

Burnside Blairbeth Church



Contact

No 147

October 2020

Dear friends,

In late September I was chatting to a farmer and asked him whether he was still busy at the harvest. He confirmed he was and then added “although this year it’s more like a salvage operation.” That part of the conversation wasn’t a huge surprise given the recent unpredictable weather and also given the fact that farmers probably aren’t the most optimistic people on the planet. Therefore, it was a slight surprise when he then went on to say “still, as it says – seedtime and harvest will never pass away.” I am sure the fact he knew that I am a minister influenced his decision to quote from Genesis 8.



The full verse is as follows – “as long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.” It is a verse that I have regularly heard as part of a harvest thanksgiving service. It was part of the promise God gave to Noah after the earth had been destroyed and he emerged from the ark.

In a year when the rashness of making any sort of prediction has been shown up time after time, I am making a prediction which regrettably I am very confident about. This year we will not have a harvest service that looks like anything that has happened before. Predictions about what cannot happen are currently much safer than any predictions about the resumption of what we consider normal life. That is one reason that it’s helpful to remind ourselves of this promise to Noah and to think about the promises of God in general.

That promise was made following far more extensive destruction than that caused by Covid. It promised that God would uphold a rhythm even during chaos. That feels like an important truth to hold on to just now. As I write this, things seem to be becoming more rather than less uncertain. There may well have been major changes in what we can and cannot do even between the act of me writing this letter and it being published – so I am not leaving any hostages to fortune!

So, during chaos where do we look for order? That is where knowingly or unknowingly my farmer friend had it right – we look to God and the promises He has made. He has put the laws of nature in place, which is why there is a rhythm

to the year, but even when those laws of nature seem to be turned on their head God is still in control.

Having started out talking about the harvest let me go way too early, by mentioning Christmas. Over recent days we have seen all sorts of headlines about how we might or might not be celebrating Christmas. We have been asked to “save Christmas” by obeying the rules about gatherings. We should certainly obey the rules and people’s attention or otherwise to rules may well influence the celebrations that take place at Christmas. However, regardless of whether we can have large family gatherings or even whether we will meet in a church building for Christmas I would respectfully like to suggest that the headlines are nonsense. They are nonsense because nothing that happens regarding Covid can change the God we worship at Christmas – and He has already kept the central promise we remember at that time of year – that a Saviour would come.

Amid uncertainty, we need to anchor ourselves in what is certain. God is the Lord of all creation. He made promises to Noah about the rhythms of the earth. He made promises to His people that He would send a Messiah. He has made numerous other promises. There are times when we struggle so see how these are working out. At those times we need to hold on the words of Peter in 2 Peter 3 “But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

May God help us to trust Him as one who is faithful to His promises.

Your friend and minister,

William Wilson

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Meeting for worship

You can register by emailing: **kate.airlie@burnsideblairbeth.church**

If you have any questions or concerns about registering to attend worship or how we will maintain our records, please contact Kate or Alan Hudson.

Kirk Session

Notes from the Kirk Session Meetings

The extraordinary times in which we are currently living have continued to impact on the regular business of the Kirk Session. We have continued to hold meetings by Zoom and, not surprisingly, a lot of our time has been spent dealing with the various aspects of the ongoing life of the congregation as a result of the pandemic.

Our meetings have largely focused upon how best to conduct worship on a Sunday morning through the period of lockdown and in the subsequent stages of the loosening of the restrictions (which may be returning!). A small working group was appointed to think about and plan our return to the building on a Sunday morning once that became possible. A survey of members was carried out and the responses taken into account as we planned what we felt was the best way forward. At each stage the Session has reviewed and discussed the steps being taken and we now have two services on a Sunday morning (at 10.00am and 11.30am), with the first of those being live-streamed on YouTube and Facebook. Otherwise recordings of the services have been distributed on CDs and DVDs to people who do not have internet access.

Approval of Presbytery was required to open our building for worship. An additional meeting of the Session was convened on 10 August and at that we addressed all that was required for the purpose of seeking approval from Presbytery. Such approval duly followed.

Because of the pandemic we have been unable to hold any Communion services since March but we hope to do so once again on Sunday 13 December. This will be dependent upon any changes to the current guidelines regarding gathering for worship. The Session will be giving careful thought to the distribution of the bread and wine.

At each of our meetings since April we have received reports on various matters – an Alpha course, Discipleship Explored courses, prayer triplets meeting at various times during the week, as well as property and finance updates.

