

CROSSWIND



The Journal of
St Michael's Parish Church

August 2022
Vol 25:2

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution,
or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*

ROMANS 8 v35

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Communion

Sunday, 28th August
10am in the Kirk*
and
3pm in the Kirk Hall

***livestreamed on St Michael's web-site and Facebook**
Available to view later on YouTube

Weekly Services

10am in the Kirk*
and
9.45am (during term time)
in Springfield School

***livestreamed on St Michael's website and Facebook**
Available to view later on YouTube

Cover: Courtesy of Stephen Blake

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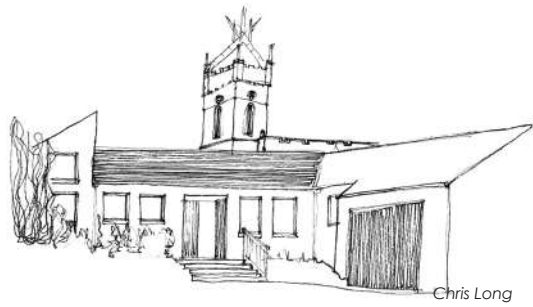
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The deadline for the November 2022 issue is 1st October 2022.

VIEW FROM THE MANSE



by Rev Dr Liam J Fraser

Two and a half years from the lockdown of March 2020, we have now – just about – gone 'back to normal'.

Yet what is 'normal'? Is normal good, or can it sometimes be bad? Is it the same for everyone, or can 'normal' look different to different people?

I remember when I was a child I used to get quite bored of life. Although I was an only one, and had everything I could ask for, the everyday routine of school, dinner, homework, and sleep was tiresome. I used to lie in bed and think 'I really wish life was more exciting than this', and would dream of alternative worlds in which I was a millionaire, or had super powers like in the comics I read, or even just had the ability to skip school and play my PC and Sega Megadrive more!



Then – by most folk's standards – life became a lot more interesting.

I was the lead singer in a – very bad – rock band, started going to parties, acquired a girlfriend, and had a good set of friends. Yet while these were all good up to a point, something was still missing. The things that satisfied and excited others were, well, just a bit dull to me. I knew there had to be something more to life, something more complete, something less ordinary.

Well in my case, it wasn't to be student drinking or – in the career highlight of our band – trashing the stage at the Liquid Rooms in Edinburgh that would make life less ordinary, but something very different indeed. Something I had never foreseen in my childhood dreaming, something that to many today might seem boring or dull but to me became the most exciting something – someone – I could imagine: Jesus Christ.



What I discovered in my late teens is that Jesus is not the staid, boring character that some may remember from Sunday School. He is not someone locked in the pages of a dusty black Bible sitting on a shelf, but someone who is wild, someone who is unbounded and free and limitless. He is someone who not only gives us a career or hobbies or a new car or a trip abroad or any of the other things that the world gives, but someone who gives us a sacred destiny: the destiny to become sons and daughters of the living God, and to know and be known, love and be loved by the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

To deepen in relationship with this God is the deepest of all mysteries, and the height of all joy. It does not destroy our

other loves – family, friends, hobbies – but heightens and perfects them, enabling us to enjoy them more while – to use William Blake's phrase – allowing us to kiss the joy as it flies, and not to hold on to what is passing away. In short, he makes the ordinary extraordinary, and our 'normal' anything but.

So now that Scotland has gone fully 'back to normal', don't rush back to normal just yet.

Take time to consider what you want to stay the same and what you want to change, what 'normal' things bring you joy and make you a better person and what do not. For in Jesus, there is always an alternative, and a freedom – from guilt, meaninglessness, and death – that the world cannot give.

May you know that freedom, and may God richly bless you, your family and your friends.



CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

by Rev Dr Liam Fraser

What comes to mind when you think of the word 'worship'?

Do you think of school assemblies, or old Sunday School hymns? Do you think of numb bottoms on hard wooden pews, or do you think of something more life-giving and essential?

We all have different images of what worship is, and many of us have strong opinions about it. This is true not only of churchgoers but of many others also. It is always a source of amusement to the Minister when those who rarely or never attend church are moved to give me their views about what true worship should be!

What is undeniable, however, is that worship has changed a great deal over time. If you visited St Michael's 500 years ago, you would have seen a man at the West end with his back to you saying things you could not hear, only paying attention when a bell rang and the communion wafer was raised and broken. Fast forward 200 years and you would have been singing only unaccompanied Psalms, with an hour-long sermon to boot! 70 years from there you and your friends would have been complaining that the new-fangled pipe organ being installed was a sin against God, and a few decades after that would be moaning that someone other than the minister had read the Bible at the lectern, or even – shock horror – that they let a woman preach!

Yet if worship changes over the decades, our tastes do too. For some – including myself – traditional worship continues to be enjoyable, and allows me to connect with God. I love its order, its reverence, and the lyrics and melodies of older praise. Yet for many in contemporary Scotland, traditional worship does the opposite: it stops them from connecting with God. It is as alien to them as hymns to Zeus in Ancient Greece would be to us, and they want to worship in a way that is intuitive and 'normal' to a 21st-century Scot.

