

Life at St. Paul's Milngavie



August 2020

Dear Friends,

It's good to be enjoying the easing up of the shielding conditions but like others I still experience some anxiety whenever I am out and about. I suppose it will take some time before I am totally at ease in the company of others. It's astonishing that we have come to this. Always promoting the importance of community and of reaching out to one another in time of need but now having to keep our distance. Even with things so much better than they were three months ago we still need to be careful. As I write, people in England are having to cope with restrictions being imposed once again and the other nations within the United Kingdom are being warned against complacency.

It's the uncertainty that gets to you along with the mixed messages. The ancient voices of faith arise out of similar circumstances and show us a quality of inner being to which we are called to aspire. Psalm 112 paints a portrait of a man of faith. One of his qualities is:

'He will have no fear of bad news;
his heart is steadfast trusting in the Lord.' (v. 7)

We are called to this steadfastness of inner being time and time again in Scripture. The changes and upheavals in human experience are never far away from the man or woman of faith but what will matter in the end is how firmly they are established in their God. It is from Him that flows the strength and courage and peace that are needed in times of uncertainty. Paul signs off his letter to the Christians in Rome with the prayer that God will 'establish' them in the truths of the Gospel, what they have found to be true in Jesus Christ. It is with His help that we can be strong in these uncertain times through the truths that stand forever.

Praying for your steadfastness in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fergus".

Covid-19 Update

St Paul's along with other churches, closed on 28th March 2020 because of the global Covid-19 pandemic. The Scottish Government has produced a four-phased approach on how they plan to ease Covid-19 restrictions in Scotland. A copy of this guidance is available from the Scottish Government website (www.gov.scot/news/route-map-formoving-out-of-lockdown). There is legislation in place restricting the use of church buildings and it is the responsibility of the Scottish Government to provide a regulatory framework for when congregations can reopen their church buildings and for what purpose. The guidance document has been produced to help congregations think about how they may be able to reopen their church buildings safely. Some congregations will be able to reopen their church buildings very quickly, whilst for others it might be later in the year, or even 2021 before they can reopen.

The decision to reopen for worship at St Paul's will be taken by the Interim Moderator and Kirk Session subject to Presbytery approval. The Church of Scotland has produced a guidance document on the reopening of church buildings which is being updated as required.

From 15th July the Scottish Government regulations for places of worship allow churches to reopen for communal worship, subject to ensuring that a risk assessment is completed and that when they open, physical distancing and good hand hygiene is observed. The Church of Scotland guidance to congregations (www.churchofscotland.org.uk) is to encourage people who come into our buildings to wear a face covering and everyone will be asked to provide their name and contact details as part of NHS Scotland's Test and Protect System. At this time singing in worship is not permitted and numbers attending a worship service are limited to a maximum of 50 at any one time, although many churches will only be able to admit fewer individuals safely.

Many of the restrictions that have been in place since March 2020 will be with us throughout the rest of this year and probably into 2021. Physical distancing, hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning and disinfection will have to be embraced into a new way of church life. We also have to consider those vulnerable members of our congregation, and how we can support their needs. Congregations can only reopen their church buildings if they can safely meet the principles outlined in the guidance document. At this stage, no congregation will be required to reopen their church buildings.

It is expected that all Presbyteries will play a role in supporting congregations in the reopening of their church buildings. Presbyteries will ensure that every congregation has completed a reopening of church buildings checklist and a Covid-19 risk assessment which indicates that the congregation can meet the legal requirements expected of a church building open to members of the public.

We in St Paul's, are very fortunate that Fergus is able to record a service each week and we are grateful to the team who edit and prepare the service for the web-site. This facility is much appreciated by the members who are able to view the services and by many others around the world. The recording of the services will continue for the foreseeable future.

We do not anticipate St Paul's reopening for worship in the short term however a small team is being formed to examine the regulations and steps that will be required to allow the reopening of our buildings. This is of course subject to any changes in the Scottish Government guidelines.

If you are able please check the web-site for the latest information. If you have any comment or concerns please contact your District Elder, Visitor or myself.

Graham Mill,
Session Clerk
30 July, 2020

Christian Aid 2020



Due to the Covid pandemic Christian Aid week was thrown into disarray because of the lockdown and the fact that it was not safe to deliver or collect the envelopes. There were plenty of options for supporters to donate money either through their mobile phones, the internet as well as simply sending cheques. I am pleased to report that although last year the national amount donated was £7.5 million, as of the 1st of July an estimated £3.5 million has been donated. This is a true reflection of the tenacity and commitment of our churches and supporters in responding to the poverty crisis.

