

Christ's Kirk Chronicle

Glenrothes Christ's Kirk

Pitcoudie Avenue

Glenrothes

KY7 6SU

September 2020



Re-opening the church

In the interest of public health and safety we announced the closure of our church buildings and the suspension of normal services in March. We are grateful for your patience as you endure the continuation of church online, rather than in familiar church surroundings, but we believed the health and safety of our community, as well as others, should be paramount.

We welcome the increased flexibility for gatherings and the suspension of shielding, some of you may even have decided to take advantage of this liberty. However, in such cases social distancing and hand hygiene must be observed, as we should remain vigilant in preventing the spread of COVID-19, acknowledging the health guidelines that Governments have issued.

As we are looking forward to coming together in September we wanted to make you aware of what that will look like. The elders in consultation with others in our church, have spent many hours discussing how best to gather again for worship in these strange times. We have tried to take into account all the variables that are in play in our "new" world. Following the various guidelines with regard to the virus and providing an environment for corporate worship has not been easy to balance. We beg your prayers and patience as we seek to navigate the ever-changing waters in which we are all swimming.

To begin with there will be a shorter service without any singing and no coffee fellowship afterwards. We ask that if you do fellowship with others that you please do so outside and maintain social distancing. Unless you hold an exemption you will be required to wear a mask, invited to hand sanitize and required to give name and contact details. Seating will be allocated and social distancing in place. Things will be different, but we hope that these necessary changes will only be temporary. We will continue to evaluate the situation and make adjustments as needed.

As much as I long to welcome you all back to worship here at Christ's Kirk I would ask that you please exercise wisdom in deciding whether or not you will attend. We understand and respect that during these extraordinary times some may choose to stay home. A regular weekly reflection will still be posted on YouTube and our Facebook page. As always we welcome your feedback, so don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

Every blessing.

Ruth

Session Clerk

Dear Friends



It's hard to believe that we have been in lockdown for almost 6 months and although some restrictions have eased - it is quite clear that the spread of Covid-19 has been devastating upon so many facets of our lives. It will take some time for life to resume to what we feel is normal. The impact upon our church communities up and down the land and across the world, has been immense and it will continue to be so for some time. It's true that we have been able to engage in online worship and other online events. Lockdown for me has meant the need to provide pastoral care remotely - which I don't find satisfactory, as there is no real substitute for face to face pastoral work. I miss it and I have missed seeing the congregation.

Working from home most of the time has been challenging. At times 3 of us have been working from home and this has required tolerance and forbearance from each of us. I think too - blessed as we are to have homes to live in - working within the same four walls each day adds a monotony to life. I am used to being out and about as a minister. Many of you reading this letter are used to being out of the house more than you are. So how do we sing a new song to the Lord, in the uncharted territory that we find ourselves? Perhaps you remember Psalm 137 written by God's people in exile in Babylon. They are in a strange land, with an unfathomable language and strange food - far away from Jerusalem and its Temple, which are now in ruins. The Psalmist writes,

*By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept
when we remembered Zion.*

*There on the poplars
we hung our harps,
for there our captors asked us for songs,
our tormentors demanded songs of joy;
they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"*

*How can we sing the songs of the Lord
while in a foreign land?
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
may my right hand forget its skill.
May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth
if I do not remember you,
if I do not consider Jerusalem
my highest joy. [vs 1-6]*

Firstly to sing a new song in this "strange land" means that we remember that God in whom we believe does not change - even when everything around us seems very different. The Old Testament uses words like "rock" and "refuge" to describe God's steadfast nature. It's a comfort for us to know that God's character, his interests and his transactions never change. The writer of the sermon to the Hebrews reminds us that the character of Jesus the Christ is the same as it always was. He writes "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." [13:7-8]

Secondly, count your blessings. Are you a glass half-empty or a glass half full kind of person? Hopefully when you stop to reflect - then there are some positives that you can count as blessings. When I have made contact with members of the congregation by telephone, text or e-mail, I have been amazed about how you have been so positive. I've spoken to people who are 90 plus and still able to potter about in the garden. Others have spoken about how glad they are to be able to welcome friends and family members into their homes. In the past we would have taken these things for granted, but now we appreciate them all the more. Don't forget to count your blessings.

