

Marksman

September and October, 2021



St Mark's Church of Scotland (Oldhall), Paisley
334 Glasgow Road, Paisley, PA1 3DL
Office Telephone – 0141 882 2755
Email: office@stmarksoldhall.org.uk
www.stmarksoldhall.org.uk
Scottish Charity SC011210



As I sit and write this, I am already aware that it is dark outside where only a few weeks ago the sun would have been still up in the sky. The mornings are darker too and, although today was warm and sunny, last week there was a touch of Autumn in the air – especially in the early mornings.

Over the last few weeks I have become aware that some of the trees are changing colour too. Since completing the environmental study on the trees in our church grounds a few weeks ago (thanks to Graham Black and Bob Tonner for their help) I have become all the more aware of the trees, and am walking around looking in much more detail at their leaf structure, which can be used as a means of identification. (Any one interested can download the Woodland Trust app, which helps you follow flow charts to make decisions regarding their identity.)

All of this makes me aware of the passing of the seasons, and makes me think of harvest-time and the Harvest Thanksgiving which will be on Sunday 19th September. As we think of the harvest of the land, and of the sea, I'd like to share with you a prayer written by Christian MacLean* about Jesus, who walked with farmers and fishers.

*Jesus who walked with farmers and fishers
And sat in village kitchens,
Walk with us now.*

*We hold before you those who have the privilege and responsibility
Of working on the land and the sea,
And those who struggle to make a living.*

*We hold before you those whose relationship with the earth is ruptured;
Through conflict, poverty, stunted opportunities and environmental degradation.*

*We hold before you rural communities where people feel isolated, marginalised, and
powerless in the face of distant economic and political forces.*

*We hold before you those whose policies affect the land, the earth and all of our lives;
and we pray for those in positions of power,
That they will have the courage and vision to make wise decisions.*

*God hear these prayers today, and fill us with your Spirit.
That we may live in peace with the earth,
And with each other,
And that your kingdom may come.*

*Jesus who walked with farmers and fishers,
And sat in village kitchens,
Walk with us now.
Amen*

* Originally published in 'Around a Thin Place', by Wild Goose Publications

Perhaps, as we approach the COP 26 environmental conference for world leaders, this is a prayer we may read and use again and again.

I'm also planning a series of sermons looking at Creation and the Christian response to Environmental issues in the weeks leading up to the COP 26. These topics will be explored further in a new series of four Bible studies starting at the end of October. Perhaps you may be interested to join with these, even if you don't usually come to/join in with the Bible studies.

I look forward to sharing this journey with you as we pray for the leaders who will be making the big decisions, and as we explore what our individual responses should be.

Your friend and minister,
Sonia

Worship Matters

Easing of Covid restrictions has allowed us to have more people in church on a Sunday, with no need to pre-book seats, and we can now all sing the hymns – whilst wearing masks.

This is a busy term with several special Sundays.

29 th August	Baptism – Luca Barnes
19 th September	Harvest
3 rd October	Youth Dedication Service
11 th – 18 th October	School holidays
17 th October	Safeguarding Sunday
31 st October	Communion Sunday
1 st – 12 th November	COP 26
14 th November	Remembrance Sunday

The Wednesday services will restart on Wednesday 1st September. These will take place weekly and begin at 11am.

Harvest

As our Harvest Thanksgiving will be the 19th September, the church will be open on Saturday 18th September, 10.30am – 12 noon to receive Harvest gifts of tinned and dry food, cleaning products, toiletries etc. which will be given to the Renfrewshire Foodbank. At the moment they DO NOT require pasta or beans. Thank you.



Funerals



14 th July	Francis Mitchell, Duchray Drive
13 th August	Isobel Sansom, Redshank Ave, Renfrew
31 st August	Mary Kettlewell, Adam's House Care Home formerly of Dunchurch Rd.
1 st Sept	Margaret Ross, Nightingale Care Home

Church Office

Whilst we were sorry to say 'Goodbye' to Julie, as she ended her time as church secretary, I am delighted to announce that we have now appointed a replacement.

Fiona Stirling will take up her new job with us on Wednesday 1st September.

