

St Ninian's Church  
Corstorphine

Quarterly



Autumn 2020



Edinburgh, Corstorphine St Ninian's Parish Church (Church of Scotland)  
144 St John's Road, EH12 8AY  
Scottish Charity Number SC016557

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**website:** [www.corstorphinestninians.org.uk](http://www.corstorphinestninians.org.uk)

**Sunday Services are available on YouTube at**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW-OUJ0F3JL09vUD7KYMffA>

**Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, all the usual activities listed below are suspended until further notice.**

Our SUNDAY SERVICES are held at 10.30am and are followed by tea and coffee in the Martin Shields Hall.

COMMUNION SERVICES are on the first Sunday in March, June, September and December at 10.30am and 3.00pm. Our less able members are particularly welcome at the 3.00pm Communion Services, following each of which there is an afternoon tea.

SUNDAY SCHOOL is held every Sunday during term time and all classes meet at 10.25am.  
Crèche: (0-3yrs); Beginners: (3-5yrs); Primary: (5-8yrs); Juniors: (8-12yrs); Alpha: (12+yrs).

STEP INSIDE is a youth club for our 10 to 14-year olds and is held on the last Saturday of the month (except July and December) with games, music and craft sessions.

We offer a CHURCH TRANSPORT SERVICE for our less able members. Volunteer drivers pick up passengers before the service and return them home afterwards with the option of staying for tea/coffee. Reserved car parking is available at the rear of the Church.

The CHOIR leads the Praise under the direction of our Organist, Anne Kirkpatrick, and choir practices are on Thursday evenings from September to May.

The GUILD meets on a Tuesday afternoon between September and March, with interesting speakers, teas, and outings.

Men are invited to CONVERSAZIONE on the last Wednesday of the month between October and April, for fellowship and chat over a light lunch.

Many other Church and non-Church organisations use our premises throughout the week; contact details can be found on the back page

*Dear friends,*

*“When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; and there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.” He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I do choose. Be made clean!” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. (Matthew 8: 1 - 3)*

The last time a pandemic struck was in the 1980s and 90s, HIV/AIDS. Then, one of the most helpful biblical stories was that of Jesus touching and healing a leper. People who had AIDS were marginalised and touching them didn't transfer the HIV virus. This story was a helpful challenge to a conservative church to be caring towards those who were most affected by that pandemic.

Today, these verses don't seem so helpful. Leprosy was and is a disease that could be spread through physical contact, just like Covid-19. If we were to follow Jesus' example by touching those infected, we would do more harm than good. But, Jesus' interaction with lepers is helpful. After all, there are many people in our society who have put themselves within touching distance of those who are infected - health workers and other key workers for example, albeit in personal protective equipment. These words remind us that even in a pandemic it is important to create 'touching places' where the sick can be treated, the hungry fed, and the homeless housed.

As we exit lockdown everyone will have had their own experiences during the past months, and they will all be different. Some won't have had any direct experience of the virus, while others will know someone who has succumbed to it. For some, the months of isolation will have been lonely, others will have been catching up on their favourite TV series or re-reading much loved books, there are those who will have lost their jobs and will now be facing an uncertain future.

By the time you read this I hope that it won't be long before we will be worshipping in the church building again in some way. Like every part of our lives post-lockdown that will mean being physically distant from one another, not touching one another, wearing face coverings (and not touching our faces), not singing, and washing our hands. There may be limits to the number of people who can attend services. Yet, even as we take these precautions, we will still need to create 'touching places'. In each other's company we will listen to each other's experiences with respect and with a desire to include them in the overall story that we tell ourselves about the pandemic.

When we do this - when we listen to, respect, and include the stories and experiences of others, we create an inclusive kingdom; God's kingdom. John Bell's hymn, A Touching Place, articulates this well:

*Christ's is the world in which we move;  
Christ's are the folk we're summoned to love;  
Christ's is the voice which calls us to care,  
and Christ is the one who meets us here.*

*To the lost Christ shows his face,  
to the unloved he gives his embrace,  
to those who cry in pain or disgrace  
Christ makes, with his friends, a touching place.*

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Best wishes,

*James*

## Communion Services

Communion Services are due to be held in the Church on **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September and 6<sup>th</sup> December** at 10.30am and 3.00pm.

*“This do in remembrance of Me”*

We practise inclusiveness by providing gluten-free bread And alcohol-free wine for everyone at Communion services.

However, at the time of going to print, there has been no decision about re-opening the Sanctuary for worship. We may well have another “virtual” Communion courtesy of YouTube.

## **Kirk Session**

Wednesdays: 9<sup>th</sup> September; 11<sup>th</sup> November

## **Deacons’ Court**

Wednesdays: 23<sup>rd</sup> September; 25<sup>th</sup> November

These are the dates planned for the remainder of 2020. The arrangements will depend on whatever social distancing rules are in effect at the time.

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## **Congregational Register**

### **Funerals:**

19 May 2020*	Mrs Elizabeth Lees, 2/7 Manse Road
29 May 2020*	Mrs Rona Stevenson, 37 Hillview Crescent
27 July 2020*	Mrs May Johnston, 4 Damselby Road

\* Denotes member

## RONA STEVENSON

It was with great sadness that the congregation heard of the death in May of Rona Stevenson.

Rona played a big part in our church community and family and was known and loved throughout Corstorphine and beyond. The day of her funeral was a testament to that, as the people of Corstorphine turned out to pay tribute to her when her hearse passed through the streets. Wherever people encountered Rona they met someone who was friendly, interested in their lives, and keen to encourage their involvement in the life of whichever community they had encountered her. Once you knew Rona, if hard times befell you, she would always take the time to care and help.



