

# The Beacon

**St. John's-Renfield Church**

**Magazine**

**No 356**

**[www.sjrchurch.com](http://www.sjrchurch.com)**

**2021**

**Feb**

**Mar**

**April**

**May**

**June**

**July**

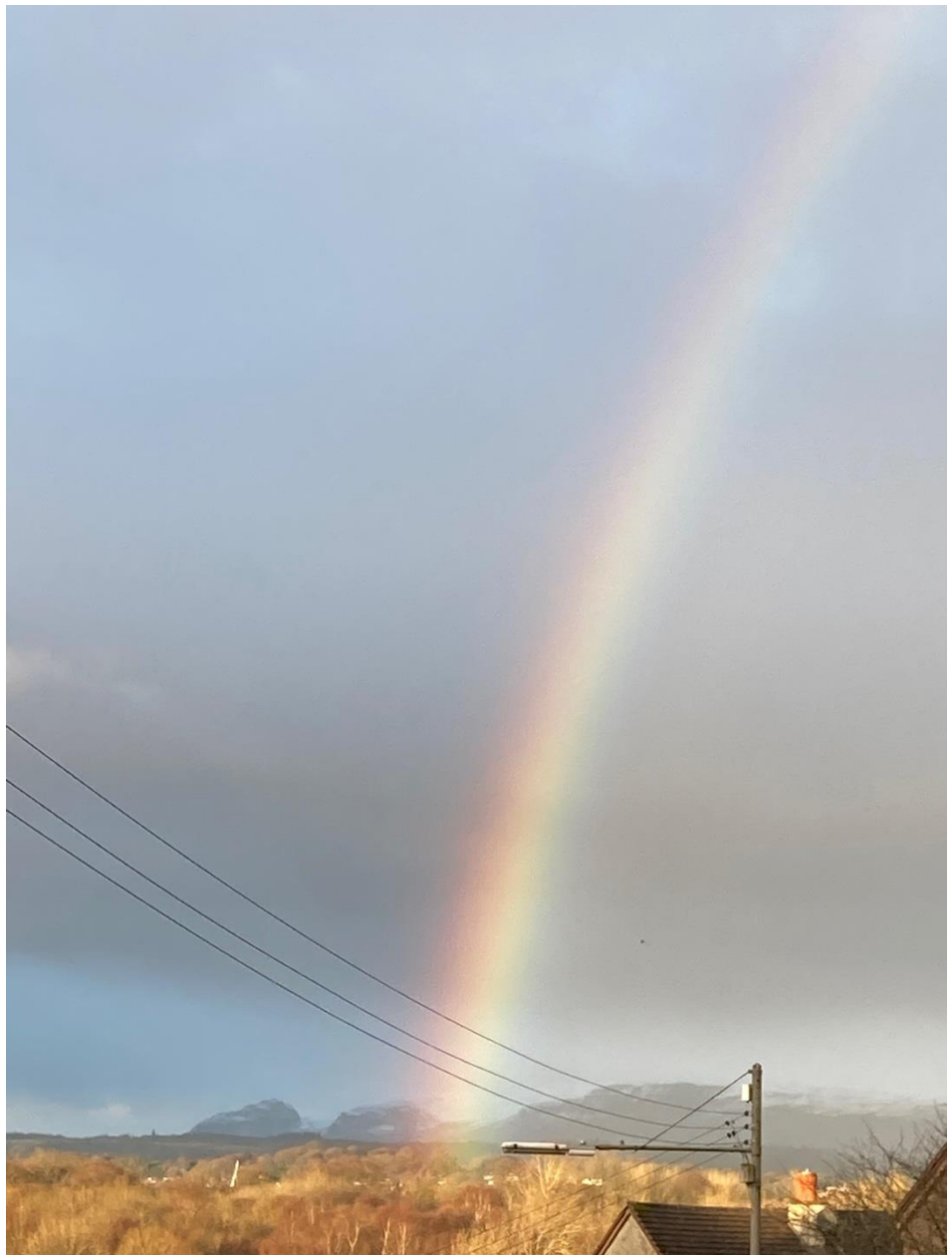
**August**

**Sept**

**Oct**

**Nov**

**Dec**



Dear Friends,

On Saturday (27 February) a blue envelope arrived in the post at the manse. From NHS Scotland. A5. Private and Confidential. Not a circular. I opened it and found a most welcome letter headed: Your Covid-19 vaccination appointment. Its opening lines were:

Dear DAVID GILLAN,

You are now being offered the vaccine that will protect you from COVID-19. Your appointment details for your first dose of the vaccine are shown below.

