

**Park Church Stirling**  
**Newsletter issue 8 :**  
**Spring 2022**



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

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# From the Minister

Dear Friends in Christ

Thank you for your kind-heartedness for welcoming me here to Park Church, Stirling. It is a joy to be with you and serve the Lord with you in this part of his Kingdom.

We are nearing the season of Lent which is a significant time in the year for Christians – it is a time of solemnity and self-reflection based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The idea of fasting from certain foods such as eggs, meat, fish and fats around the time of Easter goes back to the days of the early Church 2,000 years ago. For some years after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Christians fasted from all food and drink between Good Friday and Easter Sunday – marking the time period between his death and the discovery that his tomb was empty. Lent, as we now know it, has its origins about 900 years after Jesus. There was an international agreement that there should be a season of prayer and seeking forgiveness lasting 40 days – plus Sundays – leading up to Easter Sunday. Nowadays people might give up a luxury food – such as chocolate. They may also give up an activity such as using social media or drinking alcohol. Word has it that it is called ‘Lent’ in English because it is the time of the year when days are ‘lengthening’ in the northern hemisphere.

The significance of the time period was that immediately before Jesus began his years of travelling and teaching, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert reflecting on the future of his life.

In the words of the late Brother Roger, Prior of the Taizé Community (2005): “Lent is not a time for austerity or sorrow, or a period to cultivate guilt, but rather a season to sing the joy of forgiveness” Brother Roger saw Lent as forty days to prepare to rediscover little “springtimes” in our lives. The life of Jesus Christ invites us to a conversation: not to turn towards ourselves in introspection or individual perfectionism, but to seek communion with God and also communion with others. Therefore, Lent is a season that invites us to share. It leads us to sense that there is no spiritual growth without consenting to give something up, and to do so for Love. During Lent, many Christians use special studies to guide their times of personal prayer and reflection. This year there will also be such an opportunity at our Church in the form of a weekly Lent Bible study, starting on Tuesday 8 March at 7 pm. You are more than welcome to join these gatherings.

It has been lovely to meet folk and get to know you better over the past few weeks.

If there are things that you want to ask me privately or discuss on the phone at another time: please do not hesitate to telephone me at the manse (or leave a message if I am out) and I will call you back. Manse telephone 01786 –478269

Be assured of my prayers for us as Park Church.

With every blessing,

Attie



## From the Session Clerk

The Kirk Session was delighted to welcome our new minister to his first session meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. We feel blessed to have Attie after over three years of vacancy. At a previous meeting we had thanked Rev Alan Miller for his invaluable service as Interim Moderator since the Union of the former St Columba's and Allan Park South congregations on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. Despite the extraordinary challenges faced with this start in lockdown, he had provided wise leadership, unfailing encouragement and care which had enabled us to attract the first minister of Park Church.

Session has been discussing a new Stirling Presbytery Mission Plan due to be finalised by summer. This addresses the major challenges of the reduced numbers of available ministers (Stirling Presbytery will be getting an allocated 21.5 paid posts instead of the previous 35) and financial pressures facing the Church of Scotland. All Congregations are facing major change as we look to build new innovative partnerships focussed on more effective mission to our communities. This will involve building on our established projects and working closely with friends in St Ninian's Old, Viewfield, Holy Rude -as well as other local churches. A series of meetings with neighbours and Presbytery will be held to agree how we will work together as the Church of Scotland in the city. Together we can combine talents to grow, thrive, reach others and serve our community.

The Finance Committee with our new Treasurer, Catherine Jones, are working to prepare on our accounts for last year; review systems and budget for the year ahead as many activities start up after lockdown. Voluntary unrestricted donations and bank balances fell last year. Restricted funds were boosted by the sale of the former APS Church last year which supplemented the Manse Fund to enable purchase of our new Manse at 24 Laurelhill Gardens. A decision as to whether to rent out or sell the former APS manse will be made shortly. We are very grateful to the late Bill Neely who gave a very generous bequest of £20,000 to Park Church.

Audio-visual facilities in the Peter Memorial Building are being reviewed and will be upgraded. A new church noticeboard has been ordered. Session are delighted that the Stirling Kirks Together (SKT) Friendship Lunches are being restarted in March, as well as the Easter Code for Primary children and the SKT Holiday club. The Sparks pre-school group continues to thrive, Coffee Club has resumed and tea and coffee are available after Sunday services. The church premises are being increasingly used which is welcome. Bookings for rooms should be made through the Administrator. Sandra Muir continues to represent Park Church in the Stirling Church eco-network. Prayer cards are taken out monthly by volunteers to some frailer or isolated members. Ian Ritchie has been nominated as an elder to attend this year's General Assembly in May.

It is lovely to be able to meet in person more often and make new friendships. We are grateful to new volunteers to join welcome team duties and hospitality rotas, but would be keen to have more. Please do not hesitate to contact the Minister, Attie, the Church Administrator, Sheena Tait, or myself with any queries, concerns or comments. These are challenging but exciting times! Finally can I ask you to support Attie by our prayers and actions in this new ministry?

Again thanks to you all for your encouragement

Peter

## **A Busy Place**

Members may be interested in what groups meet regularly in the Church premises. These include:

**Sundays- Scottish Recorder Orchestra – monthly- afternoons**

**Mondays-Stirling Chess Club- Anderson Hall evenings**

**Ladies Group alternate Monday evenings**

**Tuesdays **Choirs** \***Torbex Community Choir** Tuesday mornings**

**\***Stirling City Choir**- Tuesday evenings**

**\***NYCOS** (National Youth Choir of Scotland) occasional and summer school**

**Men's Badminton – Tuesday lunchtime**

**Stirling Floral Art Club- Tuesday 1-4pm monthly from March-May**

**Compassionate Friends (Bereavement Support)— monthly Tuesday evenings**

****Lent Bible Studies**- series of six starting 8<sup>th</sup> March 7pm**

**Wednesdays Friendship Lunches- 1-3pm monthly from March**

**Kirk Session monthly evenings**

**Thursdays Coffee Club – Thursdays 10.30-11.30pm**

**Our Guilds Together – Thursday afternoons monthly**

**Park Church Choir Practice- 8-9pm**

**Fridays SPARKS – Pre-school play group- 09.30-11.45am**

**4/6<sup>th</sup> Stirling Scout Group-Fridays - Beavers, Cubs and Scouts from 5.30pm**

**Saturdays Stagecoach Stage School 9-5.30 weekly and summer school**

**British Doctors and Dentists Group monthly 6.30pm**

**Stirling Presbytery has an office on the first floor and Stirling Street Pastors have an office on the top floor which they use as a base for patrols into the City Centre on Friday and Saturday nights**

Committee and Planning meetings, thrice yearly two day schools events and occasional conferences, workshops and parties also get fitted in.

