

CROSSWIND

The Journal of St Michael's Parish Church



*And thus you shall greet him:
'Peace be to you, and peace be
to your house, and peace be to
all that you have.;* 1 SAMUEL 25:6

**February 2020
Vol 22:4**

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SUNDAY SERVICES



Communion

Sunday 23rd February

All-Age Communion at 9:30am.
Traditional Communion at 11am
in the church
3pm in the Kirk Hall
with common and individual cups

Weekly Services

9.30am First Morning Service

9.45am All-Age Worship
Term time in Springfield School

11.00am Second Service

Monthly Communion

Sunday 29th March
at 12:15pm
Individual Cup

Cover photograph:
Courtesy of Gordon Young

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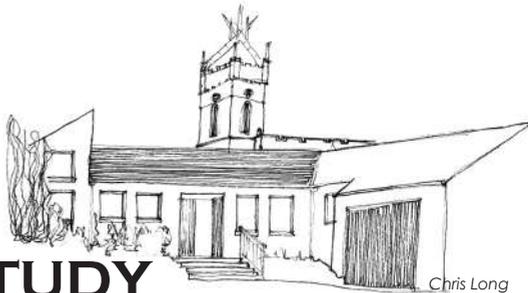
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The deadline for the May 2020 issue is 4th April 2020.

VIEW FROM THE MANSE STUDY



by Rev Dr Liam Fraser

The view from the Manse is obscured by piles of boxes, bags of rubbish, and pieces of flat-pack furniture. The late-afternoon light shines through the trees and over Cross House, but struggles to reach the corners of the study through the clutter that lies all around.

I wonder if you feel like that sometimes, feel like the light can't get in for all the baggage of the years, baggage that – try as you might – never seems to get shifted, never seems to be left behind.

We have now entered into a new year, and a new decade, and this gives us an opportunity to look back on what was. I can look back on a decade in which I gained three degrees, acquired a wife (you can hear her take on this in her own article!), two children, a house, and two ministries, as well as moving house five times. As a family, we end the decade with a strong sense of blessedness, having finally found our home at St Michael's, and being humbled by the kindness and welcome of so many good people in the staff team, eldership and congregation.



Yet more important than looking back is looking forward. Joe Ritchie, former Assistant at Mayfield Salisbury in Edinburgh would often say 'never look back'. This phrase, on one reading, might seem to be irresponsible, reckless, and even cold. In the mouth of an everyday saint like Joe, however, it expressed something of the joy, freedom, and hope that he found in his Lord, and which accompanied him through his life.

The past can haunt us. The past can shame us. The past can hold us in its grip, so that we spend more time living there than we do in the present. Yet God is not only the God of the past but of the present. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and he wants to bless you *today*, in this time. So as we enter into 2020, what do you need to let go of? What do you need to stop fixating on so you can look forward in hope and joy, and find grace for today?

The view from the Manse is obscured, the light struggling to reach the corners of the study. Yet the boxes will be unpacked, the things I no longer need given away or binned, and the bright vision of Cross House and the town beyond will come into view. God wants to bless our todays and our tomorrows, and, while all of us carry the baggage of former years, that does not mean we have to hold onto it.

I pray that all of us would accept the blessing God wants to give us, and step into a new decade, and a new way of living.



VIEW FROM THE MANSE KITCHEN!

by Samantha Fraser



As I write this article, we are approaching the end of 2019 and the start of 2020. It's a time when many of us will take stock and consider what has happened in the previous year and what we might have to look forward to in the new year; it's a time to consider change, a good time to start something new.

As a family we have been experiencing lots of change over the past few months as we have started to settle here in Linlithgow. We've moved house, and the children have started at a new school and nursery. I was quite anxious about the school move in particular, and had asked friends and fellow ministers' wives (we have our own Facebook group!) to pray for the children as they left behind a familiar setting and friends and started in a new place.

I am pleased to let you know that both of the boys have settled well at school and nursery and are happy there. Theo in particular seems to be growing in confidence all the time and was a brilliant second Wise Man when the school came to St Michael's and P1 performed their fantastic nativity musical.



The children have been enjoying exploring the church too. Seb has discovered lots of interesting little wood carving creatures, his favourites being the little frog and little mouse (if you don't know where these are he will be happy to show you!) and after one recent visit to the church he asked me 'when can I go back to the Jesus playground?' – which I thought was wonderful.

As a family we have felt extremely welcome in St Michael's and in Linlithgow and we are thankful to God for this wonderful community. We have been almost overwhelmed by the number of cards with special words, and beautiful gifts that we have received, please be assured that we have been grateful for these.

And we are very happy to be settled (well – there's still some boxes to deal with in the new year but we are almost there) in the manse now, we moved in the week before Christmas. As a keen baker, I am particularly enjoying the new kitchen, it is wonderfully spacious. I'm particularly fond of making biscuits, and if you've not yet sampled one I'm sure there will be plenty of opportunities to try them in the future.



AN EXCELLENT START

OUR PROSPECT GROUP IS UP AND RUNNING

by Bill Duncan

As reported in the summer issue of Crosswind this is an initiative for adults with learning disability. We have an excellent support team with an array of talent for the initiative. This has been shown by the whole atmosphere of each event with a great deal of fun and activity. As one member said, the singing was fabulous.

