

KIN-NECTIONS

KINROSS PARISH CHURCH | DECEMBER 2020 – FEBRUARY 2021

FREE: Please take a copy



Following Christ | Spreading the Word | Serving the Community

*Following Christ
Spreading the Word
Serving the Community*

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Kirk Session Council: 08 December 2020

Pre-Kirk Session Council: 02 February 2021

Kirk Session: 08 February 2021

Kin-nections Mar - May Deadline: 26 January 2021



The Church of Scotland

SUNDAY SERVICES

December 2020 to February 2021

Now livestreaming!

- Sunday Service live: 10.30am on www.kinrossparishchurch.org, YouTube or Facebook
- Sunday Service recordings: Sunday after 1pm on www.kinrossparishchurch.org, YouTube, Facebook or dial 01577 528270
- CD recordings of the service or a printed copy of the sermon available. Contact the Church Office.

Please note: it is not yet possible to attend Sunday worship in person but there is a small gathering in the church for mid-week worship on Wednesdays at 10.30am. Please contact the Church Office by 5pm Monday to register (details held for NHS Test & Protect).

Communion is celebrated on Zoom on the first Sunday of the month; on other Sundays there is the opportunity for fellowship at Zoom coffee following the service.

Christmas services to be announced: please check website, Intimations, the church notice boards or contact the Church Office.

Before Christmas we will focus on the theme of Longing; after the New Year we will turn to reflect on themes emerging from the Growing Young project and then, as we prepare for Easter, we will look at Jesus on trial.

06 Dec:	Ezekiel 13:1-16 - Longing for Peace
13 Dec:	James 2:14-17 - Longing for Shelter
20 Dec:	Revelation 22:20 - Longing for Christ
27 Dec:	John 1:1-5 - Christ the Light of the World
03 Jan:	1 Corinthians 1:18-25 - Christ the Wisdom of God
10 Jan:	Luke 2:41-52 - Growing Young: Fuelling a Warm Community
17 Jan:	Ephesians 4:1-16 - Growing Young: Taking Jesus' Message Seriously
24 Jan:	Luke 10:25-37 - Growing Young: Being the Best Neighbours
31 Jan:	Mark 9:33-37 - Growing Young: Prioritising Families
07 Feb:	Romans 12:16 - Growing Young: Stepping into Others' Shoes
14 Feb:	1 Timothy 4:12-16 - Growing Young: Empowering the Young
21 Feb:	Mark 14:53-65 - Trial by the Council
28 Feb:	Mark 14:66-72 - Trial by a Friend



Find us on Facebook
[Kinross Parish Church of Scotland](#)



Find us on Instagram
[kpcscotland](#)



Find us on YouTube
[Kinross Parish Worship](#)

Keeping in Contact: Every household connected to the Church is allocated to one of 14 Area Pastoral Teams. Magazines are currently delivered four times a year, but Covid-19 advice prevents Pastoral Elders visiting. If you want to contact them please phone the Office on 01577 862570.

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CONNECTING WITH GOD & NEW YEAR
PRAYER

I am delighted to welcome you to our December edition of Kin-nections taking us into 2021.



As we continue to live with the Covid-19 pandemic and with Christmas approaching we are reminded that Jesus' light came in difficult times. This edition's theme focuses on light and dark: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5 (NIV).

We have a bumper edition packed with features including one on Café Church and an interview with Christian singer / songwriter Steph MacLeod.

We have a book review of Growing Young and a music review on page 9. We also draw your attention to some Christmas activities featured on page 12.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and wish you and your family a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

- Graeme Shaw, Kin-nections Design Editor

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Funerals

15 September	Thomas Maxwell
17 September	James Ballingall
06 November	Elizabeth McBain
09 November	Susan Mackessack

Wedding

30 October	Karly MacLachlan and David Liddle
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Suggest a Charity

Every year the congregation raises funds through retiring offerings at our quarterly communions to support local, national and international charities. If you have a charity close to your heart which you would like us to consider, please send your suggestion to the Church Office or contact the Finance Convener, Brian Timms.

TALKING WITH GOD

Our Heavenly Father,

We are often told that Christmas is a time for children. We all look forward to parties and presents, but this Christmas is going to be different. It's easy for us to feel disappointed or sad about the things we can't do, but we pray, Father, that you will help us all to be grateful and enjoy the things we can do this year.

It is hard that we may not be able to gather together as a family, but no matter how far apart we are, help us to know that we are held close by the invisible threads of love, to each other and to you.

We will miss going to church and singing carols, being in the nativity play and seeing our friends. Help us to remember that we can still celebrate Jesus being born and the joy that brings.

It is hard that we may not be able to deliver presents, but remind us that the greatest gift of all still comes to us at Christmas in the manger in Bethlehem.

Heavenly Father, this has been a year when lots of people have felt sad, alone or frightened. Please help us all to remember that in the darkness, Jesus is a bright light and His love is all around us. He tells us not to be afraid for we are never alone and you are always with us.

