

Bennoch Parish Church of Scotland Kirkcaldy

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JUNE 2021

NEWSLETTER

From the manse

Lock down has shrunk our world and I am not referring to the lack of foreign travel. I am thinking about the spaces where we have lived these past 15 or so months. I have spent more time in my study as preparation and meetings have gone online. It is a space I am comfortable in. On the walls, and in nooks and crannies', there are things that remind me of what I have done, and where I have been.

I know that other people have not been so fortunate. Sharing their space with others, working from home, or family not at nursery or school. For some it has been a place of loneliness, isolation, or even violence. It is so true that our environment 'shapes' us. It is part of what makes us who we are, and for so many people, lockdown has changed that 'shape', and their lives for ever.

As restrictions ease, we have the opportunity to 'reshape' our living space. To reconnect with people and well-known haunts we have not seen for so long. To 'stretch our legs' into new and familiar environments. To go where we once went.

For some that will be difficult, or even impossible journeys to make. Home and or garden will be the new place where memories are made, as once again, family and friends come to visit.

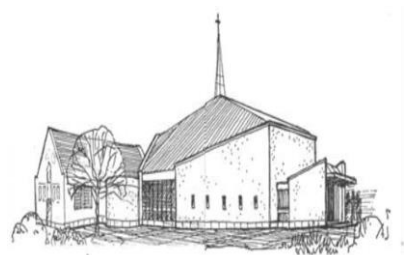
Many friends of Bennoch have not yet felt ready to return to 'in person' worship, and our environment on a Sunday is changed as a result. I hope many will feel more comfortable to join us in the near future. If it is not yet time for masks off, then at least we can sing. If we still need to keep our distance, then we know God draws close.

Till then, we will gather in one place, as we worship together, in the 'common space' of home and sanctuary.

I want to thank some of those who have made it possible to create a 'common space' that links where we are. To Allan Morton, our webmaster, who has maintained our church website. This has been our main place of communication throughout lockdown since last March, and to Jim Neilson and Ragnar Ingebrigtsen, who have been at the sound desk, enabling our services to be live streamed.

As I have said before, and will say again. Please stay connected. Stay safe, till the next time.

Robin



Sunday Services

Attendances at our Sunday services since we started back in April have been encouraging despite the severe Covid-19 restrictions, which thankfully are now easing a little. A significant number of people have been taking advantage of the online streaming - approximately the same as those attending. If you wish to view the services online via Zoom and have not done so already, please pass your email address to George Drummond and we will send you the link.

The audio output from the service can now be listened to at home on an ordinary phone. This is done by phoning an Edinburgh number and entering a simple numerical code when asked - in the same way that one would enter a phone number. This might appeal to members who do not have access to technology. Please ask for details if this is of interest.

Our permitted capacity now for worship is dictated by the 2 metre rule. In the Sanctuary there are 44 locations marked out including for those on duty. 6 of the places are able to be used by couples so that the maximum possible is 50, which by coincidence, was the legal cap until recently. We can now accommodate a further 20 members in the Methven hall, where they can view the streamed service on the screen. For special occasions where we know in advance the make-up of those attending - i.e. couples, family groups - it is possible to increase our capacity a little by rearranging the pattern of seating.

Deaths

06.03.21	Alan Keddie
15.03.21	Mrs Ethil Whitehead
18.04.21	Mrs Elizabeth Blair
26.05.21	Mrs Janet Shields



Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have lost loved ones during this difficult time.

* **Margaret & Walter Simpson** very much appreciate your caring concern and prayers over this long period of illness for Walter. A miracle did happen and we are now marching along the road to recovery with grateful hearts.

For the many blessings, thanks to all.

Clothes Bank

We have all had a very difficult year and a half, but for some people it has caused serious hardship. Many people will be without a job for the first time in their lives and they will not know where to go for help or who to ask.

The four town centre churches have decided to organise a clothes bank for children's clothes and are looking for donations of good quality children's clothing (birth to 16 years), laundered and ready to be given out. Packs of new underwear and babies' nappies will also be welcome.



The "Clothes 4 Kids" project starts on 2nd August and will be open on a Monday and Wednesday morning in St Bryce Kirk. Donations of clothes or cash can be handed in to St Bryce Church building from Monday to Thursday from 9am – 2pm, and volunteers will also be required to help. This is a 4 church initiative – please support this venture. More information on our website.

