

# Life at St. Paul's Milngavie

February 2022



'We're getting through the Winter,' someone said to me. More light, weather not too bad and the first sightings of snowdrops. Always a sign that brighter and warmer days are ahead. Which brings to mind something C.S. Lewis once wrote. He said the birth of Jesus was like the first snowdrop of Winter. It points forward to the creation of a new humanity, living in closer harmony with God, destined to inhabit a renewed creation.

There are so many things that might stack up against the realisation of that vision. We can point to so much progress in science, technology, medicine and the arts and we have benefited from all of this in these Covid days. But entangled in all of this is the reality of a broken humanity, cut loose from the source of all love, goodness and justice. My newspaper today carried stories of careless conduct in high places, sexual harassment, highly organised fraud, anti-Semitism. And this is just in the UK. There is still starvation in Afghanistan and the threat of invasion in the Ukraine looms large.

How much has really changed? The dark shadows of the centuries still fall on the human heart and give rise to endless suffering.

No one was more aware of this than the Apostle John. A prisoner in a penal colony for his Christian faith, he received disturbing visions of the devastations that humankind continually brings on the Earth. In the end, however, he also received the reassurance that God was still in control and a time had been set for Jesus to return and establish His Kingdom where His love, justice and peace would dominate.

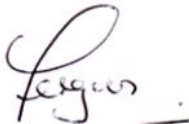
At the beginning of his Book of Revelation John addresses the Church under pressure of persecution and describes himself:

'I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus . . .' (Revelation 1: 9)

John is at the sharp end of suffering and yet what he believes falls to him is 'patient endurance'. Not the gritting of teeth so much as the faith that God is working through all our dark experiences to bring in His Kingdom. It's interesting that he talks about 'patient endurance' being 'ours in Jesus.' He endured the cross to the point of feeling abandoned by God and yet in the end believed Himself to be in His hands, the Father who loved Him. John is calling the Christian community to connect with this faith not as wishful thinking but as something which flows from being 'in Jesus', being in a living relationship with Him.

The message is for us to stay close to the Jesus revealed in the Word and to pray through our troubles in the knowledge that the course of human history will reach its climax when He declares: 'I am making everything new!' (Revelation 21: 5)

Praying you and yours stay safe and well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

### **Thank You**

On behalf of Ian and myself I would like to thank you for the lovely flowers and card received from St. Paul's.

Ian is still in hospital but has been moved from the High Dependency Unit to, a regular room on the 9th floor. He is slowly recovering, but still has some way to go before being discharged.

As I would not be allowed to take the lovely flowers to him, I took a photograph of them when they were looking their best and will let him see when he comes home. The card is with him in his room.

Thank you so much for your kind gesture, it was very much appreciated.

Kind regards,  
Mary Russell

Since receiving this note, Ian has now been discharged, with visits from nurses, continuing.

## **Guild News**

We were really sorry that our January meetings were not able to go ahead, but understand why. We hope everyone has stayed safe throughout the month, and that you have been able to stay connected through phone calls and also seeing one another at church and in other settings too.

The good news is that we plan to restart our meetings on Monday February 7th at 7.30 when we will have one of the senior office bearers in the Guild committee as our speaker. She is Helen Eckford, one of the National Vice-Conveners, and her title is 'North and South', a reference to her role visiting groups in a wide area.

At 2.00 on February 14th Robert Keys will give an illustrated talk about Glasgow Cathedral. On February 21st at 7.30 we will have a visit from Claire Herbert who works for the Lodging House Mission.

Our final meeting in February will be at 2.00 on the 28th when our speaker will be Roxanne Boyd, a member of St. Paul's. She works as a journalist under her maiden name of Roxanne Sorooshian and will be talking about her work as a journalist, as the editor of The National and also as a media lecturer.

We look forward to meeting together again and extend a warm invitation to any member of the congregation to join us in the Large Hall at any or all of our meetings.

**Eleanor Easton**

## **St Paul's Society Cards**

We are having one final rally to raise funds for Dumbrock House Boys' Home in Strathblane. Cards are available outside the office window and orders can be directed to me either by phone or email. Thanks to the members who have given us donations.

**Alex McEwan**



### Dear Friends

Recently I decided to go up Tokyo Skytree, the world's tallest tower. Because Tokyo is built in an earthquake prone area, there are very few tall buildings around. This makes the 634-metre tower stick out even more. The highest point visitors can go to is just over 450 metres but even from there the view is incredible. Perhaps the most outstanding view is of Mount Fuji, about 100km away. You can also see a mountain range another 100km to the north.