Other matters which have been noted or decided include:

- the appointment, in June, of William as the Moderator of Glasgow Presbytery for the next year

- the first tranche of the “Go For It” Continuation Grant being received in July after a delay due to the pandemic
- Alan Hudson and Liz Johnston returning from furlough with effect from the beginning of August
- Andy MacArthur engaging in a one-to-one mentoring scheme with Mel Lacy, who runs an organisation called Growing Young Disciples – this will run over the next 10 months
- the distribution of Christmas Cards round the parish, even though it is unlikely that we will be able to hold the normal range of Christmas services
- participating in the Blythswood Christmas Shoebox Appeal – more details of which appear elsewhere in this edition of Contact

It is hoped that going forwards the Session will be able to start getting back to more normal ‘business’ but that will depend upon how the pandemic continues to impact our life as a congregation.

The next Session meeting is on **Wednesday 28 October** and will again be conducted on Zoom.

Alan Thomson
Session Clerk

Finance Update

Please find below are current financial position for the 8 months to the end of August. We currently have a shortfall in our General Fund and Local Mission Fund with a small surplus in our Missionary Partner Fund. Please continue to remember the finances of our church and the wider church in Scotland at this time.

Financial Position - 8 months to 31 August 2020

Freewill Offerings

- Total freewill offerings of £170,202 for the 8 months to 31 Aug were £8,530 (-4.8%) lower than for the same period in 2019 and were £30,262 (-15.1%) lower than the plan for the 8 months.
 - General Fund offerings of £115,964 were £12,750 (-9.9%) lower than last year and £23,073 (-16.6%) below plan.
 - Local Mission Fund offerings of £33,744 were £674 (+2.0%) higher than last year, but £7,692 (-18.6%) below plan.
 - Missionary Partner Fund offerings of £20,494 were £3,546 (+20.9%) higher than last year and £502 (+2.5%) above plan.

Offerings for Special Purposes

- With the building being closed, there has been very little additional giving for special purposes since May as the vehicle for that would normally be our regular Sunday morning worship.
- Offerings and donations for the 8 months in respect of sponsorship of children at Rhema School, Kampala, Uganda, amounted to £942.

Expenditure

- Congregational expenditure for the 8 months to 31 August at £93,531 was £1,118 (1.2%) higher than for the same period in 2019, but £11,042 (-10.6%) lower than plan.
 - General Fund expenditure was £2,136 (-4.3%) lower than last year, and £7,849 (-14.2%) lower than plan.

- Local Mission Fund expenditure was £3,304 (+7.7%) higher than last year and £3,120 (-6.3%) lower than plan.
- Fabric Fund expenditure amounted to £10,093 for the 8-month period (full year plan of £20,000).

Allocations / Distributions

- For the 8 months to 31 August £102,107 has been provided in respect of our contributions to the Church of Scotland (Ministry and Mission contribution: £96,499 / Glasgow Presbytery dues: £5,608).
- £24,667 has been provided for in respect of Missionary Partner Fund distributions. The distributions from the 2020 fund will continue in the coming weeks.
- For the 8 months to 31 August the year to date Local Mission Fund distribution to the Reachout Trust is £6,667.

Main Fund Balances / Shortfall

- Overall, across the 3 main funds there was a shortfall of £16,734, £21,627 behind plan.
- General Fund: for the 8 months to 31 August the shortfall was £16,690 compared to the planned surplus of £4,893, £21,583 behind plan.
- Local Mission Fund: for the 8 months there was a shortfall of £714, £714 below plan.
- Missionary Partner Fund: for the 8 months there was a surplus of £671, £671 above plan.

Andrew Telfer
Treasurer

Burnside Blairbeth Guild

“Going the Extra Mile”



Six months have passed since we last met as a Guild, and sadly, we are still unable to come together due to government restrictions on gatherings. Services of worship have special dispensation, and some of us have been privileged to attend church again over recent weeks, and found it greatly encouraging to be able to meet together again in the sanctuary in a very non-threatening environment.

At the end of last session, we distributed the Guild project funds to our chosen charities and all have now been gratefully acknowledged. Below are a few extracts from the letters for your encouragement.

