

Marksman

August/September, 2022



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



From the Manse



The last few weeks have been a little challenging for me. I caught Covid near the end of June - I knew it would probably get me eventually - and for me, the worst symptom has been the tiredness. I've had other bits of symptoms : brain fog ; headaches ; a sniffy nose ; a few hours of achiness, but the tiredness has been much worse than I anticipated, and I have had to spend a lot of time resting, and usually sleeping - even in the middle of the day. Now, as I enter into my fourth week and still feeling tired, I am glad that I am about to go on a leisurely holiday and I will have the opportunity to leave the computer behind and have a change of scene, and to forget about the clock.

As I was preparing for my last Sunday, I was faced with the text of Martha welcoming Jesus into her home, and Mary sitting at Jesus' feet. I found this reflection which I didn't use on Sunday but which I'd like to share here:

Which is the better part?

For years interpretation has sought to divide Martha and Mary determining that only one of them can be commended by our Lord, that only one way is important in the kingdom.

Yet, truth be told, we know all too well

that we need those who welcome others doing all the things necessary
to provide hospitality

as well as those

who will take time to listen, affording intimacy.

And in both women

we see the norms of the day confounded yet again,

turned on their head

by women refusing to conform.

Martha, welcoming Jesus boldly as a head of a household might.

And Mary, sitting at the Rabbi's feet, as a disciple might.

Both, in their own way contributing to the table fellowship they shared.

And, we can imagine Jesus

taking the fruits of Martha's labour:

bread still warm from the oven,

its aroma filling the room,

and sweet, heady wine,

kept for just such an occasion

and, wrapped in the adoring gaze of Mary, transforming those gifts

in the knowledge

that the portent of death

was not missed in this home.

For here were two women

who simply got it

and, together, made room for the One in whom everything made sense.

Two women who demonstrated that love does not consist in either/or

but in both/and.

Martha and Mary,
who recognised
that the kingdom was near. (*Spill the Beans* - Issue 43)

I hope and pray that you will find time this summer to sit and rest at Jesus' feet, to learn from him as Mary did, and that like poor Martha, you 'get it', and can leave your worries with the Lord, and continue to serve him, focused on him and his love, for you and for others.

Have a happy summer and may we all be refreshed and ready to go again by August.

Your friend and minister,

Sonía



But the Lord answered her,
'Martha, Martha, you are
worried and troubled about
many things ...

Worship Matters

Harvest Thanksgiving 18th September.

As usual, dried and tinned goods, cleaning products and toiletries will be gratefully received for Renfrewshire Foodbank.

Church will be open for donations Saturday 17th 10-11.30am.

Thank you.



Funerals

14th June	John (Jackie) Fotheringham
24th June	Lily Campbell, Kinpurnie Rd
18th July	James (Jim) Forson, Ben Nevis Rd

Also the death of Sandra Blane on 11th July.

Report from the Kirk Session



At the recent session meeting we were apprised of several important aspects of church life. The finance convenor reported that our finances were a bit down this year, obviously partly due to the dreaded Covid and also a reduction in Gift Aid. Many members pay their donation by direct debit and if anyone doing this method pays any form of income tax then, if they Gift Aid their donation, the church receives a 25% top up from the government at no extra cost to the donor. This may be something worth considering.

We continue to support Peter, our church worker, who provides valuable support to Sonia and who is instrumental in maintaining links with the schools and wider community.

A recent Afternoon Tea was very well received and our Dementia-friendly café is proving very successful. We have agreed to purchase a barista coffee machine and it is hoped that progress will be made in our plans for a café.

We have had new lighting fitted in the sanctuary and grateful thanks are due to Andy Grant and Jok Everett for installing them. They are brighter and much more efficient to run.

Clyde presbytery is planning to reduce the number of full time ministers in our area and there is talk of mergers. It is vitally important that we continue to enhance our involvement with the local community to make St. Mark's a vital community hub for many groups as well as a centre of Christian worship.



Colin Reid, Session Clerk

Church Choir

Church Choir will resume on Thursday 8th September 2022 in the Session House from 7-8pm. All new members are welcome and the ability to read music is not required. A good sense of humour, patience and tolerance are all essential. You do not have to attend every week as we rehearse musical items for the church services in advance thanks to Sonia's forward planning of Bible readings and service themes. Please do come and speak to me or any choir member for more information. Or just come along and give it a try.

Research has shown that singing can be good for you on many levels. **It may help lower stress, boost immunity and lung function, enhance memory, improve mental health, and help you cope with physical and emotional pain.** One of the best things about singing is that you don't have to be good at it to reap the rewards.

Plus you are worshipping God at the same time so it is a win win.

Thanks.

Dawn Hope



Green Team

Care for creation is at the heart of the Eco-Congregation movement. “The earth is the Lord’s” declares the psalmist (Psalm 24:1). It is God’s creation, not ours to do with as we please. In the Biblical creation stories God subordinates rule over creation to humans to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:26-28).

But in doing so God lays on human beings the responsibility for how we manage the earth and every living creature, in ways consistent with the ways of the Owner, to whom we will have to give account. This expresses the now familiar notion of stewardship or trusteeship. (Genesis 2:15) We are also called to be partners with the rest of creation and co-partners in the ongoing creative and renewing activity of God. In caring for what God has created, we care for ourselves, because in God’s providence and wisdom our flourishing is dependent on the flourishing of creation. To care for what God has created is therefore also to care for each other, and especially for the poor and vulnerable.

