

St Ninian's Church  
Corstorphine

# Quarterly



(Genesis 9:13)

Summer 2020



**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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**Church Telephones:** OFFICE (and Voicemail): 316 4777;  
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Office Hours: Tue/Wed/Thurs - 9.00am to 12 noon; Fri - 9.00am to 1.00pm

**website:** [www.corstorphinestninians.org.uk](http://www.corstorphinestninians.org.uk)

**Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, all the usual activities listed below are suspended until further notice. Sunday Services are available on You Tube at**

**<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW-OUJ0F3JLO9vUD7KYMffa>**

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, following each of which there is an 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 April, 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.



I'm sure mistakes have been made along the way - at home, in the church, between friends: things done that shouldn't have been done; things said that shouldn't have been said; places gone that shouldn't have been gone to. After all, as the First Minister has said repeatedly, "We'll make mistakes." The situation is unprecedented. We are all under pressure. But I know too that, amongst Christians, forgiveness is just a heartbeat away.

Let me end by saying thank you to everyone who has stepped up. Gaynor in the office has been a rock that I and others have relied on. In the early weeks Gillian in the church was tireless (she's on furlough now). The elders have been consistently diligent and caring. Networks and friendships have been sources of comfort and strength. People have given help and kept in touch. Your encouragement for my work has been invaluable.

Thank you everyone.

*James*

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Kirk Session**

Wednesdays: 13<sup>th</sup> May; 9<sup>th</sup> September; 11<sup>th</sup> November

### **Deacons' Court**

Wednesdays: 27<sup>th</sup> May; 23<sup>rd</sup> September; 25<sup>th</sup> November

**These are the dates planned for the remainder of 2020. The arrangements will depend on whatever social distancing rules are in effect at the time.**

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## **Congregational Register**

### **Funerals:**

12 February 2020*	Mrs Hilary Sellar, 48 Clerwood Gardens
20 February 2020*	Mrs Pamela McAdam, Manor Grange NH
17 March 2020*	Mrs Kathleen Murdoch, 52 Belgrave Rd
18 March 2020*	Mrs Fran Flucker, Manor Grange NH
30 March 2020*	Miss Caroline Hinshelwood, St Margaret's NH
14 April 2020*	Mrs Phyllis Hay, 4/67 North Gyle Terrace
7 May 2020*	Mrs Margaret Mills, Belgrave Lodge NH

\* Denotes member

# PASTORAL CARE AND COVID-19

*“Love one another as I have loved you.”  
(John 13: 34)*

*St Ninian’s is here for you, and for anyone in our community who needs help. If you need help at this time with anything, contact your elder, the church office, or the minister. We can help.*

How does Jesus love?

In the Gospel of John, the commandment to his disciples to love comes after Jesus has washed their feet. In the Gospel of Luke, it comes after Jesus has told them the parable of the Good Samaritan. In both Gospels the primacy of love for others by way of service that changes people’s lives and confounds expectations is at the heart of the Gospel.

When the Covid-19 lockdown was imposed, loving service was St Ninian’s first response. While I, as minister, was working out how I could continue to lead worship on a Sunday morning with the building closed, members and staff of St Ninian’s ensured that every house in our parish received a card that offered hope and help.

It helped that the Easter Card was ready to go out, and Margaret and Jim Hunter did sterling work in bundling the cards into streets. But, a great deal of thanks should go to Gillian and Gaynor in the office who stapled a message into every one of over 1500 cards. After that, members made sure that over the course of one weekend every bundle was collected and distributed in the week following.

There are few churches left in the country that maintain the traditional system of

elders’ districts that St Ninian’s does. Many have moved on to different forms of pastoral care and leadership. But the elders’ district system has proved invaluable in this crisis. It has meant that as a church we can communicate quickly and directly with everyone in our congregation to offer support, information, and a listening ear. Elders are on the end of a phone, don’t be afraid to call.



And don’t be afraid to call me. I’ve spoken to many members over the past few weeks and sent out well over one hundred cards to those who may feel isolated, worried or disconnected from the church. While you are watching the service on YouTube on a Sunday morning, I am in the church with the

service on in the background writing cards to those who I think might appreciate knowing that someone is thinking of them and praying for them.

