

The Country Link



Kelso
Country
Churches

~~~~~May/June, 2021

Dear Friends

Church has reopened again for in-person worship though we have been open throughout the last year but online. It is good to be together again in one space worshipping though it is strange not to be able to sing together or have fellowship together over a cup of tea. Hopefully it won't be too long before we can do these things again.

Soon we celebrate Pentecost together, the coming of the Holy Spirit onto the followers of Jesus and what is marked as really the beginning of the church. The church was founded at Pentecost by the blessing of God's Spirit.

Everything changed at Pentecost. Everything changed with the coming of the power of the Holy Spirit -

**'When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there.'**  
**Acts 2.1-3**

We are gathered together once more in one place. And the Holy Spirit moves amongst us. Everything is different for us now as everything was different for those 120 believers in Jesus who gathered together often to pray and worship.

Everything is different in our lives because of the pandemic and we know things can't go back to the way that they were before.

Everything is different in the lives of the followers of Jesus because of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

It is time for us a society to reflect on the changes that have taken place in the last year and what things we would like to see return. Much is changing in our church locally and nationally and these will be discussed at the online General Assembly at the end of the month. We need to reflect in our own fellowship about changes and how we move forward from here.

And as we reflect we need to pray as was talked about in the last magazine and we need to read God's word as is mentioned elsewhere in this magazine. Through studying God's word and in prayer we can discern the leading and guiding of God's Spirit and move in the ways that God would have us go.

'You have shown me the paths that lead to life, and your presence will fill me with joy.' **Acts 2.28**

Yours

Stephen

## *Pentecost Prayer*

**Breathe in me O Holy Spirit  
that my thoughts may all be holy;  
Act in me O Holy Spirit  
that my works, too, may be holy;  
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit  
that I love but what is holy;  
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit  
to defend that is holy;  
Guard me then O Holy Spirit  
that I always may be holy.**

- St. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430)

talk *amen*

# *Parish News and Updates*

**The Guild** Virtual soup lunch was a huge success with our members joining in the spirit of the event and it raised the grand total of £400. This has enabled KCC Guild to give a generous donation towards the Guild projects for 2020/21.

Although we are still not allowed to meet as a group, the plans for next session are well in hand and because we are embarking on a new 3 year strategy, six new projects have been chosen by the National Guild Committee. Three support home charities and three support charities in other countries, details of which are on the church website. As the Guild movement has done throughout its long history, we will go forward in faith, 'Whose we are and Whom we serve.'

## **Stichill Summer Fayre**

Under normal circumstances we as a church family would be planning to support Christian Aid with a poverty lunch in May, and the annual Stichill Summer Fayre on first Saturday in June. Sadly, for the second year, these events can not take place due to ongoing covid restrictions. This is a big miss for our churches, both socially and financially.

**However, there will be opportunities to give donations during Christian Aid Week : 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May by Retiring Offering at church services on 9<sup>th</sup> May at Stichill and 16<sup>th</sup> May in Makerstoun, or direct to our treasurer, Liz Orr.**

**Thank you, Stephen:** During the many months of lockdown, our minister has kept in touch with some of his 'flock' by the only way possible; a telephone call. Several recipients of these chats have expressed their appreciation for his concern and thoughtfulness, especially if they did not have internet access and felt isolated or out of touch with their friends. So a catch up with the minister was a welcome breath of normality.

## **Useful contact details**

**Minister: Rev. Stephen Manners 470 663**

**Email: [smanners@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:smanners@churchofscotland.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.kelsocountrychurches.org.uk](http://www.kelsocountrychurches.org.uk)**

**Church of Scotland charity no. SC000958**

## Finance report: May 2021

### **2020 Kelso Country Churches accounts:**

As with many areas of life in the last year, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic could be seen in the financial results for 2020, with some areas of income and expenditure being reduced.



