

St Ninian's Church
Corstorphine

Quarterly



Winter 2019



Edinburgh, Corstorphine St Ninian's Parish Church (Church of Scotland)
144 St John's Road, EH12 8AY
Scottish Charity Number SC016557

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If you are a Visitor to St Ninian's or are reading this magazine for the first time, the following information may be useful:

Our SUNDAY SERVICES are held at 10.30am and are followed by tea and coffee in the Martin Shields Hall.

COMMUNION SERVICES are on the first Sunday in March, June, September and December at 10.30am and 3.00pm. Our less able members are particularly welcome at the 3.00pm Communion Services in March, June and September - following each of which there is a special afternoon tea!

SUNDAY SCHOOL is held every Sunday during term time and all classes meet at 10.25am. Crèche: (0-3yrs); Beginners: (3-5yrs); Primary: (5-8yrs); Juniors: (8-12yrs); Alpha: (12+yrs).

STEP INSIDE is a youth club for our 10 to 14-year olds and is held on the last Saturday of the month (except July and December) with games, music and craft sessions.

We offer a CHURCH TRANSPORT SERVICE for our less able members. Volunteer drivers pick up passengers before the service and return them home afterwards with the option of staying for tea/coffee. Reserved car parking is available at the rear of the Church.

The CHOIR leads the Praise under the direction of our Organist, Anne Kirkpatrick, and choir practices are on Thursday evenings from September to May.

The GUILD meets on a Tuesday afternoon between September and March, with interesting speakers, teas, and outings.

Men are invited to CONVERSAZIONE on the last Wednesday of the month between October and May, for fellowship and chat over a light lunch.

Many other Church and non-Church organisations use our premises throughout the week; contact details can be found on the back page.

Dear friends

*This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you,
that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.*
(1 John 1: 5 - 7)

“I was filled with exultation,” said astronaut Michael Collins when he saw nothing but an infinite black void of space whilst orbiting the moon in 1969. He was not the first to make friends with darkness. “Hello darkness my old friend,” begins *The Sound of Silence*. Paul Simon found that composing in the dark helped his song-writing.



Michael and Paul’s experiences are unusual. The darkness may have many symbolic meanings, but few tend to be positive: predators hunt in the dark; the darkness is an ally of crime; it is hard to see in the dark; it is redolent of intellectual and moral ignorance.

The darkness is all around us in the winter season. It squeezes us from both ends of the day. It is with us too in our worship during the run up to Christmas. Advent, the four weeks before Christmas day, is a season of the Christian year when as a church we wait in the darkness of the world for the coming of the Light of the World.

In church circles there is a debate about whether we should mark Advent anymore. The secular society that squeezes out religious life in the 21st century has forgotten about Advent. It prefers to ignore the dark and to begin the Christmas season at the start of December at the latest. Should we conform to the world, or should we be different?

I think we should continue to recognise the darkness of the world during Advent and reveal slowly the light that flickers with fragility like the life of a new-born child before its full revelation on Christmas Day. Imagine a black and white photo with no black, imagine a candle burning in a room with all the lights on. The dark provides definition and meaning to the light.

There is a lot of darkness in the Christian faith for we live in a dark, fallen world of suffering and pain. That is why we need the light. We can’t understand and celebrate the birth of the Light of the World, unless we acknowledge the darkness the light has come to pierce, or its fragile burning. After all, darkness surrounded Jesus’ birth. He was born in the dark, and shepherds and kings walked through the darkness to find him. He fled from Herod at night. He was a refugee. There was violence following his birth.

The light we need in our lives is the light of peace, of justice, of mercy, of love. It is the light that Christ brings from God into our dark world to illuminate and enlighten. Let’s get to know the dark, so that we can pierce it with light.

James

Communion Services

Communion Services will be held in the Church
on **Sunday 1st December 2019**
at 10.30am and 3.00pm.

“This do in remembrance of Me”

We practise inclusiveness by providing gluten-free bread
for everyone at Communion services.

Afternoon Communion

The Afternoon Communion on **1st December** is open to all and caters especially for our less sprightly members. If you know of anyone who would like to attend, please let them know. Anyone requiring transport, providing they are ambulant, please contact Rona Stevenson (334 4471). Wheelchairs can be accommodated in the church if anyone needs to come by taxi. Everyone is welcome. If you would be able to provide transport to this service, please also contact Rona.

Kirk Session Meetings 2019

Wednesday: 13th November

2020

Wednesdays: 12th February; 6th May; 9th September; 11th November

Deacons' Court Meetings 2019

Wednesday: 27th November

2020

Wednesdays: 26th February; 20th May; 23rd September; 25th November

... and some other dates for your diary

23 rd November	- Christmas Fair
27 th November	- Conversazione (<i>last Wednesday monthly - not Dec</i>)
30 th November	- Step Inside (<i>last Saturday monthly - not Dec</i>)
8 th December	- Fresh Start Donations
19 th January	- Congregational Lunch
26 th January	- Quarterly Copy Date
16 th February	- Soup & Roll Lunch
15 th March	- Soup & Roll Lunch

(Further details will be provided in the Intimations)

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Congregational Register

Marriage Blessing:

27th September Helen and Colin McLean, 34 Roull Road

Funerals:

12th September * Mr Robin Sellar, 48 Clerwood Gardens

13th September * Mrs Mary Hyslop, 2/3 Russell Gardens

* Denotes member

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John (Ian) McEwen Hendry (1925-2019)



Ian was born in Springburn, Glasgow on Christmas Eve 1925. During the war he served with the "Chindits" in Burma. He graduated with a BSc Hons in Biochemistry (1952) and a PhD (1964). He worked at Bangour General Hospital from 1965 until retirement in 1990.