We have had three events in 2019 covering different themes.

The aim of the first was to show that Jesus wants people to follow him.



This photograph of the occasion was published in the Linlithgow Gazette.

We had a great fishing game to start with. Then we had the reading from Mark 1: 16 – 18, followed by a drama of the story with everyone taking part. In the picture you can see the fish we caught and with a bit of imagination the front of the boat. Is anyone wondering, 'why the feet?' This was a craft exercise we had and the feet were used in the chorus 'I have decided to follow Jesus'.

The aim of the second event was to show that God is a loving God who is always ready to welcome us into his family.



To assist we had the city, and a pig farm background ably designed and painted by a member of our team and her daughter.

(The cars give a modernistic approach!)

Yes, you have guessed it was about the prodigal son.

For the closing scene of the drama we all participated in a grand party to celebrate the return of the son. There were balloons, streamers, party hats and of course yummy eats.



With our craft activity the hands can come together in a hug to show how God welcomes us back and loves us.



The aim of the third event was to show that Jesus wants everyone to be his friend.

Our group photograph is around another work of art, the tree being the one that Zacchaeus climbed. As with our other sessions everyone participated in the drama with great enthusiasm.



Our songs during the sessions were all lively and included: 'We are here together', 'Hallelujah', 'So high you can't get over it', 'Welcome everybody' and 'Come on and celebrate'.

Bible readings were always short and linked to the theme. Prayers were kept simple but pertinent.

At the end of each evening refreshments were provided by Guild members, who had also fully participated during the evening.

From January to June 2020 events are scheduled in Cross House at 7.00pm on the third Thursday of each month. If you know anyone who might like to come along, please encourage them to do so. You may wish to accompany them yourself – it is so much easier to go along with someone else. You can be assured of a warm welcome.

If you wish further information, please feel free to contact:
Anne Law (Tel: 01324 718271) or Bill Duncan (0742 7743 847).

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

by Alison Miller



Prayer – according to Collins Dictionary prayer is the activity of speaking to God. However, we all know that prayer can involve silence, listening, asking, and somehow it always seems hard to spend time in prayer. Pete Greig describes his book 'How to Pray' as 'a simple guide for normal people', and indeed both the book and the prayer course give many simple and practical suggestions to help us make prayer part of our everyday lives.

Exploring Prayer – since September a varying group of people have been meeting monthly to follow the sessions from Pete Greig's prayer course. Everyone is welcome to come along when you can. We watch a short video about prayer and discuss and/or pray

in small groups. Subjects covered so far include praying for others and unanswered prayer.

Still to come:

4 March – Contemplation.

1 April – Listening.

29 April - Spiritual Warfare

To find out more see www.prayercourse.org/sessions.

You could follow the course from the comfort of your home.



A personal point of view from someone who has attended our group

'My name is Richard and I pray: I am a pray-er. This feels like quite a significant thing to admit to. Yet a 2018 survey of over 2,500 UK adults found more than half said they pray on occasion and one in five pray at least once a month. So in some ways I am in the majority.

So why does it feel like an admission? Partly because quite a lot of people in my life probably don't know this about me. I pray quietly, often on my own, and I tend not to talk about it much. But I went to a meeting about prayer in Cross House, and found myself listening to other people telling their personal prayer stories and saying a bit about my journey with prayer.

That encouraged me to think about how many people in Linlithgow are praying every day, week, month and year. If we had a screen at The Cross or on top of St Michael's indicating the number of prayers said so far this year we (though maybe not God) might be surprised. We might also be emboldened to tell our own stories of prayer.

I pray in five main ways: using a prayer app, at the 12.30pm Wednesday prayer group in St Michael's, at a monthly service at The Bield, a Christian retreat centre in Perthshire, and on occasion I pray at Edinburgh University's Chaplaincy Taizé Service on a Monday lunch time. I also pray with my spiritual accompanist once a month at the Ignatian Spirituality Centre In Glasgow.

I tend not to pray for particular outcomes: I remember people and their situations in my prayer, trusting that God knows better than me what might be needed and what might be possible. I know that others may see this as not utilising the power of prayer fully – and indeed my main hope, or rather prayer, in writing this is to encourage others to share their prayer histories and the many ways there are to speak to and listen to God through prayer.

Quotes from other group members:

'Pete Greig is a genius at making sense of prayer.'

'These sessions have helped me to see how prayer can change things, sometimes inside me, sometimes outside.'

'Loved learning about the useful Prayer Tool 'Palms Down, Palms Up'.'

'I'm enjoying the safe space to discuss prayer and am benefiting from the suggestions to improve my prayer life.'

'Pete gives a very relaxed, natural, practical and clear account of the why and how of prayer.'

Why not join in with a prayer event and add to the prayers going up from the spire of St. Michael's?!

the
prayer
course



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CHANGES TO QUARTERLY COMMUNIONS

by Sheila Musgrave



In 2020, the dates for quarterly Communion are changing and they will now be on the last Sunday of February, May, August and November. At the same time, the serving of the Elements has been discussed at Kirk Session. The sharing of the Bread and Wine is an essential part of the Communion service and it is felt that bringing people closer together would improve that sharing experience. With this in mind, a trial will take place for the February and May Communion whereby the rear four pews on each side of the Church will not be 'dressed' and the Elements only served in the 'dressed' pews further forward. People will be welcome to sit in the pews not 'dressed' during the earlier part of the service and they will then be invited, prior to Communion, to come forward thereby bringing people closer together for sharing the Elements. After the May Communion, Kirk Session will review the results.

