



KINGSWELLS PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER

August 2020

View from the Manse

Since lockdown, I have had a few new visitors to the manse, I thought you might enjoy their photos. The **Thieving Seagull**, who made off with the dish I was using for **Ms. Tiggy-Winkle**, made no bones about it as she stares into the trail camera right before flight! And **Bukee the Badger** on an evening visit!



The new bench, which I made out of a pallet, is ready to **welcome you** for a cuppa!

It's hard to believe that it has been 19 weeks since many of us were physically together in our

Kingswells Church building. Since 15 March 2020, we have been limited to connecting by way of a friendly wave, phone calls, emails, Zoom, Facetime and WhatsApp video chats, and online worship through the Aberdeen West Churches YouTube and call-in Twilio for those who do not have the internet. All-important attempts to stay connected with one another during trying times is vital, yet as many of us have no doubt come to realise, there is nothing that can replace being in the physical presence of another human being and gathered community.

These past four months of lockdown has had a profound influence on our spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical well-being, whether we want to acknowledge it or not. How could it not? The reality is we are all experiencing trauma as a result of the global Covid-19 pandemic. It has changed our daily routines, cancelled planned holiday trips, and called into question ongoing plans for the next several months. Our mental health and well-being have been strained. "One in seven Scottish adults are experiencing feelings of hopelessness owing to the COVID-19 pandemic," according to the recent study, *Coronavirus: Mental Health and the Pandemic*, led by The Mental Health Foundation.

it is important for each one of us to pay attention to how we are feeling, especially as we are moving out of lockdown. Yes, I do realise that this is not a typical Scottish response, but we are now living in extremely uncharacteristic times, so a shift is necessary. As you will read from Lorna Graham, our session clerk, our being together in our church building will not take place until possibly mid-August and it will not be as we have previously experienced. The online Aberdeen West weekly worship service will continue through August, and more than likely throughout the autumn as we live into this new way of being church together.

In the midst of this change, I encourage you to actively be in connect with your pastoral visitor, other church members, family and friends. The pastoral care that we all share with one another is vitally important. Every one of us, yes...your minister included, needs to tangibly experience the love, care, and support of our Christian community. We are being invited to live into a more expansive understanding and way of being family for one another, within our congregation and beyond into our community of neighbours. We are so blessed with one another and God's guiding spirit. Let us live into that new

reality that God has for each one of us, our church, and the world. May God's spirit continue to surround you and yours with God's love, mercy and compassion.

Peace, *Laurene*

PS. I am looking forward to getting together for a cuppa!

RE-OPENING OF THE CHURCH

With the easing of many of the lockdown restrictions, many of you will be keen to know when we might be able to open the church for worship. The First Minister announced on 9th July that churches could begin to re-open from mid-July, but while we very much look forward to the time when we are able to worship together again, there are a number of preparations which have to be completed before we can welcome you back safely. The safety and well-being of our congregation has to be our priority. A Risk Assessment, running to 9 pages has to be completed, together with Re-opening of Churches documentation of 5 pages, both to be submitted to Presbytery. In addition, the sanctuary and halls will have to be thoroughly cleaned, and hand sanitizing and specialist cleaning products purchased. Over the last few weeks there have been a number of Zoom meetings with Presbytery and our Cluster Group to discuss how all this can be achieved and our churches re-opened safely. However, when we do re-open things will be far from normal. Everyone attending will have to provide their name and telephone number (for contact tracing purposes). Face coverings will be required, there will be no singing, and no coffee after worship. In order to maintain the required 2 metre physical distancing there will be a restricted number of people who can be admitted. Due to the size of our sanctuary, the maximum number of worshippers has been estimated at 15. We very much hope that the next Review by the Scottish Government will reduce the distancing requirement to 1 metre which would allow a larger number to attend.

It is likely to be mid-August before we are able to open the church for worship. Initially we are planning for a mid-week evening service as a trial, and then towards the end of August to have Sunday worship. All five churches in our Aberdeen West Group will be following the same timetable. Further information and guidance for attending services will be issued when we are in a position to re-open our buildings.

In the meantime, the online services will be continuing throughout August – you'll find them on YouTube at Aberdeen West Churches.