Ian married Muriel Marshall in 1952 and enjoyed 42 happy years. They moved to Edinburgh in 1959 setting up home in Drum Brae South. In 1960 both became members of St Ninian's Church. A gentle family man, Ian was very proud of his three children. He had a lifelong interest in science and a tremendous sense of humour. He had many hobbies; particularly enjoying his greenhouse, gardening, classical music, hillwalking in the Scottish Highlands and painting in oils.

Ian left Corstorphine in 2015 to live with his daughter and son-in-law in North Berwick. In January 2019, declining in physical health, Ian decided to move to Erskine Home, Bishopton, where he received wonderful care and fully embraced new challenges and numerous indoor and outdoor activities. He died peacefully on 26th August and will be greatly missed.

(contributed by Ian's daughter, Susan Ainslie)

Christmas Services

Sunday 1 st	1 st Sunday in Advent: 10.30am & 3.00pm - Communion
Sunday 8 th	2 nd Sunday in Advent: 10.30am - Sunday School Gift Service
Sunday 15 th	3 rd Sunday in Advent: 10.30am - Morning Service
Sunday 22 nd	4 th Sunday in Advent: 10.30am - Family Service 6.30pm - Nine Lessons & Carols, with the Choir
Tuesday 24 th	8.00pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Wednesday 25 th	10.30am - Christmas Day Family Service (No Church Transport)
Sunday 29 th	10.30am - Morning Worship (No Sunday School - re-opens 12 th January)



Christmas Parties



Juniors & Alpha (Bowling)	Saturday 7 th December
Primary Sunday School	TBC
Guild Party with the Choir	Tuesday 10 th December (2.15pm)

Congratulations

More Long Service Certificates

The following Elders were presented with Long Service Certificates on Sunday 13th October, having been on holiday at the time of the presentation in June:

30 years
Alec Miller

40 years
Andrew Gibb; Ian Kirkpatrick

60 years
Douglas & Sheila Ramsay

The congregation thanked them for their long and loyal service and noted the remarkable 60 years served by Douglas and Sheila.

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Clerk to the Deacons' Court

When Alec Stevenson was appointed Clerk to the Deacons' Court in 2005 he didn't plan that he would still be Clerk in 2019! However, his intention to demit office some time ago was put on hold following the retirement of Rev Alex Stewart and the induction of Rev James Aitken.

Happily, a successor is waiting in the wings. The nomination of Mrs Anne Bryce was approved at the September meeting of the Deacons' Court, and Anne will be inducted into the rôle of Clerk at the next meeting of the Court, on 27th November 2019.



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. . . and Many, Many Thanks



Harvest Thanksgiving

On behalf of the congregation, we would like to say “thank you” to all those who do so much in and around the church during the year - some are obvious, and many are often unseen. The list includes (in no particular order) those who: lead the praise; arrange & deliver the flowers; serve tea & coffee; provide church transport; look after our young (and not-so-young) people; ring the bell; launder the Communion Cloths, dress the pews and prepare the Elements; manage the heating of the halls and the Sanctuary; keep the gardens tidy; distribute the publications; maintain our web site and social media; make recordings of services; participate in outreach activities; look after safeguarding; take care of the finances; promote Christian Aid; and serve on the various committees. Special thanks to the Hospitality team who, once again, have had a very busy year feeding us on many occasions, including the Fair lunches. And, of course, the church officials - the Church Secretary, Beadles, Church Officer and Cleaner. We thank you for your dedicated service and wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

Enterprise Committee

The forty-fourth edition of “Let’s Talk about Corstorphine” will be distributed in November and December. Additional distributors would be appreciated - please contact me.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Ian Kirkpatrick, Convener (334 5951)

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 23rd November

11.30am - 2.30pm

St Ninian's Church

(entry from St John's Road or St Ninian's Road)

Admission: Adults £1; Children 50p



The proceeds from the Coffee & Gateaux evening and the sales of jam and woollens have already been donated to the Fair and, for the Fair itself, we plan to have lots of interesting and exciting stalls. We need your help to make the Christmas Fair an even bigger success than last time.

Donations will be accepted after the Service on 17th November and may be left with the Church Officer on Tuesdays to Fridays from Tuesday 12th November to Friday 22nd November, 9am - 12 noon. In addition, goods for stalls may be delivered to the Burns Hall on Friday 22nd November between 2pm and 8pm, and between 9am and 10.30am on the day of the Fair.

There will be stalls for **Christmas Hampers, Baking/Jams/Jellies/Chutneys/Fudge/Tablet/Toffee etc, Books and Jigsaws, Craft, Flowers, Jewellery, Toiletries, Water or Wine**

Prior to the Fair the organisers will be present in the Crush Hall after Morning Services on Sundays in November to hand out and receive Hamper Envelopes and to accept donations. Envelopes for the **Christmas Hamper Draw** are available at the doors of the Church and in the Crush Hall. Please take some to distribute amongst friends, family and work colleagues and return them in time for the Fair.

