmail.com **no later than Sunday 26 April.**

The Editor

A Message from your Treasurer and Finance Convenor

We find it difficult to write this when every one of us has our own difficulties and challenges working our way through the worldwide pandemic of Coronavirus-Covid19.

Your Church has difficulties and challenges also. We want to provide pastoral care, support in the community, a place to worship, and all the other things that being St Mary's Parish Church of Scotland Kirkintilloch means. In simpler words we want you back, to the ones that are able to come and worship with us, and for those who are unable, we want to be able to reach out to you. Regrettably at this given time, for everyone's safety, opening and coming back is not permitted. Unfortunately, your Church continues to have costs even during a time of closure. The Church of Scotland states:

"In the midst of the current global and economic crisis our church buildings may be closed but the work of the church goes

on. The regular, committed and generous giving of our members is necessary to support and sustain that work. Together we can ensure that the church - that's all of us - continues to demonstrate God's generosity, faithfulness and love. If ever the church has been needed in our communities, it is now."

And: "The great hallmarks and characteristics of the Christian church are its inherent love and kindness in the face of adversity. In the eighth chapter of 2 Corinthians we read about the grace that God gave to the early church in the midst of a very severe trial. That grace led to overflowing joy and generosity.

People across our nation are facing life-changing situations; therefore, we must be fully committed, equipped and resourced to be the church for this time and context. In every parish throughout the country, ministry and mission

continues to be delivered even in these times of challenge and restrictions. However, this is only sustainable through the ongoing generosity of those who support the church."

Your Church locally continues to have costs during closure amounting to, but not limited to, in excess of £11,000 per month.

This unavoidable expenditure even when not open and fully operational would include such things as insurance, telephone contract costs, Ministry and Mission, and Presbytery obligations to Church of Scotland to provide continued territorial ministry across the nation, and also Locum costs. It would also include utility costs such as water, gas and electricity, and although consumption may be reduced we do still have to offer a minimum heat to protect the property and continue to provide for example security lighting; all of the above utilities coming with daily standing charge costs also. We also have a duty of care to our long serving and faithful church employees so continue to have salary costs although a proportion of these we may be able to recover. During this time of closure whereby our weekly offering by members at worship

is not happening and our other sources of income through, for example, hall lets is nothing, we are very thankful for those members of our Congregation that have chosen to give by regular standing order which currently is our only income. Trying to balance the above mentioned £11,000 per month expenditure to approximately £4,600 which currently would be our monthly receipts by standing order, and measuring bridging the gap, and for how long, you can see is concern to us. We are grateful to a number of folks that have made contact with Hugh or myself in the last couple of weeks enquiring how to give by standing order.

How can you help if you are able to?

We are aware that through these difficult times many face their own difficulties and challenges financially. We are also aware that standing order may not suit everyone but during this difficult time of no contact it may be worthy of consideration. If it doesn't suit you long term it could be stopped again after this situation is over. We can advise on setting up a standing order and can provide necessary details. We believe this can be set up through

online banking, telephone banking or by presenting a completed form to your bank, this could be by post.

If you prefer an alternative method of getting your offering to St Mary's during this period, I will happily accept cheques made payable to St Mary's Parish Church Kirkintilloch, but posted to my home address detailed below.

Another valuable source of income to our Church, for those that it applies to and have signed a mandate, is being able to apply gift aid tax recovery to these givings. Part of our strategy to manage cash flow during these times will be to manage and submit these claims on a more regular basis.

If you are not already registered with us for Gift Aid purposes and you are a tax-payer please also request a Gift Aid Declaration Form for completion as this will enable us to collect a further 25p for every £1 you have donated. Should you be a higher rate taxpayer you can also benefit from an extension to your basic rate band for tax purposes resulting in you paying less tax.

To summarise:

If you wish to set up a standing order for your Church please contact John M Thomson Treasurer Telephone 01417778231 or email johnm.thomson@ntlworld.com OR Hugh Biggans Finance Convenor Telephone 01415780586 or email hmbiggans@hotmail.co.uk We will be able to provide details and record your interest in this method.

If you wish to set up a bank transfer, whether it be a single payment or periodic payment, please again make contact using the above details.

