

The *Lych Gate*

The Newsletter of St Machar's Ranfurly Church



October 2021

Volume 23 Issue 5



FROM THE MINISTER

As I write this it is already dark at quarter to eight in the evening... Where has the summer gone? Still, there is still plenty of beauty to enjoy outside during the daylight. I have enjoyed doing the Creation Time series – Christian views on creation and the environment have always been an interest of mine. There is so much in the Bible that is relevant, but we're maybe not used to looking for it.

Of course, it is one thing thinking and talking about it, and another acting on what we've learned. As the apostle James said in his letter:

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. (James 1:22-24)

As COP26 approaches it is to be hoped that world leaders will also put their money where their mouth is; but in truth it is a responsibility for us all.

It is the fifth mark of mission that the Church of Scotland has accepted:

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Some have questioned whether this is part of our Christian mission, but it flows from our understanding of a Creator God who has sent his Son to reconcile all things (the cosmos) to himself:

'In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.' Colossians 1:20

So if it was part of God's mission to

recreate the heavens and the earth by reconciling all things to himself, then surely it should be ours also.

We cannot be 'so heavenly minded so as to be of no earthly use', in fact this attitude stems from a misunderstanding of what heaven is!

It is the hope of a new heaven and a new earth that can inspire us to work in the here and now for a greener and fairer world; without this hope our labour would be in vain, but we know God will not let go the work of his hands (Philippians 1:6).

It is certainly this hope that keeps me from despairing, and I pray it is this hope which will spur you on to faithful action too.

Yours,
Hanneke

FLOWERS

In view of the ongoing Covid restrictions it is not possible for many people to enter the church on an ad hoc basis therefore the flower rota has been suspended for the meantime. I have been putting flowers in the church each Sunday mainly using money that is in the flower fund. A few members have given me money but the fund is taking the main strain. So if anyone would like to donate money for flowers there are a number of ways you can do this:



- put money in an envelope marked flower fund and put it in the plate on a Sunday morning.
- you can also transfer money via our church account and

email the treasurer - treasurer@stmacharsranfurlychurch.org.uk

- hand it to me any Sunday you are at church.

Thanks to those who have already donated and to those who will in the future.

Norma Hancock.

CHOIR - SINGING IN THE RAIN

St. Francis of Assisi said this: "He who sings prays twice". Since March 2020 our worship has been nearly devoid of singing. The familiar saying "you only miss something when it is gone" made me start to consider the importance of music playing such an important part of worship, especially when the choir was rehearsing on zoom and there was no congregational singing whatsoever. Aside from reciting *The Lord's Prayer*, the one aspect of a Church service which unites a congregation and is about the only aspect of worship we all, actively, participate in simultaneously is the singing of the hymns. When we sing, we sing to God. To hear a congregation sing *Love divine, Guide me O thou great Jehovah, How shall I sing that majesty* and *To God be the glory* to name but a few at the top of their voices can be really special. It's this communal singing which goes some way to unite people. It isn't just at Church when singing unites people either! There's something rather powerful when tens of thousands of supporters sing the national anthem and other songs during sporting contests; when people sing *Happy birthday* at a birthday party; and even when strangers come into your booth and join in a favourite song during a karaoke. There's something about music, and singing, which unites and brings people, even total strangers together.

Back in Reformation times, Martin Luther wanted the congregation to

play more of an active role in worship. Services could last for four hours with little in the way of congregational participation. Luther changed this and chorales which would often be set to popular, secular tunes were a way of introducing communal singing into worship. For instance, *The Passion Chorale* which we sing to *O Sacred head sore wounded*, began life as a drinking song from the taverns of Leipzig. In our own times our hymn book has many hymns set to popular folk melodies and I have been (un)lucky enough to sing "Choruses" set to the tunes of *Match of the Day* and *The Flintstones*. Experiences I'd rather not repeat. However, if these recognisable melodies are what it takes to connect someone to God, surely that's all for the better?

