

Park Church Stirling
Newsletter issue 6 :
Autumn 2021



***Park Church Stirling , a congregation of the
Church of Scotland
Worshipping in the Peter Memorial Building
Park Terrace, Stirling, FK8 2NA***

Picture on front page: melting glacier in Alaska 2015

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From the Interim Moderator

Dear Friends

The summer seems to have sped past, and already there is an autumnal feel to the weather and the light. Schools are back, Covid restrictions have been greatly eased, and the pace of life is picking up again.

This is also true in the church, in our congregations which have endured these past eighteen months or so through two lockdowns and tough restrictions on church life and worship. It comes as a huge relief to be allowed to sit closer together, and to sing again – albeit while continuing to wear§ our masks out of concern for the safety of others and ourselves.

Our hope must surely be that as we move into autumn and look ahead to the winter months, we will continue to respect the guidelines that remind us that we have not yet come to the end of the pandemic, even though we see a little light at the end of the tunnel.

With the autumn comes also the continuing search for a new minister for Park Church, and it is good news that a nominating committee has been appointed in line with the approved protocol for use during the pandemic and held its first meetings. We are grateful for the commitment of those who have agreed to serve on the committee, and we should keep them all in our prayers as they undertake this important task on behalf of all the congregation, while remembering that their work is strictly confidential.

That task is made all the more challenging by the present circumstances of the Church of Scotland, with a large shortfall in the number of ministers now very much in evidence, and with the uncertainties that face us as we emerge from the pandemic and take stock of where we are, and of the state of the church as it looks to the future.

At the same time, the committee is working to a tight deadline, imposed by the new Presbytery Mission Plan Act passed by this year's General Assembly, which instructs Presbyteries to draft new plans on the basis of much-reduced numbers of ministry posts, and set a deadline of 31st December for those congregations (like Park Church) who have permission to call a minister, to find a Nominee to preach for the charge.

This is a time of continuing reform across the Church of Scotland, and we look to equip ourselves to meet the challenges and opportunities of this fast-changing world in the 21st century. Each one of us who belongs to the Church will more than ever need to put our trust in the God who showed such love for the world in his Son Jesus, and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as together we map out the way ahead and continue the journey of faith and witness to which we have all been called. As Ruth Duck's hymn (CH4 252) puts it:

“As a fire is meant for burning/with a bright and warming flame/ so the Church is meant for mission/giving glory to God's name.”

With every blessing

Alan

From the Session Clerk

It has been encouraging to welcome more people back into the Church building not only on Sundays but also as more hall users are returning with reduced Covid restrictions. We are very grateful to all the ministers who have provided pulpit supply, as well as to the Junior Church team for leading intergenerational worship. We look forward to a number of baptisms in coming months.

Our main priority over the last 2-3 months has been to work towards attracting a new minister. A parish profile has been developed (can be read on the new website) and we had a successful bid for a potential manse in Laurelhill Gardens to which we hope to gain entry by the end of November.

Thanks are due to the property team for arranging remedial plasterwork and painting of the Back Stairs and the Anderson Hall ensuring that they are in good condition for return of the many groups using our facilities. They have attended to overhanging branches in the car parks and also ordered a new outside notice board.

The former Allan Park South Church building has now been sold. The net proceeds are being held by the Church of Scotland on our behalf for property purposes. This will contribute to the costs of the new manse and repay a loan from Presbytery. However the balance will be safeguarded for further fabric purposes to enhance our mission and outreach.

Information about a National Church Giving Day on 19th September (which gives an opportunity to support the congregation without counting towards central Church assessments) can be seen on page 18. Any additional money given will help offset the loss of income this year from hall lets.

It is great to announce the opening of SPARKS, our new pre-school play group on 23rd September, by a team of volunteers led by Moira Parry.

Park Church is well supported by those who already volunteer for various tasks ranging from the gardening squad, grass cutting team, coffee making, welcome team, flower arrangers, streaming and recording, delivering newsletters and friendship bags and furniture shifters. Please continue to share all your talents - additional offers of help, including with IT from members, friends and family are always appreciated.

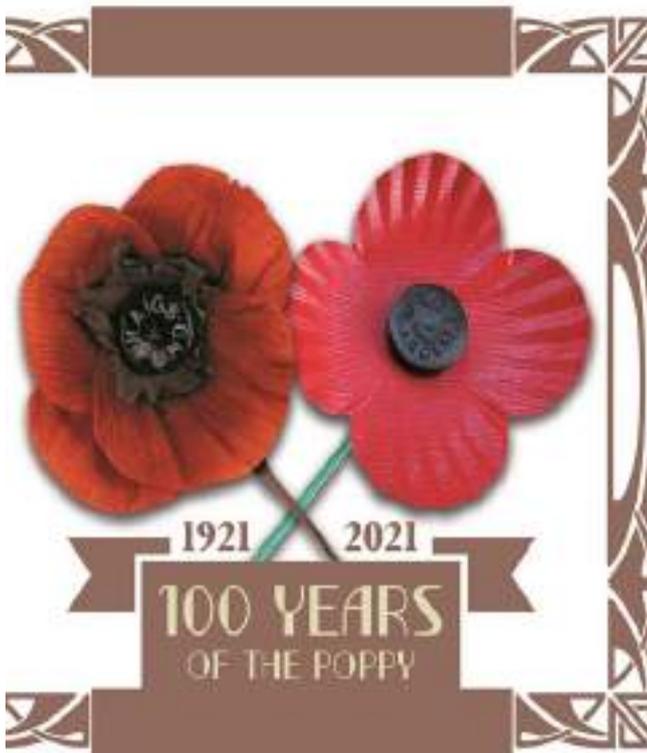
Many of you will know that Duncan Crombie will be stepping down as Church administrator in October. Duncan has been the key contact to those in and out of the congregation, our very positive link to outside organisations and given invaluable support to ministers and office bearers for the last 9 years. He has gone way above and beyond his official duties with unfailing tact, great expertise and good humour. Park Church will be looking appoint a successor as soon as possible. Details will be posted on the website shortly.