If the situation continues, there will be more to be done. But, as a start, in a crisis, we have responded to Christ’s command.

Thank you.

*James*

# WORSHIP, TECHNOLOGY AND COVID-19

*“And I say this to you: You are Peter, the Rock; and on this rock I will build my church...”  
(Matthew 16:18)*

*The Sunday morning service is available on YouTube from 10:15 on a Sunday morning.*

*Search for St Ninian’s Corstorphine, or go to*

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW-OUJ0F3JLO9vUD7KYMffa>

I’m sure there is no direct connection, but the exponential curve associated with virus infections across the UK seems to match the exponential curve of technological understanding that I have experienced over the past couple of months.

I am very grateful that St Ninian’s established a Technology and Communications Committee that was able to offer me some helpful advice. But, once the church



buildings were closed, and everyone went into lockdown, it was my job to attempt to continue broadcasting a St Ninian’s worship service each week.

The biggest constraint on producing a service was time. With the schools closed, I wasn’t just learning how to broadcast a service, but how to be a part-time teacher as well. So, the development of the services was phased over a number of weeks as I worked out what I wanted to achieve, what was achievable, and what I

could achieve. For example, it took three weeks before I managed to get Anne’s piano playing into the service. That was a light bulb moment in the middle of the night when something



woke me up, and the first thing I thought about was to ask Anne to record herself playing the piano, and I could film the words in the hymn book. It only took another couple of hours to work out how to put the two together using the video editing software I had recently bought.

If you look at the websites of different churches in Edinburgh, you will notice that there is a wide spectrum of online worship. Of those who are producing anything at all, at one extreme some ministers are offering a ten-minute reflection on a Sunday morning, and some are offering a ten-minute reflection every day. What I am doing at St Ninian’s probably lies at the other end of the spectrum - a full worship service that matches as closely as possible what happened in St Ninian’s before the lockdown.

This was a deliberate choice on my part. The casual observer might not be much interested in the YouTube videos of the service, but I wanted members of St Ninian’s to feel that the familiarity of the Sunday morning service offered some rhythm to your week, spiritual sustenance to keep you going, and a sense of your own community to connect with. After all, Jesus Christ built his church upon a rock. When our lives feel tossed in a storm we didn’t see coming, the church should be there for you as a place of solid sanctuary.

As I write this at the end of April, I know that there is more that could be done. The sound could be improved. We could have online coffee together after the service using a meeting platform like Skype or Zoom, for example. Perhaps, one day the service will be broadcast live. At the moment, it is pre-recorded on a Friday morning.

I hope that you are enjoying what you see, feel that you are having a spiritual experience, and connecting to a community. Don’t hesitate to get in touch - all suggestions are welcome.

*James*

So suddenly . . .

- New York 'the city that never sleeps' is now asleep, all quiet.
- Paris the 'centre of romance' lives in echos.
- Rome 'the eternal city' is deserted.
- Disney is out of magic.
- London is caged in silence, the Queen speaks to her people from a hidden room.
- Mecca is empty! Nobody to 'stone the devil'.
- The Chinese wall is no longer a fortress.
- The G8 nations are speechless.
- The developed world suddenly on its knees.
- Churches, mosques, great parks, monuments, stadiums are filled with unfilled spaces.
- The busiest places at present were hitherto the most dreaded: hospitals and cemeteries.
- The famous football leagues, the fashion shows, exotic weddings, festivals all lost to memory.
- Celebrities have run out of celebrations. Our titles, status and privileged positions are stale.
- With all our boastful 'citizenships' we cannot step out of our houses. With all our savings in gold and cash, we can only buy food to eat and toilet paper to take care of the waste.
- We usually went to watch animals in cages, now animals roam our empty streets, watching us in our 'cages'.
- With our expensive clothes and shoes, our house clothes and pyjamas are the latest fashion.
- AND despite all these 'oddities'...the world still goes on; the sun still shines; the birds still sing; our God is still in His Throne.
- When this long night finally gets over and a new day sets in, let us not forget the lesson of the long night - that the only essential is LIFE, the rest are but dispensable prefixes and suffixes - BUSY EMPTINESS.
- LET'S LIVE OUR LIFE TO THE FULLEST: TO BE A BLESSING TO OTHERS AND TO PLEASE GOD OUR CREATOR. THIS WORLD IS NOT OURS.
- ALL IS VANITY... 🙏🙏🙏