Ten days hence at 10:40am, at the NHS Louisa Jordan, SEC Centre for me. (I'm David as far as the NHS is concerned.)

I felt myself relaxing, which told me I had been concerned about it to a greater extent than I had let on to myself. Having not heard to that point. Happy to wait my turn, but happy to get the news as well. A leaflet was enclosed, 'The Covid-19 Vaccine', which I read from cover to cover. I drew a red circle around the appointment details and pinned the letter to the cork board in the study. Circled the date on the wall calendar and entered the details in my diary and phone calendar. And told Sarah and the kids the good news.

When I asked Sarah why the word 'offered' had been used – I was being offered the vaccine – she thought this was because the NHS was not at liberty to require it, given that people have the right to refuse it, and that some are asserting that right. The most the NHS can do, therefore, is offer the vaccine and urge that the appointment be taken up in the interests of personal and public health.

The fact of my own appointment having registered, I turned my thoughts to related matters. The question, 'How will Covid vaccines be shared around the world,' for example, given the huge discrepancy in access between rich and poor countries. This week, news came that 600,000 doses of the vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University arrived in Accra, the capitol of Ghana. This via the Covax scheme (Covid Vaccines Global Access), which aims to ensure that vaccines are shared fairly among all countries. Covax is led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and aims to deliver two billion vaccines to 190 countries in less than a year. One of President Biden 's first acts was to sign the US up to Covax – good news all round, especially concerning funding for the scheme.

In this connection, we might think of the long partnership between Scotland and Malawi, in church and state. It's President, Lazarus Chakwera, said at the beginning of February that Malawi had finally secured doses of the

AstraZeneca vaccine, to arrive by end February for rollout in March. Twenty percent of Malawians are to receive the vaccine in the first instance, with front line workers, the elderly and people with underlying conditions to be given priority, as you might expect. The Scottish Government, in its Coronavirus Strategic Framework Update for February 2021, stated its strong support for Covax, noting in particular its support through Scotland's International Development Fund of partner countries in Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia on vaccine preparedness.

In the Church, the Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, Convenor of the Faith Impact Forum, asked the question last week, 'Do we have the courage to say that, now that the people in the UK who are at-risk have been vaccinated, we ought to be prioritising all those who are vulnerable, wherever in the world they are?' Answering her question, she stated, 'Not only would this save lives, it would be the morally right thing to do. With the ease of transmission of Covid-19, we can only be safe here when everyone is safe everywhere. We have also a higher calling to humanitarianism and to answer the question: how are we showing love to our global neighbour at this time of crisis?' Susan is Minister of the Glasgow: Castlemilk charge, one of 5% of parishes with the highest levels of poverty in Scotland. I take heart from her integrity as a disciple of Christ at home and abroad, and feel the challenge of her call to us all to support a just sharing of the vaccines throughout the world.

Many in our congregation have already received at least one jab, and many of us have now been offered an appointment. There are avenues for us to contribute funds in support of the Covax scheme, and of Scotland's partners in Africa. In the days ahead, as the rollout continues here at home, let's see how we might go about showing our love and support for 'our global neighbours,' that we might be found to have kept faith with them when it was most needed.

