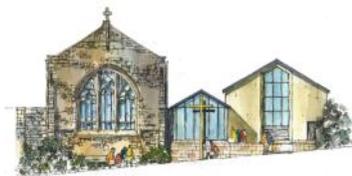


Life at St. Paul's Milngavie

October 2021



Dear Friends,

At the time of writing intense preparations are proceeding for COP26 which will meet in Glasgow from 31 October until 12 November. According to the official website the purpose in bringing together nations from all over the world is to unite to 'tackle climate change.' That aspects of our behaviour are contributing to adverse environmental conditions, seems to be beyond dispute. The call now is to make changes that will secure a better quality of life for future generations.

For the recent Harvest service in St Paul's I chose a hymn which says:

'Praise God for the harvest that's quarried and mined,
then sifted, and smelted or shaped and refined;
for oil and for iron, for copper and coal,
praise God, who in love has provided them all.'

It was only when we sang it together that I realised that the references to oil and coal might be deemed controversial. The use of both along with gas have a dominant role in global energy systems and according to the website 'Our World In Data' are 'the largest driver of global climate change.' Reference is also made to their contribution to local air pollution which has an adverse effect on community health. So I can understand if some people might find the hymn as yet more evidence of the Church being out of step with issues that really matter. The thing is, Christians have for many years had a perspective on environmental issues which has called for more care and action.

In 1970 Francis Schaffer, theologian and social commentator, published a book called 'Pollution And The Death Of Man.' In one review it was said that: 'Dr. Schaffer points out biblical Christian guidelines which if followed, would bring about substantial healing and restoration.' Healing and restoration, in relation to the planet, are what people of all faiths and none are interested in. My point is, there has long been an orthodox Christian voice protesting at human behaviour which is damaging to the environment and health. But as with so many issues that voice has not been heard.

Christian Organisations like Tearfund are working hard to ensure that a Christian voice is heard on environmental matters during COP26. Tearfund is encouraging congregations to get in touch with those Biblical guidelines which can bring about 'healing and restoration.' I hope that throughout COP26 we can respond to this in our worship and personal reflection on God's Word.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Lesley'.

Christmas Card Delivery

The Stewardship Committee are again arranging a special Christmas delivery from St. Paul's to every household within our Parish boundary.

The delivery will take the form of a Christmas Card and will include an invitation to come and join us at our Christmas services.

Extra cards will be made available at the back of the church if you wish to hand these to any other households you may know, that might consider coming along to join us at St. Paul's this Christmas.

I am sure that anyone who takes up our invitation, will experience the warmth and support of a loving and caring family at St. Paul's, that will encourage them to come back to learn more.

If you are able to assist in the delivery of our Christmas Cards, please contact me by phone or e mail. It is anticipated the cards will be available for delivery towards the end of November.

Gordon Fairbrother
Stewardship Convener

Phone – 0141 563 8698

Email – gordonf62@gmail.com

St Paul's Cards

Orders continue to pour in and we are hoping to have cards visible in the church very soon. Having sent £500 to Dumbrock House, we now have approx. £150 gathered so far for their next donation. Just remember it's any kind of card, for any kind of event. Just let me know and it'll be considered. Special request cards with names etc. on them will now be £1.25. This has been decided due to the rise in costs but I'm sure customers won't mind due to the good causes receiving the funds.

Alex McEwan



Dear Friends,

How are you doing? I hope you enjoying living with fewer restrictions again. Here in Japan we are finally ending our State of Emergency, though we expect some restrictions as an interim measure. My church here is hoping to be able to gradually restart some of its small groups. In OMF we are hoping to have our first in-person praise and prayer gathering for folks in the Greater Tokyo Area since November last year. The borders, however, remain firmly closed, and we have nearly 20 new workers who have now been waiting many months to move to Japan.