Ideas for Action

Have you ever thought about calculating your own carbon footprint?
Or calculating how much carbon you use by your car travel?
Or save by using the bus or train?

Handy online calculators are available on the Eco-congregation website :
<http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/carbon-footprint-calculator/>

Why not have a go - you might be surprised - or shocked!



Ink Cartridges

Following the purchase of a new printer, I have surplus cartridges for our previous model, which I am happy to pass on to anyone who can use them.

Canon Pixma 570 (Black) and various 571 (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black). These are a variety of Canon and Cartridge People own brand.

Please contact **Sheena Tonner** if interested.

Additionally, Sonia has some Epson 29 and Epson 590/1 cartridges which she does not require.

Please contact **Sonia** directly if you would like any of these.

39th Paisley Brownies (Tuesday)

We finished our year with a joint evening with the Tuesday Rainbows to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Sonia and our two visiting Elders, Margaret Currie and Simone Smith, joined us for the evening.



On arrival, the Rainbows and Brownies decorated Postcards from the Palace, Jubilee Bookmarks and decorated crowns for the occasion.



They were then sorted into groups to undertake a Scavenger Hunt in the Sanctuary, looking for coloured pictures which they then had to match up with clues about the Queen's life. Lots of nimble running helped Margaret Currie's team win. We were all winners though as we learned facts about the Queen, from her military service to her love of animals (especially Corgis and Elephants).

Ice-cream and jelly followed as the parents mustered in the large hall awaiting the presentation of awards and badges. Sonia started the proceedings by showing the Rainbows and Brownies her bible, which she had received as a Queen's Guide.

We were delighted to present 7 Rainbows with a *Welcome to our Pack* certificate and a *Welcome to Brownies* badge, and we look forward to seeing them at the end of August.



The Brownies themselves were awarded their Interest Badges, Skills Builders and Theme Badges – well earned and well deserved. Sonia kindly presented these on our behalf. The girls also received a Platinum Jubilee Badge, and we were delighted to present Sonia with a GirlGuiding Platinum Badge too.

We also awarded four Brownies a gift to thank them for being kind, helpful, supportive and always willing to do that extra wee bit. These were well received, and will hopefully also be an encouragement to the other Brownies. We have no Brownies due to go to Guides this year, but there are several Rainbows due to join us, so that will swell our numbers for next term. We will still have space if you are aware of any other young ladies who might like to come and join in the fun.

Brownies will resume at the end of August for our new starts, and the first week in September for the whole Unit.

Sheena Tonner, Brownie Leader

39thA Paisley Brownies

The 2021 – 2022 session finished “with a bang”.

At the beginning of June, 14 excited Brownies and 4 equally excited[??] leaders headed to PGL Outdoor Centre in Perthshire. The weather was reasonably kind and we had a great weekend. For many of the Brownies it was their first time away from home [and certainly for 2 nights!] – and I think this concerned the parents more than the girls!! They had great fun!!

What a shock they had when they arrived and found they had to make their way to the accommodation [uphill] carrying their own luggage. I do not think they had believed us when we warned them beforehand. The weekend was action packed – 2 activities on Saturday morning, 2 in the afternoon and campfire at night. There were a few girls who wished they had slept more on Friday night!! Sunday was similarly busy with 2 activities in the morning and a further 2 in the afternoon. Are you surprised there were a few Brownies asleep on the bus home?

The activities were varied and included some team building sessions, some basic orienteering, tree-climbing, archery, giant swing [including lots of squealing!!] and a fun burn walk.



Our final meeting of the year allowed us to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. We were delighted to welcome Sonia and our visiting elders, Eileen Wilkie and Irene Boyd. All 3 of our guests threw themselves into helping the girls with the activities. The Brownies made crowns with sparkly jewels, chalk ‘cameo’ pictures of the Queen, re-usable Union Jack ‘party poppers’, played ‘royal themed’ games and even got Union Jack tattoos!



The Parents of the Brownies had all been invited to join us towards the end of the meeting to see a photo presentation to show many activities from throughout the session. We then presented the final badges of the session.



First Aid – Stage 2

Annarosa, Beth, Charlotte, Daisy Mac, Emily, Evie, Grier, Jenny, Jessica L, Jessica M, Joanna, Juliette, Katie,

Lauren I, Lauren S, Phoebe, Ruyi, Sophie, Sydney, Zoe, Lexi

Feel Good - Stage 2

Darcy, Ellie, Helena, Meiyee

Be Well Theme Award

Beth, Charlotte, Daisy Mac, Daisy Mast, Darcy, Elie, Jenny, Jessica M, Katie, Lauren I, Phoebe, Ruyi

Section Awards

Bronze – Daisy Mac, Jenny

Silver – Ellie

Gold – Meiyee This is first Gold Award that has been achieved in the Pack.

Best Six Award – Elves – Darcy, Helena, Phoebe, Jenny, Ruyi

We finally presented gifts to 7 girls who have completed their Brownie Adventure and are now moving on. Best of luck to Annarosa, Daisy C, Darcy, Ellie, Grier, Helena and Meiyee.

We were even able to award a volunteering award to one of our helpers. Emily has completed 50 hours of volunteering and received her Saltire Award. Well done and thank you Emily from us all!