Alex McEwan
Christian Aid Convenor

Thank You

Firstly I should like to thank everyone who has sent cards, flowers, messages, phone calls & prayers to support me both during lockdown & thru' my short sojourn in hospital. There are differing reports going around as to the sequence of events. Yes, I did have an accident— took a corner too fast on my mobility scooter, — whoops— But the hospital stay was due to pancreatitis, which for those of you who know, is very uncomfortable.

Rosemary Fraser

TRADCRAFT

Traidcraft is still very much up and running and although we are not in the Church Hall, nevertheless I still have a good stock, which is as follows:-

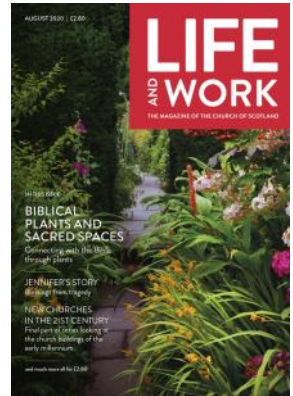
- Coffee - instant, ground, & decaf
- Tea- - breakfast, decaf. & loose leaf,
- Cocoa, Hot chocolate,
- Divine 70 percent dark chocolate, small & big bars,
- jelly beans
- marmalade,
- strawberry jam
- Kolombero white rice
- Sweet & juicy sultanas,
- Toilet rolls,
- kitchen roll,
- bio sanitising hand wash,
- washing up liquid,
- Clean & fair multi surface cleaner, bio fabric conditioner (fragrance free)
- Clean & fair soap— orange & honey—.
- Washing up gloves,
- gardening gloves
- Greetings cards,
- lots of Socks



I am very happy to provide items which I already have—see above— or to order new stock. All that you buy helps to give the poorest and most vulnerable the ability to sustain themselves and their families in a way that is honourable.

Rosemary Fraser 956 3222 or 07986992583

LIFE AND WORK AUGUST 2020



Biblical Plants and Sacred Spaces

Lynne McNeil discovers how you can create a direct link to the Bible in a garden or balcony

Jennifer's Story

Thomas Baldwin learns how the loss of a precious baby daughter provided the backdrop for the author of a new book.

Plus, the work of a charity which provides a Christian charity on issues of miscarriage, infant loss and infertility.

New Churches in the 20th Century

The final part in the series looks at a rural parish that got a new lease of life by uniting in one extended building.

Our Wake-up Moment

In his first column as Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair reflects on the impact of the pandemic.

Emergent Church

Ruth Harvey considers the pathway for the Church from lockdown offered by Matthew 18.

The Children of God

In this month's youth column, three teenage siblings reflect on their baptism.

Plus all the regular columnists, news, reviews, letters, registers and crosswords

Online

Visit www.lifeandwork.org for news and exclusive features, including Corona-virus 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 £12, or download a digital copy for £1.99; return the form in the magazine or speak to your church's Life and Work coordinator.

St. Paul's Society Cards

As you know, we sent a cheque for £200 to 'The Beatson Wellness Centre' for use in their Glasgow premises. After consulting with Fergus, we found it was a place he used. We received a letter from one of their staff, Maisie McCormick. Here is a small part of the letter:

Dear Alex,

On behalf of everyone at Beatson Cancer Charity I would like to thank everyone at St. Paul's Church, and particularly The St. Paul's Society, for your kind and generous donation of £200, raised through the sale of homemade cards. What a fantastic idea and a great amount to have raised! Please pass on our thanks to your members and send our good wishes to Fergus, it is great news that he is back with you and doing well – it's so good to hear that he loved the Wellbeing Centre, although not a surprise as we love it too! We are especially thankful for this thoughtful donation throughout these trying and difficult times. It is truly thanks to supporters like you, that we can continue our vital work for cancer patients and their families.

All our work is made possible by supporters like you. It is your generosity which allows Beatson Cancer Charity and all our staff and volunteers to deliver an innovative and patient-focused approach to cancer care and change the lives of those affected by the disease every day.

We hope you are all staying safe and well. Thank you so much for being with us,

Maisie McCormick

St. Paul's Society Cards in general

We have raised approximately £85 already for Bobath Glasgow so remember if you need cards of any kind, email me on alexjmcewan@gmail.com or phone me on 0141 384 0274 and I can arrange delivery of cards to you.