The Church is 'dressed' for each quarterly Communion by a team of approximately 20 experienced helpers led by Sheila Musgrave. They work in a rota with 6 to 8 required for setting out on the Saturday afternoon and about the same number required at 12 noon on the Sunday for removing the cloths. The chrome clips holding the cloths are lined up by Ron Day with his plumb line!

All the linen is examined by Sheila after each Communion and she takes home to wash and iron any which require laundering. Approximately 10 pew cloths and 35 napkins are washed each quarter. In addition, all the linen is ironed each time – 57 pew cloths, 2 table cloths and 35 napkins.

The linen is stored in a cupboard in the Choir Room specially fitted out as an airing cupboard with rack shelving and vents by Chris Gunstone.

Visitors have often commented on how superb the church looks when 'dressed' for Communion.



Praise the Lord!

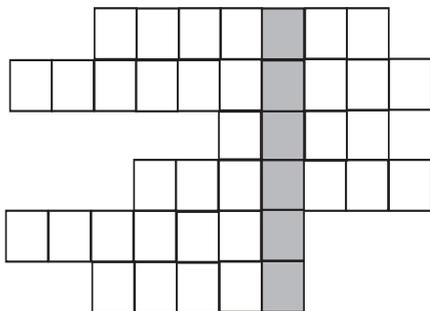
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S	O	P	R	A	N	O	L	B	R	L
R	E	C	O	R	D	E	R	A	Y	S

All the instruments and voices below have performed in St Michael's. Find them in the wordsquare and then the left-over letters spell out what they do quoting Psalm 150.

- alto
- bass
- bassoon
- cello
- choir
- cymbals
- drum
- flute
- guitar
- harp
- oboe
- organ
- piano
- recorder
- saxophone
- soprano
- tambourine
- tenor
- trumpet
- viola
- violin



Starting with the letter above the arrow and then the one below it, take every third letter clockwise around the wheel until all are used. This spells out part of Psalm 150.



When the following instruments are placed in the correct order in the grid, what they offer to God is spelt out in the shaded boxes.

- cymbals
- flute
- harp
- strings
- tambourine
- trumpet

Praise him for his acts of power.

FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

by Alison Hastie

Taking up the post of Organist and Music Co-ordinator, I have been touched by the warm welcome from all and sundry – renewing old friendships, and meeting new colleagues (so many named Alison – there must be a collective noun?). Starting just 6 weeks before Christmas, it was never going to be a leisurely ride... finding out who's who, and what's what, and *which* Amen? Apart from meeting Liam, my pressing concern was to become properly acquainted with the choir and to put together the Nine Lessons and Carols. Ideally, preparation begins at least a month sooner, so there was naturally some apprehension about it.



Trusting in the choir's experience and musicianship and ability to learn quickly, I've been buoyed up by their cheery response (and patience!) as we headed towards the big event. With our two young soloists, Maisie Pandian and Colum Cameron, with Glyn Eggar on piano, and cellist Tracy Curle, the choir soared. The thrilling sound of the recessional carol 'Hark! The herald angels sing', resounding through the vaulted spaces was a fine approach to the Christmas mysteries to come.

Though I am not a trained singer, I vividly remember being in our school choir at Inverurie Academy, under James Lobban, learning Bruckner's motet 'Locus iste'. Violin and viola were my instruments, and I was fortunate to start lessons at school, following through to orchestral opportunities with NYO of GB (these were the days before NYO of Scotland).

My teacher, Bryan Dargie, formed a string orchestra in St Machar's Cathedral in Aberdeen for his students: a pattern which inspired me to start The Antonine Ensemble in 2016, for my own students and colleagues. Most of my professional life as a musician has been accompanying the voice, with Scottish Opera or with choral societies. The singing voice has always held a mysterious magic for me: with an instrument, you can see the sound being formed – the angle of the bow on the string, the fingering on the keys.

But listening to a group of otherwise ordinary folk, standing together, breathing as one, pitching and blending their voices in expressive harmony, using only the air we breathe – can truly transport you to spiritual realms. I'm looking forward immensely to continued explorations with the church choir, and the many musicians (young and seasoned alike) in our midst.

GIVING AND LEGACIES

by Anne Law



I have written on the topic of Giving and Legacies before on behalf of the Stewardship & Finance team and it doesn't get any easier! I have therefore taken some of the text below from the Church of Scotland website which has also provided some stories from other congregations.

Christians believe that everything we have comes from God. Our God invites us to nurture these gifts with love and care.

Every year in St Michael's we have rigorously followed the direction given by the national church to review the gifting of our time, our talents and our treasure. 2019 was the year in which we considered Treasure and we also held a Gift Day which raised an amazing £20,000 towards the refurbishment of the West Doors.

The people of St Michael's are incredibly generous in all aspects of stewardship. I would however like to ask you to consider remembering St Michael's in your Will. Making a Will is an important undertaking. If you are thinking about making your Will, or changing an existing one, we advise you to seek the help of a solicitor. They will ensure that your wishes are clearly drafted in accordance with the law.