At St Ninian's Rona was part of, and organised, so many things. Many will remember her for the help she gave those who find attending worship difficult. For them she organised lifts and ensured that at the afternoon communion no one was left out, and that everyone enjoyed a very special tea after the service. She was connected to so many people such that, if I were worried about someone or noticed that someone was not at church, Rona would be the first person I would seek out for information.

Rona didn't just bring a spirituality of care and compassion to the congregation, she also brought tremendous organising skills and a forensic attention to detail; when Rona was responsible for something nothing would be overlooked, no piece of necessary information was forgotten about. Her skills were such that in the early months of this year as I was reflecting on how St Ninian's could better coordinate its pastoral care, Rona was one of the people I turned to.

Organisational skills and a caring character are good things for any person to possess. But Rona had much more than just those. She was a lovely person who always had time to stop and chat, who enjoyed a very full life of physical activity, travel and enthusiastic energy. She was, of course, a loving wife to Alec whom we are all keeping in our prayers and who was involved with much of what Rona was involved with, including as editor of this publication, the Quarterly.

Rona brought her usual diligent organisational skills to producing the Quarterly, and because she knew so many people and was connected to so many lives she was able to encourage articles from many in the congregation and many who crossed the congregation's path. For the work she did on the Quarterly alone, St Ninian's has much to be grateful for. We are grateful that Alec will continue to edit it, albeit it will be a bigger job. As Rona said when she wrote a report in the Spring about its production, "In general, I input all the material, we both proof-read it, and Alec tinkers with the final layout."

At St Ninian's Rona was a member, an elder, and a greatly loved friend. She will be much missed by us all.

*James Aitken*  
*July 2020*

## Thanks to our Minister and his Team

As the New Year arrived, none of us could have conceivably anticipated how surreal the year 2020 was to become! There is no doubt that many varied emotions have resulted from Covid and the lock down on 23 March. As they say, life has changed and will never be the same again. The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, formerly Principal Clerk and a former Moderator of the General Assembly, has recently made reference to the fact that, perhaps, bricks and mortar are of less importance to the Kirk than we thought, and that social media provide a great opportunity for the Kirk to extend its reach within our Scottish community. We will not return to any degree of normality for a while, if ever.

We have been fortunate and blessed that our Minister Rev James Aitken has embraced the possibilities of computer technology enthusiastically since lockdown and so we have been able to participate in weekly worship, although not in a way to which we are accustomed. His Services have been always uplifting during this very difficult time and have involved both preparation and embracing the new technology to enable the Sunday Services to be broadcast on social media. His preaching has been very insightful during this period and always very apposite to the situation we all find ourselves in. His entire Services have been carefully and thoughtfully prepared and for all that, we are grateful. It reinforces the view that we made an excellent choice in calling James as our Minister. James has not had a break since January and as I write this he is enjoying a very well-deserved holiday. Clearly we are still far away from normal worship, but James has indicated the intention that our Services will continue to be streamed on the internet even after that happens.

This is an opportunity for me to say on behalf of everyone an immense thank you to James. It is also an opportunity to say thank you to others for their input each Sunday - Anne Kirkpatrick our organist, Margaret Hunter for the flowers for the Communion Table, and the various readers. Thank you also to Alister McGlashan for his continued superintendence of the buildings, and to Gaynor Beams for all her work as Church Secretary.

*Andrew T.F. Gibb, Session Clerk*

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## Hymns during Lockdown - the Trials and Tribulations!

During this time, our services have been on YouTube. Once I have the list of hymns I record them and an introit one at a time on my mobile phone then use "WhatsApp" to send them individually to the minister - one for each hymn followed by one for the number. Quite easy! Yes - except when (a) lapse (s) in concentration mean(s) I forget which verse I'm on --- is it 4 or 5 or 6? I've found that the longer the hymn the greater the chance of error, which means redoing it (possibly more than once) --- too short 😞, too long 😊. Singing along is not an option --- too audible 🎵. Better listen to them all again --- just to check 🎵. Then it's over to the minister to work his magic. Happy days. 🎹 🎹

*Anne Kirkpatrick*

## . . . more 'Thoughts on Lockdown'

What can anyone say about the recent lockdown, now slowly being relaxed, which was not experienced by everyone? Maybe a few brief comments about everyday things? We are among those fortunate enough to have a garden as well as a comfortable home. What it must have been like for a young family in the top floor of a tower block is beyond our imagination. Our hearts went out to them, as well as to single folk living in isolation. Katherine and I realise how fortunate we have been to have each other for company. Up to the time of writing this in late July we are thankful not to have caught the virus, but we take nothing for granted. It's not over yet, by a long way.

The garden has been an absolute godsend when there were so many empty days to fill during the gorgeous warmth and sunshine of this unforgettable Spring. The miracle of Spring evolving normally, despite the pandemic, was so reassuring. Our garden has never looked so beautiful or been more appreciated.



*The beautiful walled garden at Cambo, Fife*

For more than fifty years here, we have always been aware of the background noise from Corstorphine's busy motor traffic. The contrast at the height of the lockdown in the middle of what should have been ordinary busy working days was almost incredible: in our garden an eerie silence was broken only by occasional birdsong. We might as well have been in wildest Sutherland, far from any human habitation. An unexpected bonus from the almost complete shutdown of motor traffic was the wonderfully unpolluted skies and cloudscapes. At night, the craters on the moon became startlingly obvious.