Your friend,

Stewart

## **PARISH RECORDS**

### **Funeral and Memorial Services**

**"Nothing can separate us from the love of God"**

On 5 February **Margaret Whitty**

On 26 February **Jane Templeton**

"Bryan Whitty would like to thank all who braved the elements to pay respects at Margaret's funeral, also to those who did so in other ways. Very much appreciated"

**Bryan**

# zoOM to Church Services

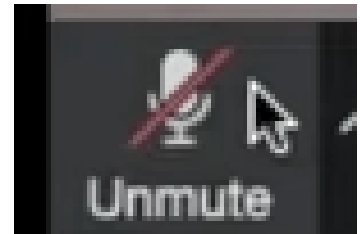
During this lockdown, Church Services have shifted to being delivered “live” via Zoom on Sunday mornings, when there is also time to join in with chat before and after the service. There has been a high number attending, but I do realise that not every member is comfortable with the technology, or sure what they need to do. All that is needed is a laptop, pad or smart phone and an internet connection. A simple email sent out by Moyra, our secretary, includes a link which takes you directly to the Zoom meeting you can join with fellow members.

If you have an email address but haven't been getting the link, please email [office@sjrchurch.com](mailto:office@sjrchurch.com) and ask to be added to the distribution list.

Zoom is very simple to use, but if you are unsure or wary, whether you have been attending and used Zoom before or not, please email me at [shaun.digges@gmail.com](mailto:shaun.digges@gmail.com) or give me a phone on **07896193603** and I will arrange a short test Zoom and, explain and demonstrate everything you need to know to make the morning stress free and enjoyable.

## Tips:

- Once the service starts the host will mute everyone (turn off microphones) - you must stay muted, even during hymns, till the service ends and we split up for chat. Remember that if you are not muted – we can hear you, and **all** noises around you.
- If using a phone – turn it sideways to enlarge your video.
- Be close enough to the device so your voice can be picked up.
- If using a pad or phone find a stable way to lean it at the right angle for the camera to show your face.
- After the service, stay around while we split up into “breakout rooms” to meet and greet in smaller groups.
- There is no need to speak or even be seen on a Sunday if that is what you wish, just listen in!



***Shaun Digges***

## GREAT NEWS!

Michael Audain has been keeping the Church clean for almost a year now, and has been doing a first-class job. After a lot of work behind the scenes, trying to establish what we can and cannot afford in the current climate, we are happy to announce that Michael has accepted the role of Cleaner/Janitor and is now a part time employee of the Church. He will be living in the downstairs flat,



which mitigates many of the security worries we faced had the flat stayed empty or had been occupied by strangers.

It has to be stressed that Michael is **not** a replacement Church Officer. His role is to keep the Church clean, ensure all supplies are up to date, and carry out some security tasks along with some mutually agreed extra duties. He is extremely friendly (though a bit shy), and very obliging. He is always keen to help, but we must be careful not take advantage of his good nature and ask him to do too much!

Unfortunately, we are unable to introduce him in the normal way, so we include his photograph, and ask that, if you do see him about, please introduce yourself – *Safe distancing of course* – and help make him feel part of our fellowship.

***The Personnel Committee***

## **Better than expected – Thank you for your support!!**

We have a book bought for our Grandson entitled “It Could Have Been Worse...” showing a mouse getting into all sorts of dangerous situations.

In a way, we could look back at 2020 similarly and say that, financially, we are much better off than we had hoped since we are only showing an excess of expenditure over income of just over £3,000 compared with a projected deficit almost ten times that.

This is, in no small measure, thanks to you. Income has held up well. Offerings are only £2,300 down and this can be attributed to not having services in the church for almost nine months due to the pandemic.

But a special thank you must go to the members who boosted our income right at the end of the year as a result of our annual Review of Giving appeal. This brought in just over £9,000 of one-off donations and this saved the day. **THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO ALL**, but not forgetting those who have contributed faithfully throughout the year.

At the same time we are grateful for the legacy of £5,000 left to the Church which went some way to offset the loss of income from our external users (choirs, dancers, musicians etc.)

That is only half the story. We have also seen a fall in expenditure. Less heating and lighting and a saving in not having a Church Officer for most of the year are two of the main reasons for a fall of almost £14,000 in total expenditure.

This year also saw us change the way we interacted with the Maryhill St Gregory's foodbank. This has been supported financially last year rather than in kind and we have contributed just over £4,000 to this essential service.

This need continues.

2020 saw reduced opportunity for fund raising both for charities and ourselves with cancellations of coffee mornings and Bonanza. This has affected our toilet upgrade project possibly by as much as £10,000 although we did gratefully receive a donation of £5,000 from the W M Mann Foundation.