Lastly, we can sustain and nourish our Christian faith at home. In lockdown we have been given the gift of time to pray more or read our Bibles. Many Churches live stream their church services or provide a YouTube recording. There is now a substantial bank of reflections on our Church website and Facebook page. There are plenty of resources for us to tap into. Look after yourselves,

Your minister and friend,

Andrew

Points for Prayer

- * Please remember Anne Innes and her family. Anne's husband John passed away in July.
- * Please ask that the Lord would continue to guide the Kirk Session regarding the Church being opened for worship. Pray for the Church of Scotland as a whole and the loss of income it has experienced in the past 6 months during lockdown.
- * Pray for those in our congregation who continue to be anxious about the covid-19 pandemic.
- * Bring to the Lord Doreen Herd at Preston House. Doreen has been suffering with poor health in recent times.
- * Pray for the arrangements to bring together 3 Presbyteries to form the Presbytery of Fife as from 1st January 2021. Let's hope for a smooth transition.
- * Remember those who have lost their jobs and those whose jobs are at risk at the moment.

Prayer Call

Heavenly Father,

We lift up our hearts to you in prayer, asking for your love and peace to be given to those who have found life very difficult during the lockdown, especially those who have been bereaved but unable to say goodbye to their loved ones.

We thank you for life and health,
love and friendships old and new,
the support and help from our minister and church friends,
for the care and love shown by all in the NHS, volunteers, front line workers, neighbours and community workers.

We pray that soon we will be able to worship in church again.

God, you are ever constant, blessing us with your strength to go forward in faith to meet all the new challenges facing us.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change

Courage to change the things I can and

Wisdom to know the difference.

Amen



Isabelle

Prayer Secretary

Brownies

During lockdown our 19th Glenrothes Brownies have been meeting on zoom. Usually we are a lively group enjoying running around games, singing and making things in the church hall so we've had to adapt, like everyone else in these coronavirus times.

We've still managed to play some games such as scavenger hunts and a beetle drive but our main activity has been doing challenges for a 'Guiding at Home' badge. Some of the Brownies have shared photos and videos of themselves learning dance routines, clapping for keyworkers, making straw rockets etc.

After we finished our badge we decided to paint some stones with positive pictures/messages for the church hall entrance. This was to bring a smile to anyone visiting the church grounds, with the hope it wouldn't be too long till the church welcomed people back into the building.

Lorna



Fabric Report. September 2020.

Christ's Kirk Fabric committee has been majorly involved with the office bearers in preparing for the re-opening of the church, as well as a few other bits and bobs. We are awaiting repairs for the church roof, for instance. Miscellaneous electrical and heating problems came to the fore as we prepared the church for re-opening, but all have now been attended to. And the church garden looks good.

The sub-group of the Session given the re-opening responsibility has worked hard to complete the many coronavirus stipulations given by the Church of Scotland, from strict safety to a lengthy and detailed risk assessment. (50 items!)

Ron

Fabric Convenor

Finance report for the year to end of July 2020

Balances at 31 July 2020:

General Account	£18493.54
Cafe Account	£8000.00
Fabric Account	£1493.51

The year 2020 will always be remembered for Covid-19 and the impact that it had on everyone's lives. Everything changed and we have had to develop a "new normal" in all aspects of our daily living, but unfortunately there are some things that don't change and that is the continuing everyday running costs of our homes and businesses. The church is no different and during the last few months we have still had to cover our operating costs on a much reduced income. As a congregation we were fortunate to have paid our Ministries and Mission contributions for this year in advance, which has meant that we are showing as having had a surplus for the first 7 months of the year of £8530.42. It was our intention that the £1600 per month that we would have sent for our contributions would have been put in our fabric account to allow us to save for much needed roof repairs but this has had to temporarily be put on hold due to our fall in income.

We are much more fortunate than some congregations that we do have some reserves but with the additional costs to make us covid compliant, loss of hall rentals and fundraising, we cannot be complacent in thinking that these will last forever. A small working group has been working hard behind the scenes to get the church ready for some form of reopening but it will be a long time before we will be back to any sort of normality and perhaps a time of reflection on different ways of giving may be required.

On the next page you will find an Income and Expenditure for the period which I think shows quite obviously how much income we have lost and through which channels, and although our costs have also gone down these will now start to rise as increased cleaning and maintenance has to take place.

If anyone is still shielding or unable to attend church for whatever reason but would still like their envelopes collected please let myself or any of the other elders know and we can get this organised for you. Likewise if anyone would like to change their method of giving to standing order I can organise a mandate to be sent out.