In my opinion the singing of a hymn or the choir singing an anthem seems to draw us as a congregation to God. An anthem provides a space in the service to gather our thoughts after the sermon, providing an opportunity to contemplate the minister's words and a moment to reflect. The hymns (usually chosen to reflect the theme of the service) help the congregation by enforcing the meaning and message of the act of worship. Music has the ability to express more than the spoken word which makes the singing of hymns far more personal and spiritual than we perhaps imagine.

As part of the Gold Award exam in the Royal School of Church Music's Voice for Life Chorister training programme,

the candidates are asked to discuss with the examiner the role of ministry as part of the choir. The candidate shares their experience of the various skills and attributes being in a choir gives them: social skills, leadership skills, performing skills, musical skills and religious awareness. Additionally, the candidates have to show some understanding of how music can speak to a congregation. The power of music is such that it has the ability to calm, heal, or inspire others and when the true meaning of the music and text is revealed can be immensely deep and moving. After eighteen months away, I hope you, as a member of the congregation are ready to connect more with God through the act of singing. Singing in Church is not a performance but us speaking to God and connecting with him.

Singing the hymns might not be enough for you and the choir is now rehearsing on Thursday evenings from 7.30 p.m. until 9.00 p.m. in the Church. The repertoire this term covers everything from John Rutter, Karl Jenkins and Schubert to more modern, spiritual songs, and beautiful arrangements by Mack Wilberg (director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir) and the late Gerre Hancock (Master of the Music at St. Thomas' 5th Avenue, New York). Do come and join us.

Ian Munro

FROM A VICTORIAN VISITOR

Here is another page from the 'visitors' book of my grandmother. This little leather album was used each time a visitor came to call and after tea in the pantry or front room, they would write a few words or a poem in this little book. This poem about friendship was written by and signed by my grandmother in 1904.

Helen Bullen

FRIENDSHIP

As the green of the leaves in a garden gay
That makes all the colourings blend
So in the noon of our youth and joy
is the love of a loyal friend

As a well proven staff on the climbers hand
When he fain would the heights ascend

So in the stress and strain of life
is the love of a trusted friend.

As the glow of a fire in a winter's eve
When the days work comes to an end
So in the grey of our life's last years
is the love of a faithful friend.

ST. MACHAR'S RANFURLY JUNIOR CHOIR

We have recently started a junior choir at St. Machar's which is open to all children in the P3 - P7 age bracket. The choir meets on Thursdays from 4.00 p.m. - 5.00 p.m. in the Church.

Our rehearsals begin with some warm-ups, we play some games and sing some songs. With Hallowe'en and Harvest just around the corner that's what we've been focussing on this term. *Double Trouble* by John Williams from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* film seems to be going down well with the children as is *Touch the earth lightly* which we've sung in Church on a couple of occasions recently.

With the COP 26 conference approaching alongside Harvest it is quite good to get the children thinking about the planet and the environment. After all, they are our future and it is vitally important we leave the earth in a better state for them than it currently is in. *Touch the*

earth lightly is a really simple, yet thought provoking hymn which the children seem to have taken to heart and enjoy both singing and reflecting on.

Touch the earth lightly is by the New Zealand hymn writer Shirley Erena Murray (1931 - 2020) and I believe this draws on some Maori traditions. The Maori believing that the planet is a gift to us from God, it is our responsibility to look after it and pass it over to the next generation and so on. The first verse acts as a simple message of how we should be caring for the environment and is in a major key. The second verse is rather darker in tone and is telling us exactly how we've been treating the planet and the damage we've caused. Whilst the melody stays the same (or does it?) the harmony shifts from major to minor. The very last note of the 2nd verse causes me some consideration, if we sing it as written the verse

finishes in the minor, if we raise the note by a semitone we finish in the major - an element of hope and . The third and final verses, return to the major key and act as a prayer and a promise we make to God that we will change and look after the planet.

Simple words. Simple tune. Profound message. There's something in that hymn which has struck a chord (no pun intended) with the junior choir members. Whilst our rehearsals are fun, singing a song/hymn such as *Touch the earth lightly* is re-iterating the environmental messages they are getting at school, it is teaching them the meaning of Harvest but also covers a little bit of music theory and gets them thinking more about music as well. The children really seem to be enjoying their Thursday afternoons, and if you know of any other children in the village (and surrounding villages) please do encourage them along.