The office will now be staffed Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am – 12.30pm.

We hope Fiona will soon settle into her new role, and I am sure you will look forward to meeting her.

Peter's News

As we continue to head out of lockdown and the restrictions we have seen over the past 18 months ease, the work at the church continues.

I had hoped to run a holiday club for primary school age during the summer holidays. It was decided that with the Covid numbers and restrictions still in place, it would be sensible not to run anything at that time. We were also thinking of running the *Junction* again (the youth café we ran a couple of years ago for P6 to S3) but again with Covid numbers we decided against it.

We did still have *Trash* through the summer with only a couple of weeks off when the majority of the young people were not about. It is great that we have such a dedicated group of young people who are keen to come along and engage in studying the bible together. We had a nice afternoon and evening together during the last week of the school holidays. We played some games at the church before heading to *Xcite* (the new name for *Xscape*) for food and then brought dessert back to the church. We will try and do this again in the near future.

Ralston Primary school have been in contact and are wanting to restart some of the work I was doing in the school before the lockdown. So, from the end of September, we will be able to go in and do assemblies and support the school in whatever way we can.

Looking ahead, I am planning to try and help provide activities for children and families of our church and community. I am hoping to restart the *Messy Church* family events that we managed to run a few times before restrictions stopped them. I will also look at

the *Friends and Heroes* group on a Sunday night and see if that is something we should restart.

I mentioned in the last *Marksman* that I am returning to teaching to do a couple of days a week. I have really enjoyed my first couple of days that I have been teaching and look forward to being back in a school.

With more people being back in church, I am not having to make as many DVD and CDs. I am going to keep making these for people who need them, so please let me know if you are aware of anyone else who would appreciate a recording of the church service.

Thank you for your continued support of the children and young people of our church and community. Please continue to pray for the work with young people and for God's guidance in what we do going forward.

Peter



A very big thank you to everyone in the congregation who contributed to my leaving gift of vouchers for Stobo Castle. I am looking forward to an overnight stay and some pampering.

I have loved working for St Mark's for the past 8 years and will miss my days in the office. I will still be at Church and will remain as Deputy Session Clerk so you still see me about.

Thanks again.
Julie



I wish to thank the people of St Mark's for their friendship, kind thoughts, good wishes and especially your prayers for healing after my fall.

The gifts, flowers, visits, calls and cards I received certainly uplifted me.

I know healing takes time but I am improving and I want you all to know I appreciate being a member of a caring church.

With grateful thanks.

Margaret Currie

1st East Rainbows

We have all had a relaxing summer and some of us got away for a break.

Parents' Night was held on Wednesday 23rd of June and Sonia joined us outdoors for this event. It was done as a tale of 2 halves : girls who had recently joined us in the last year and girls who are leaving to join Brownies.



The girls were awarded the following badges : Family Tree ; Nature ; Pet Lover ; Agility ; Helper ; Drawing ; Fruit and Veg and Healthy Mind.

Awards were made as follows :

12 Bronze awards : Francesca, Anna, Charlotte Crawford, Beth, Jessica, Jessie, Katie Macdougall, Leah, Charlotte Lang, Sophie , Joanna and Phoebe.

5 silver awards : Daisy, Phoebe, Joanna, Jessie & Freya .

2 gold awards: Daisy and Phoebe.

We have received £5300 this year due to COVID funding from *Arnold Clark, Corra Foundation, Robertson Trust, Tesco, Neighbourly, Gannochy Trust and Girlguiding UK*. This has helped us to keep the unit going since lockdown and grow the 1st East Rainbows to 16 girls when most units almost vanished.

The Rainbows have been super busy over the holiday period with their purple packs and finding out about wee beasties.

We are looking forward to starting again on Wednesday 1st September ... So watch this space. Purple



39th Paisley Brownies (Tuesday)



We are planning to resume Brownies indoor at St Mark's from Tuesday 31 August. Risk Assessments, plans, letters to parents etc are all currently being worked on, to allow us to resume safely.

Over the summer, the Brownies have been given a challenge badge to work on – *40 Days of Summer* – so we are looking forward to seeing what they've all been up to over the summer.