*(forwarded by Irene McCartney)*

## A quick maths lesson [or, Exit - Pursued By A Virus]

Maths can be strangely comforting when it shows the world is not arbitrary and unpredictable. Take exponential growth, which applies to rabbits breeding, pyramid schemes, and viruses: if  $R$  is the number of people to whom we pass on a virus, then if  $R > 1$  the virus multiplies exponentially; if  $R = 1$  the number of cases is stable, and if  $R < 1$  it dies down. Exponential growth is best thought of as a doubling every so often; for COVID-19, cases were doubling every 5 days or so.

Simple, is it not? And predictable. We can reduce  $R$  by altering our behaviour, restricting human interactions. We introduced lockdown and, reassuringly, it worked: new cases have levelled off, so  $R$  is now (last week in April) about 1. But cases are going down only slightly, so  $R$  is currently not much less than 1. If we relax now,  $R$  will rise above 1 and exponential growth will restart. Scotland cannot allow this, because exponential growth has no limit; it will inevitably overwhelm our capacity to care for the sick. So, we must keep  $R$  down to less than 1. Notice that this is not a matter of choice or political judgement - it is mathematics.

Where we *do* have choices is *how* we keep  $R < 1$ . We can perhaps relax here if we tighten up there, or get smarter by testing & tracing - perhaps giving up our privacy to a Bluetooth app. Indeed, we need to get smarter, or the magic money tree will fail. Notice that we have to *keep*  $R < 1$ . This isn't just for a few weeks; lockdown isn't a quick fix after which we can get back to normal. We must keep  $R$  less than 1 until we find the exit.

So what is the exit - or indeed, is there an exit? Immunity. Folk who have had the virus are to some extent immune. So, you

can't pass it on to them. Time for more maths. If  $R$  is the number of people to whom we normally pass on the virus, and  $P$  is the proportion of the population who have gained immunity, then the end point of the epidemic will come when

$$P = 1 - \frac{1}{R}$$

In the 'normal' unrestricted Scotland we yearn for,  $R$  is 2.6. The equation tells us that the end-point, where 'herd immunity' kicks in, will come when  $P = 62\%$ . That's when we can get back to normal. Immunity is acquired either by recovering, or by vaccination.

These are the only 'exits' to normality. Aggressive test-and-trace programs provide an attractive coping strategy, but they only work if the case-count is kept low; which means herd immunity is never reached, and without a vaccine there is no end-point. We would have to test-and-trace forever.

So, either way, 'normal' is a long way off. Whatever we do, it will be for years, not weeks. So now is the time for folk from all walks of life, including St Ninian's, to start working out how they can adapt and make the best of it. It doesn't make sense to wait for the government to work out the best solution for us, or for your life.

And remember that this is maths, and therefore predictable, like seasons. We don't stress about winter; we knit a woolly jumper and look out the sledge. People die; we celebrate life. God, give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed.

*David Craig*



# Mission Committee

## Annual Coffee Morning in aid of St Columba's Hospice.

Our annual coffee morning was held on Saturday 7 March 2020. We were so lucky to have a dry day given that we had had so much wet weather. Our usual stalls were stocked up with goods and we were very busy right up until 12 noon. The final total raised was an amazing £3117.43. A big thank you to all those who worked on the stalls and to everyone who contributed and finally to all who came along on the day. The Hospice have asked me to pass on their grateful thanks for our fundraising. We have now raised over £46,000 from our coffee mornings over the past 21 years.

## Easter Cards

The Mission Committee would like to thank all those who helped deliver the Congregational Easter Cards. We managed to have most of these delivered before the lockdown took effect.

We, like everybody else, are not able to meet at present so everything is on hold meantime. We look forward to when we can meet again and continue to take forward new ideas. The Mission Committee send you their best wishes and hope you stay well.

*Margaret Hunter*  
Convenor.

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# Fabric Committee

Prior to the temporary closure of the Church, some contract works were carried out.

A new strip light was fitted at the front garden to illuminate the Church signboard in the evening.

The Martin Shields Hall floor has again been sanded and re-sealed with lacquer coatings and we are delighted at the refurbished appearance of the timber block floor which will serve for many more years to come.

