

# Bellie & Speymouth Church

Reaching out - Welcoming in

## Weekly Newsletter No 24 - Sunday 30 August 2020

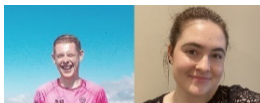


The Church of Scotland

### Our Church – the bigger picture.

During this period while most of our churches remain closed some may think the Church is sitting back doing little or nothing. But this is not the case. Just have a look at the Church of Scotland web-site and see what is going on. All over Scotland and beyond, people are working, praying, helping others, getting involved. Here are a few highlights:

- The Moderator as part of the Week of Prayer climbed and prayed at the top of the four cardinal Munros i.e. the most northerly (Ben Hope), the most easterly (Mt Keen), the most southerly (Ben Lomond) and the most westerly (Sgúrr na Banachdaich on Skye).
- The Very Rev Dr Susan Brown as convener of the Faith Impact Forum of the Church of Scotland, has joined nine other leaders of faith groups in calling for new legislation to be introduced as a matter of urgency to combat all forms of racism especially on-line and to force the social media companies to take proper responsibility for their on-line platforms.
- Kirk members are amongst a group of young activists campaigning with Christian Aid to stop a UK government scheme supporting fossil fuel extraction. Young people aged between 18 and 30 years old are highlighting the issue as part of the 'Stop Fueling the Fire' campaign. Their aim is to put pressure on the British government, which is considering ending the use of UK Export Finance in funding fossil fuel extraction overseas.



Two of the group – the girl is an Elder of her church

That's some of the 'big stuff' but there are lots of people involved in various projects. Take some time and look at the Church of Scotland web-site – you will be amazed at what is going on in a church which is closed? - Aye right!



Just when you thought it was safe to go out, the Messy Church Gang have been organising again! This time it is a virtual 'Bake-off'. Some folk think Messy Church is for kids but this time we challenge all ages to take part. Have a look at the flyer at the back of this newsletter for details.

We cannot emphasise enough that Messy Church is not just for young people – this is one activity where anyone of any age (and in some cases like me - no ability) can take part. So, come on older folks – get the apron on and join in the 'Bake Off'!



***From our minister Seòras.***

Recently I have found the sea to be a strangely peaceful place.



It started when I was off work, and feeling depressed and directionless. I would take a fishing rod and go down to the beach or a harbour and just stare out at the waves. It was at a time where I was finding it really hard to read my Bible or pray. But it was there that I felt closest to God. I still felt His love for me. Despite me feeling broken and small, I had just the gentlest sense of His Holy Spirit with me. It really kept me going.

I then started swimming. It felt amazing to dive into the cold water, to float on the waves and pray staring at the big open sky. However, after a handful of times coming back to the car shivering like crazy, Debbs ordered me to get a wetsuit. So at least once a week since then, I've got dressed up and gone for a swim in the ocean. I would have the time to just look out at the wonder of creation and see the Lord.



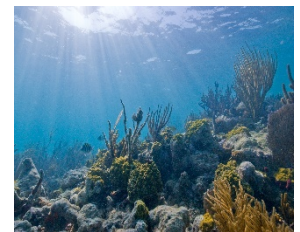
In Romans 1:20 it says *“Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made.”*

For some reason, seeing the ever-changing vastness and beauty of the sea makes me feel ... calm. I am aware of how small and significant I am. My life seems short and insubstantial compared to the millennia of waves that had crashed against the rocks of that shore.

There's a term that's used about 50 times in the New Testament, a Greek word *er'-ay-mos*. It means the lonely place, the desert, the wilderness, the place of solitude. All throughout Jesus' earthly ministry he takes time to leave the crowds and the excitement, to leave his responsibilities to his disciples, to leave the busy-ness and the noise and the distractions ... just to be alone with God.

Mark 1:35 says *“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there He prayed.”*

For me, the sea has been my solitary place in recent months. The wilderness of quiet where I feel I can go to rest my mind and Spirit. It is also just so beautiful down there! Every time I swim, I am reminded of the amazing creativity that God has poured into our world. The colours, the plants, the creatures ... every time I'm blown away by God the CREATOR.



So, my question for this week would be, where is your *er'-ay-mos*? Where is the place that you can find the peace to pray, to meet with God, to enjoy His presence?

It doesn't have to be really out in the wilderness, the word *er'-ay-mos* also means a place of spiritual peace and solitude in other parts of scripture. This could be a favourite armchair, a quiet walk in the woods. Our prayer group has been blessed each week with “Pyjama prayer” materials from Margaret King, being led from the quiet of our own homes but in prayer together.

(Please do get in touch if you would like to receive these weekly materials)

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father, God of the wild places, you who are not confined to our buildings. Thank you that we spend time with you wherever we go. Lord thank you for the quiet wildernesses where we can go to allow our busy minds to slow. The places where your Spirit has met and ministered to your people since the very beginning.

Allow these times to revive us to return to our responsibilities, families, friends, communities with a fresh desire to see your Kingdom come. Inspire us by your scripture, lead us by your grace, and whisper to our hearts in each day.

Amen.

