

#### Weekly Newsletter No 10 – Sunday 24 May 2020



With this being issue No 10, that means we have now completed nine weeks of 'lock-down' but there is light appearing at the end of this tunnel (Nicola Sturgeon found the switch!). We have prayed through this time and God is answering – but in his time, not ours. The statistics are grim though.

While the media report on numbers, we have to remember that each 'number' is a person. In Scotland, 14,969 people have been ill as a result of this virus and 2,245 have died. In Moray, where we have been somewhat sheltered from the



worst of the outbreak, 75 people have, so far, tested positive and 8 people have died including our own George Nicol (see below).

So, remember in your prayers those who have been affected by this virus. OK some politicians may have made wrong decisions; some scientists may have drawn the wrong conclusions or offered the wrong advice. They will all, no doubt, question themselves and while we all now have the benefit of hind-sight, there will undoubtedly be a blame-game to follow. However, before we join in the shouting of whose fault was this or whose fault was that, please consider Mathew's Gospel, Ch 7 v 1-3 which reminds us, 'Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?'

## Death of a friend.

Sad to inform you all of the death of George Nicol, (95), Vinery Cottage, Beach Road, Kingston. George died on Tuesday 19 May 2020 at Seafield Hospital, Buckie. The funeral will be a private affair due to current guidelines. George was an Elder of Speymouth Church from 1963 to 2014 and continued to worship at Speymouth Church until recently. He was a 'weel kent' figure who will be missed. At least now he will be playing his fiddle in Heaven – lucky Heaven.

# Messy Church - 'Click and Collect'



It's Messy Church time - but not as you know it.

The Messy Church team are busy organising a 'Click and Collect' Messy Church for the afternoon of Saturday 30 May 2020.

Please read the accompanying leaflet for details.

If you, or anyone you know, wishes to take part please contact me by email at <a href="mailto:jmcconnachie78@gmail.com">jmcconnachie78@gmail.com</a> with

- a. Your name.
- b. How many bags you wish
- c. Your address if you wish to have your bag[s] delivered.

And, please remember that *Messy Church is not just for kids*. Big people are allowed to have fun in our church.

# Our Church Finaces are getting critical.

A report by The Assembly Trustees of the Church of Scotland (May 2020) has estimated that as a result of the Coronavirus COVID-19 'lock-down', there could be a 30% loss of income for individual congregations as well as the Church itself. There is no reason to doubt that with the suspension of regular Sunday Worship, fund raising events, contributions for the use of the halls and hall lets, there will be a substantial fall in the revenue of Bellie and Speymouth Church. Since 1 January 2020, our bank balance has reduced by over £9,000. This will all have an effect not only for 2020 but undoubtedly for 2021 and beyond. In fact, even before the current crisis, the financial position of our General Fund was already in a challenging state having run at a deficit for the last few years.

The Kirk Session had already agreed some time ago to hold a fund-raising effort in the form of a 'Giving Day' at Pentecost. This was to be a whole Church effort focusing not only on those who attend worship regularly but all persons on the Communion Roll.

It is impossible to deliver an 'gifting' envelope to everyone on the Roll at this time, so we are issuing a cry for help through this newsletter. Please consider making an additional contribution over Pentecost towards our Church finances. You can do this by Cheque or Bank Transfer but please, no cash. Please mark the back of the cheque, or the reference part of the bank transfer, 'Gift Day' or similar. This will allow us to advise you of the amount raised. Remember that if you pay Income Tax you can Gift Aid your contribution. If you want to know more about Gift Aid, just give me a call (01343 820671).

Even with your generous help at this time, we will not cure all our financial ills but it may start us on a road to recovery.

You can send or hand in your contribution to Betty Brown, myself or to any Elder.

(There is a cartoon which we could have used here but chose not to. The siuation is too serious)

# But now, on a happier note

#### Birthdays - Anniversaries - Special Days

We heard of a few birthdays last week and how our sisters and brothers in our church family sent cards and greetings. It's great to hear how people are rallying round. If there is a special day in your house this week let folks know as they would love to help that day to be just a little better.

To all our birthday people, anniversary people and Special Day people;



Have a Happy Happy Day



### **Don't forget Pentecost Parade**



Don't forget to post your photographs of something red for Pentecost; a red tie, red shirt, red dress, red anything would be great. The Easter Parade was such fun so let's have some more fun while celebrating Pentecost.



#### Have an ice-cream

As we enter week 10, take a minute to congratulate yourselves on surviving nine weeks of 'lock-down' – give yourself a well deserved pat on the back – have a celebration bar of chocolate or an ice cream (the Ice Cream Parlour is now open for take-away ice cream – now that's good news). During this week, some restictions will be lifted; you can do more exercises (groan) and you can only guess at the excitement regarding the news that golfing will restart on Friday 29 May 2020.

Don't forget to keep in touch, phone someone who lives on their own or someone who may be struggling – send them some chocolates or deliver an ice-cream (stay safe yourself).



Things have looked gloomy for long enough so it's time to turn on the smile and enjoy the coming summer as best we can. I did like a comment from a scientist this week when he said, "The only thing which spreads faster than a virus is hope"

May you feel the warmth of God's love around you John



Since the lockdown in March, we have not met in our Church buildings and Messy Church meetings, like other Church gatherings, have had to be cancelled in the meantime.

However, the next Messy Church is scheduled for Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May (which is Pentecost weekend). Pentecost is the time when Christians celebrate the Church's birthday. It is when God sent the Holy Spirit and equipped the disciples to go out and spread the Good News. The beginning of the work of the Church.

So, we are arranging a "Click & Collect" Messy Church for that day.

We would like to invite **YOU** to come along and collect your "Pentecost Party bag" with a selection of crafts, stories and even cake. Of course, we will be keeping to the rules of social distancing during the collection process.

# Here's how it is going to work-

- 1 Order your Pentecost Party Bag (PPB) by sending your name and how many bags you wish to order for your family (or those you wish to be included). See e-mail address below
- 2 Come along to the Square in Fochabers (just outside Bellie Church) between 2 and 4 pm on Saturday 30th May to collect your PPB.
- When you return home, enjoy the activities etc and then please join with the wider Church family in celebrating the Church's birthday on Pentecost Sunday
- 4 Why not share a photo of your family group on Pentecost Sunday a Pentecost Parade of photos will hopefully be posted on our webpages

Please note that if you are unable to collect in person and wish a delivery to be arranged, then that is possible if you let us know when ordering your PPB.

Ordering is important so we know how many bags to prepare.

Messy Church is for all ages and everyone is welcome to join with us at Pentecost.

It's that simple - just "Click & Collect"

Please order by e-mailing: <u>imcconnachie78@gmail.com</u>