Lodging House Mission

“Thank you so much for that very generous gift of £500 to The Lodging House Mission. Burnside Blairbeth Guild have been very good friends to us over many years. It was very thoughtful and timely to ask that the gift be used towards our housing project as we are looking at a second property at the moment and indeed have already allocated a client. We continue to make up parcels of food and toiletries for onward transmission to those temporarily housed in “Hotels”, B & B’s and of course those left on the streets. We also have an emergency help line for anyone requiring support or indeed just someone to speak to. So, there is still a lot going on in LHM and we are looking at all the good things happening and doing our best to adapt. We do not forget that we can only offer the services we do because of the generosity of people such as those in Burnside Blairbeth Guild and we are very grateful.”

Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic and the Ecumenical Women’s Initiative Croatia

“It is an absolute delight to be able to officially acknowledge this gift and the support of the Guild at Burnside Blairbeth. I can't believe almost a year has passed since we were all together in Dundee, and what a great day it was. With you, I look forward to when we can all once again meet in that spirit. Please convey my sincerest thanks to all at the Guild, for your collective generosity, care and kindness towards me, hoping that you are all well and as indomitable as ever!”

The Cambuslang and Rutherglen Reachout Trust

“Heartfelt thanks from the Cambuslang and Rutherglen Reachout Trust. This financial gift, along with the Guild’s prayerful support, will greatly assist our work with the young people in this area. Please pass on our warmest regards to all members of the Guild.”

The current Guild strategy is “One Journey, Many Roads” with a theme for this third year of “The Extra Mile” and I was wondering just where the extra mile will take us in this current climate? We can all think of a time when someone has gone the extra mile for us and we hope too, that we have gone the extra mile for someone else. Matthew 5:41 says, “When anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.” In the Guild, we express our faith in worship, prayer, action and fellowship, using both words and actions to do this.

As we begin our third year of One Journey, Many Roads, we should be prepared to go the extra mile, to do more than the minimum. This is a challenge for us, as Guild members this year - a challenge we can start now, even if we are not yet able to meet together. I hope we can all think of ways in which we can go the “Extra Mile”, not least by befriending others, helping our neighbours and being faithful in prayer. I have also included a couple of practical suggestions which I hope you may be able to participate in.

Blythswood Shoeboxes

Burnside Blairbeth Church is participating in the Christmas shoebox appeal and full details are included elsewhere in the magazine or on the Blythswood website (<http://www.blythswood.org/shoebox>).

As Guild members, we encourage you to participate in this and fill a shoebox as described to demonstrate the love of God and make a difference to lives that are otherwise almost hopeless. If, however, you are unable to get all the items to fill a box on your own, we would love to have donations of any of the loose items listed, which will then be put together and the young people in the church will make it a project to fill the shoeboxes with these items. Donations can be dropped off at the church, alternatively, you can contact either Esther Ninian or Catherine Nelson and we will arrange for uplift.

Suggested Items for Shoeboxes

All items must be new and can be for men, women or children.

- Soap; Toothbrush & paste; Shampoo; Shower Gel; Deodorant; Moisturiser; Shaving Foam; Comb; Brush; Facecloth.
- Hat, scarf and gloves; Underwear; Socks/Tights;
- Pens/pencils/sharpener; Notepads; Colouring Books; Rulers; Rubbers.
- Bags of sweets – No chocolate - (Date no earlier than 31 March)
- Small Toys (cars, dolls, balls)
- Empty shoeboxes for filling

Knitting for “Fish and Chip Babies”

Many of our members have helped with this project in the past, and we are keen to promote this again - knitting for babies in Africa. Newborn babies, many suffering from Aids are being called Fish and Chip babies because many are sent home from hospital wrapped in newspaper for warmth – they need your help. The jumpers themselves are very easy to knit and they are knitted in one complete piece. Average knitters can complete a jumper in an evening – it's a quick and easy pattern – see below.

Please contact Isabel Rowatt Tel: 0141 634 4080 for collection details or any other queries.

These are just a couple of ways in which we can go the extra mile to help others, and I am sure you will be able to think of many others. We have no idea if and when meetings of the Guild will be permitted or practical, but we do look forward to the time when we can safely meet again and renew our fellowship together. In the meantime, as we try to go the extra mile, "Let us hold fast to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful." Heb 10:23.