I thought I'd give you more of a personal/family update this time. It has been all change in the last couple of months. Daniel has moved from London to Bangkok to take up a new job with a legal firm there. He is currently working from hotel quarantine. Matthew remains in Glasgow where he is working from home, but he will be moving to Edinburgh at some point since he has a traineeship there from late summer 2022. Calum got a very last-minute transfer from his University in Florida to one in New Jersey. He is now getting used to a different culture in that part of the US. And Alistair is in his last half-year of school, looking to move to a Japanese University from spring next year. So I have 4 boys in 4 countries in 4 different time zones.

One of my favourite passages in the Bible is Psalm 139. There we are reminded of how intimately God knows us, knowing where we are and even our thoughts. The Psalmist recognises that he can never be out of God's reach. "If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, and your right hand will hold me fast." (vv9-10). At the moment I am writing a series of Japanese devotions on the book of Jonah. Jonah thought he could flee from God, but soon discovered the truth of this Psalm when God sent a great fish to save him from the depths of the sea.

Psalm 121:4 says, "indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." Time zones are of no concern to God! The first half of the next verse also contains an amazing promise: "The Lord watches over you." How amazing to think that the Lord of the universe is watching over each one of us. Wherever we are, wherever our loved ones are, we are never out of God's reach. May each of you know the presence of the Lord with you today and every day.

Thank you for all your love, prayers and support.

Lorna, Calum and Alistair

Flower Donations

Thank you for the Flower Donations given in Memory for the Month of September.



F. Dorrell M. Ure A.D Easton.

Please mark any donations for The Flower Fund addressed to Treasurer, Mrs Barbara Lawson.

Donations can be left in the Flower Guild pigeon hole at the back of the Church, or in the offering plate.

Thank You

Dear St. Paul's,

We extend our heartfelt thanks for the kind messages, cards and flowers, and for upholding us in prayer, following Mum's passing.

This has been a great comfort and is so much appreciated.

Alan, Roxanne, Hector and family

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the congregation of St. Paul's for the support you have given me throughout my recent health problems. A special thanks to the prayer group whose continued support has brought me much comfort. My thanks to you all.

Sincerely,

Anne Murray



East Dunbartonshire Welcomes Refugees

Ever wondered what you could do to help refugees escape the misery of a refugee camp? The Community Sponsorship scheme was set up by the UK government in 2016 to encourage local people to play a part in responding to the refugee crisis by welcoming a refugee family into their community.

We are a group of East Dunbartonshire citizens who want to sponsor a refugee family to come and live here. We have started planning for their arrival, thinking about all the things that will need to be in place, looking for a house to rent, and raising £9000 to help support the family for one year with the costs of interpreters, furnishing the home, travel costs and other expenses.



How you can help now

- ◆ There is lots to do - why not come and join us and help plan this exciting but challenging venture.
- ◆ Support our fundraising by donating on our Just Giving page (ED Welcomes Refugees).
- ◆ Text MVIT09 to 70970 to donate £5.

How you can help in the future

- ◆ Let us know if you have furniture, household goods or clothing you could give us for the family.
- ◆ If you are a landlord with a house or flat and you would be willing to let it out to a refugee family at a reasonable rate, please let us know.

What we do and how you can help

Our first fundraising event is a group challenge to walk the distance from Syria to Scotland (around 3,000 miles). Although we don't know where our family will come from, the challenge represents the kind of journey that a family seeking refuge might face.

Find out more

Look at our Facebook page - East Dunbartonshire Welcomes Refugees

or contact us on:

edwelcomesrefugees@gmail.com

Church Choir

Choir practices resume on Thursday 7th October at 7.45pm in the church. We look forward to welcoming back those of our singers who feel able to join us in these very different times. We would also welcome anyone who is interested in joining the choir. Practices last from 7.45 – 9.15pm each Thursday night. For further information please contact **Derek Norval** (0781 4389262).

Badminton Club

The St Paul's Badminton Club will meet on Tuesday 5th October at 7.30pm in the hall. We are keen to invite new players to the club and anyone interested should come along on Tuesday. All you need is a racket, suitable footwear and a ready supply of energy and enthusiasm. For just now we suggest that players bring along their own bottled water. If you wish further information about the club, please contact **Derek Norval** (0781 4389262).

