

**Church of Scotland
Scone & St Martins Parish**



Church News

March/April 2021

Parish Register

Deaths

21 December 2020	Ian Murrie, Perth
9 January 2021	Marina Thomson, Balbeggie
15 February 2021	James M Currie, Scone
25 February 2021	Elizabeth Scrimgeour, Scone

Church News

Material for the May/June edition should be forwarded to the church office (tel 553900; email sconeandstmartinschurch@talktalk.net) or to the editor Moira Daly (moiradalyscone54@gmail.com) by Thursday 23 April 2021. Please send in any items you think will be of interest to the congregation.

Electronic Version of Church News – If you would prefer to receive your copy of Church News directly to your inbox, please let the office know or complete the form below and hand it in.

Name

Address

Email

If you know of anyone who requires a visit from the minister or an elder, please hand in the details at church on Sunday or to the church office.

Church Office

Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.15 am to 12 noon

Address: Balformo Road, Scone, PH2 6QX

**Contact: 01738 553900 or email
sconeandstmartinschurch@talktalk.net**

Dear Members and Adherents,

This letter comes to wish you all A Very Happy Easter 2021. It is our Hope that all the Church doors will be open for worship on Easter Day!! Do please prepare to book in. It is our intention to offer 4 services as follows: 9.30 am St Martins; 10.45 am and 12 noon Scone New, Balformo Road, and an extra service at 6.30 pm at Scone Old. This will allow all doors of our sanctuaries to be open on the Day of Resurrection! Easter is the High Point of the Christian Year! It is good that the Government is recognising the Churches at the commencement of opening up from Lockdown, it makes much more sense than opening the pubs in the first instance, not that any of us has any objection to them opening and wish them well for their reopening, but no space is safer than our worship spaces. All services will be 25/30mins. You must wear a mask, though we have some spares, please try to remember to bring your own. We strictly operate to Government and National Church Guidelines. If there is any doubt about you having Covid or if you have been in the company of anyone who has had it, please be kind to yourself and others and stay at home. I have mentioned the services in Church. If you are an early riser and wish to meet at Dawn, safe-spacing, please buzz the Manse telephone.

Now, may I encourage you to get coloured ribbons; on the ribbons write "Alleluia". Make sure the ribbons are long, as you are invited to hang them on the trees and bushes and railings around our sanctuaries. (The Range and Home Bargains are open but these kinds of things can also be bought online or you can cut up something colourful and old and make your own.) You might like, also, to consider white doves and on them print Peace, or you could cut out the Empty Cross, colour it if you like or draw children of different nationalities and cultures around it or paint on New Life. You could also make a poster with a sunflower and write on it, "Christ is Risen". You are also invited to bring along little plants on Easter Saturday. There will be tubs in which to plant them or you might pot them up and bring them along. Just do it at a time convenient to you; always be mindful to safe-space if anyone is there at the same time, and remember to wear your mask and your gloves!!!

Listen out for all the bells ringing in Easter!!!

This is opportunity for us all to witness Life is Victor over Death. We have cause for Thanksgiving and we have cause to give thanks for our Faith in Jesus Christ and for his promise of New and Abundant Life! You might like to shout out the Easter Acclamation in your homes at the dawn of Easter Day, Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!!!!

And may you all know Easter blessing, Maudeen

An Easter Message

I'm sure you will all be pleased that the months of winter are now over and that Spring has officially arrived. Liturgically, I do more than survive Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, I appreciate them, but there is something about the winter season that makes it not my favourite. Seeing wellie boots, and raincoats and coloured umbrellas, add colour to the landscape, but . . . And, yet, as the Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 3 reminds us, "*For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.*"

Recognising that, I still find myself saying, on one level, maybe the all too human: Give me spring and the high-point of the Christian Year, Easter, and I am as joyous as can be. Indeed, I like the manse garden not too tamed so that creation can be at play and in song. And, that story of Mary encountering Jesus in the garden, I absolutely love!

Well, let this Easter be significant to all of faith, and to those who doubt, or who agonisingly search, or who find themselves in a place where faith seems to play hide and seek with them in the shadowlands of life. Aware of how many in the parish have suffered physically or mentally during the pandemic, and aware of all those who have not lost faith, and of those who have been pondering these strange times, I do believe we should prepare to have our spirits lifted, by the Hope, Life and Love of Easter. If there is a time for suffering, there sure is a time for healing. Poets, Painters, Songsters, Musicians, join in the celebration, as, I like to think do the farmers and the gardeners once the wrinkled, creviced earth gives way to new growth, and the moaning, lamenting winds on dark nights give way to the brighter tones of Spring's choristers.

