

KIRK NEWS LIGHT

Issue No 4 – July 2020



Incorporating Weekly Newsletter No. 18 - Sunday 19 July 2020

Thank you to John for his weekly missives of encouragement, news and fun. Here are some more of the Messy Church Treasure Hunt photos promised from Newsletter No. 16.



Treasure Hunt



BLESSINGS FROM YOUR CHURCH FAMILY ON YOUR LOCKDOWN BIRTHDAYS!

Louisa Smith (5) 12 April; Chloe Campbell (9) 12 April

Charlotte Meighan (10) - 12 May

Maxwell Sidney (9) 6 June; Jorja Bell (15) 9 June; Kathryn Bell (15) 9 June

Fraser Fettes (10) 1 July; Ethan Lambourne (12) 9 July; Sullivan Orr (2) 10 July

Isobel Davidson (7) 11 July; Sophie Campbell (7) 12 July; Harry Pellegrom (1) 12 July

Erin Fettes (8) 25 July

Ruth Tyldesley (4) 3 Aug; Alex Lambourne (10) 12 Aug; James Tyldesley (6) 28 Aug

Aonghus Archibald (5) 31 Aug

ALPHA COURSE UPDATE From SUE PIANTA- SCOTT



You may have wondered what has happened to the course that was started at Gordon Castle and then moved to Bellie Church. Well, let me tell you.

We completed the course towards the end of last

year where Jan Pellegrom and myself were co leaders of a lovely group. Over the weeks we were treated to videos and introduction to the various sections, first by our minister Seòras and then it was over to Jan to do the technical stuff.

Beyond me, I'm afraid!

Each week we had a wonderful meal prepared and served to us by a dedicated team of volunteers and then we watched a video and discussed it.

Now, we still meet up, albeit via Zoom (whatever would we do without it?!)

We share how we are dealing with the current situation and how the Lord is with us in various ways. We share how we are keeping our faith without the usual Sunday services and get-togethers. This includes online, YouTube services, books, bible texts etc.

It has become a very blessed and special time and I look forward to when we can meet up in person. But until then, thanks to Debbie for setting up our monthly zoom meetings, we will continue as we are.

And of course, we're looking forward to seeing Seòras back among us. What great news!

REFLECTIONS FROM MODERATOR OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rt Rev Dr MARTIN FAIR

[Extracts from May's Life & Work]

[Last Year's Moderator, Very Rev Colin Sinclair's theme was Jesus' simple command. "Follow me".

This year's theme follows on from that **"and I will show you how to fish for people."**]

Last year, the General Assembly committed us to a Radical Plan which has involved many folks in the business of restructuring – re-shaping the central bodies ('121' George St, Edinburgh) and the creation of larger regional units ('super presbyteries').

*But deep down, we're all aware that restructuring in itself will prove to be of little help to us unless it is accompanied by a wholehearted re-commitment to the mission to which Jesus called us... **God isn't finished with Scotland yet** and will, I pray, use us powerfully in the days ahead as a channel through which his love, joy and peace will be made known afresh to the people of our nation and beyond. So as we continue with the necessary business of redesigning the way we operate, let it go hand in hand with a full-blooded, no-holds-barred commitment to what Jesus called those first disciples to: **fishing for people.....** for most of us our fishing ground will be right where we are – among our neighbours,*

*colleagues and friends.... **If we want the opportunity to stand up and speak, first we need to kneel down and serve.** I've never been keen on fishing and therefore know very little about it.... But I do know this much; you need some kind of bait....I wonder if that's perhaps how we've thought of fishing for people. ..if we got our music right, or changed the version of the pew Bible, or projected the words or served better coffee or installed nicer toilets, people would come? If so, then we've been guilty of using the wrong bait. There's nothing wrong with any of the above but ... (there's) **no substitute for offering the love of God made known in Jesus.... people were drawn to Jesus.** But there's something else about the idea of bait. By implication, it involves luring, or drawing fish to us. What if, in sending us out, Jesus means for us to go... to go out! So we're not to 'stay in' and lure people to us; **we're to 'step out' and take with us the greatest gift we have to offer, Jesus.***

Note: Our Kirk Session has to decide to 'go into' either Highlands & Islands or the North East and Northern Isles Presbytery. This may not matter to you personally, but it does for our leadership and the good ordering of the Church. Please pray.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT (Other than Covid 19)

