

Life at St. Paul's Milngavie

May 2021



Dear Friends,

I am writing this on the day when I come out of shielding. Having been designated by the Scottish Government as one who needed to observe extra restrictions in my lifestyle I can now look forward to more room for movement and personal contact. This means that I will be able to record services from St. Paul's and also lead the restricted worship on the Lord's Day.

Shielding has been a frustrating experience but there is a shielding mentioned in Scripture which is entirely positive. In Psalm 3: 3 David says:

'But you are a shield around me, O Lord;
you bestow glory on me and lift up my head.'

At a time of great pressure in his life David takes comfort from the idea of being shielded by his God. As a military man he would know the importance of a good shield so it is not hard for him to imagine God providing even more expansive protection. This is just one of 19 such references in the Psalms but the idea is prominent throughout Scripture. In many instances we see the faith that God can provide physical protection for His people in times of danger. But there are other texts which in a sense go deeper. God protecting the soul from harm. Here is Psalm 28: 7:

'The Lord is my strength and my shield;
my heart trusts in him and I am helped.'

I can only think of two references in the New Testament. Paul speaking of the Christian's armour in spiritual warfare writes:

' . . . take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish the fiery darts of the evil one.' (Ephesians 6: 16)

Peter speaking of the default spiritual state of the believer describes those 'who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.' (1 Peter 1: 5)


Continued overleaf...

Neither Paul or Peter could ever claim that they had always been shielded from physical danger but they were convinced of a deeper shielding. They trusted that even in their worst of times they could be sure that their souls were safe with God. That is to say nothing would ever affect their place in the heart of God, His good purpose for them in this life and their fulfilment in the coming Kingdom. Jesus says:

'My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.' (John 10: 27-28)

The believer is in the hands of the Good Shepherd and no one or nothing will ever prise us away. We are called to regard our souls as shielded against the spiritual dangers of sin, death and the devil. It is in this great truth that we can go forward with faith into the unknown future.

Wishing you all God's Peace,



Scottish Bible Society



There was an overwhelming response to the appeal for support for the 'Faith Comes By Hearing' project in Mozambique. Enough money was raised to supply 900 Proclaimer Audio Bibles to churches and villages in Mozambique. This gives great encouragement to the church in Mozambique and to all those involved in the distribution of the Proclaimers, especially in these difficult times. More information on this and other Bible Society work can be found on the Society's website at www.scottishbiblesociety.org.

Frances Ireland



Dear Friends,

Japan is known as a group-orientated culture. From a young age, children are taught to work and play in groups, and often to put the needs of the group above their own. One of the most important groups is the family. In Japan you introduce yourself with your family name first and then your first name, which reflects the order of importance.

When coronavirus case numbers started to rise earlier this year, the church leadership sent a message to all the church members. In particular, it asked those over 75 to discuss with their families whether they could still attend church in person. Several older members were asked by their families not to come, in order to protect their health.

One of these is Mrs M, an older lady with a very simple faith who loves attending church. Two years ago her family took her for a treat to a hot spring hotel for a night, but she was very cross that it would mean missing a Sunday morning service! Her family have asked her not to come to church whilst case numbers remain high, and she has respected their wishes, though she finds it very difficult.

Last week, we were surprised to find Mrs M joining in the church's online prayer meeting. She has never been one for technology. Yet she made the effort to learn how to use Zoom so that she could join in. When the pastor asked her how she was doing, she mentioned the daily devotions that we have been writing and sending to church members for the past year (I write one each week). She said, "When I used to read the Bible, I couldn't really understand it. But now that I have the daily devotions, I can understand what I am reading."

Given that I still find it challenging to write in Japanese (it is easier to speak), this was such an encouragement to me, and I hope to the others who write the devotions as well. But it was also an encouragement to see Mrs M's love for being part of the church family, and her perseverance, whether to learn new technology or with reading the Bible even when she has found it hard to understand. I thought you might feel encouraged by her example as well. Please continue to pray for Japanese Christians to be able to persevere in their faith and grow in their love for Jesus and desire to tell others about Him.

Thank you for all your love, prayers and support.

Lorna, Daniel, Matthew, Calum and Alistair

Ways to give to Christian Aid Week this year

Christian Aid week is from the 10th to 16th May and as you can imagine it presents its own set of problems for the second year in a row.



So, this year, it is as important as ever to try and send something to Christian Aid especially as St. Paul's usually leads the way in the local Christian Aid programme.

So, in an effort to try and do something positive this year, here are some ideas regarding how to donate.

1. If you have a magazine delivered by your Church visitor or elder, you will find the usual Christian Aid envelope inside. If you are attending church personally there will also be envelopes placed around the vestibule for your own use. You can use this for your donation and refer to numbers 4 & 5 of this article to find out how to return the envelope.