Our Programme moving forward will focus on the *Network Skillsbuilder*, and we plan to get to know Paisley a little better with the *Local History Interest Badge*. That will be us working towards the *Know Myself Theme Badge*.

Two of our Brownies move up to Guides, and we wish them well as they continue their guiding journey with Karen. We've got one Rainbow moving up, and we look forward to welcoming her.

However, we will have capacity to take in more, so if you know a girl interested in coming to join our Guiding family, we will be happy to discuss, or go to the GirlGuiding website, where they can enrol.

Sheena Tonner, Brownie Leader

39thA Paisley Brownies

The Pack returns on Wednesday 1st September and the leaders are looking forward to welcoming back the Brownies that were with us in June and meeting 4 new starts who have transferred from Rainbows. We are also delighted to be joined by one of our former Brownies, Emily, who has agreed to join the leadership team. At our planning meeting, the Guiders discussed different ideas for the following session and we look forward to finding out the Brownies ideas to add to our plans.



We will be starting working on the *Take Action* theme as we hope one of the Brownies might continue working towards her Gold Award which is the highest award available.

Usually, we would be organising a trip to watch the PACE pantomime. Unfortunately, this event is unlikely to go ahead this year so we will be considering alternatives.

I look forward to sharing our fun and adventures with you during the session.

I know there has been a lot of buying of houses in the area over the last year. If you have any new neighbours with girls in the family, please encourage them to come along and enjoy the fun and friendship that Girlguiding offers. Adult volunteers will, of course, be very welcome too! Interest should be registered at :

www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus

Christine Hair, Brown Owl

24th Paisley Boys' Brigade

The new BB session is almost upon us and we are at last preparing to hold face-to-face meetings. We were, of course, able to maintain a level of activities and contact via Zoom over the last 18 months, but it was not ideal for all. We are very much looking forward to welcoming members new and old back, albeit still with some restrictions for now.

We are also making some changes with the Anchors meeting earlier at 6pm on Fridays and the Juniors moving from a Thursday to a Friday at 7pm. The logistics may be a challenge, but we are happy to have the challenge after a long time away. The changes are in part due to the challenge of appropriate staffing so if you are interested in playing a part in *Advancing Christ's Kingdom amongst Boys* please get in touch with me.



It has been a difficult last year for children and young people whose lives have been turned upside down. It's time to get back to spending time with friends, having fun, learning, growing and discovering. Nationally, the Brigade has launched a campaign entitled *Open To* to emphasise that the BB is indeed open to all children and young people. The campaign's vision is taken from John 10:10 :

"I have come that you might have life - life in all its fullness".

In the session ahead we, as a Company, certainly plan to offer opportunities to young people to reach their full potential. In October we will award 5 President's Badges and will have 10-12 young men working towards their Queen's Badges. This is great, but I was equally encouraged to be contacted by some parents asking if their sons could join the Anchors. The vision is for those youngsters also to achieve as much in the coming years.

It will be great to be properly 'open' again and to quote a certain football manager from a couple of years ago : "Let's Go!"

I am pleased to announce that the Company is now on *Facebook*. To find our page, you just look up 24th Paisley Boys' Brigade company on *Facebook* and you can then gain access, pending approval.

Jack Goodall (Company Captain)

St. Mark's Church Guild



All being well, the Guild plans to resume weekly meetings, in the Large Hall, from Monday, October 4th. at 2 p.m. A warm welcome is extended to all ladies and gentlemen who would care to join us and enjoy the interesting and varied programme arranged.

The yearly subscription is £15.00 (of which at least £12.00 goes to Church of Scotland Headquarters, Edinburgh).

After such a long absence, we look forward to greeting members, old and new, for an afternoon of fellowship.

The Committee

Prayer Group



We are currently still meeting every Wednesday on Zoom at 7:00pm.

This group is open to all and you would be made welcome. To join in, please ask Irene Pollock for the Zoom details. (irene.pollock03@gmail.com).

During the pandemic we have seen our numbers grow, which has been very encouraging, and God has answered many of our prayers. Why not give it a go?