The work of the Church of Scotland has been assisted greatly by many generous gifts in the Wills of members. If you wish to make a gift in your Will to support the work of the Church, you can choose to support a local congregation such as St Michael's, a particular aspect of work such as mission, the Church of Scotland in general, or any combination of these.

Stories from congregations

Churches in Fowls & Liff, Lundie and Muirhead

When we received two gifts in members' wills totalling £39,429, the Session Clerk was designated as leader of a committee formed to suggest various proposals after listening to groups and individuals in the congregation. These were presented to the Kirk Session which approved the purchase of two new pulpit falls, pew Bibles and gazebos for the various outdoor events we hold. Discussion is on-going about multi-media equipment.

However, the most interesting use so far approved, is to help the spiritual development of the congregation by sponsoring retreats. We are now working on the detail of this proposal and will take a more specific plan to a future Kirk Session.

Ardrossan Park Church

We received a legacy of £13,102 which could be put towards various needs in the church. It was spent on a new digital piano for worship, two sound systems for the church and a new cooker. Some money was directed to allow the progress of providing a car park which cost £44,000 in total.

With the new kitchen, the church is now able to hire the hall and hold Messy Church services. The car park has made access to church much easier and is beneficial for events like funerals and weddings as street parking and grass verge parking was causing tensions locally.

We were able to put £2000 towards our reserve too.

Your legacy? 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith'. Timothy 4:7

Thank you for considering. The Church values all gifts, small or large and each one makes a difference to the work we are able to do.



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FUNERALS

I am the resurrection and the life



September

John Maxwell, High Street
Alexander McFarlane, Springfield Road
Isobel Harkness, Bellsburn Avenue

October

Lawrence (Larry) McCrum, High Street
Alaister (Mick) Crocker, Perth
Ann Brownlie, Brightons

November

Lorna Irving, Lennox Gardens

January 2020

Robin Younger, Linlithgow Bridge
Alex Doig, Kinloch View
Fiona Lamond, Whitecross
Robert Turnbull, Laverock Park
Andrew Wilson, Linlithgow Care Home
(formerly Glasgow)

WEDDINGS

They are no longer two, but one

October

Erin Bradford to Christopher Roff

November

Catherine and Stephen Brooks
(renewal of vows)

December

Hannah Henderson to Bruce McKerrow

NEW MEMBERS

For we are all members of one body



Gerald and Kathryn Moore (*by transference of membership*)
Dorothy Hannan (*admitted by Resolution*)
Samantha Fraser (*by Profession of Faith*)



BAPTISMS

Let the children come to me

September

Angus William Burton, Maddiston

October

Thomas Alexander MacKenzie, Baronshill Avenue

November

Emilia Isla Hada-Shaw, Bo'ness

Faye Isabel Condeco–Dunachie, Falkirk

Sophie Thirza Hockaday, The Maltings



December

Ollie Robbie Wildridge, Falkirk

Thomas Jay MacFarlane, Fife

Charlotte Eva Greig, Winchburgh



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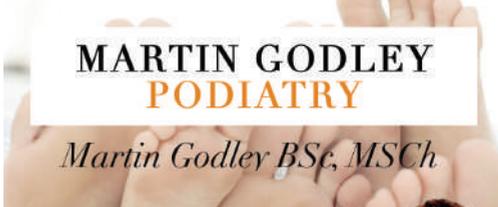

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'Bring me sunshine in your smile'

By Norma Costley

'I love the friendly feeling as soon as you walk in the door and meet everyone else.'

'It's the highlight of the month. It cheers me up.'

'Mum really enjoys the company and the lovely lunch. I like the company too and the lovely flowers.'

'Food, friendship and singing - what more could we ask for.'

The above comments are just a sample of the positive feedback we have received from those who attend the Sunshine Singalong for Memory. We are now in our fourth year and are going strong. Around 80 visitors attend on the second Thursday of every month at 12 noon in the Kirk Hall. Approximately half of our visitors are local people who attend independently with a carer. The remainder comprise Linlithgow Day Care and smaller groups from a number of local care homes. New friendships have been formed, in addition to old friendships renewed, as those now in local care homes meet again with friends from the past. There is a happy, joyful atmosphere where both those with memory loss and their carers can socialise and relax among people with similar challenges in an environment where they are made to feel very welcome.

There is a theme to the songs each month and over the years new songs have been added, many of which have been requests. We are grateful to Angus Robertson for accompanying us on the piano and faithfully arranging his holidays around the Singalong for the past three and a half years. Angus's repertoire, which is normally classical, has been expanded with requests such as 'She wore an itzy bitsy teenie weenie yellow polka dot bikini' and 'Sweet Caroline'! It is wonderful to watch the sheer joy on the faces of our visitors as they move to the music and sing along, many from memory, although the words for each song are projected onto the screen in large print. We are grateful to the Sunshine Singers for supporting the singing each month and to the 25-30 volunteers who work really well as a team to make the Singalong so enjoyable for those who attend.



Thanks to a generous donation this year, we have increased our number and variety of musical instruments played by our visitors to accompany the songs. We have wind chimes, tambourines, rainmakers to name but a few, all carefully chosen and incorporated into the programme of songs.