Catherine Nelson

Baby Beanie Hat Pattern

Approx 20g DK wool. 4mm needles

- Cast on 64 stitches and work 14 rows in K1, P1 rib.
- Work 24 rows in stocking stitch (1 row knit, 1 row purl) or until work measures 11cm from cast on edge. Then shape crown as follows:
- Row 1: *K6, K2tog. Repeat from * to end of row (56 sts)
- Row 2 and every alternate following row: Purl
- Row 3: *K5, K2tog. Repeat from * to end of row (48 sts)
- Row 5: *K4, K2tog. Repeat from * to end of row (40 sts)
- Continue decreasing in this manner until (K1 K2tog) has been completed and 16 sts remain. Purl 1 row. Break yarn and thread through remaining 16 sts. Pull up tightly and join seam.



Baby Jumper Knitting Pattern

Approx 50g DK wool - bright colours - no pastels - jumpers may never be washed. 4mm needles.

- Cast on 44 stitches. Work 18 rows in K2, P2 rib
- Work 30 rows in stocking stitch (1 row knit, 1 row purl)
- Cast on 12 sts at beg of next 2 rows and change to K2, P2 rib (for sleeves)
- Rib 22 more rows in K2, P2 rib
- Next row: Rib 21 sts, cast off 26 sts, rib 21 sts (Cast sts off loosely in rib, using one size bigger needles if necessary) to allow neck to stretch over baby's head)
- Next row: Rib 21 sts, cast on 26 sts, rib 21 sts (Cast on loosely)
- Work 22 rows in K2, P2 rib
- Cast off 12 sts at beg of next 2 rows.
- Work 30 rows in stocking stitch (1 row knit, 1 row purl)
- Work 18 rows in K2, P2 rib
- Cast off. Sew up side and sleeve seams.

Our Missionary Partners

Update from Andrew Robertson in Bolivia

Hey everyone, hope you are doing well as you read this and continuing to grow closer to God. I really miss being with you all, but please know that I am praying for you. I also love being able to see the services online.

I have now been in Bolivia for 10 months, which is crazy! Some days during strict lockdown felt incredibly long, but the months have flown past.

The situation in Bolivia appears to be steadily improving, with diminished cases and more and more things returning to a semblance of normality. However, we do have another set of elections to look forward to next month. No one really knows how that is going to go.

With more travelling now being allowed, I have been able to move this week to a children's home in Santa Cruz. I decided not to go to Oruro at this point as the work there will be limited for the foreseeable future.

The children's home currently has 25 children between the ages of 3 to 17 years. The children live in three houses. Each house has two Bolivians who assume the role of parents. The home is in the city but has a large amount of land and some animals. I have started to help one of the teenagers look after the three horses, I really know very little about horses! If anyone does have any expertise in this area please let me know, any advice would be wonderful.

Please pray for me as I build relationships here and work out how God wants to use me. It has been wonderful so far getting to know the children but at times it is difficult to know exactly what is expected of me.

Thank you so much for all of your support and love.

Blessings,

Andrew

Update from the Bakunda's in Uganda

Bernard and Alice have asked for prayers for Alice who has recently undergone surgery for breast cancer. While that surgery was successful, Alice has been advised that the cancer has spread to her liver and she will have to undergo chemotherapy treatment. Please pray for Alice who is dealing with this new challenge in her life and for Bernard and the wider family who are supporting her.

Pastoral Work - Confusion in a time of COVID

Are you confused? I am !

Total lockdown, while strict, was at least simple to understand and obey. Now things are changing regularly and I find it hard to remember exactly what I am allowed to do, who I can see, and where I can go. I am very glad that Alan Hudson reads the guidelines thoroughly and keeps me up to date on the most recent recommendations. But the changes never bring us anywhere near “normal” and sometimes take us much further away.

I did long for the way it used to be, for “normal” to come back. But I am slowly beginning to understand that “normal” was God’s gift and how much I took so many things for granted. God is still in control, none of this is unexpected to Him, or outside His power and permission. What we have now, confusing and frustrating as it can be, is still part of God’s good plan for his people. Life is never “normal”, it’s always a gift, and I hope I don’t make that mistake so often in the future.

God has given our church family so many gifts and blessings to help us through this time. Many have embraced new technology so they can participate in church life on-line, though not always with enthusiasm. We are rich in the skills and expertise that make this possible. Some of us are taking part in services who couldn’t come to church when things were “normal”. But while we can be very grateful for all these gifts, we also see that COVID has put many gaps and barriers between us.