St. Paul's Cards and Flowers

As you know, with the church being closed, our usual bunches of flowers and cards are not going out to the sick, the bereaved, or those in care homes. Since the lockdown though, we have been sending out a church card to those we hear about. The card, with a suitable prayer, is posted out and we are also working with The Pastoral Care Team and sending out a card to those on the pastoral care list from time to time. Since the lockdown 55 cards have gone out and through feedback we know that the recipients enjoy the cards and the contact with the church. If you hear of anyone who would benefit from a card let me know using my contact details and we can arrange one.

Alex McEwan

Christmas Tree Festival

It has been decided, with great regret, that this year's Christmas Tree Festival will not take place. The committee and many others involved have been unanimous in agreeing that the current situation is too uncertain to allow us to go ahead.

We obviously hope to hold the Festival next year and expect that everyone will be especially delighted to come along after the unusually long gap. This delay gives participants more time to plan the decoration of their tree, and perhaps to inspire new involvement of others! We are very grateful for the enthusiastic contribution of many members of the congregation in past Festivals, and will keep you informed about developments in due course.





Dear Friends,

Hello from a hot and humid Tokyo. Our rainy season has ended and summer is now beating down on us. It is the season of shaved ice, special cooling underwear, fans and air conditioning!

When I was in Scotland earlier this year, I told people that I would like to get more involved in my local church once I came back to Japan. The ideas I had were, a children's club or English classes – things which I enjoy doing and could help the church have more contact with the local community. But by the time I got back, the coronavirus was spreading and church meetings were being stopped, rather than anything new being started.

As I mentioned in a previous edition of Life, the minister decided to start emailing daily Bible devotions to church members for their encouragement. I was then asked to write one a week. We have now been doing this for 4 months.

We only have short socially-distanced church services at the moment, and are not meant to hang around to chat afterwards. However, quite a few church members have taken the chance to come up and thank me for the devotions we are doing. They are genuinely grateful for the encouragement they are receiving from God's Word each day.

I realised that God has answered my prayer of being involved more in my local church – just not in the way I expected. Through writing the devotions, church members are being encouraged in their faith and we are getting to know each other better. I trust that this is laying a good foundation so that, when we can open the church to others in the future, we can work together as we seek to develop contacts with our local community and share of the amazing hope we have in Jesus.

Please pray for these church members. In a group society like Japan it is hard to be a Christian when they are such a small minority. Quite a few members are the only Christians in their families. May they continue to grow in their faith and be strengthened by God's Word.

With love and prayers

Lorna, Daniel, Matthew, Calum and Alistair

Guild News

Last week marked a new development in the congregation's Guild history when we held our first committee meeting on Zoom! This was actually the first meeting of the committee which took office at our online AGM in March. Until now it was deemed unnecessary to meet, but recently Guild headquarters had been in touch with various communications which we wanted to share.

We hope to hold many Afternoon Tea parties on Saturday August 8th at 2.00 p.m.. Obviously that date and time may not be suitable for everyone, but as many as possible will meet then to create a sense of involvement in a joint activity. Members will meet in small groups and will make a donation which will be sent to Guild headquarters; the money will be divided among the six very worthwhile projects which the Guild supports.

For the last two years we have supported Malawi Fruits, which gives funding and training to young farmers in northern Malawi. The Coffee Mornings and last year's concert all raised money which has made a big difference to this work. We have decided that this year we will highlight another project, The Free to Live Trust – Seema's Project. This has funded the building of a children's centre for abandoned street children, and is also building a rehabilitation centre for rescued victims of human trafficking. We are becoming increasingly aware of the scale of this problem all over the world and are keen to help this work in Pune in India.

Members have each received a tube of Smarties which we know they will enjoy eating! We hope that afterwards they will be able to fill it with £1 coins as we have often done in the past, this time to replace our weekly offerings at Guild meetings. We realise that many members no longer possess such coins since we are using cards to make our purchases! No doubt we will be creative and will write a cheque or donate the equivalent value in notes when we eventually return to Church and Guild.