This has brought a great deal of pleasure and a sense of achievement to those who have happily tried them out.

Our visitors love the crustless soft sandwiches prepared by the Fellowship Team for the finger lunch offered before the singing. Greggs continue to provide us with their end-of-day produce and their sticky buns have become a firm favourite. We would like to say a warm thank-you to the many members of St Michael's who produce the delicious home-baking and to the ladies who provide the much-admired flower arrangements for the tables. This year in the summer months of July and August, the introduction of ice-cream cones was a huge success. Mannerstons kindly donated their award-winning ice-cream for the cones in the month of July. This prompted lots of memories of 'pokey hats' on a summer outing, as well as the volunteers noticing that the eating of a cone was a skill that few had forgotten!



By opening our doors to the vulnerable in our community and welcoming them warmly, we are showing that as a church we care. Not only are we providing warm fellowship over lunch but we are also creating a stimulating environment prompting memories and speech through the singing of well-known songs. It is

wonderful to see the way in which music brings life and pleasure to those who attend. It is very humbling to hear how much this monthly gathering means to our visitors.

If you feel you would benefit from joining us or you know of someone who you might like to bring along, you can be sure of a warm welcome.

I'll leave the last word to our visitors:

'The Singalong makes us happy! We enjoy singing with everyone and having a lovely lunch.'

'I enjoy the company and having lunch. The singing is good and the helpers make us very welcome.'

'Lovely to be once more amongst so many kind people.'

'The Sunshine Singalong has helped tremendously with me caring for my mum with dementia.'



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

COFFEE MORNINGS

Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon in the Kirk Hall.

14th March	Friends of Girl Guiding
28th March	4 th West Lothian Scouts
2nd May	Linlithgow Reed Band



EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

29th February	7.30pm	Linlithgow Piano Trio concert
8th March	2pm	Pupils' Charity Concert
30th March	9am	Cracking Easter
18th April	7.30pm	Glasgow Chamber Choir concert (in assoc with a Dutch choir)
24th May	7.30pm	Linlithgow Male Voice Rugby Choir
31st May	7.30pm	Edinburgh Bach Society Choir Choral concert
7th June		NYCoS summer concert - TBC

OTHER EVENTS

26th April	3pm	Scouts St George's Day Service
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WEBSITES

www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk – See Crosswind in full colour! Also find podcasts of sermons, current intimations, details of upcoming events and all other church activities.

www.helpcentre.org.uk – For information on support available for most situations.

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UPDATE FROM THE PROPERTY TEAM



by Jim Rae

Property maintenance and repair issues continue to be dealt with on a daily basis, but larger, more complex projects are becoming a major part of the team remit. We have recruited three new members during the last year, but would welcome younger volunteers to join with us to assist with these projects.

Developing a new church rainwater and toilet drainage system continues. This involves working with our near neighbours HES and WLC, as well as conservation architects and Civil Engineering consultants.

It is important that roof drainage remains effective and this requires constant maintenance of clearing gutters, hoppers, gullies, downpipes and the repair to roof slates and flashings. The most cost effective method of doing this is by engaging steeplejacks who use high level rope access methods, alleviating the requirement of high cost scaffolding. Contact has been made with Border Churches Maintenance, a highly recommended company, who have carried out project work for the Church of Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland. They have provided an approved cost for attending to our roof. Their first visit takes place early in 2020.

The original installing contractor carried out a preliminary survey of the aluminium cladding on the lower area of the Crown of Thorns. Depending on cost, a similar survey for higher elevations will be considered, providing a complete condition survey of the structure.

The church internal ceiling timber support structure renewal, covering a third of the ceiling, is being progressed by Pollock Hammond Architects. New main timber support beams and support bracing will be fixed to the vaulted ceiling in the church roof space. This requires careful selection of tendering contractors as this is more than a straight forward joinery job.



The refurbishment of the West Doors has been completed by Charles Taylor Woodworking. Both doors look in wonderful condition having had all surfaces cleaned, repaired and treated with appropriate weatherproof coatings which restore them to their original condition. The small stained glass windows just above the doors were cleaned to complete the project.

Before and after restoration

We enjoy a unique collection of stained, painted and clear glass windows throughout our church. It is evident that all windows require cleaning, therefore Rainbow Stained Glass Studio from Prestwick visited late October to discuss proposals for window maintenance and internal cleaning. It was felt that a phased approach would be best and a cost for cleaning the leaded clear glass and the provision of window protection screens will fall into the first phase. This is at proposal stage.

A successful refurbishment of the manse, over a ten week period, has been achieved and we are delighted to say that Liam, Sam and the boys are in residence. Thanks to the Property Team, all contractors and members of the congregation who assisted in this project.

The solar panel project, with a proposed location on the roof of the manse, to supply electricity to Cross House, will not be going ahead as proposed. This is due to the scheme generating only 4kw rather than 5.4kw of electrical power as originally advised. The additional power cabling to Cross House makes this an expensive installation in comparison to similar projects. There was uncertainty about planning permission and time deadlines.

Kirk Session approved the appointment of Pollock Hammond Architects and CRA Ltd Engineers for the Cross House Improvement Project.