PARTNERPLAN

Jenny Featherstone - Zambia

March 2021

Chodort Training Centre, Choma
PO Box 630451
Kitwe
Zambia

Dear church friends,

Warm greetings from Zambia, although Lent is generally thought of as a season of giving up, this year, for Britain at any rate, it is a season of coming back. Thanks to your vaccination plan, things are gradually returning to normal, including kids going back to school.

Here in Zambia there is little change, but we are hopeful that the South African strain which has been prevalent for the last few months, is waning now. Nevertheless, our government is struggling with billions of dollars of unsustainable debt, so even with an election looming in August, they cannot provide such essentials as PPE for the covid wards. The two we are supporting in Mansa are desperate. James (a charge nurse) texted, "we have run out of disinfectant and gloves and N95 masks please reply, down on our knees for help" and "we have been having difficulty with supplies from the government, this money (we gave £50.00) will go a long way in our operations".



Despite schools returning in February, we have decided not to open Play4all as the risk of kids taking the infection home to elderly or vulnerable relatives is too great. Jane however, continues to distribute food weekly as part of the feeding programme and gave out 30 single blankets a couple of weeks ago to those vulnerable children who had none. The cold season starts next month. I am also attaching Janes interesting newsletter.

This year we are very thankful for good rains, even though the rain is tailing off now, the dams (reservoirs) remain full, so full in fact, that my friend Emma collected 5kg of small Bream that had spilled over the dam wall, into the sodden grass below it.

My main emphasis since I last wrote has been supporting CADRO. Maketo came up with the idea of 3 recovering alcoholics walking to Lusaka from Choma (just over 300km) to try and raise funds for a counselling centre which will support addicts, recovering addicts and their families. The need for this is huge, Zambia has the highest alcohol addiction amongst women in Africa, and the local brew is downright dangerous as methylated spirits and industrial urea (meant for the crops) are often added to it. Whilst local community leaders are concerned, there is little they can do about illicit alcohol. CADRO wants to offer practical help and advice in their communities, and provide counselling and other resources to help people come off alcohol and drugs.

PARTNERPLAN



The CADRO planning committee usually meet on my veranda every week. Left to right Matemola, Chief, Andrew and Maketo. The 3 nearest right are walking from Choma to Lusaka.

One of our members, an engineer in his early 30's, was so hopeless and dejected that he made a serious attempt at ending his life, he was found in time and ended up in the mental health ward, from where he was referred to CADRO at the end of last year. Now he is sober, back in employment and thanking God for his recovery. He and his mother gave a very frank and open talk on the local radio station YGFM which gives CADRO an hour every Saturday afternoon. Mum stated how she had given up on him and didn't want to have him around, but now thanks God for the difference in his life. There are many more people like these which CADRO wishes to help to turn their lives around, and if we can manage it, the counselling centre will be a significant move forward.

Items for prayer

- For Marita, her visit to Luanshya hospital for elephantitis was not very successful and she is still in a lot of pain. The plan was for her to stay there for treatment, but she was sent home the same day She had an arduous 3-day journey back to Chapata, staying overnight in the broken-down bus.
- For Bridget who looks after Nathan and his sisters, she is very run down with an infected wound from a caesarean, gall stones which couldn't be operated on till after the birth, and is just recovering from malaria, as well as a new baby to look after.
- For the fundraising efforts of CADRO to touch the hearts (and pockets!) of local businesses, and for them to be able to inform many on their walk to Lusaka next month.

Items for praise

- For dedicated and capable people like Jane Mwenda and the Play4all volunteers
- For Nathan, as he has been off dialysis for over 3 weeks now and back with his sisters in Mansa. We hope he will soon be tablet and diet controlled then possibly stop the medication altogether.
- For the motivated CADRO members who meet weekly to support each other. They have changed their lives and are determined to keep away from alcohol addiction.

Wishing you all peace, patience and good health, and a happy Easter for next month.

Jenny

Jenny Featherstone - Zambia

As you may know, we normally make a contribution to Jenny's work in Zambia at our Harvest Thanksgiving service. If anyone feels they would like to make a further donation during these difficult times this would be very welcome and can be done through her charity account, listed below -

Nationwide Flexi Account
No. 4404068
Sort code: 07 01 16
Name: Ms JA Featherstone

Update from Louisa Turner, Development Worker

Firstly, a big HELLO to you all. It seems such an age since I saw my friends from Bennochty face to face. Secondly, so much yet so little has happened in the past eighteen months.