Thank you for all the love you give us and help us to share that light and love with everyone we meet, at Christmas and throughout the year,

In Jesus Name, Amen

by Evelyn Cairns

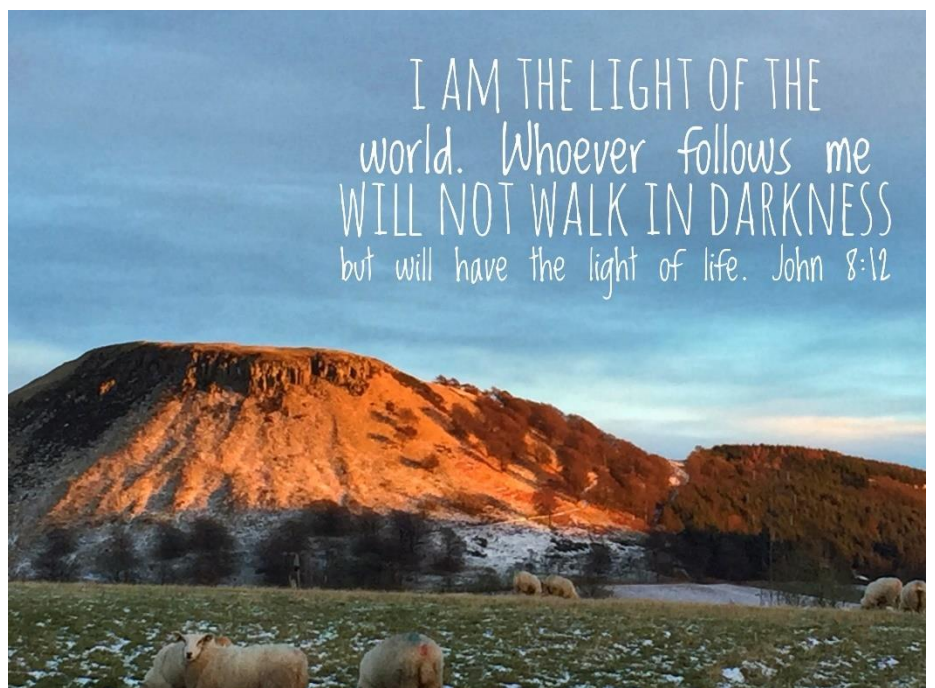


REFLECTIONS

We wander the stony paths
The steep and windswept slopes
A winter's chill is in our hearts
As we yearn for days since gone

In the darkness hear us, Lord
Gather up your flock
Breathe your warmth into us
And guide our stumbling steps

Circle us O Lord
Fill us with courage and hope
Lead us from our darkness
Into your eternal light



FROM THE MANSE...



Dear Friends,

For one person the glass is half full whereas for another the same glass is half empty. It's all down to perception and attitude. For some of us the past months have been characterised by what we have been *unable*

to do and about what we have lost, but even though we would not have wished it this way most of us have discovered new opportunities that we might never have had except for Covid. What is true for each of us as individuals is also true for us as a congregation. It is understandable that people hanker after the 'perfect Christmas' and it is clear that, like everything else this year, Christmas will be different for individuals and for the church.

In that context it is worth reflecting that Jesus was born into a world that was far from perfect - in fact that is why He came. He was not born into comfortable (or even safe) surroundings and the world into which He came was in turmoil, but to quote some of the familiar words we read at Christmas, the people who walked in darkness saw a great light, on those living in the land of deep darkness a light dawned (Isaiah 9:2) and the light which shone in the darkness has never been put out (John 1:5). And that is the Good News that we must put at the heart of Christmas 2020 in the midst of the darkness which threatens to envelope us in our time.

At the time of writing it is impossible to say what level of restrictions will be in place by the time you read this or by the time the festive season is actually upon us. We cannot plan Christmas services with any certainty and whatever happens (face-to-face or online, in the church or outdoors) will be different from anything we have experienced before but, just as we have been doing since March, we will take the opportunities that arise and we will find new ways to celebrate the great hope that we have because of the coming of Christ into the world.

Will it be a half empty Christmas, or a half full one? Perhaps it will actually turn out to be the best Christmas we have ever had just because we will be forced to reconsider everything we take for granted. Maybe this will be the Christmas when Jesus Himself is born in us.

With Christmas greetings filled with the light of Christ and hope for the year ahead,

Yours because His, **Rev Alan D Reid**

TIME FOR PRAYER

The monthly **Prayer Diary** is available by email and on the church website. If you wish a print edition (including large print), please contact the church office.

The prayer times below (apart from Silent Meditation) are livestreamed on the Church Facebook page and a daily prayer is available on the dial-up telephone service (01577 528270)

Prayer for the Nation **7pm on Sunday evenings**

In company with others across the whole country there is a short pause for prayer.

Midweek Prayers

Midday on Wednesdays

We take time to pray together for individuals, the parish and the wider world.

Silent Meditation

07 December, 04 January, 01 February

Guidelines for a period of reflective stillness are published on the first Monday morning of the month.

Compline

17 December, 21 January, 18 February

20 minutes of reflective readings and prayers, a peaceful way to end the day, on the third Thursday of each month at 9pm.

PRAYING FOR ALL THE PARISH

Did you know that each day in our monthly prayer diary a small part of our parish is listed to be prayed for? Over the month the whole parish of Kinross is included.

One of our elders, Gordon McFarlane, says: "I am not the only one to have found that the knowledge you are being prayed for on a certain day has been important in these difficult times. It was particularly strengthening to hear our area mentioned in the online mid-week prayers."

The prayer diary is available by email and on the church's website or contact the office for a printed copy (including large print). The mid-week prayers at 12 noon on Wednesdays (livestreamed on the church's Facebook page) include that day's locations. These are often flagged up the day before on Facebook with photos.