As always, none of this would be possible if it were not for the hard-working, dedicated leadership team. A big thank you to them all – have a restful summer and hopefully be refreshed for new session in September. Planning has begun!

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

Prayer Groups



Our new session for our Prayer groups starts on Wednesday 17 August. We will continue to run on Zoom as well as face to face. Instead of meeting in the manse this group will meet in the Session Room.(hopefully) Both meetings start at 7:00pm and last about half an hour.

Everyone is welcome to join either meeting, and if you've been thinking about it, but haven't quite gotten round to coming, why not give it a go this year.

Bible Study Groups

Again, these will continue as before, with the Zoom meeting on Saturday mornings, starting on 3 September at 10:15/10:30 a.m., and the face to face meeting will take place just after the Prayer Group meeting, around 7:45 p.m. on the following Wednesdays, starting 7 September, in the Session Room(hopefully).

The study this time round will be from 1 & 2 Peter and Jude, looking at how we mature in our faith.

Again, all are welcome and we would encourage you to 'have a go'. If you aren't too sure about what this entails, please ask Sonia, ourselves, or any of the folk you know who attend. Times and dates laid out below. Please don't feel you have to attend every week.

Irene and Bob Pollock

Month	Zoom Bible Study Group Dates 10:15/10:30 a.m. SATURDAY	Zoom and Church Prayer Group Dates 7:00 p.m. WEDNESDAY	Church Bible Study Group Dates 7:45 p.m. WEDNESDAY
August	None	17 th , 24 th 31 st	None
September	3 rd , 17 th	7 th 14 th , 21 st , 28 th	7 th , 21 st
October	1 st , 15 th , 29 th	5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th	5 th , 19 th
November	12 th 26 th	2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th	2 nd , 16 th , 30 th
December	10 th ,	7 th , 14 th , 21 st tbc	14 th
January	14 th , 28 th	11 th , 18 th , 25 th	18 th ,
February	11 th , 25 th	1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd	1 st , 15 th ,
March	11 th , 25 th	1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th	1 st , 15 th , 29 th ,
April	15 th , 29 th	12 th , 19 th , 26 th	19 th ,
May	13 th , 27 th	3 rd , 10 th , 17 th , 24 th , 31 st	3 rd , 17 th , 31 st
June	10 th , 24 th	7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th	14 th , 28 th

Prayer Guide



		AUG, 2022
		NO MID WEEK SERVICES THIS MONTH. THEY RESUME IN OCTOBER.
Mon	1	First streets up for prayer this month are Golf Drive, Hawkhead Road, and Killearn Drive. We pray for all those who feel ISOLATED. May they know God's presence.
Tue	2	Today we remember the Presbytery and our Presbytery elder, Sandy, and discussions and meetings that will take place over the next wee while.
Wed	3	Coffee Morning this morning 10:30. Pray for all who meet there.
Thu	4	Pray for our local community, shopkeepers and businesses.
Fri	5	Pray for all those who care for others – many unpaid Carers who work tirelessly to look after relatives. May they get opportunities to have a rest and be refreshed.
Sat	6	Pray for our Pastoral Committee as they plan for the next session and look for ways to support those in our congregation.
Sun	7	As Sonia leads worship today, may she know your presence and guidance with her.
Mon	8	Pray for the following streets – Kinpurnie Road, Lanfine Road and Marchbank Gardens and for those who are especially JOYFUL this week. Bring joy to those who are feeling low. Pray for The Junction that will meet this week and the young folk who will come along each day.
Tue	9	International Youth Day. Pray for any young people you have contact with, and ask God to bless them and help them find their worth in Him. Pray for The Junction today.
Wed	10	Pray for our Green Committee Group as they look for ways to take care of our grounds and ways of reducing, recycling and reusing. Pray for The Junction today that you will bless the work being done.
Thu	11	Dementia-Friendly Café this afternoon from 2:00 – 4:00pm. We ask that all who attend can find friendship and be able to relax and share with one another. Pray for The Junction today that they have been enjoying their time together,
Fri	12	Pray for the emergency services who are under stress – for ambulance workers and paramedics, coast guard and lifeboat crews, police and fire fighters and keep them safe as they help others. The Junction finishes today. We pray that each day has been fun and the youngsters have learned more about Jesus as they've met and played together.
Sat	13	Pray for the Strawberry Extravaganza happening today that there will be a good turn out of people from the community.
Sun	14	"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity." Unite us as we worship you this morning.
Mon	15	Our prayers this week surround those in Netherdale Drive, Newtyle Road and Newnham Road. Help them be KIND to their neighbours and help us who live there show KINDNESS to others.
Tue	16	Schools open today. Pray for staff and pupils that they have a good, settled year.
Wed	17	First Prayer groups meet tonight. We are still offering a Zoom group at 7:00pm as well as a face to face group which will be held in the church. This will, hopefully, be in the Session Room.
Thu	18	We pray for local government and ask for honesty and integrity in delivering the best for all.
Fri	19	Be with those who do the menial tasks in our society and who are often taken for granted – refuse collectors, road sweepers, sewage workers etc., Give thanks we have these services and remember places throughout the world where they don't have them.
Sat	20	Pray for our Finance Committee as they are charged with looking after our finances. Thank you for their integrity and knowledge.