Let me share with you some thoughts of one of the many poets I appreciate. He is RS Thomas. Born in March 1913 he died in September 2000 but his poetry lives on. He has been described as *a poet for a doubting believer's Easter*. Of Easter, it was said that *Historians will continue to doubt the objectivity of the witnesses, and believers will continue to believe their accounts. And many will continue to live in the tension between doubt and belief*. RS Thomas, priest and poet, highlights this tension by describing two gardens, his kitchen garden and his cemetery garden. In the first, he plants vegetables; in the second, the bodies of parishioners:

A priest has two gardens, one feeding the body and one the mind. He is trained more for the one than the other. He discovers a quicker calendar in his own garden. What he plants comes up soon. In the church-yard garden everything waits. Is the meaning, then, in the waiting? The stones face expectantly towards the east.

Every spring, RS Thomas planted dead-looking seeds in the soil; every summer, there was new life on the dinner table. But he was still waiting, as priests have waited for two thousand years, for the Son to appear in the east. He did not, however, allow doubt to poison his waiting. He continued to believe in God. And he referred, in a poem written near the close of his earthly existence, to life after death as “an impalpable possibility/for faith’s fingertips to explore.”

The risen Jesus invited Thomas, the doubter, to “put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” And Thomas answered Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:27-28)

. . . an impalpable possibility/for faith’s fingertips to explore.

You might like to read the book that John G McElhenney has written, entitled, *A Masterwork of Doubting-Belief: RS Thomas and His Poetry.*

In it he offers this opinion, *that his quarrel with so much Easter preaching is that it explores the mystery of the risen Jesus with the mind’s fist, not faith’s fingertips.* It attempts to make the empty tomb irrefutable evidence of the resurrection. And I’m in sympathy with his remarks. He continues, RS Thomas, on the other hand, refuses to touch the empty tomb, opting rather to explore the uninhabited cross with faith’s fingertips:

Not the empty tomb but the uninhabited cross.

Look long enough and you will see the arms put on leaves.

Not a crown of thorns, but a crown of flowers haloing it,

with a bird singing as though perched on paradise’s threshold.

We have over-furnished our faith. Our churches are as limousines in the procession towards heaven. But the verities remain: a de-nuclearized cross, uncontaminated by our coinage; the chalice’s ichor; and one crumb of bread on the tongue for the bird-like intelligence to be made tame by.

RS Thomas sees faith’s living room cluttered with our totem poles of piety. But certain truths are unchanging: McElhenney described the unchanging truths this way: *A cross cleansed of fissionable doctrinal materials. The Eucharistic cup with its, in Charles Wesley’s phrase, “Draughts of GOD.” The Eucharistic bread that stills the squirrely, doubting human mind.* Wow! But it’s worth our giving thought to. And that leads me now to a meditation based on - John 20:19-31

Meditation of Thomas: Did he condemn me for doubting? Not a bit of it - He understood, and answered.

Perhaps I should have believed earlier -

After all, I had my fellow disciples' word that Jesus was alive -

But you can appreciate I wanted to be sure.
Don't forget, we were grief-stricken when he died, numb with despair,
None of us listening when Mary and the others
Rushed back. from the tomb
Declaring it was empty and the Lord raised –
No, not one.
We feared it was wishful thinking, a beautiful but sad delusion,
For though Jesus had spoken of rising again,
we never imagined it could really happen.
It was just my luck not to be there when he appeared to them all,
and I longed to accept their story afterwards.
Yet I didn't dare to trust, lest it were all to prove a ghastly mistake.
I couldn't have lived with more disappointment, not after what we'd been
through already, so I closed my mind to the idea until Jesus stood before
me, inviting me to touch, and feel, and know.
Seeing is believing, isn't that what they say, and so it was for me.
So how, you may ask, can anyone possibly believe without seeing? Well
actually they can, for even though he's gone from us now, returned to the
Father, I know he's with me still, every moment of the day -
here through his Spirit in his risen power.
I can't see him, but I can feel his presence, by my side.
Not that you have to take my word for it - I wouldn't expect that.
Never give up on fresh encounter and be sure to make your Response,
and discover the truth for yourself. And Thomas said, My Lord and my
God.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, we have faith in you - in who you are, all you
mean, and in what you have done and will yet do. But we also have doubts
- things we don't understand, and cannot make sense of, that we struggle to
accept.

Alongside our belief is unbelief, alongside trust, uncertainty.
Accept us, we pray, despite the warring voices within. Deepen our faith and
respond to our doubts, assuring us of your living presence and constant love.
Though we will never have all the answers, teach us that, in you, we have
the one answer we really need. Amen.