Ian Munro

HARVEST



Our Harvest Service was held on Sunday 26th September. Items were donated to the Renfrewshire

Foodbank and cash was donated to the Foodbank and to the Christian Aid Harvest Appeal. The General Assembly of 2021 has asked congregations to hold a **National Giving Day** to reflect on God's presence in challenging times and to offer gifts of thanksgiving back to God. Congregations can pick their own causes to donate to. The Kirk Session decided to combine our National Giving Day with our Harvest Appeal and so we are raising money for the **Renfrewshire Food Bank** and the

Christian Aid Harvest Appeal. If you were unable to attend on the 26th you can donate online directly to [Give to the Renfrewshire Foodbank](#) or [Give to Christian Aid Harvest Appeal](#) You can also transfer your gift via our church account as long as you email our treasurer so he knows it is for the two causes (it will be split equally in this case).
St Machar's Ranfurly Church,
Clydesdale Bank, Sort Code 82-61-11,
Account Number: 9015 5171

1ST BRIDGE OF WEIR BOYS' BRIGADE

THE BOYS'
BRIGADE

> the adventure begins here

1st Bridge of Weir Company

JOIN NOW!

Anchors	P1 - P3	Thursdays	6.15pm
Freeland Church Hall			
Purifiers	P4 - P6	Fridays	6.30pm
St. Machar's Church Hall			
Company	P7 - 18yrs	Fridays	7.30pm
Freeland Church Hall			

Email Brian Logie: brianlogie@hotmail.com

GOD'S CREATION—THE BEAUTY OF AUTUMN

Spiders Webs



Fruits



Berries



1ST BRIDGE OF WEIR GUIDES (WEDNESDAY GUIDES)

We started our new term on the first week of September. It was great to be back having the use of the hall again but hard to believe it was the first time meeting in it since March 2020. It was great to have our existing Guides back along with some new members this year.



We began the evening setting our Unit Guide-lines for the year which are put together and agreed by everyone. This year we tried to think of something beginning with every letter of the alphabet. There was lots of laughter trying to think of something beginning with the letters X and Z but we managed it! The rest of the evening we spent making a 'box oven'. This is made by covering a cardboard box with a lid in tin foil then taking it outside the hall. Inside, in the base in a tinfoil tray, we placed a few barbecue coals. After a false start when the coals failed to light we managed to get both ovens going and baked cupcakes for everyone to try.



On our second Wednesday in September, it was so warm we decided to make a last minute change to the first part of our evening and had some games outside at the front of the church. As it doesn't often hit over 20°C in September we didn't want to be stuck in the hall all evening. It was lovely to be out in the sunshine playing parachute games and other activities.

Over the next few weeks we will be working on our Skill Builders activity packs and starting our Vlogging badge (I think the girls will be able to teach me a thing or two about vlogging!) We are also looking forward to presenting two girls who, over the summer, finished their Gold Award, which is the highest Award they can complete in Guides. More on this in the next edition.

Christine Haddock
Guide Leader



OCTOBER QUIZ (THERE IS AN ANIMAL LURKING HERE)

		Answer
1	One pleat out of order	
2	Fighting deranged Goth	
3	Stew I bleed stew	
4	My French door opener	
5	Fag fire exploded	
6	Scotland's bard used his teeth	
7	Her old record	
8	Famous guerrilla had split tea	
9	Yes-Yes	
10	Sick inside a crumpled rag with nothing	
11	Laugh holding Japanese currency	
12	Put a stop to (but not include) jeer	

August Quiz Answers: 1. Ardrossan 2. Dumfries 3. Hamilton 4. Livingstone 5. Stirling 6. Bathgate 7. Helensburgh 8. Fort William 9. Wishaw 10. Catrine 11. Melrose 12. Crail

NOTICES

DIARY

October

Sunday 3rd	10.30 am	Sacrament of Holy Communion
Sunday 10th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 17th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 24th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Thursday 28th	7.30 pm	Kirk Session Meeting
Sunday 31st	10.30 am	Morning Service - All Age Service