A summary of the results is shown on the next page.

***Robin Hutchison***

## Summary Annual Accounts - Year ended 31 December 2020

General Account	2020		2019	
	£	£	£	£
Offerings (incl. tax recovered on gift aid)		141,811		147,005
Fund raising, interest, etc.		4,254		13,309
Legacies, donations & grants		5,000		0
<b>Total Income</b>		<u>151,065</u>		<u>160,314</u>
National Ministry & Mission and Wider Work	91,363		90,510	
Local Staffing Costs	17,507		29,262	
Building and equipment costs	39,626		42,355	
Other local costs	5,642		5,961	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<u>154,138</u>		<u>168,088</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for year</b>		<u><b>(3,073)</b></u>		<u><b>(7,774)</b></u>
Balance brought forward		33,845		41,619
<b>Balance to carry forward</b>		<u><b>30,772</b></u>		<u><b>33,845</b></u>

Other Property Funds	Fabric Funds £	Toilet Upgrade £	Parish Develop	Other Funds £
Donations	200	6,783	0	4,691
Fund raising	0	280	0	0
Legacies grants and other income	0	5,000	50	0
Investment income	2,200	227	255	123
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>12,290</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>4,814</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2,846</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,210</b>
Decrease in value of investment	12,300	0	0	0
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for year</b>	<b>(12,746)</b>	<b>12,290</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>1,604</b>
Balance brought forward	99,236	9,837	11,024	6,113
<b>Balance to carry forward</b>	<b>86,490</b>	<b>22,127</b>	<b>11,329</b>	<b>7,717</b>



## **SUNDAY CLUB**

The children are doing a great job of showing resilience in difficult times. Having balance in our lives at the moment is tricky as there is no defined time for school and home life. We have been reminding the children to take time out of their schedules to focus on finding peace whether that's talking to God or just finding time to do nothing.

We have also talked about focusing on the important things in life and that might not be the obvious. Caroline played a fantastic game where they had to imagine they were on a raft – we looked at lots of different objects that could help our survival and rank them as to their usefulness. The most obvious choices like navigational tools were not at the top. A seemingly insignificant item, a shaving mirror, was at the top of the list. It could be used to reflect the sun and signal to passing ships.

In February we looked at who we are and how do we identify ourselves to God and others. Lockdown allows us space for this reflection but children do not have their usual support network of friends and activities to help them answer this question. Am I still a P5 if I am not at school with my class, am I still part of the football team if there is no football being played? That is why it is so important to give them an opportunity to feel a sense of belonging at Sunday Club even if it is not face to face.

***Wendy, Caroline & Robbie***



*Picture by Jim MacDonald*



## **CrossReach NEWS**

At The Bungalow, a purpose-built-care home in Stonehaven for adults with Profound and multiple Learning Disabilities, four months into lockdown the decision was taken to use a generous donation, from a family that had known the benefits of The Bungalow, to provide a hot tub.

The benefits for people with complex health needs are incredible: promotion of relaxation, stress and pain relief and reduction in muscle tension – all very relevant to the people living in The Bungalow. Natural stiffening is a common trait for people living with Profound and Multiple Disabilities.

Installation complete, the sheer delight on the service 'users' faces was priceless as they began to use the resource and to relax into buoyancy provided by the water.

## **SAD NEWS FROM THE LODGING HOUSE MISSION**

Tributes have been paid to a man who dedicated his life to helping Glasgow's homeless and marginalised population.

Stephen Mitchell, manager of Lodging House Mission, passed away on February 7 aged 60.

For over thirty years, Stephen worked tirelessly to help those most in need firstly through the Wayside Day Centre (later known as The Marie Trust) and then the Lodging House Mission, where he became manager in 2018.

Deacon Claire Herbert said: "When [Lodging House Mission](#) had to close down due to Covid-19 in March 2020 Stephen himself had been unwell. Within a few weeks, he was back to work and making sure the resources (of space and donations) at LHM were able to support the whole homeless sector.

"He reached out to our partner agencies and was able then to multiply the effect of the impact we were able to have. Stephen was generous with the provisions he had at his disposal, never losing sight that what was given was for the benefit of others and not to promote ourselves.