Easter Hymn:

Jesus is risen, Alleluia! Worship and praise him, alleluia!
Now our redeemer bursts from the grave; lost to the tomb, Christ rises to
save.
*Come let us worship him, endlessly sing;
Christ is alive, and death loses its sting:
Sins are forgiven, alleluia!*

Jesus is risen, alleluia!

Let heavens echo, let the earth sing; Jesus is saviour of everything.
All those who trust him, Christ will receive; there-fore rejoice, obey and believe!

Another Easter Hymn

The strife is o'er, the battle done; now is the Victor's triumph won;
Now be the song of praise begun,
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Lord by the painful wounds you bore, death lost its sting for evermore;
Living in you, our praises soar.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

And another hymn:

Christ has risen, while earth slumbers, Christ has risen where hope died,
As he said and as he promised, as we doubted and denied.
Let the moon embrace the blessing; let the sun sustain the cheer;
Let the world confirm the rumour, Christ is risen, God is here!

Christ has risen, and for ever, lives to challenge and to change,
All whose lives are messed or mangled, all who find religion strange.
Christ is risen, Christ is present, making us what he has been –
evidence of transformation, in which God is known and seen.

EASTER READINGS: Acts 10:34-43

Gentiles Hear the Good News

34 Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He

commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

THE EASTER GOSPEL: The RESURRECTION OF JESUS - John 20:1-18

²⁰Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' ¹⁶Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." ' ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.



As you receive your Palm Cross

Today, you receive your Palm Cross with your Church News. As you hold it in your hand hear these words:

Christ entered in triumph into the Holy City to complete his work as Messiah:

to suffer, to die and to rise to new life.

Today we commit ourselves to walk the way of the cross, so that, sharing his sufferings, we may be united with him in his risen life.

The blessing of your Palm Cross

Loving and Gracious God, we thank you for these crosses of palm. By your blessing may they be for us signs of the victory of your Son. May we who carry them in his name ever hail him as our Messiah, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Response: Amen.

As Christ gave his all for us, may we generously give our all to him, in thanksgiving, this Easter and through the coming year.

Read now the Story:

The triumphal entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem before His passion has been celebrated with particular solemnity since the first centuries of Christianity. It is always celebrated on the Sunday before Easter with the blessing of branches. From ancient times, palm-branches were symbols of victory and triumph. The Romans rewarded their champions of the games with palm-branches and military triumphs, were observed with palms. It seems that the Jews followed the same custom (Lev. 23:40; I Macc. 13:37) of carrying palm-branches on their festive occasions. That is what happened during the solemn entry of Jesus into the Holy City before His last Passover.

From Jerusalem this celebration of palms spread to Egypt, then to Syria and Asia Minor. By the fifth century the feast was celebrated in Constantinople, where the Emperor and his household used to take part in a solemn

procession on Passion Sunday. There, besides palms, the faithful were given olive and lilac branches. During the sixth and the seventh centuries the procession took place in the morning. It was at this time that the blessing of palms and other branches was introduced. The feast then spread to the West, where it received its present name - Palm Sunday.

“Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” As Jesus was entering the city, the crowds were excited but the Scribes and the Pharisees became alarmed. Indeed, Jesus’ presence set Jerusalem in turmoil (the Greek word used was that used for earthquake). Jesus was not entering a foreign city, nor entering the city of “the Jews”. He was a Jew. He was entering the city which symbolised everything about His faith and His scriptures, God’s promise to Israel. To confront one’s own faith and its traditions is painful.

The issues at stake here were not ultimate control or power; they are about obedience, fulfilling the work of God, and doing our part in His calling to us.

True signs of servanthood have little to do with glory, palms and crowns, but they are to do with acts of healing, wholeness, justice and compassion. Christ’s self- giving love on the Cross on Good Friday and the Resurrection Hope, in New Life and healing power is the essence of which we are called to partake this Easter season and as we reach out to share Love in its fulness. Christ’s radically subverted model of power, exercised in gentleness and compassion, challenges the systems of not only the first century Roman world but also their equivalents in our own world today. It is this subversive, radical power that Christ unleashes on the world through the events of the coming week, and through the imperfect, but forgiven and redeemed band of people called the Church.

The Collect for Palm Sunday

Lord Jesus Christ,
On the first Palm Sunday
You entered the rebellious city
Where you were to die.
Enter our hearts, we pray,
And subdue them to yourself.
And as your disciples blessed your coming
And spread garments and branches in your way,
Make us ready to lay at your feet
All that we have and are,
That we too may bless your coming
In the name of the Lord

HYMN:

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain, I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet, sorrow and love flow mingled
down!

Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Maudeen

Appreciative and Delighted!

We are so appreciative of all volunteers who are keeping in contact and who are able to express an interest in helping with established projects, with which they have been associated, into the new normal, when that comes about.