There can sometimes be interesting distractions from the usual maintenance or project supervision. Australian visitors to St Michael's enquired about a chair, manufactured and donated to the church, by their ancestor John Frater. Information provided by the family and collated by Val, our church secretary, uncovered the following. John Frater was born in Ochiltree on 23 April 1865. He married Sarah Eskdale on 14 March 1890 at Elmbank, Threemiletown and moved to Glasgow, working initially as a joiner but eventually becoming a skilled furniture maker/wood carver. They had seven children. John died on 13 June 1948 aged 83 in Glasgow and is buried at Linlithgow Cemetery. His craftsmanship can be viewed at the end of the north choir seating area, just before the Apse. Take a look at the Frater chair the next time you are in Church.



The Frater Chair

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RISE! TAKE YOUR MAT AND WALK

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
6 MARCH 2020 - ZIMBABWE**

by Jaqueline Coyle

The World Day of Prayer 2020 service has been prepared by Zimbabwean women. Zimbabwe, in the South East of Africa is a landlocked country of almost 400,000 square kilometres (nearly twice the size of the UK). Zimbabwe means 'House of Stones'.

The country has an estimated population of 16 million people, 51% of whom are women. They play a significant role in the socio-economic life of the country. Many rural households are headed by women, since husbands often migrate to towns to find work, and young people leave their villages for neighbouring African countries or elsewhere in the world. Because of a complex interplay of economic, social and historical factors, women and girls often face systematic disadvantage, especially those who are poor, live in rural areas or are from particular social groups. They face barriers to education, early marriage, poor gynaecological and obstetric provision, violence in the home and legal discrimination regarding family law. Various groups are lobbying for gender equality and some laws have been enacted to protect women against gender-based violence. It is nearly always women who look after those with disabilities: physical, mental and emotional.

WDP Zimbabwe is active throughout the year, supporting children with special needs, their families and other health and social care projects.

This year the WDP 2020 program is based on Jesus' encounter with a person who, although positioned for healing, had not acted upon opportunities given (John 5:2-9a). Jesus asked, 'Do you want to be made well?' You are faced with this life-changing question. What are you going to do? 'Rise! Take your mat and walk' said Jesus. Our sisters from Zimbabwe are taking Jesus' encounter to be a call to act in love for peace and reconciliation. The action verbs suggest that we should not be afraid to act of the word of God. God is offering us the steps for personal and social transformation. We are empowered to take up our mats.

A service will be held in St Michael's Hospital at 2.30 on Friday 6 March 2020. Later that day the churches of Linlithgow invite you to join us – along with the rest of the world – for an evening of fellowship and prayer at 7.30pm in St Ninian's Craigmalen. Refreshments will be served after the service. Please come along and bring your friends.

Messy Church

by Trish Archibald

Messy Church is a fun, lively and creative way of doing church. We meet several times a year on a Saturday from 4.30pm - 6.15pm.



Messy Church is for children and adults and aimed at all ages and all families. It doesn't follow the format of a traditional church service because it provides something for families who have no previous experience of church. At St Michael's we are blessed with a great team of volunteers (which you would be very welcome to join!). Each St Michael's Messy Church starts with games, songs, a bible story and prayer. We often use YouTube clips and

sometimes have parachute games before heading to the Adam Room. In the Adam Room everyone has the chance to do various crafts and activities that fit in with our theme.



Meanwhile our team are busy downstairs making our dinner! They transform our Kirk Hall into a bright and cheerful dining room. When we are finished our crafts we all enjoy a meal together with lots of chat and laughter.

Our next Messy Church is on Saturday 28th March. We will be having an Easter party, thinking about how much Jesus loves us, making Easter crafts and having a tasty meal together. Messy Church is open to everyone. There is no need to book – just come along on the day. You will be most welcome!

Photos are of the Messy Church Christmas Party.





by Peter France

Every year St Michael's and St John's collaborate to explore the real meaning of Easter with approximately 150 P5 children from all the Linlithgow Primary Schools. Led by Trish from St Michael's, Lorraine from St John's, and a team of volunteers from both churches, the children attend a 2-hour event of fun and facts about Easter. We start with an Easter Eggs fun quiz, and then split into small groups and circulate into different areas.

- **The Last Supper** comprises getting their feet washed and experiencing and tasting elements of the Passover meal.
- **Crowds** – learning about crowd reaction to 2 events of the last week of Jesus' life; His entry into Jerusalem and the crowd who condemned Jesus to the Cross and released Barabbas. At this point peer pressure is discussed and experienced by the children.
- **Crucifixion** is discussed.

The children all come back together for a short drama about the women and the empty tomb, performed by the children themselves. There are also crafts and snacks for the children and tea and biscuits for the adult volunteers.

This outreach is vital as the majority of the children have no church connection. Supporting Trish and Lorraine in this venture (and also in Unwrapping Christmas, a similar event which takes place – surprise, surprise – just before Christmas) is very important.

Without volunteers these events wouldn't happen and our Linlithgow children in many cases wouldn't hear the wonderful news about Jesus. This should surely be a major outreach for both churches. Also, it's fun. The children arrive full of enthusiasm and determined to enjoy, and the adults also find this a very happy time.

When the call comes please volunteer, have fun and make a difference. You won't regret it.

Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot...