**The Library is used for meetings with minister and Church Office for administration.**

The Sanctuary also used for choir and other concerts, schools events and services and messy church

Church events e.g. funerals, weddings and fundraisers are always given priority but there is still some spare room.

The Administrator, Sheena Tait, manages bookings and the diary.

## Bubblegum & Fluff December 2021

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December both mornings and afternoons we ran our Bubblegum & Fluff project for 120 Primary 5 children from Allans, Borestone and St Ninians Primary Schools for the first time for two years. It was a joy and a privilege to be able to do this once again, albeit with some adaptations because of Covid restrictions. The children all seemed to enjoy it and certainly engaged with all the activities, interacting enthusiastically. Evaluations we received from both staff and pupils indicated that the majority really enjoyed taking part in the experience, with comments such as:-

“I loved that we could have some fun and laughter.”

“I thought the craft work was very cool.”

“I learned that Jesus could change people.”

“I enjoyed every single second of it.”

As usual, in the final activity the children showed insight with some thoughtful, caring and loving wishes for other people at Christmas. However it was notable this year that for some this was a more difficult task than it had been in previous years, and many of the wishes were Covid related.



Our thanks as always goes to our many helpers who participated over the four sessions and helped things run so smoothly. And a special word of thanks must also go to the Kirk Session who agreed to finance a new large TV screen, and to the Property Committee for purchasing this. It added greatly to the presentation, and will be enormously helpful for both our other schools projects and many activities such as Holiday Club, Messy Church etc.



Our next programme, **Easter Code** takes place at the end of March with children from Primary 6 from all three schools, and we are particularly looking forward to working with this age group again as it was 2019 when we were last able to run this particular programme.

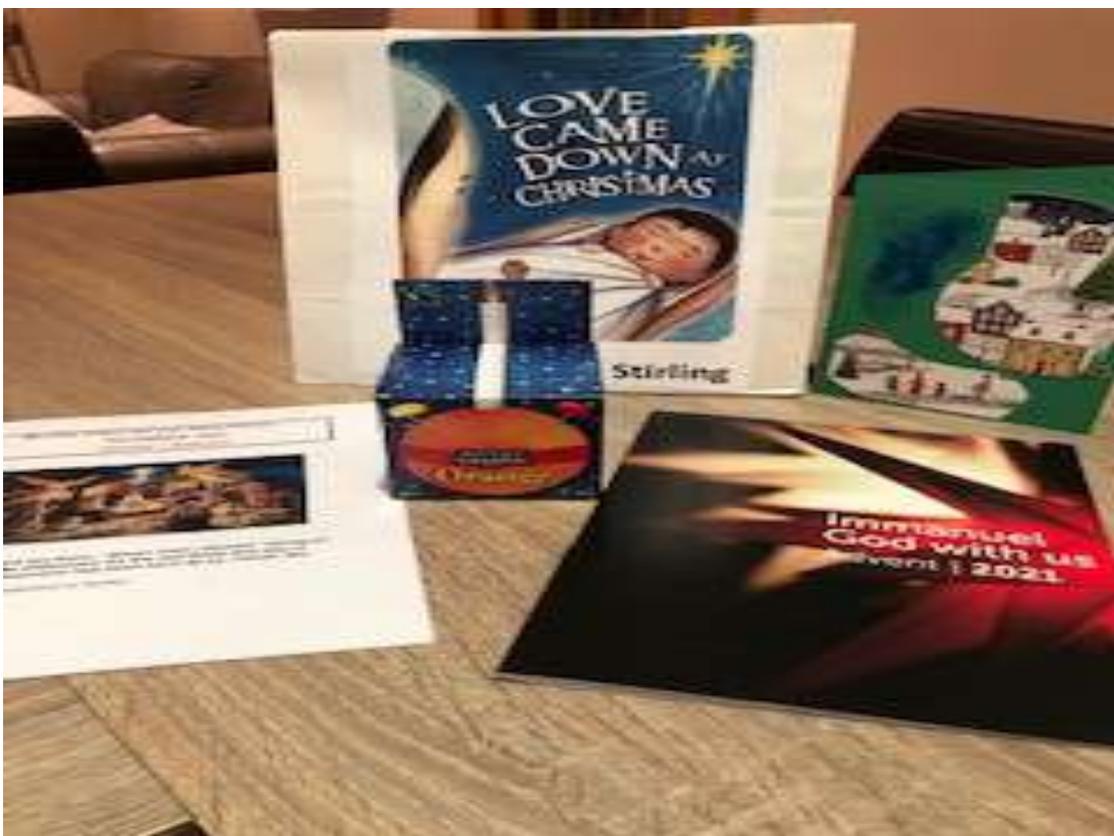
A warm welcome is extended to any member or friend of the congregation to come along on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> or Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March** and enjoy the fun

The Youth Committee

## Christmas in Church

Many thanks to all who donated at the Christmas services : our new Treasurer, Mrs Catherine Jones, was delighted to be able to send our gifts to the United Mission to Nepal where our Prayer Partners, Joel and Fiona Hafverstein have been serving and to Guide Dogs for the Blind .

Thanks also to John Magrath and colleagues who decorated the church and Willie & Evelyn Crawford for the beautiful tree for the Sanctuary which was much admired.



## December Friendship Bags

The prayer theme for our Friendship bags was the Nativity and included cards from Junior Church, an Advent leaflet and a chocolate treat.

Many thanks to all the helpers who have delivered the bags each month for the last year and to Moira Parry and Margaret Risk for the monthly prayers.

We are looking forward to restarting some of the activities which we have all missed in the pandemic like the Friendship lunch and afternoon teas in person!

