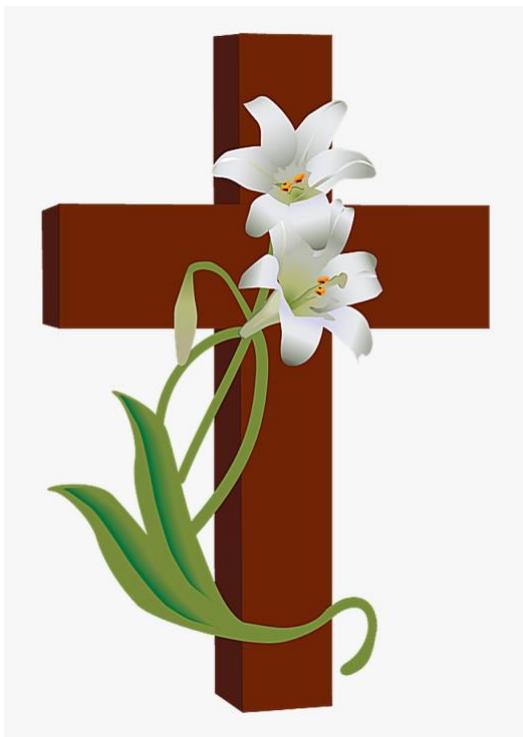


KINGSWELLS PARISH CHURCH



Easter Newsletter 2020

Contacts

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(Scottish Charity Number SC006865)

Keeping in Touch

We want to keep in touch with each and every one of you within our Kingswells Church family. Due to the current restrictions, it needs to be over the phone, or via email and internet. Some of you notified us last year of your phone number and email but if you didn't please do so now.

Now, in order to stay in touch, we would like you to provide your phone number and/or email address to our minister Laurene, or our Session Clerk, Lorna Graham. Then, we will be able to reach out to you during these challenging times. Thank you.

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Also, if you have internet access and/or a smartphone, you can be included in the Kingswells Church WhatsApp group, online video/audio chats, a weekly worship service, and other online gatherings which develop.

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VIEW FROM THE MANSE



Hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (Paul to the Christians in Rome)

Hope is lived when it comes alive, when we go outside of ourselves and, in joy and pain take part in the lives of others. (Jürgen Moltmann)

Dear Friends,

Hope you are keeping well and safe during these difficult days. Not to be able to gather together as a community of faith or visit with one another in person is indeed a hardship. Of course, if it can stop the spread of COVID19, it is well worth. Nevertheless, it is difficult as we need one another more than ever before. You will see more information for ways to be in touch on the opposite page. Through our pastoral care team of visitors, we will be reaching out to you via phone, post, and email, if you have one. We will get through this crisis together.

Yet, it is important to remember during these unprecedented times that we as Christians are a people of hope. There is something profound that this is all taking place during the last few weeks of Lent leading up to Easter. We have the opportunity to live out the hope and joy we celebrate on Easter morning. This does not mean that we ignore our genuine feelings of fear, sadness, loneliness, doubt, and yes, even anger. In the midst of the unknowns about the virus and national lockdown, it is important that we acknowledge the gamut of feelings we are experiencing, otherwise they are often expressed in unhealthy and potentially destructive ways.

What is of lifegiving importance is our response to those feelings of fear, sadness, and loneliness. For example, last week, (I'm writing this on the day one of the national lockdown) I was feeling very homesick and sad. Quite overwhelmed, I was struggling. When I was meditating that evening, I reflected on my options of being sad and miserable, feeling isolated or

reaching out to my dear pals with whom I have a deep connection. So I called two of my friends after which I felt so much better. Didn't change the current circumstances but did help shift my perspective.

Picking up the phone and calling someone with whom you can talk freely, is an act of hope because it recognises your own value, and your need to be heard and supported. Talking to someone on the phone or via video chat can give each person involved a deeper sense of connection and purpose. Please do not hesitate to give me or your pastoral visitor a call. We need one another.

Having experienced Jesus' ministry, the Last Supper, and the Crucifixion, the disciples waited in the darkness of that moment. Those long hours, before the Sunday sunrise, must have felt like aeons.

In many ways, we are in such a time of darkness: physically isolated from one another, our social routines and structure upended, movement limited, fear festering, brooding and yet, there is hope. There is hope because of good news shared by the women on that First Easter morning. There is hope because we have one another. There is hope because the spirit of God is creating a new way of being together. We are a resurrection people. We are living into a reality that we have always known; the most important aspect of life is our relationships. The joy of Easter morning is knowing we have new life through Christ. If there is any silver lining of this crisis, it is that we are invited to celebrate all the incredible ways people are coming together, caring for one another, and experiencing the virtual support of one another. We will get through these challenging times. We are resurrection people whose lives are rooted in the hope of our living God.