We had hoped that our annual outing, postponed from May, could be rescheduled for September, but realise now that that is not possible. We hope that something will be feasible next year but will just have to be patient, like everyone else! We are enjoying the greater freedom we have now to get together, and we know that various members have been meeting up and supporting one another. In the meantime we continue to enjoy the Sunday services and are particularly appreciative that Fergus is back preaching! We also continue to remember him and Gabrielle in our prayers.

We should all remember our Guild motto, 'Whose we are and Whom we serve', as we continue to live in these strange circumstances.

World Mission

A call to sign a statement for nuclear weapons ban to mark 75th anniversary of Hiroshima

The Church of Scotland has reiterated its support for a world free of nuclear weapons ahead of the 75th anniversary of the atomic bomb attacks on Japan.



Rt. Rev. Dr. Martin Fair, Moderator of the General Assembly, has signed a Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament statement and is encouraging other ministers to do so too. He says: "We must speak out and call for action to ensure that the horrific events witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki are never repeated. We call on the UK Government to make every effort to engage in meaningful international disarmament, most importantly by committing to the cancellation of the current programme to replace Trident."

The Church of Scotland has also signed a World Council of Churches backed interfaith statement on nuclear weapons.

South Korean Christians donate COVID-19 testing kits



To mark the 70th anniversary of the start of the Korean war and to honour the 236 Scots who lost their lives in the conflict, Presbyterians in South Korea have donated £50,000 to buy COVID-19 testing kits for the NHS.

Rev Dr JunSoo Park, who completed his PhD studies in Scotland, delivered the kits to veterans who served in Korea and to St Michael's Parish Church in Linlithgow.

Dr Park said: "Thanks to Scottish missionary Rev Dr John Ross's translation of the New Testament into Korean, the Presbyterian Church of Korea quickly grew. "Later, against this background, Scottish soldiers took part in the Korean War and as many were Presbyterians, they were defenders of the faith. "That is why in this pandemic, we Koreans want to fight and overcome COVID-19 together."



Rights of EU citizens in Scotland

In addition to existing support under the [Stay in Scotland](#) campaign, the Scottish Government has commissioned JustRight Scotland, a legal centre for justice and human rights, to develop a range of factsheets for EU citizens. This guidance explains the rights of EU citizens in Scotland to vote, work and access healthcare, education, housing and

benefits. These are now available in English, Polish, Romanian, Lithuanian, Spanish and Italian. Please make these known to members of your congregations and parish who may find them helpful.

Fears for conversion of Hagia Sophia to a Mosque

Our partner church, the Evangelical Church of Greece, along with the Greek Orthodox Church and individual Christians in the region, have expressed sorrow that Hagia Sophia, the most historic Christian monument in Greece is to be converted into a mosque. They condemn this action and pray the decision will be revoked as they are concerned that it may provoke unrest in the region.

The World Council of Churches has written to the Turkish President asking him to consider this act carefully for the sake of peace.

Biblical Quiz

This is a most remarkable puzzle, being found on an aircraft from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping the reader occupied for hours. He even studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine, his wife, even tried. She judges the job of finding the answers to be so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help calm her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot - that's a fact. Some people will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since some are quite difficult to remember. However, the truth is, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes sometime to see some of them at the worst. Something in our genes is probably responsible for the difficulties you may have. Those able to find all 24 of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation may be helpful. Books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers and punctuation or spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete. Remember there are 24 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph

Answers on the next page

Answers to the Quiz

The hidden books are all highlighted in "bold"

"This is a **most remarkable** puzzle, being found on an aircraft from Los Angeles to Honolulu, **keeping** the reader occupied for hours. He even studied it while playing his **banjo**. **Elaine**, his wife, even tried. She **judges** the **job** of finding the answers to be so involving, **she brews** a cup of tea to help calm her nerves. **There** will be some names that are really easy to spot - that's a **fact**. **Some** people will soon find themselves in a **jam**, **especially** since some are quite difficult to remember. However, the **truth** is, **from** answers we get, we are forced to admit **it usually** takes sometime to see some of them **at the worst**. Something in our **genes is** probably responsible for the difficulties you may have. **Those** able to find all 24 of them will hear great **lamentations** from those who have to be shown. One **revelation** may be helpful. Books like **Timothy** and **Samuel** may occur without their **numbers** and punctuation or spaces in the middle are **normal**. **A chipper** attitude will help you **compete**. **Remember** there are 24 books of the Bible **lurking** somewhere in this paragraph"

Copy Date

The copy date for the September issue is Wednesday 26th August via email.

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