If you wish to make a cheque payment or regular periodic cheque payments to your Church, please make your cheque payable to **St Mary's Parish Church Kirkintilloch** and post to **John M Thomson, 17 Glenwood Court, Lenzie, G66 4JL**. It would be helpful for you to enclose a note of your name and address and if you normally use offertory envelopes then if possible one of your envelopes detailing your offertory number. If this cheque facility is used, I will deposit payments at our bank as often as practical under the current conditions. I will also issue

periodic receipts for audit trail purposes.

We regret having to address this subject during these worrying times but thank you for reading and understanding our concern and hope that the information is of help to you in your considerations.

We hope and pray that you all keep well and safe.

Yours sincerely

John and Hugh

**John M Thomson Treasurer and
Hugh Biggans Finance Convenor**



Over the next few months when we will not be having any Church services, Life and Work will be posted to all who purchase this very worthwhile Church of Scotland magazine.

If you normally take yours from the rack in the Church vestibule and have not yet received it, or would like a copy (£2.80

per issue), please contact Sandra Burns on 0141 776 6322, email: sandraburns.me@gmail.com

Whitever ye dae, remember
tae pray
Remember tae pray every day
And when ye dae pray every day
You'll see yer troubles go away.

Ian Chesney

***For all NHS workers,
Doctors and Nurses
who are tending to
those in Hospitals and
Nursing Homes and
to each and everyone
of us coping as best we
can at this very difficult
time.***

Session Report

I sincerely hope you and your families are all safe and well. We suddenly find ourselves in a very different and difficult world, although it was only a few short weeks ago that the Kirk Session last met and that we were all meeting as a congregation in Church to share Sunday Worship. Now that has all changed, for very good reasons, but we miss the normal interactions that previously we would have taken for granted.

At this time, I am particularly grateful to Morris, David Burns and David Tinto, who were able to record our service on Palm Sunday for us all to enjoy. I hope you have had the opportunity to join in! If not, you will find it on YouTube by searching for "St Mary's Parish Church Kirkintilloch". A link is also available on our website and Facebook page. It is hoped that this is something that we will be able to repeat in the weeks that lie ahead.

Our Kirk Session Meeting was on

Wednesday 11th March and one of the most significant aspects of the evening was our visitation from the Vacancy Advisory Committee. This effectively marks the start of the vacancy process, with the committee outlining the many and varied activities we need to engage in as we journey together in finding our next Minister. The Committee was led by the Rev Allan Vint – Minister at Anderson Parish Church, Kilsyth. However, Allan is better known to many of us as our previous Interim Moderator in 2000 / 2001.

As well as our vacancy, other topics discussed at the meeting included:

The sale of the manse – we were hoping to conclude the sale in early April;

Nursery move to 1,140 hours – planned to move to an all-day service from August;

Our Stated Annual Meeting – where our accounts to December 2019 would be presented to the

congregation; and

Holy Week Services – our usual diet of worship in the week leading to Easter.

Of course, these plans, including our plans for progressing with the vacancy, have all been impacted by Covid-19 and the necessary restrictions we are now experiencing. At this time, we do not know how long these restrictions will apply and at what stage we will be able to start to progress matters again, but I will endeavour to keep you informed in the weeks and months that lie ahead.

As I look back to my last Session Report in February, it was at the time we were preparing for our Stewardship Evenings which took place at the beginning of March. I would like to express my gratitude to Charles and his team for all of the work that went into making the Stewardship Evenings a great success – the evenings were very well received and it was most encouraging to see so many people in attendance.

And in last month's Parishioner, Ian advised that because we have

been able to clear our Ministries & Mission deficit in full, we would be seeking a review of the basis of our Tenure. I am very pleased to advise that, at the Ordinary meeting of Glasgow Presbytery on the 10th March, a recommendation to reinstate our Tenure to an unrestricted basis was unanimously approved. This decision will still need to be ratified by 121, but it is hoped that this will be received as a matter of course. This is an extremely positive position for us and it is down to your overwhelming generosity – Thank You!

Finally, I would love to be able to keep in touch with you, even though we are not able to meet together at Church. Please don't hesitate to contact me at morrisgo@sky.com

I wish you and your families the Peace of Christ this Easter.

Kind regards,

Gordon

**Gordon Morrison
Session Clerk**

Nursery News



As you know our nursery closed on 20th March following government guidelines. In the few days before the closure, the staff worked hard to put together learning packs for the children to use at home and to ensure they had a fun few days.