This area between the mountains and the Pacific Ocean is known as the Kanto plain – home to the Greater Tokyo Area, which is the biggest metropolis in the history of the world. So as I walked round the viewing gallery of the Skytree, I could see the area where nearly 43 million people live. Looking out, I wondered how many of them know Jesus, or have even heard of Him. So afterwards I did some research. In that area I could see from the tower:

- There are a little over 2,600 churches – that is just under 1 church for every 16,000 people.
- On average one church (pre-pandemic) had 50 people attending their worship service.
- So out of the nearly 43 million people living in this area, an average of just over 130,000 would have been in church on a Sunday. That's about 0.3% of the population of the area.
- Since the pandemic has generally reduced the number of people able to attend a worship service, this number will now be less.

It was a reminder to me of the vastness of the task in Japan to give everyone a chance to hear and understand the gospel. It truly is daunting. It can be tempting to say that the task is too hard and that we should give up.

But then we remember Jesus' small group of disciples who turned the world upside down as they went around telling people that Jesus had died for them and had risen again. How did this happen? It was by the power of the Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost. If we believe in Jesus we have that same Holy Spirit. May we trust in His power as we seek to share the good news of Jesus with others whether in Japan or in Scotland, knowing that nothing is impossible for Him.

With love and prayers.

*Lorna, Calum and Alistair*

## View from Tokyo Skytree



## **Men's Association**

We were disappointed at not being able to meet during January but we fully understood why organisations were not allowed to meet for that month. In February, we will meet, as usual, in the Jubilee Hall and our first meeting is on Tuesday 8th February when the noted Burns expert, Len Murray is going to address us. As this note is being prepared, we are checking his availability, and should he now not be available, our own Brian Atkinson will talk to us about Glasgow's Green Spaces.

On Tuesday 22nd February, another of our own, Malcolm Boyd, will be speaking to us about Andrew Jackson Higgins and we look forward to that evening. The meetings commence with tea/coffee and a nibble at 7.15 with the speaker starting at 7.30. All members and friends will be made very welcome.

Blessings to everyone,  
**Brian Adair**, Secretary.

## **World Mission News**

### **Moderator champions 'life-changing' health programmes in Malawi**

The Moderator of the General Assembly has been appointed the ambassador of a Christian healthcare charity which supports work to improve lives in one of the poorest regions of the world. Lord Wallace said he is delighted to help promote Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society International (EMMS) which funds two programmes at Mulanje Mission Hospital in Malawi, run by the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian – a Church of Scotland partner. The Christian international healthcare charity delivers compassionate healthcare in Malawi, India and Nepal.

Lord Wallace, whose visit to Malawi had to be cancelled due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, attended a series of online meetings and met with EMMS International's team including CEO Dr Cathy Ratcliff, and Mulanje Mission Hospital's medical director, Dr Arie Glas, and his wife Dr Lianne Glas, to learn more about their important, life-changing work.

## Pray for Ukraine

The Faith Impact Forum has been in touch with members of our partner church, the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia, Ukraine (Egyházkerület Kárpátaljai Református). Like all of us, they are watching with concern as armed forces assemble at the Russian border and the threat of conflict grows. Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly, and Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, convener of the Faith Impact Forum, are asking all of us to pray for those who are frightened and at risk in Ukraine.

Prayer for Ukraine:  
The news can be difficult to listen to and to read.  
When that news relates to faces we know  
And to voices familiar to us,  
It becomes all the harder to hear.  
Lord God,  
We ask you to hold the people of Ukraine deep in your heart.  
Protect them, we pray;  
From violence,  
From political gamesmanship,  
from being used and abused.  
Give, we pray,  
the nations of the world the courage  
and the wisdom  
to stand up for justice  
and the courage too,  
to dare to care – generously.  
Lord in your mercy,  
Take from us all,  
The tendencies in us  
That seek to lord it over others:  
Take from us those traits  
that see us pursuing our own needs and wants before those of others.  
Teach us how to live in love  
And dignity  
And respect – following your example.  
In your name and for your sake, Amen

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## Copy Date

The copy date for the March issue is Wednesday **23rd** February.

Please send any articles to [st.paulslifemagazine@gmail.com](mailto:st.paulslifemagazine@gmail.com)

| Date     | Flower Deliveries        |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 6th Feb  | F. Ireland               |
| 13th Feb | A. McNellan<br>K. Hagart |
| 20th Feb | J. Mill                  |
| 27th Feb | A. McLeod                |