The pandemic period has been challenging for everyone but I am optimistic that the church is entering a more encouraging and exciting phase. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Peter Murdoch



Remembrance Day 11th November 2021



This year marks 100 years since the poppy was first used in commemoration of those lost in war.

The Haig Fund and Poppy Scotland have asked us to support them generously as they continue to look after those who served their country in different conflicts and peace keeping duties.

Over the last 18 months we have seen forces deployed to assist in the pandemic, and their logistics support and expertise has been used to move supplies and goods.

Please pray for their families at home, the children who don't see their parents while they are deployed and loved ones often left grieving.

The Allan Park Church and South Church War Memorials from the First and Second World Wars have been brought over to the Peter Memorial Building and after restoration are going to be relocated in the Sanctuary in time for Remembrance Sunday.



Image of 'In Flanders Fields' poem and poppies as gifted by Earl Haig to The Earl Haig Fund Scotland 1926.

Stirling Kirks Together



Messy Church Summer Bags

At the beginning of the summer holidays, the Youth Committee and volunteers from St Ninians Old Parish Church delivered Messy Church bags to our shared families.

The bags had the simple message- 'Enjoy your summer in God's wonderful World' and contained some craft activities for the children to enjoy.

Our last Messy Church was in January 2020! We are hoping that we will be able to meet up in person in the Autumn.

The Youth Committee.



Bags of Hope : Summer 2021

Our older folk have continued to receive monthly gift bags with a prayer card and a treat, some flowers or a gift



The June bag focused on "Joy"



The August bag theme was "Creation"



you are invited to an

All Age Service

On Sunday 12th September

at 11.00am in Park Church

No need to book – there is room for

everyone!

Retiring Offering for  **WaterAid**





Stirling Area Eco-congregation Network

In recent months, a small group of representatives from churches within the Stirling area has been meeting as an Eco-congregation Network. By working together we can share ideas and present a united front. On 12th August, the group met, via Zoom, and in attendance were members from Bridge of Allan Parish Church, Holy Trinity Scottish Episcopal Church, Stirling Methodist Church, Stirling Park Church and St Ninian's Old Parish Church; also taking part was a representative from Eco-congregation Scotland. Apologies were received from Callander Parish Church and Buchlyvie and Gartmore Churches.

It was decided that a small group would get together, in person if possible, in order to draft a press release to include what churches are doing in response to the climate emergency, what they still need to do and to highlight the responsibilities we all have, both policy makers and individuals, in this crisis.

Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) has organised a Relay for COP26 which started in St Ives in June and will end on 30th October in Glasgow. The final leg will be from Uddingston to Glasgow – a distance of 11 miles. Anyone can join in walking part or all of this last section; it is also hoped that there will be a welcoming party at St George's Square. Those of us unable to take part are asked to remember the young participants (and not so young) in their prayers.

<https://www.yccn.uk/>

For those who prefer cycling, there is a Pedal on Parliament cycle event for COP26 on 6th November. <https://pedalonparliament.org/were-pedalling-on-cop-will-you-join-us/>

Climate Sunday on 5th September will be marked by special services in individual churches across the country. We are planning on holding a joint Climate Sunday service, at some point in September or October. Stirling Methodist Church have offered the use of their church. More details later.

Also on Sunday 5th September there will be a Nations Climate Sunday Service at 3.30pm (for 4pm) in Glasgow Cathedral. This will be streamed live online and in person. It will celebrate and share the commitment of churches ahead of COP26. Sign up to join online: <https://nationsclimatesunday.eventbrite.co.uk>

Sandra Muir

Creator of all life,

**We thank you for the precious Earth
you so carefully crafted.**

**How grateful we are
for the blessing it is
to marvel at your wonderful creation.**

**We lament the ways
in which humans have chosen to seek dominance
instead of practising care.**

**We ask that you would humble us
and help us to see ourselves
not as separate from the rest of creation
but as components of it.**

**Guide us as we seek to turn
our gratitude for the Earth
into action to care for it,**

**and let us never forget
that to love and care for the Earth
is an expression of our worship and love for you.**

Amen.



A FAVOURITE HYMN.

CHRIST IS OUR LIGHT (CH4 336).