Take care, keep safe and we hope to be back in church together soon.

Lorna Graham, Session Clerk

Farewell to Hugh and Elizabeth

For almost 20 years now, our congregation has been blessed with the outstanding musicianship of our organist Hugh Melvin, first, for a short time,



as 'stand-in' organist for Bob Whyte, and as our permanent organist thereafter. His playing has very much enhanced morning worship in both leading the praise and in his choice of voluntaries – way beyond that which can be normally be expected in a small suburban Parish Church. The congregation frequently stayed back and applauded at the end of a service. Hugh has had an adventurous and wonderful musical

career starting in his teenage years - "I did my debut broadcast on Children's Hour at the age of 15 presented by Auntie Kathleen and Uncle David."

He left school shortly afterwards, due to poor health and after passing University Prelims studied accountancy with the School of Accountancy, Glasgow. He worked for 11 years in a Chartered Accountants office and during this time met Elizabeth who at that time was a GPO Telephonist. He then changed his job to Law accounting and worked with two law firms until he was made redundant in 1994. This was when he created his own music related business. Hugh and Elizabeth were blessed with two children Olga and Stuart and now have two grandchildren Erin and Harry. Both Hugh and Elizabeth still lead busy lives but due to health reasons have now decided to slow down a bit.

Since his early broadcast on Children's Hour he has done many broadcasts on BBC, Radio Highland and Radio Forth. He also appeared on BBC TV, and

Grampian TV as an accompanist while playing organ for three Church Services and a religious programme on Grampian TV. In Aberdeen he has played on stage at Tivoli Theatre, H.M. Theatre, also in the Music Hall.

During his years as a piano accompanist he played for Hector MacAndrew and Ron Gonnella, two of Scotland's finest fiddlers and on stage, played the piano music of Beethoven for a talk given by John Suchet of Classic FM fame: also on stage he played for the stars of London West End, such as Anton Rodgers and Elizabeth Garvie when they played at the Aboyne Theatre, and even had the pleasure of playing piano for David Jacobs (of Top of the Pops fame) for a talk he gave.

He says, 'A highlight for me was in April 2019, when I played the mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Organ in the ballroom of Blackpool Tower. I will always remember coming up through the floor on this mighty instrument into the bright lights of the ballroom!'

Hugh has been drawing and painting since age 4 especially enjoying painting landscapes and seascapes in water colour and oils. He also composes music; some of which has been published. Some of his performances are on CDs and records by various artistes. He has had an illustrious musical career and we have been privileged by his presence with us.



Hugh and Elizabeth trained our small church choir to lead the praise, and to put on many performances to entertain the congregation and wider community to raise much needed funds. As a member of the choir I can attest to the high standards they demanded and also to the fun and sheer joy of singing and taking part. The choir was often challenged by the anthems at special services, but with patience and encouragement would rise to the occasion. We have several CDs

as a lasting memory of these concerts.

Hugh and Elizabeth will be greatly missed now that they have finally decided to demit, and we send our very sincere thanks and love and wish them well in their retirement. Both intend remaining members at Kingswells. It is our

intention to hold an occasion to celebrate their time with us and express our thanks when circumstances allow.

Anne Carmichael July 2020

Pastoral Care

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God.....

Acts 20:28

The challenge in ensuring that pastoral care continues in some meaningful form, other than in face to face contact, continues to be problematic.

Fortunately, and looking ahead, if the country complies with their “social distancing” restrictions and rules as we progress through Phase 3 of their strategy, life might just be able to see a larger light “at the end of the tunnel” over the next few weeks.

In the meantime, the Pastoral Care Team continues to meet through online “virtual” meetings, so it is still functioning behind the scenes.

Unsurprisingly, the annual Strawberry Tea Party, is not able to take place this summer as a result of the current pandemic.

A common message over the last several newsletters is that we continue to encourage members to share their telephone numbers and e mail addresses with us and the response so far continues to be minimal, for whatever reason, but we wish to reassure you that the holding of such data is strictly controlled by the terms of the Data Protection Act. **Please provide your visitor with contact details if you haven't already done so – telephone and /or email!**

During these continuing and challenging times for us all, should you feel the need for any form of support, please make contact with your visitor or contact Audrey and Mike on below contact telephone numbers.