Be well. Be the light of hope.

Happy Easter!

Looking forward to being together soon.

Peace, **Laurene**

THE LINK FOR OUR THE CLUSTER GROUP SERVICES AT
10.30AM EACH SUNDAY IS

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6alrjGmvx2kBKjp8QIHchg>

RESPONSE TO THE PRESBYTERY PLAN

The Kirk Session and Congregation discussed and agreed the following response after morning worship on Sunday 1 March

The Congregation:

- **Accepts** that the church grouping for the West Aberdeen Group of churches is relevant and appropriate (Note 1)
- **Accepts** the concept of team ministry as appropriate and necessary in response to a shortage of ministers of word and sacrament in the national church and **welcomes** the assurance that there will be a continuing pastoral presence residing in Kingswells. (Note 2)
- **Welcomes** the possibility of being part of a new enlarged parish with the advantages of
 - Shared ministry
 - Shared mission
 - Shared resources
 - Shared responsibility for finance and buildings maintenance management
- **Welcomes** the possibility of engaging with its church partners in extending its mission to the new development of Countesswells (Note 3) **but believe the proposal**
 - to transfer the mission-oriented congregation in Kingswells from its existing site to a community building (unspecified) in the centre of the village is impracticable and premature (Note 4)
 - and with an implication that the present buildings will be disposed of will act as a disincentive to the congregation and community to engage with our proposals (see below) to develop a more relevant approach to mission in our community (Note 5)
- **We accept**, in the context of the Presbytery Plan, that a re-evaluation of the nature and scope of our mission to the community and development of 'church for the 21st century' at this time is crucial.
 - Our aim is to provide a **diversity of approach** that recognises and seeks to meet the spiritual needs of both current church members and adherents, and those in our parish who are currently not involved in the life of the church. (Note 6)
- **We are committed** to developing the kind of mission envisaged by the Presbytery Plan within the community and will plan to do so prioritising developments and resources to that end. (Note 7)

- We believe that the present Kingswells Parish Church site has an important role to play within the community. There are only 3 buildings: Kingswells Village Hall, Kingswells Community Centre and Kingswells Parish Church for community activities and events. Currently, the church space is used to capacity every week.
- By adapting and developing the site, we request the approval of Presbytery as to the following:
 - **That the proposal regarding the “C” designation of the building in the current proposed Presbytery Plan be changed to the “D” undetermined designation whilst the Kingswells congregation develop a plan that will strengthen its mission to the community from the existing site on the basis of a series of actions over the next 12- 18 months as follows:**
 - **Re-evaluate our mission to the community** in the context of the Presbytery Plan following congregational and community audits
 - The community audit would establish how the community regards the Kingswells Church, what its expectations are and how the Kingswells site might be further developed as a community resource.
 - The congregational audit would establish how existing members and supporters would react to extending our mission to the community by adapting our present programmes and buildings to taking greater account of the communities needs while remaining a focus of worship and Christian outreach.
 - **Investigate the potential for and cost of adapting the sanctuary to create an open space** in which worship can continue and other community-oriented activities can take place. (Note 8)
 - **Investigate the potential for and cost of enhancing and extending our present facilities to extend** the range of spaces available for the different potential activities of the community and congregation as indicated from the audits. (Note 9)
- **Report back to the PDC no later than September 2021.**

NOTES

1. **Church Grouping** - the grouping of the churches seems entirely appropriate as a ‘West Aberdeen Group’ from both a geographical and theological perspective.