We are also so delighted that new volunteers are stepping forward to signal their interest in new ventures.

To have both is such a blessing!!

Now, you might be sitting thinking, *you know, I think I could help*, or you might be a neighbour or a friend of one of our Church members, someone who has not been much around a church and you might be thinking, *I could do with fresh purpose and new challenge, maybe I could get involved*.

If you are either, why not give me a ring at the manse. My telephone number is 551942.

For some of our work, eg work with children and vulnerable adults, a PVG form would be sent you to fill in. If you have been in certain types of employment you may have already been through the process so will be asked to fill in a shortened form of the previous one. It is all confidential and we don't hear about all the parking tickets you have accumulated over the years!

Be good to hear from you,

Maudeen

Tribute to Rev Bruce Thomson by Rev Alex Millar

J BRUCE THOMSON was born in Dalkeith in July 1944; his father was Colliery Secretary at one of the local mines. Sometime relatively soon afterwards the family moved to Edinburgh, where his mother ran a hotel in Royal Terrace, and Bruce was educated at James Gillespie's Boys' Primary School and at Heriot's.

At Edinburgh University Bruce graduated MA, contemplating at one time becoming a meteorologist or weather forecaster. Fraser tells me that the nearest his dad ever got to fulfilling that ambition was the occasional appearance on Reflections, the late evening 'Thought for the Day' on Grampian TV; it followed the weather update!

Responding instead to a call to ministry, Bruce enrolled as a BD student at New College, and he and Anne were married during his last year there. They had met some time previously at the Broughton District Youth Council, representing their home churches, and they were married at Hillside Parish Church, adjacent to the Edinburgh Playhouse, at the top of Leith Walk. If you know the area, you'll be aware how busy it is, with lots of traffic on a big, big roundabout, so theirs in 1970 was a very public commitment to one another!

Thereafter, Bruce served as assistant at St Mary's in Dundee, with Hugh Douglas, a former Moderator. Ordained there, Bruce remained three years, during which time Anne gave birth to Ruth, with Fraser following a few years later after the family had moved to Caithness, where Bruce in the meantime had accepted a call to Thurso: West. During his ministry there Bruce acted as chaplain at the Dounreay Nuclear Power Plant, and he was also a local officiating chaplain assisting the services padre at the US Naval base outside Thurso. On at least one occasion he officiated at the launch of a vessel at Scrabster, and another time he nearly witnessed his car being blown up as a security risk, since it was regarded as suspiciously parked!

He moved to Scone: Old in 1983, coinciding with the Boys' Brigade Centenary International Camp at Scone Palace in August of that year, and with Charlie Mitchell and Stan McMillan, among others, he played a prominent part in the local BB Company, the 15th Perth. For Bruce, annual camp was a highlight, and he contributed regularly to the King George VI youth leadership training courses at Carronvale House in Larbert.

It was through Bruce that I got involved in prison chaplaincy. He arranged for me to visit HM Prison Perth, C Hall in particular, which had been the scene only a few years before of violent rooftop protests. With his encouragement I joined the ecumenical chaplaincy team there, each of us part-time, but doing what we could to make a difference and to offer a little

bit of light and hope. Those were challenging days, but fulfilling too alongside - we too apart - Colin Williamson, Duncan Bruce, Deirdre Yellowlees and Father John, the RC chaplain from the monastery at St Mary's, Kinnoull. I 'did' five years in total - my choice of words is quite deliberate, I would tell Bruce - but he served for far longer, a mark of his compassion for the misguided, the misled, the vulnerable, the foolish, and he was well respected, by staff and prisoner alike, in his role as chaplain and for his humanity. 'When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?.....' I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these....you did it for me!

Bruce was an able minister of the Kirk. He rarely got flustered. Advice given to me back in the day, when I was a young and inexperienced minister, and which stood me in good stead for the whole of my professional life, amounted to this: 'In the ministry don't ever be surprised by anything that happens; and if you are, don't ever show it.' I don't know if Bruce ever received the same advice, but he certainly embodied it.

He was always professional and accomplished in the performance of his duties, and well prepared too, and Fraser remembers that the boot of his car was full of stuff he might need in a hurry. On one occasion, Murrayshall at short notice contacted him and asked for his help. For some reason they didn't have a minister for a wedding due to place shortly. Bruce announced: 'I can be there in five minutes.' I'm told that Bruce officiated at lots of weddings - and never turned down the invitation to the meal afterwards! Among the messages of support received by his family in these past few days have been many from couples whom Bruce had married and helped make their wedding day special. He conducted the marriage services for Ruth and Gavin, and for Fraser and Fiona, and for many of their friends too. In retirement, settling in Errol, he was in demand as a locum during ministerial vacancies, and served with distinction in a variety of places.