# SPARKS

On 17th December 2021 our pre-school group SPARKS had its first Christmas party which was full of fun and games and lots of smiles and laughter. Thanks to all who made this a special event.

Left: throwing snowballs at the snowman

Below: musical chairs



This was a lovely way to finish 2021 and we are delighted that some others have now joined us for 2022.

Left: everyone enjoyed the special party snacks



There was a special visitor, Santa, who came with a sack full of toys for all of the children and the party rounded off with the children having individual photos taken with Santa at the Christmas tree in the church.

Moira Parry & Lyndsay Boyack



## The Tartan Pimpernel

In a previous newsletter there was an article about Rev. Donald Caskie, the minister of the Scots Kirk in Paris during World War 2 and I would like to draw your attention to the fact that there are two copies of his book in the church library. This is a book I can highly recommend to our congregation as it tells the story of a courageous man who believed strongly that what he did was directed by God.

One Sunday in June 1940, at the close of the service in the Scots Kirk that he had conducted he locked the building up, gave the key to a friend who had a café next to the Kirk and left Paris. It was dangerous for him to stay there as he had, on more than one occasion, denounced Hitler from the pulpit and was therefore on the Gestapo "Black List".

After a difficult journey to the south of France he ended up in Marseilles and commandeered the British Seaman's Mission near the Old Harbour. The Allied Intelligence Officers contacted him and thus the Seaman's Mission became a vital link on the escape route for our Armed Forces. Donald Caskie fed, clothed and gave the men shelter before sending them through the Pyrenees with forged papers. He also collected military information for the Allies which proved important. He was given the nickname "The Tartan Pimpernel" because of his help with the escape route, with reference to Baroness Orczy's book "The Scarlet Pimpernel".

Eventually Caskie was arrested by the Gestapo and sentenced to death in a Nazi Court. He was held in seven different prisons and miraculously saved from death by the intervention of a German padre. In his time in prison his faith shone through and he was respected by all the prisoners and even some of his German captors.

My mother had read this book and when I was a teenager she gave it to me to read. I was transfixed. I now have my mother's copy and every few years I read it again and it never fails to move me. Borrow this book from our library and read for yourself the story of this remarkable man and his faith, through a difficult period in history.

Moira Parry

## Church Library

**Faith for the Puzzled Man: A Biblical Guide for the Wandering Thinker by James Macnaught-KINDLE EDITION.**

Please note-we don't actually have this book as it has seemingly never gone to print but a kindle copy is available at price of £1.

James Macnaught (1907-1973) was a Glasgow-educated wartime army chaplain, Stirling parish minister -**here at our Church** -and Convener of the Church of Scotland's committee on Probationers and Transference of Ministers.

Chapters include-

**Beginning your journey**-which assumes the reader may even be agnostic.

**The Majesty of God**-revealed through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

**Things old and new**-with six pointers for today's wandering thinker.

Lyndsay Boyack



**Save the date!**

## **Park Church Congregational Lunch: Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup> 2022**

**Celebrating the formation of Park Church, Stirling in 2020,  
the calling of our new minister, Rev Attie Van Wyk in 2022,  
the reduction of Covid19 restrictions and the Platinum Jubilee!**

**After the service on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> there will be a light lunch,  
some party games for the children (and those young at heart)  
and an opportunity to meet friends old and new.**

**Michael Moore is booked for catering and we will use all areas of the church buildings  
and gardens to allow lots of space and ventilation.**

**Offers of help to set up the halls, gardens and games are welcome: please speak to  
Marjorie McGowan, Sarah Murdoch or the Administrator.**

**We can then set up a small group to co-ordinate the activities.**

**Details of how to book tickets for the event will follow.**



## Lent Bible Studies

Park Church and St.Ninian's Old Parish Church are holding a joint series of **Lent Bible Study evenings based on a study guide by Anne Calver entitled: "Who is the Christ" to explore different aspects of Christ's character.**

Through our five meetings we will discover fresh insights into the person of Jesus, and how He revealed the nature of God through His role as: The Builder, The Humble and Holy King, The Harvester, The Risen King, and The Great Commissioner.

Study notes will be provided.

We will meet on:

**Tuesday** 8th March,

**Thursday**, 17th March,

**Tuesday** 22nd March,

**Tuesday** 28th March,

**Tuesday** 5th April.

Meetings will be held at Park Church and will begin at 7pm.

All are welcome.

### **Other Dates for your diary :**

**Sunday 6th March-COMMUNION at 11am in Park Church**

**Easter Code** schools programme in Park Church on Friday 25th and Monday 28th March

**Stirling Kirks Together Holiday Club** in St.Ninian's Church April 5-8th

**Services in Annfield Care Home**-first Sunday in each month if restrictions allow

### **Easter Week Services**

We hope to have a number of Easter week services this year and will put details on the website, in the Sunday Order of Service and the Stirling Observer Community notices page.

Good Friday - 15 April

Holy Saturday - 16 April

Easter Day - 17 April

Easter Monday - 18 April

**General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh** : Saturday 21st to Friday 27th May can be viewed on-line via Church of Scotland website. Our Minister and Presbytery Elder, Ian Ritchie, will be attending as Commissioners –please pray for them in this important role.

## Mens Badminton Club



The Men's Badminton Group has re-started after covid restrictions were lifted.

It meets every Tuesday at 12-30p.m. in the Main Hall.

We currently have 7 members but new members are always welcome regardless of age or ability.

We normally play for about 90 minutes and the sessions are a mixture of games of doubles and a bit of chat.

Badminton is a good form of exercise so why not pop in, say hello and join in?

## FIRST AID IN PARK CHURCH PREMISES



The new first aid box and pad of accident forms are on the top and middle shelves of the marked cupboard in the kitchen. All users of the box, the cool packs, gloves and irrigation equipment must complete a form to enable us to monitor accidents and replace items used.

**Please alert the Administrator and Session Clerk to any significant injury which may have to be reported.**

A second first aid set is located in the marked cupboard in the coffee bar in the Anderson Hall upstairs.

The church defibrillator is located on the wall leading from the halls to the sanctuary. It has audible instructions which tell the person using the machine how to use it. There are also pictures on the wallchart and inside the box.