2. **Team Ministry** - in the context of the shortage of ministers of word and sacrament within the national church and the allocation of ministers and MDS' to the Presbytery of Aberdeen, the allocation of 3 ministers and 1 MDS to the West Aberdeen Group of churches seems appropriate.
3. **Mission to Countesswells** - Our mission to Countesswells must be a collective responsibility of all the members of the West Aberdeen Churches.
4. **Transfer Worship to a Community Building** - On present evidence the Kingswells community requires all its facilities, including our own, to develop as an active and caring inclusive community that caters for all age groups and a wide range of interests.
5. **Impact on Congregation and Community** - No account appears to have been taken of the negative impact a transfer or ultimate disposal of the existing site will have on the enthusiasm and ultimate viability of a worshipping and mission-oriented congregation in Kingswells and the involvement of the wider community.
6. **Mission in Kingswells – the Next Ten Years** – For the future a re-evaluation of the nature of our mission to Kingswells is essential in the context of the Presbytery Plan. The Plan suggests new ways of doing Church recognising that in a largely secular society few have any concept of what 'church' means except those who currently practice and worship as Christians in our communities. This requires a diversity of approaches reflecting the needs of the community as well as the needs and desires of our existing members as part of the community and on which any enhancement of our mission to the community will largely depend.
7. **What Kind of Mission?** - In essence we need to further develop and create relationships within the community:
 - a. with the primary school in particular and the care home
 - b. develop outreach and expand services that meet the social, spiritual and caring needs of the community among all age groups. *We already provide a community, well attended, monthly lunch - 'Nosh and Natter' as well as providing accommodation for scouts, the tiny tots group, yoga, Pilates, the Women's rural Institute, the Bible club, MS Society, Story Telling Group, and two weight loss groups.*
 - c. build relationships with other community groups as appropriate, liaise with the community Council, local councillors and others.
 - d. to develop this requires further in-depth consideration through a process of planned re-evaluation of our role in the community in discerning God's will and in defining our purpose and mission.
8. **Developing the Existing Site as a Community Resource** - To enhance our facilities to this end, the modification of our sanctuary space has the potential to offer a different kind of multi-use facility to be found elsewhere such as to accommodate music, other arts and other community activities. Its acoustics are well recognised as being rather special. Removal of pews and a rearrangement of the central heating would allow a space that would be more conducive to such use and also provide an ambience that could be more attractive to the non-member but nevertheless retaining the 'special place and space' for a witnessing Christian community.
9. **Upgrading Existing Halls and Potential Extension** – there is a need to consider the upgrading and expansion of existing hall facilities to enhance their attraction for use by the wider community.

MONEY MATTERS

Treasurer's Report

Accounts for 2019 - The total income for the combined Restricted and Unrestricted funds increased during the year by £4,070. Most of the increase is explained by several "one off" items – proceeds of an insurance claim for damage to the manse; a grant from 121 George Street towards the costs associated with the new minister and generous donations from two longstanding members George Gordon and James Murray.

Whilst income from external sources shows a healthy increase the continuing year on year decline in congregational giving is an ongoing cause for concern.

An increasing number of groups now regularly use the hall and whilst this appears to spread the risk it is worth noting that three groups provided the majority of the income.

There has been a significant increase of £29,617 in expenditure. This is due almost entirely to costs arising following the filling of the vacancy including significant expenditure required on the manse building and grounds.

Restricted funds returned a small surplus for the year of £1,166.

The overall combined fund balance at the end of 2019 was £48,490 (2018 - £63,013) a decrease of £14,523.

Prospects for 2020 – The provisional figures up to 31st March show that we are already somewhat below where we expected to be at this time of year particularly in respect of gift aid income and the associated tax recovery.

However, assuming that the current situation lasts until the end of July the potential outturn for the General revenue fund is bleak. My best estimate at the moment is that instead of a budgeted surplus of £3,000 we face a potential deficit of £9,000 – an overall change of £12,000. The basic reason for the size of this change is that, despite a sizeable number of members contributing by monthly standing order, our income will decrease by around £17,000. On the other hand, our expenditure will reduce by only £5,000 due to the fact that we

have so many fixed costs to meet as a matter of course e.g. Contribution to 121 George Street; Heat and light; Council tax; insurances. If my assumptions are realistic our overall reserves will fall below £40,000.

Position of treasurer – in light of the ongoing situation I shall continue to play a primary role in looking after the finances of Kingswells Church.

Jim Henderson

FABRIC AND MAINTENANCE

The upgrade work mentioned in my last report regarding the manse interior is now complete.

The trees on the east boundary of the manse garden have now been removed as their roots were causing damage to the associated boundary wall. A fence will be installed in the next few weeks along this boundary to provide safety and security.

There are no major projects planned for the church itself apart from a feasibility appraisal to establish how best the church layout itself could be improved or changed to allow better flexibility of use to the community.

There is some minor painting work scheduled to start soon on the recently repaired church exterior doors and windows.

An upgrade to the sanctuary sound system will go ahead as soon as the equipment can be obtained by the installation contractor.

Mike Reid

INSTALLATION OF THE OLD BELL

When Dot Sutherland passed away Ian Gordon had quite a lot of dealings with her family, in particular her son Donald.

On a follow up visit to Donald after the funeral he told Ian that after his Dad passed away, he was clearing out his fathers shed and came across the bell, which he learned had come from the church. He put it in his shed and it had been there for many years. Donald offered the bell to the church.