Children & Communion - We experimented with this 10-12 years ago, but it has rather fallen by the wayside. Stories of how other churches are including children and teaching their congregations about the mystery of this sacrament and how it is 'administered' are shared in April's Edition of Life & Work. Allowing only elders to serve is a recent tradition. One minister wrote about attending a communion where the minister had 2 children either side of him holding out the bread and the 'wine' as people came forward, and loved the informality and inclusiveness of that. ***What does Communion mean for you personally? Does it feel inclusive or exclusive? How should it be do you think? If the sacrament is made more informal and inclusive, how do we preserve the 'special-ness' and mystery of meeting with the living God in the ordinary things of life?***

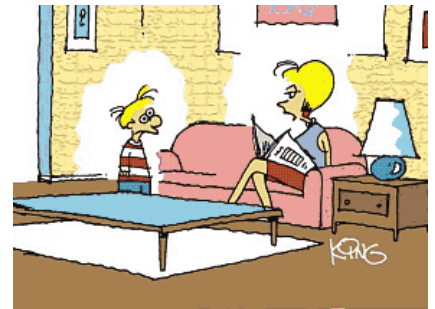


Robotics & AI (Artificial Intelligence) – (Also from April's L&W) It is the 50th Anniversary of the Church of Scotland's Science, Religion & Technology Project (SRT). Many highly qualified scientists who are Christians advise the Scottish government on the ethics of various scientific/ technological advances. E.g.



One company advertises that their helpful mini-robot "loves to be around people, and the relationships he forms are the single most important thing to him", lulling the user into the illusion that the machine has a personality... Devices such as Alexa and Apple's Siri are being developed by companies who listen to our conversations and respond to our instructions. Should we train our children to be polite to Alexa? If that seems ridiculous, might it not be a problem if they learn patterns of communication based on a master-slave conversation. Most programmers are young white males, single, materialistic and tech-savvy. What innate

biases are being built (consciously/ unconsciously) in to the systems? Technology has been a 'godsend' during this time of pandemic, but some of us have also felt the pressure of 'enslavement'. ***How do we use it and control it well, but also protect ourselves and our children from its harmful effects?*** The only answer I can come up with is to keep God to the front and centre of our lives, looking to him (not Google!) for guidance and helping our children do the same. And wonderfully, we don't need to be tech-savvy to do that!



"No, you weren't downloaded.
You were born."



What did YOU do in the Pandemic then?! - News from two of our young people

Abby Cant - Just wanted to start off by saying I hope everyone is doing okay during this time and that you have been able to cope with the situation.



So just before lockdown happened, I passed my driving test, which during this time has been a great blessing as I am able to do shopping for my mum and my grandparents. I was supposed to do my test on the 31st March which of course would have been cancelled so I am grateful that my driving instructor pushed me to do it early!

During lockdown, I have been trying to use my time in the best possible way, so I have been out painting the fence, clearing out the garden shed, putting my cooking skills to the test and even dying my mum's hair! I have also been trying to keep my languages going for my degree with the kind help of Sue which I am hoping to start in September whether that be at home for a few months or if I will get to move to Edinburgh.



So much is up in the air just now with University but hopefully I will get some answers soon. In the meantime, I am desperately waiting to get back up to the horses to be reunited with them as well as my wee buddy Archie who always makes me smile with his funny little antics.

Everyone take care and be safe. **Abbz**

Euan Cant - I was in 5th Year when the Covid 19 started, and was meant to be sitting my Higher Exams in May which were all cancelled, so am just now waiting to see what results I will get in August based on Prelim/ Teachers professional judgement and coursework throughout the year, so fingers crossed. Currently I have just started my S6 timetable online which has been a big adjustment, but I have managed to adapt to this. It's weird that I haven't been at school starting this year with my friends, but I have kept in contact with them in other ways.

Like Abby, I have been out trying some new recipes and baking cakes which haven't gone too badly!



Once this lockdown eases, which I am hoping it won't be too long until we can get back to school even if it is part time, it will be nice to have some sort of routine again. I am also looking forward to finally getting my provisional licence as I am 17 in July and really want to start my driving lessons I have booked.



Hope everyone is okay and staying safe.

[We are very proud of all 'our' young folk and pray for their physical, mental and eternal wellbeing.]

*God of our children,
You hold their destiny in your hands.
They are not victims of fate, but inheritors of faith.
What world will you remake from the rubble?
What great new thing do you mean to bring?
May our eyes be open to what you will do in the aftermath.
May our hearts and arms be opened wider to you, and one another.
May our imaginations be filled with Spirit-sparked creativity
To become the Church you mean us to be tomorrow
To become the Church you call us to be today
To become the Church you've been planning to build since yesterday.*

From June's Life & Work

MONEY MATTERS

THANK YOU FROM CROSSREACH

Letter received from Viv Anderson, CEO of CrossReach (Social Care Council of the Church of Scotland) to whom we donated £1,000 from the Tom Paton legacy.