Please take care and continue to be safe and as healthy as you possibly can.

Audrey Paterson, Pastoral Care Co-convenor, 07912 752776

Mike Gall, Pastoral Care Co-convenor, 01224 742910

Prayer Chain



Do you have a prayer request? Do you need some prayer support? PHONE 01224741558. Your request will be kept in confidence and will only be shared with the prayer chain. If you are asking for prayer for someone else, please do check that they are happy for details to be passed on. (The Chain is a vital part of our church life and is very much appreciated by many in the congregation – thank you Barbara – *Editor*)

Barbara Bruce 01224741558.

Buildings and Fabric

Due to the ongoing lockdown regulations and the subsequent restrictions to accessing the church, there is not a great deal that I can report on.

The outstanding exterior painting work to halls and church has been completed. The sound system upgrade should be installed in the next few weeks once the supplier catches up with their schedule.

The church is being monitored regularly to check for any maintenance issues, in line with insurance requirements. A group of volunteers have cut grass and the hedges and tidied the Car Park, all ready for future use when the time comes. To all of these people our continuing thanks.

We also have a metal frame to display our posters erected so that people approaching Kingswells on the A944 are aware of our continuing presence as a gathering of Christ's people. Thanks to Robbie Mann and his son.

A fence has now been installed along the east boundary of the manse garden.

Mike Reid July 2020

Money Matters

In common with all churches Kingswells continues to feel the financial effects of Covid 19.

However, I am pleased to report that thanks to the willingness of several members to change from freewill envelopes to standing orders the situation is not as bad as once feared.

Nevertheless, based on current trends we appear to be heading for a general fund deficit of around £10,000 against a budgeted surplus of £3,100.

Despite the possible limited return of church services, the position is unlikely to improve until we are once again able to obtain regular income from the letting of our halls.

If you are not already doing so, please consider making a regular donation in the coming months – ideally by standing order or cheque.

If you need any further information, please contact me on 01224 740108.

Jim Henderson - Treasurer

Zoom Book Study



What is your image of Jesus? How does it affect your personal faith? What do you really know about the Jesus of his time? Are we aware of the different ways in which Jesus is presented in the four gospels? Are his sayings his? What do we mean when we refer to Jesus as a 'spirit person'?

These are just some of the questions that have challenged us in recent weeks in our study of Marcus Borg's book *'Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time'*. These questions, it turns out, are not easy questions to answer and they are derived from 'people who want a fully contemporary faith that welcomes rather than oppresses our critical intelligence and openness to the best of historical scholarship. Borg shows how a rigorous examination of historical findings can lead to a new faith in Christ, one that is critical and, at the same time, sustaining.'

This book relies on a quality of frank, historical and theological research that one rarely comes across presented in such a comprehensive way. It puts in a clearer perspective the nature of our questions and our beliefs and leads us to an understanding of who Jesus really is. The aim is to understand our relationship with God: is it one of just belief or is it beyond belief? Is it rather 'an understanding of the Christian life as a relationship to the Spirit of God' a spirit we know and simply experience as a presence within us and around us in the everyday things of life and in the overwhelming experience of creation?

This is a book that takes us off a well-worn, too comfortable a path into unfamiliar territory and perhaps on to paths of mystery and adventure; but with a promise that we will be changed at the end of our journey!

Editor

CHRISTIAN AID/DEC EMMERGENCY APPEAL

Last year, over 45 million people were forced from their homes by conflict and violence. Families who have suffered so much need your help now more than ever to face the deadly threat of coronavirus. Millions of lives are at stake. Coronavirus is the latest threat to their safety. Families who have fled conflict and hunger are now living in crowded camps where social distancing is impossible. In these places there is limited access to medical care, clean water or enough food, making people extremely vulnerable to coronavirus. **Here, the virus is likely to be even more deadly than it has been in the UK. Deaths are already mounting.**

We've joined the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to raise urgent funds



for communities living in extreme poverty and conflict in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. Please help us protect refugees and vulnerable people in the world's most fragile places today.

