

The Country Link



Kelso
Country
Churches

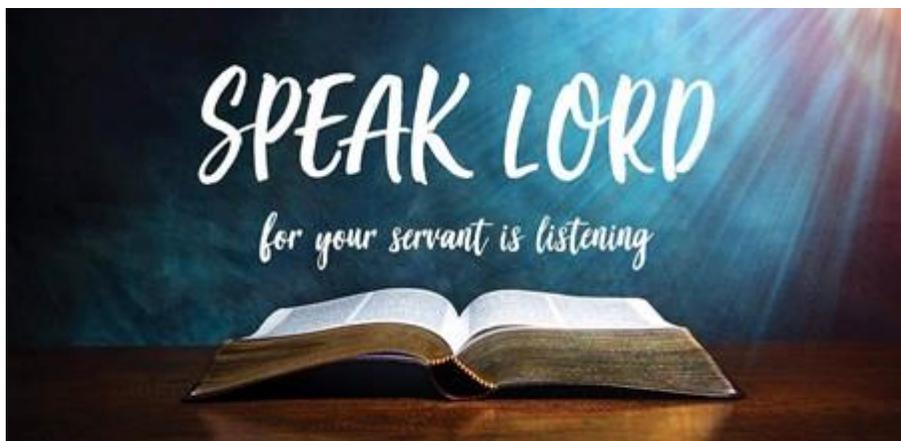
~~~~~ September/October, 2021

**Dear Friends**

The story of Samuel in the bible is a well known one. The little boy was asleep in the temple and heard the voice of God but he did not realise at first that it was God.

But he listened to the voice and he did what God told him to do. We also need to listen to the voice of God and do what He tells us to do. However, just like Samuel, we struggle to hear the voice of God and know what He is saying to us.

As we enter into discussion with the Presbytery and amongst ourselves about the future shape of worship and ministry in our local area, we all need to be carefully listening out for the voice of God, and faithfully doing what He tells us, as Samuel did.



Stephen

# *Parish News and Updates*

**Blythswood Charity Christmas Shoeboxes:** Kathy Wilkie has reported that she has handed out approximately 100 shoe boxes to the Kelso churches and our own churches and there are still boxes available for filling with useful gifts for people in need in the wider world.

Information on how the filled boxes will be collected will be given out at a later date.

**Disasters Emergency Committee:** There was a good response to the retiring offerings given in our churches in August for the work of DEC. corona virus Appeal **The sum of £300 was raised.** The daily news bulletins portray the suffering and devastation of millions of people around the world who experience the hardships of pandemic, floods, hurricanes, droughts and conflict and the DEC are one of the first charities in place to give aid wherever it is needed.

**New Printer:** The printer is now up and going and I will be using it for the first time to print this magazine so hoping all will run smoothly. We thank Bert for the considerable work he did to re-figure the space which accommodates the printer.

It's also that time of year when the manse hedges and shrubs need a good trim and this was done at the end of August by the trusty trio, Bert, Jim and Alister. Thank you boys, and well done!

We are delighted to hear that Liz Orr's mum Janette is home again after a spell in hospital. She celebrates her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday this month and we send love and good wishes to her and Liz who is her constant companion.

After a long absence due to covid restrictions, a Film Night will be held in Stichill village hall on Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> September starting at 7.30pm.

The hall can accommodate 24 people and it is recommended to book ahead with George Anderson (01573 470 707).

**Food Bank:** A gentle reminder of the ongoing need for tinned and packet foods for the Kelso food bank. Donations can be placed in receptacles at Sainsburys and the Coop.

## *A Letter from the Treasurer*

### **Harvest Offerings 2021 – Supporting farmers in Africa**



As the month of August has progressed and we move into September our thoughts have been turning to the forthcoming harvest thanksgiving service. Our farmers have all been extremely busy gathering in their harvest here in the Borders and it is such a pleasure for the onlooker to see the work going on in the fields, the culmination of a year's activity.

Once again our harvest retiring offerings will be donated to Self Help Africa (charity no 298830) which runs 40 projects for farmers across Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. African regions have had significant challenges to contend with in the past year such as the impact of climate change, an unprecedented locust outbreak and Covid-19, all of which placed additional pressure on regional food systems. The work of Self Help Africa resulted in increased production of food for 326,332 households. They write:



‘Smallholder farmers were vital to Africa’s future long before the pandemic hit, with over 75% of the population reliant on small-scale agriculture. Now, they will be crucial to ensuring its short-term recovery and long-term

resilience. In addition to ongoing interventions focusing on handwashing and sanitation, we’re supporting smallholder farmers to build a future for themselves and their children - through small loans, farm tools and training, nutrition education, climate smart agriculture, feeding programmes and more. By supporting Self Help Africa this harvest you will be helping families to grow more and earn more from their farms, improve their nutrition and build more resilient communities.’