In-person worship did not take place during the period late March to late September and, when services did resume, numbers attending were reduced due to social distancing and some members continuing to shield etc. Offerings taken up at services were therefore reduced for the year. However, members found other ways to give if they could, and standing orders continued and in some cases increased. Kelso Country Churches' principal source of income is donations and the final outcome was a decrease of £2,722 from the year before, amounting to £14,722 for 2020. Investment income reduced due to the impact of Covid-19, and this may continue into 2021. However, other sources of income in 2020 included £5,000 from the sale of the organ at Roxburgh Church, and grants totalling £451 from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme in respect of repairs to Makerstoun and Stichill churches. In addition, we were able to maintain our fundraising income mainly because a Burns Supper was held in January, before the coronavirus restrictions, and Jim Smith's books (putting together historical news accounts of the various villages that make up our parish) sold extremely well. We received other fundraising income also from various sources and we are very grateful to all involved. On the expenditure side, our Ministries and Mission allocation increased from £4,313 in 2019 to £9,985 in 2020 as we were no longer in a ministerial vacancy. There were some savings in various costs because of the reduction in activities during the year.

Overall, there was an excess of payments over receipts (deficit) in our unrestricted congregational funds for the year of £3,226 and this was met from our reserves which are still in a healthy position.

If you would like a copy of the full set of accounts then please don't hesitate to contact Liz Orr on 224595 or email

[lizzorrscott@btinternet.com](mailto:lizzorrscott@btinternet.com).

**Many thanks** again to all of you for your support of the congregation, however you do this – through prayer, practical help or finance.

Whatever you do, it enables the work of God’s kingdom of love, both here in the parish and beyond, as we continue to trust God for His ongoing provision for us and for our world in these particularly uncertain times.

***A note to Gift Aid donors:***

We are extremely grateful to all of you who are taxpayers and have signed a Gift Aid declaration in our favour – this enables us to claim an additional 25 pence from HMRC for every £1 you donate. We recommend that you check that you are still paying as much or more tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all your donations (in the corresponding tax year), and if not, just let me know.

Liz Orr



**Why English is Hard to Learn**

We’ll begin with box: the plural is boxes:  
But the plural of oxes is oxen, not oxes.  
One fowl is a goose, and two are called geese,  
Yet the plural of moose is not meese.

You can find a lone mouse or a house full of mice:  
But the plural of house is houses not hice.  
The plural of man is always men,  
But the plural of pan is never pen.

If I speak of a foot, and you show me two feet,  
and I give you a book, would a pair be a beek?  
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,  
Why shouldn’t two booths be called beeth?



If the singular’s this and the plural is these,  
Should the plural of kiss be ever called keese?

We speak of a brother and also of brethren,  
But though we say mother, we never say methren.  
When the masculine pronouns are he, his, and him:  
Just imagine the feminine....she, shis, and shim.

*James Donovan*



In the first few months of coming to be minister here I enjoyed visiting as many people as I was able to and getting to know you in your homes. Everything has changed now after the pandemic. I'm still happy to visit but think it can only really be done if it's requested by you or someone lets me know who needs a visit from the minister. And I need to do fewer visits at a time to reduce the possibility of me taking infections from one household to another.

In the past I often made visits by just knocking on the door and saying I'd dropped by to say hello. Going forward I will always phone or email to make arrangements and check that you would like me to visit.

If you are letting me or an elder know that someone needs visiting please give me/them a phone number and/or email address to contact the person on.

I hope to see you again in the future at church, in your home or at a local community event. If I've not spoken to you before please introduce yourself.

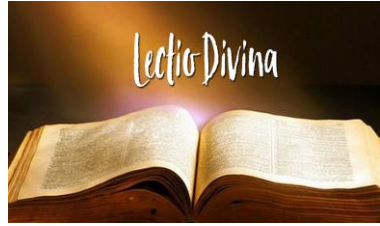
**Stephen**

### **Preaching plan for May/June**

|                              |                                                  |         |                 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> <b>May:</b>  | Makerstoun                                       | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> “            | Stichill                                         | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> “           | Makerstoun                                       | 10.30am | Charles Orr     |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> “           | Stichill                                         | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 30 <sup>th</sup> “           | No in-person service. Zoom chat together at 11am |         |                 |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> <b>June:</b> | Makerstoun                                       | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> “           | Stichill                                         | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> “           | Makerstoun                                       | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> “           | Stichill                                         | 10.30am | Sophia Duncan   |

**Lectio Divina** is a dynamic way of reading the Scriptures that has been around since AD 300. It follows a four-step approach of:

Prayer            Reading  
Meditation      Contemplation



**Lectio Divina** invites you to savour and mull over God's words quietly, slowly and intently. It gives you the space to respond to what you feel God is saying and helps you build a vital bridge between your encounters with God and everyday life with its joys, humdrum and challenges.

