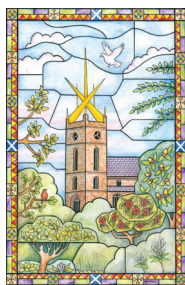


ST MICHAEL'S CROWN OF THORNS SPIRE NEARLY FINISHED! (PART 1)

"When will it be finished?" is a question many people excitedly ask me these days – and like all the best questions, there's more than one way to answer.

Let's start with the short answer: **"Soon!"**. The gleaming new bronze alloy cladding, visible for several weeks on the top upright of St Michael's Crown of Thorns spire, is clearly attracting huge interest and anticipation from you, the community whose generosity helped to fund it. Thank you once again for your tremendous support through donations, coming to events, buying raffle tickets and generally being very enthusiastic!



Exactly when the spire's full glory will be unveiled now depends mostly on the reliably unreliable Scottish climate. In the meantime, however, we can share a wonderful image showing how local artist **Meg Wallace** visualises the spire as it will be. One way we plan to use this is to produce a limited edition run of high-quality prints framed alongside a sample of the new cladding. Watch out

for further details of how and where to buy one of these unique commemorative items!

Ask a member of St Michael's fundraising team "When will it be finished?", though, and you may hear a different answer. That's because we're re-focusing onto our next two projects. **A House for the Town** is about repairing and



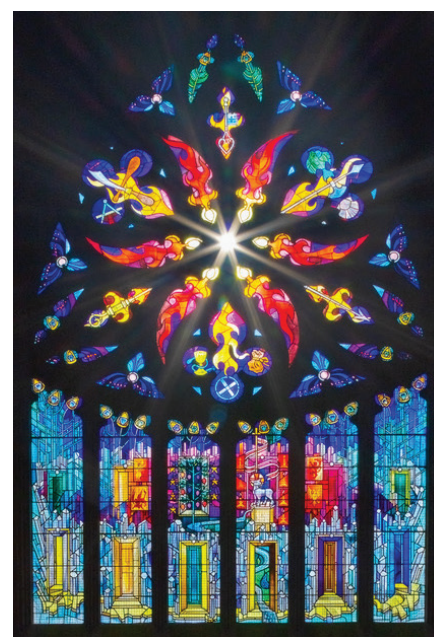
transforming Cross House so that it can continue to serve as a hub for community health and wellbeing, but now with 21st century facilities and a welcoming and bright interior.

We're currently speaking with community groups and the many regular Cross House users. These conversations are helping us understand better how to develop the role of Cross House as both a community hub and a gateway to

Linlithgow's rich heritage. We'd be delighted to hear from anyone with ideas to contribute – just email **aspirelinlithgow@gmail.com** to share what you're thinking.



Up the hill in the church building, **Project 600** is taking shape. Why 600? Work started on the present church after a fire in 1424 ravaged the previous structure. In 2024, it's not fire but water that threatens the integrity of the building. We're planning major works to stop further rainwater damage, to implement a new solution for drainage and to put right the consequences of existing water penetration. Woodworm in the timbers that hold the plaster ceiling in place is another serious issue to be resolved.



While we're seeking major grant funding for both projects, we'd also be delighted to talk with anyone who shares our passion for living heritage and wants to help make it happen. We recognise that the path to full funding for these projects will involve several stages and a great deal of work.

Maybe that's why, just occasionally, I sense a flavour of "When will it ever end?!" in the question. Well, projects run their course one way or another; but what won't ever finish is the motivation that drives us on with this work – for the church to continue to provide a place of welcome, sanctuary and support for all in the community we serve.

Alan Miller