With no visitors, and no prospect of visiting anyone else, how (apart from weeding, and weeding, and weeding) did we put in our day? To begin with, the days seemed to fill themselves. With no appointments to keep and no-one to meet, it was relaxing before it became wearisome. Now we had ample time to do all the things we had always meant to do but never seemed to have time for: to read all the 12 Shakespeare plays I had had at school (done), and do all the wee household jobs that somehow we had never got round to, like clearing out drawers and cupboards, and dusting and cleaning in a few remote corners (all done). But what to do after that? The answer can only be found in Parkinson's Law: "Work expands to fill the time available". We have found this to be absolutely true!

I did start to keep a daily diary from mid-March till the present. Apart from recording the bewildering speed with which the lockdown was imposed in March, I would not call it recommended reading for anybody as it is the most boring record imaginable. With morning coffee and afternoon tea breaks plus a snooze in the afternoon, and a 20-minute walk (saunter) round the houses on most days, there was very little that was different from day to day. Yet it has been just startling how the time has gone in. Our 12-year-old grandson said that for him each day was a drag, but at the same time it was amazing to him how quickly the weeks went by. We can only agree.

One feature we must record, however, is our incalculable debt to our Minister who from the very outset has provided the congregation with services every Sunday morning on YouTube and Facebook. These have been our one firm anchor to look forward to from week to week, uplifting our spirits as well as our faith. They have helped enormously to bind the congregation together during this unprecedented and extraordinary time. Thank you, James.

*Andrew Broom*

# “Letter from America France”

Those of a certain age among the readers will remember well the radio broadcasts of Alistair Cooke's "Letter from America". Had he been alive today we would, no doubt, have heard his reflections on the Covid-19 situation. We don't have a correspondent in the USA, but here are some reflections on the situation in France from someone well-known to us in St Ninian's.

Quillan, France, 11 July

This comes with very best wishes to friends at St Ninian's from SW France where Lara and I arrived at our home in Quillan (an hour west of Perpignan and near the Pyrenees) at the beginning of March.



Within a fortnight we entered "confinement" and regulations were in force which permitted only journeys to work, health appointments or essential shopping (food) and we had to furnish a piece of paper signed and dated with our reasons for leaving home. We live on the edge of a small town and fortunately have a large garden and so I busied myself there during Lara's visits to the supermarket and tuned every evening to the French TV news which, like the UK media, was saturated with Coronavirus coverage.

President Macron addressed us all once or twice via TV as "compatriotes", but the bulk of public pronouncements were given by the Prime Minister Édouard Philippe who impressed me greatly by his warmth and modesty. Experts testified regularly and the whole emphasis was on moving to "déconfinement" -the light at the end of the tunnel as the incidence of Covid-19 fell. There seemed to be little flaunting of the rules (unless the French media were not reporting it), perhaps because French citizens are used to heavy bureaucracy in

their daily lives. There was also a pragmatic approach when 'hot-spots' developed around Paris and the North East. These were designated red while the rest of us were green and enjoyed greater relaxations - first the ability to travel in a 100km radius, and then countrywide. Recently borders were opened, and we personally crossed the border into Spain on July 5<sup>th</sup> with no problem. Masks are still being worn in many places and I have to wipe my library books when I return them, but the 1 metre distancing was managed well throughout and, as we approach July 14<sup>th</sup> (Hogmanay à la français), it looks as if it will take place almost normally. (One wonders if it had not, whether the conformity would have lasted!)

As July began France went to the polls for local and parliamentary elections and Prime Minister Philippe's soaring popularity was rewarded by Macron (whose popularity continues to fall) by replacing him as PM. (I wonder if the two facts are not connected!). Philippe accepted it graciously, perhaps even relieved after his exhausting stint.



So, now we face an almost normal summer in France, but we cannot come back to Scotland yet without (at the time of writing) being put in quarantine.

Rev Stewart Lamont

# Covid-19 Snake Corstorphine

In mid-May, a Covid-19 Snake was started here in Corstorphine by a member of the Corstorphine Friendly Village Facebook Group. A poster was attached to the bench outside church asking people to add their decorated stones.



The first stone.

Families arrived every day to place their painted stones on the pavement outside our church. The snake now reaches from Neilson's to the Vet's door in St Ninian's Road. Rumour has it that the stones will be removed sometime in the future and will be preserved in a museum - part of the pandemic story.

*Gaynor Beames*



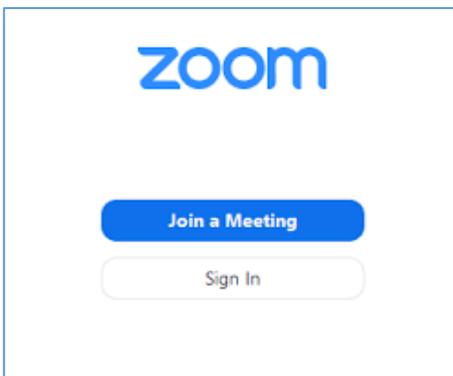
# Stated Annual Meeting 2020

So, why do we have this meeting each year?  
The answer lies in the laws of the Church of Scotland:

**“CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS (RECEIPT OF ACCOUNTS) ACT (ACT III 1994)  
(AS AMENDED BY ACTS VIII 2008 AND VI 2016)**

*Whereas the General Assembly have laid down a requirement, in terms of their Regulations anent Congregational Finance, that, after the Trustees’ Annual Report and Accounts of the Congregation have been approved by the Trustees of the Congregation they shall be submitted by the Trustees to the Congregation at the **stated annual meeting**, or equivalent Congregational meeting in the case of Congregations not having the Model Deed of Constitution; . . .”*

You may not have been able to take part in the Zoom meeting on Sunday 28 June, so here is a summary from the Clerk to the Deacons’ Court.