Highland Cathedral has become one of the best-known tunes inside and outside the Church in the present day, rivalling Amazing Grace. It was written as a pipe tune by two visitors to Scotland from Germany, Uli Roever and Michael Korb.

At first, it became associated with Ian Pitt-Watson's modern version of Psalm 139, "You are before me, God, you are behind", but the editors of CH4 preferred a set of words beginning "Christ is our light!" provided by Leith Fisher, a former Minister of Wellington Church, Glasgow.

This hymn refers to both baptisms and funerals and is often sung on those occasions.

I look forward to singing this hymn soon at one of our morning services.

Ross McGowan, Organist



The Prayer Group at St Columba's was formed in 2009 when Rev. Ken Russell was the minister. Over the years there have been many prayers undertaken by the small but dedicated group. Now we have a new name, that of Park Church, since St Columba's and Allan Park South have united and the Prayer Group continues to serve our new congregation.

If anyone would like prayers said on their behalf, the Prayer Group will pray for this request for four weeks. Requests can be made by contacting the church office or by accessing a request form on our website.

Requests may be anonymous but it does help if initials or a first name can be given regarding for whom the prayers are for and I would like to reassure everyone that all information is treated confidentially.

In addition, if anyone would like to join our group please get in touch with Moira Parry 01786 463743, we would be glad of your help.

Coffee after Sunday service in church is coming back but we need some more helpers!

We are planning to resume serving coffee, tea and juice after the Sunday services in October. All are welcome.



We are looking for volunteers (male and female) to assist in serving the coffees and teas, so if you are willing to join the rota, please contact Marjorie McGowan on 01786-461258 or Sarah Murdoch on 01786- 473087.

Mrs Margaret Campbell—an appreciation



Margaret had been a member of the former St.Columba's congregation for 54 years and flower convenor for many years.

Together with her late husband Alastair she loyally supported the Kirk. She was a talented flower arranger, and baker . In addition to her country dancing, swimming and SWRI she enjoyed travel and meeting people.

Margaret attended the Friendship Lunch events, church Coffee Club and was a regular worshipper who was delighted when Covid –19 restrictions were eased and she could join the congregation in-person for worship. She will be much missed by her family, neighbours, friends and colleagues.

Sarah Murdoch

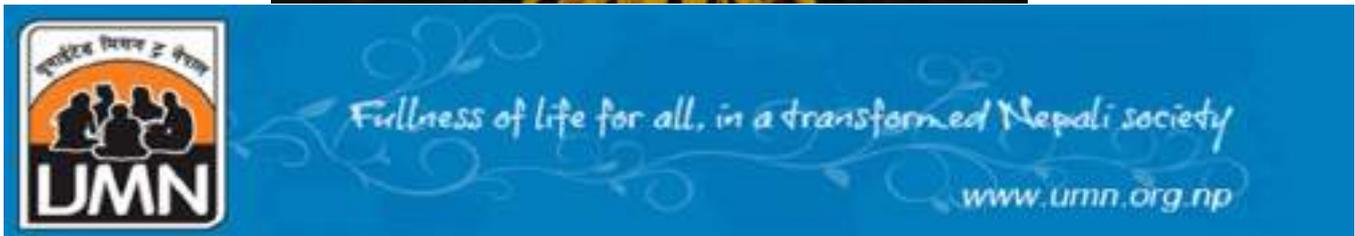
Flower Ministry

Many thanks to all who have contributed to the successful reintroduction of flowers to our service since the beginning of June, whether as a sponsor, arranger or deliverer.

The flowers have been greatly appreciated both by those attending services and also by those who have received them afterwards. They have brought a great deal of pleasure to those unable to attend, knowing that they are remembered as well as enjoying the companionship and chat of those who bring them, particularly as many have experienced isolation over the last months!

We are very fortunate in having so many people willing to contribute. If you would like any more information on supporting our group, either by donating flowers or helping to arrange or deliver, please do get in touch. I can be contacted on 01786 281190 or email mcarthurmb@yahoo.co.uk. I hope to make up a delivery rota in the very near future as numbers at our services continue to increase.

With many thanks, Maureen McArthur



Please pray for our Mission Partners, Joel, Fiona, Caleb and Isaac Hafverstein in Nepal as they continue to find a way to complete their current work prior to returning to the UK next year.

We remember the communities they serve as they grapple with climate change, closures of international borders affecting income and the distribution of Covid vaccines.

As schools, universities and offices re-open in the UK we think of those in remote villages who will struggle to access technology, healthcare and educational opportunities.

We trust that the Hafverstein family will be in God's loving hands as they seek to find accommodation, schools and support for the future.

A Celtic rune of hospitality

We saw a stranger yesterday.

We put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place.

And in the sacred name of the triune God
The stranger blessed us and our house,
Our cattle and our dear ones.

As the lark says in her song:
Often, often, often goes Christ in the stranger's guise.



Extracted from the Church of Scotland website where you can find more details:

Scottish Faith Action Group for Refugees (SFAR)

People across the world have watched in horror as the stories of refugees and their treatment by politicians and societies has failed to live up to their own principles of hospitality and helping those in need.

All religions teach a form of the Golden Rule (treat others as you would wish to be treated) and that our common humanity transcends national, racial, cultural, or linguistic barriers.