On 20th October 2019 Rev Dr JunSoo Park was inducted as the new minister of St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Balham, London. Elma Birrell attended to present a gift on behalf of St Michael's which was much appreciated.

Most of us will remember JunSoo with affection as he was our Minister in Association when he lived in the Kirkgate flat while studying for his PhD at New College. We also remember Bora, his wife, and the boys, Daniel and Timothy. Esther was born during their time back in Korea.

Rev Dr JunSoo Park



Rev Dr Will and Susan Jones



Also in October, Will and Susan Jones paid a short visit to Linlithgow and many in the congregation were delighted to see them again. Will was our Associate Minister from August 1996 to June 2000, during which time he studied for his Doctorate in Edinburgh. He was also a member of the original Crosswind committee.

He is now the minister of Germantown Presbyterian Church in Memphis.

PHONES, PRAYER AND PATCHWORK

by Ruth Middleton

In times of concern many, even unbelievers, turn to prayer, and perhaps this has been so in recent times. Timely, therefore, for a group to be Exploring Prayer in the Church and for a reminder of how to be involved with existing prayer opportunities.

On the front of the weekly Order of Service is the **Prayer Focus**, a suggestion of how you might pray during the coming week, also a phone number should urgent prayer be needed. This enables a prayer to be passed quickly down a chain of prayer volunteers. The Pastoral Care Team (PCT) plan to arrange a meeting soon for existing volunteers of the **Prayer Chain** and for others who may be interested in joining.

The PCT also want to remind you about **Prayer Quilts**. This idea came from New Zealand. A prayer quilt is made in a special way by holding it together with knots and with each knot praying for the person for whom it is made, who may be ill, grieving, or just needing the comfort that people are thinking and praying for them. We plan to remind District Elders and Visitors about prayer quilts, so if you know of someone who may be comforted by receiving one, speak to a District Elder or a member of the PCT.



Making a Prayer Quilt

Then, **Wednesday Prayers** – a peaceful half hour, 12.30-13.00 in the Queen's Aisle every week where anyone who is free can join in prayer for those who have left requests in the prayer box. Often this is a time of reading of much pain, and sometimes of thanks for answered prayer.

And – after each morning service there an opportunity for anyone to ask for prayer with a member of the **Sunday Prayer Team**

- also the monthly **Prayer Calendar** covering the needs of our local, national and world Church, for the nation, disasters and celebrations, and ideas for private contemplation.
- Last but not least, look out for suggestions for other **new ways to pray** coming from the group who are **Exploring Prayer**.

'You can pray with others or alone. You can pray in Church, walking down the street, in the shower, You can whisper, you can sing, you can shout! Sometimes you don't need words at all! Anyone can pray, anytime, anywhere. God is always listening.'

A VISIT TO GENEVA'S OLD TOWN

by David Elliot

Isobel and I spent a few days in Geneva last autumn. The city has many points of interest, not least a double-decker bus sited permanently behind the railway station with *Alloa* on its destination board. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in the north of the city was fascinating but equally so was the old town.



On a hill at the top of the old town is the *Cathedrale St Pierre*. You can't visit it without being reminded of St Michael's. St Pierre was begun about 1160 and of course was built as a Roman Catholic Cathedral, but since the Reformation has been Protestant. The interior has the same unadorned look as St Michael's and the minister wears the familiar black gown. It was the adopted home church of Jean Calvin, and his chair is on display. What was more surprising was a magnificent altar table which bore the lion rampant of Scotland. The table was donated to the cathedral by the Church of Scotland back in the 1960s.



Right next to the cathedral is the *Auditoire de Calvin*, the local Church of Scotland, although the congregation is now made up of many nationalities and denominations. Both Calvin and John Knox preached there. Also adjacent to the Cathedral is the International Museum of the Reformation. It is housed in a beautiful 18th-century villa which encloses a courtyard on three sides. Each room is devoted to a different theme. One of them is a tableau of the early reformers and historical figures, such as the philosopher Rousseau, sitting round a table arguing about the finer points of religion.

Our French wasn't up to following it, but you are given an audio guide to take round with you. John Knox and the Reformation in Scotland are mentioned, although Calvin and Martin Luther dominate. There is an amazing display of bibles including that of Luther. The museum covers the development of the reformed Presbyterian Church over the centuries, culminating in a video filmed recently in churches across many countries. It shows forms of worship similar to the Church of Scotland although sometimes a bit livelier. Well worth a visit if you get the chance.



Jean Calvin's chair

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NINIAN WINZET

by Bruce Jamieson

Whenever I attend St Michael's, I cannot help but look around and wonder about those historic characters who had entered the church. One such character was a former chaplain of the church called Ninian Winzet.



The Altar of the Holy Rood in St Michael's may have featured a piece of the 'True Cross'. This one is in Vienna.

Although he was appointed as a teacher at Linlithgow Grammar School (in 1551), he supplemented his income fulfilling another requirement of that job – presiding over St Michael's Altar of the Holy Rood.

Winzet was a popular teacher – imparting Latin and also what he called 'science and philosophy' to the boys of the burgh and impressing his 'boss', town dominie James Brown. In one of Winzet's many literary outpourings he lamented the fact that insufficient resources were being put into Scottish schools and that teachers were being poorly paid for the important job they were doing. (I like the man already!) But Winzet enjoyed his task – and he liked Linlithgow calling it a 'kyndly toun'.