That is why we are hoping to create a new, contemporary service at St Michael's in addition to our traditional service. We want to create an informal, welcoming space in which people can be themselves, enjoy music by Hillsong, Bethel, Elevation Worship, Rend Collective and other artistes with guitars, drums and keyboards. We want to create a community in which non-Christians will not feel awkward or threatened, and in which they sense something of the goodness and the grace of God. Yet above all, we want to worship in a way that glorifies God and moves us to love and praise him more.

So, if you've ever found church boring or uninspiring then keep a look out – for it's about to become very different!

GUESTS FROM UKRAINE

by Stephen Marshall



'When do you think they would arrive?' asks Nina, 'Oh, not for weeks or months, plenty of time for us to get ready' says Stephen. Fifteen days later we are at Edinburgh Airport waiting for our Ukrainian guests, a mother and son from Kyiv, to come through customs. As it happens, this turns out to be the first family arriving in Linlithgow, no pressure then!

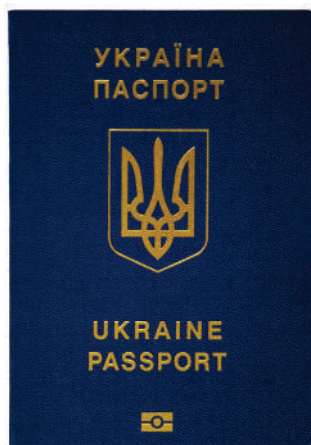
Three months later and how are things going?

In Linlithgow we now have over 40 Ukrainians, with the numbers growing all the time. The support from the local community has been tremendous; it's more than just the right thing to do. Linlithgow is kind to strangers, this sort of situation brings out the best in people.

Having a couple of strangers living in your house can be a little daunting at first but turning it around, what do you and your family learn? The first thing that strikes you is 'what really matters?' When a family leaves their husband/father behind, fleeing under air-raid sirens to the sound of bombing in the distance then most of your own problems pale into insignificance.

I've learnt that you don't say 'When this is over', you say 'When Ukraine wins', positive thinking and a determined resolve are evident. You've got to admire the strength of character and determination to rebuild a country when the time comes. However, below that strength lies the trauma and pain of what is an awful situation.

Another big lesson has been getting involved in the bureaucracy that comes with helping a family new to the UK. The Visa system for refugees is fundamentally broken or, if you are cynical, it's designed deliberately to slow things



down and discourage people from coming to the UK. This is the same process that has existed under different political parties – it's something that as Christians we should be praying and potentially lobbying about.

The Universal Credit system also appears to have been designed by the same set of inefficiency consultants – it's really opened my eyes to how on earth do the poorer members of our community cope with a benefits system that tries to trip them up at every step of the process. We've had to involve our local MP on an issue and we are not the only Ukrainian Host family that's had to do this. Where there is a process laid down and it's appropriate then as a country we aren't bad at following it and helping people. Where we have to be creative and think out of the box to solve a problem, then I'm afraid we seem to fall down.

Again, as Christians in Linlithgow, we need to think about how we can help people that face the challenge of the Universal Credit system and all that comes with it. We should all open our eyes to the need on our own doorstep, as well as the challenge from Ukraine.

Yanina's favourite Universal Credit moment was when she was reported for not attending a meeting; she was phoned by someone from the job centre as she sat in the job centre some 20 feet from the person phoning – we had the appointment with another person. When we walked across to ask them to remove it from her record – 'Sorry, the computer won't let us delete it'. We had to laugh, there are bigger issues to worry about after all.

As Yanina has taught me – 'If you can't change the situation, then you need to change your attitude to the situation'.

Yanina and Yehor really appreciate the help and support of St Michael's, there's no doubt that Linlithgow and St Michael's in particular have really gone the extra mile to help the Ukrainians that have joined us in the town. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Stephen, Nina and Family.





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OUR NEW ORGANIST

DR JOHN WILLMETT INTRODUCES HIMSELF

How shall I sing that majesty? This is the question of my life. Although the organ doesn't sing, exactly, it can be made to, and the one in St Michael's does, wonderfully.

From my time at school, in Truro, through my university, at Bristol, through my school-teaching career, first in England, and then in Edinburgh, and then, through service in Inverleith, Mayfield Salisbury, and Bearsden churches, I have played the organ for the greater glory of God, and my daily bread.

Alongside this, after 'early retirement', through study, at Edinburgh University, of German, History, Music and Divinity, leading to two doctorates, one in music, the other in theology, I have sought to understand how I may better sing that majesty. The piano, of course, comes in there, too.

My master's degree (Music) dissertation treats the organs of Henry Willis in Scotland; Truro has a magnificent Willis organ in its cathedral. So, it's full circle, to be privileged and honoured to be called to play the magnificent instrument in St Michael's. I feel, having been born in Scotland, and grown up in Truro, that I have come home. The organ suits my style of playing; what I have here is what I call a real organ. With the music of JS Bach, we (Bach, Henry Willis, and me) are a unity, where we may sing that majesty. God be praised.