"Our staff team remained on furlough until November and during these months Stephen worked with a small team of dedicated volunteers to continue to meet the Missions aim to - reduce the harm caused by the experience of homelessness and poverty. He completely reorganised the ways of working and serving, to best assist the most vulnerable in the city.



**The Boys' Brigade**

**5<sup>th</sup> Glasgow Company**

**<http://5glasgow.boys-brigade.org.uk>**

**[5thglasgow@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:5thglasgow@boys-brigade.org.uk)**

## **COMPANY SECTION NEWS**

Our weekly Zoom activities continued during February with the start of our First Aid classes, including a look at sprains, strains, & dislocations, stings, allergic reactions, & defibrillators. During March we will move on to Conservation, followed by Faith & Lifestyle. The aim is that by the end of the session we'll have covered sufficient badgework to enable the boys to gain their annual activity awards.

The Senior boys led a Circuits session and we've used a variety of games including Where in the World, Imposter, & Not the Same. Hopefully if lockdown eases a little we'll get back to some cookery and other, more unusual, activities.

As usual, keep watching our social media feeds for regular updates. Please do 'like', 'share', and 'retweet' our posts if possible!

**STEDFAST**

## **BRAVO**

Scones as light as a feather,  
Made with a loving hand,  
Baked in a magic oven; good to have, grand.

Her Dad savoured his present,  
A plateful with butter and sweet strawberry jam,  
Glad his girl had come safely home;

A bright glow  
Of love,  
Through the kitchen door.

***Jane M. Finnie***

A poem written about the pandemic, and included in an online University archive journal in order to keep a historical record of our times.

## EIGHTY YEARS AGO

This month brings the eightieth anniversary of the two nights of Luftwaffe raids on the Glasgow area that have gone down in history as the Clydebank blitz.

On the successive nights of 13th and 14th March 1941 death and destruction arrived from the sky. Clydebank's name has been attached to the events because of the high number of casualties per head of population but Kelvindale was not spared.

Not long after your editor moved to Kelvindale, an older colleague, Margaret who seemed a Bearsdener through and through, let him know that her happy days of early childhood had in fact been passed in Kelvindale.

The family lived in a house in Leicester Avenue, overlooking Chelmsford Drive. On the evening of the 13th, alerted by the sirens, she had taken refuge under the living room table. Suddenly she found herself in the capacious cellar!



What had happened was that a parachute mine had arrived at the front of the house. This weapon was designed to act as a blast bomb, detonated at roof level rather than on hitting the ground. The resulting explosion caused chaos over a wide area.

The one in Leicester Avenue destroyed the fronts of the houses there and the rears of those in Chelmsford Avenue. In total, eight houses between 10 and 24 Chelmsford Drive and six houses in Leicester Avenue were badly affected; another 150 houses suffered damage including broken windows and falling ceilings. Seven residents were killed, among whom were two children aged 5 years and 7 months respectively.

Margaret survived but had clear and horrifying memories.

There was a man at an upstairs window who had been watching the 'fun' at Clydebank but now found himself blinded and standing with a space in front of him as the house front had been blown away. His rescuers below urging him not to move.

Later she saw bodies, including that of a baby, laid out in the church hall. Other local 'hits' occurred, on tenements at Peel Street in Partick (50 deaths) and at Dudley Drive in Hyndland (36 deaths). As the sites can be virtually joined to Kelvindale with a straight line, they seem possibly the product of one plane's unloading.

And what of Margaret? The Kelvindale house was a wreck so the family found a place in Bearsden, until it was sorted – and never returned.

For more Glasgow wide information  
see: [glasgowpunter.blogspot.com](http://glasgowpunter.blogspot.com)

***Alan Christie***

# **WORLD MISSION UPDATE**

## **Covid-19 in Malawi**

One of our partner churches, the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Synod of Livingstonia (SOL), has written to inform us that the number of Covid-19 infections in Malawi is rising. Of those being tested for the virus, 50% are testing positively. SOL runs three hospitals in the North of Malawi and they are doing all that is possible to support the country's efforts to respond to the pandemic.