Prayer Guide

		AUG, 2022
Sun	21	As we gather today, help us have open hearts to what you have to say to us. Be with Sonia in her preparation and delivery of your word. Today is International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism. We remember the many families throughout the world who have been traumatised through acts of terrorism and pray you would bring healing.
Mon	22	Many are LONELY in our streets this week so pray for those in Oldhall Road, Ossian Road and Penilee Road who are maybe feeling this way.
Tue	23	Kirk Session tonight. Our prayer is that God's Spirit would be present and guide and direct discussions and decisions.
Wed	24	Weekly prayer groups on Zoom and in the Session House at 7:00pm.
Thu	25	We pray for national governments and the decisions being made currently which will affect us all.
Fri	26	We pray for our Worship Team as they support Sonia in her ministry here. Bless them in their work and encourage them in their walk with you.
Sat	27	Messy Church this afternoon – pray for all families that come along.
Sun	28	Be with Sonia as she brings your word to us. Help us be receptive and to worship you as we ought.
Mon	29	It's the turn of MUMS in Ralston Avenue, Roffey Park Road and Rosshall Avenue for us to remember them in prayer. Young mums, new mums, well worn mums. Give thanks for all they do.
Tue	30	Pray for the 39 Brownies as they meet for an Induction evening and for their leaders. Throughout our world there are many countries where people disappear' we bring before you those who have been forced to disappear and ask that you would restore them safely to their families.
Wed	31	Pray especially for 39A Brownies' Leaders' planning meeting tonight. Guide them as they look forward to this next year with the youngsters. Prayer groups meet on Zoom and in the Session House at 7:00pm





The Church of Scotland

The Church of Scotland joined a group of international faith communities calling the first Meeting of the States Parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) held in Vienna last month "a glimmer of light and hope" in a step towards global nuclear disarmament.

"Russia's invasion of Ukraine has shown how fragile Europe's peace and security is," Rev. Karen Hendry, acting convener of the Church of Scotland's Faith Impact Forum, said. "At this time of conflict and threat, we need to push harder than ever for alternatives for peace. The Treaty is a step in the direction for a world free of nuclear weapons, and where the huge sums of money which are spent on them can be diverted to help those in greatest need."

This statement says:

"As faith communities from a diversity of traditions and located all over the world, we join together with one voice to mark this first Meeting of States Parties (MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). We welcome this historic occasion and celebrate this milestone that moves us closer to a world without nuclear weapons.

"We gather at a time when the threat of nuclear annihilation feels closer than before. So many more of us suffer from anxiety in response to the increasing threats by nuclear armed states. In the face of these urgent existential threats, we are more determined than ever to abolish nuclear weapons.

"We are acutely aware of the threats facing humanity and our beloved planet. From the devastating impacts of a global pandemic to the rising threat of climate catastrophe, the stakes for life on earth have never felt higher.

"Our faith traditions call us to denounce this misuse of resources and to call for greater international cooperation to end nuclear weapons forever. Nuclear weapons are a tool of domination and violent coercion in a time when we urgently need to prioritize human security. Our religious and spiritual traditions uphold an ethos of mutual aid, care for the stranger and trust in the community."

For over 30 years the Church of Scotland has consistently condemned the existence and threat of nuclear weapons as sinful and an offence to God's created order. With other churches in Scotland, the United Kingdom and around the world we have campaigned for disarmament and urged the countries that possess nuclear weapons to abide by their international treaty obligations and work together for a world free of nuclear weapons.





General Assembly 2022

- **Final approval for Church of Scotland ministers to officiate same sex marriages**
- **Help for ministers in fuel poverty**
- **Historic Declaration of Friendship with Catholic Church in Scotland**
- **Presbytery mergers agreed**
- **Further reforms to central Church**
- **Westminster Confession of Faith retained as subordinate standard, alongside new Book of Confessions**



SAME SEX MARRIAGE

The General Assembly gave final approval to the legislation that will allow Kirk ministers to register to become celebrants of same sex marriages if they wish.

In the debate, holders of the traditional view that marriage should be between a man and a woman continued to argue that same sex marriages are unscriptural. The Rev.

Scott W Burton said the position against same sex marriage was 'about a faith that says it's more important to be in line with God and his Word than what my community,

my nation or my world might say otherwise'.

The Rev. Philip Gunn said: "Quite simply put, this overture is not biblical and we see the scriptures, old and new, that point to God's teaching on marriage and human sexuality."

In response to a question on whether the church would financially support a minister who was taken to court over refusing to officiate a same sex marriage, Procurator, Laura Dunlop QC said that she considered the protections built into the scheme, under which ministers are legally banned from

officiating same sex weddings unless they 'opt in', to be sufficient.

The legislation was drawn up by the Legal Questions Committee in response to an instruction of the General Assembly of 2018. Delayed due to the cancellation of the 2020 Assembly, it was approved last year, and by a majority of presbyteries under the Barrier Act.

Urging the Assembly to approve the proposals, the Rev. Craig Dobney said: "I have seen the heartbreak of those in same sex relationships in our congregations who are unable to marry in their home church, devout Christians though they are. To be married in front of their church

families would mean everything to them.”

And the Rev. Dr Lezley Stewart pointed out that the debate had been going on for years, and at every point the church had continued its trajectory towards allowing same sex marriage. “It’s General Assembly 2022 and we need to take account of that collective voice over many years,” she added.