May you be blessed for your welcome.



TODDLERS

by Fiona McCracken

But Jesus called the children to him and said, 'Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.' Luke 18:16



Toddlers was set up over 30 years ago to provide a warm and safe environment for local families with young children to meet, make new friends and feel part of our church family.

Like all activities, Toddlers had to stop during the COVID pandemic. However, the group re-started in October 2021 and in January 2022 I was appointed as the Early Years Worker, with my main purpose

to work alongside the Ministry Team to extend the church's work with pre-school children and their families through Toddlers.

I'm hoping most of you already know me, one way or another! Having been born and brought up in Linlithgow, I have been coming to St Michael's all my life, with my parents John and Agnes Aitken. However, you may not know about the various roles that led me to this job!

My involvement with children at St Michael's began when I used to help at the creche as a young teenager. I have also helped with Junior Church. But most of my volunteering experience was through Girlguiding.

Professionally, I gained a degree in Home Economics, then worked for several charities in project manager roles. When my two boys started school, I became a childminder. More recently, I worked for West Lothian Council in the nursery at Linlithgow Bridge Primary, as well as a spell in the school office. Along the way I have completed courses in childcare, family therapy and systemic practice.

I was delighted when I saw the post of Early Years Worker advertised, as the combination of co-ordinating the group, looking after the volunteers, making tea, talking to people and giving the occasional baby cuddle – it is my dream job, using all the skills I have picked up in my varied career!!

Since January, Toddlers has run every Tuesday and Friday morning in term time, from 9.30 -11.30am. However, to ensure that we all keep safe in these covid times, we have had to limit the numbers of those attending. We have been using Eventbrite to book places in advance and this has worked well. However, it may be possible for us to revert to a first come first served basis soon.

We communicate with our families mainly through our Facebook page:

St Michael's Toddlers Linlithgow | Facebook

What about Toddlers? We offer parents and carers of pre-school age children the chance to come to the Kirk Hall and 'stay and play'. We give the adults a warm welcome and engage with the young children and their parents/carers to strengthen relationships, and therefore improve confidence, attachments, and interactions. We aim to have lots of fun through play. We offer a hot drink for the adults and a selection of lovely biscuits. The cost is £2.00 per family.



The work that we do through Toddlers is based on the principles of **Getting it Right for Every Child** (GIRFEC), which is the national approach to improving the wellbeing of children and young people. GIRFEC focuses on eight areas of wellbeing that are important for children to develop and to reach their full potential. These are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible. All our work will be based on these principles.

So, we have recently re-opened the cellar as a quieter area, with the reading corner and small world play. We have also tried a couple of different layouts of the toys. We celebrated Easter and the Queen's Jubilee by doing crafts and having special treats to eat. These activities were very well received, so we will be doing more of this in the forthcoming session.

We have developed a partnership with the Little Bugs Nursery at Abercorn and have enjoyed a couple of visits to use their amazing outdoor facilities.



St Ninian's Church were kind enough to let us have use of the Longcroft Hall to run some sessions during the school summer holidays. The garden allowed us to play outside as well as in.

Plans for the future include the setting up of a smaller session for new mums to come along, meet and chat. More about this later.

I would like to say a big thank you to the amazing volunteers who come every week to assist with setting up toys; making teas and coffees; chatting to parents and carers. However, we could always use more help, particularly on Friday mornings. You do not need to commit to every week – once a month would be a great help. If you would like to come along and see what it involves, or for any further information on Toddlers – please contact me on fiona@stmichaels-parish.org.uk

A LINLITHGOW PILGRIMAGE PART 1

by Bruce Jamieson



Map courtesy
of John Aitken

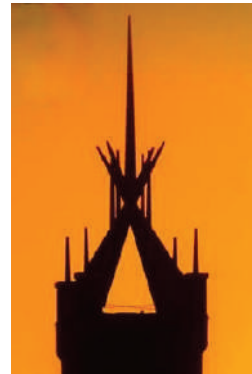
In April, I presented a 'Linlithgow Pilgrimage' through the virtual reality of Zoom and raised £420 towards the restoration of St Michael's crown. The trail can actually be walked on foot. Why not give it a go – following this route plan and using or expanding on the suggested passages at each location.

1. Linlithgow Cross – symbol of the crucifixion and the site of the Medieval Mercat Cross which was graced by a unicorn like the one atop the Cross Well. 'God brought Jacob forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of a unicorn' (Numbers 24)

2. St Michael's Church surmounted by its Crown of Thorns. 'And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee and mocked him.' (Matthew 27)



3. St Michael's is still witness to many historic and religious events. 'Loving God, thank you for bringing us to this living church in this beautiful sanctuary. As we travel, help us to be open to the wonder and variety of your creation.' (St Michael's Prayer Calendar)



4. St Michael's Well – dated 1720 with the motto 'St Michael is kinde to straingers'. We share our saint with Kyiv and we pray for peace in that troubled city.