Occasionally Bruce and I would play golf together. Neither of us was much good, but our enthusiasm was undimmed as we thrashed our way round King James VI, the island course. He was brought up supporting Hibs, dallied for a time with Dundee United, and finally settled upon St Johnstone in good time for the Scottish Cup success in 2014, reward for many a 'dreich' day spent by he and Fraser following the team. He took an interest in the Scotland rugby team, though mostly as an armchair fan, and on a Sunday evening in the Manse he relaxed by watching American football live and forming an attachment to the New England Patriots.

He was a connoisseur of a fine malt, but for more on that you'll have to consult with Mike Moir. And holidays he regarded as special: To Dornoch, for example, where he would happily trudge over hills and through forests;

or to a caravan park in France or Spain, after a gruelling journey to get there; or on 'a trip of a lifetime' to Luke Reader's wedding in Los Angeles, or in more recent times to relax on a cruise with Anne.

In due course, Bruce bore his final illness, with its unpromising prognosis, with courage and with dignity. Latterly he was admitted to the Craigieknowes Care Home and died there peacefully, aged 76, on the morning of Friday 27th November with Anne in attendance.

This was the eulogy given by Rev Alex Millar at the service held at Perth Crematorium, which was due to be streamed, but due to a technical malfunction, the service was not available to view or hear until the last few minutes of the Service. Thanks to Alex Millar for permission to print this tribute.

Pastoral Care

Here we are, still challenged by the rules and regulations - and fears - of these difficult days. It is frustrating for everyone to be so restricted but with care and the vaccine, we can look forward to longer and brighter spring days with gardens and countryside coming to life. At the weekend at Scone Palace, I saw little black lambs skipping and leaping, all four feet in the air at once. What a treat.

The church may well be open for small services by Easter and hopefully, we will also be able to ease out of personal hibernation. Face to face conversations, maybe with a cuppa, rather than communication over the wire or on the web will take a bit of getting used to but will be very welcome. The powers that be watch and direct as the situation develops and we can only wait for advice on how we may open up our social activities.

As the Pastoral committee, it is often difficult to keep up with parish news. Please continue to let us, or your elder, know of any circumstances or events from big birthdays or family occasions to bereavement and daily struggles to which we can offer some contact and support.

With good wishes from us all
Margaret McMillan

Thank You

I wish to say a big thank you to the church members for all the messages and support I have received from friends in the congregation on Alec's sad death in September. I cannot express my appreciation enough of all the lovely thoughts and prayers and flowers my family and I have received at this difficult time. They mean so much to us all. Thank you.

Alice Collie



Christian Aid's 75th Anniversary, so we wanted to say a very big thank you for all your support over the years.

Everyone is equal in the sight of God, and for over 7 decades, this truth has inspired people like you to stand in solidarity with our most marginalised global neighbours. Now, as we look ahead, we hope you will choose to celebrate with us. Please visit caid.org.uk/75anniversary to find out more.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the Christmas Appeal. £118 was collected and sent to Christian Aid. Communities in Ethiopia are facing many changes: conflict, climate change, locusts and coronavirus. We will continue to follow the work of our partners there. Your generosity means we can support farmers like Bobo to tackle climate change.

Easter approaches - Traidcraft has a good selection of Easter cards and eggs. These, plus other fairly traded goods, can be found at Traidcraftshop.co.uk. Have a look. You may be surprised at the range of goods available from groceries, gifts, cards for all occasions and clothes including scarves, socks and bags. A good way to support Christian Aid and its partners.

Christian Aid Week 10 to 16 May As you will remember, Christian Aid week had to be cancelled in 2020 due to lockdown. This has created a very big short fall in Christian Aid funds. This year, we hope to collect with delivery only envelopes. This would mean envelopes would be put through doors with an address attached for drop off point. No ringing of door bells or face to face contact. If you feel that you can help with this vital work, please contact Peggy Lamond on 01738 553582.

Quiztian Aid Quiztian Aid will be on Saturday 8 May at 7pm. This fun filled online quiz is suitable for all the family. Hosted by some special friends, you can sign up for more information at caweek.org/quiztianaid.

Peggy Lamond for Scone and St. Martins Christian Aid committee
(01738 553582)

Prayer Chain

A Telephone Prayer Chain is available to support in prayer any person/s in the church or community, or their family or friends whether living here or elsewhere, particularly if urgent prayer is required for matters such as illness, operations or other problems. Phone requests to Lilian at 553651 or, if she is unavailable, Ina at 551607 or Helen at 01821640560.