CAFÉ CHURCH

IT'S INFORMAL, IT'S LIVELY AND IT'S LOOKING FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU!

The idea for having a monthly Café Church first came about in early 2020. The Outreach Group had been chatting for a while about ways to reach out to those perhaps on the fringes of our church and started to plan an informal, contemporary event. Modelled on a similar event run by a church in the south-west of Scotland, we held our first Café Church at the beginning of March. It included lots of lovely home baking, fresh coffee, a live band, worship and a variety of engaging activities around a theme. We thought it was a good start for our new venture... and then lockdown happened.

For a while we didn't have any idea of how we could continue to run the event remotely, but then we started meeting monthly on Zoom. It's not quite the same as you have to provide your own coffee and treats! However, much of it remains the same. Firstly, there's a chance to worship with a (small) live band and sing along to contemporary songs (albeit on mute!). There's also a chance to explore the theme through quizzes, interviews, chat, drama, Bible readings and a short talk. We hope that the people who come along find it welcoming, engaging and meaningful as we explore God's Word informally and in a contemporary way.

We try to make it relevant to all ages and wherever people find themselves on their journey of faith.

We usually meet on the third Sunday of the month, although it can sometimes be the fourth one in a five-Sunday month. If you don't feel comfortable on Zoom, or if you'd prefer to cook the dinner at the same time, then it's fine to keep your camera off and put yourself on mute. We want everyone to feel welcome and, unlike the pre-recorded services, it's a chance to meet live and talk to people in real-life (well, as close to real-life as we can manage for now).

Our vision for the future is that we will be able to meet in the church again. We hope that over the next few years, Café Church can be a place where those who are wondering about faith can have a safe place to explore, those who enjoy contemporary worship can grow in their faith and where families can meet and worship together in an all-age setting.

I hope that we can welcome you to Café Church. Although we won't be meeting in December, we look forward to welcoming you on **17 January 2021**, so please make a note of the date in your new diaries!

- Ruth Robertson

Café Church is where those who are wondering about faith can have a safe place to explore, those who enjoy contemporary worship can grow in their faith and where families can meet and worship together in an all-age setting

ZOOM ALPHA - JOIN US IN THE NEW YEAR

"The Alpha Course really opened my mind, it is a great comfort in these troubling times to know we have God on our side"

The latest Alpha Course, conducted on Zoom, finished in October. We had had reservations that fellowship might not be easily transferred to the virtual world but we need not have worried.

Tuesday evenings soon fell into a challenging and welcome gathering of hosts and

participants, a film was shared online, followed by lively discussion, questions were asked and the journey towards understanding Christianity either started or was renewed and refocused.

The running of Alpha was a collaborative effort, with hosts, prayer teams and a technology team making a meaningful contribution to the success of Alpha.

Here are what some of the participants said, "It has meant so much to be with you all in such a safe,

supportive and loving space while exploring Christianity"; "I had a lovely warm feeling in my heart after Alpha, knowing that I have made lots of new friends in Jesus"; and "The Alpha Course really opened my mind, it is a great comfort in these troubling times to know we have God on our side. The hosts and tech team made it really enjoyable and I will miss Tuesday evenings."

Each week we were uplifted and guided by the Holy Spirit and felt the presence of our Lord. It was a privilege to be part of the pioneering Zoom Alpha Course and pray it will be the first of many for Kinross Parish Church.

A second Zoom Alpha is planned for the New Year.

- Jane Robertson



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

STEPH MACLEOD

I was keen to speak to Steph MacLeod following the release of *The Celtic Blessing*. Steph was busy moving home so we conducted the interview by email.



Graeme: This year has been very difficult for us all. Is there a particular piece of music or scripture that you have found yourself turning to during this pandemic?

Steph: Lockdown has been mentally very challenging. No longer having my regular routine meant adapting. David Leonard's live album *'The Wait'* carried me through the tough days, especially the song *'Share This Burden'*. I love reading Romans, especially Romans 5:1-5.

Graeme: Can you tell us a bit about how *The Celtic Blessing* came about?

Steph: As you know, *'The Blessing'* really fed the body of Christ at a time where the world literally came to a halt. Naomi Stirrat from Celtic Worship had the idea to record a Celtic version of *The Blessing* with a mixture of English and Gaelic. Both Naomi's and my own family are Gaelic speakers from the Western Isles so it felt like a natural fit. We reached out to a number of Scottish worship leaders, friends and musicians and asked if they'd like to take part. The response was unbelievable. Gus Stirrat, Celtic Worship's bass player and Naomi's husband put together all the footage from phones and computers and mixed something we are really proud of. The amount of work he put in pulling everything together was unbelievable. We've had a number of emails to say how blessed people have been by the arrangement. *'The Blessing'* truly is an incredible song and we were so honoured and privileged to have been able to arrange a version that expresses our love for God as well as our Scottish musical heritage.

Graeme: Can you tell us what to expect in the next Celtic Worship album?

Steph: We've been working hard on our new album; it's been great fun! There's a mixture of some traditional hymns, modern worship songs and also original songs written by Celtic Worship. We hope to release the album in January and we are excited to share it with you all!

Graeme: With Christmas around the corner and the prospect of us not being able to physically spend time with friends and extended family what advice would you give?