The last two months of changes, since lockdown started to ease, have been difficult for many of the less vigorous members of our congregation. The toll of isolation since March is becoming more apparent. While some have coped remarkably well, others have been affected physically and mentally by these very strange circumstances. For those without family close by, the enforced distance from their church family has been hard.

As I have been taking registration for the live services, I have seen just how important our church family gatherings are for many of our more mature members. While some are continuing to worship at home, many are eager to see each other again and to worship and pray together. It is so good that we can come together again now, despite all the barriers we still have to observe.

Kate Airlie

Alpha Course – Feedback

In last month's Contact magazine Susan Gordon gave an update on the Alpha course we had been running through the summer.



We have now finished the Alpha course; our last session together was at the end of August. All of the guests who were part of the Alpha course have decided to carry on meeting within their own groups to continue studying the bible together.

I asked two of the guests, Lorna and Darren, to give some feedback on their experience of Alpha.

Q: Why did you join Alpha?

Lorna: The reason I joined the Alpha course was really down to Andrea Thomson who encouraged me to do the course. She suggested that I might get some answers to the questions I was asking her, so I decided to give it a go.

Darren: It was curiosity mostly, along with a respect for the person that invited me. My partner Hazel has grown up in the church and has a belief. I was the complete opposite. I was hoping to maybe get something from it that I could apply to my own life. I approached it a bit like a self-help class that was free. I am very, very glad I did.

Q: How was your experience of the Alpha course?

Lorna: I really enjoyed the course and met some new friends - Ross Munro being one of them. He is an Aberdeen supporter and needs to improve his golf just like me!! The course was very informative, and it was good to hear from other people on the course as they were asking the same questions that I was thinking. I was made to feel very welcome in the group.

Darren: It was life changing. I really mean that. The people on the course were all lovely which helped to settle any nerves I might have had about being on the course.

The videos were the things that really made the course for me, they put their point across and explained things in a way that I had never heard before from a point of view I had never considered. I very quickly started to look at God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in a way I never had before and all of a sudden it felt like something that I could understand and possibly even believe.

It felt like as the weeks of the course went on, more and more clicked. I feel as though I was really lucky as everything just seemed to fall into place. We are quite a spiritual couple and hearing about the Holy Spirit really struck a chord with me. I have always had a belief there was something out there keeping an eye on me and helping me but I certainly didn't believe it was God. Hearing about the Holy Spirit was my key to unlocking everything else. It was great to speak to the other people on the course about the videos and hear their take on it. It felt relaxed because we were doing it from our own home. I don't think I would have taken part on the course if it wasn't in the Zoom call format - just another little thing to feel lucky about. The course has completely opened my eyes to a new way of looking at religion.

Q: What is next for you after Alpha?

Lorna: As a result of the Alpha Course we (the Alpha group) are going to be meeting up through Zoom every fortnight to discuss the Bible. It will also allow me to keep in touch with my new friends and learn more about Christianity.

Darren: I have struggled to keep the momentum I felt during the course. Everyday life seems to take over again and it seems like there is no time to focus on a relationship with God. Luckily our Alpha group have started a split off session to allow us to meet regularly and designate a specific time to think about the things that the course brought up. I am really looking forward to the sessions and hope to learn how to harness the positivity I felt each week on the course and recreate it in my everyday life.

It has been such a privilege being involved with organising Alpha, and I am hugely grateful to the folks around Burnside Blairbeth Church for supporting through prayer, whether they were part of the prayer team or not, for all the folks

who helped by baking for the sessions each week, and for the hosts and helpers who were meeting with the guests each week and facilitating the discussions.

The next Alpha course will be after Christmas, so please look out for more information about it.

If you would like to be part of the prayer team, be a host or a helper, please get in touch with me at gandrwylic@hotmail.co.uk.

Gary Wylie

Church Psalm Walk at Fernbrae Meadows – 5 September

A number of people joined the “Psalm Walk” through Fernbrae Meadows on Saturday 5 September. The idea was to walk and find a number of quotations from Psalms which had been placed at different places throughout the Meadows.

Here, the Morison family tell us about their experience of the walk:

Lois: It was very, very fun and we went in a river and we went over bridges. We went on logs and we said “God is my shield” and remember it.

Eden: It was fun looking for the discs and we found 7 discs and we went in mud. We kicked stones in the river and went in woods. We found sticks and then threw them back in the river. I will remember this “God is my shield”.