Rather than just teach the rudiments of the Latin language, Winzet decided to encourage his pupils to use Latin to discuss current

affairs. By the late 1550s there was plenty to discuss, including the growing discontent with the Catholic Church – a religion Winzet regarded as the 'true, established authority of centuries'. While admitting that considerable corruption had crept in, he was genuinely shocked at criticism of its beliefs and rituals and regarded the stirrings of Protestant Reformation as 'the renting asunder of the traditional fabric of society.'

He was dedicated to his religion – rising early every morning to officiate at mass in St Michael's. The ceremony at the Altar of the Holy Rood took place at 5am in summer, 6am in winter, which allowed him to start teaching at 8am.

In 1559 the bombshell dropped. Winzet wrote of how astonished he was that matters had escalated so fast and that 'the uproar for religion' had led to attacks on Roman Catholic churches in Perth, St Andrews and Dundee. On June 29th the Protestant forces arrived in Linlithgow and the 'rascal multitude' attacked St Michael's. Winzet watched with horror as altars were broken, the font destroyed and the statues of saints around the exterior walls knocked down.



Linlithgow Grammar School stood to the south of St Michael's.

The red-roofed building is a later school on the same site.



Empty statue niches and the damaged figure of St Michael.

Whether Winzet argued on that occasion with the leader of the 'zealous multitude', John Knox, is not certain but it is historic fact that he later engaged in heated debate. But Winzet was fighting against forces outwith his control - and there is no denying that many problems were inherent within the RC establishment.

By spring of 1560, St Michael's had a Protestant 'Reader of God's Word' in William Cornwall – formerly the chaplain of the Altar of St Katharine and in 1561, the church had its first Protestant minister, Patrick Kinloquhy, previously a canon of St Andrews' Cathedral.

English aid helped Protestantism to become the established order against which opposition was almost impossible and Winzet became a marked man, especially when he pressed his anti-Protestant views with the newly appointed minister.

Kinloquhy, with the backing of the Superintendent of Lothian, John Spottiswoode, determined to oust Winzet from his teaching post. The dominie was called in front of the minister (whom Winzet unwisely called 'the King of Linlithgow') and was pressurised to sign the Confession of Faith. He firmly refused and the consequence was inevitable. He was banished, in his own words 'expellit and schott oot o' ma kindly toun.'

Winzet sought refuge in the Holyrood household of the newly returned Queen of Scots and quickly became a favourite of his monarch – administering the sacrament to her and hearing her confession. He also continued to issue polemics against the Protestant leaders including his 'Last Blast of the Trumpet Against the Usurped Authority of John Knox.'



The front page of Winzet's tract against 'the errors of John Knox'.



Ninian Winzet's grave marker in the Sanctuary of St James, Ratisbon.

He returned with Queen Mary to Linlithgow in 1561 and no doubt showed her the devastation carried out two years before. But his days were numbered and a year later he was forced to flee to the Netherlands, leaving his queen to be plunged into the web of intrigue, flight to England and eventual imprisonment for 19 years. He was allowed by Queen Elizabeth to join Mary when she was the 'guest' of the Earl of Shrewsbury in Sheffield Castle. He was referred to as her 'Scottish secretary' but when it became clear he was also her priest and confessor he was again forced to flee.

He died at Ratisbon in Bavaria in 1592, aged 74, still a learned scholar but far from his Kyndly Toun and the church wherein he worshipped.



by Rev Ali Pandian

At a recent routine eye test with one of our daughters, I was blown away when the optician announced that her vision was 'better than 20/20'! How was this possible? I had always thought that 20/20 was the absolute best, the equivalent of 100%. Yet on closer exploration it appears that 20/20 vision is what is considered 'normal'... a *minimum* for airline pilots!

It got me to wondering how often we aim for 'normal' (whatever that is!) with our vision for our lives, for our Church, for the world? How often do we shape our vision around what we already know or have known? I wonder if anyone else has recently said a despairing comment along the lines of 'it's just the way things are now' and felt stuck in a time of darkness, limited to try to capture an essence of the way things were? Has this become our 'normal' vision for 2020 and beyond?

Yet we are followers of One who is far from 'normal'!

Jesus saw the 'normal' around him during his time on earth and challenged it, having a very different vision of a Kingdom to come. A future where those who did not fit in or keep up or 'lord it' over others were not only welcome but given priority.

Many of us recently participated in the Church of Scotland 2030 Vision workshops, where we were encouraged to imagine who might walk into our Church in 2030 and what might get them excited about being in Church. This exercise gave us permission to be creative, to have fun and to imagine without limits what could be. We await the characters we helped to create together.

In the meantime, could we each pause to think about our own vision... Are we paralysed by aiming for 'normal'? Could we look to God for courage and creativity to move forward with Him?

Lord God,

As we become accustomed to living in 2020, align our vision with Yours.

Help us to look beyond 'normal'

Beyond that which surrounds us,

That which seems possible or practical

To the hope that you point to, the future that you promise.

Take away our fear, so that we can step out towards that glorious future in the here and now,

Using the gifts you have already placed within us.

Amen

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