The woodworm attack in the East Cloakroom was due to New Zealand weevils. I don't know how they managed to travel here but they have now been removed and the timber replaced. Signs of rainwater entry were noted in the Gallery ceiling and masonry works were urgently undertaken to point up high level masonry and seal the rainwater penetration. Church gas and electricity meters have both been replaced with Smart meters which will relieve Gillian of taking monthly records.

When the gas meter was replaced in February all went well until the Engineer decided to test the Kitchen gas rings at full blast. This set off the heat detector in the Kitchen, which then set off all the Church fire alarms and shortly afterwards two fire engines arrived at the front door where I quickly explained, "It wisnae me".



*Alister McGlashan*

# The Guild

Whose we are and Whom we serve  
Strategy: "One Journey Many Roads" 2018-21  
Theme: The Extra Mile

The theme for 2020-21 is the "The Extra Mile" which will build on the previous themes, "Seeking the Way" and "Companions on the Road". What an appropriate theme given our current situation. The Bible is full of stories where people go that extra mile in many different ways and for many different reasons. During this Covid-19 pandemic we have all witnessed many acts of kindness. This has been demonstrated in the way we help our neighbours and support the people who are sick and vulnerable. Calling fellow members is another way to give support to those who are home alone.

A suggestion has been made by the Guild Office that Guild members light a candle at their window at 7pm on a Sunday night and pray for the healing hand of God to be on the world, the community and yourself at this difficult time.

Reflecting on our past year and its theme "Companions on the Road", we met many wonderful and interesting people on our journey. We travelled across the world with speakers telling us about their journeys to the Wild West of America, India and the Silk Road in China, to name but a few.



We had a highly successful Coffee Morning in February and the sum of £547.50 will be added to the £743.60 raised at the Coffee Morning in October - many thanks to all who supported these ventures. All proceeds will be donated to the Guild projects.



The Committee will be working on a new programme over the summer months. We are hoping to arrange for new and interesting speakers to join us, together with some local fun events.

Alas, due to the Covid-19 lockdown we had to cancel both the penultimate Guild meeting and the AGM. We missed celebrating Geoff Alsop's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Ninian's Guild but, rest assured, the celebrations are only on hold. We will be celebrating these milestones on our return.

In the meantime, please keep safe and well.

*Irene McCartney (Secretary)*

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## Scrubs to order for NHS staff

On Maundy Thursday, Norma Gilmore was due to have been at Church in the evening, but the service was cancelled because of the Covid-19 restrictions. What to do? Norma found herself watching The One Show on TV and was inspired by a report about Scrub Hub - a network of voluntary community groups who love to sew and are making scrubs to order for NHS staff who are struggling to get them during this crisis. Some doctors including consultants and GPs don't usually wear scrubs - but are realising this is the safest and easiest way for them to dress during this crisis. The message from the programme was that community garment making hubs can make a difference for our local doctors. The scrubs are made to order by experienced and professional volunteers, working safely within the guidelines of the lock down. Nothing daunted, Norma decided to get in touch with the Edinburgh group and soon took a delivery of material and patterns.



Each local hub runs independently and seeks donations for its materials separately. Coincidentally, the week before this story came to the Quarterly, the Rotary Club of Corstorphine made a donation to support the work of the local Scrub Hub group, so well done, Rotary and St Ninian's. Are there other St Ninian's members who have also become involved?

In anticipation that this need will still be around when you receive your Quarterly, for more information go to Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/158227442067550>

Or the Scrub Hub web site at <https://scrubhub.org.uk/>

You can contact the local hub by emailing [edinburgh.scrubhub@gmail.com](mailto:edinburgh.scrubhub@gmail.com)

And you can donate by going to <https://www.gofundme.com/> and searching for Scrub Hub Edinburgh, where you will find the following message:

*Due to COVID-19 there is a national shortage of scrubs. The Scrub Hub are a UK based organisation who hand sew medical scrubs for NHS workers. I have set up a Scrub Hub location in Edinburgh, Scotland.*

*Donations are needed for fabric and thread so that we can make these scrubs for the NHS doctors and nurses in and around the Edinburgh area.*

*Any leftover funds at the end of the project will be donated to NHS Practitioner health, an organisation dedicated to supporting the unique needs of health care professionals and their mental health, which we think will be of great importance in the coming months.*

*Save lives - Help the NHS - Protect the NHS*

*Thank you,  
Imogen*



Christian Aid has more than 70 years' experience of working in partnership to support communities to thrive. They tackle the root causes of poverty so that people the world over are strengthened against future knocks. And, if disasters happen, they get people the help they need straight away.