**Before using the defibrillator-call an ambulance on 999 to "Park Church, Park Terrace-FK8 2NA" to ensure you get support quickly.**



## What's the Birdie? Bird Quiz

1. Rod Hull's feathered friend
2. Does this bird spend the hours of darkness in a force 10?
3. A cowardly mallet
4. Jesus said "are there not two "xxxxxxx" sold for a farthing?"
5. Rug brigade (anagram)
6. Quiet swain
7. Glutton
8. Shelley wrote an ode to it
9. Bad luck for the ancient mariner
10. Found among most riches
11. Rating Pam (anagram)
12. The first bird Noah sent out of the ark
13. Royal angler
14. Naïve leg
15. Find another one in here
16. One can't, but "xxx" can
17. Would you find pearls in this nest?
18. Messrs Williams, Hood and Cook



## LENT APPEAL

The Jam Jar Appeal for **WaterAid** will take place during **Lent** ( Wednesday 2nd March to Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April)

This appeal will help to transform the lives of communities impacted by **Climate Change**. Longer droughts are drying up springs and more extreme flooding is polluting fragile water sources in places like Mozambique where almost half the population have no clean water close to home!

### Facts :

One in ten people around the world do not have clean water close to home

One in four have no decent toilets

Without clean water their education , security and health suffer.

To take part ,start collecting in a Jam Jar every time you use water. Labels to put inside the jars to record your Gift Aid will be available at the front and back doors from 27<sup>th</sup> Feb.

They should then be returned on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April.  
Thank you, Helen Reid

# Flower Ministry

Can I take this opportunity of thanking once again all those who have donated flowers over the last few months and also those who have arranged and delivered. We have received many notes of thanks from members of our congregation who have greatly appreciated being remembered and supported at what may have been a difficult time. This is a very significant and meaningful part of our outreach work!

Should you wish to donate flowers in the future or to help in any way. please do get in touch. I can be contacted on 07979875304 or have a word after the service. There are still some vacant Sundays in March, April and May and the flower team are always happy to arrange for you!

You may also have noticed that if flowers have been donated in memory of a family member or friend, this is now acknowledged in the order of service on that particular Sunday. We are pleased to be able to do this if you so wish.

A flower quote I came across recently, "Where flowers grow, there is hope".  
I rather liked it!

Maureen McArthur



## The Ladies Group

The Ladies Group meet on alternate Monday evenings at 7.30pm in the Church Hall from September to March

On Monday 7th March we are delighted to welcome Tricia Chillas who will be putting us through our paces with some gentle exercise to music.

On Monday 21st March we will be returning to the golf club for our closing dinner.

Due to the ongoing COVID restrictions we have decided to postpone the coffee morning from Saturday 5th March until September when we hope arrangements will be more like pre-pandemic times.

The Ladies 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 these meetings.

## Update on HMP Corntonvale and Glenochil Visitor's Centres

The charity responsible for running the Visitors Centres has changed its name to “**Forth Valley Inclusion-support for people in prison and their visitors**”, to more accurately reflect their role. Face to face prison visiting was reintroduced in May 2021 and it started slowly. Staff continue to work in partnership with external agencies to support families in their communities. They also seek to engage with local churches, colleges and the university to recruit volunteers.

The new prison at Cornton Vale was due to open in May 2022 but has now been put back to September of this year. There are only 46-50 women in Cornton Vale at present, the others have been relocated in one of two units, either in Dundee or Glasgow. The remaining women have been placed in other establishments.

The “Families Together Programme” in Glenochil has restarted with both Harvestoun and Abercromby dads (this includes sex offenders). Topics include culture and tradition, mindfulness and yoga, healthy living and craft sessions. These classes have proved very popular and culminated in a family day event. A good step forward.

Eleanore Hunter



**Saviour God, whose well-meaning disciples sometimes missed the point, help us to keep our focus on You.**

**Forgive us, we humbly ask, when we have been overtaken by our own projects rather than nurture the life of Your Kingdom.**

**We have looked other ways, and not been mindful of You.**

**We have hurt others and ourselves.**

**Draw us close we pray; may You speak words of forgiveness within us.**

**Re-ignite the fire of faith and inspire us with the breath of Your Spirit.**

**With the glory of Jesus Christ reflected upon our faces may we shine for You each day.**

Rev Bill Taylor—retired Prison Chaplain (from Church of Scotland website)



Dear friends,

Thank you so much for your prayer support throughout our time in Nepal. When we last wrote in September, we were on the verge of having to leave the country and work remotely. As we now serve our final months with the United Mission to Nepal (UMN), these would be our priorities for prayer:

- 1. For us as we say goodbye to many close friends and colleagues.**
- 2. For Dhana Lama, Joel's successor as head of UMN.**
- 3. For the smooth and rapid approval of UMN's remaining Project Agreements.**
- 4. For COVID vaccines to reach Nepalis in hard-to-reach corners of the country.**

When we found out last year that our various agreement and visa/passport renewal delays would force us to leave Nepal until 2022, we held on to the trust that God would be with us through all the disruption and uncertainty. And we've experienced God's provision in the many opportunities that came during our "mini-exile." We were given free accommodation in southern England. Caleb and Isaac quickly got their school places and thrived with the return to in-person classes. Fiona was able to submit a PhD research proposal on medicinal plants in Nepal to the Ethnobotany programme at the University of Kent, which was enthusiastically received. Joel joined a number of other Christian activists at the COP26 conference in Glasgow and shared about the impacts of climate change in Nepal.

There have also been strains and disappointments alongside the blessings. Joel has enjoyed a very good relationship with UMN's board and supporting partners; so it was sad not to be able to take part in person in the final board meeting and partner assembly of his time as UMN director. (Though it's a blessing to have been able to take part at all, to an extent that would have been impossible a few years ago before the pandemic familiarised us all with Zoom.)

The boys did experience some culture shock in their UK school, and were more than ready to return to more familiar turf in Nepal. Sadly, shortly before our return, our pet dog Muffin was killed by a shocking leopard attack; that was a great loss for Isaac in particular.

Multiple moves between continents have taken their toll in raised stress levels. At Christmas, we all tested COVID-positive and had to push back our return to Nepal by three weeks. Fiona was hospitalised for three nights with a migraine that seems to have been super-charged by COVID. Thankfully Caleb and Isaac were never symptomatic, and neither Joel nor Fiona have experienced lingering symptoms.