CrossReach

The CrossReach News is now available for collection on the shelf at the church entrance.

Morag Thomson

Harvest Thanksgiving 2021

On behalf of the Kirk session I would like to thank the Sunday club, Bible class and members of the congregation for the wonderful amount of food donations provided for our Harvest Thanksgiving.

Thanks should also be given to the volunteers who gladly set up the display in the church, packed the food and delivered it to the Preshal Trust. (You know who you are.)

Preshal were very glad to receive both the food donations and £820 in cash and checks to be used in their work.

Elizabeth McEwan

Covid-19 Update

We have not beaten the virus which continues to circulate in our community and some public health measures may be in place for some time to come. The guidance on the Church of Scotland website was updated on 10th September 2021. The recommendations on cleaning and disinfecting regimes, hand hygiene, good ventilation, maintaining risk assessments and complying with the NHS Test and Protect (T&P) programme, all remain in place.

Although the law does not stipulate physical distancing, the Scottish Government continue to advise the public that - especially indoors - keeping a safe distance from people in other households and avoiding crowded places will minimise risk. Each organization must keep a record of all those attending each meeting together with their contact details. The lists must be held securely and destroyed after 28 days.

Face Coverings must continue to be worn by everyone aged 12 or over in all indoor settings unless eating or drinking.

Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of every congregation to ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements in place to comply with health and safety legislation. COVID-19 is a recognised hazard. For any activities that take place within church buildings an activity risk assessment will be completed by each organization relevant for their particular circumstances.

The Risk Assessment must be regularly reviewed and updated in line with current practice.

Cleaning

The cleaning and disinfection of all church buildings are important infection prevention and control measures against COVID-19. Advice is being prepared for each organization.

Hospitality

The availability of refreshments carries an increased risk and forms part of the risk assessment undertaken by each organization.

The co-operation of each individual is vital to reducing the risk to us all.

Note the guidance may change and restrictions including closure, may be reintroduced.

Guild News

Our opening meeting is on Monday October 4th at 7.30p.m. when we will welcome a talented young singer, Kirsty Duncan as our guest. We are delighted that our meetings can go ahead after such a long hiatus, and hope that many ladies in the congregation-and your friends- will join us.

The following week sees our first afternoon meeting, at 2.00p.m., when the speaker will be Ailsa Turner; her subject is The Glasgow Boys, always a fascinating topic.

Our third meeting is again in the evening. Rev. Fergus Buchanan will be with us, but he will miss out this time on the fish and chips which we promised him! We have decided not to have tea, coffee and other refreshments at our meetings for the first month because of the restrictions due to the pandemic; we hope that these will ease soon. An interesting evening awaits us all, however, with news of Guild activities both nationally and also nearer home.

The final meeting in October is again in the afternoon and our speaker is Mhairi Philipson who will be telling us about the very worthwhile work of Bethany Trust.

Men's Association

Meetings are as below in the Jubilee Hall with get together and tea/coffee at 7.15pm/7.30pm followed by the speaker from 7.30pm till 8.30pm and then questions. In view of the current guidelines, masks will be required to be worn during the meeting except when having tea/coffee. Windows will be open in the Hall to provide ventilation and members and guests should realise warm clothing may be appropriate.

Syllabus:

5th October- Alistair Tough
19th October- John O'Grady

Life and times of Norman Carr.
Presence - The famous and infamous
whose paths have crossed.

30th October (Provisional)

Coffee Morning 10am in aid of East
Dunbartonshire Action on Mental Health.

2nd November - Rev. Claire Herbert

Chaplain to Lodging House Mission.

All members and friends of St. Paul's, and for the avoidance of doubt, including ladies, will be made very welcome at all or any of the meetings.

World Mission

Moderator speaks out about Afghanistan

Lord Wallace is encouraging people to sign an online petition calling for the urgent resettlement of 20,000 Afghans.

More than 136,000 people have backed the petition (at the time of writing) so far. Despite the UK Government's initial commitment to resettle 20,000 Afghans 'in the coming years' the Church says it is important to call for a more generous response and firm commitment.