The Assembly passed the Act by 274 to 136.

Later in the week, there was a question about an amendment to the Marriage

Services Act resulting from the decision. The Rev. Michael Weaver said there was concern among ministers holding the traditional position about the removal of the words ‘husband and wife’.

Mrs Dunlop said that the inclusive language contained in the Act, which meets the legal requirements for the solemnisation of marriage, did not preclude the use of additional wording.

MINISTERS AND FUEL POVERTY

The Assembly voted to introduce a scheme to support parish ministers facing hardship due to rising energy prices.

On the opening day of the General Assembly, ministers spoke of deciding not to put the heating on in winter, only heating one room of the manse, or even skipping meals as the cost of heating large, often old and poorly-insulated buildings rises by thousands of pounds.

The Rev. Iain Majcher said he feared for his family this winter. The Rev. Peter Johnston said that he and his wife had already turned the heating off last winter, and had still faced a monthly direct debit of £572. The Rev. Bryan Kerr said that while Church of Scotland ministers were not poor, worries about fuel bills were, for many, ‘overtaking their ability to minister’.

Later in the week, the General Trustees accepted new measures aimed at making sure manses are energy efficient.

Congregations were instructed to provide an Energy Performance Certificate with the Manse Condition Schedule from the end of this year, and to ensure the Energy

Performance Rating for the manse is within categories A-C by 2025 – either by making improvements or by replacing the manse.

CHURCH REFORMS

The Assembly heard several reminders of the need to keep up the pace of reforms.

The Very Rev. Dr John Chalmers, Convener of the Assembly Trustees, said in his speech: “The task remains redesigning the architecture of the whole system in order to build a Church of Scotland which is relevant and fit for purpose.”

And the Rev. Rosie Frew, convener of the Faith Nurture Forum, acknowledged there had been pain over the past year as the Church grappled with Presbytery restructuring and Presbytery Mission

Planning, but said: “We’re currently living in an in-between world – in between an old system and a new system. It’s like being in a chrysalis, a dark and difficult place of transformation before the beauty of the butterfly emerges.”

The Assembly agreed further reform of the central structures, under which the work of the Faith Nurture and Faith Impact Forums will be brought together under a single Active Faith Leadership Team with four Programme Groups: Mission, People & Training, Public Life & Global Justice, and Resource & Presence.

The process of merging presbyteries continued as the General Assembly approved the creation of four new presbyteries: Lothian and the Borders (merging Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian and Melrose & Peebles), Perth (merging Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meikle, Perth and Stirling), Forth Valley & Clydesdale (Falkirk joining the existing presbytery of that name) and the North East and Northern Isles (merging Aberdeen & Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, Kincardine & Deeside, Orkney and Moray).

Proposed arrangements for a Pioneer Mission Fund and the Seeds for Growth Fund, which will support the establishment of new worshipping communities and work with the under 40s, were also passed.

DECLARATION OF FRIENDSHIP



The General Assembly overwhelmingly approved a Declaration of Friendship with the Catholic Church in Scotland.

In the Declaration, to be named the Saint Margaret Declaration, the two Churches ‘recognise each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, and wish to express our friendship and respect for one another as fellow Christians, citizens and partners in announcing the Kingdom of God in our land’.

The Rev. Sandy Horsburgh, convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee, said that friendship was ‘a key biblical concept’.

He added: “Friendship is a very deep relationship, a relationship of conscious and deliberate choice, in which individuality is respected and there is room for disagreement, but a relationship in which we stand alongside one another, support one another, rejoice together and weep together, pray for and with each other, and do things together.

“We regret that our two churches have not always been friends, that we have not always recognised one another as children of God in Christ, because we should have done. We recognise our need for repentance and forgiveness for the hurts and harms we have caused one another. In making this Declaration of Friendship, we are decisively and deliberately putting these things behind us.”

Archbishop Leo Cushley, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, told the Assembly that the Declaration meant that the two churches ‘stand shoulder to shoulder before an unbelieving world’. He added: “By acknowledging all the good we hold in common, we can walk and pray together as friends, deepen our affective unity and be a more authentic Christian witness in the land.”

The title Saint Margaret Declaration was proposed by the Rev. Dr Grant Barclay, who said that St Margaret, the 11th century Queen of Scotland, was 'a figure of unity in political and church life in our nation', and closely associated with Scotland's newest city, Dunfermline. The suggestion was warmly welcomed by Archbishop Cushley and the Moderator, minister of Dunfermline: St Margaret's Church.

BOOK OF CONFESSIONS

The Assembly agreed to the creation of a new Book of Confessions, retaining the Westminster Confession of Faith as a subordinate standard of the Church, but adding other confessions that 'express the range and depth of Reformed thought'; and the preparation of teaching materials on the confessional position of the Church and the vows of office holders.

Convener of the Theological Forum, the Rev. Dr Liam Fraser, told the Assembly that the reforms would mean Church office holders who disagree with the Westminster Confession would no longer have to subscribe to it; that those for whom the Confession is important could be reassured that it was being retained as a subordinate standard; and that the new teaching resources would ensure that 'the Reformed identity of the Church of Scotland will be maintained'. He added that it would 'resolve a disagreement over the role of the Westminster Confession that has continued for centuries, allowing us to move on to other pressing matters'.