This included an Easter egg hunt in the church grounds. We hope that all our children are able to enjoy time spent with their families and encourage them to keep in touch through the nursery Facebook page where Shake and Wake sessions can be found!

Another government announcement made in the wake of the coronavirus is that plans to roll out 1140 hours of funded nursery sessions from August have been delayed. This is obviously disappointing but certainly the right decision to make. We will continue to prepare for extended hours as best as we can at the moment by planning and working together through social media.

Many ideas have sprung up recently but there are two that are particularly for children;

- ◆ Paint a rainbow and display it in your window. If you have a child in your family, please encourage them to create a rainbow.
- ◆ Bear Hunt – Based on the book 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt', children are encouraged to find bears in house windows as they go out for a walk with parents. If you have a bear (no matter what age you are!) please display it in your window and bring joy to children as they pass – it may make your neighbours smile too!

Fiona Leishman
Nursery Convenor

Treasurer's Report

February Offering

DATE	FREEWILL OFFERING	GIFT AID	OPEN PLATE	STANDING ORDERS
02.02.20	299.00	626.00	90.00	
09.02.20	285.00	345.00	40.00	
16.02.20	542.00	561.00	85.00	
23.02.20	286.00	532.50	77.60	
Standing orders				3755.00
TOTAL	1412.00	2064.50	292.60	3755.00
Total for the Month		7524.10		

March Offering

DATE	FREEWILL OFFERING	GIFT AID	OPEN PLATE	STANDING ORDERS
01.03.20	268.90	468.00	61.00	
08.03.20	310.00	484.00	62.70	
15.03.20	420.80	510.50	91.00	
22.03.20	Closed	Closed	Closed	
29.03.20	Closed	50.00	Closed	
Standing orders				4556.00
TOTAL	999.70	1512.50	214.70	4556.00
Total for the Month		7282.90		

Receipts and Donations

Received during February and March

with thanks and gratitude for your consideration of our Church

Donations to Parishioner	39.40
Donation to Fabric Fund	20.00
Donation to Fabric Fund	20.00
Receipts for Unicef Tubs of Grace Programme	787.18
Donation to Parishioner	10.00
Over 50's Badminton Donation to Hall Funds	200.00
Donation from Cynthia and David Keellings	300.00
Funds Received for Offering due to closure	50.00

UNICEF Tubs of Grace Programme 2019/20

The amount received and counted in relation to UNICEF Tubs of Grace Programme for this year is a fantastic £787.18.

Thank you to all who participated in the programme, a very pleasing result going to a very good cause.

Thank you also to the team that gave of their time to sort and count.

Food Bank

As St. Mary's and the nursery are now closed until further notice we no longer have a collection point for the Food Bank. However, if you are able and willing to take foodstuff etc. to the **Food Warehouse at 19 Donaldson Crescent G66 1XF** it would be very much appreciated in these difficult times. Their opening times are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1pm-4pm. It would be good if you could spread this information to folk in the congregation.

God bless and keep you,

Katy

Beatitudes for these days

Used with permission www.ionabooks.com

We continue to hold the world and one another in our prayers.

Blessed are those who wash their hands,
for they shall hold living water;
blessed are those who keep their distance,
for they shall draw closer to God;
blessed are they who self quarantine,
for they shall help others;
blessed are those who do not hoard,
for they shall feed families;
blessed are those who sing songs to sheltering neighbours,
for they shall be neighbours of the heavenly host;
blessed are parents who learn to teach at home,
for they shall learn from their children;
blessed are they that shop for elder folk,
for they shall receive everlasting thanks,
blessed are the frontline health workers,
for they shall be called healers of humanity;

Thom M Shuman

Mental Health during Self-Isolation

There are a number of online spaces filled with tips and advice on maintaining good mental health during self isolation. Further details: www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/children-families/counselling

'April is the cruellest month . . .'

With these words T.S. Eliot opened his modernist masterpiece, The Waste Land, in 1921.

It was the aftermath of World War I and the Spanish flu pandemic. Millions had died. His poem brims with the pain, the trauma, the disillusionment and the death of that time. Now it is April 2020. Eliot could never have imagined that nearly 100 years on, April might well become our 'cruellest month', when trauma and death stalk our land as the

coronavirus pandemic is forecast to peak.