Steph: The prospect of not being around friends and family at Christmas is heavy on the heart, especially at church on Christmas Day. Fortunately, we are living at a time where we have the capacity to connect with each other virtually. Sometimes a phone call can make such a difference to someone if they are feeling low and isolated. We will be connecting with as many people as we can, reading our Bibles and praying together and reflecting on Christ our hope coming into the world. For me, Christmas is all about giving and being of service to others, so I'll be hosting times of worship and carol singing via social media and my phone. My wee Gran is in Bethesda hospice on the Isle of Lewis; they showed her my last online worship event via an iPad which was so lovely and kind of them.

Graeme: While this year has been especially difficult we look to next year with optimism. Can you tell us any provisional plans lined up for next year?

Steph: Next year is unknown territory for anyone involved in the music industry. It's been wiped out for the most part, but we can still serve online, and it's in service that we welcome and see 2021 with optimism. For myself, I'll be continuing to write songs for the church and the needs of the community. I'll endeavour to continue with prison ministry, working with the recovery community and mental health awareness. I also intend to develop my online platforms for ministry, teaching and ways that I can better serve our Lord and the body of Christ. There may be uncertainty about the future, but we can be certain and confident that the Lord knows our needs and is faithful.

A music review of Celtic Worship can be found on page 9
- Graeme Shaw

New Moderator was Deputy First Minister

Jim Wallace, a former Deputy First Minister of Scotland, has been chosen to be the next Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, from May 2021. The Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC (to give him his Sunday name) is an elder at St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall, Orkney - an area he represented for many years as MP and MSP. As leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats he held the post of Deputy First Minister. Lord Wallace will be the second elder of modern times to be Moderator. He said: "I am both excited and daunted by the challenge of the task that lies ahead and to be honest I have had to pinch myself that it is actually happening. As an elder, I hope my year will be a source of encouragement to other elders and members of congregations who already play a very full part in the life of their church and communities."

(From information on Church of Scotland website)



Jim Wallace

CHRISTMAS WRAP

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT CATH

We are all expecting Christmas to be very different this year. CATH, Churches Action for the Homeless, is continuing to do sterling work in the Perth and Kinross area and the house groups would love to give our usual support to folk who may not receive any other parcel.

We will not be able to meet in the church for the festive Christmas Wrap evening but we are suggesting a way to continue with this tradition, albeit in a slightly different format and we invite the whole congregation to participate with their usual generous response.

This year we will buy presents, more of a treat than the utilitarian gifts of previous years, and a few volunteers will gift wrap them, enclosing a Christmas card with an encouraging message from our congregation.



If you would like to make a donation towards the Christmas Wrap project please visit our [church website's Giving page to](https://www.give.net/20314082) make a donation via <https://www.give.net/20314082> or bank transfer to Kinross Parish Church (details on our Giving page) noting CATH WRAP, or contact Jane Robertson or Myra Cathcart direct or via the church office and they will be happy to collect the envelope from your home.

Donations would be required by 8 December.

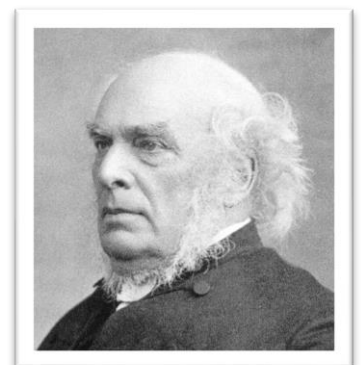
Warmest thanks on behalf of Churches Action for the Homeless (Scottish Charity Number SC021740).

PS: Four house groups meet at present by Zoom on Monday evening, Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday evening. Each group would welcome new members and Margaret Michie will be happy to answer any questions and provide more information.

HORATIUS BONAR

In putting the hymns together for the online services, I have become curious about some of the hymn writers, or hymnodists. How about Horatius Bonar? An outstanding name! He was the hymnodist for 'I heard the voice of Jesus say' which we sang recently. He sounds a wee bit Scottish, but Horatius? His close friends and family called him Horace, but that is still a name that pinpoints a certain period in time!

He was born in 1808 into an Edinburgh family (all with normal sounding names) with enough boys for one to be a doctor, one to join the army and one to be a minister. He became a minister. He went to Edinburgh University and studied under a well-known teacher, Dr Chalmers. This point has relevance for later in life. His first charge was to Kelso in 1837, where he remained for almost 30 years. You can imagine that the rural environment there would be well-suited to feel close to God and to express that in poetry. Most of the photos of him are as an older man, but even as a young man he had a fine set of fashionable whiskers, which may give the impression that he was a 'fire and brimstone' kind of a preacher, but the record is clear: *'He preached with fervour and unction, and in house to house visitation proved himself the comforter of the sorrowful and the guide of the perplexed'*. He was no stranger to sorrow. He and his wife, Jane, lost five of their young children in succession.



Horatius Bonar

He was sent by the church to visit Palestine in 1856. That must have been quite an undertaking in those days. A traveller recorded this about him: *'A man of impressive countenance, of low and musical voice...Learned and eloquent, there was a wonderful charm in what he said, because he had strong convictions on that subject of much speculation - the second coming of the Lord. He believed in his personal coming, to reign on the earth; and his faith, seconded by his rich poetic imagination and fervour, all quickened by the fact that we were in Jerusalem, gave his words a winning power that I cannot describe.'* This Palestinian visit inspired 'The Voice from Galilee' which is the title he gave 'I heard the voice of Jesus say'.