Donations of the following items will be very welcome:

- **Bakery** - all goods must be covered or wrapped.
- **Books** - preferably paperback novels and children's books in reasonable condition, also jigsaws. Please leave them in the buckets at the doors of the Church or phone Susanne Hope, 334 2489.
- **Craft** - any handmade craft items suitable for sale would be very much appreciated.
- **Flowers** - bowls of potted bulbs, plants and any cuttings. Happy to collect nearer the time - contact Margaret Hunter, 339 6262.
- **Jewellery** - refresh your collection. Adult or children's jewellery required, especially costume jewellery.
- **Toiletries** (new, unopened) - please hand in to the Church Officer.
- **Water or Wine** - if you can donate bottle bags, please put them in the box in the Crush Hall and be kind enough to pop a bottle in (wine or water). It will be the luck of the draw whether you pick a bag filled with water or wine. Anne Bryce, 334 5119.

For those needing sustenance, there will be delicious St Ninian's **lunches** from 11.30am till 2.30pm in the Martin Shields Hall.

Our organist, Anne Kirkpatrick, will play **music** in the Sanctuary. Please make any special requests in advance - phone 334 5951.

Clearing up at 2.30pm - the more helpers there are, the less time it will take! Please contact Ian Kirkpatrick on 334 5951.

Half the proceeds will go towards Church Funds and half will be divided equally between **The Rock Trust** (which prevents youth homelessness and supports young people to build better lives) and **The Dystonia Society** (which supports people with this neurological condition).

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Church Transport

As we approach the end of another year, I would like to express my very warm thanks to the band of Regular and Occasional drivers who have helped out with transporting our less able members to church, and those who help with the Afternoon Communion & Special Teas. Thanks also to Charles Morgan who regularly assists with wheelchairs in the car park.

We currently need 4 cars each week to accommodate those who require front seats, so the Regular drivers have been working on a four-weekly rota. I would like to recruit another team of 4 Regular drivers, or Occasionals who would be willing to share duties more frequently. It is an enjoyable experience meeting some of our older and less sprightly members, and they really appreciate the opportunity to maintain their links with the church and their friends.



If you would like to consider helping, please speak to me. Many thanks.

Rona Stevenson (334 4471)

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

EVERYONE WELCOME

The Bible Study uses a method called **Contextual Bible Study** to reflect on the Lectionary's Gospel readings for the Sundays in Advent*. We will read the texts together and talk about their meaning and how they relate to us today in the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Advent week 1: **Monday 2nd December** Matthew 24: 36 - 44

Advent week 2: **Monday 9th December** Matthew 3: 1 - 12

Advent week 3: **Monday 16th December** Matthew 11: 2 - 11

Advent week 4: **Monday 23rd December** Matthew 1: 18 - 25

All at St Ninian's, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

There is no need to commit to all five, each week stands alone; come along to one, two, three, or four, or try one and then decide about the others!

If you are interested in taking part, please email or phone James (JAitken@churchofscotland.org; 0131 334 1324) or add your name to the sign-up sheet in the vestry.

*The Revised Common Lectionary is an approved week-by-week three-year cycle of biblical readings. The readings lead us from Advent through the Christian year, the Bible, and Jesus' life through birth, baptism, his public ministry, his death, resurrection and ascension. The Bible study will focus on the Lectionary's five gospel readings for Advent.

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A Beadle's Tale

(excerpts from a book written by the Very Rev Dr James Simpson)

The term "Beadle" has an interesting history. Prior to the Reformation in Scotland, the role of doorkeeper, the *Ostiarus*, was an important one in the Roman Church. He was officially recognised as a member of the ecclesiastical staff. He not only had to be regular in attendance at church but was responsible for opening the church doors at certain hours, admitting the faithful and preventing heretics and those who had been excommunicated from entering the church.

After the Reformation he reappears, reduced in status yet promoted socially to the role of the "Minister's Man" or Beadle (a contraction of the Latin word "Bedellus"). The term Beadle was used to designate any person whose duty it was to summon parties before a public court. One of the main roles of the Beadle was to serve citations on those suspected of lying or committing adultery to appear before the all-powerful Kirk Session. Those found guilty were handed over to the Beadle for punishment and, clothed in cloaks of coarse linen, they had to sit through the Sunday service on the repentance stool in front of the pulpit.



Even when no longer ordained to the office, Beadles continued to open and shut the church doors and ring the bell on the Sunday, calling parishioners to worship. With serious face they took the Bible to the Pulpit, before leading in the Minister with measured and dignified tread. Beadles also had the responsibility of maintaining discipline during the observance of public worship, of quietening noisy children and waking those who had fallen asleep during what were often lengthy Sermons.

Most Beadles responded positively when called on, but not all. One Beadle, on being instructed by a visiting Minister to waken the sleepers said “Sir, you put them to sleep, so you can waken them up”. Scottish Beadles were renowned for their forthright and not very flattering comments. After preaching as a candidate for the vacancy a young Minister retired to the Vestry where he disrobed. Anxious to learn more about what might probably be the scene of his future labours, he returned to the Church where he found the Beadle clearing up. “I am just looking at the Church” the young Minister said. “Aye take a good look”, said the Beadle, “for it is not likely you will see it again”.

In country Parishes in the old days, the Beadle often had to look after the Manse garden, plough the Manse Glebe, feed the cows and sometimes dig graves, a very busy man.