To make matters worse, as well as dealing with the pandemic, the isolation centre set up at Ekwendeni Hospital had its roof blown off in a storm at the end of January, rendering it unusable. The Faith Impact Forum has sent £1,000 to support SOL's efforts to re-roof the centre. Please remember Malawi in your prayers.

## **Myanmar situation**

We continue to receive regular news from our partner, the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar, following the 1 February coup. Church members have joined the peaceful protests, and marchers are avoiding confrontation with security forces, although there are reports of police opening fire on demonstrators and some clashes have followed.

Communities are installing night-watchmen as security forces are raiding homes of activists during the overnight curfew. The internet has been switched off on at least two occasions.

We continue to pray with the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar for the reversal of the coup, the release of elected leaders, and for peace and justice for all in Myanmar.

***Marjory Watt***

## **LIFE AND WORK : MARCH**

### **Where God's Taking Us'**

Thomas Baldwin explores some of the connections between faith and Scottish traditional music, speaking to members of Tide Lines, Skerryvore and Celtic Worship

### **The Golden Thread**

Jackie Macadam meets Ruth Harvey, new Leader of the Iona Community

### **Lent Reflections**

Continuing the series of reflections for each week in Lent

### **A Serving of Daily Bread**

The Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair explains why not all habits are bad ones

### **The Healing Cross**

The Very Rev Albert Bogle reflects on the healing power of Lent

### **Epiphany on the Capitol**

Ruth Harvey explains why the Psalms can hold the answers in times of uncertainty

### **Standing on the Giants of Faith**

The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers explains why those whose stories are remembered should encourage and inspire today

### **Online**

Visit [www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org) for news and exclusive features, including Coronavirus Diaries from Church of Scotland mission partners across the world. You can also find us at facebook.com/lifeandwork or on Twitter @cofslifeandwork

**Subscribe** online from £6 for three issues (special offer for new readers), or download a digital copy for £1.99; return the form in the magazine or speak to your church's Life and Work co-ordinator.



## THE SNOWDROP

Snowdrops bloom In winter  
The harshest time of year  
Like a gentle promise telling  
Spring will soon be here.

How anything so fragile  
Can flourish and abound  
Showing how God's miracles  
To this day are found.

Resilient little flowers with  
Petals white as snow  
Brighten every corner  
Everywhere they grow.

Mothers through the ages  
Have received a gift so grand  
A fresh picked bunch of snowdrops  
From a grubby little hand.

Flowers are all beautiful  
Whether large or small  
But you little snowdrop  
Are the best loved flower of all.

***M. Milloy***

***(Friend of Margaret Murphy)***



The mention of rainbows in the scripture reading of Sunday 21 February followed by Stewart's remarks, reminded Wilma Murphy of stopping her car at the top of Clevedon Hill recently and taking the page 1 photo, because it was so arresting and full of hope and promise....



## OFFICE BEARERS

### Minister

Rev. Dr. D. Stewart Gillan

26 Leicester Avenue

G12 0LU

Tel: 339 4637

[stewart.gillan@outlook.com](mailto:stewart.gillan@outlook.com)

### Session Clerk

Graham Moore

80 Ashburton Road

G12 0LZ

Tel: 576 0806

[edward.moore2@ntlworld.com](mailto:edward.moore2@ntlworld.com)

### Assistant Session Clerk

Susan Finnigan

183 Clevedon Road

G12 0JY

Tel: 357 1083

[sfinnigan183@gmail.com](mailto:sfinnigan183@gmail.com)

### Editor of Beacon

Alan Christie

21 Hertford Avenue

G12 0LG

Tel: 339 7883

[alan932@gmail.com](mailto:alan932@gmail.com)

Material for the April Beacon is required by

## Friday 19 March, midnight

The Church Office is closed to all visitors.

Telephone answer machine messages are being accessed remotely

Tel: 334 0782

Email: [office@sjrchurch.com](mailto:office@sjrchurch.com)

[www.sjrchurch.com](http://www.sjrchurch.com)

Follow us on social media



@SJRCHURCH



@sjrchurch

Registered as a charity in Scotland Registration No.SC012920