In 1865, he moved to Edinburgh and he took up the charge at Chalmers Memorial Church, named after his old teacher. His exploits were many, his writings, biographies, mission work (to Leith and beyond), gaining a doctorate, being Moderator... *'He did not seek earthly honour, yet it came to him'*. He died in 1889. At his funeral, no eulogy was offered as what could be better than the rich legacy of hymns he had left behind?

- Moira Hookham

BOOK REVIEW: GROWING YOUNG BY KARA POWELL, JAKE MULDER AND BRAD GRIFFIN

I got quite excited when I heard about this new idea that the Church had signed up to - although I knew little about it. So, I bought the book that goes alongside the teaching. The book is based on research conducted by the US Fuller Youth Institute. They tried to identify common factors in all churches that attracted people under 30, i.e. churches which were 'Growing Young'. The programme doesn't seek to give you a step-by-step blueprint of what you need to do to Grow Young, rather it offers six core principles (keychain leadership; empathising with young people; focusing on Jesus' message; cultivating warm relationships; making young people a priority in everything; and being good neighbours - locally and globally) and, in each chapter, these are explored and ideas are suggested of how you might put these principles into practice. It also offers questionnaires that could help the Church when trying to determine its starting point. The book is very easy to read with useful sub-headings. It's probably not the kind of book you would read cover to cover (unless you're writing a review!), but dip in and out of as you work through the course. I particularly liked the quotes from the young people which are peppered throughout the book and that it emphasised that it is not just the young people who will gain from a church's decision to Grow Young but that the intergenerational work will help everyone - this is exciting for Kinross Parish Church!

- Anne Sutherland

"We want to be here, and the older people in our church can see that... so they want us to be here. Our whole church treats us like we're the church of today, not just the church of the future." Ashlee, aged 17

MUSIC REVIEW: CELTIC WORSHIP

A collective of some of Scotland's most talented folk musicians, the band Celtic Worship blends traditional and contemporary Christian worship music with the powerful sound of bagpipes, whistles and fiddle. Their mission is *"to combine their working life as professional musicians with their deep love of Jesus and their passion to share God's love through their music."*

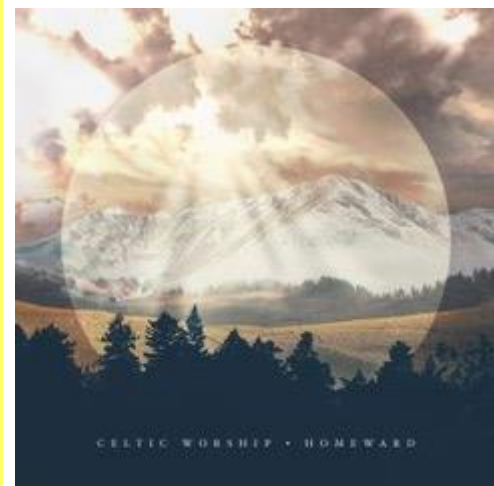
Led by singer-songwriter Steph MacLeod, the core band comprises Scottish musicians from many different backgrounds and styles.

In 2019 the band released their nine-track debut album 'Homeward'. It contains favourite worship songs such as 'I Stand Amazed', 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus' and 'In Christ Alone' but with a fresh, modern, Celtic interpretation. The engine is the soulful expressive voice of Steph MacLeod which is complemented by sympathetic nuanced harmonies and instrumentation. The standout tracks for me are a cover of the Matt Redman song '10,000 Reasons', and a beautiful version of one of my favourite hymns 'Be Thou My Vision'. Videos of most of these songs can be viewed on YouTube and the album is available from the band website: www.celticworship.co.uk

In the spring of 2020, thousands of people were both captivated and comforted by the beautiful 'Celtic Blessing' which the band released online on YouTube. Originally composed by Steven Furtick, Chris Brown, Kari Jobe and Cody Carnes this stunning song was recorded during lockdown by the group and many musician friends from across Scotland.

- Brenda Frier

"As with our brothers and sisters around the world, this song has helped us unite in Christ during a time of separation. We've felt it right to offer our version in the music and language traditions rooted here in Scotland, joined by friends from across the nation. May it bless you."





TRAIDCRAFT
Fighting poverty through trade

Traidcraft - Gift Ideas and Advent Action

The pandemic has affected all the producers of Fairtrade goods across the globe, and also our ability to sell the products here. Every purchase of a Fairtrade product is helping communities in some of the poorest areas of the world to earn a living and feed, clothe and educate their families.

Many people would appreciate a practical but delicious gift this year: tea, coffee, chocolate and biscuits or ingredients to make a delicious meal, curry sauce, chutneys and rice. As usual we can make up baskets of all sizes and also do the wrapping so that the gift is ready to be delivered! One of our team is planning to give all her family lovely Fairtrade facemasks from Cambodia as part of their gift this year, and we also have bamboo socks which are very popular.

As well as the difference you make in the world by buying Traidcraft goods, Traidcraft Exchange have another suggestion of how we can share The Light of Jesus Christ throughout Advent. While the children are enjoying their Fairtrade chocolate Advent calendars, why don't we sign up to:

<https://traidcraftexchange.org/injustice-advent-calendar#signup>

Traidcraft Exchange will email us 24 suggestions, one a day, of things that we could do that would make a difference to others. The emails stop after Christmas, so you don't have to unsubscribe. I hope that many of you will join with the Traidcraft Team in signing up.