Coronavirus does not discriminate, and the world's poorest communities, who already lack access to healthcare, will be the most vulnerable. Christian Aid set up a Coronavirus Emergency Appeal and owing to the urgency of the situation, St Ninian's donated £900 on your behalf, to support that Appeal. A retiring collection will be held when we return to worshipping in the Church so that that money can become your donation.

We, in St Ninian's Church, fundraise in the Church and Parish enabling Christian Aid to help communities in the developing world. Last year, we raised a total of £7,744. Many thanks to everyone who helped raise such a wonderful total.

This year Christian Aid Week runs from 10 to 16 May. However, Coronavirus across the world has intervened and, due to the current lock-down and distancing procedures, we are unable to undertake our normal fundraising activities (house-to-house collection, soup & sweet lunch and Forth Bridge sponsored walk), which usually account for two thirds of the year total. So, Christian Aid Week is moving online! Christian Aid are building a vibrant, virtual Christian Aid Week so you can take part with our online community in activities such as online quizzes. More details on these and a Just Giving page will follow later.

Alec Millar ([alec.w.millar@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:alec.w.millar@blueyonder.co.uk))

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The Rock Trust continues to appeal for community support as it struggles to provide food for homeless young people in Edinburgh at this extremely challenging time. If you would like to help, you can make a donation at <https://www.rocktrust.org/donate/> .

Many thanks.

Susanne Hope (334 2489)

# TechComms

In the Spring of 2019, the Presbytery of Edinburgh carried out its five-year Local Church Review of St Ninian's. From this, a review group appointed by the Kirk Session and Deacons' Court identified five 'Next Steps'. After a successful inaugural 'Annual Adventure' for teenagers, organised by Alpha, the next working group to mobilise was the 'Technology and Communication Group', or 'TechComms' to use its snappier, abbreviated title.

Its remit was to address the question "As modern communication technologies are used by more and more people, especially young people, how might we use a range of technologies to communicate the Gospel better amongst ourselves, during worship, and to the world around us".

Little did we know then that the initial focus of the group would have to be how to use new (at least to most of us) technologies to try and maintain some communication and a sense of church community, while we are all isolated from the physical sanctuary, the halls and of course each other!

Many of you will hopefully be experiencing the fruits of the minister's and others' efforts on this front, primarily by delivering online services to your laptop or tablet via YouTube. While we have had to press the 'Pause' button on delivering on the original intended remit of the TechComm Group, work has progressed on a number of fronts, on what will be a phased and incremental approach towards improving the technology and communications both within and outwith the church buildings. We will see what works well in each step before taking it further.

The first phase includes the replacement of the 'sound mixing desk' in the church, the piece of infrastructure which sits in the box in the gallery and controls the sound system in the sanctuary. Replacing the

current 'analogue' box with a modern 'digital' equivalent is really an 'enabler', which will give us more control and flexibility for how we use technology in the sanctuary.

We will purchase additional microphones, so that, for example, the congregation can hear both sides of the conversation the minister is having with the youngsters during the children's address. We plan to acquire a new modern projector and screen, which will be able to be used in the sanctuary for 'presentational' items, including text, photos and videos. This will be a huge benefit for example to the Sunday School, for use in their Christmas or End of Session Services, enabling them to integrate these elements into their services a lot more easily and most importantly to significantly improve the 'audience experience' for the congregation! The same benefits will accrue when this kit is used in any of the church halls for presentations, films and so on, with the additional safety benefit that the 'short throw' nature of the projector means it will actually sit on the stage in front of the screen - no cables on the floor to trip over!

Finally (for the moment), we will install a 'Digital Display Screen' in the Crush Hall. This will be able to be used for anything from a welcome message, to directing visitors to the appropriate hall or room for their event and could effectively replace the cluttered notice board on the west wall.