The Rev. Mike Goss, who admitted he had been 'deeply suspicious' of the proposals for reform of the Church's confessional position, praised the proposals. He said: "I think the work that has been done to try to do something coherent that could be assented to by the whole church and gives us a confessional basis is to be welcomed... I am also hugely grateful for the emphasis on education, training and learning. All of this can only be deeply helpful."

CHAPLAINCY PRAISE

In a sometimes emotional session, the convener of the Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces recalled praying with a bereaved refugee

while she was serving as a chaplain.

The Rev. Dr Marjory MacLean said that in 2016 she had been on the Navy vessel HMS Enterprise as it rescued migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean from Libya.



She said: "On that unforgettable day, with over 700 migrants squeezed onto our quarterdeck, we discovered that two women had died in the lower layer of humanity crammed two deep onto one of the inflatable craft. Each of the two was travelling with family members who were distraught. The sister of one of these ladies was an East African woman, French-speaking and wearing a wooden cross round her neck..."

"I extemporised a prayer, with my young colleague at my shoulder translating as best he could. And then, suddenly, the sorrowing figure took a breath and began to pray; desolate, lamenting prayer, desperate, fast prayer, too fast for the young lieutenant beside me to keep up with the translation. He looked at me in panic, and I waved him away. It didn't matter to me what she was saying; she was praying now her own sorrow and need, and I only needed to keep holding her hands."

As is customary on 'Chaplains' Day', the General Assembly was addressed by a senior member of the British military.

Lieutenant General Nick Borton, Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, said the Chaplains Department have 'a long and glorious history of providing pastoral care, spiritual support and moral guidance'.

KEY DECISIONS AND SPEECHES

- The General Assembly condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, calling for an immediate ceasefire and 'just and peaceful solution'.

- The Faith Impact Forum introduced work on a Jewish-Christian glossary intended to aid understanding between the two faiths. Rabbi David Mason, who is working with the Forum on the glossary, said it offered a way that the two communities can express opinions without offending each other. "Harmony doesn't mean we will agree, it means we will disagree well. There is no attempt to change the other, just to understand the other in a deeper way."
- The chair of Christian Aid, Archbishop John Sentamu, challenged the Church not to resist change, and to continue its work in challenging poverty. He said: "The harvest is ripe and you as a national church have the greatest delight to make Jesus Christ visible and known in many different places, tackling poverty, and always rejoicing that He who called you is faithful."
- The outgoing Principal Clerk, the Rev. Dr George Whyte, urged the Church of Scotland to show humility and listen to others. He said: "Any group which lacks humility doesn't listen... either to the God who might have new plans, or to the neighbour who might have new needs, new questions or - heaven forbid - new insights."
- The Rev. Fiona Smith was sworn in as Dr Whyte's replacement, becoming the first woman to hold the role permanently.
- Professor Jason Leitch, the Scottish Government's National Clinical Director, thanked the Church for everything it had done during the pandemic: "Whether you run the tiniest church in Scotland or one of the largest fellowships, the work you've done for those you serve has been absolutely without precedent."
- The Assembly agreed to recognise the 'terrible harm' caused under Scotland's historic witchcraft laws and to apologise for the role of the Church in persecuting victims.
- The convener of the Social Care Council (CrossReach), the Rev. Thom Riddell, said that 'thousands of lives have continued to be transformed over the past year' by CrossReach services. He urged the Assembly to make their voices heard as the Scottish Government presents

legislation for a National Care Service in coming weeks.

- During the report of the Iona Community, there was applause for the musician and worship leader John Bell, who retires later this year.
- The General Trustees encouraged Commissioners to write to their MSPs to protest against new rules which will require church office bearers to be named on the Land Register.
- Members of the Church were urged to put themselves forward to serve on the national committees. Convener of the Nominations Committee, the Rev. Julie Rennick said: "If you haven't taken that step yet, please consider it... it's not just a privilege, it's often enjoyable too."
- The National Convener of the Church of Scotland Guild, Margaret Muir, said the last two years have proved the movement is 'not afraid of challenge or change'. She said: "If you had asked what would happen to the Guild if a global pandemic closed everything down for 18 months not many people would have thought we would survive, but survive we have."
- The Lord High Commissioner, Lord Hodge, said that the week had given him 'a strong sense of the energy and vibrancy of initiatives being taken at a local level' across Scotland.
- The Moderator, the Rt Rev. Iain Greenshields, praised the Assembly's willingness to work together to find a way forward through difficult debates. "If the Church is to do anything it has to work together on mission," he said, "And it has to work together to bring Christ to the people and the people to Christ, and surely that is our greatest privilege."

Words by Thomas Baldwin ; Pictures by Andrew O'Brien for the Church of Scotland

**Life and Work, Church of Scotland, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN
Scottish charity number SC011353**

**Original version may be accessed at :
<https://www.lifeandwork.org/resources/general-assembly-2022-special-supplement>**

Peter's News

It has been another busy couple of months with lots of things going on.

Schools Work

It was great to be able to welcome the Primary 7 pupils down to the church on a number of occasions to practise for their end of term service. Then, on the last day of the school term we were able to welcome the pupils, teachers, parents and friends of Ralston Primary to the P1-3 Summer Service and then the P7 Leavers' Service. It was wonderful to be able to host these service after two years when the school was not able to come down to the church.