After collating results of a wee questionnaire and meeting with Sonia, we have agreed to have a second prayer group meeting, face to face, on Wednesday in the Manse, also at 7:00pm.

This gives you the option of joining either one, best suited to your circumstances. You are not tied in to one or other, and it may be that on occasion you may switch which one you attend.

Bible Studies



Saturday 4 September will see the start of our Studies again. We meet at 10:15am for a 10:30am start and usually manage to keep it within an hour!

We are finishing off *Listening to God* studies.

The dates are **Saturdays - 4 September, 18 September, 2 October and 16 October**

Again, after looking at questionnaire responses, Sonia will be leading a second Bible Study group on the Wednesday after the Saturday Zoom meeting. This will be held in the Manse at 7:45pm after the prayer group. (There will be a short break between the two so that people can, if they wish, attend the prayer meeting, but leave before the Bible study starts.)

Wednesdays - 8 September, 22 September, 6 October, 20 October

Again, you have the option to choose the study group that suits you best, without being tied to one or other.

A new Bible study series will begin on 30 October based on Creation/Environmental issues and Sonia will lead both the in-person and the Zoom Bible studies. The discussions will also tie in with a series of sermons on the same topics in the run up to COP26.

These will be on the following dates :

Saturdays - 30 October, 13 November, 27 November and 11 December on Zoom at 10:15am for 10:30am start.

Wednesdays – 3 November, 17 November, 1 December and 15 December in the Manse at 7:45pm

Prayer group Zoom	Prayer group Manse	Bible Study Zoom	Bible study Manse
Wednesdays 7:00 pm and weekly thereafter	Wednesdays 7:00pm and weekly thereafter	Saturday 4 September 10:15am	Wednesday 8 September 7:45pm
		Saturday 18 September 10:15am	Wednesday 22 September 7:45pm
		Saturday 2 October 10:15am	Wednesday 6 October 7:45pm
		Saturday 16 October 10:15am	Wednesday 20 October 7:45pm
		New Series – Creation Saturday 30 October 10:15am	New Series starts Wednesday 3 November at 7:45pm

Prayer diary for September 2021

Wednesday 1 Our new church secretary, Fiona Stirling starts today. We give thanks for this post being filled and welcome Fiona as she takes up her new role.

Word for Wednesday services begin this morning at 11:00. This service will be held in the church.

Prayer Groups meet this evening on Zoom and in the Manse.

39th A Brownies start again this evening. Pray for all the girls and Christine and leaders.

Thursday 2 Today we bring the country of **Afghanistan** to you, and given the recent struggles and Taliban take over, pray for the people of this land for peace, and for justice – especially for women and girls.

Friday 3 We remember the **Boys' Brigade** and pray for their leaders, and for the young lads as they meet together again. All sections are meeting on a Friday - Anchor Boys starting earlier - Junior Section move from a Thursday to a Friday. Pray for them with these altered plans.

Saturday 4 Bible Studies recommence this morning at 10.15am Zoom. Log on details at (Irene.pollock03@gmail.com) . Sonia will take face to face group covering the same topic in the Manse on Wednesdays at 7:45pm.

Sunday 5 Pray for our morning service in church and live streamed. Ask God to bless us as we meet together.

Evolution has started again for our youngsters. Pray that they will come back and feel comfortable. Also pray that new people would step up as leaders to help with this work.

A number of leaders have left. If you feel you could help, do speak with Ruth Forrest. 😊

Monday 6 We remember the following streets and families who live there this week – **Auchmannoch Avenue. Balfron Road and Barshaw Place.**

Tuesday 7 Guides hope to restart tonight face to face! This is a big milestone as they haven't met as a unit since just before lockdown last year. Pray for Karen and the

leaders and for the girls as they come together.

The **39 Brownies started on the last Tuesday of August.** Pray they will enjoy meeting face to face, and for Sheena as she leads them this session.

Wednesday 8 Word for Wednesday service this morning at 11:00.

International Literacy Day

Prayer Group meets tonight in the Manse and on Zoom. Both at 7:00pm.

Face to face Bible study meets in the Manse after the prayer group at 7:45pm.