The key message with all this stuff of course, is not the technology itself, but how we utilise it. As with smart phones, tablets and so on, the opportunities are endless, limited only by our imaginations and our willingness to explore the opportunities - so watch this space, or rather these screens.

*Derek MacGillivray*

# Enterprise Committee

In the last Quarterly I stated that it had been decided that there would be no future print issues of “**Let’s Talk about Corstorphine**”. Andrew Broom requested copies of all past issues for the St Ninian’s archive which he administers, and he suggested that I offer copies of past issues to The National Library of Scotland. The National Library will welcome copies of past Issues and has requested that I also send them to The British Library in London.

For many years, two copies of each Issue have been sent to the Edinburgh Room of Edinburgh Central Library on George IV Bridge.

Thus, for those of you have contributed articles over the years, these articles are filed for posterity.

The next **Christmas Fair** will be in 2021 on a date yet to be decided.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

*Ian Kirkpatrick, Convener (334 5951)*

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## Care Van Update

The Care Van service has continued throughout the coronavirus pandemic as it is deemed to be an essential service by the Scottish Government, and Bethany reports that it has seen many hungry users as several of the normal food providers have had to close. The Bethany policy is that as rough sleeping continues to be a risk to human life, they would endeavour to keep the services run throughout any crisis.

Early on, I realised that we would be struggling to continue with our commitment to the service with many of our volunteers falling into the higher risk groups (over 70!), and I didn’t want to put anyone under any pressure to volunteer. For this reason, I contacted Bethany and removed our teams from the rota for the time being. I think several other churches also had to make this difficult decision.

The van has been able to continue, and I believe is now supplying aprons, gloves and masks for the volunteers and Social Bite are supplying sandwiches for the service users. There are 2m strips of tape on the pavement at Waverley Bridge to try and encourage social distancing for the service users; gel and hand washing facilities have been put in place. The Care Shelter has also continued to run nightly.

I am hopeful that by our next rota commitment on the 29 May we will be able to return to volunteering with the Care Van - this being dependent on the lifting of the lockdown and the volunteering of those less vulnerable within my teams.

*with best wishes,  
Alison Cunningham*

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# Sunday School News

The news today is all about the coronavirus. Everyone stuck indoors and limited to one outside trip per day. I'm a great believer that for every negative there is a positive. While being stuck indoors, worrying about catching the virus, unable to meet up with family and friends, issues getting shopping (not forgetting the severe lack of toilet roll!) is all very negative. All we have to do is look outside our windows to see the positive. The flowers are blooming and starting to show their beautiful colours, there is blossom on the trees. I can sit at my back door and hear no noise from trains, planes, cars, buses, but I can now appreciate the birds singing and breathe some cleaner air.

Before "the Virus" there was much talk of climate change, again all very negative. But I think now that things have shut down, Our Mother Earth has a chance to heal some of her wounds which is most definitely a positive.

While we haven't had any Sunday School over the last few weeks due to the lockdown, we will hopefully be back in church to worship at some point over the summer. I do hope that our young people will come back, too. We will do our best to organise an activity group for during the service.

Stay well and safe,

Best wishes

*Diana Fairgrieve and Lesley Gulland*

*Sunday School Co-ordinators*

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## What is lockdown like for some members of Alpha?

### Jenna's lockdown

During lockdown I have done many things I don't usually make the time to do. I have been baking with my mum, which has resulted in us making very yummy cakes and brownies over the past few weeks. During lockdown it has been my dad and my birthdays so for that we made a delicious chocolate cake, my personal favourite. We spent our birthday facetimeing family and friends including my sister Sarah, her husband David and my baby niece Lily. I think one of the hardest things about lockdown is not seeing Lily grow up as well as not being able to see the rest of my family and friends. On the positive side, facetime and skype have certainly come in handy to speak to all these people and receiving videos of Lily laughing and learning to crawl has put a smile on all of our faces. On a daily basis, the most exciting thing has been what we

have for lunch and dinner which me and my dad never fail to ask about five times a day, but if you tried Laura Langdon's cooking you would know how good it is. Recently I got nominated for a 5K run for the NHS which is a challenge going around on Instagram where you run 5K then donate £5, so if you saw me effectively crawling around panting on your street in Corstorphine recently, then that will explain why. Sadly, school has not left me alone as they have been assigning me with homework as well as video calling me to ensure that I have completed it, however I have enjoyed doing all of this from the comfort of my bed.