Today in many Parishes there are no full time Beadles. In some churches Beadles are still present on a Sunday to open the church doors and carry the Bible into the Pulpit and look after the Minister. Fortunately, with less austere faces than many of their predecessors.

Oh, how things have changed! Interestingly, here at St Ninian’s, we currently have three ladies as well as a gentleman undertaking the Beadle duties.

Margaret Hunter

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**. . . and “out of the mouths of babes . . .”
(but not the Psalms 8:2 version!)**

- “I know God loves everybody, but He never met my sister.”
- “My Mother should be a Minister. Every day she gives me a sermon about something.”
- “I would like to go to Heaven some day because I know my brother won’t be there.”
- “I think a lot more people would come to church if we moved it to Disneyland.”
- “Please say a prayer for the school football team. We need God’s help or a new goalkeeper.”



In 1843, our church was formed when our congregation was one of many to leave the Church of Scotland during the Disruption. As we know, one of the main issues was the desire for congregations to be able to call their own Ministers. In 1929, there was a Settlement when several churches, like ours, reunited with the Church of Scotland.

From our archives we can tell that, in January 1929, our Kirk Session approved the Basis and Plan of Reunion by 9 votes to 3 and, in February, the congregation approved it by 246 votes to 46. [The 46 dissenters would form the core of those leaving to form the Corstorphine United Free Church.]

A change of name was under discussion at this time and, in June, the Moderator of the Kirk Session suggested that Elders, during their visitation with Communion cards, might endeavour to "sense the feeling of the members in this connection". In July, Rev Peter Beith invited the Session to express its mind on the question of a new name. The Minutes record that, after a frank and free exchange of opinion, it becomes the unanimous opinion that the name St Ninian's Corstorphine be adopted.

The Minutes do not record the discussions nor the reason why St Ninian's was selected.* On 8th October 1929, the newly united Presbytery of Edinburgh met and was constituted in prayer in St Andrew's Church, George Street, before processing to the Presbytery Hall in 121 George Street for the transaction of business.

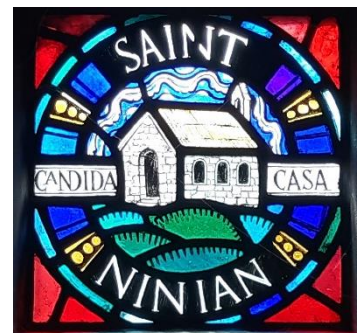
On 9th October 1929, the Kirk Session of St Ninian's Church Corstorphine met and was constituted for the first time under the new name.

Ninety years later, on 8th October 2019, Presbytery marked this history with an event very similar to the one exactly 90 years earlier. It started in the Church Offices in George Street with a talk on the 1929 reunion by the Very Rev Prof David Fergusson. Then the gathering walked along to St Andrew's and St George's West Church for a Service of Communion led by Rev Angus Mathieson and the Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore. The talk and the sermon can be seen on the Presbytery of Edinburgh website:

<https://www.edinburghpresbytery.org.uk/>

Sheila Minty, Presbytery Elder
(with thanks to Andrew Broom for his research in the archives)

** St Ninian established a church in Whithorn, Galloway in the mid fifth century AD and it became known as Candida Casa. The link is acknowledged both on the Manse gate and in one of the stained-glass windows in the Lounge.*



The Guild

Whose we are and Whom we serve
Strategy: "One Journey Many Roads" 2018-21
Theme: Companions on the Road

The focus in 'Companions on the Road' is not just about who might be on the same journey but also about who is sharing the journey.

Highlights of this session so far have been an illustrated talk from Rona and David Craig about their trip to the Arctic, Geoff Alsop telling us about his time in the army, and Derek Munn giving us an insight into his calling to become a Minister. Our syllabus is on the noticeboard beside the Martin Shields Hall and you are very welcome to join us.



Joyce Cunningham interviewing Geoff Alsop on his time in Korea

The Church of Scotland Guild works to a three-year programme and there are six projects to which all the Guilds throughout Scotland contribute. This year we are supporting 'Joining the Dots' and 'Malawi Fruits'.

- 'Joining the Dots' is a CrossReach project targeting loneliness and isolation in Scotland, working with people of all ages;
- 'Malawi Fruits' is a project working with farmers in that country providing resources to help them to become self-supporting, producing food and running their own businesses.

As Guilds work together on the same projects, enough money is raised throughout Scotland to make a significant difference to people's lives. The common projects are also a way of encouraging Guilds to work and meet together, both locally and nationally.

Coffee mornings are our main fund-raising activity and the Guild would like to thank all those who supported the coffee morning in November which raised £820. Pick a Flower (Freesia) winner - Sheena Sugar; Doll's Birthday (25th April) - Ruth Dolbear.

Marion Fry (President)

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A great poem by the late Spike Milligan

(thanks to Irene McCartney)



Smiling is infectious,
You catch it like the flu.
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.

I walked around the corner,
And someone saw me grin.
When he smiled I realised,
I had passed it on to him.

I thought about the smile,
And then realised its worth.
A single smile like mine,
Could travel round the earth.

So, if you feel a smile begin,
Don't leave it undetected.
Start an epidemic,
And get the world infected.