The Church of Scotland resolved to establish a refugee co-ordination project in 2015 as a response to the refugee crisis and as a way to harness the outpouring of goodwill and desire to act which was being expressed by many congregations across the country. The Church of Scotland approached the other major faith groups in Scotland, which agreed to share in the work of co-ordination and support.

We are working with Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and interfaith groups, and through our commitment to each other seek to demonstrate that by building on common values we have our own story to tell of hospitality.

We work in partnership with the Scottish Government (in line with the 'New Scots' refugee integration strategy), the Scottish Refugee Council as well as local government and charities including Amnesty International, the British Red Cross, Oxfam, and Christian Aid.

A Letter from Rev Elinor Gordon in Orkney:

Dear Friends, Greetings from Orkney

I am spending three months here as Locum Minister to the **East Mainland Parish** (which, of course, is not all mainland but includes the island of Lamb Holm.)

This article is not a coherent, carefully considered whole ('when did she ever produce that you cry!) It is a series of scenes which will live on in my memory and may become a coherent whole at some time in the future as I ponder on my time here.

I have turned up at new places so often in my life that the Lord has taken to sending me angels to fulfil his promise that he will watch over my coming and going. And sure enough, there was one waiting in the manse when I arrived. He was the Property Convenor and a retired BT engineer and was thus equipped to deal with any issues that arose. He also cuts the grass, replaces broken door bells etc etc. Members of the congregation had cleaned this huge house and had given me a welcome pack to see me through the first few days (or months) until I found Tesco's-although my angel made sure that I did. The pack included the first real eggs I had tasted in years. The yolks were a deep yellow. Imagine that. Their preparations showed the Christian care that I so much appreciate.

I have a friend who ministers on Orkney and before I arrived she told me that my name had been mentioned on Radio Orkney. She said 'that puts you right up there alongside the Orkney Sheep Shearers' AGM.' Fame at last! I once met a man on Shetland who said that it was his ambition never to have his name appear in the pages of The Shetland Times. I don't know whether he managed to fulfil that ambition because the minutiae of island lives are important to those who live there. With small populations, even as an incomer (Ferry Louper in Orkney) you are connected to everyone in some way. For example, a few days after I arrived here, I received a phone call from an old Shetland friend. She was holidaying in Kirkwall and heard my name on Radio Orkney and phoned me up. That is the sort of thing that makes listening to local radio a sacred time. If you pop in to see someone when it is on, you have to sit quietly in a corner till it is over.

The Interim Moderator of the parish, a new found friend, took me to lunch at Sheila Fleet's establishment which is in my parish. You may well know her jewellery. She was there and we spoke to her. Being world famous changes nothing if you remain living in the islands. You are there, people know you and you cannot be aloof. If you want to be treated with deference, then you have to leave. George Mackay Brown was the same and used to sit sunning himself on a wall outside his home in the middle of Stromness. Peter Maxwell Davies became so during his time here. This egalitarianism is one of the things I like most about island life. Everybody is important.

I was asked to conduct an interment of ashes in a little graveyard down on the coast so it took place to the sound and smell of the sea with a herd of cows looking over the wall to see what we were doing. Altogether gentle and lovely. (**Below View from Manse**)





Visiting parishioners is challenging when they live in a house which does not even have much of an address e.g. I live in The Manse, Holm which is a whole chunk of the East Mainland. Rarely will there be a farm or house name at the road end because 'everybody knows where it is'. So careful directions are important. I was given directions based on a school. I found the lovely new school and the directions didn't make sense. I drove around and found what looked very much like a derelict old school. I then found the farm. The people who gave me the directions had attended the now disused building so that was the school to them. Silly me. Anyway, I am now one of the 'everybody' who knows where that farm is, so no problem.

Elinor outside East Mainland Church

I undertook my first Covid restricted funeral. The undertakers were lovely people which I have found undertakers to be. I was shown round their premises and I was able to ask questions and I did a recce to find the graveyard so I thought I knew what would happen. However, as we all set off for the burial we didn't turn off where I expected to. We then drove all round the streets of Kirkwall and then all round the East Mainland at 20 miles per hour. People were gathered in groups all along the route. The whole thing took one and a half hours. When I asked later if this was a tradition, I was told 'covid'. It was done to give people the opportunity to pay their respects when they could all attend the funeral and, of course, 'everybody knew that'.

I have also conducted my first covid baptism. Regulations say that I am not allowed to hold the baby which is sad. The father held his daughter over the font and the mother carried her round the church while we sang 'The Lord Bless You And Keep You.' It was lovely and we all felt blessed.

I am conducting a wedding in the Italian Chapel which is in this parish. I was speaking to someone about this and she said 'Oh that'll be so and so's wedding. I asked if the bride was local. Concerned frown. 'Well, she wasn't born here.' Spending your entire childhood and youth here does not count you in as 'local.' It takes a few generations more than that.

My Shetland friend came to church and commented afterwards that she had been unable to make her offering because she had not seen the alms dish at the door and had assumed that the offering would be uplifted. Concerned, as any minister would be, at the church missing out on an offering, I suggested to the office bearers that they put the plate in a more obvious position because everybody didn't know where it was. They kindly did so but warned me that if we did that on a windy day our offering would be whipped through the church, out the exiting door and into Scapa Flow in seconds.