Company Section

With the church hall being opened up to us the Company Section managed to get in 4 weeks of parades on Thursday evenings in November and December. With no contact games allowed and social distancing required it was not "BBs we know it"! Most weeks Kevin took the drill part of the evening and put the boys through their paces with figure marching (easier for distancing). Quite remarkable how the boys performed, digging the routines out of the recesses of their minds from Junior Section days. The boys coped very well and required very few reminders of the required protocols. There were no gripes about having to sanitise chairs and tables at the end of the evening.

It had been hoped that we would get back into full swing after Christmas but we had to suspend face to face meetings in the New Year due to the second lockdown and we are not likely to get back to face to face meetings until May. That will be virtually a whole year lost. Three families took part in the BB National Online Christmas Quiz and out of 40 entries the Stevensons came 5th; the O'Loughlins 12th.; and the Floods 19th. Well done to all of them. 11 boys from the Company Section and 3 boys from the Junior Section took part in the early evening Christmas Eve service in Scone Old Church. Six of the boys (Ben; Aiden; David; Harris; Lennon; and Lewis Flood) had written prayers for the service and they were all eloquently delivered. Well done to all of them. The minister thought they were excellent. Lewis O'Loughlin read (very well) a version of the Christmas story which had been prepared by the Minister. We are very fortunate to have so many great boys in the Company.

We have been having virtual online sessions during the lockdown. Most of these have been quizzes of various shapes, forms and sizes. Mainly from materials prepared by BB HQ but we also had an evening prepared and presented by Craig Stevenson, a father and a former officer in the Company.

Last year we held a very successful Burns' Supper; this year we had a virtual Burns' Night, although some of us had a supper. We were joined by the Minister; Fraser Boyd Captain of 25th. Stirling (Dunblane) Company (known to many of the boys as a teacher at RDM); and Martin Knight an officer in the 16th. Perth Company. We started with Fraser Flood telling us a few things about Burns. An imaginary haggis was then piped in courtesy of Spotify and between them Lewis Flood and David Rose addressed the haggis. In a very novel approach Ben Wylie then recited the mouse's reply to the poem To a Mouse having written this reply himself. No Burns' event is complete without Tam and Harris O' Loughlin recited a large part of Tam o'

Shanter. Matthew Stevenson gave us a rendition of My Heart's in the Highlands and we finished with Lewis O'Loughlin regaling us with one of Burns' best loved love poems, Red Red Rose. Hopefully next year we can have a proper Burns' evening.

Our first meeting in February started with a competition to identify chocolates/bars of chocolate from part of their wrapper. There was one for each letter of the alphabet. Most scored 20+..I wonder if there is a message there? Our second meeting (which had 8 Junior Section boys taking part as well...mainly boys from his class at school) took the form of a presentation by Fraser Boyd and three of his lads about the Dunblane Company's trip to Malawi to help in the building of new classrooms at a school in the south of the country. It was both interesting and illuminating. They have around 130 kids to a class. They get one meal a day. They wear the same clothes day in day out and much of the clothing comes from clothes banks in the UK and elsewhere. At the end of the presentation there was a q & a session with many very pertinent questions being asked.

Unfortunately the National Chess championship was not completed last session denying our chess team the opportunity to represent Scotland in the final. The championship for this session was cancelled and so we do not have the chance of going 3 in a row as Scottish champions. We expect to have the same team next session so fingers crossed. The boys were invited to write a prayer for St. Valentine's day and Matthew's prayer was published at the head of the church website. I make no apologies for the length of this article. It is important to let folks know that the BB is working on in the face of adversity and hopefully folks will be encouraged in these difficult times by what they read.

Iain Lamond



Sunday School

You will need a drawing of a bare tree and green, yellow and orange paint. Spring is coming and the tree will come to life with fingerprints of green leaves and orange and yellow blossom. Hope you and your families are all well and look forward to seeing you soon.

Sylvia, Helen and Rae



GUILD

Guild ENews/Facebook

Guild ENews continues to be published weekly and can be found on the Church of Scotland website or if you subscribe (free) a copy will be emailed directly to you.

Recently on Facebook, members of the leadership team, past and present, have been posting their favourite bible verses. Some members, from various parts of the country, have also been asked to name their favourite hymns. Some of the contributions are very familiar while some are less well-known but all are interesting especially when the contributor gives the background to their choice.

I am very aware that many of you do not have access to electronic/digital communications but unfortunately, at the moment, this is the best way to impart information since we aren't able to gather either in public places or in our homes. Here's hoping in the near future for some news allowing us to meet albeit in limited numbers.