A young girl fetches water from the well C 1880

5. The Mint – HQ of the Knights of St John, once stood here. 'John the Baptist, profit us unto salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (The Knights' Prayer)

6. Hamilton's Land – Linlithgow residence of Patrick Hamilton, first Protestant martyr, burned at the stake in St Andrews. 'What is it to say that Christ died for thee? For thou he madest the sacrifice, and he suffered the pain, and that for the love he had for thee.' (Patrick Hamilton's Prayer)



7. At the Low Port is Alan Herriot's statue of St Michael slaying the dark forces of evil in the form of a dragon. 'Illustrious leader of the heavenly army, defend all peoples in the battle against the rulers of the world of darkness and the spirit of wickedness.' (Prayer by Pope Leo XIII)

8. To the east stands St Michael's Roman Catholic Church, designed by Peter Paul Pugin – the foremost 19th-century architect in the Gothic revival style. The building was partially opened for Mass in 1888 and officially dedicated in 1893, becoming the spiritual home of Linlithgow's Catholic population and initially of the many Irish folk who came to work in the shale industry.

9. St Magdalene's – once a whisky distillery named after the 14th century Lazaretto of St Mary Magdalene. 'A man with leprosy came and knelt before Jesus. "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said, "Be clean!".' (Matthew 8)

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR TWIN CONGREGATION IN REINEH

Fiona Duke, Convener of the Kirk Session's International Team received the email below in reply to her Easter greetings sent to our friends at Holy Family Church in Reineh near Nazareth. We remember them all in prayer as they face very difficult times.



From: Hanna Dally
Sent: 21 May 2022 05:32
To: Fiona Duke
Subject: Re: Greetings

Dear Fiona

Praise God for every thing .. we passed the covid danger even though there is other covid called monkey virus .. deadly .

May God save us all .

The church activities are going very well the holy week was great many people had attended , still making a Bible study on zoom for there are about 15 friend from over the world are with us , which is so great to study the bible and dicuse many issius toward it .

In momet looking for the youth summer camps and the sunday school activities douring the school holidays to come .

The chuchs in galilee are all praying for the peace in our area alote of our people had suffer from the ocupation soldiers many young men got shot and killed, 🥹 please pray for us .. 🙏 also we love you scotch people for your staning and suporting us and raising the voice of justice. Our greating to you all st. Michael brothers and sister .

Love and peace

Rev. Hanna dally

The Holy family church

In Reineh



**ST.
MICHAEL'S**
Parish church

Parish Register

BAPTISMS

Let the children come to me

April

Arthur Mills, Cayman Islands
Arran Farrell, Falkirk

May

Phoebe Murdoch, Falkirk
Honor Walker, Linlithgow
Freya MacKenzie, Linlithgow
Ruaridh MacKenzie, Linlithgow



July

Iris Graham, Bo'ness
Struan Cumming, Torphichen

NEW MEMBERS

For we are all members of one body

by Transfer Certificate



Iain Redeer
Moira Redeer
June Lodder

FUNERALS

I am the resurrection and the life



May

Paul Brodie, Linlithgow
Sheena Cathcart, Linlithgow
Donald Burgess, Linlithgow



June

Heather Pankhurst, Armadale
Irene Cameron, Linlithgow
Maureen McGrath, Linlithgow

July

Stella Henderson, Linlithgow
William (Bill) McFarlane, Linlithgow
Glenda Ferguson, Philpstoun

WEDDINGS

They are no longer two, but one

May

Mary Hope to Blair Neilands
Rachel Brodie to Kyle Reid

June

Lorraine Dunsire to William Redmond

July

Rebecca Scott to Ross Stephen
Sarah and Mark Tighe (Blessing)



OPEN GARDEN IN AID OF ASPIRE



On 19th June, Janet and John Carsewell opened their lovely garden in support of the Aspire appeal. A fine day and the many visitors enabled them to raise £1,450.





*Photos by
Stephen Blake*



Dates for your Diary

EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

Sat 3rd Sept	7.30pm	Antonine Ensemble String Orchestra Concert
Sun 4th Sept	2.00pm	Linlithgow Reed Band – Celebration of the life of Joe Lavery
Fri 16th Sept	7.30pm	SCO Classical Music Concert
Sun 18th Sept	3.00pm	Occasionally@stmichaels – Song Recital
Wed 28th Sept	2.00pm	Literary Event with author, Robert Harris
Sat 12th Nov	7.30pm	Linlithgow String Orchestra Classical Music Concert
Sun 20th Nov	2.00pm	Music Buds Pupils Concert



COFFEE MORNINGS in KIRK HALL

Sat 29th Oct	10am - noon	Cancer Research Coffee Morning (TBC)
Sat 26th Nov	10am - 4pm	Advent Fair teas/coffees in aid of Aspire

(both conditional upon what Scottish Government / Church of Scotland COVID guidelines and regulations are in place at the time)

WEBSITES

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

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

STEPPING FORWARD

by Alan Miller

'Set your goals high, but take one step at a time.'