These are times unparalleled in any of our life experiences. In the words of the Psalmist, the 'foundations are being shaken'. And yet – as Christians we can lift our eyes from the turmoil and look up. Some verses from Psalm 46 are shared with you now:

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

'Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way

and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea...

'Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts.

'The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

'He says, "Be still, and know that I am God..."'

Caring for the Sick

For Hospital Staff and Medical Researchers

Gracious God,
give skill, sympathy and resilience
to all who are caring for the sick,
and your wisdom to those
searching for a cure.

Strengthen them with your Spirit,
that through their work many will
be restored to health;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Tae a virus

Twa months ago, we didna ken,
yer name or ocht aboot ye
But lots of things have changed
since then,
I really must salute ye

Yer spreading rate is quite intense,
yer feeding like a gannet
Disruption caused, is so immense,
ye've shaken oor wee planet.

Corona used tae be a beer,
they garnished it wae limes
But noo it's filled us awe wae fear
These days, are scary times.

Nae shakin hawns, or peckin lips,
it's whit they awe advise
But scrub them weel, richt tae
the tips, that's how we'll awe
survive

Just stay inside, the hoose, ye bide
Nae sneakin oot for strolls
Just check the lavvy every hoor
And stock-take, your, loo rolls

Our holidays have been pit aff
Noo that's the Jet2 patter
Pit oan yer thermals, have a laugh
And paddle 'doon the waater '

Canary Isles, no for a while
Nae need for suntan cream
And awe because o this wee bug
We ken tae be..19

The boredom surely will set in,
But have a read, or doodle
Or plan yer menu for the month
Wi 95 pot noodles.

When these run oot, just look
about
A change, it would be nice
We've beans and pasta by the ton
and twenty stane o rice.

So dinny think yell wipe us oot
Aye true, a few have died
Bubonic, bird flu, and TB
They came, they left, they tried

Ye might be gallus noo ma freen
As ye jump fae cup tae cup
But when we get oor vaccine
made
Yer number will be up.

Willie Sinclair
March 2020

Church bulletin board

The following appeared in church bulletins
or were announced at church services.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again', giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

The Rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing 'Break Forth Into Joy'.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5pm – prayer and medication to follow.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge – Up Yours.'

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Compiled by Max Bowen

The Rectory

St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

This year, the rigours of Lent have taken second place to a far more pressing matter: the installation of a lavatory at St James the Least of All.

Personally, I entirely disapprove of this additional sign of decadence in our moral fibre; we have survived perfectly happily for the last 800 years without one, so why is there such an urgent need now? And being surrounded by acres of fields, there seems to be a completely acceptable alternative.

It also spoils the pleasure I used to take, informing ushers at weddings, having liberally refreshed themselves at our local pub before the Service, that we have no facilities and that they would just have to wait. Their look of pained resignation, developing to clear signs of repentance as the Service progressed, was most cheering. It also meant that wedding parties did not linger after the Service but disappeared with commendable speed to safe havens.

I anticipate that now we have the thing, a sub-committee will form to devise a commissioning Service for the person who will be in charge of its maintenance. I can already foresee Lady Bartlett proposing an appropriate set

of robes for the office holder – although it will need some tact to select suitable insignia on the sleeves.

In fact, the project has not been entirely successful; we still need to have a lock fitted and so at present, occupants have been advised to sing hymns loudly. A hymn book has been installed as an aide memoire.

The greater difficulty arises from our antiquated plumbing system. A member of the congregation can leave a Service perfectly discreetly; they can enter the lavatory unseen by anyone, but on flushing, water is drawn through pipes running the length of the inside of the building with a thunderous roar.

I am sure that in your worship centre you will have lavish cloakrooms furnished with colour co-ordinated walls and towels, baby-changing facilities and video monitors relaying everything going on in the service. But we are made of sterner stuff, and I maintain that our congregation should be grateful that they now have a lavatory at all. And to think that someone suggested it should even have heating!

**Your loving uncle,
Eustace**

Easter

The Most Joyful Day of the Year

Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Christ has died for our sins. We are forgiven. Christ has risen! We are redeemed! We can look forward to an eternity in His joy! Hallelujah!

The Good News of Jesus Christ is a message so simple that you can explain it to someone in a few minutes. It is so profound that for the rest of their lives they will still be 'growing' in their Christian walk with God.