We will be taking up a retiring offering for Self Help Africa at our harvest thanksgiving service on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October at Makerstoun Church. There will also be an opportunity to give at Stichill Church on

the following Sunday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, and donations can also be passed directly to our treasurer, Liz Orr. This year we will also have Gift Aid envelopes available, so do make use of those if you are an eligible taxpayer and you wish to increase the value of your donation by 25%.

Finally, and for your interest, Church of Scotland congregations have been encouraged by the General Assembly to participate in a church-wide **National Giving Day** at a time of their choosing over the season of Harvest 2021 ‘to provide people of all ages an opportunity to reflect on God’s presence with us through these challenging times and to offer gifts of thanksgiving back to God.’ Our offerings for Self Help Africa will be the way that Kelso Country Churches participate in this initiative.

Liz Orr

## *Preaching plan for September/October*

### **September**

|                  |            |         |                 |
|------------------|------------|---------|-----------------|
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Makerstoun | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | Stichill   | 10.30am | Sophia Duncan   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> | Makerstoun | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> | Stichill   | 10.30am | Stephen Manners |

### **October**

|                   |            |                      |                 |
|-------------------|------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> : | Makerstoun | Harvest Thanksgiving | Stephen Manners |
| 10 <sup>th</sup>  | Stichill   | 10.30am              | Stephen Manners |
| 17 <sup>th</sup>  | Makerstoun | 10.30am              | David Harvey    |
| 24 <sup>th</sup>  | Stichill   | 10.30am              | Stephen Manners |
| 31 <sup>st</sup>  | Makerstoun | 10.30am              | Stephen Manners |

# WELCOME BACK

Things have now opened up a lot more and we are closer to things being normal in church. We'd love to see you all back in church again and please let me know if there is anything we can do to facilitate this.

I'm trying to get back to working as I did before the pandemic so I won't be continuing to phone people as I have for the last year and a half. I won't be doing as many pastoral visits as its not entirely safe to do so but if I hear of someone who should be visited by the minister I will phone and try and arrange a visit.

I have been continuing to put services online and recording the sermons as a podcast for those who can't make it to church. Please check these out - <https://www.kelsocountrychurches.org.uk/services/>

Thanks

Stephen





KCC Guild did not meet together last session for obvious reasons but the important work of the Guild continued apace and many Guilds found ways to meet together through the wonders of technology and our collective fundraising efforts for the six projects the Guild movement have supported for three years, resulted in the magnificent total of £551,434.

Our small group in Stichill contributed to that sum by holding a virtual Soup lunch in February.

A new session for 2021-22 is beckoning and we are **‘Looking Forward in Faith’** to being allowed to meet in the church hall as covid restrictions are gradually lifted, and can do the work that the Guild does best; express our faith in worship, prayer and action.

A programme has been planned for the winter session with the Theme: **‘Lights and Bushels’** which is taken from Matthew 5: 16...

*“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

A light does not serve its purpose if it is hidden. That may seem obvious but the good news of Christ is often a well-kept secret in the churches of the communities they serve.

Here is a brief summary planned for the session ahead. This of course depends on covid restrictions continuing to lift in the coming months;

**October 13<sup>th</sup>** : Afternoon Tea and get together

**November 10<sup>th</sup>**: presentation on project, BEAT eating disorders

**December 8<sup>th</sup>**: A trip to India. Speaker Jim Smith

**January 12<sup>th</sup>** : Talk about work of Border Women’s Aid

**February 9<sup>th</sup>**: ‘at home’ evening

**March 9<sup>th</sup>**: Project evening for the charity. Pioneers UK

Guild meetings are held in the church hall at 2.30pm, and we would love to welcome **YOU** to any or all of our meetings.

# Guild Projects 2021-24

**STARCHILD** - 'Finding the Light' project will address the stigma and myths related to intellectual and physical disability of children in Uganda. Many of these children are ostracised and locked up.

Starchild aims to build a holistic centre called the Sunflower Sanctuary. It will offer support and training to the marginalised and in partnership with the Guild will demonstrate that disabled people can benefit society.

**BEAT** - UK charity dedicated to treating eating disorders.

1.25 million people in the UK have an eating disorder with millions more supporting someone they know. BEAT'S aim is to expand services in Scotland and ensure everyone gets excellent treatment early for the best chance of a full recovery.

**UNIDA** - **Hear our voice**; a charity in Brazil dedicated to education and training women for ministry and service, thus contributing to church and community.

**HOME FOR GOOD**-a charity who are passionate about finding a home for every child who needs one in Scotland. They work to inspire people to consider fostering and adoption. With the Guild's help they want to build their network of volunteers, offering training and support providing much needed encouragement.

**VINE TRUST** **Kazuna: Village of Hope in Tanzania.** An international charity providing medical, home-building and care support to communities living in severe poverty. They hope to build a village of 40 homes housing 300 people (many orphans among them), a school, training centre, and hub to bring people together. With the Guild's support it will enable their plans for the village to happen much sooner.