Malcolm: It was lovely going out as a family to somewhere local we have never been before. We had fun walking about looking for the wooden discs and thinking about how God looks after us. The girls enjoyed playing in a small burn and we would never have found any discs if we had not managed to extract them from it! We went a bit off-track at one point but that reminded me that God can show us the right way. Everyone we met was very friendly. Looking over the city reminded me that no matter how small we feel God is bigger than everything and can provide protection and strength to help us with anything. Finding the discs was not always easy and reminded me that we don't always find what we are looking for even if we think we are on God's path. I'm thankful to God for the dedication of Messy Church organisers and helpers.

Rebecca: Time spent as a family reminding ourselves about God is time well spent! It was lovely to discover a beautiful new park and get fresh air and a bit of exercise. The girls were so excited each time we found a disc. We were a bit shy of shouting out "God is my shield" but we gave it a go!

God really has been my shield, He's been my open door in dead ends, my comfort, my hope, my provider. In 1989, standing on a train platform utterly alone, in Northern Ireland a

teenager far away from home, I realised that He will always be the person I turn to.

I think we can all relate to the Psalms of King David. There are so many elements of his life, from being the youngest and sometimes discounted member of his family, his adventures and need for bravery, his fame, artistry, hardship, delight, confusion, anger, fortune, success, temptation, shame, fear, not forgetting his determination to follow his purposes regardless. Even though we don't have David's life story, our own hilltops and valleys are as real to us as his were.

Through David's steadfast love for God and unashamed reliance on Him throughout and his honesty in celebrating all his feelings in song and poetry, God reaches out to us now in 2020 reminding us He remains our constant shield.



Rebecca, Malcolm, Lois and Edén Morison

Blythswood Christmas Shoebox Appeal

The Covid pandemic has affected everyone but particularly those living in poorer countries where their lives have been torn apart by the virus. As a church we have decided to support the appeal again this year although it will be a little more difficult than usual in our present circumstances. So we pray this will bring God's love to people in need overseas this Christmas.



Here are the details for doing a shoebox this year.

1. You can access the leaflets and instructions for what to put in a box online at :

<https://blythswood.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-SBA-checklist.pdf>

You will need to print the form to stick on the top of your box indicating what's inside.

OR

2. The leaflets, with instructions, will be available at the Burnside building and you can pick one up from the foyer, after any of the services. If you are not going to church just now you can phone the office or email them to arrange when to go and get one. (The office telephone number is 0141 634 7383 and the email address is theoffice@burnsideblairbeth.church.)

OR

3. Phone me, (Andrea Thomson) If leaving a message, please leave your name, address and telephone number so I can deliver a leaflet to you.

The boxes should be filled and handed into the church by -

Sunday 15 November

You can take your filled boxes to the Church between Sunday 1 November and Sunday 15 November. If you are unable to bring the box yourself, please phone Andrea and she will collect it from you.

Finally, the cost of sending a box is a minimum of £3, so please include the money in the box in a sealed envelope.

If you do not feel able to fill a shoebox yourself, we will be very pleased to receive empty shoeboxes, and items for putting into the shoeboxes, and also donations towards the cost of sending them. These should be handed in to the church (or will be collected by Andrea if you can't hand them in). The deadline for all of these items is Friday 30 October, so that the young people at Switch can make up shoeboxes by 15 November.

Please follow all the instructions and thank you again for your support.

Andrea Thomson

In the absence of a response from Andrea, please contact Alan Hudson at the Church for any advice

The Church Office Tel: 0141 634 7383
Email theoffice@burnsideblairbeth.church



Glasgow Street Pastors

Glasgow Street Pastors began in January 2009. Carole McQueen, who was part of our church then, was instrumental in setting up the Team in 2009. Today, over 120 volunteers operate in 8 Street Pastor teams, Safe Zone teams and Prayer Pastors teams.



The Street Pastors have a very clear understanding of their role which is to 'Listen, Care and Help'. Teams patrol on the city centre streets from 10:30pm on a Friday and Saturday night until 4:00am the following morning. The Safe Zone, based in St George's Tron Church in Buchanan Street operates at the same times and provides additional support to vulnerable individuals brought in by the street teams, Police Scotland officers or by concerned friends. Fully trained first aiders support the street pastors on duty and provide a service which often avoids the need for a visit to A&E at the Royal Infirmary.