### Hannah's lockdown

In lockdown I have found many different ways to fill my time. I have been re reading the Harry Potter series as it is one of my favourites, practising the piano as I

am learning to play and baking lots of cakes. My teachers have been setting me assignments electronically through my school iPad so that I can keep up to date with my course work. I celebrated my 16th birthday on the 20th so me and my family had a bbq in the garden and my friends visited me at my door while practising social distancing. I've been going on my daily walks around the neighbourhood either by myself or with my dad. I've been tuning into James' videos on Sunday mornings with my mum and have enjoyed still being able to worship while at home. Lockdown has taught me that it's the smaller things in life that matter like being able to hug your friends and family.

### Caitlin's lockdown

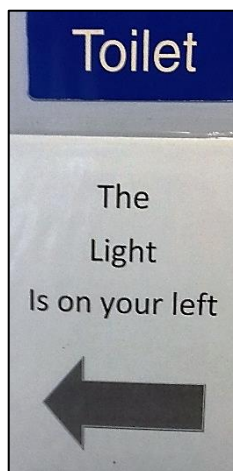
Whilst in lockdown I've been doing lots of things. I've baked cakes and cookies for my families. I've done some arts and crafts like colouring books, I've been doing lots of tidying and I've completed jigsaws and board games. My teachers have been setting me some work over Microsoft teams on a weekly basis. And I've been using zoom to have my ballet classes weekly and equip meetings run by SU monthly. In our equip meetings we hear talks from speakers and split into discussion groups to speak more in depth about God and whatever the topic of the talk was.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Signs . . . beyond face value



*'strait is the gate, and narrow is the way...'* Matthew 7:14' [On the fence around the zoo]



*'The light shines in the darkness...'* John 1:5 [Ladywell Medical Centre]

David Craig



## Laughter in Heaven (and on Earth)

Martin Luther said that if there wasn't laughter in heaven he wasn't going. To that I would only add "and hot showers". We all need cheering up more than ever at this difficult time of self-isolating, and the following extracts from *Holy Wit* and *Laughter Lines* published by the Rev James A Simpson well over thirty years ago when he was Minister of Dornoch Cathedral should meet the requirement.

**Surely James doesn't hear back-handed "compliments" like this from folk going out after a Service?**

- "I don't care what other people say, I like your sermons."
- "If I had known you were going to be good today, I would have brought a friend."
- "That was a great sermon. Every word you said was superfluous."
- "You always find something to say to fill up the time."
- "It's not that you preach longer than others, it just seems longer."
- "That was a great sermon today. For once I felt you did not mean me."

**And then there are occasional typing errors in parish notices and newsletters:**

- "For members of the congregation who have children and don't know it, there is a children's nursery downstairs during the Service."
- "Sinners wanted for the Choir."
- "There will be a meeting of the Deacons' Court on Sunday morning before the Service. It will be gin with breakfast at 7.30am."

**And finally, . . .**

- An American Rabbi received a thank-you note from a bridegroom he had married - "Dear Rabbi, I want to thank you for the beautiful way you brought my happiness to a conclusion."

---ooOoo---

*The above are all quoted from Holy Wit and Laughter Lines, with grateful thanks and acknowledgment to the author, the Very Rev Dr James A Simpson, a former Moderator of the General Assembly.*

Andrew Broom

## Intimations gone wrong?

<i>Twenty-two members were present at the church meeting held at the home of Mrs Marsha Crutchfield last evening. Mrs Crutchfield and Mrs Rankin sang a duet, "The Lord knows why".</i>	<i>The third verse of "Blessed Assurance" should be sung without musical accomplishment.</i>
<i>Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.</i>	<i>The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.</i>
<i>The vicar will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing "Break Forth Into Joy"</i>	<i>The Reverend Merriweather spoke briefly much to the delight of the audience.</i>
<i>The older children will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church hall on Friday at 7pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.</i>	<i>Scouts are saving aluminium cans and bottles to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.</i>
<i>Please do not lock the door as we have lost the key.</i>	<i>Cup of coffee to sit in or take away.</i>

(with thanks to Alister McGlashan)