**PIONEERS UK** - **Chocolate Heaven** is a small chocolate business on a small island in S E Asia where Paul and Sarah and their children and wider team demonstrate the love of God to an unreached people. It provides employment for chocolate makers and fair prices for growers and sharing God's good news to those who haven't heard it.

## **I've been the Beedle o' the kirk since 1953**

The year the Inversneckie session clerk appointed me,  
And tho' I say it masel, we run a maist successful Kirk,  
The Meenister tak's the credit, but we ken wha' does the work.

Where wid the Kirk be withoot John Maconochie  
He runs the hale affair frae the cellar tae the spire.  
The man that exercises tact, he pats the Elders on the back,  
He butters up the organist & pacifies the choir.  
The Minister said tae me, ye have a job ye can't abuse,  
A Beedle of the Kirk has got tae mind his Ps & Qs.  
I says "Na,na, man, that's your job, mine's the keys & pews  
**I'm the lad that pits the Sun in Sunday.**

Folk come tae see the kirk and I must be their guide  
O' a the jobs I have tae dae, it's the yin that I can least abide.  
Fur wi' yon architects and folk I dinna get on weel  
'Cos when they speak aboot the nave, I think they mean masel'

I mind yin o' yon student fellas sayin' tae his lass,  
"There's an odour here of sanctity" – I couldna let that pass.  
I says Sanctity, be damned man, it's just an escape o' gas!  
**I'm the lad that pits the sun in Sunday.**

Noo Sunday nights the Kirk's no just as full as it might be.  
We thought we'd write a note up - the meenister and me.  
Of course, t'was me that thought aboot the verra thing tae dae –  
Enjoy a pleasant evening, bring your sweetheart tae.

The Kirk wis fu', the lights were low, a maist inspiring sight  
The Meenister gied oot his text and said "Let there be light"  
So I turned up the gas & spoiled a pleasant Sunday night  
**I'm the lad that pits the Sun in Sunday.**

*I was given this ditty years ago by an old friend and recently  
found it, so I thought I would share it with you.*

*Any reference to present-day beedles/ministers is entirely  
incidental!*

*Sophia*

## *Prayer using The Lord's Prayer*

### **Lord, we pray 'give us our daily bread!'**

We remember before you: the many in our world for whom daily bread means daily struggle; our brothers and sisters who are stricken by famine and shortages, oversupplied with despair. Guide and inspire us to share the bounty of this fruitful earth so that compassion becomes the key and life the hope.

### **Lord, we pray 'forgive us our debts!'**

We remember before you:

The many in the world beset by a sense of paralysing guilt; those driven by forces within themselves over which they have little control.

Those nursing sins long forgiven by those they once hurt and by you. Release and uplift them so that they know the offer of freedom and life renewed that lies at the heart of the Gospel.

### **Lord, we pray 'deliver us from evil!'**

We remember before you: The many in our world assailed by evils of unjust laws, prejudice, wasteful conflict and oppression from compassionless leaders.

Redeem and revive your fallen world so that outcasts know themselves included in the feast of heaven, and peace and right-purpose is pursued by leaders and trend-setters.

In Jesus name we pray. **Amen.**

Contacts

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**PRAYER OF PIOUS INTENTION**

**O Lord, so long as the weather is fine,  
So long as I have no visitors,  
So long as nobody asks me to do any work,  
So long as I can sit in my favourite pew,  
So long as it isn't a visiting preacher,  
so long as they don't choose hymns  
I don't know,  
So long as I can get home in time for lunch  
and not feel I have lost the whole day,  
I will honour thee with my presence in church  
whenever I feel like it.**

**Amen**

## *Hymns we love*

### **Thy hand, O God, has Guided by Edward Hayes Plumptre**

It was in a small village in England where a friend was being inducted as vicar in the parish church, that the writer first heard this fine hymn. On such an occasion the first hymn is all-important.

*Thy hand, O God, has guided* was a trumpet start for a ministry.

The congregation seemed to shout the last line of each verse –

*‘One Church, one Faith, One Lord’*

Dean Plumptre’s hymn grew rapidly into a favourite because of its combination of firm, clear words, and a tune which a congregation can go for. Like all great hymns this one has been adopted by the church universal so that Christians of all communions sing it and in doing so, affirm their belief in the Great Church.

*Thy hand, O God, has guided  
Thy flock from age to age;  
The wondrous tale is written  
Full clear, on every page.  
Our Fathers owned thy goodness,  
And we their deeds record;  
And both of this bears witness,  
One church, one faith, one Lord.*

*Thy heralds brought glad tidings  
To greatest, as to least;  
they bade men rise and hasten  
To share the great kings feast;  
And this was all their teaching,  
In every deed and word,  
To all alike proclaiming  
One church, one faith, one Lord.*

**HARVEST  
THANKSGIVING  
Makerstoun Church  
Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October  
at 10.30am**

**There will be a Retiring  
Offering for  
Self Help Africa**

**Donations for Kelso food bank also  
welcome.**