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About a month ago, there was a 5-minute video posted on YouTube. It featured the comedian Michael McIntyre visiting a fortune teller, ostensibly in December 2019. In it, the fortune teller, who is also played by McIntyre, looks into his crystal ball and says he sees the comedian at the till in a shop wearing a mask and gloves. Michael McIntyre quips “Am I a robber?” but the fortune teller carries on saying “You will spend many months inside, and you will only be allowed out for one exercise per day”. The colour drains from McIntyre’s face: “Are you telling me I’m going to prison?” The fortune teller replies, “Sort of .....

I hope for you all that Lockdown was not quite as bad as that. For a good part of it, the weather was mercifully kind which helped raise morale a bit and, needless to say, St Ninian’s Stated Annual Meeting was dominated by the effect of Covid-19. The meeting started with the Treasurer, Mrs.

Janice Reynolds, presenting the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019. The surplus on the General Account was £15,279. There was an increase in income mainly from hall lets, gift aid tax recovery, and the Stewardship Campaign. On the other side of the coin, there was an increase in expenditure, mainly due to higher contributions to the Ministry and Mission Fund, in staff costs due to the introduction of holiday and sick pay, and printing expenses. In addition, a legacy of £5,000 was received giving a total surplus of £20,279 of which £19,000 was transferred to the Pastoral Assistance Fund and £1,000 to the Flower Fund. The Balance Sheet showed that the Church was in a healthy financial position at 31 December 2019. However, the Treasurer reported that the value of investments, which had risen in 2019 by £23,500, had since lost most of this increase due to the impact of Covid-19. As a result of a member’s question relating to the funding

of future youth work, the Minister confirmed that the Janet McKay bequest to the Sunday school of £45,000 which was made many years ago would be used for this work. Due to the unprecedented circumstances currently prevailing in 2020, the Treasurer advised that she had decided not to present a budget for the current year. The cash balance of £34,217 continues to be sufficient to cover a minimum of two months' costs. During 2019, the congregation raised the magnificent sum of £14,780 for the work of other charities.

The Minister referred to the recent Local Church Review in which 5 areas were identified to take forward i.e. Pastoral work with the young and elderly, Worship, Technology and Communication, Building Access, and Outreach. Last year, Alpha had a very successful weekend away which they had hoped to repeat this year, but it has had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. Despite this, the minister expressed the wish to take the Youth pastoral work forward. In addition, the congregation was advised that the Techcomm Group had taken delivery of new equipment and it is hoped that the new screens, microphones, and other equipment will be installed shortly. The Minister reported that a Church Recovery Group (CRG) had been set up to co-ordinate the task of opening up the Sanctuary and halls. He then invited

questions from the members which were mainly about when and how the Sanctuary and the halls would be opened up and services restarted. The CRG is working on the basis that, until there is a one metre distance policy, it would not be practical or safe to open the Sanctuary for services. Under the one metre social distancing rule, there would, however, have to be the wearing of face coverings, no singing, and the congregation would have to leave contact details for Track and Trace purposes. It is intended that a questionnaire will be sent to members to seek their views. It was explained that, before the Church can open up, we must complete a risk assessment which would require to be signed off by Edinburgh Presbytery. Hall users will also be asked to complete risk assessments for the approval of St Ninian's before they are allowed to return. There being no further business, the Meeting concluded with the Grace.

Lastly, who could have foreseen in December 2019 that the Church's Stated Annual Meeting would be held using a computer programme called Zoom? Oh, that we all had 2020 vision!!

*Anne Bryce*  
*Clerk to the Deacons' Court*

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## **Mission Committee**

The Mission Committee would like to thank those who left donations for Fresh Start in June, these will be passed to Ferry Road Drive as soon as they are able to receive goods. At this difficult time, we have sent a cheque to Fresh Start for £500 to enable them to purchase goods, as they continue to send out emergency food packs, toiletries and cleaning materials. St Ninian's will continue to help the most vulnerable members of our community.

The Mission Committee hope to meet sometime soon, we send our best wishes to you all.

*Margaret Hunter*  
*Convenor*

# Fabric Committee

Due to the Covid-19 regulations only emergency repairs were permitted in Church premises. The roof leak at the Gallery was sealed externally so we arranged for opening up and examination of the marked ceiling internally. Leaks often lead to wet or even dry rot and I was greatly relieved to find that no permanent damage had been caused so the roof timbers were spray treated and the plasterboard lining repaired. This repair will have to be redecorated.

Essential maintenance is also allowed so weekly fire alarm tests have been carried out together with running all the water systems to prevent contamination.

The church boiler flue is operating poorly, and investigations have now begun. Luckily, the boiler is not used during the summer.

Portable appliance testing has also been completed. All moveable electrical appliances were checked to ensure they are safe to use. St Ninian's has more than 85 items which were inspected and labelled. This took 2-3 hours to complete.



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## . . . an accident waiting to happen?

St Ninian's has experienced trespassers on our church roofs over the summer months for several years. This also occurs on other roofs in the Corstorphine area and appears to be a youth culture "Ninja Warrior" game involving running and jumping at high level. Church members and adjoining neighbours have often spotted trespassers but by the time the police arrive the youths are far away. Meetings have been held with the local community police officer to find ways of discouraging this behaviour but there are so many areas where agile kids can gain access.