We're already responding to the Covid-19 outbreak by delivering life-saving information and hygiene support, personal protective equipment and food packages to communities in need. Your donation can help us to:

- provide families with clean water, soap and information on keeping themselves safe
- give frontline medical and aid workers the equipment and supplies they need to care for the vulnerable and sick
- ensure families get enough food to prevent malnutrition, particularly amongst children. Help families who have lost everything as they face this deadly threat.

**Please donate now using the Christian Aid Web Site
www.christianaid.org.uk**

Michael Mosselmans, Head of Humanitarian Christian Aid

WALK THE LINE



On

Sunday 5 September 2020 at 1.30pm

Walk, Jog or cycle along the Deeside Railway line from Cults to Peterculter or Peterculter to Cults – or any part thereof.

**Sponsor Forms are available from
Chris Maxwell 01224 743857**

If you are unable to take part yourself, please help us raise money for Christian Aid by sponsoring one of the participants.



Wonder Zone - Young Church Holiday Club

This summer the Aberdeen West Churches Cluster Group is running a virtual Holiday Club, Wonder Zone, from Monday 3rd August until Friday 7 August. Instead of meeting in person we will be using Zoom to gather each morning at 10am for some time together with stories, games and challenges. A pack with craft materials and other resources will be supplied in advance to each family taking part.

We are excited to be able to bring you this and hope all the young people will be able to join in and be interested and occupied and to virtually meet up once again before they go back to school.

Anne Rodger

Children's Books and Games

The Aberdeen Cyrenians would like to thank everyone who donated children's books and games for distribution to families in receipt of food parcels.

The books and games will be a wonderful bonus to children in families already struggling to get food on the table and where buying these items is not available to them.

There are many rainy days during the school holidays where children are at home and this offers an alternative to watching TV and playing computer games.

It's great to think that books which have already been read and loved can be passed onto to others to enjoy.

Anne Rodger

The Guild



With weekly phone calls to all members, the guild is keeping together and supporting each other in different ways and especially giving support to each other through illness and hospital stays. Fish suppers are still popular – thanks are due to Joyce for the time she devotes to this! Of course, what we really long for is the day when we can all meet up together and enjoy each other's company!!

Chris Maxwell

A New Book by our member Angus Haddow 'Dowsing for Patterns of the Past'

When a family came forward to ask him to look into unexplained phenomena in their house, Angus, a Church of Scotland minister, tried to find possible explanations. A local dowser helped out with the investigation and they were surprised to find strong patterns of energy around the house. Over the years that followed, having himself taken up dowsing, the author went on to dowse the sites of a large number of stone circles, standing stones and other historical sites in Aberdeenshire, building up pictures of how the stones had previously been arranged before the ravages of time had affected them. He also considered and researched the various reasons that the ancients had brought these stones together in the first place over a thousand years ago, considering them to be a link between the pagan Gods and the people. It felt like he was piecing together a large puzzle after having to first construct most of the pieces themselves! This book describes his journey and his discoveries.

The book can be obtained from Amazon for £4.00; Angus A Haddow (Author), Pete Haddow (Editor) and Ina Melengoglou (Illustrator).

Access to Weekly Worship Service by Phone

**ABERDEEN WEST CHURCHES
NOW OFFERING EASY ACCESS TO SUNDAY WORSHIP BY PHONE
Listen to a Sunday Service at 10.30am and during the next 7 days
CALL THIS NUMBER BELOW FROM ANY PHONE
01224013222**

Access to Weekly Worship Service by YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP4UWG4vEAhuLZ0F79-9U2g>

The service is available at 10:30 am on Sunday, but you can also watch any of the past worship services at your convenience. Just go to the Aberdeen West Churches YouTube channel.

You are invited to drop into our weekly Zoom gatherings for prayer and fellowship. All are welcome to join us.

PRAYER

Thursday 9.20 to 9.35 -chat;
9.35 to 10.00am Prayer Service
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84842264821>
Meeting ID: 848 4226 4821

FELLOWSHIP

Sunday 13.00 to 13.30pm
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82372083183?pwd=NURISTgzMkNBNWtINnV6c3lFMGQ4dz09>
Meeting ID: 823 7208 3183
Passcode: 036705

Contacts

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