Rose

Treasurer

Christ's Kirk Glenrothes General Account 2020								
Income	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	
Hall Lets	420.00	820.00	395.04					1635.04
Open Plate	265.36	224.29	151.82					641.47
WFO	622.70	552.60	514.70					1690.00
Coin a Day		10.66	1.00					11.66
WFO S/O	982.00	797.00	1037.00	837.00	942.00	1132.00	1252.00	6979.00
Fundraising	910.00	60.00	300.00					1270.00
Donations	220.00	500.00						720.00
Time for a Cuppa	77.46		149.01					226.47
Guild gift aid reclaim	21.01							21.01
Gift Aid reclaim	5067.54							5067.54
Coffee Morning	89.60	160.41	102.90					352.91
Sunday coffee	36.28	138.00	82.65					256.93
Rental Manse	766.80	766.80	766.80		646.80	766.80	855.60	4569.60
CAFG	15.36	30.72		30.72			15.36	92.16
	9494.11	4060.48	3500.92	867.72	1588.80	1898.80	2122.96	23533.79
Expenditure								
Ministers Travel			466.10					466.10
Pulpit Supply		120.00						120.00
Office expenses	77.14	5.99	5.99	5.99	85.99	5.99	132.62	319.71
Church electric			192.31		116.34	58.21	28.75	395.61
Church Gas		814.66			902.97	52.75	85.77	1856.15
Church Rep & Maint	25.29	105.00	288.15			495.18		913.62
Manse Rep & Maint						50.00	385.93	435.93
Equipment		180.00						180.00
Presbytery Fees								0.00
Church Phone/Internet	79.82	86.88	84.53	81.60	81.60	81.60	81.90	577.93
Organist	260.00	180.00	180.00	180.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	950.00
Insurance	168.83	168.83	168.83	168.83	168.83	168.83	168.83	1181.81
Ministries & Mission		2068.00						2068.00
Gardener	275.00		542.40		114.00	114.00	114.00	1159.40
Cleaning	100.00	137.50	150.00					387.50
Coffee/Teas/Jam etc								
Misc			21.13					21.13
Guild gift aid reclaim		21.01						21.01
Messy church		16.00	60.17					76.17
PPE Covid 19						113.30		113.30
To Fabric account		1000.00	2000.00					3000.00
Advertising		100.00						100.00
Auditors			660.00					660.00
	986.08	5003.87	4819.61	436.42	1519.73	1076.56	1161.10	15003.37

Foodbank

In these present times many families are suffering hardship and the need for using Foodbanks has increased. If you can help please take your donation direct to Glenrothes Foodbank. Their opening hours to accept donations are from 12 noon – 3pm, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The address is Caledonia House, Pentland Park, Saltire Centre, Glenrothes, KY6 2AL



Guild News



It has been a strange and testing time for everyone over the last few months and no less for the Guild and its members. Formerly, the national convener's year of service would start from the General Assembly, but that has now changed to start at the Annual Gathering, making it more of a Guild event. This means that Marian MacIntyre continues as National Convener until September 5th when Mabel Wallace will take on the role.

The Annual Gathering, which was due to take place in the Caird Hall, Dundee on Sept. 5th was cancelled but there is an online version of an alternative event, including communion, available on Facebook at 11am on the day. Also, a DVD is been produced, which will perhaps provide a topic for a meeting in the future.

With regard to meetings. The church is not yet open for worship and when it does, severe restrictions will be in place, due to the ongoing pandemic. It is the feeling of the committee that it would be too risky to resume meetings meantime and a decision has been taken not to meet until the New Year. This will be disappointing for some, as I am aware that folks are wearying to get back to church, the Guild and sharing in fellowship with others. We are grateful for the Rev Gardner's twice weekly reflections during this time of crisis.

Since lockdown the Guild office has been producing a weekly edition of the "Church of Scotland Guild News". It is possible to subscribe by going to the Church of Scotland website. However, if you do not have e-mail access and would like to receive a copy please get in contact with me on 01592 745454.

Jenny Catlin
Guild Secretary

World Mission Stamp Appeal 2020

The proceeds of the 2020 appeal will go to support the work of the Women's Development Centre (WDC) in Kandy, Sri Lanka. The WDC runs a project which helps women and girls who have been the victims of rape and sexual abuse. It provides a safe place to live, enables them to return to education should they wish and offers training in skills that they can use to make a living, when they leave.

Your used stamps do make a difference, so keep saving them and bring them along to church when we are once again open for worship.

Jenny Catlin

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