During the P1-3 service we were looking at Psalm 139 and how we are all wonderfully made. We did this by talking about *Build a Bear* workshop and building a Lego model where you see everything that is in your bear or model. The service also included a couple of P3 pupils doing the readings and the P6s playing their violins.

I look forward to after the summer holidays when Sonia and I will go into the school to take regular assemblies.



Messy Church

We have had a couple of *Messy Church* events since the last magazine and they have been well attended. We have looked at the stories of Moses and him leading the Israelites out of Egypt and also talking about the time of the Judges and the story of Gideon. During *Messy Church* we have been working our way through the Old Testament and the history of the church.

We will be running *Messy Church* in July and have a games day. We will then be on the 27th August, the 24th September, the 29th October and the 26th November.

The Junction

We are going to run *The Junction* from the 8th to 12th August for anybody in P6 to S3. The last time we ran it we had about 30 young people coming along each night. The young people will have the chance to play pool, table tennis, table football, air hockey, and other table top games. There will be some consoles for them to play as well as some craft activities to do. We will also have some large group games where everybody can be involved together.

The Junction is just a place for the young people to come and spend time with their friends and have fun in the church. There will be flyers in the church if you know or any family or neighbours who might be interested in coming along.

I am looking forward to the summer and getting organised for the new session after the summer.

Many thanks for all your support.

Peter

Prayer Guide

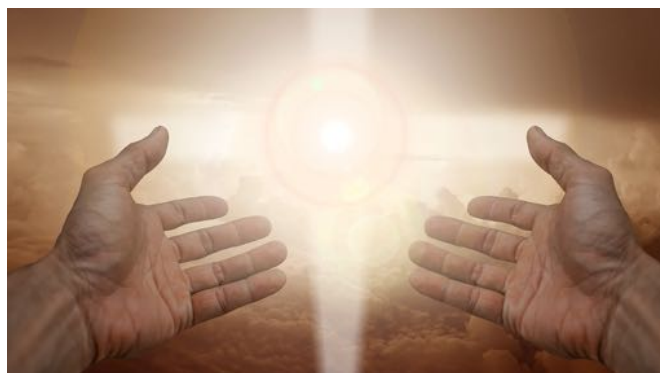


		SEP, 2022
		NO MID WEEK SERVICES THIS MONTH. THEY RESUME IN OCTOBER.
Thu	1	World Day of Prayer for Care for Creation. We pray for countries where there has been devastation due to natural disaster, famine, flooding etc., and where man has played a part in climate change. Help us to do our bit to care for your creation.
Fri	2	Give thanks for our Property Committee and all the work they do to ensure our safety and comfort in our building.
Sat	3	Our first Bible Study of the year meets today, again on Zoom at 10:15/10:30am. All welcome. Contact irene.pollock03@gmail.com for link. More details in this <i>Marksman</i> edition.
Sun	4	Remember Peter as he prepares for and leads our service today. We pray for all those heading off to the Holy Land today, and ask that their time there is reflective and enjoyable, and that you will bless their time together. We pray for safe travel and protection.
Mon	5	Pray for decisions made today in the election of a new Conservative Leader and Prime Minister. We ask that the person would look to you for guidance and wisdom. NEIGHBOURS. Every street has them. Pray for all those in Rotherwick Drive, School Road and Southwold Road.
Tue	6	First time 39th Brownies meet tonight. Remember them in your prayers as they join together.
Wed	7	First meeting of the 39A Brownies tonight. We pray they will have a great time as they meet together and welcome new members. Rainbows start back this evening too, so remember them also in your prayers. Prayer groups on Zoom and in church at 7:00pm, with Bible Study group meeting at about 7:45pm in Session Room. All are welcome.
Thu	8	This is International Literacy Day. Pray that people world-wide would be given access to education and help to become literate, and give thanks for this basic right which we enjoy here.
Fri	9	Give thanks for each of the organisations that function in St Mark's. Give thanks for the leaders and children or young people who attend, and bless the work they're doing.
Sat	10	Today is Clyde Presbytery Mission Conference. We pray for those leading it and those attending.
Sun	11	Be with Jack as he leads us in worship this morning. May we come ready to hear what you have to say to us today.
Mon	12	In our prayers this week we remember OLDER FOLK who live in Springfield Avenue, Strathmore Avenue and Tylney Road. Pray for a safe return for all those away to the Holy Land.
Tue	13	Give thanks for our Flower team ministry, both for us to enjoy in the sanctuary and as they go to people who are unwell, housebound or celebrating milestone events.
Wed	14	Coffee morning from 10:30am. Prayer groups meet at 7:00pm on Zoom and in the Session Room.
Thu	15	We bring before you those countries where war and conflict continues – Ukraine and Russia, The Yemen, Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan and more recently the situation in Sri Lanka. Dementia-Friendly Café on this afternoon and all are welcome – 2:00 – 4:00 pm.
Fri	16	Pray for the Guild committee and members who will attend this coming session and be with them in their planning.
Sat	17	Blair Drummond Park is the venue for 18 Brownies and 3 Leaders who are attending a Scottish Guiding event so pray for them. World Patient Safety Day – pray for countries where they have little or poor health care. Pray for our own country where the NHS is creaking at the seams. Bible Study this morning at 10:15/10:30 – 11:30am on Zoom .