Question: what links the 70s hit single 'Puppy Love' with this article about the Aspire Linlithgow fundraising campaign? Read on....!



Our fundraising targets flow from St Michael's 2030 Vision of blessing our town through its service, facilities and witness. In practical terms, that involves transforming Cross House into a welcoming community hub, and restoring the integrity of the church building's fabric. Add in the refurbishment of our Crown of Thorns spire, and you end up with a bottom line of around £4 million to raise. We have indeed set our goals high.

But less than a year into the campaign, progressing 'one step at a time' is paying dividends. The charity auction in June brought in close to £16,000 – almost a giant leap! At the time of writing, the campaign total for the spire stands close to £125k (of which about £23k has been applied to spire works and fees, plus fundraising costs).

In another major step, we've appointed Bruce Tait Associates as professional fundraisers. They will lead on the major grant funding applications which we hope will fully fund the works on both Cross House and the church building.

The fundraising team's next steps include plans for further sales, in-person and online, a quiz night, Christmas hampers and a sports-themed gala night. We're also delighted to see others stepping in with imaginative contributions: for instance, Janet Carswell's open garden afternoon and Chris Long's classy tea towels have each raised 4-figure sums.

Could you take a step for Aspire Linlithgow? Or perhaps you could encourage a community organisation or business to step forward? It doesn't matter whether you raise £10 or £10,000 – every event adds to the 'buzz' around Aspire Linlithgow, and the more fun people have in the process, the better!

'Someone help me, help me please; Is the answer up above?' begged Donny Osmond in 'Puppy Love' in 1972. Yes, the answer is up above, but we must help make that answer a reality. And Donny seems to know that himself: his quote at the head of this article continues 'Sometimes you don't think you're progressing until you step back and see how high you've really gone'. We've gone high already; now let's see how much higher we can go together!

ST MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH GUILD

by Margaret Henderson

When you think of the Guild, what image does your mind conjure up? As a much younger woman, I thought of the Guild as a group of elderly women with blue rinses and wearing heather mixture twinsets. I imagined them having cups of tea chatting about their families and what was happening in Linlithgow, having listened to a speaker who talked about something very far removed from their experience. This could not be further from the truth.

Nowadays the Guild is open to men and, although we have no male members in our branch, there are men in the Guild. In fact, the recently retired General Secretary of the Guild was a man, Ian Whyte. Therefore, not a group of women!

Our members still enjoy a chat over a cup of tea or coffee, chat which comes from a real sense of being with friends and sharing fellowship together. Our members support each other through times of joy and sadness. I am reminded of the marriage vows which many of us took – 'for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health'. These words are at the core of all that we do as a Guild. The Covid pandemic is a prime example. This was a time of great anxiety and loneliness for so many but as a Guild we phoned our members, delivered treats, sent regular messages and visited from a safe distance.



*Supporting teenage mothers in
Zambia*

In March we had a visit from Karen Gillon, the new General Secretary of the Guild. Most will be familiar with **USP** which means **Unique Selling Proposition**. For her talk that evening, Karen shared what USP means to her. She took us on a journey which started in 1893 up to the present time, not her personal journey but that of the Guild. The following are some of the works undertaken and supported by the Guild.

- 1919 – 2 hostels in Edinburgh and Glasgow where women could go to escape abusive relationships;
- 1947 – a church in Clydebank, recognising the need to build peace after the war, organised the sending of some 3,000 layette boxes to German families as a sign of friendship;

- 1980 – with advances in video production, 42 years ahead of time, the Guild recognised the need to change as the world changed, and today we have Sanctus Media;
- 1987 – the Centenary project was set up to care for prostitutes in Leith;
- 1996 to 1999 – AIDS Malawi was set up;
- 2006 to 2009 – saw support for homeless Scots in London;
- 2012 to 2015 – 'Out of Africa into Malta' where 85% of monies raised are still being used to help refugees;
- 2015 to 2018 – female genital mutilation was brought to the forefront.

These are only some of the amazing areas where the Guild has been instrumental in bringing about change. From 1969 the sum of £7,325,000 has been raised. Not bad for a group of elderly people who are not afraid to tackle worldwide issues head on.



Supporting young farmers with solar powered irrigation pumps in Malawi

Karen describes the Guild as 'the radical arm of the Church.' Would you not like to be involved in such amazing work whilst sharing friendship and fellowship with other likeminded people in St Michael's? I never thought I would say this, but I am proud to be a member of the Guild. We could do so much more with your help. YOUR GUILD NEEDS YOU!



Empowering and training women for mission in Brazil



Supporting children with disabilities and their families in Nigeria

NEWS FROM THE SANCTUARY TEAM

by Robin Watson

Those of us who are fortunate to attend St Michael's as members of the congregation really appreciate the timeless beauty of this magnificent place of worship. It is often rightly cited as one of the very finest sacred spaces in Scotland. Yet we are aware that the Sanctuary we see today has seen many physical changes over the centuries leading to its current form.