A Lesson in Culture

When I mentioned that we were going to India for a holiday, everybody said; "prepare yourself for a culture shock". This advice turned out to be very true, but not in the way I was expecting. As our guide tried to explain, within Indian culture different values apply which are mainly based on the Hindu traditions, consequently their attitude to life is very different to ours and this is reflected in the way life is conducted. It was perhaps this that was the biggest culture shock for me.

When we arrived in Shimla on the second day of our tour of Northern India, on the famous Toy Train winding its way through the foothills of the Himalayas, it was early evening with the sun low in the sky and the taxis were eager to take us to the hotel.



Shimla is glued to the side of a hill, the streets are steep and narrow, and it was here that we experienced Indian problem-solving first-hand. How to get the taxis up the hill on a road that is too narrow to turn on? Answer: employ the zig-zag method of route planning, shoot up a ramp at speed, then reverse into the opposite ramp at the same speed up to the next level, then continue forward at even greater speed until the next ramp, and so on. All this with traffic trying to do the same thing but in opposite directions, overtaking, undertaking. I just closed my eyes!

Shimla is famous as it became the summer capital of India when the British

government moved to the town to avoid the heat in Calcutta and Delhi. It is therefore a place of a peculiar mix of cultures and architectures. British Edwardian Neo-gothic, Tudor half-timbered grand houses, and hotels alongside Buddhist shrines and shanty constructions all clinging to impossibly steep hillsides. One of the grandest Edwardian properties is the Viceregal Lodge which was the summer residence of the Viceroy standing on the top of Observatory Hill. It is also known as Rashtrapati Nilayam (The President's House) having been used as the President's summer residence after independence. Now it is occupied by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, a social sciences think tank. This is a magnificent mansion, built in the Scottish Baronial style with some of the most magnificent interior wooden panelling and carved decoration I have seen. The walls are lined with photographs from the twenties, thirties and forties, as it was here that Mahatma Gandhi met the Viceroy in 1922 and in 1945 the plans for Indian self-rule were finalised, only to be rejected by the Muslim delegation. Finally, the partition discussions were concluded here in 1947. The sense of history is overwhelming. This is the site where a nation was born.

At the other end of the main thoroughfare past the Town Hall, the Gaiety Theatre and several grand residences (none of which would be out of place in Surrey) stands Christ Church, a Neo-gothic traditional Victorian church. Built in 1857 it has become one of the most prominent landmarks of Shimla reflecting the British influence on the area. It is still an active church; Christianity, though, is very much in the minority in Northern India. The interior is of traditional Church of England design, with pews facing the altar, the walls are covered with memorials to the great and the good of the British in India. The most striking features are the stained-glass windows. These represent the virtues of faith, hope, charity, fortitude, patience and humility and were designed by Lockwood Kipling, the father of Rudyard

Kipling. This place epitomises the characteristics that make India such a fascinating place, with different cultures and religions co-existing as neighbours in such a vibrant way.



Another example of the different approach to life was the journey, by taxi, down the hill to Chandigarh to catch the train back to Delhi. Nominally India drives on the left-hand side of the road; however, it soon becomes apparent that this is just a suggestion. If it is easier or more direct to drive on the right-hand side, then why not? The other traffic will go around you. Similarly, traffic lights are treated as advisory only, with green meaning go, amber go faster, and red meaning go if you can. It also seems obligatory to blow your horn whenever another vehicle, person or animal is visible, so the roads are never quiet. All these facts were starkly

reinforced on this journey, with the added complication of fog and low cloud. Meeting a truck head on going around a cow chewing the cud in the middle of the road as you round a hairpin, focuses the mind. But in the end, you learn to go with the flow so it becomes like a rollercoaster ride, these excitements making the trip hugely entertaining.

What I found was an utterly chaotic, bemusing environment, where tradition rubs shoulders with modern technology. Things work, but not necessarily in the way that you would expect, different cultures coexist (mainly) peacefully, rules seem to be adhered to on an optional basis, western values mingle with traditional values. All of which results in a vibrant, exciting, crowded, noisy but wonderfully diverse culture and society that I found enthralling and challenging at the same time.

What I have taken from our trip is that I cannot judge Indian society or culture by my West European culture and values; there are too many nuances and sensitivities in this different way of life making any direct comparisons impossible. The tour continued for another ten days visiting major cities and a national park, reinforcing these first impressions and I cannot wait to go back to continue exploring.

Andrew Job

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A Little Prayer for Peace

Give us, O God, the vision which can see Your love in the world in spite of human failure.
Give us the faith to trust Your goodness in spite of our ignorance and weakness.
Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray with understanding hearts
And show us what each one of us can do to set forward the coming of the day of universal peace.

(Frank Borman, Apollo 8 space mission, 1968)

Fabric Committee

Several projects have been successfully completed in the Church over the last few months.

- A new computer-controlled system has been installed to ensure that heating to the Church halls is pre-set for each group activity.
- The Wi-Fi system has been extended to cover all areas of the Church buildings.
- The front metal gates have been repainted and the neighbour's trees were trimmed back along the west boundary wall.
- Timers have been fitted to the electric wall heaters in Rooms 2 and 3 to prevent them being accidentally left on.
- At the Manse, the Kitchen & Laundry floor coverings were replaced.

The wall surface and paintwork in the lower west corridor is now in poor condition and we will shortly start redecoration work.

I would like to compile a register of all those who have **church keys**. If you have a key, please let the Church Office know. This register will be compiled in order to comply with both our Health and Safety procedures and Fire Policy.