Thursday 9 Pray for **Haiti** after the most recent earthquake and tropical storm. We ask God to be close to those who have lost loved ones and homes, to help those working to re-build and to give them strength and courage to keep going.

Friday 10 We pray for the continued work being done on Covid vaccinations and treatment. Be with those who are suffering from long Covid.

Saturday 11 Give thanks for the many good things God has given you, and look for ways that God wants you to share your blessings with others.

Sunday 12 Pray for Sonia as she leads worship this morning. May your Holy Spirit guide and direct her as she brings your word to us, and make us receptive to it.

Monday 13 Bathgo Avenue, Blair Road and Buchlyvie Road are in our prayers for the following week. We don't know everyone who lives in our district, but God does!

Tuesday 14 Keep those who work tirelessly for others in your care, giving them strength and perseverance to carry on.

Wednesday 15 Word for Wednesday

Session meeting this evening at 7:30pm. Pray that all discussions and decisions would be in keeping with your will for St Mark's.

International Day of Democracy. Think of the many countries where there is no democracy and pray for people who live under autocratic leaderships and dictatorships. We pray for God's compassion and mercy on them.

Thursday 16 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer We think about the extremes of weather that we have witnessed over the past few months – raging fires across many continents, catastrophic flooding, and drought that ruins harvests, and we ask that as the COP26 conference approaches, it would bring about changes in the way we look after our world. Give leaders wisdom to do the right thing and help us all to play our part where we are.

Friday 17 World Patient Safety Day Again we pray for health care personnel, surgeons etc., who have lives in their hands.

BB meets tonight, and we pray for them this session.

Saturday 18 Bible Study group meets again this morning on Zoom at 10:15am.

Sunday 19 Harvest Sunday – goods will go to the Foodbank and financial contributions to Christian Aid .

Monday 20 Please pray for **Crookston Drive, Dalfoil Court and Darvel Crescent** and all who live there.

Tuesday 21 International Day of Peace – in our troubled world Lord, we ask that You would indeed bring peace to the many nations who are at war. Help your message of hope reach many more people, and raise up leaders who will turn to you for wisdom. Be with the many peacekeepers who work in very difficult situations.

Wednesday 22 Word for Wednesday

Prayer Groups meet on Zoom and in the Manse at 7:00pm.

Bible study meets in the Manse after the prayer group at 7:45pm.

Thursday 23 International Day of Sign Languages – thank you that there is a way for people to communicate through sign language. Help us be more aware of barriers to communication.

We pray for **Yemen**, and the political situation. Pray for the humanitarian situation, the famine, corruption and ongoing conflict to end.

Friday 24 Continue to be with teachers and pupils as they are settling back into a more normal routine.

Saturday 25 At the end of another week we give thanks for your care and protection. We thank you that we can have a close relationship with you, and know that you are with us in every situation.

Sunday 26 Sonia is away today. It is still to be confirmed who will be leading our worship.

Monday 27 We start the week remembering the people who live in **Drummond Drive, Duchray Drive and Dunchurch Road**.

Tuesday 28 We pray for the local businesses around our area.

We pray for the organisations meeting in our church – tonight Brownies and Guides.

Wednesday 29 Word for Wednesday.

Prayer Groups meet at 7:00pm on Zoom and in the Manse.

39th A Brownies meet tonight when some of them will make their Brownie Promise.

Thursday 30 Pray for our own country, for our governments in Westminster and Holyrood. Ask God to give wisdom to our leaders as they seek to govern.

October, 2021

Friday 1 Pray for students who have just begun their studies recently. Pray they can study face to face, with those living away from home, those who may be anxious and with Christian students to be encouraged in their walk with you.

Saturday 2 We continue with our Bible Studies group today. Again 10.15am on Zoom.

Sunday 3 YOUTH DEDICATION SERVICE

We ask that you would bless the leaders of the organisations in St Mark's as they work with young people. We pray that their lives would show your love, and that the young folk would be interested in knowing more about you.

Monday 4 Keep praying for those who live in **Gartartan Road, Gartmore Road and Glasgow Road** this week. You may be praying for yourself and your family – and that's ok!