Why does the date move around so much? Because the date of Passover moves around, and according to the biblical account, Easter is tied to the Passover. Passover celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt and it lasts for seven days, from the middle of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which equates to late March or early April.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to use the Hebrew lunar calendar to come up with firm dates for Good Friday: Friday 7 April 30 AD or Friday 3 April, 33 AD, with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these the most likely.

Most people will tell you that Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is broadly true. But the precise calculations

are complicated and involve something called an 'ecclesiastical full moon', which is not the same as the moon in the sky. The earliest possible date for Easter in the West is 22 March, which last fell in 1818. The latest is 25 April, which last happened in 1943.

Why the name, 'Easter'? In almost every European language, the festival's name comes from 'Pesach', the Hebrew word for Passover. The Germanic word 'Easter', however, seems to come from Eostre, a Saxon fertility goddess mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He thought that the Saxons worshipped her in 'Eostur month', but may have confused her with the classical dawn goddesses like Eos and Aurora, whose names mean 'shining in the east'. So, Easter might have meant simply 'beginning month' – a good time for starting up again after a long winter.

Finally, why Easter eggs? On one hand, they are an ancient symbol of birth in most European cultures. On the other hand, hens start laying regularly again each Spring. Since eggs were forbidden during Lent, it's easy to see how decorating and eating them became a practical way to celebrate Easter.

Idle Hands

If you are sitting at home wondering what you can do instead of housework – and can knit, please find below the pattern for a Twiddlemuff. These are a stimulation activity for restless hands for patients suffering from dementia.

How to make a Twiddlemuff

Materials needed:

- ◆ A selection of leftover and odd balls of wool
- ◆ Needles: 8mm circular or 6.5mm straight needles

Directions

Cuff:

Cast on 45 stitches using 2 strands of double knitting wool or 1 strand of chunky wool (one plain colour works best). Work in stocking stitch (knit a row, purl a row) for 11 inches.

Muff Body:

Continue with stocking stitch, but use up oddments of various textures of wool, such as chunky, mohair, ribbon etc. until the work measures 23 inches (two strands of double knit for two rows each

gives a lovely assortment of colours). Cast off.

Finishing:

If working with straight needles, lightly iron the long strip, then neatly join the sides together using edge to edge stitch (with the knit side facing out). Turn inside out and push the one colour cuff up inside the muff body. Sew the two ends together, again using a neat edge to edge stitch.

Decoration:

Now you can decorate the muff, inside and out, with ribbons, beads, flowers, zips, loops, pompons, buttons etc. Knit a separate pocket for a favourite photo or a hanky. Be creative, but make sure each item is securely attached!

For the Children . . .

The Story of People Waving Palms to Jesus

As Jesus came closer to Jerusalem, he asked two of his disciples to go ahead of Him. He said, "When you get to the town, you will see a donkey tied up. Untie it and bring it to me. If anyone asks you about taking the donkey, just tell them, 'The Lord needs it and He will bring it back as soon as He's done with it.'"

So, the disciples did as Jesus asked. They soon found the donkey tied at a doorway. As they were untying it, some people were standing nearby visiting. They didn't recognize the men and asked, "What are you doing? Why are you untying the donkey?"

They replied just as Jesus had told them to. Explaining that the Lord needed it, the people let them go.

When they brought the donkey to Jesus, some of the disciples took off their coats and laid them on the donkey's back. They did this out of respect for Jesus. Then Jesus rode on the donkey towards Jerusalem.

As He was traveling, some people saw Jesus coming and came running towards Him. They had heard He might be coming and they wanted to see him because he had just helped a dead man come back to life.

One by one, they laid their coats on the ground for the donkey to step on. Even the people that weren't wearing coats ran to the fields and trees nearby and cut palm branches and laid them down.

These people knew that Jesus was special. It was like when a King or Queen would come to town, and people would roll out a red carpet for him or her to step on. This is what these people did for Jesus when they laid down their coats and branches.

As they got even closer to the town, more and more people noticed Jesus. A crowd surrounded Him and started to shout praises to Him for all the miracles He had done: "Hosanna!

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna, Hosanna!"

The word Hosanna means save us. They said this because Jesus was helping them and doing amazing things. They wanted to praise Him, and they wanted Him to keep helping them. Some men named Pharisees (these men thought they were important; a lot of the people listened to them). They heard the crowd praising God. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, why don't you tell these people to stop praising you as if you were God?"