One Saturday evening in mid-July, three or four youths were spotted running around the roof at 10 o'clock at night but this time one boy fell onto a rooflight above the Crush Hall and crashed through to fall 10 feet to the floor below. He suffered broken bones to his legs and ankles but managed to crawl to the door and open it. Neighbours called for an ambulance which quickly arrived, and he was taken to hospital with complicated injuries.

The police later interviewed the boy in hospital and said he will be out of circulation for some time! They also noted that youngsters text each other frequently so hopefully they will now understand that roof running is an accident waiting to happen.

*Alister McGlashan*

# Celebrations and Congratulations - even in Lockdown!

## A Celebration . . .

Congratulations to Jim and Estelle McKean who, on 14 July, celebrated their Blue Sapphire Wedding Anniversary, 65 very happy years of marriage, with a party in their garden - 5 socially-distanced family groups on a lovely and thankfully dry day!

A wonderful celebration with video messages of congratulations sent from home and abroad. Just a shame not to be able to share cake with their church family after a Sunday service.

The whole family are very proud of their wonderful parents, grandparents, and great grandparents!



*Alison Cunningham*

## . . . and Congratulations:



In January I received a surprise letter, the postmark was in red ink and read “Buckingham Palace”. I didn’t open it for twenty minutes because I was in shock. The letter was from the Royal Almonry Office and read as follows.

Dear Mr. Byers,

### The Royal Maundy Service

On Thursday, 9th April, 2020, The Queen will attend the Royal Maundy Service in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle at 11.00 a.m. during which Her Majesty will distribute Maundy gifts of specially minted coins to the Maundy Recipients. This year the Maundy Recipients have been chosen from across the United Kingdom. The precise number of Recipients is equal to The Queen's age and on this occasion there will be 94 men and 94 women chosen to attend the Royal Maundy Service. I am delighted to inform you that your name has been submitted by the Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland to be one of the Maundy Recipients and I very much hope that you will feel able to accept this honour.

Each Recipient is invited to bring one Companion to accompany them on Maundy Thursday. Your Companion should be able to look after you on the day and ideally would be a spouse/partner, family member or close friend who will sit next to you in the Chapel.

My companion of 54 years soon had train tickets and hotel accommodation booked and we looked forward to meeting Her Majesty in person. I have never had the honour of meeting The Queen before but saw her in 1953 as a ten-year-old boy waving my Union Jack on a very rainy day, the whole class caught a cold, but it wasn’t going to rain in Windsor Castle. And then of course along came lockdown because of Covid19. On 18<sup>th</sup> March a third letter bearing the distinctive postmark arrived, the postman gave me a hearty wave! The letter of course bore the disappointing, but understandable, news that the Maundy Service had been cancelled. However, not all was lost.

I wondered what would happen and then two days before Maundy Thursday a large packet was delivered bearing the Palace post-mark, the postman knocked on the door this time. In the parcel was the Maundy Money. A letter from Her Majesty and a letter from Dr John Inge, Lord High Almoner together with notes about the Maundy Service and its history. (Copies of which are attached to this article). My photograph even appeared in the Daily Telegraph, spotted by my cousins.



I had hoped that by now I could have shown the money and letters to the Sunday School, but this is not to be for a while. By the time Easter comes round in 2021 then perhaps I can show my treasured gift. In the meantime, let us remember what it is all about. Jesus said at the Last Supper "I give you a new commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you are to love one another".

*Jim Byers*



WINDSOR CASTLE

April, 2020

Dear Mr. Byers,

I have great pleasure in sending you the Maundy Gift which, unfortunately, I am unable to distribute to you personally at the Royal Maundy Service in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> April. This ancient Christian ceremony, which reflects Jesus's instruction to his Disciples to love one another, is a call to the service of others, something that has been at the centre of my life. I believe it is a call to service for all of us.

It is one of my most rewarding duties as Sovereign to observe this highly significant ceremony at such an important point in the Christian calendar. I know that you, as a Recipient of this year's Maundy Gift, will be as deeply disappointed as I am that it is not going ahead, while understanding the necessary decision in the current circumstances.

However, this should not mean your invaluable contribution within the community goes unnoticed, and I am sending this Maundy Gift to thank you for your Christian service.

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your families at this difficult time.

With my best wishes to you this Easter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth II", with a horizontal line underneath.

James Byers, Esq.

# The Royal Maundy - notes by the Rt. Reverend John Inge

## The Lord High Almoner

It is a great sadness that this year's Royal Maundy Service has had to be cancelled. These notes are intended to give a little information about its history.

The most important background to the Service, its origin, is to be found in the Bible and the actions of our Lord on the night before he was betrayed recorded in it. In the 13th chapter of St John's Gospel we read of the Last Supper in the Upper Room on the night that Jesus was betrayed: "Jesus knew that His hour was come and He must leave the world and go to the Father . . . During supper . . . Jesus rose from the table, laid aside his garments and taking a towel, tied it round Him. Then He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples' feet and to wipe them with a towel." Later, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said: "*I give to you a new commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you are to love one another.*" With those words, said by the Lord High Almoner from the altar, the Royal Maundy Service begins.

The Latin words meaning "new commandment" are "*mandatum novum*"; and it is from the word "*mandatum*" (commandment/mandate) that we derive the word Maundy. The Royal Maundy Service is an abbreviated form of an ancient ceremony commemorating Jesus's words and actions that was being followed in Northern Italy and Spain at least as early as the 4th century. In England it has taken place since at least the 6th century.