**Lectio Divina** (Latin for Divine / Sacred Reading) is an ancient spiritual practice from the Christian monastic tradition that allows us to experience the presence of God through reading and listening, prayer, meditation and contemplation. It is a simple, easily learned spiritual practice to slow life down and allow God to speak clearly through His Word into life.

**Start with prayer:** Take time at the beginning to be silent, to prepare to meet with and hear from God.

**Reading:** Read through the text slowly and repeatedly. As you read, pay attention to a word, phrase or idea that catches your attention.

**Meditation:** Begin to meditate on the word, phrase or idea that has captured your attention. Repeat it again and again. Consider what thoughts come to mind as you meditate on this word, phrase or idea. What does it remind you of? What does it make you hope for? Don't worry when random thoughts enter your head. As they come, offer them to God.

**Prayer:** Pray to God. Tell God what word, phrase or idea captured your attention and what came to mind as you meditated upon it. How is God using this word, phrase or idea to bless and transform you? Tell God what you have been thinking and feeling as you've listened and meditated. Tell God how you hope he will use this word, phrase or idea to change your heart to be more like his.

**Contemplation:** Finish by focusing your attention on the fact that God is present with you. Be still before God and invite him in. Few words, if any, are necessary here. Enjoy time in his presence. Just be with him and let him love you and refresh your soul.

## Book Review

### **The Salt Path – by Raynor Winn**

This story is an autobiographical account by Raynor Winn of the way she and Moth, her husband of 32 years, coped with the sudden end to a way of life they had enjoyed at a smallholding in South Wales.



They lost their home and livelihood to the bailiffs just days after learning that Moth was terminally ill.

Homeless and nowhere to go they chose to walk the 630 mile South West Coast Path from Somerset to Dorset (via Landsend) with only what they could carry on their shoulders.

The book is an account of how they endured pain, cold, inclement and excessively hot days eating the bare minimum of what their little money could buy.

Living wild and free they met many differing responses from the people they met when it became known they were a homeless couple.

The Salt Path left me feeling exhausted even though I was comfortably seated in an armchair! But it was an enjoyable journey around the beautiful coastline of South West England. I recommend it as a book about human endurance and received kindnesses as well as Raynor's description of the natural world.

**Ailsa Harvey**

### **Aspects of Culture in the Country Parish of Stichill – by Margaret Carlaw**

Margaret Carlaw's latest book about Stichill is a beautifully illustrated tribute to the creative life of the village and parish of Stichill, past and present. The book documents the wide variety of cultural activities and events which have taken place in the parish and those who participated in them. Those familiar with the area will recognise many of the places and people in the illustrations and photographs; the section on the Parish Church includes the wonderful musicals produced by George Amos, *Hopes and Dreams*, and *City of Gold*. Margaret is very generously donating the proceeds of the sale of the books to the village hall and the church – copies are available either through the village hall or at Stichill Church.

*Thank you Margaret.*



## *More Historical Books by Jim Smith*

There is a lot to be said for lockdown and staying at home. For the second year running, I have been delving into the local history, continuing from where I left off the last time. I intend doing five books this time and that coincides with the books that sold the most the first time around, and four of them are now in print; MAKERSTOUN 1900-1926; SMAILHOLM 1900-1921; NENTHORN 1900-1912 and STITCHEL 1900-1914 and the one still to do is the HUME one. They are all roughly the same size, over 100 pages, and cost £10 and all that money goes to Kelso Country Churches.

All the information for these books comes from “The National Newspaper Archives”, with some local knowledge, and we are very grateful to them for letting us publish all this information. One of the disappointing things about these archives is that the years mentioned above are not covered by “The Kelso Chronicle” or the “Kelso Mail” as they have not downloaded any information for the years 1888 to 1950. They are still downloading a lot of local papers over the United Kingdom so they will get round to it someday. So most of the information comes from - The Berwickshire News, Southern Reporter, Scotsman and the Jedburgh Gazette. We sold over 130 copies of the first books, so that was very successful and still ongoing, so thank-you for showing an interest.