God bless,

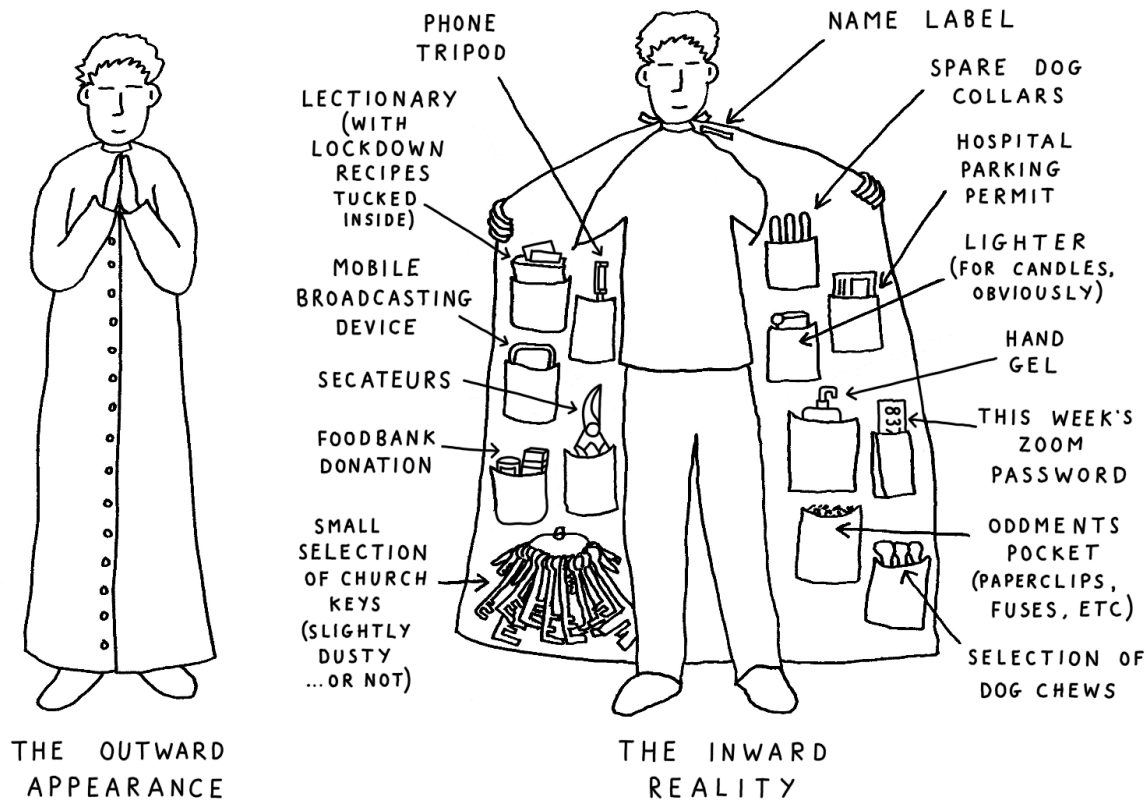
*Seòras*

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## Ministers clothes

In some churches, the minister wears a long black coat or gown or robe called a 'Cassock'. These gowns are usually black but may be other colours, the saltire blue is popular in Scotland. Gowns like these are today usually only worn by clerics and some other church officers. Universities also use similar gowns. However, some of us may wonder what is under the Cassock-

# THE CASSOCK



## Its Birthday Time

There are some important days this week. One boy we know is 10 – double figures, and there will be others waking up to an exciting day. Your church family hopes you and all of you who have special days this week



### Watch out – there's a bug about

Just when it seemed the Coronavirus bug was in retreat the number of people being infected is rising. This bug didn't retreat because it wanted to, it was us being careful that caused it. In the same way, if we stop being careful, we are giving it a chance to come back and really, we don't want another lock-down. OK we made the best of it earlier this year but it wasn't much fun, was it?

That's why we are being so careful about reopening our church buildings. When the churches reopen, we want them to be safe places where people will want to go but we must get it right. A great deal of work is being done to get things organised but we ask you to be patient. The Kirk Session has decided we keep working towards reopening and that's what we are doing.

You may have heard that certain indoor activities including children's activities are permitted from 31 August 2020. However, the Scottish Government has yet to publish guidance which would allow such activities to begin within church buildings so we can't even make a start on how that can be done.

In the meantime, we shall stick with the on-line worship and reflections – Seòras will have a new one for Sunday. Last week there was a computer glitch with the 11.00am Coffee-time but it will be fine this Sunday! It is really nice to see folk albeit on-line and to have a wee chat. You will find the links on the web-site and the Church Facebook pages.

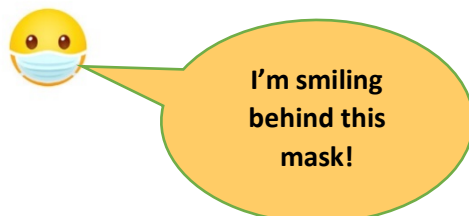
As regards to ministers wearing gowns, Seòras was asked about this but he said that if he had to wear one, he would wear his wet suit as well – You can picture for yourself the image of Seòras leading worship while wearing a wet-suit ( Help, he might just do that!).

So that's three things for your diary this week

1. Seòras' reflection on Sunday
2. The 'virtual' Coffee/Tea time at 11.00am on Sunday and
3. Messy Church Bake-off on Saturday.

Keep smiling behind those masks – on hearing someone grumbling about wearing face masks, a 12-year-old girl was heard to comment, "What's the problem – just get on with it!"

With blessings to all  
*John*





# Messy Bake-Off?

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September

2 pm



Join us **via Zoom** for an afternoon of fun, fellowship and food galore!

Enjoy a baking demonstration with **Alison McDonald**

There will also be games, stories, sharing and, of course, eating what we bake along with a cuppa.

In order to join in you will need the **Zoom meeting link**. Check out the Bellie and Speymouth Facebook page or

e-mail [jmconnachie78@gmail.com](mailto:jmconnachie78@gmail.com) for details.

**Join in the fun (and the mess too!) - why not prepare one of your own favourite recipes before the event and have it ready to show and share with everyone on the day?**

Alison's recipes will appear on the FB page afterwards so that everyone can have a go.