The 2030 Vision is ambitious to explore opportunities to enhance the experience for all who visit the Sanctuary. Having only been recently established, the team are already exploring some exciting ideas, venturing far and wide for examples of how others are addressing similar opportunities in their churches, cathedrals and visitor centres. We are looking into new and fresh ways of presenting the story of faith through the building fabric in its beautiful stained-glass windows and its splendid architecture. We aim to present this within the historic context of the times, as the story of faith is inextricably linked with this. Visitors are often genuinely confused as to whether they are standing in the Palace or the Church. Hopefully our story will be able to help. You should all be able to enjoy the captivating new insight into the Stained Glass Windows in a newly created video display area in the north aisle in the coming weeks.

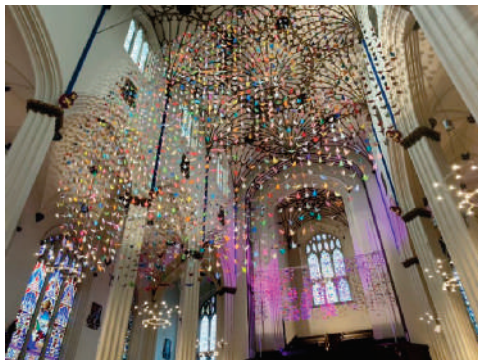


The Team

We are exploring contemporary ways of presenting the information, using state of the art QR code technology, accessed via smart phones, with a variety of engaging presentation styles. Of course, all of this costs money. To this end, as we look forward to the return of visitors to St Michael's, we have been working with the Finance and Stewardship team to implement technological means of contactless giving. This is now up and running, for those of you who may be keen to try this out.

We are delighted to be engaging with other key tourism and visitor organisations, to play our part in promoting the historic centre of Linlithgow to create a thriving place in which to live and work.

Our longer-term ambitions feature the development of internship programmes, as well as establishing St Michael's Live SCIO to develop the Sanctuary as a Venue. We have already been successful in setting up internships for local Design and Media Forth Valley College students. Throughout all that we do, we aim to be respectful to this much-loved sacred space, whilst seeking opportunities to use modern technology and our own creative vision to enhance and revitalise its use. Exciting times lie ahead.



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FINANCE AND GENEROSITY IN 2022

by Linda Jamieson

I do hope that you and your families are well.

As leader of the Stewardship and Finance team, having taken over from Anne Law in April 2022, I bring you an update on St Michael's financial position.

As restrictions of the pandemic eased, we were able to return to something resembling our normal operating model, and we can now see income flowing from activities such as weddings and Cross House groups, not to mention plans to re-open the Church to visitors.

We can foresee increased spending in 2022, as much of the disrupted planned schedule of maintenance and repair by the Property Team now moves forward. The upkeep of two grade A-listed buildings, the Church and Cross House, present us with great challenges in meeting the associated costs in their care and maintenance. However, let us not forget the enormous opportunities in their use.

Our 'Ministry and Mission' contribution, more than £158,000, to the national church remains our largest expense. This is being replaced with 'Giving to Grow' in 2023, we do not know at this stage how a new calculation will impact our contribution. The first six months of the year show a small surplus as we continue to operate within budget. Our thanks to Tim Brown of the Stewardship and Finance team for his work in preparing monthly income and expenditure figures.

In our year of generosity, Alan Miller and his fundraising team have worked tirelessly to deliver events in support of 'Aspire Linlithgow.' Through the generosity of donors, £114,447 has been raised to date. We are extremely grateful for the support of members and the wider community in helping us to reach this stage.

We are planning a stewardship campaign – A Narrative of Generosity – keep an eye on newsletters for more information. We must all work together for the future prosperity of St Michael's. Lots of people doing a little can make an enormous difference.

Our Stewardship and Finance team is looking for a volunteer – or volunteers! – with financial/management skills to join them. This is not an onerous commitment, but we must ensure the church looks after everyone's money properly. If you have some spare time and have financial experience, please contact me on LJamieson58@aol.com to find out how you can help.

I thank you again for your continued support for St Michael's, both in terms of financial support and to all our volunteers who work tirelessly in Christian faith.

ALL ARE WELCOME IN THIS PLACE

from the Discipleship Team



'St Michael's is kind to Strangers' to adopt the town motto for our church. But what does it mean in practice – could we do this better?

A good starting place is to think about our own experience. What makes you feel welcome? Is it meeting people who think like us and look like us? Is it a smile at the door from the welcome team? A cuppa after the service? Someone saying hello and asking us where we are from? I'm sure all of these are good! Perhaps you could go one step further and invite someone to your home for lunch after the service?

We hope that the people who have come along to our congregation since lockdown feel welcome.