Edinburgh Presbytery is embarking on an ambitious project to see publicly accessible defibrillators mounted outside all Church of Scotland buildings. St Ninian's has agreed to support this scheme which will provide our local community with a valuable emergency aid and we have sent our proposals to Presbytery for approval.

Alister McGlashan



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23rd Psalm – Shepherd's Version

*Wha is my Shepherd, weel I ken,
The Lord himsel' is He;
He leads me whaur the girse is green,
An' burnies quaet that be.*

*Ilk comfort whilk a sheep could need,
His thochtfu' care provides;
Tho' wolves an' dogs may prowl about,
In safety me He hides.*

*Aft times I fain astray wad gang,
An' wann'r far awa';
He fin's me oot, He pits me richt,
An' brings me hame an' a'.*

*His guidness an' His mercy baith,
Nae doot will bide wi' me;
While faulded on the fields o' time,
Or o' eternity.*

*Tho' I pass through the gruesome cleuch,
Fin' I ken He is near;
His muckle crook will me defen',
Sae I hae nocht tae fear.*

(with thanks to Iain Dunn)

Mission Committee

Fresh Start

Our next collection for **Fresh Start** will be on **Sunday 8th December** when we will be looking for Dishes and Cutlery: bowls, glass tumblers (no pint glasses), mugs and tea towels. Small electrical items such as kettles, toasters and lamps (in good condition) are also urgently needed. Further information will be in the Orders of Service on Communion Sunday, 1st December. Once again thank you for your continuing support.



Office-Bearers' Get-Together

We held our biennial Office-Bearers' Get-Together on Sunday 13th October. Our first speaker was Major Carol Young, accompanied by her husband Alan, who spoke on the work of the Salvation Army. Then our own Andrew Broom spoke on the history of St Ninian's. Around fifty Office-Bearers came to hear two wonderful speakers.

Carol and Alan are based at the Salvation Army headquarters in Loanhead. Before they came to Edinburgh in 2016 they had been involved in Prison and Town Centre Chaplaincy in Yorkshire. In Edinburgh they have taken up a new role called 'Mission Enablers', as well as having other responsibilities. Carol went on to tell us how the army helps deal with the drug problems, alcohol abuse, homelessness and many other social problems. They are now ready to start work on renovating Ashbrook House, which is situated on Ferry Road, for refuge and rehabilitation. We wish them every blessing for the future work of the Salvation Army.

Carol's talk was followed by the most wonderful afternoon tea. After tea we heard from Andrew Broom who took us on a very interesting journey through past times of St Ninian's. This included all the previous Ministers right up to date with the Rev James Aitken, and all the various changes to the buildings over the best part of nearly two hundred years. Andrew's talk was well supported with pictures and plans along with his usual passion for our Church. We agreed that we could have listened to Andrew for a much longer time.

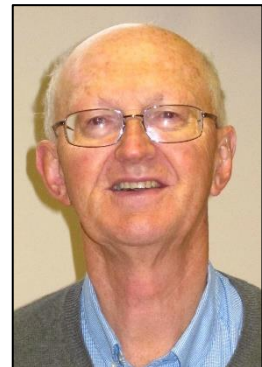
The Mission Committee would like to thank Georgie Wallace and Fiona Knapp for all their hard work in the kitchen.

Congregational Lunch

A date for your diary - the Congregational Lunch will be held on **Sunday 19th January 2020** immediately after morning worship. Monies raised will go to The Salvation Army for the Ashbrook House project. More information nearer the time.

Margaret Hunter

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Since the Autumn Quarterly, there has been little action on the Christian Aid front with the exception of the Amazon rainforest fires petition in mid-September 2019. The petition is still open as below.

Amazon rainforest fires petition

You will have seen news articles on the extensive wildfires raging in the Amazon Rainforest. Christian Aid is seeking signatures for a petition calling on the UK Prime Minister to put the Amazonian people at the heart of any response to the wildfires raging in the rainforest and to ensure that communities’ rights and ecosystems are safeguarded in any trade talks. Also, to ensure that any UK response or future dealings with Brazil and Bolivia put the Amazonian people in charge.

Send a message to the Prime Minister

Call on the Prime Minister to put Amazonian people at the heart of any response to the fires and to ensure that communities’ rights and ecosystems are safeguarded in any trade talks.

*“Dear Prime Minister,
Put the rights of Amazonian people first. Please ensure any aid to protect and restore the Amazon rainforest region is led by the very people who are most affected. And please ensure any trade and investment talks with Brazil and Bolivia ensure that communities’ rights and ecosystems are safeguarded.”*

The petition is still open and can be accessed at:
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/amazon-rainforest-fires-petition>
To submit the petition, insert your details and then click on **Submit**

The next Christian Aid activity on the horizon for St Ninian’s is the Christmas Eve Retiring Collection on **Tuesday 24th December**.