Now we are well, back in our familiar corner of the Kathmandu Valley, and about to begin our goodbye trips to the various UMN field offices and hospitals. Please pray for safety in travel, for good farewells, and for our emotional health as we wrap up this chapter in our family's story.

Please also pray for Joel's successor, Dhana Lama, UMN's first Nepali executive director. After working with the mission for 28 years, she has now taken the helm with grace and courage during a time where we still face a lot of uncertainty and many challenges.

We have been writing for some years asking for prayer for UMN's agreement renewals—and slowly but surely, those prayers are being answered. Last week, Dhana and the government signed one much-delayed Project Agreement at last, covering much of our village-level work this year. Three more Agreements still need approval to ensure that UMN can carry out its planned work through 2025. Please continue to pray for UMN through this marathon process!

Like most of the world, Nepal has undergone a steep wave of COVID cases driven by the Omicron variant, but that has largely subsided now, with very few casualties. Our prayers for Nepal to receive a sufficient vaccine supply have been answered, with over 50% of the population vaccinated and enough committed stocks to reach the rest. There is still a challenge of logistics—of getting the vaccines out to hard-to-reach corners of the Himalayas. Please pray for government officials trying to achieve this during a season of continuing political turmoil.

Even though we are leaving Nepal soon, we hope you will continue to pray for the United Mission to Nepal and its faithful service to Nepal. Please consider signing up for their regular prayer updates [here](#).

As for the Hafvensteins, we hope that Fiona's PhD research will bring us back to Nepal as a family from sometime in 2023. We will write more about that in our final update in a few months' time!

Joel and Fiona  
Caleb and Isaac  
United Mission to Nepal



Left: Joel addressing the Board Meeting of UMN for the final time as Director by Zoom virtual platform

Right : Dhana Lama, the new Nepali Executive Director signing the Project Agreement renewal in February 2022.



## Bird Quiz Answers:

1. Emu
2. Nighthingale
3. Yellowhammer
4. Sparrow
5. Budgerigar
6. Plover
7. Gannet
8. Skylark
9. Albatross
10. Ostrich
11. Ptarmigan
12. Raven
13. Kingfisher
14. Greenshank
15. Heron
16. Toucan
17. Oyster catcher
18. Robin



### A Favourite Hymn

#### **Praise My Soul the King of Heaven (CH4 Hymn 160)**

The words of this great hymn were written by Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847), who based it on Psalm 103. He also wrote “Abide with me” and Praise the Lord, His glories show”.

The music was composed by John Goss (1800-1880), who was organist at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. He also wrote the tune for the Christmas carol “See! In yonder manger low”.

“Praise my soul” has a rousing start with verses 1 and 2 thanking God for all his goodness. Verse 3 is quieter, speaking of God’s compassion, while verse 4 compares man’s frailty with God’s ensuring nature. The final verse ends triumphantly with a special organ accompaniment.

Ross McGowan



## **Stirling Eco- Network News : January 2022**

The last meeting of the network was on Tuesday 18th January when representatives from six local churches plus two members from Eco-congregation Scotland met on Zoom.

### **COP26**

Some members attended the walk to Glasgow Green during COP26. They distributed home baking to participants who had walked in the relay. Members of the Sikh community distributed curries.

Prayer boats made by members of congregations around the UK were on display in Glasgow Cathedral.

### **Joint ecumenical service**

Discussions are continuing regarding a joint service with a climate change theme. The rector of Holy Trinity Church will co-ordinate with interested clergy from other churches. The service is likely to be held in Stirling Methodist Church, both in person and through Zoom.

### **Interfaith Scotland – Trees for Life**

Faith groups are encouraged to consider planting trees at Harmony Grove in the Scottish Highlands. As an example – Stirling Methodist Church is donating one sapling for each decade the church has been in Stirling. Each tree costs £6.

### **Future Plans**

Meetings will be quarterly with the possibility of extra meetings when events are being planned.

During Creation Season in September, churches will be encouraged to include eco matters along with harvest celebrations.

At network meetings, representatives could explain the green initiatives in their churches.

Possible guest speakers include: representation from Zero Waste Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland (churches are mostly historic buildings which provides challenges when trying to reduce their carbon footprint).

### **Next meeting**

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30. Topic: Scottish Episcopal Church's tool kit – actions to be taken to achieve the goal of being carbon neutral by 2030.

Sandra Muir-Park Church representative

## **New logo & heading for stationary and badges: progress report**

In 2021 the Communication Committee looked at the images used on letter headings, newsletters and name badges by congregations in Scotland. Kate Langley, one of our Elders, is an professional artist and we sought her advice and help.

Our intention was to show that Christ is central to all we do and that we are more than a building -any building. Park Church is a vibrant Scottish congregation which comes together to reach out to each other, the community and overseas.

With the congregation's name "Park Church" reflecting our geographical heritage of Allan Park and King's Park plus our status as an eco-congregation, we sought to incorporate a natural symbol without losing our Christian focus. Kate was given a very hard task and she rose to the challenge of her remit designing a modern take on the logo. Kate's design has incorporated the cross on blue and white (Scottish flag colours), the petals join together in the centre and then reach out to the sun just the church members come together in Christ and look outwards to love and serve in his name.



Marie Muir kindly printed new welcome badges for those greeting visitors to the church.

The logo has been used on our website, our vision document and is incorporated into updated visiting cards for Elders to leave when they undertake pastoral duties.

Please let the Administrator ( Sheena Tait) know if there are any other things that might be needed and the Committee will liaise with her and the Session.

Sarah Murdoch, Convenor Communications Committee

## **SUNDAY COFFEE**

**I am very pleased to report that we are once again able to serve coffee, tea and biscuits after our Sunday services—and hope you will join us when you can.**

**We have a small group of enthusiastic volunteers who help with this on a rota basis, but further assistance would be welcome! Ladies and gentlemen are equally welcome and we have unisex aprons for church helpers use.**

**If you are able to help us and join the rota please speak to me on a Sunday morning, call me on 01786-461258 or email me at : [ranandmmcgowan@gmail.com](mailto:ranandmmcgowan@gmail.com).**

**Marjorie McGowan**



## Annual Car Parking Permits from March 2022

There is **NO** restriction on parking in Church grounds for those attending Sunday services or meetings in the church: although spaces outside the front of the Church should be reserved for those with limited mobility (and wedding or funeral cars).