"Thanks to the generosity of every one of our amazing supporters, we have been able to provide equipment and resources so badly needed during this emergency. While the challenges we face continue, knowing we have such wonderful, faithful supporters partnering with us strengthens our resolve. Thank you to all of you for donating, praying, volunteering and generally getting alongside us in so many ways."

The total raised in the Covid-19 Emergency Appeal was £270,000.

THANK YOU from Church Treasurer and Team - The 'Giving Day' at Pentecost raised £5000 + (including Gift Aid) for our Church finances. That was a wonderful expression of thanks to God and support for our Church.

Needless to say this does not cure all our financial ills and has only started us on a road to recovery. The lack of Hall rental and weekly offerings are likely to continue for some months to come. Please, as you pray for the ongoing situation, consider your ongoing giving.

Why not give a 'thank offering' for safe-keeping, good neighbours & friends, for Messy Church, for family? Don't feel you have to wait for another 'special' day. Surprise and encourage the team with a gift to the Church 'out of the blue'!

You can do this by Cheque or Bank Transfer, or setting up a Standing Order, but please, no cash. **Remember that if you pay Income Tax you can Gift Aid your contribution.** You can send or hand in your contribution to Betty Brown or to any Elder. That's the local way. OR...

The Church of Scotland has devised a simple way to donate centrally, but to the local church (or the Church as a whole). Go to the Church of Scotland website Home Page and click on the section which says, *Support your local church with our new online donations system.* and find out there how you can donate.

We know that you are not a 'magic money tree'!

But we also know that we belong to a God who 'owns the cattle on a thousand hills'
and who gives to us abundantly so that we can give to others.

We are just stewards of his wealth and are to be channels of his blessing and generosity.



Remember these two?! **Jennie Cameron & Louise Williamson** - Coffee & Chat. We will meet again! **Mary Brander and Penny**, her spaniel, looking after each other during Lockdown.



Elizabeth Runcie out on her walk recovering 'miraculously' well after a massive operation and inspiring us with her positive spirit.



And this garden gnome is **Joyce Gordon**, stalwart member 'of old', enjoying an hour in the sunshine

We WILL meet again!
God bless you
and all the others we haven't seen in a while.
Let's remember each other in prayer.

NEWS FROM THE MANSE

Seòras and Debbie wished to share their sad news with the wider Church family and appreciate your prayers. The following comes from an email sent round to the elders on 1 July.

I have some sad news to share with you. Debbs and I were expecting another baby, who sadly went to be with Jesus on Friday (26 Jun) after Debbie suffered a very traumatic miscarriage at 12 weeks.... We are suffering a huge loss, but at the same time have the comfort of knowing our little one is seeing God face to face, reveling in his glory, knowing the love of our King in a way we here on earth can only look forward to. Please pray that we too would know the comfort of his love in very real ways as we grieve and begin to heal. ...please don't feel ...you have to keep a distance – knowing we are loved and supported means a lot.

Love and prayers, Seòras, Debbs and Sullivan

Having had some compassionate leave, our Manse family were advised to take some annual holidays and so until August, the contacts in case of need are in the box below.

We assure them of our 'wrap-around' prayers for healing love and refreshment of spirit, mind and body

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Deputy Session Clerk: Ann Bowie, 01343 821476, AnnMCBowie@aol.com

Church Admin: Colin Hanover still furloughed

Kirk News Light: Margaret King 01343 820937 margaretking889@gmail.com

Church Website: www.bellieandspeymouth.org.uk Facebook: www.facebook.com/bellieandspeymouth
[Scottish Charity Number SC005310](#)

DEPARTED FRIENDS

19 May – Mr George Nichol, Kingston. (Speymouth Elder for over 50 years)

27 June – Mrs Muriel Halket, Wakefield Care Home, Cullen, Late of Bogmoor, Spey Bay.

From everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him. Psalm 103: 17

Non – Events (For your prayers if not your Diaries!)

ReFuel Christian Holiday Camp, Gordon Castle; SpeyFest and its ecumenical Church Service; agricultural shows and Highland Games. *Pray for disappointed holiday-makers, local businesses and accommodation providers. Lord, help!*

United services at Speymouth in July and Bellie in August; Holiday Club – *Lord, keep us strong and faithful!*

SCHOOL STARTS – TUE 18 AUG

CHURCHES RE-OPEN - When organised and safe to do so

Our local woodsman reminding us of our social duty!

Cartoon sent in by Liz Moir

NEXT ISSUE

Any thoughts/ poems/ drawings from Lockdown?