The Maundy ceremony's connection with the royal court in this country goes back a very long way. Until 1985 it was accepted that the first known Royal Maundy Service was in 1213 at Rochester. However, it has since been discovered that King John took part in the Maundy Ceremony in 1210 at Knaresborough Castle in Yorkshire three years earlier. The practice of the Monarch

washing feet lapsed in the 18th century and, around that time, the presenting of the Royal Maundy gifts personally by The King or Queen seems to have disappeared from The Sovereign's list of engagements, and to have been left to my predecessors as Lord High Almoner, and to the officers of the Royal Almonry, to administer. It was only as recently as 1932 that King George V restored the ancient custom, after 200 years, by appearing in person to distribute the Maundy in Westminster Abbey. Since that time the uncrowned King Edward VIII did so once in 1936 and King George VI attended seven times during the course of his 15-year reign. The Queen has performed the ceremony every year except for four occasions when she was unavoidably prevented from doing so because of a long overseas visit or giving birth and, very sadly, this year. It has taken place at every Church of England Cathedral, as well as St. David's and Armagh.

Since the 18th century there have been equal numbers of men and women. This year is Her Majesty's 94th year (she will be 94 on 21<sup>st</sup> April), so 94 men and women will receive the Royal Maundy gifts. Recipients are selected because of the Christian service they've rendered to the church and community – and for which they would not otherwise be honoured.

During the Royal Maundy Service Her Majesty goes into the congregation to give out the Maundy gifts. It is the only occasion when Her Majesty goes to Recipients to present an honour rather than them going to her. Because it is a royal Service, rather than simply a cathedral or diocesan occasion, The Queen is attended by her own choir: the gentlemen and choristers of the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace. They can be seen every year on television at the Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph in London.

# The Guild

Whose we are and Whom we serve  
Strategy: "One Journey Many Roads" 2018-21  
Theme: The Extra Mile

I was hoping, by this time, to be reporting on how many miles our Guild had travelled this summer. Anyone care to make a guess? No prizes for answering zero. We enjoyed no less than three trips during 2019. All blessed with summer sunshine. We could not have asked for anything more. What a difference a year makes. Not to worry, it is a small price to pay for our health and wellbeing and, of course, there is always next year.

During lockdown we have been in contact with members who were in isolation or shielding to offer our help. It has been reassuring that members were both well and managing to keep occupied. I have been wondering, just how many books have been read, jigsaws completed, cakes baked, and drawers tidied out. Once we return to our 'new normal' perhaps we can share what we have been doing, to keep ourselves entertained over the past few months. Who knows what this 'new normal' will be?

In the absence of Guild outings in 2020 I thought it would be nice to reflect on the happy times we enjoyed last year. To prompt your memory, we started with coffee at Silverbirch Garden Centre in Biggar, travelling on to Netherurd, the Scottish Girl Guides' home from home. Following a delightful lunch, we were shown round the house and gardens. Netherurd brought back many lovely memories for members previously involved with the Guides.

Our next trip was to Hopetoun House for a tour of the House and Grounds. This was followed with afternoon tea in the Carriage Rooms. This trip coincided with Isobel McKenzie's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday and as arranged with Hopetoun House, a special birthday cake was presented to Isobel and enjoyed by all.



Our final trip was to Kingsknowe Golf Course where we enjoyed each other's company, not on the Golf Course or the 19<sup>th</sup> hole but in the dining room to enjoy yet another scrumptious afternoon tea. Had we known then, what we know now perhaps we would have had that extra scone or one more cake? Another successful and memorable outing.

Following one of our previous talks on the regeneration of Saughton Park, one of our proposed trips, for this year, was to visit Saughton Park. Marion and I walked to the park recently and enjoyed the beautiful gardens and sampled the takeaway coffee from The Garden Bistro. The menu looks inviting and includes vegetarian and vegan snacks, details of which can be found online together with the opening times. It was a lovely sunny day and despite being very busy everyone managed to socially distance and enjoy themselves.

We live in faith that we will continue our journey together in the not too distant future. The Committee will be meeting soon to discuss how and when we can reconvene. Watch this space!!!

For now, please stay safe and well.

*Irene McCartney (Secretary)*

## NEWS FLASH! ... it's official Norma Gilmore is retiring!

Following the February Guild Coffee morning and celebrating her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, Norma decided to throw in the towel and hang up her apron.

Norma has been our Tea Convenor for 25 years plus! I would like to take this opportunity to thank Norma, on behalf of the Guild, for all her years of hard work and dedication.

Hopefully, we will still enjoy those wonderful pancakes, scones, tea loaves and not forgetting the beautiful celebration cakes for every anniversary imaginable. A little bird told me that our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake is in Norma's freezer just waiting for the Guild to resume. Norma will have the brandy at hand when that day arrives.

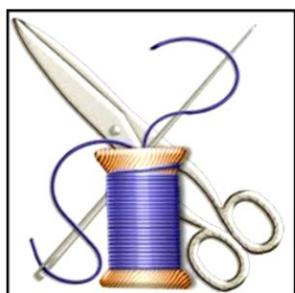
Once we do reconvene and pick up where we left off, we will be able to thank Norma in true Guild fashion. In the meantime, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you, thank you, thank you.

*Irene McCartney (Secretary)  
St Ninian's Guild*



\* \* \* \* \*

## Dower House Sewing Bee

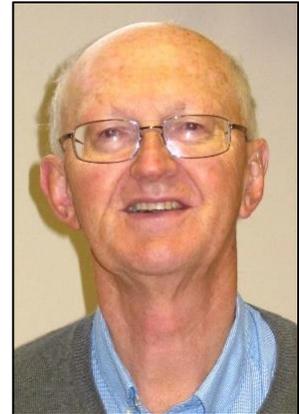


Many years ago, a patchwork class was started in the Dower House by Joan Cameron, Dorothy Davidson and others. I took over from Joan in September 2004, which is a long time ago, others have joined and left for various reasons and, at the moment, we have 6 regular members and at times a few more. We are always delighted to have new members or visitors who can join us for a welcome cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit.