However, the Kirk Session considered it is reasonable to seek some contribution to the upkeep of the car park surface (which needs regular maintenance to fill potholes) from those members wishing to use spare capacity for parking their cars when going into town midweek.

Car Parking Permits are now available and for sale for £25 on Sundays in the Hall after the service and from the Church Administrator during office hours (Tuesday-Friday 0930-1200).

Peter Murdoch, Session Clerk



## Fund– raising marathon run Sunday 15th May 2022

Gordon Luke, one of our Elders is running a marathon with a guide person to help him (he is registered blind) in memory of his late wife Carolyn who actively contributed to the St.Columba's church youth outreach and website design. Gordon and his Guide dog are normally seen in the back of the Sanctuary co-ordinating the sound system.



Gordon is seen here in the middle of the picture at his ordination as an Elder together with his Guide dog.

We would want to wish Gordon every blessing in this tremendous effort and sponsorship forms will be available nearer the date from the administrator and a link to the donation page published in the order of service.

## Mrs Jean McAllister -Tribute from the Ladies Group

It was with great shock and sorrow that we learned of the passing of our dear friend Jean just a week before Christmas. Jean was quite simply a good and lovely person. She led our Ladies Group meetings an understated modesty, a smile and a laugh. She welcomed everyone warmly and always had a word with each and every lady. Jean was interested in and concerned about others, often asking about or families and their various issues!

Jean led our committee meetings in her home with a cuppa and some treats- what fun memories those are! She managed our many digressions, steering us subtly back to the matter in hand! She was a practical efficient person who did what had to be done, who thought and planned ahead, but with no fuss. She did lead, but she also sought advice, listened and then we all came to a decision.

Dear Jean we will always miss your lovely presence, we will try to follow your example and will continue to provide and enjoy the fun and fellowship of Park Church Ladies Group for which you were greatly responsible over many years.

**Alison Magrath**

Jean died suddenly on 17th December. She was a much loved and highly respected member of Park Church and President of the Ladies Group. A retired teacher and Deacon in the former St.Columba's congregation for 20 years, Jean actively contributed to the life and worship of the church especially supporting outreach to young people through Messy Church, Holiday Club and Schools programmes.

Jean enjoyed travel and golf making many friends wherever she went. In retirement she had time to enjoy her grandchildren and she will be especially missed by her husband Andrew, son Stuart and daughter, Lorna.

Sarah Murdoch



## **The Ladies Group**



It has was suggested by the Committee and agreed by those present at the meeting on 8th February 2022 that the Ladies Group will donate the church flowers that they gift annually, in memory of Jean, on a Sunday in September

## Mrs Elizabeth Hunter

Mrs Elizabeth Hunter ("Bet") to all of us in Park Church.

Born at Forth Village, Educated at Forth Primary School and Lanark Grammar School She trained for her career in nursing at Motherwell Fever Hospital and Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

A lady with a keen enquiring mind and an undaunted spirit to challenge it. One such trial was the computer-she achieved her goals and became a competent daily user.

Her family- whom she raised with her late husband, Bert, were her pride and joy. They were equally devoted to her and responded to her needs with exemplary care until her passing. Although in later days Bet's physical health declined her intellectual ability remained: she continued to phone her family and friends amazing them with her skill and communication. Her kindness, sympathy, encouragement and support were always present.

Bet remained well-informed and could converse on many subjects from art to knitting patterns and soup making. She could talk about her garden for hours on end! Her skill in gardening produced a magnificent display of flowers of astonishing variety and colour each year. Her seeds and cuttings were freely shared and we will have their blooms to remind us of her as we propagate them this year.

Bet's faith and trust in God was embedded in her life. She would speak of the support that she got from her faith as she endured some of life's difficulties.

Bet appreciated the church family and how she was supported during the lockdowns by visits from her Elder. Regular visits, waving and calling to her at the window of the sheltered flats and kind phone calls.

As she approached death Bet got great comfort from the scripture readings and prayer she shared with the Session Clerk in her own home and by phone to the Care Home where she spent her final weeks.

Park Church will remember our hundred year old friend with great affection.

Jean Shearer



Above: Bet in her garden in 2017 with blue poppies.

Below on her 100th birthday at Hogmanay in 2021



## Orange Marmalade Loaf

### Ingredients:

**175G Self raising flour**

**115 g Butter**

**Pinch of salt**

**85g sultanas**

**85g soft brown sugar**

**2 medium eggs beaten**

**115g orange marmalade + 2 tablespoons extra for glazing (optional)**

1. Pre-heat oven to 160C (140 fan), gas mark 3 (325) and line a large loaf tin (2lb)
2. Rub flour, salt and butter together until mixture looks like breadcrumbs, and then stir in sugar and sultanas.
3. Pour in beaten egg and mix well with spoon.
4. Spoon a third of the mixture into the loaf tine then spread half the marmalade over the mixture. Top with another third of the mixture then the other half of the marmalade. Finish by putting in the last third of the mixture and smoothing over the top.
5. Bake in a preheated oven for at least one hour or until golden brown and firm to touch ( I found it took 90 minutes in my old fan oven)
6. Leave to cool slightly in the tin before turning onto a wire rack.
7. Warm the extra 2 tablespoons of marmalade and brush over the cake while still warm.
8. Leave to cool completely and then slice.

This cake freezes well but the glaze can get sticky when defrosted so I would omit the glaze if planning to freeze it – still tastes delicious!

Sarah



## A special bird box for the Sparks Pre-school playgroup



The children and helpers at the Sparks playgroup would like to share with you pictures of a handcrafted bird box which has been specially made and donated .

It has been designed to replicate the church buildings with accommodation for four bird families at the rear. "Airbnb" with a difference!

The pictures were taken in the vestry before it was fixed outside ready for occupants.

Many thanks to all who made and gifted this wonderful box.



## Membership Roll, Elders Districts and Newsletters

As we are coming out of lockdown it is lovely to make new friends. We appreciate that the last two years have been very hard for many people and regrettably some individuals have had little or no contact with the church. Not everyone had an allocated elder prior to the union and some previous elders have stepped down from duties for health or other reasons.