Alec Millar (alec.w.millar@blueyonder.co.uk)

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Just a Few of Our Favourite Hymns

In August we held a Hymns of Praise Service at which we sang 11 of St Ninian’s most popular hymns. Some 148 members of the congregation suggested a total of 75 different hymns from CH4. The favourite hymns chosen were:

**The Lord’s My Shepherd
Praise My Soul The King of Heaven
O Lord My God! When I in Awesome Wonder
Just As I Am
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
Be Thou My Vision**

**Make Me a Channel of Your Peace
To God Be The Glory
Great is Thy Faithfulness
I, The Lord of Sea and Sky
Thine Be the Glory**

Sunday School News

High Wire Adventures

Abernethy Trust, Loch Tay was our first (hopefully not last) Alpha/Juniors' weekend away. After much arranging we were off, but I hadn't arranged a trouble-free journey. An accident near Grangemouth halted our progress for an hour. Every cloud ... more time to listen to Harry Potter on the CD player. Friday night after dinner and much 'Chap Door Run' we settled down.

Saturday morning, bright and sunny, we split into High Ropes, Low Ropes and Archery. Low Ropes was good team building with Caitlin leading. Lorraine and Laura were more than happy with Low as High was pretty high.

High was great fun but quite a challenge, eg climbing up a 35-foot telegraph pole and fitting four people onto a 12-inch square of wood. Leaning out and trusting your very very close neighbour wasn't so easy as I am 4 times heavier than Hannah (15), Oliver (9) and Jenna (16). As you can imagine, we didn't manage to trust for very long before we all fell off and swung away attached to ropes.

The afternoon was Gorge Walking and, though the day was blue and sunny, the water was verveeee cold. After the walk we had the chance to jump into Loch Tay. A few did and it wasn't really that cold! But it certainly took your breath away. Hannah, Caitlin, Jenna, Oliver, Hannah, Rebekah, Lorraine and I took the plunge. Saturday evening, along with another group, we had a discussion on the subject of Identity. Sunday was a bit more relaxing with a walk, catch up of Strictly, lunch and home.

2020 - let's go ...

Campbell Gray

(in cahoots with Hannah, Jenna, Matthew, Oliver, Caitlin, Eloise, Cara, Eleanor, Hannah, Rebekah; assisted by Lorraine, Laura and Scott)



Strike by the Choir, Christmas 1889

A recent trawl through the British Newspaper Archive on the internet for any information relating to our predecessors in Corstorphine Free Church produced the extraordinary report printed in full in "Past Times in Corstorphine" on the following page. It records an alleged "strike" by the Free Church choir just before Christmas 1889 over new arrangements for seating the choir immediately following the lengthening of the church and the construction of the apse in that year.

The dispute is better understood by reference to the photograph in "Past Times" showing the new apse with the large pulpit in the centre and the adjacent seating at the front of the church. According to the report the choir were strongly objecting to their being seated *behind* the pulpit on uncomfortable backless forms, completely separated from their organist and conductor seated at the new Harmonium reed organ in *front* of the pulpit, clearly seen in the photograph. Because the Deacons' Court were ignoring their complaints, says the report, the choir had refused to attend the service on the previous Sunday, and "several" deacons had resigned over the issue.

But was it really true, or just "fake news" in modern parlance? A search in the Deacons' Court records produced the following from the meeting of 5th Nov 1889: Mr Chalmers, the organist, had sent a letter drawing the Court's attention to the present unsatisfactory position of the choir and organ. A petition signed by 20 members of the choir had likewise been received, "craving" [*requesting*] that the organ be placed immediately in front of the platform and that the choir be seated on the platform [*that would have involved the pulpit being placed much further back*

in the apse]. "After considerable discussion" it was agreed that Mr Chalmers be requested to make trial of the organ for one month behind the pulpit, and that the petition from the choir members "lie on the table" [*remain unanswered*].

Both the choir and the organ were now behind the pulpit, mostly unseen by the congregation! One month later, on 4th December, Mr Chalmers again wrote to the Court. The contents of his letter are not recorded, but it was resolved that the organ should remain behind the pulpit, that the pulpit should be brought forward "two feet 8 inches" to afford more room for the choir; also that extra lighting should be made available for the organist, and that chairs should be provided for the choir in place of the uncomfortable forms.

And there the story ends, so far as the Deacons' Court record is concerned. But the Kirk Session minutes of 10th January 1890 record without comment the resignations of three deacons, two of whom had only been ordained on 6th October previous, thus confirming the press report.

Clearly, this absurd arrangement could not be allowed to continue, and maybe there was indeed a "strike" before the Court decided to relent and locate both choir and organ in front of the pulpit. An unhappy episode, the seriousness of which the Clerks of both the Deacons' Court and Kirk Session did their best to conceal from their minutes. Perhaps we should be grateful to the "tell-tale" - possibly a choir member? - who informed the press of the dispute, otherwise it would never have seen the light of day 130 years later.

Andrew Broom

Past Times in St Ninian's

130 years ago - from the Buchan Observer and East Aberdeenshire Advertiser,
19th December 1889

"Strike of a Church Choir"

"Considerable friction has been occasioned in the usually quiet village of Corstorphine on account of a difference which has arisen between the choir of the Free Church there and the Deacons' Court.

"It appears that the church has recently undergone considerable structural alterations, and that the original choir arrangements have been departed from, the Court having assigned the choir a position behind the pulpit, where they were very uncomfortably seated. They also laboured under the disadvantage of not being under the eye of the conductor, which naturally had a detrimental effect on the musical part of the service.

"A memorial was submitted by the choir to the Deacons' Court desiring that their grievances should be considered, but so far it has not even been acknowledged by that body. Several members of the Court, however, who sympathise with the choir have resigned over the matter. As a result, Corstorphine Free Church was on Sunday without its choir, the members having gone on strike."