The four new books are getting nearer to our generations and a lot of us can remember the hardships of our early years. Also there are a few family names cropping up which people will recognise. To help to find things in these books they have an index at the back which helps to locate special names and locations.

Grateful thanks go to the local people, who let people know that these books are available, and sell them, such as Sophia, Kirsty & Gareth, Kirsty and Liz, and also publishing in the magazine has helped and I have had interested people who know the villages but have moved away, who have bought them.

It's not been easy with no events on for people to see these books, but where there is a will there is a way. So the books are available now; just see your friendly contact or contact me on E-Mail or phone 470 250.

Thank you,

Jim

(Session Clerk)

## Wise Words



“Whatever burdens you’re carrying now, let them down for a moment. Relax; pick them up later after you’ve rested. Life is short. Enjoy it and the now ‘supposed’ stress that you’ve ‘conquered.’

‘Accept the fact that some days you’re the pigeon and some days you’re the statue.’

Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.’

‘Always read something that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.’

‘Never buy a car you can’t push.’

‘Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won’t have a leg to stand on.’

‘Nobody cares if you can’t dance well. Just get up and dance,’

‘When everything’s coming your way, you’re in the wrong lane.’

‘You may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.’

‘Since it’s the early bird that catches the worm, sleep late.’

‘The second mouse gets the cheese.’

‘Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.’

‘We could learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty, and some are dull. Some have weird names, and all are different colours, but they all have to live in the same box.’



We believe in life before death

This year Christian Aid is celebrating 75 years of love and action for the poor and vulnerable in the world. It was the belief that the world could change that led to its foundation at the end of the second world war by British and Irish churches.

It is incredible what has been achieved to bring hope to communities where all hope seemed lost.

The collapse of the horrors of Apartheid in South Africa, the creation of the Disasters Emergency Committee to provide food, shelter and healthcare in all the global emergencies, debt cancellation of poor countries, and pioneering the Fair Trade Foundation are just a few of the achievements that Christian Aid has championed in those years.

Today, the greatest challenges are the corona virus pandemic, and the climate crisis which are leaving people in increasing famine, poverty, hunger, homelessness and heartbreak. Again, this is affecting the poor and vulnerable more acutely with extreme weather threatening their ability to farm – with intense rainfall and drought destroying crops and livestock and livelihoods.

Once again it will be real people like you and me coming together to make a difference by giving a donation this Christian Aid week, 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> May.

## Lord, hear our Prayer May - June

**Week 1** 'The poor shall eat and be satisfied. Those who seek him shall praise the Lord.' Psalm 22:26. Give thanks for all those preparing for Christian Aid Week as they pull together the practical and logistical plans.

**Week 2:** 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.' John 15:12. Pray that the story of Rose Jonathan from Kenya who walks miles every day to get water for her grandchildren will give us renewed determination to tackle climate change and raise vital money.

Her simple prayer: "I pray to God that the rainfall will become normal."

**Week 3:** 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path' Psalm 119: 105. Pray for resources to be found to meet the urgent needs of the peoples of India as they struggle to overcome the darkness of the pandemic which is causing death and suffering on a massive scale.

**Week 4:** 'All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.' Acts 2:4. Give thanks for the work of God in the world today and the places where we see the Holy Spirit moving. Give thanks for the different ways we understand God and the ways we can share this with one another.

**Week 5:** 'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' 1 Peter 4:10 Pray for all the volunteers with whom Christian Aid partners work, especially those who have stepped up during the pandemic, sharing health messages with those living remotely.

**Week 6:** 'Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well.' 1 Timothy 2:2 As the leaders of G7 nations meet in Cornwall, pray that they meet in a spirit of cooperation rather than self-interest, that seeks a path out of pandemic, that promotes climate justice and tackles inequality.

**Week 7:** 'If you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others?' Matthew 5: 47. Give thanks this refugee week for partners in Syria responding to the double threat of violence and covid-19. God of peace, whose Son was displaced and forced to flee, be with all those far from home and give them hope for a safer future.

**Week 8:** 'O sing to the Lord a new song: sing to the Lord, all the earth.' Psalm 96:1 Give thanks for Christian Aid partners in Ethiopia who are helping communities affected by drought to find new ways to make money. Pray for Kumana Kurasho, whose aloe soap business is helping the community to practice good hygiene and bring much-needed income to her family.