Perth and Kinross Guilds Together

On the subject of electronic communication, the Annual Business Meeting of Perth and Kinross Guilds Together will have taken place by the time you get this newsletter. Another virtual meeting of P&KGT will take place at 10.30 am on Wednesday 5 May when Karen Gillon, the Guild Associate Secretary, will be the speaker. Having heard Karen speak on a few occasions it will be well worth joining in this meeting if you are able - you can join by telephone if you do not have the internet. The links to this meeting will be sent out when received.

One of the topics for the May meeting is the project partners associated with the strategy for 2021-2024, Look Forward in Faith. These project partners are due to be announced on 15 April.

P&KGT is promoting a fundraising project – Guilds Together Lockdown Recipe Book. Recipes should be sent to Janice Taylor or Renee Riddell by 26 March.

Fundraising

Over many years Scone and St Martins Guild has been very well supported by the wider congregation, and indeed community, when we have organised events to raise funds for various projects. This session we had hoped to raise funds for the projects in association with The Sailors' Society (a pastor in

every port) and Malawi Fruits (an organisation helping young farmers to irrigate their crops in order to increase productivity and hence income). Also, the Guild branch usually makes a contribution to Scone and St Martins Parish Church. If you would like to make a donation to these projects, you are welcome to send a cheque (payable to Scone and St Martins Guild) to the Treasurer Margaret Nicol, 8 David Douglas Avenue, Scone PH2 6QQ.

Christine Munro

Every December we look forward to the annual Christmas Dinner but of course this did not take place in 2020 because of Covid restrictions. However we received a delightful surprise when a bag of Christmas treats was delivered to our homes. May I, on behalf of all the recipients, thank the committee who made this possible. They gave up their time to fill bags, bake, make tablet and deliver the gifts to our various homes. Special thanks are due to our convener, Christine Munro whose idea it was, and was responsible for all the organisation it entailed.

A dark cloud has been hovering over us these past few months but Christmas reminds us of the light coming into the world. In his gospel John writes "the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never out it put" (John 1 verse 5). I hope and pray that it won't be long until we can all meet again. Until then may God bless us all and keep us safe.

Margaret Buchan, Secretary

Depute Session Clerk Report

I think we are all looking forward now to the prospect of the churches re-opening and it will be a great boost to everyone when that happens. As you will know, the Kirk Session has not been able to meet as a group for a year now, but we have maintained the flow of necessary information by email and letter for items which need to be done, regardless of the lack of meeting together. We have not done any Zoom meetings for the Kirk Session for the very simple reason that there are some elders who are not online and, therefore, would be omitted from any such meetings. There is very little to report in terms of business other the accounts for 2020 have now been audited, the congregational roll is about to be attested and we are making progress with a view to utilising a youth worker in the work of the church. Hopefully, once the pandemic is finally over, we can get back to some sort of normality and meet together.

Keep well and follow the guidelines!!

Mike Moir, Depute Session Clerk

Scone & St Martins Parish Church Finances
Receipts and Payments for year ended 31 December 2020
(including Guild and Clubs)

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	2020	2019
RECEIPTS	£	£
Offerings	69,969	72,879
Tax recovered on Gift Aid	14,649	15,211
Donations	3,148	4,785
Hall lets	7,746	23,943
Contributions from congregational organisations	1,650	2,300
Fund raising activities (gross receipts)	3,991	11,317
Grants received	8,552	1,430
Release of revenue from consolidated fabric fund	4,414	3,700
Other income (net)	<u>4,036</u>	<u>7,450</u>
Total receipts	<u>118,155</u>	<u>143,015</u>
PAYMENTS		
Ministries and Mission allocation	68,600	64,517
Staffing costs	19,647	19,375
Heating and Lighting	9,701	9,432
Insurance	6,495	7,838
Fabric and equipment repairs and replacements	4,603	18,514
Printing and Stationery	4,494	5,295
Guilds and Clubs	3,045	4,228
Other	<u>9,516</u>	<u>13,555</u>
Total payments	<u>126,101</u>	<u>142,754</u>
<u>(Deficit) for year</u>	<u>(7,946)</u>	<u>261</u>

Notes:

- Offerings are down by only 4% on last year, thanks to a well supported Christmas Appeal, which raised over £4,000, and an anonymous gift aided sum of £3,000. Many members of the congregation kept up their regular giving during the year.
- The largest shortfall in receipts was in Hall Lets, down by nearly 70%.
- Fundraising from the Minister's sponsored slim raised £1,860, and sales of Lockdown Recipes £1,137.
- Grants received included £5,562 from the government's Job Retention Scheme.

- Other income included the receipts of the Guild and Clubs, investment dividends and interest on deposits.
- The comparative amounts for 2019 exclude receipts and payments related to the refurbishment of the manse and the Burnside toilets, which were self-balancing.