The Pharisees thought that Jesus was getting too much attention from the people. They wanted to be the most important, but everyone was listening to Jesus instead.

Jesus replied, "If they were quiet now, even the rocks would cry out!" Even the rocks knew that He was God; after all, Jesus did make them.

Now Jesus could see Jerusalem and it made Him very sad. He came to help the people, but no one realized that He was God, and they didn't accept Him.

Chocolate Donkey Poo

1 Packet Ready Made Fondant
Icing
1 Tablespoon Cocoa
Mix together, using freshly
washed hands

Shape into bite sized Donkey Poo
Balls

Allow to set then enjoy.

A Prayer for the Coming Week

God we ask that as we go forward in the next week that you will look after us all We are very uncertain about a lot of things, just as Jesus must have been on Palm Sunday Help us to remember you are there with us all the time. Keep everyone safe until we are together again.
Amen



"The organist isn't too sure about it,
he says he can't play that fast."

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 22:24, John 13:3-17

Jesus and his disciples were celebrating the Passover with the special meal. The disciples were bickering again.

I'm most important because I've known him the longest

But I've given up the most to follow him!
I'm the oldest!



There was a reason why no-one wanted to be the least important - the roads were mud and everyone's feet got very dirty.

It was the job of the least important servant to wash everyone's feet...



The disciples didn't have a servant, and none of them wanted to do the feet washing...



Jesus took off his outer robe and tied a towel around his waist.



He filled a large bowl with water and started washing the disciples' feet.

Peter couldn't believe what he was seeing!



You will understand later why I am doing this.



If you don't let me, you will no longer be my disciple



If you've had a bath, then you only need your feet washing!



Once Jesus had washed all their feet, he put his robe back on and sat down.



Do you understand why I, your teacher, did this? I am setting you the example of how you are to serve each other. Do it, and God will bless you.

Church Organisations

Contact list 2019.20	Organisation	Location	Time	Contact
Sunday	Sunday Worship	Church	11am	Rev Morris Dutch
	Young Church	Church Halls	11am	Elaine Stevens
	Fairtrade Stall	Main Hall	12 noon	Leslie Baird/Fiona Leishman
	Badminton - Senior	Main Hall	7.30-10pm	Liz Barrie
Monday	Nursery	Church Halls	8.30-11.45am	Joanne McDonald
	Ladies Bowling	Main Hall	1.30-3.30pm	Cathie Devine
	Running/Walking Club	Session House	7pm	Bob Brown
Tuesday	Nursery	Church Halls	8.30-11.45am	Joanne McDonald
	Ladies Badminton	Main Hall	1.15-3.15pm	Ann Selbie
	Badminton - Senior	Main Hall	8-10.30pm	Liz Barrie
	Prayer Time	Meeting Place	7-7.30pm	Rev Katy Owen
	Country Dancing	Mid Hall	7.45-10pm	Moir MacNeill
Wednesday	Nursery	Church Halls	8.30-11.45am	Joanne McDonald
	Wednesday Welcome	Session House	10-11.20am	Mary Stirling
	Wednesday Service	Church	11.30-12noon	Rev Morris Dutch
	Over 50's Badminton	Main Hall	1.30-3.30pm	Anne Allan
	Rainbows	Mid Hall	6.30-7.30pm	Janet Millin
	Brownies	Main Hall	6.30-7.45pm	Cara Daniels
	Vestry	Church Vestry	7-9pm	Church Office
	Running/Walking Club	Session House	7pm	Bob Brown
	Guides	Main Hall	7.30-9.30pm	Cara Daniels
	Trefoil Guild (monthly)	Mid Hall	7.45-10pm	Edith Dunn
Thursday	Nursery	Church Halls	8.30-11.45am	Joanne McDonald
	Flower Circle (Alternate Weeks)	Mid Hall	7.30-9pm	Elizabeth Walker
Friday	Nursery	Church Halls	8.30-11.45am	Joanne McDonald
	Listener's Circle (Monthly)	Session House (church)	2-4pm	Edith Dunn
	Friday Fellowship (Alternate Weeks)	Mid Hall	7.30-9pm	Moir MacNeill

For further information on any of the above –

Please contact the Church Office on

0141 775 1166 or email: office.stmarys@btconnect.com



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