It is thought this bell was the original church bell which had been removed almost 40 years ago when there was a problem with the bell tower. It is thought that the replacement bell was lighter. Donald's Dad was on the property committee at the time, hence the reason it ended up in his shed.

It means that the original bell which is now installed on its mounting in the church must be 162 years old.

The mounting was constructed by the 'Men's Shed' in Westhill. We are very grateful for all those involved in making the return of the bell to its original home possible.



Editor and Ian Gordon

PRAYER CHAIN



'BUT YOU, O LORD, ARE A COMPASSIONATE AND GRACIOUS GOD.' Jesus spent a lot of time in prayer and taught about it. He said, 'whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours'. In the prayer chain we truly believe those words. We have gone from thinking God might heal to knowing **He can** and we are willing to pray for you, your family and friends. Nothing is too great or too small to bring before the Lord. **Contact Barbara 01224741558.**

Barbara Bruce

THE CHOIR



The Choir regret they are unable to sing this Easter in Church due to the ongoing health restrictions. However, we look forward to being with you in the future. We extend our Best Wishes to you all and also to Laurene, our minister. Keep well and safe.

Hugh and Elizabeth Melvin

The choir's 'Musical Cocktail' concert at the end of November was very well received and enjoyed by our audience. It was a very happy occasion! The amount raised for a new Church Notice Board was £410. We are indebted to

Hugh and Elizabeth for their commitment to the choir and the positive impact it has on our services week by week.

Editor

PASTORAL CARE

Following the resignation of Ian Gordon as Convenor, Mike Gall and Audrey Paterson have agreed to co-convene the Pastoral Care Committee. Their contact details are as follows –

Audrey – 07912 752776 - audrey.paterson@btinternet.com and

Mike - 07766148308 - michael.gall@sky.com

Due to Covid19 the pastoral support of the congregation has had to change temporarily as we use other means such as email, phone and post to keep in contact. For this reason, it is very important that we obtain members personal contact information. **Please ensure that your visitor is provided with your telephone and email contacts, if you have them, or inform our Session Clerk and Minister directly using their email or phone numbers that you will find on the front cover of this Newsletter.** This information is held in confidence and is covered by the Data Protection Act.

Although we had planned to continue our monthly visits to Kingswells Care Home these have had to be postponed during the Covid19 crisis. Audrey has been in touch with the Care Home who are in lockdown and they have a contact number if needed. We will resume our services there once the crisis is over but please keep the residents in your prayers.

The pastoral team and visitors will continue to support our church family and keep you all informed of on-line services. Remember that you can keep in contact by using our Web Site www.kingswells.church. In the meantime - stay safe.

Any member who requires help should contact their visitor and our minister in the first instance.

Audrey Paterson and Mike Gall

NOSH AND NATTER

Following a really good start to the year I'm sorry to say that, like a lot of things, Nosh + Natter has been postponed until the Corona virus crisis is over. However, we did enjoy our usual quiz and raffle in January, in February we were entertained by Donald Vass a local singer and we were pleased to hear

him offer to come back another time to entertain us. In March the five-piece group, In the Mood, entertained us with their singing and playing and amused us with their banter. I'll certainly not be repeating the comment about bingo-wings!!



We have a programme made out until the end of the year so please pray that we will all be able to get together sooner rather than later so we can enjoy the fun and friendship we always share. The programme for the rest of the year is as follows

and you can see I have very optimistically included the month of May in the list.

Programme for 2020

May – All at C

June – Salvation Army Timbrals

July – Charlie House

August – Donald Grassie and Friends

September – Aberdeen City Music School

October – Inverurie Glee Club

November – Chinese Music and Dance (children)

December – Christmas party with Music4U

Anne Rodger

YOUNG CHURCH



In Young Church we continue to have fun and learn all about Jesus and how we should be like him in our world. This season of Lent we set about putting pictures on the board with a purple candle to represent each week in Lent as you will see from the photo: we have got to week three.

Now as church is cancelled for a while there will be no more drawings added to our Lent display. There is still lots of space to be filled, so can I suggest that if members of the Young Church draw an Easter picture and send it to the church, we will print it off and add it to the board. We will send you photos of the board as it fills up. If you have any friends who would like to draw an Easter picture as well, they are very welcome to send it too, the more the merrier. If you take a photo of it on a phone and send it to me annerodger48@gmail.com we will be able to stay in touch. The church website is www.kingswells.church.

Anne Rodger

ONE WORLD

Some Chinese Calligraphy from a Christian Brother in China.



Emily, who is a member of our Bible Study group has passed on these messages from a Chinese Christian brother, an artist in Beijing. He kindly copied them for us. The bigger Chinese character line on the right side is *'Emmanuel'* the smaller ones in the middle means *'God with us'* on the left is the Chinese lunar calendar time and his signature, red design is his personal writing stamp.