So, that's how Orkney has been to me; great people in a beautiful landscape.

I hope that you are enjoying your summer too.

Yours, Elinor Gordon

Additions to the Church Library 2021

The Church library has benefitted from the addition of a number of adult books plus some very attractive books for children.

Please feel free to browse our shelves. The library operates on a self service basis by signing out the book you want by the date and returning it in the same way.

Books are organized on the shelves by section- Pastoral Care, Prayers and Poetry, Biographies, General Reading, Christian Faith, Bible Study

They are catalogued for the most part alphabetically under the author's last name.

We do not have a time scale for returning books or, you will be glad to know, any fines!

Children's books are in the large wooden divided box as you go into the library.

Children's Books

Adams Georgie-The Bible Storybook

The Birth of Jesus

Butterworth Nick-The Good Stranger

Butterworth Nick-The Good Stanger

Butterfield Moira-The Christmas Story

Cousins Lucy-Noah's Ark

Creation and The Flood

Davidson Alice-The Story of the Baby Moses

Elijah

Fanthorpe Lionel-Birds and Animals of the Bible

God Made Colours

Jesus gets Lost

Jesus does Miracles

Jonah and the Whale

Joseph

Lashbrook Marilyn- Don't Rock the Boat

Lindbergh Reeve-The Circle of Days

The Loaves and the Fishes

Maine Lee-The Three Wisemen

Moses

The Prodigal Son

Ruth

Who says that?

Adult Books

Bunch Cindy-Coming of the Saviour (Bible Study)

Harris Frida-Through the Pain Barrier (General Reading)

Nee Watchman-The Glorious Church (Bible Study)

Richard Cliff-My Life, My Way (Biographies)

Sanghera Sathnam-The Boy with the Topknot (General Reading)

Williams Rowan-Christ on Trial (Bible Study)

We hope you will enjoy them

Lyndsay Boyack and Fiona Wesley (a welcome new member of Library Team with publishing expertise)

PS

Before he moved house from Stirling to Edinburgh Peter Record donated a number of religious texts to the Church: these will be catalogued and noted in the next newsletter.

Review of All Age Service (13th June)

The Youth Committee felt strongly that we wanted to try to encourage the children to attend a church service before the start of the summer holidays. Many of them have not been coming to church for all sorts of reasons, and the last time we involved them was at the Christingle Service in December.

So as there was no official Prize giving Service this year we decided to try to engage them in an All Age Service, using ideas similar to what we use in Messy Church.

Our theme was decided very easily and quickly. We felt that the story of the Lost Sheep epitomised what lots of us have been feeling during the Pandemic, with restricted numbers and abnormal activities during services, and wanted to put over the idea that nobody is ever lost to God, that He misses everyone who goes astray.

Though it was "billed" as an All Age Service the emphasis was definitely on our younger congregation members with a "treasure hunt" to find 20 sheep hidden around the church. Whilst we tried to engage even the youngest of our children we hoped that the more mature members of the congregation would join in and enjoy the activities as well as appreciating the message behind them.

We were delighted that there was such a large turn out of 77 folk including 17 children, and sincerely thank all the parents and grandparents for their efforts in bringing the youngsters along. We were truly heartened by both the participation and words of encouragement from a variety of people. We hope to do something similar in the fairly near future when we will be again asking for your support.



National Giving Day



Congregations have been encouraged by the General Assembly to participate in a church-wide National Giving Day at a time of their choosing over the season of Harvest 2021. This will provide people of all ages an opportunity to reflect on God's presence with us through these challenging times and to offer gifts of thanksgiving back to God.

Money received through this initiative will remain with participating congregations who will choose how to use these gifts. This money may be used to fund specific work, to launch a new project or simply to offset deficits taking into account the challenging financial circumstances faced by many of our churches over the last year. Congregations can use the money locally or direct it towards projects at home or overseas, provided that it will be used in line with the charitable objectives of the Church.

The money raised through your congregation's involvement in the National Giving Day will not be assessable for Ministries and Mission purposes. Congregational Treasurers should separately identify the income donated and be able to demonstrate it was specifically given as part of this initiative. The total received should be recorded under a 'National Giving Day' line in the analysis of donations note in the accounts. This will enable these gifts to be excluded from assessable income which is used in calculating the Ministries and Mission allocation.

Congregations are encouraged to engage with this initiative on a day of their choosing between Sunday 5 September and Sunday 31 October 2021. Worship resources to support this engagement – whether virtually or in church – will be made available online from August, with promotion planned for the Church's website and social media platforms over the summer. We will update you on how to access these resources as they become available. There is no plan to produce printed resources.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to enabling and sustaining God's work through the Church of Scotland at this time.

May God bless and multiply our efforts.



Over the summer months the Street Pastors based in Park Church have been going out in the afternoons on Friday and Saturday.

Now that the clubs have re-opened they are back on patrol in the evening in Stirling.

Please pray for them as they care for folk who are in need of an ear to talk, and reflect the message of Christ's love in small practical ways (like giving out flip flops or helping to order a taxi).