The bank and deposit balances carried forward at 31st December 2020, totalled £162,759.

2021 will be another difficult year, but hopefully there will be much easing of the current restrictions. We are budgeting for a deficit of £6,000.

Robin Walker, Treasurer



Moldova

“You search the scriptures because you know they give you eternal life – but the scriptures point to me” John 5 v 39.

The Bible Society in Moldova is working to make the Bible available to as many people as they can. This huge distribution project provides the scriptures in many different formats and languages. One particular group to receive them is the Russian speaking children – a specially translated bible in Russian has been produced for this group. It is hoped that this bible will have a far-reaching impact on the families.

Please pray for the Moldovan Bible Society in their mission to make the Bible accessible to people in their heart language and in many formats this year to reach as many people as possible.

Jim Currie

Social and Fund Raising

Unfortunately no decision as yet has been taken by the Government re any gatherings for Coffee Mornings or any other Fund Raising events which we would have been running this year. The Committee are disappointed re this as these events are a huge part of our Church where we meet and make lots of friends.

Please be patient with us until these restrictions are lifted. Hopefully if the situation changes soon we can get back to a new normality and fund raise for the Churches in our Parish. Any events will be published in Church News.

Anne Lamond, Social and Fund Raising Convener (01738 552262)



RECIPE for EASTER - Hot Cross Buns - Makes 12 buns

Hot Cross Buns are traditionally served on Good Friday and during the Lenten season, but they are great any time of year too!

Ingredients:

1/2 cup warm water; 1 cup warm milk; 1/2 cup sugar; 1/4 cup softened butter or margarine; 1 teaspoon vanilla; 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg, 6 1/2 to 7 cups self-raising flour; 4 eggs

1/2 cup dried currants; 1/2 cup raisins

2 tablespoons water, 1 egg yolk; 1 cup confectioner's sugar

4 teaspoons milk or cream; Pinch of salt; 1/4 teaspoon vanilla

Method:

Have the water and milk at 110-115 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl add the warm milk, sugar, butter, vanilla, salt, nutmeg, and 3 cups of the flour. Beat until smooth. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating the mixture well after each addition. Stir in the dried fruit and enough flour to make a soft dough. Turn out onto a floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 6 to 8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl and turn over to grease the top. Cover with a damp towel or plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size (about 1 hour). Punch the dough down and shape into 30 balls. Place on lightly greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until doubled (about 30 minutes). Using a sharp knife, cut a cross (or X) on the top of each roll. Beat the water and egg yolk together and brush over rolls. (You will probably have more than you need, discard the unused egg glaze.) Bake at 375 F. for 12 to 15 minutes. Meanwhile, make icing by combining the last four ingredients. Stir until smooth, adjusting sugar and milk to make a mixture that flows easily. When rolls are baked, cool on wire racks. Drizzle icing over the top of each roll following the lines of the cut cross.

Maudeen

Prayer Notes

King on a Donkey

“Then they led the donkey to Jesus. They put some of their clothes on its back and helped Jesus get on. And as he rode alone, the people spread clothes on the road and in front of him” Luke 19, v 35-36.

Jesus came to Jerusalem. The people accepted him with enthusiasm as he rode on, but they missed the significance of his coming. He came as a king, but he came as a king on a donkey.

Riding the donkey, he rejected both the reality and the trappings of power. The king on a donkey refused to conform to the expected image, the accepted values of society of his time. He came humbly, choosing the way of peace, relying on the quiet persistence of love, rather than the sterile forces of compulsion.

That’s where it turned all sour. It was one thing to challenge the authorities. That’s always popular with the people. We enjoy seeing the rich and famous embarrassed. It’s comforting to see that they don’t always get their own way. We applaud as we read of him turning over the tables of the moneychangers but his lifestyles challenges everyone. Then and now. You and me. Challenges us to change. Not just the man or woman across the street.

If Jesus entered the city of Perth today, I’ve a feeling he’d appear not in a powerful car but on tatty bike with his trousers tucked into the tops of his socks and the first call he would make wouldn’t be to a church or cathedral but at the Foodbank to see who needed help. Then I wonder who’d cry “Hosana” and who “Crucify”?

And now we pray:

Take our burden Lord and let us rest on you, for you understand what it is to carry burdens that are too great for hearts to bear.

And you Lord, who bore the greatest burden of all, know what it is to feel your body break with weariness.

Let us be folded within your love so that we may become strong again and ready to walk on, with you at our side.

Hear our prayer, our gracious Lord and, as we look forward to winter lessening its grip and spring entering in its wisdom, let us never forget (in the words of Captain Tom) that tomorrow will be a good day.

Amen

Jim Currie

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