Prayer Guide

		SEP, 2022
Sun	18	Harvest Service this morning. Give thanks as we celebrate the goodness of God towards us in so many ways, and the luxury of choice that we have. Remember those less fortunate.
Mon	19	Pray for Woodend Drive and those outside the district and think especially of those who are PARENTS. May God bless them as they bring up their children.
Tue	20	We pray for all the Elders in St Mark's as they serve God here.
Wed	21	World Day of Peace. Pray that God, in his compassion, would hear our prayers and peace would be restored to homes, lives and countries through people finding him and following his ways. Zoom Prayer group 7:00pm. Prayer group in session room at 7:00pm, followed by Bible Study at 7:45pm.
Thu	22	We thank you for agencies and charities who help provide toilets and water aid to countries that are struggling.
Fri	23	We pray for the leaders and youngsters of the BB and Anchor Boys in their new session. Be with their leaders as they plan and prepare each week. May the youngsters learn more of God's love for them.
Sat	24	Be with all who come along to <i>Messy Church</i> this afternoon and with the leaders and helpers. Bless their time together.
Sun	25	Pray that we will come to church ready to worship and to receive God's message for us this morning, grateful for the freedom to do so. Be with Eileen as she leads us.
Mon	26	We think of those who live QUIET lives in Allanton Road, Alton Road and Atholl Crescent. Sometimes quiet people can become invisible. Help us not to overlook people.
Tue	27	Thank you for the people who clean our church building and make it a pleasant place to worship and meet in. Help them know they are appreciated.
Wed	28	Pray for Hedwig's last night at 39A Brownies as she goes on Maternity leave 😊 Prayer groups on Zoom and in the Session room at 7:00pm.
Thu	29	We pray for the Local Mission Groups that meet within the presbytery and for Eileen Wilkie and Peter Blair who are part of this group.
Fri	30	We pray for Fiona in the office and for all the administration work done to keep things running smoothly. Give God thanks for her skills.





Flowers in Church

07.08.22	Mrs W Browning
14.08.22	Mrs N Macgregor
21.08.22	Mrs J Bradley
28.08.22	Mrs A Fisher
04.09.22	Mrs K Sheils
11.09.22	Mrs K McLauchlan
18.09.22	Mrs D Grant
25.09.22	BB Coy Section

Ladies Delivering Flowers

07.08.22	Mrs J Dempster	
14.08.22	Mrs I Pollock	
21.08.22	Mrs M Robin	
28.08.22	Mrs D Grant	Mrs M Adam
04.09.22	Miss I Higgins	
11.09.22	Mrs S Tonner	
18.09.22		
25.09.22	Mr I Kinloch	Mrs C Kinloch



Let's do
Lunch!

save
the date!

Ladies Buffet Lunch and Fashion Show

Due to demand, the Ladies lunch and fashion show is returning. Again this fund-raiser for the Church will be held at Ralston Bowling Club.

The date to pop in your diary is Saturday 5th November. There will be some lovely food followed by a fashion show. After that, there will be the opportunity to buy the clothes shown at discount prices.

I will be happy to receive any donations for a raffle that will be held on the day. I am also looking for gift bags to help with the organisation of the raffle.

Watch out for an intimation of when the tickets will be available. .

Why not organise a group of friends to join you for a fun afternoon?

Any questions and prize donations will be welcomed by **Christine Hair** or can be handed into the Office.



Monthly Bake Sale



The Bake Sale, with a variety of home baked goods, will resume in the Corrie Road Vestibule starting 4 September, and thereafter the first Sunday of each month. Everyone welcome.

If anyone would like to contribute to the baking, including jams, pickles, etc. please let **Liz Morgan** or **Sheena Tonner** know. Contributors are reminded of the need to clearly list allergens to comply with Food Legislation. A copy of "Home Baking Food Hygiene Guidance" is available on request.

Orders for meringues will be taken a week ahead of the sale so that Liz can have these boxed up in advance.

Dementia-Friendly Café



The Dementia-Friendly Café runs on Thursday afternoons every four weeks from 2-4 pm. It is a friendly and safe environment where people can pop in for a chat and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and some delicious baking.



It is open to anyone who is living with dementia, including their families and friends, and support is available for anyone looking for advice. Why not come along and experience it for yourself?

The next café will be on **Thursday 11th August**. Looking forward to seeing you there!



Pastoral Afternoon Tea

June 23rd saw us holding our first Pastoral Afternoon Tea for two and a half years.

It was wonderful to see everyone again as we celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The hall was suitably decorated with red, white and blue bunting and Commonwealth flags. The tables were laden with goodies popular in the 1950s.

Throughout the afternoon, scenes from the Queen's life were shown, followed by a video of the Trooping of the Colour.

No afternoon would be complete without a singalong including songs from 1952. We even had a visit from the doggie, made famous in the song "How much is that doggie in the window?". For many, the highlight of the afternoon was meeting up with old friends they had not seen for such a long time.

A big "thank you" goes to everyone who helped in any way to make the afternoon such a success.



Elizabeth Macdonald



Super
Strawberry
Saturday



Teas, Tarts and Coffees



Sat 13th Aug
10am to 12 Noon
On the church
lawns
Inside if wet



Please send articles for the *Marksman*
to the editor at :
marksman@stmarksoldhall.org.uk

Contribution deadline for Aug/Sep
edition : **12 noon, 22 September, 2022.**