Photo on right shows Michael and Isobel returning from a Saturday afternoon patrol

Park Church Coffee Club meets on Thursday mornings from 10 am to 11.30 in the Main Hall and will resume on the 23rd September 2021.



Everyone is welcome, so please come along, enjoy the home baking and make new friends.

We are also looking for volunteers to assist in serving the teas and coffees. If you are willing to assist on a rota basis, please contact Marjorie McGowan on 01786-461258 or Sarah Murdoch on 01786-473087.

Part of an article extracted from the Church of Scotland website

A Church of Scotland minister nicknamed the **Tartan Pimpernel** who helped orchestrate the safe return of around 2,000 men from occupied France during the Second World War has been honoured in Paris.

Rev Dr Donald Caskie is commemorated on a marble plaque erected on the exterior wall of the Scots Kirk where he was the minister 81 years ago.



Around 100 people attended the unveiling ceremony on La Rue Bayard on 10th June (including local church members and representatives from Mairie de Paris (Paris City Hall) and the Scottish Government).

Bagpiper Francis Sykes greeted guests with renditions of Auld Lang Syne, Flower of Scotland, Highland Cathedral, Scotland the Brave and The Skye Boat Song.

Local school pupils read aloud in English and French extracts from Dr Caskie's book, *The Tartan Pimpernel*, which tells how he fearlessly worked with the French Resistance to help trapped or imprisoned airmen, seamen and soldiers escape Nazi-occupied France.

The plaque was unveiled by Jeanne d'Hauteserre and Laurence Patrice of Mairie de Paris.

The commemoration project was led by Derek Bonin-Bree, an elder at the Scots Kirk, with the support of other office bearers and minister Rev Jan Steyn who said the war hero's faith "spurred him on to oppose injustice, intolerance and tyranny".

Some of the sharp eyed folk will recognise that the Bagpipes were played by one of our friends from the Pentemont –Luxembourg congregation which is "twinned" with Park Church.

I wrote to compliment Francis on his musical skills and he told us another story about Donald Caskie and also sent a photo. (Sarah, editor)

Francis Sykes writes:

I was christened in that church as a baby so I feel a connection with the Scots kirk and I am always happy to play the pipes when asked.

It was a very moving service (I mean the Caskie dedication ceremony, not my christening) . The minister Jan Steyn is a wonderful preacher.

My other excuse for playing was that my parents were married by Donald Caskie in Paris in 1955. Here is a picture taken when my parents were signing the register in the presence of Donald Caskie.



But not “Goodbye”



Peter and Betsy Record are moving to Edinburgh to be closer to their family: we wish them every blessing as they move and thank them for all the contributions they have made to the life and worship of Park Church. Peter has donated some of his books to the Library for others to enjoy.



Environment Matters... to everyone

It takes a special kind of friend to visit your home and leave a note by your aerosol deodorant in your bathroom, saying, 'save the planet, buy roll-ons!'.

My good friend left me just such a note back in 1991. Now my aerosol was labelled, 'CFC free. Environmentally Friendly'. So why could I not use it?



The conversation that followed the note led me to a professional life in the world of the environment and the consumer. As a Trading Standards Officer in the West Midlands, with the encouragement of my boss, I challenged the aerosol manufacturers to remove the 'environmentally friendly' part of the claim. It took three years, but along with my colleagues, we succeeded. Now many may wonder why their hard-earned taxes and Council Tax funded a local government service that spent time on such frivolities. It was certainly a niche specialism and ignored by many colleagues across the country. Well, it **was** thirty years ago and all of the messages about climate change were largely denied or ignored. Of course it wasn't going to happen.

The 'environmentally friendly' claims led consumers into a false sense of environmental security. They could have the feel-good factor of still using their aerosols, complete in the knowledge that they were not causing environmental harm, for those pesky CFCs had gone. Sadly, consumers were being misled on a totally irresponsible environmental scale. For CFCs were replaced with different environmentally harming HFCs. Instead of contributing to the hole in the ozone layer, they contribute to the formation of smog in the lower atmosphere when they react with sunlight. Both cause huge environmental damage.

My friend was absolutely right – use a different product, which, although usually plastic is involved, at least if disposed of properly, it can be recycled, therefore reducing the environmental harm we cause.

For the next 15 years, I was involved in promoting the reduction of packaging and packaging waste, the accurate energy labelling of appliances and the promotion of more energy efficient ones and, of course, challenging the plethora of misleading environmental claims.

I wrote 'environment matters'. It remained a niche subject, with many colleagues believing that other trading standards areas of work were far more important. I did those alongside my environmental work.

Now, as if from nowhere, environment matters more than ever. My former profession sadly no longer has the resources to specialise in these things. However, anyone who still believes that climate change is not with us is sadly mistaken.

Environment matters because this planet is the only one we have. We have a Godly commanded duty to take care of it. We are the environmental stewards and our actions have a dramatic impact on others. We have a responsibility to take care of others. Climate change devastation ruins livelihoods across the world, but also is an unnecessary cause of death. Famine results from climate change, whether the famine stems from drought or floods.