Our church in 1892 or later, before the transepts were put in, showing the central pulpit in the new apse with the Harmonium reed organ in front, long after the choir dispute had been resolved. The article on the previous page comments on what was an extraordinary, and hopefully unique, event in our congregation's history one hundred and thirty years ago.

World Mission

The World Mission Council is asking churches to support 'The Olive Tree Chapel Project' in Palestine this Christmas. The olive tree is seen as a symbol of peace - on average olive trees live for 500 years (and some up to 1500) and, because of their slow growth, they do not require cultivation during war time and continue to thrive and bear fruit into peacetime.



The land in Palestine is in turmoil and the ancient olive trees have great significance. The ancient groves are often victims of the continuing conflict. The General Assembly is asking churches to create an oasis of peace in Palestine by helping to build something beautiful. The Church of Scotland's Mission Partner in Jerusalem, the Rev John McCulloch, is working with the Nassar family at the Tent of Nations in Bethlehem to create the Olive Grove Chapel. We are being asked to pray,

reflect and donate to help build the chapel - a vine covered structure surrounded by a grove of olive trees - see the short video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnlIWmxwilg>. You can support the project by contacting World Mission at the Church of Scotland offices, 121 George Street, or emailing world@churchofscotland.org.uk.

World Mission is also encouraging local congregations to get more involved with the global church. The WM magazine also outlines the Mustard Seed Stories where members have, for instance, gone on an overseas visit or hosted a guest which has had a major impact on their lives and their faith. If you are interested and would like to find out more, please visit <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve>.

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As our Thoughts turn to Christmas

'The main thing' is to recognise the significance of that first Christmas, the Nativity. The birth of Jesus Christ was marked by astonishing simplicity. The highpoint of history, the climax of eternity, was not marked with grandeur, pomp and pageant. Rather, a pregnant teenager had no option but to deliver her child in the stark and smelly surroundings of a stable, the only warmth provided by the body heat of sheltering animals. The first visitors were shepherds, who were considered the lowest of the low. Jesus, the Bible tells us, did not come with majesty and opulence, but 'full of grace and truth', to reveal God - a God who is love - and to bridge the gap between us and that lavishly loving God.

Christmas is ultimately about love ... actually. As Christina Rossetti's carol puts it, '*Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine, Love was born at Christmas*'. Perhaps, as we make our plans, we should be less concerned with how simple or extravagant our Christmas will be. Perhaps the touchstone of all that we do should be love - and how we respond to the extravagant love of God and how we love those around us.

(extract from an article by the Mission & Discipleship Church Without Walls Team)

St.Ninian's Church Of Scotland, Corstorphine

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the Period ended 31 October 2019

	Actual 2019 £	Actual 2018 £	Variance £
PAYMENTS			
Ministry and Mission			
National Stipend and Mission and Renewal Fund	85,730	83,198	(2,532)
Congregational expenses			
Presbytery Dues	3,198	2,942	(256)
Pulpit Supply	616	420	(196)
Minister's Travel and Expenses	720	720	0
Local Salaries	32,005	28,354	(3,651)
Fabric,Repairs and Maintenance	6,352	4,370	(1,982)
Regular Maintenance Charges	2,176	1,670	(506)
Hall Running Costs	7,977	8,101	124
Property Insurance	4,247	4,363	116
Manse Council Tax	2,586	2,585	(1)
Office Expenses	5,034	3,954	(1,080)
Other Expenses	5,780	5,058	(722)
	70,691	62,537	(8,154)
Total Payments	156,421	145,735	(10,686)
RECEIPTS other than Offerings			
Use Of Church Halls	29,085	28,759	326
Investment Income	3,435	3,172	263
Other Receipts	3,011	3,296	(285)
Total	35,531	35,227	304
Amount to be met from Offerings	120,890	110,508	10,382
Offertry and Tax Recoveries			
Congregation Offerings	108,593	107,180	1,413
Tax Recovery on Gift Aid	23,797	22,010	1,787
	132,390	129,190	3,200
Surplus to date	11,500	18,682	(7,182)
Before Legacies Received	£5,000	£1,500	£3,500

COMMENT

The Surplus, on the General Fund to 31 October 2019, **excluding** Legacies received is £11,500. This is **£7,182** less than the same period last year. The difference can be explained as follows:

Higher Costs - £10,686

- Ministry & Mission costs / Presbytery dues - higher charges for 2019 of **£2,532** / **£256** are due to general increases
- Salaries - the increase of **£3,651** is due to overtime and the cost of providing cover for sickness and holidays
- Fabric,Repairs & Maintenance - the increase of **£1,982** is mostly due to costs in respect of church exterior paintwork, electrical repairs and an upgrade to the heating control system
- Regular Maintenance - the increase of **£506** is due to higher costs for Fire Alarm maintenance
- Office Expenses - the increase of **£1,080** is entirely due to higher costs for printing
- Other Costs - the increase of **£722** is due to cost of the Stewardship campaign offset by some savings in other areas.

Higher Income - £3,504

- Income from Hall Rentals (**£326**) and Investments (**£263**) has increased slightly on last year
- Congregational Offerings & Tax Recoveries - the increase of **£1,413** / **£1,787** is due to the response by the congregation to the Stewardship campaign which has more than offset the reduction resulting from the falling role.

Janice Reynolds
Treasurer