Face masks

- Karena Jarvie

Pastoral Group - Can You Help Deliver Kin-nections?

Winter seems to be fast approaching, with all the fears and anxieties which that can bring. This year we have the added unsettling effect of the ever-changing restrictions on normal life being introduced to help reduce, and hopefully stop, the spread of Covid-19 virus.

Shining through this darkness, however, there are many acts of kindness being carried out amongst our congregation, such as phoning other members for a chat, sending cards or flowers to cheer someone up, or arranging to meet for a chat in whatever way complies with current restrictions.

One other way you can spread a little kindness is by helping the Elder Team responsible for your Pastoral Area to distribute magazines to homes around you. As you know, a year ago we rearranged the areas where Elders would in normal circumstances visit. Current Covid

restrictions mean, however, that they have not been able to visit and develop new relationships in these new areas, so by helping with magazines you would be playing a part in keeping in touch with members around you. If you would like to know more, please leave your name and contact details with the church office and I will be in touch.

From previous magazine articles, and intimations by the Minister, you should be aware that magazines are only being delivered through your door, and no one from the Church is visiting, all to reduce to an absolute minimum the risk of spreading Covid-19. This restriction is burdensome as, traditionally, we are a Church which enjoys visiting its members on a regular basis. Please be assured that we will restart visiting as soon as we can, when restrictions permit.

- Robert Mitchell, Pastoral Group Convener

Kinross Boys' Brigade

In September William Constable took over as Company Captain of our Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association Company (1st Kinross) from the long-serving David Munro. William was a boy in the Kinross Company through Anchors, Juniors and Company levels and returned in 2010 as an Officer. He is married to Clare and both their children are in the Company.

If you have seen something you'd like to get involved with - please get in touch!



Knitted angel

Craft Group

Craft Group has continued since March to meet every week virtually and we have enjoyed each other's company. It's not quite the same as meeting in person and this is something we all miss very much.

Our members have tackled different projects over this time and have raised almost £500 for the KPC General Fund. Quite an achievement when most of us are not going much further than our house.

We haven't been able to hold our annual coffee morning and craft sale this November which is disappointing

but if coronavirus restrictions allow we'll do our best to sell some things that we have in stock.

At the beginning of December we hope to distribute knitted angels to members of our community. You never know, you may receive one yourself for hanging on your tree or sitting on a bedside table during the Advent season.

We would love to see some new members joining us on Zoom so if you're interested in crafts and enjoy a chat please contact the Church Office for further information.

The Guild - Celebrating Margaret Michie's 60 Years' Service to the Church of Scotland Guild



Margaret receiving certificate

Margaret Michie was introduced to the Women's Guild as a young minister's wife in the 1950s. It was her husband's first charge and one duty was the baptism of fire as President of the Guild. This terrified her as she had never even attended a Guild meeting before and didn't know what to expect. Margaret said,

"The first year

was one of the worst in my life as a minister's wife. I came home in tears after every meeting."

Eventually, one of the members kindly took her under their wing, encouraged her and helped her. Things changed and she was President for 11 years until the death of her husband in 1972.

Thankfully, ministers' wives are no longer expected to take on this role.

Margaret was more at home when taking part in the Young Mothers' Group, which shared the same aim as the Guild. It was recognised that members were under the age of 40 so the name of the group was changed to Mothers of the Young. She enjoyed the company of other young mums and could take her four children along, where they were looked after in a crèche. With this group it was expected that when members reached the age of 40 they should leave and join the Guild but this didn't always happen.

Over the years there have been some changes. In Margaret's early years the Guild meetings were all based on religious topics and once a month there was a Bible Study - not many light-hearted evenings at all. In 1997 the door was opened to men. A big change has been the drop in membership, from 160,000 in the 1950s to just around 17,000 today including 400 men.

Margaret still enjoys attending Guild meetings and has been one of our pianists for many years.

The motto of the Guild from, Acts 27:23, has remained the same since the Women's Guild was formed in 1887 by Dr Archibald Charteris:

"Whose we are and Whom we serve"

World Day of Prayer 5 March 2021

This annual event takes place on Friday 5 March and is likely to be online. Representatives from the churches in Kinross-shire will present the script written by the women of Vanuatu, a group of islands to the east of Australia.

If anyone has cultural items from Vanuatu, please send a photograph which we can display. Send to the Church Office or contact Alex Cant or Tina Shepherd. Remember that if you are unable to take part online, you can listen to the service on your phone. Details later.

- Alex Cant

Hear Our Prayer: call 01577 528270 any time of the day or night to hear a recording of one of Ministers sharing a daily prayerful reflection.

Follow the Star



Todd & Duncan Car Park
Sunday 13th December
1:30-2:30pm or 3:15-4:15pm

Book your place at:

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/christmas-carols-in-your-car-tickets-126677789679

A fun outdoor event for all the family! Hunt round Kinross for clues to find out more about the first Christmas.

Invite all your friends! You can dress up as a character from the nativity if you would like to. More information nearer the time, but for now, save the date!

Sunday 20 December: 10:30am

Jampact & Crossfire - Come Along to Sunday Brunch at the KYTHE Hub!

Over the past few weeks we've had a big think about Jampact and Crossfire, our church's youth groups, and how we can best meet the needs of our young people in our church family and beyond. We've decided to put Jampact and Crossfire in their present form on hold for the moment.