As we approach the Conference of the Parties, known as COP 26, we know all of our world leaders have a responsibility to agree to action and not words. The problem is that we've heard of good intentions and agreements before and still, we face a climate catastrophe. So what can we do?

Surely we must persuade our leaders to act now, put the environment before profitable fossil fuels and invest in renewable sources of energy. But that's not all. We must try to achieve carbon negative and not simply carbon neutral. Therefore, we have to think about what energy and resources we use.

I hear the cry quite often that whatever we do will be minimal, because industrial nations will overtake any difference we make. However, I would suggest that if we all make even small changes, they will collectively become bigger changes. Environmental sense has also always made good financial sense. Using energy guzzling appliances costs a lot. 20 years ago, few saw sense in changing to energy saving lightbulbs. Now, that's what we have, in a variety of different forms. Our more energy efficient appliances cost far less to run.

Turning our heating down by 1°C, turning off lights in unused rooms, buying local produce, or even growing our own, using tap water rather than bottled (even if you filter or carbonate it yourself) all makes a difference. Reducing our waste and then recycling makes more of a difference.

Friends of the Earth and WWF both give a lot of advice on their websites about what we, as individuals can do. Ecocongregationsscotland.org has materials and ideas for action. There will be other resources available too.

Please do ignore advertising excesses on labels. No manufactured product can ever be environmentally friendly. They simply may cause different or less harm. The best advice is to buy less, reuse more and recycle what we cannot reuse. Get to know the impact our living has on the planet and our neighbours who share it. Then work towards becoming an eco congregation. Environment matters to all of us. It will never be considered a niche specialism again.

Rev Maggie Roderick

Used Postage stamps

Every March the World Mission Department of the Church of Scotland decides on the project that they be supporting over the next twelve months.

Due to Covid-19, however, they decided to continue with 2020's undertaking to assist the Women's Development Centre in Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Money from used stamps helps women and girls who had survived sexual violence, rape or family rejection returning them to education or learning skills that will allow them to be self-sufficient.

Thank you to all those who faithfully collected used stamps and hand them into the Church.

Just a reminder that our used stamp box is now located in the back vestibule of the Church.

Sincerely, Yvonne McQueen.



The family speug!

Duncan Crombie

I'm sitting writing this in my home office, looking out over the back garden at a veritable squadron of sparrows; at least 14, but it's difficult to count them constantly flitting about from feeder to bird bath and back again – the sparrows that is. There's a mixture of adults and juveniles and right at this moment, one of the adults appears to be giving diving and breast-stroke lessons to one of the youngsters - they've obviously been watching the Olympics!

Small garden birds have had a tough time recently, with numbers falling dramatically, but, on our four feeders and one birdbath, we have resident sparrows, great tits, coal tits, blue tits, blackbirds, thrushes, gold finches, robins, the occasional chaffinch and long tailed tit and one wren regularly spotted. We also have, although "discouraged" with a water pistol, pigeons, the odd magpie and what can only be described as an infestation of grey squirrels, (but that's another story.)

The "menagerie" is completed by a regular, nocturnal, visiting hedgehog and a fieldmouse nicknamed "hoover" because he/she tidies up the peanut bit, leftovers from the birds.

On a recent edition of the "Springwatch" programme, they discussed the decline in numbers this year, especially, of blue tits. This was apparently caused by late frosts killing off the Oak leaf buds on which green caterpillars feed, which, in turn are the staple diet of blue tit chicks (yuk!)

Global warming and late frosts – is there a contradiction here? discuss!

In any event, having successfully raised families of BlueTits over the last few years and having successfully produced eggs in the bird box this year, the chicks perished – we assume all, but there were only two corpses in the box by the end of July, so maybe some survived?

The family speug?..... they're thriving.

Thought for the day. If small garden birds only live for a year or two, how come we're not ankle deep in dead birds?



STEVEN MOORE

Preludes & Encores

Repertoire from
J.S. Bach, A. Piazzolla,
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Concerts are on a
'Pay what you can' basis

Tickets are not required

Friday 3rd September 1pm
Stirling Park Church
Park Terrace. Stirling FK8 2NA

www.StevenMoorePercussionist.com

Ladies Group

The Ladies Group Committee are delighted to be able to announce a programme of speakers for the new session starting in September.

After the past year we are looking forward to being back together as a group even if we may have to make a few changes to table layout and catering arrangements to comply with any Covid restrictions.

We can assure you the welcome and fellowship will be just as warm as before.

Monday 27th September: A social games evening

Monday 11th October : “Tales from a tour guide”.

Monday 25th October: Dr Mary Higgins makes a welcome return with an update on her work with the charity “Let Us Shine”.

Monday 8th November : A mini “Antiques Roadshow”.

Monday 22nd November :Fiona Ritchie from Ochil Skincare.

Monday 6th December: Christmas meal (provisional date)

The Ladies Group meet on alternate Monday evenings at 7.30pm in the church hall.

The group is open to all, not just members of the congregation and a very warm welcome is extended to anyone wishing to join us at any of our meetings.



CHURCH CHOIR.

Choir practices will resume on Thursday, 23 September at 8pm. in the Church Hall.

Before COVID19, the Choir regularly sang an anthem at the Sunday services, and, although it may be some time before we can do so again, to start practices is a significant step on the road back to normality.