Being kind to strangers and giving hospitality are not just about our town's motto. It is a way of thinking and a way of life that goes back to before biblical times. It seems to be practised most earnestly when times are hard, when there is a war, or famine, and natural disasters. Indeed there are people in Linlithgow who have welcomed Ukrainian refugees into their homes – complete strangers. Now that is radical hospitality.

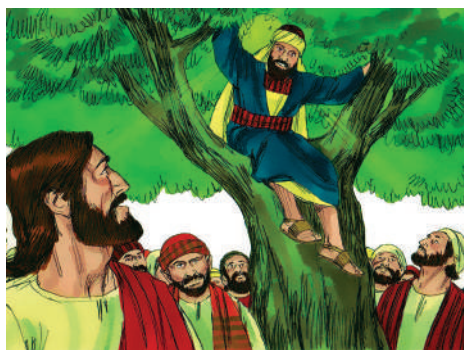
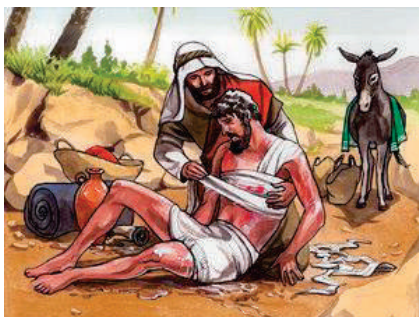
Romans 12:21-22 from The Message says: 'Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.'

We are challenged not just to be kind to strangers, but also to be kind to our enemies, and people we don't like! We are also promised that God's spirit, the helper, will be there by our side; and we are each given different gifts so that we can work together. Hospitality is a gift from God, one we can all practise.



There are many examples of 'radical hospitality' in the bible: the Good Samaritan; the story of Zacchaeus; the feeding of the 5,000. And Jesus was always eating with the 'wrong' sort of people.

No matter what we each feel we are good at, even 'gifted', we can each step out of our comfort zone and welcome strangers; these people can become friends who will also share their homes. The blessing that you give will be returned or passed on.



Maybe that's why the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews said at chapter 13 verse 2 'Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed. Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it!'

We sing the hymn 'All are welcome in this place'. And I'm sure we sing it with meaning, but how do we practically show this welcome together? What could you do?

If you would like to explore this theme further, here are some links that might interest you:

1. The Gift of Welcome:

<https://www.thenivbible.com/blog/the-gift-of-welcome/>

I note that this blog is taken from 'The Women's Bible Study', but I am sure that none of us would consider welcoming and hospitality to be women's work!



2. Radical Hospitality – the way of the Celts:

<https://godspacelight.com/2016/07/12/radical-hospitality-the-way-of-the-celts/>



YESTERDAY ONCE MORE

by Iain Harrison

Looking back 1972 was not seen as a positive year for the world. At the Olympic Games 11 Israeli athletes were murdered by terrorists, separate earthquakes in Iraq, Nicaragua and Turkey killed thousands of people and left many more homeless. Nearer home Edward Heath was the Prime Minister and had a miners strike to contend with, and in the USA, Richard Nixon was President but his days were numbered as the Watergate Scandal broke. But what was happening in Linlithgow and in our Church 50 years ago? A delve into the Kirk Session Minutes provides some of the answers.

Communion Cups

In January 1972 a vote was taken on the possibility of using individual Communion cups, and this 48 years before the onset of Covid. Initially 20 people voted for the idea and 35 against with the proviso it be fully discussed at the September meeting. In September those present voted 16 to 10 in favour with another proviso, that the sub-committee seek the views of as many members as possible before a final decision is taken. In December it was finally agreed that Communion cups (glasses) be purchased.

Grant for The Cross House

A grant of £300 was received from The Church of Scotland in respect of The Cross House. It was noted in the minutes that the upkeep of The Cross House 'was stabilising at £700 per annum'. Sadly, it was noted only a month later in the February meeting that £2,500 was urgently needed for repairs and maintenance. There were three suggestions for fund raising:- members donate antiques which the sub-committee would sell for funds, the Young Wives and Mothers Group could hold a fund raising event and the Youth Committee could organise a sponsored walk.

New Curtain at the South Door

It was 'curtains' for the old curtain at the south door of the Church as it was noted in the January meeting that it required renewal. It was suggested that 'less noisy rings/rails would be installed'.

Lunch Club

It was recorded in February that a lunch club for older members could be tried in the Cross House on one or two days to supplement the 'present service at Rivaldsgreen by the Derby and Joan Club'.

Sunday School Teachers

It was agreed that a questionnaire for recruitment of Sunday School Teachers be distributed at the time of the April Communion. This presumably met with success as no further recruitment appeared necessary.

Roll of Members

It was reported in April that a full revision of the roll of members had been completed. This would result in 46 members being taken off the roll and advised in writing of the decision. A further 38 names would receive a final warning and 28 members in the opinion of the District Elders should be interviewed by the Moderator before a decision is made.

Elders Sought

In October 1972 it was agreed that eight nominations be sought from the under-30 age group and from women following The General Assembly's decision to allow Women Elders (taken in 1966). Thankfully we have moved on since then!