With the two groups combined and the help of KYTHE we are offering something else which aims to better meet the needs of our young people: Sunday Brunch! Sunday Brunch at the Hub is a lunchtime group meeting at 12 noon at the KYTHE Hub until the Christmas holidays, combining fellowship, friendship, fun and food.

We also aim to take part in a few community winter/ Christmas events too. During this time of uncertainty and concern we, as Christians, are reminded that Jesus is the light of the world. With this in mind Crossfire/ Jampact members are going to be helping make images to decorate the church windows as part of the Light Up the Night, Kinross project.

Although Christmas may be very different this year, our young people are going to help everyone remember the true meaning of the season.

If you would like any more details please contact please contact Jenny Masson via the church office.

Congratulations Nan!

Kinross Parish Church joins the whole community in congratulating Nan Cook, Manager of the Kinross Centre, who was awarded the BEM in the Queen's birthday honours for services to the community in Kinross during Covid-19. It is a wonderful acknowledgement of the work of Nan and her team of staff and volunteers. Our warmest good wishes!



Kinross Parish Church becomes an Eco-Congregation

On 26 September a group of 19 people took to the streets of Kinross to pick up litter and help make our parish a nicer place to live. Following government guidelines, small groups of two households were dispatched around our community to litter pick. In total 20 general bags and 10 recycling bags were collected. Other events are planned. If you would like to be involved, please email the church office at: office@kinrossparishchurch.org.



DECEMBER 2020 COMMUNION AND CHRISTMAS RETIRING OFFERINGS

The recipient of the 2020 December and Christmas retiring offerings is Meningitis Now. This is the first meningitis patient group in the world, founders of the meningitis movement and the only charity dedicated to fighting meningitis in the UK. A key element of its vision is that everyone affected by meningitis gets the support they need to rebuild their lives.

Meningitis is the inflammation of the membranes that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord and can strike suddenly without warning. The devastating impact of meningitis was sadly brought to our attention when in the summer of 2019 the Neave family lost young Eilidh. This loss was also felt deeply throughout the church family and further afield.

Over its 30 year history, Meningitis Now has invested over £12m in early stage research that has played a critical part in the introduction of five life-saving vaccines. To be here for everyone affected by meningitis, spread lifesaving awareness about the disease and fund research into it, it needs over £3m every year. With no central government funding, it relies on people like us to help raise it. Support for its ongoing work is commended to you by the Kirk Session.



HOW TO GIVE TO MENINGITIS NOW (SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC037790)

Whilst your offerings cannot be taken in the usual way, you can make donations using the following options:

- online via the Giving page on the [Kinross Parish Church website](#), where you can use [give.net](#) or find bank transfer details (please mark your donation Meningitis Now)
- at the Wednesday 10.30am midweek service - in an envelope marked Meningitis Now
- direct to Meningitis Now: www.meningitisnow.org

DATA PROTECTION: PLEASE TAKE A MINUTE TO READ THIS



We have all well and truly been on a steep learning curve as we have had to embrace technology in a different way over the last nine months!

Social media sites such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc, along with our new church website (please have a look if you haven't already), have taken on a new relevance for many of us. They have provided the opportunity for participating and engaging in worship, joining in prayer times as well as keeping in touch with each other and our groups.

In tackling the challenges presented by the current crisis, we have sought to use these channels in order to remain accessible and attempt to keep everyone connected.

However, we also have a duty to protect people's online safety, ensuring nobody is identifiable and therefore vulnerable to being targeted by cyber criminals. Providing pastoral support alongside online safety is a difficult balancing act. Sadly, we have been advised that some churches and individuals have been targeted in the past and tricked out of sums of money. The impact on an individual as well as a congregation cannot be understated.

Following advice and recommendations from the Church of Scotland's data protection officer, the Administration and Communication Team have been reviewing any personal identifying information we have used online in our uploads and broadcasts and also on our website. As a result, several adjustments to the process and content are being considered in order to minimise visible personal data - we hope you will understand.

As we continue in this new online world which offers many benefits, please be aware of the dangers, especially in the run up to 'Black Friday' and then Christmas.

- be alert for any suspicious looking emails - scammers are incredibly adept at putting together very convincing scams from not a lot of information.
- if in any doubt, never hit 'reply' on an email or use automatic redial on your phone
- if you have any concerns about the use of your own or anyone else's personal data on any of our social media platforms, please contact Alice Getley, Convener, Admin & Comm Team
- report and forward phishing emails to Action Fraud - report@phishing.gov.uk

Let's be careful out there!

- Admin & Comm Team

LIGHT AND DARK



“We are never more in danger of stumbling than when we think we know where we are going.” That was a quote from American theologian, Barbara Brown Taylor. Over the summer months I

marvelled at the long hours of day light. How amazing it was to walk over to the church at 11 o'clock at night to see the sun just setting. Now, I think it must be near bedtime only to discover it's half past seven!

These are dark days as the continued months of isolation seem to drag on into endless night. Still, Barbara Brown Taylor in her book, 'Learning to Walk in the Dark' adds: “When we can no longer see the path we are on, when we can no longer

read the maps we have brought with us or sense anything in the dark that might tell us where we are, then and only then are we vulnerable to God's protection.”

The season of Advent harkens a time of waiting, something I'm sure we've all gotten good at by now. We wait for the days when we can reunite with family; we wait for a vaccine; we wait for a return to normal life. But what if in that waiting, in this dark season when so much is still unknown, we light a candle in remembrance to the One whom even the darkest night cannot conceal. For the assurance of our salvation rests in the majesty of our Triune God who chose to dwell among us - lowly as a babe in a manger, tender hearted in his care, mighty to save.