New members will be made most welcome.

Ross McGowan, Organist

Thank you to McKechnie farm food suppliers at Caledonian Markets, Stirling who gifted strawberries and raspberries for jam.

Sixty jars of jam are destined to reach housebound and older members to bring some joy to tea time in Stirling in September gift bags.



Notice these notices!

In a restaurant window just outside Brixham in Devon - 'Don't stand there and be hungry, come in and get fed up.'

In a health food shop in Los Angeles, USA - 'Closed due to illness.'

In a pub in West Sussex which is non-smoking - 'If we see smoke, we will assume you are on fire and take appropriate action.'

Cullen Skink (smoked fish soup) *suggested by Margaret Risk and adapted*

Folk historian, F. Marion McNeill, names Cullen Skink in her book, "The Scots Kitchen" (1929) when she discovers thick fish soup (skink) in the fishing town of Cullen. Originally is made with Finnan haddock, but this is much less commonly available nowadays. Undyed smoked haddock makes an excellent substitute.

Recipe serves 2 or 3 people

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon unsalted butter for frying

1 medium onion (finely chopped)

400g potatoes (peeled and roughly chopped)

250g undyed smoked haddock fillets

250mls whole milk

300mls water

Method

1. Melt the butter in a saucepan over a medium heat, then add the onion and soften gently until translucent but not browned. Add the potatoes and 300mls water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat slightly and simmer for 10-15 minutes.
2. Place the haddock in a second pan and cover with the milk. Cook gently for 5 minutes or until just soft. Turn the heat off and using a perforated spoon remove the haddock from the milk (do not throw this away – it is needed later!). When the fish is cool enough to touch break it into flakes on the plate and check if there are any bones-if so remove these.
3. Remove about a quarter of the potatoes and set aside. Mash those remaining in the pan, or puree briefly with a hand blender leaving the mixture chunky.
4. Stir in the set aside potatoes, the fish roughly flaked and milk. Adjust the seasoning if required.
6. Bring the soup to the simmer for a few minutes before serving. If the soup is too thick for your taste add a little more water or milk.

Optional extra is to garnish each serving with finely chopped parsley says Margaret who recommends eating it accompanied by crusty bread or toast.





We are starting a new pre-school group for children and their adults on Friday 24th September 2021 in our church hall in Park Terrace.

The group will run on Fridays from 9.30 - 11.15 during school term times.

The cost is £2 for adults or as much as can be afforded and each adult can bring more than one child.

If you or anyone you know e.g. parent/grandparent/carer/childminder who may enjoy this, please let them know about SPARKS.

At each session the children will have time to play, enjoy a craft, listen to a story, sing songs and have a snack.

At snack time the adults will also be able to enjoy a cup of tea/coffee, have a chat and make friends.



Come along and enjoy this new group in our new Park Church.



Harvest 2021 envelopes will be available

Please contact Helen Macdonald or Helen Reid

The seasons change, but love and community remain, strong and constant. Could you help more communities around the world build a new life, full of hope?

This is a Harvest Prayer for 2021:

Creator God, From the tree of the garden of Eden, to the tree in the city in Revelation, we thank you for our vision of creation healed. Help us to be your agents of restoration. tending to the beauty of the Earth, and enabling your healing of the nations

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS:

Any content for the next newsletter must be handed into the Church office or sent by e-mail to the Editor before 5pm on Friday 11th November 2021.

We reserve the right to edit or hold over copy if required.

Please send text as a **Windows** file and photos as **JPEG** format.

Handwritten text is accepted but should be in as early as possible please

Any submissions received **AFTER** 5pm on the copy deadline will be held over for the next issue.

WINTER EDITION (December 2021, January and February 2022)

COPY DEADLINE: FRIDAY 11th November 2021

Newsletter editor:

Mrs Sarah Murdoch, Abercromby Place, Stirling FK8 2QP

Telephone: 01786-473087 E-mail : murdochsarah@btinternet.com

In loving memory

It is with sadness, but great thankfulness for lives well lived, that we have to share the news of deaths of the following members of Park Church:

Mrs Suzanne Scott, Mugdock Care Home, Stirling

Mrs Jean Wighton, Forthbank Care Home, Stirling

Mrs Janet Kirkwood, Glenallan Court, Dunblane

Mrs Margaret Campbell, Carron Place, Stirling

Please remember their families and friends in your prayers



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The Word for the World for Today

CREATION TIME

Season of Creation



Welcome to Park Church, Stirling, Park Terrace, Stirling FK8 2NA

All are welcome to attend worship

Please refer to the church website for up to date information.

Notices are also printed weekly in the Stirling Observer (Wednesday issue)

[The Park Church, Stirling website is](#)

www.parkchurchstirling.org

The website also provides links to other information and an on-line copy of this newsletter.

Park Church Office, Stirling, FK8 2NA

The office is open Tuesday-Friday from 9.30 to 12.

Office telephone :01786-462400

(Messages can be left on this number)

**The peace of the earth be with you
The peace of the heavens too;
The peace of the rivers be with you,
The peace of the oceans too.
Deep peace falling over you;**