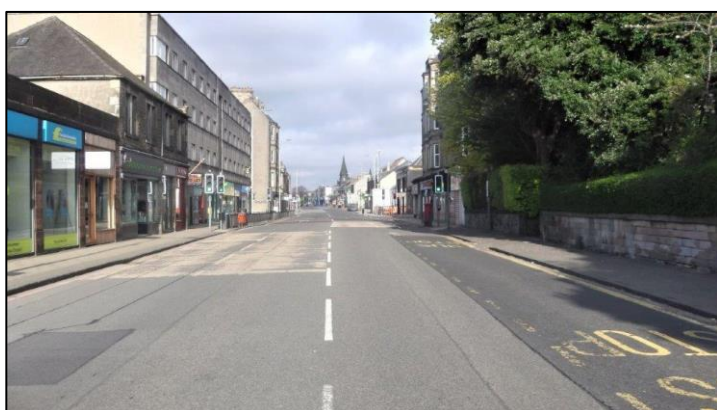
## *(Past Times in St Ninian's)*



No need for social distancing at the Christmas Fair in November 2019!

\* \* \* \* \*

## **Present Times around St Ninian's!**



Look right, look left, look right again!



Sunday Service as we have come to know it



Daily Exercise - Aidan at cycle practice!

**St.Ninian's Church Of Scotland, Corstorphine**

**Statement of Receipts and Payments for the Period ended 30 April 2020**

	Actual 2020 £	Actual 2019 £	Variance £
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
<b>Ministry and Mission</b>			
National Stipend and Mission and Renewal Fund	33,486	34,292	806
<b>Congregational expenses</b>			
Presbytery Dues	3,120	3,198	78
Pulpit Supply	0	136	136
Minister's Travel and Expenses	240	240	0
Local Salaries	12,152	13,835	1,683
Fabric - Renewals, Repairs and Maintenance	3,587	3,719	132
Hall Running Costs	4,929	2,999	(1,930)
Property Insurance	2,188	2,124	(64)
Manse Council Tax	659	642	(17)
Office Expenses	2,162	1,943	(219)
Other Expenses	2,790	3,019	229
	<b>31,826</b>	<b>31,853</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>65,312</b>	<b>66,145</b>	<b>833</b>
<b>RECEIPTS other than Offerings</b>			
Use Of Church Halls	14,603	10,419	4,184
Investment Income	400	400	0
Other Receipts	730	225	505
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,733</b>	<b>11,044</b>	<b>4,689</b>
<b>Amount to be met from Offerings</b>	<b>49,579</b>	<b>55,101</b>	<b>-5,522</b>
<b>Offertry and Tax Recoveries</b>			
Congregation Offerings	39,684	44,124	(4,440)
Tax Recovery on Gift Aid	8,381	9,137	(756)
	<b>48,065</b>	<b>53,261</b>	<b>(5,196)</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) to date</b>	<b>(1,515)</b>	<b>(1,840)</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>Before Legacies Received</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>

**COMMENT**

As at 30th April, there is a deficit on the General Account of **£1,515**. This is slightly better than the position for the same period last year. The increase in surplus of £325 between 2019 and 2020 is explained as follows:

**Lower Costs = Increase in surplus of £833**

In general, costs are in line with last year with increases and decreases offsetting one another. The two main variances are:

~ **Salary costs** - are lower than last year by **£1,683** because 2019 costs included ad-hoc payments to cover staff absence.

~ **Hall Running costs** - are higher than last year by **£1,930** due to higher energy costs resulting from increased use of our halls

**Lower Income = Reduction in surplus of £507**

~ **Income from Hall Rentals** - is higher than last year by **£4,184** due to the increased use of our halls on a regular basis.

~ **Other Receipts** - are higher than last year by **£505** due to the timing of contributions from Church organisations

~ **Offerings & Tax Recoveries** - are lower than last year by **£5,196** due to the loss of FWO donations during the period of lockdown

It is important to note that this position has been achieved despite the fact that the Church has been closed for six weeks, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, which has had a significant impact on our income stream. However, it does indicate that prior to the lockdown income was strong and hopefully we will return to this position in the fullness of time. This and the fact that we have built up reserves in previous years means that we have sufficient resources to continue for some time to come.

**Janice Reynolds**  
Treasurer