The class originated with patchwork, but we now do whatever we choose. The first patchwork quilt was raffled for Dower House funds. Each person did a square and it was put together by Joan or Dorothy. We also made lots of cushions which were sold at the Corstorphine Fair for Dower House funds. It's amazing the talent which comes to the fore when new people join the group, each with their own talents and ideas. For example, we have sent many teddy bears to Malawi and we have made lots of 'Teddies for Trauma'.

The Dower House have made us very welcome as we help to keep the building in good use, and we hand over all the funds we make every year, because we have no overheads. We meet every other Monday from 1:30pm to 3:30pm - usually from September to the end of May - but, this year, who knows when we will be allowed to start up again! For more information, call me on 334 6433.

*Norma Gilmore*



Christian Aid (CA) has more than 70 years' experience of working in partnership to support communities to thrive. Its actions tackle the root causes of poverty so that people the world over are strengthened against future knocks. And if disasters happen, they get people the help they need straight away. CA's focus this year is on the Coronavirus in Developing Countries as the virus is putting people living in poverty at great risk. CA is responding to the outbreaks in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

We, in St Ninian's Church, normally fundraise in the Church and Parish by means of a Forth Bridge Sponsored Walk, a Soup and Sweet Lunch and the House to House Collection across the entire Parish plus other associated means for Christian Aid. Our plans for Christian Aid Week were thrown into disarray when the Coronavirus spread across the world including Scotland. We were unable to undertake our normal fundraising activities due to lock-down and distancing restrictions. CA set up an online JustGiving page and St Ninian's joined them by setting up a dedicated St Ninian's page enabling members of the congregation and others to donate to Christian Aid online.

The amounts raised by St Ninian's were as follows:

St Ninian's Church JustGiving Page	£2,386-20
Donations directly to St Ninian's	£380-00
Gift Aid	<u>£556-55</u>
Total amount raised by St Ninian's	<u>£3,322-75</u>

Well done all who have contributed to this creditable amount in the circumstances.

Alec Millar 334 1471 [alec.w.millar@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:alec.w.millar@blueyonder.co.uk)

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Although during lockdown the Rock Trust office has been closed, staff and volunteers have continued working tirelessly to support the young homeless helping them to stay connected, housed and fed.

All the food items collected by St Ninian's during February and the early part of March were delivered to Albany Street immediately prior to lockdown and were very gratefully received. Since then, online donation has become the best way to support the Trust's work. Having

discussed the current situation with Joanne Simpson, one of the community fundraisers, this remains the case for the time being. Joanne has sent me the following update:

*“Young people are some of the hardest hit by the Covid-19 lockdown. It is especially perilous for those working in zero-hour and insecure jobs and living in temporary accommodation and rented homes. Applications for Universal Credit have surged. The system is unable to cope with the demand. Poverty is the main driver of homelessness and, as young people’s incomes are affected, homelessness is becoming more of a risk. Now, when our work is needed more than ever, our services are under threat.*

*We rely on the generous support of our community to do what we do. We have been overwhelmed and inspired by the support we’ve received over the past few months, including donations of food and toiletries for us to distribute to young people. But, unfortunately, we are still facing an unprecedented challenge as income typically raised through events and community activities has been lost because of the current lockdown. This income is essential to the delivery of our existing services, and for us to be able to meet the growing need we are faced with.*

*We know the impact that the Covid-19 crisis is having, and will continue to have, on the most vulnerable young people in our society - on their mental health, their jobs, their income, and their relationships. It won’t be over when the lockdown is lifted. The long-term impact on people’s lives will be felt for many months ahead. We need to be ready to help every single young person who needs us.*

*We can’t do it without our community. If you are able to, please support the Rock Trust with a donation. We know it isn’t easy for everyone and we are all facing different challenges. Whatever you feel you can give will make a difference, even the price of a coffee or bus ticket.*

*Thank you to everyone who has supported and continues to support us to end youth homelessness - we couldn’t do it without you.”*

If you would like to help, you can make a donation at [www.rocktrust.org/donate](http://www.rocktrust.org/donate) or you could send a cheque to Rock Trust, 55 Albany Street, Edinburgh EH1 3QY.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Susanne Hope (334 2489)

\* \* \* \* \*

## Enterprise Committee

It is unlikely that there will any **Garden Open Days** this year. Instead, there are **Virtual Gardens** on St Ninian’s website and on St Ninian’s Facebook page, and there you can see photographs of gardens already submitted.

Should you wish to be included, please send no more than two photographs, attached to an e-mail, to [andrewjjob@outlook.com](mailto:andrewjjob@outlook.com). Narrative can be included but should you wish your Christian name and Surname to be included this will require explicit permission for GDPR requirements; so, for example, ‘Ian Kirkpatrick’s garden’ would require permission, but ‘Ian’s garden’ would not. It would not be advisable to include your postal address.

Ian Kirkpatrick, Convener (334 5951)

# Primary Sunday School Update

In Primary Sunday School we have a WhatsApp group which we have been using to keep in touch with each other during lockdown. I have also been sending out online resources from Roots, the subscription that we use when we are in Church.

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May we had our first Zoom Sunday call. After we all managed to log in it was great fun and it was lovely to see Aidan and Thomas. We have subsequently had 4 more calls where we have had a scavenger hunt, celebrating the birthday of the Church, a virtual prize-giving, and one week where Aidan and Thomas simply entertained themselves as I kept losing my connection. It has been lovely to see the children “virtually” and we will continue with our catchups, but we all look forward to seeing everyone in person in the not too distant future.