November

Monday 1st	2.30 pm	Guild - Afternoon Tea and Chat
Sunday 7th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 14th	10.30 am	Morning Service - Remembrance Service - All Age Service
Sunday 21st	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 28th	10.30 am	Morning Service

December

Sunday 5th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 12th	10.30 am	Morning Service

FUNERALS



Jesus said "I am the Resurrection and the Life"

*

Donald Robb

24th August 2021

*

Lesley Laird

9th September 2021

*

Mark Haig

22nd September 2021

*

Morag Vaughan

5th October 2021



THE GUILD



St. Machar's Ranfurly Guild has been unable to meet since March 2020, as has all other organisations, but we are hoping to restart in the New Year with speakers and topics for everyone to enjoy. This week the committee met and decided to set the ball rolling by having an

afternoon tea and chat to decide how we want to go forward in the future. This will take place on the 1st. November at 2.30p.m. in the church hall. We hope all our Guild members will come and maybe bring a friend, but new members will be very welcome.

For further information please contact Ann Hart 01505 873010 or Elizabeth Lyle 01505 612503.

We look forward to seeing you all on the 1st. November.

Ann Hart

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising has been on hold.

Missing our Church concerts and quizzes? Hopefully, next year will allow us enjoy meeting in person for some entertaining and social fundraising events. Any wish lists? If so, please let us know.

Face to face fundraising plans remain on hold at present but filled smarties tubes, or loose change in the metre of money are always welcome since "many a mickle maks a muckle"!

Airport runs cannot yet be resumed.

Who knows? The restrictions may help us find innovative ideas for working together to support our Church and the fundraising committee welcomes your ideas.

Morven McLeod 07887 771522

Anne Allen 07399 330515.

CONTACTS

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PA11 3HT

Tel: 01505 **612417**

ROTAS

Date	Stewarding		Cleaning	
Oct 3rd	Bill Robb	Sarah McNaught	Anne Yeaman	Sarah McNaught
10th	Morven McLeod	Marion Reid	Morven McLeod	Elizabeth McClure
17th	Norma Hancock	Jane Shepherd	Norma Hancock	Jane Shepherd
24th	Scott McLaughlin	Naomi Butterworth	Scott McLaughlin	Naomi Butterworth
31st	Anne Allen	Jennie Durward	Anne Allen	Jennie Durward
Nov 7th	Philip McCulloch	Margaret Richardson	Rosemary Taylor	Margaret Richardson
14th	Mary Taylor	Dennis Taylor	Mary Taylor	Dennis Taylor
21st	Agnes McKechan	Bill Robb	Agnes McKechan	Fred Schellekens
28th	Sarah McNaught	Anne Yeaman	Sarah McNaught	Anne Yeaman
Dec 5th	Marion Reid	Scott McLaughlin	Elizabeth McClure	Scott McLaughlin
12th	Norma Hancock	Naomi Butterworth	Norma Hancock	Naomi Butterworth

Date	Sound and Vision		Registration
Oct 3rd	Lois Marshall	Drew Richardson	Dennis Taylor
10th	Harrison Butterworth	Naomi Butterworth	Dick Hughes
17th	Greg Millar	Katelyn Macfadyen	Dennis Taylor
24th	Beth Robertson	Lois Marshall	Dick Hughes
31st	Lois Marshall	Drew Richardson	Dennis Taylor
Nov 7th	Harrison Butterworth	Lois Marshall	Dick Hughes
14th	Lois Marshall	Katelyn Macfadyen	Dennis Taylor
21st	Greg Millar	Lois Marshall	Dick Hughes
28th	Lois Marshall	Naomi Butterworth	Dennis Taylor
Dec 5th	Beth Robertson	Lois Marshall	Dick Hughes
12th	Lois Marshall	Drew Richardson	Dennis Taylor



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Contributions for the next issue of *The Lych Gate* should be with the Editor by **Tuesday 23rd November 2021**.
Please E-mail to: dennis1taylor@msn.com or pass memory sticks or paper copies to Dennis Taylor.