Congregations across the length and breadth of the country are actively working to support asylum seekers and refugees.

The Kirk is a leading member of the Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees group, which has produced a 'how to' guide for congregations wishing to help in the resettlement process.

More information can be found here: <https://www.change.org/p/priti-patel-call-on-the-uk-government-to-resettle-20-000-afghan-refugees>

Moderator joins faith leaders in appealing US sanctions against North Korea

Last week, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland signed an appeal to President Biden to lift the travel ban that prevents US citizens from going to North Korea. Despite the appeal being unsuccessful, the World Council of Churches want to share the message and have issued a press release detailing the letter they have sent.

Read the press release [here](#)

Prayer request for Pakistan blasphemy case

We have shared news before about the case of Zafar Bhatti, a Pakistani Christian man convicted of blasphemy and serving a life sentence. He has been in custody since 2012. On Tuesday 7th September our partner, the Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement, filed another appeal against the sentence.

We ask that you please pray for the legal team, for the judge, Mr Justice Raja Shahid Mahmood Abbasi, that the appeal would be successful, and for Zafar and his family.

Find out more at <https://www.claas.org.uk/>

World Mission Cont...

Situation in Myanmar

News from Myanmar in the past week shows the situation there, remains difficult and challenging. While fighting between armed ethnic militias and the government military (or 'Tatmadaw') continues, there are also reports of government soldiers defecting and joining militias and local defence groups. Vigilante violence from both sides continues across the country, with multiple alleged informants assassinated.

The economy continues to struggle as at least two more international companies have withdrawn because of the adverse situation. The UK Government has followed the EU and US by sanctioning arms dealer Tay Za and his businesses. "These sanctions target a key business associate of the military junta, and his network of companies for providing financial support and arms to the military," according to a UK Government statement

The United Nations is set to consider whether to recognise the military regime or National Unity Government, and its decision could have major implications for a genocide case before the International Court of Justice.

We ask that you hold Myanmar in your prayers and remember our partner, the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar, which — along with other churches — has lost so many ministers in recent weeks due to Covid-19.

<https://www.frontiermyanmar.net/>

All Africa Conference of Churches prayer requests

Our partner the All Africa Conference of Churches is the largest association of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Indigenous churches in Africa and is a member of the worldwide ecumenical network

It is a fellowship of 193 members consisting of churches, national councils of churches, theological and lay training institutions, and other Christian organisations in 42 African countries.

They have recently written to us to ask us to pray for a number of situations affecting the continent of Africa. These include the efforts to stabilise Mozambique, the instability in Nigeria, and the peace progress in South Sudan.

Please join with us in praying for all of these situations.

Interim Moderator

After two and a half years the Rev. Ramsay Shields has stepped down as Interim Moderator of St. Paul's linked with Baldernock. We are extremely grateful to Ramsay for his contribution to the life of St. Paul's and it has been proposed that a monetary gift be presented to him. Special envelopes will be available for donations along with the collection boxes at the back of the Church until the end of the month.

Blythswood Christmas Boxes

We will be back to collecting the Blythswood boxes this year. Although we would dearly love to, we can't have a packing event as we have previously. However, we would encourage you to fill your own boxes and hand them into the church for uplift. If you are not feeling like packing a box, financial donations will also be gratefully received and can be placed in one of the envelopes, any cheques should be made payable to "Blythswood Care" with "Shoebox Appeal" written on the reverse. Don't forget the Gift Aid if you are eligible.

Please see the dates below:

03/10/2021 – 24/10/2021: Leaflets/forms available at the back of the church or from me.

10/10/2021 – 31/10/2021: Boxes can be brought on a Sunday morning or message me if you would like an uplift or to drop off at my address.

01/11/2021 – 05/11/2021: Boxes uplifted from the church.

Any questions please contact Janice Maclean on T: 07711361936 or E: janice.maclean2@outlook.com or catch me at church.

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Copy Date

The copy date for the November issue is Wednesday 27th October via email.

Please send any articles to st.paulslifemagazine@gmail.com