*Barbara Mackie*

\* \* \* \* \*

## For a Quiet Smile . . .

Prayer in England: “O Lord, grant that we may not be like porridge - stiff, stodgy and hard to stir; but like cornflakes - crisp, fresh and ready to serve.”

Prayer in Scotland: “O Lord, grant that we may not be like cornflakes - lightweight, brittle and cold; but like porridge - warm, comforting and full of goodness.”

*All in the eye of the beholder?*

# Past Times in St Ninian's

## 25 years ago; From the Quarterly, October 1995

### "Andrew Aid"

"Since the last Quarterly, two containers have arrived in St Petersburg and the contents distributed. Bob Kelley and his wife visited Father Gennady at the beginning of August. They took with them two boxes of sutures which we had been gifted. Bob gave these to the surgeon who is doing wonderful orthopaedic work with children at the Turner Institute. The children come from all the Russian republics. The work done here is truly amazing, considering the conditions and the dilapidated state of the buildings.

"The work on the fabric of St Sophia's Cathedral continues. 15 to 20 people of all ages are being baptised daily in the Parish! In the square near the Cathedral, Father Gennady has erected a cross commemorating the grave of a priest martyred by the Bolsheviks in 1917. The Communists took Father Gennady to court over it, but the cross remains, with much interest from passers-by. . . A container is going out this month with winter clothing for all ages. . . Thank you to all who have helped in any way with this work."

### "Sheila Ramsay"

*[Sheila says that Andrew Aid appears to be no more but that the above short article brings back "some nice memories" to her and Douglas - Ed]*

\* \* \* \* \*

## 50 years ago: From the Quarterly, October 1970

### From *Minister's Notes*, by the Rev Colin R Martin

"I want to put on record here a very attractive and generous gift which the Church has received, and which was dedicated over the summer period. The gift took the form of a pew for the duty office bearers in the space alongside the Manse pew at the front door. Designed to harmonise with the existing woodwork and decoration, it does so admirably and enhances the beauty of the Church. We express our deepest gratitude to the anonymous donor for his kindness. . ."



*The short "duty office bearers' pew" beside the Manse pew at the very back of the body of the Kirk*

St.Ninian's Church Of Scotland, Corstorphine

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the Period ended 31 July 2020

	Actual 2020 £	Actual 2019 £	Variance £
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
<b>Ministry and Mission</b>			
National Stipend and Mission and Renewal Fund	58,601	60,011	1,410
<b>Congregational expenses</b>			
Presbytery Dues	3,120	3,198	78
Pulpit Supply	0	436	436
Minister's Travel and Expenses	240	480	240
Local Salaries	14,555	23,138	8,583
Fabric - Renewals, Repairs and Maintenance	5,377	6,886	1,509
Hall Running Costs	9,325	6,004	(3,321)
Property Insurance	3,829	3,716	(113)
Manse Council Tax	1,670	1,614	(56)
Office Expenses	3,362	3,709	347
Other Expenses	4,179	3,780	(399)
	<b>45,657</b>	<b>52,961</b>	<b>7,305</b>
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>104,258</b>	<b>112,972</b>	<b>8,714</b>
<b>RECEIPTS other than Offerings</b>			
Use Of Church Halls	16,346	19,473	(3,127)
Investment Income	3,183	3,034	149
Other Receipts	1,245	2,572	(1,327)
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,774</b>	<b>25,079</b>	<b>(4,305)</b>
<b>Amount to be met from Offerings</b>	<b>83,484</b>	<b>87,893</b>	<b>(4,409)</b>
<b>Offertry and Tax Recoveries</b>			
Congregation Offerings	66,757	75,562	(8,805)
Tax Recovery on Gift Aid	14,228	16,839	(2,611)
	<b>80,985</b>	<b>92,401</b>	<b>(11,416)</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) to date</b>	<b>(2,499)</b>	<b>4,508</b>	<b>(7,007)</b>
<b>Before Legacies Received</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>£5,000</b>

**COMMENT**

As at 31st July, before taking account of Legacies recieved, there is a deficit on the General Account of **£2,499**. Taking account of legacies received results in a **Surplus of £7,501**. As is to be expected, given the current restrictions due to Covid19, the financial position at July 2020 is not as favourable as for the same period in 2019. The reduction in surplus of **£7,007**, before legacies received (**£2,707**, inc legacies), is explained below:

**Lower Costs = Increase in surplus of £8,714**

Most costs are in line with last year with increases and decreases offsetting one another. The main areas of variance are:

- ~ **Salary costs** - lower than last year by **£8,582** because 2019 costs included payments to cover staff absence and 2020 costs have been reduced by funds made available by the government Job Retention Scheme to cover 80% of the cost of furloughed staff.
- ~ **Hall Running costs** - higher than last year by **£3,321** due to higher energy costs

**Lower Income = Reduction in surplus of £15,721**

~ **Income from Hall Rentals** - lower than last year by **£3,128** due to halls being closed during lockdown.

~ **Other Receipts** - lower than last year by **£1,327** due to loss of income from Sunday morning coffee, open gardens and donations from church organisations

~ **Offerings & Tax Recoveries** - lower than last year by **£11,416** due to the loss of FWO donations during lockdown

**Legacies Received = Increase in surplus of £5,000**

It is important to note that despite the fall in income we continue to have sufficient resources to continue for some time to come.

*Janice Reynolds*  
Treasurer