Baird Hall

In April 1972 a valuation of £1,500 was obtained for the Baird Hall and approval was given to approach parties who might be interested. By September it was noted that the Baird Hall had been sold for £1,500 with settlement later that month. Happily, the Baird Hall is still with us today, and is a category C listed building, now a private residence, opposite the flower shop and the toy shop in the narrow part of the High Street.



DONALD BURGESS



Along with the congregation, our small Crosswind Editorial Team mourned the death of one of our members. Donald joined the committee in the summer of 2000 and was a valued member until he retired in 2019. Donald made many contributions, including an early series about the Friends of St Michael's, but is better known for 'Just a Minute', where he researched the Church's archives in Register House, Edinburgh. The series began in 2004 and continued until his retirement.

We are grateful for all Donald's company and for his work. Our thoughts and prayers are with Frances and the family as they adjust to life without him.

A VISITOR'S TALE

by Colin Ray



In May of this year, Colin Ray and his family visited St Michael's – here is their story, written by Colin.

We got married in St Michael's on 11 November, 2000, at 11am. (We scheduled our wedding on 11 November due to availability of St Michael's. It was only after it was scheduled that we thought about the significance of the day.)

The first minutes of our ceremony were a moment of silence in remembrance of those lost in war. We had chosen St Michael's due to the late Dr Charles Morrice's connection to the parish. Charles and his wife, Margaret, had recently moved back from Limuru, Kenya, where he had been a professor at St Paul's

Seminary, where my parents also taught/worked. My parents were United Methodist missionaries, having served in Bukuru, Nigeria at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (where I was raised) for approximately 15 years and then in Limuru at St Paul's for approximately 10 years. My father gave the sermon at our wedding; Charles presided over the service and marriage ceremony.

At the time we got married, Emi was finishing up her post-graduate studies in Paris at the Political Science Institute. I had recently finished Law School in the USA and was awaiting the results of my New York bar exam. I actually received notification of having passed the bar exam on 10 November, the day before we got married. (In the back of my mind I was thinking at the time, 'Well, if I don't pass the exam, now will be one of the 'for worse' times')

Emi and I had tried to get married in France, but the paperwork was ridiculously challenging, even for me and my legal training! I was talking with my parents about the challenge when they suggested that they would check with Charles Morrice. The rest is history.

Our wedding had only 10 people. Emi and me, my parents (who came from Limuru, Kenya), Charles and Margaret, my brother and his wife (who came from Bamako, Mali), and my Grandfather and Aunt (who came from the USA). I remember sitting up in the front of St Michael's, in the choir area, feeling overwhelmed by the beauty of the place and by the prospect of being married. The pipe organ music was beautiful – again, arranged by Charles and Margaret.

When Charles offered to help us get married, we were simply happy to be able to get married. We had no idea that we would be getting married in such a beautiful, special place as St Michael's.

Arrangements for the beautiful flowers on the altar were 100% thanks to Margaret, as was the young man who played the bagpipes at the small reception after our wedding service.



After our wedding, we lived near Amsterdam, where I had a new job at a law firm. In the summer of 2001 we moved to Tokyo, where we lived for 10 years and where our two children, Tom and Marina, were born. In 2011 we moved to Riyadh, where we currently live.

So – that is our brief story, and connection to St Michael's. We remain grateful to have been married in St Michael's. We will return again, hopefully soon.



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OUR CHURCH FAMILY

by Rev Ali Pandian



'One generation shall extol your works to another. They will recount the glorious splendour of your majesty.' Psalm 145: 4-5

We were recently all invited to attend a meeting about the possibility of St Michael's having a more contemporary service within the repertoire of worship opportunities. Dave and I were excited about this prospect but, when we raised it with our teenage children, one of them said something which was both interesting and wise: 'I don't want to go to a service where everyone is like me. I love

being with older people at St Michael's too.' While, of course, the intention of offering this different worship opportunity is not to segregate, our daughter's comment highlights for me one of the blessings of belonging to a church family like St Michael's – we have the opportunity to connect with others in an intergenerational way.

Many of our biological families are geographically spread so that we can't see them as often as we would like. What a gift to be part of a church family! A group of people, at different ages and seasons, who we can listen to, learn with and serve one another and those we live among.

When I look back at different stages of my life so far, I recognise that at various points, and in different churches, I have been blessed through being part of an intergenerational church family. It has been said, 'Church is not something you go to, but a family you belong to'

My encouragement to all of us is to be thankful for our church family and to know that we are each part of it. Let us look wider than those at our own age and stage in our midst. And let us wonder how we can stand together, learn together and bless and serve each other as we follow Christ's vision. Let us lift this to God in prayer:

*Compassionate Father of all your children,
Thank you for our church family and friends.
For the rich diversity you gift us with.
Help us at each stage of our own journeys*

To share with, learn from and serve alongside those within our church family at different stages of their journeys

Through sharing your vision.

And help us to know without a doubt that we belong to you.

We pray in the name of Jesus,

Amen.

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