Elders' districts are being reorganised to try to ensure that all who wish to have an allocated elder as an additional contact with the Church , are offered one.

**Please let me, or the Church Administrator know if your contact details have changed and if you do not wish to have an elder.**

**It would be appreciated if you also let us know if you do not wish to receive a newsletter and if you would prefer either an electronic or paper copy.**

At the end of December 2021 the number of members on the Park Church Roll was 447. This was down from 464 a year previously -largely because of 16 deaths last year.

Session join me in assuring you that we will work together with our experienced and capable new minister both to reconnect with old friends and also welcome newcomers to Park Church.

All are welcome.

Peter Murdoch, Session Clerk



## Stirling and District Floral Art Club

New users of the Main Hall are the local floral art club who are returning to in-person meetings after two years of lockdown restrictions.

Three spring meetings have been organised:

**15th March 2022, 12 April 2022, 10th May 2022 all at 2.30pm**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> March one of our own local members and florist, Ann Hertwig, will be giving a demonstration entitled "Flowers with Feeling".

We will offer a cup of tea served at tables at the far end of the hall from 2pm so don't worry if you arrive early.

**Visitors and new members are always welcome. Meetings cost £7.00 for visitors**

Please feel free to contact the Honorary Secretary, Mrs Sarah Murdoch, if you need further information on 01786-473087. E-mail : [Murdochsarah@btinternet.com](mailto:Murdochsarah@btinternet.com)

## Present from our twinned congregation in Paris

Our friends in Pentemont-Luxembourg churches have sent copies of a beautiful personalised calendar with photos from the congregation and Session to ourselves in Park Church at Christmas. I have placed one in the Main Hall for everyone to enjoy.



There is also an invitation to the congregation and friends in Stirling to visit if and when they are able, when hospitality will be given. If you are interested in this please give your name to the Administrator, Sheena Tait.

Sarah Murdoch



**Thy Kingdom Come will be held between  
Ascension and Pentecost, 26th May to  
Sunday 5th June 2022.**

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. What started in 2016 as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

Since its start in May 2016 God has grown Thy Kingdom Come from a dream of possibility into a movement. Christians from 172 countries have taken part in praying 'Come Holy Spirit', so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

This praying together has been across our diversity and differences as every person, household and church are encouraged to pray in their own way. According to the annual survey findings an astonishing percentage of people said they were praying for family and friends to come to faith in Jesus, and a significant number of people join in for the first time, we recognise there is much more we can do together to help *Thy Kingdom Come* be fully in the lifeblood of the Church.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- **Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ**
- **Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus**
- **Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness**

After the very first Ascension Day the disciples gathered with Mary, constantly devoting themselves to prayer while they waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Like them, our reliance on the gift of the Holy Spirit is total – on our own we can do nothing.

We are praying that the Spirit will inspire and equip us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our friends and families, our communities and networks. It has been amazing how many varied ways there have been in which people from every tradition have taken up this challenge. The effects have been remarkable.

The organisers say "It is our prayer that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves, and respond and follow Him. Specifically, we again invite each and every Christian across the globe to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call."

Whether you have joined in 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, you are invited you to take part – along with churches from over 80 different denominations & traditions in nearly 90% of countries around the world.



**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK IS  
15-21st MAY 2022**

## **ENVELOPES**

**Christian Aid envelopes will be available in church (including Gift Aid details if this applies).**

## **JUST GIVING**

**Helen Reid has created a Park Church Stirling Just Giving page if you wish to have details about this please contact the Administrator (Sheena Tait)**

**Many thanks from Helen Reid (475021) Helen McDonald (474283)**



## **Lynne Swanston**

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Lynne, a trained Church Youth Worker, who helped at a number of joint Stirling Kirks Together events including the HIV Friendship Lunch, Holiday Clubs and Messy Church.

She will be missed by her family, friends and colleagues in St. Mark's where she so enthusiastically worshipped and witnessed for many years.

Lynne is seen left welcoming folk to with Alison McLean (the Treasurer for Friendship Lunches) at the 2017 HIV Fundraising SKT Lunch.



**This newsletter covers March to the end of May and several of the main church seasons :**

## Lent (2 March - 14 April 2022)

Lent is the 40-day period before Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday. During Lent Christians may fast, or give up some of their usual routine, to give time to personal examination and to reflect on their relationship with God.

## Holy Week (10 - 16 April 2022)

Holy Week is the last week of Lent. It is the week preceding Easter and the period in the Christian year when Christians remember the last week in Jesus' life.

## Easter

Easter is the season in which Christians remember the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is the most important festival in the Christian year.