Teams carry bags with supplies of flip flops, items of clothing such as hats, gloves and socks for the homeless. Foil blankets and ponchos are also carried and provide immediate relief when clothing worn by 'revellers' doesn't meet the weather conditions! In the course of a year teams would issue over 2,000 pairs of flip flops and lift over 4,000 bottles from the streets. By doing this we are removing 'potential weapons.' (Police Scotland) Volunteers spend time engaging with the many homeless people begging at night as well as helping those who become vulnerable because they are overly drunk.

GSP is a very practical 'service ministry' and by extending kindness and care opportunities arise to talk about the Christian faith, normally in response to the question 'why do you do what you do'? A team was approached one night by a man who made it clear he was an atheist. 'I don't believe in God', he said, 'but I like what you people do'. Kindness often breaks down barriers to belief and we will never know how many have started the journey to faith because of experiencing kindness on the city streets at night.

Of course, 2020 has been no 'normal' year for GSP and patrols had to be suspended with the onset of lockdown. In July we started putting small teams out during the day time and have managed to have Street Pastors out seven days a week offering support to the public as we 'Listen, Care and Help'!

We are aiming to return to some form of limited night time patrolling again from 25 September. The challenge we face in the months ahead is to adapt to the changing circumstances in the city centre. The night life of Glasgow is very different from the one we knew at the beginning of the year. New ways of working, different times for patrolling, limits to what we can do because of physical distancing, ensuring the wellbeing and safety of our volunteers, all these and more present challenges to our work on the streets.

As a charity we are able to provide the service we do by the generosity of churches, individuals and grant awarding bodies.

Our website, www.gsp.scot gives details on how to give and also how to volunteer with Glasgow Street Pastors.

Stuart Crawford
Co-ordinator of Glasgow Street Pastors

Congratulations

Many congratulations to
Norman and Edith Stirling
who celebrated their Diamond Anniversary
earlier this month –they were married
on 7 September 1960



CrossReach – Christmas Catalogue and Cards

The Christmas Catalogue from CrossReach is now available
at: <https://shop.crossreach.org.uk/>

There is a selection of Christmas cards, Calendars and gifts
in their online shop.

The shop telephone number is 0131 454 4374

Ian Dart



Obituaries

Jimmy Whitelaw

Jimmy Whitelaw died on 2nd September aged 89. During his early working life Jimmy was in the merchant navy before working in his family shop. He was resourceful and so when the family business stopped, he learned how to weld and made wrought iron gates, as well as learning about picture framing and doing that on a small scale. He was a fun grandfather and was widely read with an extensive knowledge on all sorts of subjects. He was active in minding his grandchildren and always encouraged his children Stuart and Fiona in whatever ventures they undertook. For some years Jimmy organised the church versus bowling club annual match. Jimmy struggled after his wife Margaret's death some months ago. We give thanks for Jimmy's life and witness.



Jack Henderson

Jack Henderson died in Clarkson House nursing home on 13th September. Jack worked for a variety of companies as an electrical engineer – spending some time living in England as well as Scotland. His work took him regularly to the Far East and he loved to travel. He was married to Robina for 65 years before her death in 2018. Jack became an elder in Burnside church in 1957 and served faithfully as part of the Kirk Session for many years, retiring from this responsibility relatively recently. He loved sport, especially golf and rugby and had close friendships with neighbours around Crawford Road and Peveril Avenue. The Henderson house was always a sociable and welcoming place. Jack was a proud father to Rona, Sheila and Ian and we commit them and their families to your prayers, giving thanks to God for the faithful service given by Jack to our church over many years.



During this Lockdown period sermons are available on the Church Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BurnsideBlairbeth>

and on YouTube – search for

Burnside Blairbeth Church live stream

CDs and/or DVDs will be available as soon as possible after the live Sunday morning services and can be delivered to homes. If you, or someone you know, would like to have a copy delivered please contact:

kate.airlie@burnsideblairbeth.church

Contact magazine and **Weekly Notes** are available to view on our website, www.burnsideblairbeth.church, under **What's On/News** tab.

If you would like to view Contact this way rather than have a paper copy delivered please send a message the office

theoffice@burnsideblairbeth.church

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Articles can e-mailed to the editor - **contact@burnsideblairbeth.church**

Data Protection Act, 1998

It is normal practice to include the names, addresses and telephone numbers of our office-bearers and other individuals in our church publications. If any person does not wish to have their personal details included they should inform the Communications Team Leader, Lesley Mackintosh.

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