For the majority of the pandemic I have been on furlough from my post as Development Worker for Bennochty Church. During that time I remained well and virus free. I walked a plenty and enjoyed the downtime with a much slower pace of life, saving on fuel but having more screen time with online meetings than I had ever experienced. I did not realise that previously I had been going 100 miles an hour with all my commitments. God has been good to me and my family and, dare I say it, we have had a good year together, though I missed my grandchildren in Cambridge terribly. Seeing them in person recently rather than on screen was very surreal, but gave me such a warm glow inside and the biggest cheesiest smile.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work on a second part time job for some of the year and reaped many benefits through that. The job was through the intergenerational organisation Generations Working Together, whom I have volunteered with since 2016. I am the Fife Network Coordinator which allowed me to be included in many online meetings and workshops, opening new doors and contacts which I can, in turn, tap into in my role as development worker for Bennochty Church. I have so many ideas which we can develop in the future when restrictions have eased. Sharing my experiences from Bennochty Church, I have been able to form relationships in the community with various people in Fife and beyond. Following a workshop, someone in East Lothian contacted me wanting to hear more about the Open Door Project, which he wishes to replicate in his own church and community!

I have continued to be active with the Fife Interfaith Group, representing Bennochty and the Church of Scotland. Though this past year we have met online, it has been good to mix and share our individual faiths and have fun together. Recently I was on a quiz team for Fife, at the Scottish Interfaith Annual Quiz. The quiz was all based on world religions and it was remarkable that Fife came second! Please contact me if you would like to join a monthly meeting. There are speakers from a variety of backgrounds, some religious some not, but all very interesting. When not online, meetings have been held in Kirkcaldy Mosque.

For the summer, my role along with the Open Door team is to focus on reopening the Olive Branch Café. Over the coming weeks I will be contacting individuals who have previously volunteered in the café to see how they feel about returning. I will also be recruiting new volunteers, so if you have a fancy to help others and have a couple of spare hours a week, please do get in touch with myself or any of the Open Door team. When the café reopens it will have a slightly different layout as we will be following the government guidelines on hygiene, social distancing, and table service. There are roles a plenty for individuals who like to mix with others, from publicity and setting up, to preparing and serving refreshments and to clearing away the tables and chairs.

Everyone at Bennochty can play their part in the community café reopening – when the Olive Branch café official reopening date is announced for the autumn you can tell others, encouraging former and new customers in for a cuppa and blether again. Remember to tell them that the café does not operate for financial profit but, by volunteering or coming along as a customer you will profit in new and renewed face to face friendships.

Hope to see you all soon,

Louisa Turner, Development Worker

Sunday School & Creche - Those who have been attending our Sunday services will know that Sunday School has resumed, meeting at 11am in the hall, with crèche facilities for the younger ones. We could, however, do with some extra volunteers for the crèche. If you feel you could help in any way, either on an occasional or a regular basis, please speak to Robin or George Drummond.

BENNOCHY PARISH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, KIRKCALDY
Meldrum Road/Elgin Street, Kirkcaldy, KY2 5HR

Charity Registration Number SC 005628
(Registered Scottish Charity)

TO ALL MEMBERS
BENNOCHY PARISH CHURCH
KIRKCALDY

June 2021

GIFT DAY SUNDAY 27th June 2021

The first of our two annual Gift Days is on Sunday 27th June 2021. Due to current Covid restrictions this Newsletter is being distributed mainly by email, with the remainder being delivered. Consequently most of you will not receive the usual special Gift Day envelope to put your donation in.

We ask therefore that you use one of the following methods to make your contribution.

1. By online banking using the usual church bank account number and sort code.

Sort Code is **80-16-84** Account number is **06022892**

If using this method, please make sure you put in 'Gift Day' as a reference

2. If you are attending church on the Gift Day Sunday then put your donation in an envelope and write 'Gift Day' on it. Please also mark if you have previously signed a Gift Aid Declaration Form.
3. Put your donation into an envelope marked Gift Day and give it to your Elder or another member of the church to bring to the service for you, or send by post.

These donations can either be by cheque (made out to Bennochty Parish Church) or by cash. Please do not put cash donations in the post.

If you are a taxpayer, please consider signing a Gift Aid Declaration Form if you have not already done so, as the Church will be able to recover the appropriate level of income tax from your donation. Every £1 becomes £1.25. Gift Aid Declaration Forms are available at any time from Diane White or Margaret Kinnear or ask any Sunday Welcome Team member who will assist.

The last year has been difficult for everyone and the Trustees thank you for your continued support for God's work here at Bennochty and pray that you stay safe and well.

With all God's blessing from the Finance Team