Good Friday - 15 April

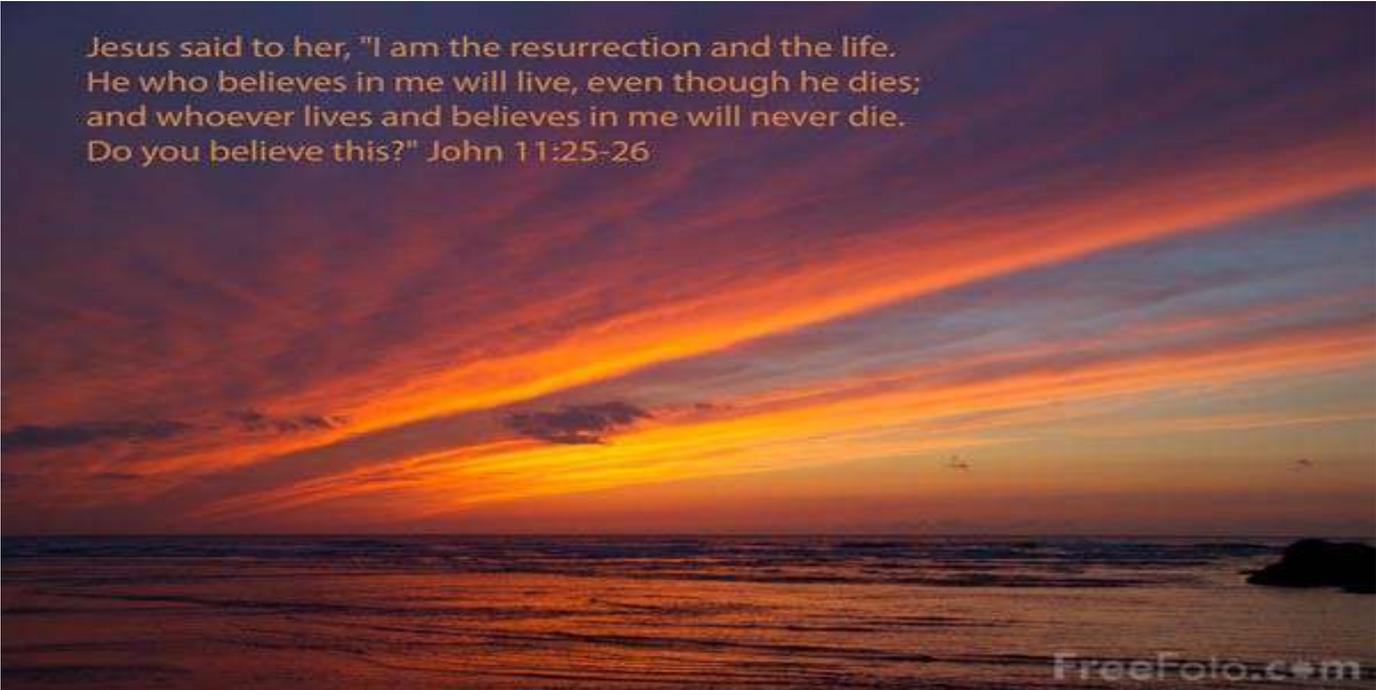
Holy Saturday - 16 April

Easter Sunday or Easter Day - 17 April

Easter Monday - 18 April

## Ascension Day (26 May 2022)

Ascension Day commemorates the ascension of Jesus into heaven 40 days after his resurrection from the dead. It can be understood traditionally as his taking up into heaven at the conclusion of his earthly ministry.



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.  
He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;  
and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.  
Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26



### 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:

Mr Robert Dunbar Gordon (retired Elder), Grendon Court, Stirling.

Mrs Betty Cameron, Beechwood Gardens, Stirling.

Mrs Jean McAllister (former Deacon), Coney Park, Stirling.

Mrs Elizabeth (Bet) Hunter , Randolphill Nursing Home (formerly Birch Avenue), Stirling

Mrs Jess Bate, latterly Forthbank Nursing Home, Stirling.

### NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS: NEW CONTRIBUTORS WELCOMED

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 20th May 2022**

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.

### **SUMMER EDITION ( JUNE, JULY AUGUST 2022)**

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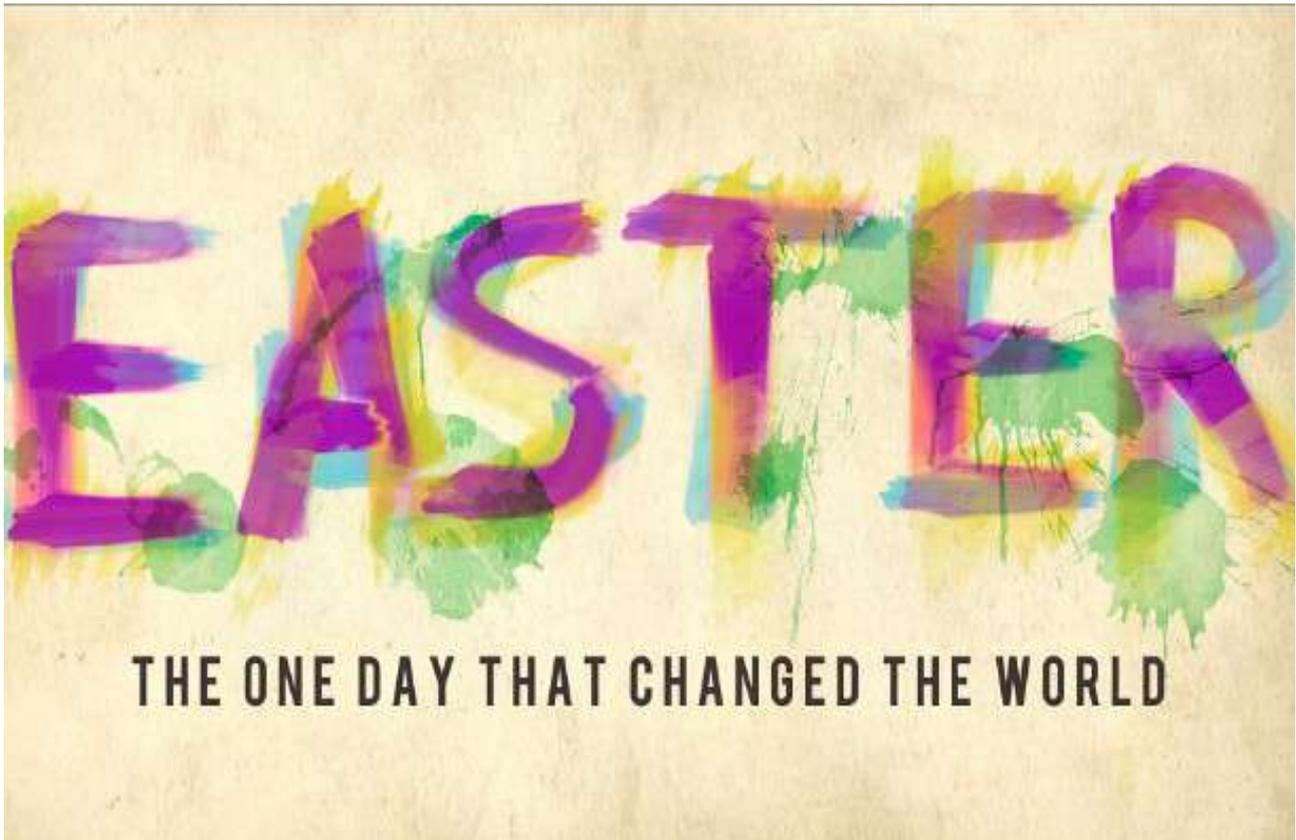
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**Welcome to Park Church, Stirling, Park Terrace, Stirling FK8 2NA**

**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](http://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)**