2. You can go on line to www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week and give a donation there.

3. If you are reading this online, simply click the hyperlink (in blue) below or you can copy and paste the following <http://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/milngavie-ca-group> into your internet browser. This will take you to a local page for Milngavie Christian Aid

4. If you don't have access to an envelope and that's your preferred way of giving, phone me, Alex McEwan on 0141 384 0274 and we can make sure an envelope is delivered and can be picked up at a later date.
(usually out delivering cards so its no problem!)

5. When you have your envelope and your donation, there will be a box, on a Sunday, in the vestibule, for you to post it through, or if you are passing the church just put it through the church letterbox and Hugh will then place it in the donation box for you.

Please give this your full consideration

Alex McEwan

Milngavie Christian Aid Group Message

Hello Milngavie,

The climate crisis is having a devastating impact on communities in Kenya. Right now families struggle to survive without a reliable water source. Every day, they walk further, dig deeper and build stronger to survive... unrelenting... determined... We can't deliver envelopes to everybody this year but we can still support Christian Aid to battle coronavirus and fight for climate justice. Please think about giving a donation in whatever way you feel comfortable.

This climate crisis hurts us all but people living in poverty fight the worst of it every day. From drought to flooding, climate change robs people of control over their lives. Extreme weather means people are struggling to survive without a reliable source of water.

Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live. A reliable source of water will help families withstand long drought or relentless rainstorms. Every envelope... every gift... every challenge can change lives.

Thank You

I'd like to thank everyone who sent me the many cards, gifts and good wishes that I received on my retirement as Treasurer to the church at the end of March. I have enjoyed the time I was Treasurer and was surprised to learn I had been in post for nearly 14 years.

I had been a Treasurer in my previous church (twice) working with big ledgers, but although I worked with computers on a daily basis, I had to learn how to operate the finance system which St. Paul's uses. I have to acknowledge the great support I received from the late Angus MacLean, who I always referred to as my mentor.

I know that Barbara and Jackie will continue the good work in the future and wish them both every blessing.

Chris Scott

St Paul's Church Society New fundraising Project

Having sent £500 off to Preshal for their hot takeaway lunches, we are now looking to raising funds for a local project.

Dumbrock House which is run by The Church of Scotland/ Crossreach is situated just outside Strathblane and accommodates 4 young people aged 12,13,14 and 15. Set in its own grounds and opened in January this year, Dumbrock house provides a homely and therapeutic environment where the boys are able to thrive and feel safe.

Inclusion is at the heart of what they do in the home and provides opportunities and support for the boys to be involved in the local community events and groups.

We have already contacted David Metcalf who is the manager and he is very happy that we are raising funds by selling the cards. David was telling me that they are looking to provide a trampoline and other things for the boys to play with in their garden. Our money will go to that. If you need any more information don't hesitate to call me.

New cards will be available to see on the church website and are visible in the magazine online. Any enquiries for cards, contact me on 0141 384 0274.

Alex McEwan



**Baby cards
Or just a birthday
name £1.25**

PIC-COLLAGE



All cards £1.25

PIC-COLLAGE



**5 cards
For
£2.50**

PIC-COLLAGE

Ann and Ramsay Shield will walk 500 miles for Christian Aid

During the month of May, Ramsay and Ann will walk 250 miles each to raise awareness and funds for Christian Aid. If you would like to contribute to their fundraising please use the link below:

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Ramsay-AnnShields500?utm_campaign=lc_fr_share_transaction_transactional--donation_received--first_donation&utm_content=e7b1bf09-3167-4a06-936f-2056a2fc642c&utm_medium=email&utm_source=postoffice&utm_term=1619465296201

World Mission News

Developing skills for income generation in Nepal

One of the biggest consequences and negative impacts (amongst many) of Covid-19 and the lockdown in Nepal last year has been the seasonal migrant workers helplessly returning to Nepal with an uncertain future.



Remittances of migrant workers are the only source of income for thousands of families. These households experienced a sharp decline in income during partial and full lockdown last year. The problem is massive but the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) has taken a small initiative in the villages of Doti (West Nepal) to help and encourage such migrant returnees.

UMN is working on developing the workers' entrepreneurial skills, thereby opening doors to an alternative source of income generation. Since November last year, after the lockdown was lifted, we have already seen around 40 migrant returnees of one village set up small enterprises. They are secure, working hard and happy to be earning in their land.

Find out more about UMN here: <https://www.umn.org/umn-news>

Debt repayment or vaccine?

Did you know that countries in Africa are spending three times more on debt repayments to banks and speculators than it would cost to vaccinate the entire continent against Covid-19?

This includes Zambia, a country where we already hear from our partner church, the United Church of Zambia, that a vaccination programme has not yet begun. Zambia and other countries have asked for a break from these loan repayments, so they aren't forced to choose between saving lives and repaying loans. So far, they have been refused.

The Jubilee Debt Campaign is encouraging us to write to the heads of these banks so that they will be forced to listen. Follow the link below to add your voice to the campaign to demand big banks #CancelTheDebt.

<https://jubileedebt.org.uk/>



**INTENTIONALLY
LEFT BLANK**

Copy Date

The copy date for the June issue is Wednesday 23rd May via email.

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