The one below is from Philippians 4:4 *“Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I will say, Rejoice.”* ‘Rejoicing’ in Chinese means filling up every corner of your chest.

It is such a wonderful thing to know that we are all together in Christ, and that we have this connection in the Lord from Kingswells to Beijing.

Those of you who come to Nosh + Natter will know Emily as she is also part of the team, and her children, Sophia and Jeremy attend Kingswells Primary School. They and some friends, the Red Phoenix Chinese Dance Group, will be entertaining us at Nosh + Natter in November.



Ann Rodger

CHRISTIAN AID

Let us continue to pray!



Christian Aid called on its supporters and sponsoring denominations to join a National Day of Prayer and Action for the Coronavirus crisis. The national day initiated by Churches Together in England (CTE), encouraged people to light a candle at 7pm on Mothering Sunday to symbolise hope in the midst of the pandemic.

A statement from CTE said: “We would pray for all in leadership at this time, making decisions about the containment of the Covid-19 virus, for those working in health and social care, and especially for the most vulnerable, whether elderly or those with underlying health conditions.”

Christian Aid is the official relief and development agency of 41 Christian church denominations in the UK and Ireland, and works to support sustainable development, eradicate poverty, support civil society and provide disaster relief in 37 countries around the world. CEO Amanda Khozi Mukwashi said: “If infection rates start to develop as they are in Europe, then people in poorer countries will be hit even harder. Many are already living with reduced health resilience because of extreme poverty, or in overcrowded humanitarian camps and in countries which do not have the healthcare infrastructures needed to combat widespread disease. We will be working on the ground to help prepare communities to limit the impact of Covid-19. Please pray for us in this vital work and support us where you can by making an online donation.

“We are praying for all those affected by this new virus, both in Britain and overseas, for all those working on the frontline and for wisdom for our leaders. Everyone is encouraged to light a candle of hope and **continue to pray**.”

“The global Church has rallied together in prayer through many a crisis over centuries. While this pandemic presents us with a crisis the likes of which none of us has seen in our lifetimes and understandably causes fear and anxiety, we cling to the hope found in an everlasting God who remains with us through it all.”

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT CHRISTIAN AID WEEK IS CANCELLED this year but you can still donate on-line – please do! (christianaid.org.uk)

Adapted from Christian Aid Web Site by Editor

MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

Christians have been urged to stand up and show the world that their faith is more than just words.



Rt Rev Colin Sinclair said the speed that normal life has been put on hold due to the Coronavirus pandemic had caught everyone by surprise. Speaking on the first Sunday that traditional church services have been suspended, the Moderator of the General Assembly said the future for many people is “very challenging” with no immediate prospect of a return “to business as usual”.

Mr Sinclair said: “Now is the time to stand up and show that our faith is more than words.

“It is the rock on which we stand and the driving force in our lives.

“We need to practice faith, hope and love and not just recite them as a creed.

“With God’s help we will get through this together and who knows perhaps the divisions in our communities and country that emerged over the last few years can now be healed as we work together.”

A PRAYER

For all that is good in life, thank you,

For the love of family and friends, thank you,

For the kindness of good neighbour and Samaritan stranger, thank you.

May those who are vulnerable, hungry or homeless, experience support,

May those who are sick, know healing,

May those who are anxious or bereaved sense comfort.

Bless and guide political leaders and decision-makers, with wisdom,

Bless and guide health workers and key workers, with strength and well-being.

Bless and guide each one of us as we adapt to a new way of living.

And may the light shining from our windows across road and wynd, glen and ben, kyle and isle be reflected in our hearts and hands and hopes.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

From the Church of Scotland Web Site

THE GUILD

In the Advent issue of the Newsletter I finished the 'GUILD' report by stating that the March meeting would be a talk about the 'Living Well Café'. Sadly, that did not happen as our world changed and the Coronavirus entered and took over our lives! Guilds were instructed to abandon meetings and indeed the Guild office, along with the rest of the Church of Scotland Headquarters is now closed.



Only the day before drastic measures were put in place the visit of our friends from our Guild Link took place. Seventeen of their members made it up from Broughty Ferry to our morning service which was wonderful. Lunch for all of us took place at the Four mile and a very happy time was had by all as the pictures show.

Meantime our Guild members have put in place a way of keeping in touch regularly with each other, ready for the time, whenever that is, when we will be able to meet again.

Chris Maxwell

Emily's Message to us All (Emily is Barbara Bruce's granddaughter)