The **GUILD** is hoping to restart today! It will be lovely for the ladies to meet together after such a long time apart. Pray you will be with them and bless their time together.

Tuesday 5 We pray for those who are in poverty in our own country. We thank you for the work done by the Foodbank movement, but pray that there will be changes made that will make these irrelevant, and that people have sufficient money to provide for their families.

Wednesday 6 Word for Wednesday service today.

Prayer Groups meet at 7:00pm on Zoom and in the Manse.

Bible study meets at 7:45pm in the Manse.

Thursday 7 We bring before you **Syria** and refugee camps there, and all who live there. For many children this is the only life they've known. For those agencies working with the children in this situation, we ask you to help and encourage them.

Friday 8 We pray for the homeless. Pray that the initiative to house people during the

pandemic would be carried on and that there would be resources available to support them.

Continue to keep the BB leaders and young folk in your thoughts and prayers.

Saturday 9 We bring before you the ministry students, probationers and assistant ministers in the Church of Scotland, and other denominations. Be with them in their studies and encourage them as they seek to follow you.

Sunday 10 We pray for our service of worship this morning. Prepare each of us to come willing to listen to what you have to say to us. Bless Sonia in her preparation and delivery of your message.

Monday 11 Golf Drive, Hawkhead Road and Killearn Drive are the focus of our prayers this coming week.

Tuesday 12 We think of those people struggling with addiction of many kinds, of the heartache this causes to them and their families. Be with those people and help them find a new way of life in you.

Wednesday 13 Word for Wednesday service

Prayer Groups meet on Zoom and in the Manse at 7:00pm.

Thursday 14. Today we think and pray for the Democratic Republic of Congo. This land is still subject to conflict. We pray for the people of Goma and the phased return of people after the volcanic eruption in May that destroyed thousands of homes.

Friday 15 Pray for our youngsters - in church, those who live near us, and our own extended families. We ask for your protection over them as they grow up in a world where there are so many pressures on them. Help them to find their worth and value in you.

Saturday 16 Bible Study meets this morning at 10.15am.

Sunday 17 SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

Monday 18 Do take time to stop and pray each day for the following streets in our district – **Kinpurnie Road, Lanfine Road and Marchbank Gardens.**

Remember the ladies of the Guild this week, as they are now back meeting together. We ask you to bless them.

Tuesday 19 There are still countries in Europe recovering from the floods. Many people died, and many more have lost their homes. Pray for them as they try to rebuild their lives, and as their governments look at ways to protect the land in the future.

Wednesday 20 Word for Wednesday meets.

Prayer Groups meet on Zoom at 7:00pm and in the Manse .

Bible study meets in the Manse at 7:45pm.

Thursday 21 Pray for all front line services and behind the scene services that we so often take for granted – fire service, police, coast guards, refuse collectors, delivery men, cleaners, road sweepers.

Friday 22 BB meets again this evening.

Saturday 22 Thank God for times of leisure and relaxation, for the beauty we see around us and the wonder of his creations.

Sunday 24 Give thanks that we are able and free to meet in church (and online) without fear of persecution. Pray for Christians worldwide where this is not the case.

Pray for Sonia as she continues her ministry here, and bless her in her work.

Monday 25 Our streets for this last week in October are **Netherdale Drive, Newtyle Road and Newnham Road.**

Tuesday 26 Remember the 39 Brownies who meet tonight.

Wednesday 27 Word for Wednesday meets.

Prayer Groups meet on Zoom and in the Manse at 7:00.

Remember the 39th A Brownies tonight as they are having a fun party evening 😊

Thursday 28 Today, bring those you are joyful or concerned about to God in prayer. God knows all our needs and he wants us to share our joys and concerns with him.

Friday 29 We bring the **COP26 conference to you as it starts on 31 October – 12 November**. Fill the minds of the leaders with imaginative ways to tackle the issue of climate change, give them your wisdom and give them humility as they work together. Help us remember to pray for them during this time.

Saturday 30 Sonia starts a short block Bible Study on Creation/Environment on Zoom today (and every second Wednesday in the Manse).

Sunday 31

Communion Service - this morning we pray we would know your presence with us as we celebrate and remember your death for us.