This Christmas is bound to be like no other, but may it be filled for you in Christ - the light even the darkest night cannot conceal.

*In Christ's Peace,
Rev Kathy Dain*

‘ALL FRIENDS TOGETHER’ HOSTS NATIONAL PROSPECTS GET-TOGETHER

Last year, Kinross Parish Church had agreed to host the Prospects Annual Get-together for all of Scotland in October 2020. Then the pandemic hit, and this looked like being something else that wouldn't happen. However, it was decided to hold it online. All Friends Together agreed to take the lead and chose the story of Ruth as the theme. All group members set about doing their own little bit and filming it - from Alex, Brenda and Owen making the music, Penny doing Makaton signing; Enid, Jane and Lindsay flexing their acting muscles; Beth narrating and the rest of us playing supporting roles. The film was then brilliantly woven together by Hannah (thanks again, Hannah, for a wonderful job).

The get-together itself was really fun - and noisy! There were 75 of us from all over Scotland on Zoom. Ivy welcomed us then we did some singing and watched the video. One of those attending, Heather, said that the story of Ruth and Naomi reminded her of our journey through life: “We

may face challenges on the way, but the kindness of friendship and support from God helps us through. Similarly, during this Covid period, we always have God walking beside us - our greatest companion and friend - and we can offer his love and support to others that we meet on the way. I am so looking forward to when we can safely meet up again face to face.”

All Friends Together welcomes all adults with special needs to a monthly celebration of Jesus.

- Anne Sutherland



A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to all the volunteers helping prepare our online Sunday worship services, particularly Thomas whose expertise using the new OBS software is outstanding! If you can help in any way, we'd love to hear from you.

CONNECTING WITH GOD

THE MIRACLE BY DIANE TAYLOR

Dear Heavenly Father,

The Christmas and New Year season is upon us. A time of year for hope, a time for celebration, filled with anticipation for the year ahead but, oh Loving Father, our hearts are heavy. It has been a turbulent year and so we come before You now, humbled by what we are enduring together. We are fighting a period of darkness but You, Oh Lord, are equipping us to bring light!

You remind us, Lord, that Mary and Joseph were real people with a divine calling to bring the Saviour into this world. The shepherds and the wise men, too, were real people who came to worship at the feet of the Saviour after His mortal birth. If we think of the problems that Mary faced, we can empathise with her. A young girl who fought the stigma of being unmarried and pregnant, and yet God made Joseph her husband. A young girl, due to give birth, who by law must leave her home town and undertake a long, tiring journey by donkey to complete a census. She may have been exhausted and fearful but also filled with love and joyful anticipation of the arrival of her baby. To then find no place to rest must have been overwhelming. And yet, God provided shelter. She may have felt abandoned and doubted why God would give a special calling to carry the Christ Child and then put all of these seemingly impossible obstacles in her way.



Or, she may have been filled with complete trust. Trust that the God who called *her* to carry his Child would divinely protect her, divinely provide for her, divinely fill her with faith and peace. Mary, in her own unique way was fighting darkness, but You, Oh Lord, equipped her with Your light. She was indeed

carrying Your light within her! Like Mary, this too is our calling, to carry the light of Christ within us to tell the world of His Glory, in spite of our outward circumstances, in spite of our fear and fatigue. We are comforted to know that we are not called to do this alone, for You are with us.

Whilst Covid restrictions may threaten Christmas and New Year celebrations, family gatherings and traditions, we must endeavour to cast out the darkness and focus on the light. The light of Christ. The Christ who came down to earth in human form to save us from our sins, heal our broken hearts and bind up our wounds. Hope is not found in knowing when this crisis will end or when our circumstances will change but our hope *is* found in Christ in spite of our outward troubles. We have to *choose* hope, *choose* light, and *choose* to draw near to Christ and, in doing so, He will draw near to us. May we fall on our knees in awe and wonder as we experience the miracle of the Christmas story. We pray that You might renew our faith, renew our hope and heal our hearts that we might be filled with Your Light.

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12, NIV

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

BY REV JIM REDPATH

[You may wish to use the response in *italics* and add your thoughts and prayers where you see]

Lord of all time, You have kept Your promise -
You have come into our world with the birth of Your Son our Lord Jesus Christ,
Help us to recognise You.

Amidst all that has happened this last year in our world

Lord of all time, You have kept Your promise -
You have come into our world,
Help us to recognise You.

Amidst all that has happened this year in our church and community

Lord of all time, You have kept Your promise -
You have come into our world,
Help us to recognise You.

In all that has happened this year in our lives
Lord of all time, You have kept Your promise -
You have come into our world,
Help us to recognise You.

As we look towards a new year,
Lord of all time, You have kept Your promise -
You have come into our world,
Help us to recognise You.

As we think of our hopes and plans for 2021
Lord of all time, You have kept Your promise -
You have come into our world,
Help us to recognise You.

Lord of all time, at the turn of the year, help us to look for You and recognise You in our world.

Amen

Kinross Parish Church **Christmas Services 2020**

**We will be offering worship and
fellowship throughout the Advent
and Christmas season.**

**Please check out our
Website, Facebook or
Church Notices for
details of online services**



www.kinrossparishchurch.org

