



Meldrum & Bourtie

Parish Church of Scotland

Registered in Scotland
Charity Number SCO15960

June / July 2020

From your Interim Moderator

Well, what a couple of months it's been. It's nothing like anything any of us have ever seen before: a real test of character for everyone. I hope that you and yours have been keeping ok and that you've managed to find ways not just to endure but to redeem this time of confinement.

Over the last couple of weeks I've really noticed a change in how people are talking about lockdown. Some of those working from home are now getting a bit bored of it and are looking forward to getting back together with colleagues again. Those who aren't having to work because they're retired or furloughed have largely worked through their long list of 'things needing done' and are wondering what more there is to do! A lot of folk are feeling a little frayed at the edges as the reality of our situation slowly sinks in. We're five miles in to a full marathon, but there are still another 21 to go.

Last week I took part in one of Gordon Presbytery's roundtable discussions where we were thinking about our faith in the context of all this uncertainty. The host, Heather, asked us to



Kirk News

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offer one piece of advice to folk as we wound up the conversation, and mine was 'be kind to yourself'. This is an unprecedented situation – everything is changed; even the little things we do in life have to be rethought and done in a different way. We can Skype and Facetime, but we miss seeing each other in real life. We're tired from having to think all the time, and dealing with the constant bombardment of information and news stories from around the world. We're having to step up and learn and apply new skills in a constantly changing landscape. Is it any wonder we're feeling a bit overstretched and depleted at the moment?

So be kind to yourself.

Realise that sometimes 'good enough' is perfectly acceptable, even though you may want to do better. Accept that it's ok if you're simply getting through each day rather than thriving (I know very few folk who seem to be thriving just now, though the natural introverts are loving it!). My wife and I have a phrase we often use with folk in our professional lives as GP and minister – and it applies more than usual at the present moment. It's this – "you shouldn't underestimate the amount of stress you're under just now."

In times like these, 50% of your usual can be 100% of what you're able to give. And that's ok. So be kind to yourself.

Do the essentials, and don't worry too much about anything else. Make time to recreate and reconnect with those you love and can be with. Don't feel guilty taking a little time to do something you love doing, even if there are a hundred other more 'profitable' things you might be doing.

If we're as busy in lockdown, and as stressed as ever, could it be that we're missing one of the few silver linings in this Coronavirus cloud? Perhaps part of the blessing God wants to bring out of this tough time is the opportunity to reclaim ourselves as human beings – not just human doings.

Coming home to ourselves and who we really are, as we keep company with him in prayer and let his peace and presence inform our living.

Isaiah put it beautifully in these memorable words from chapter 40 of the book that bears his name:

- 29 He (God) gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
30 Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
31 but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

We watch and hope for change, and for the slow emergence from this time that will see things gradually return to something approaching normal. But our greater and deeper hope is in the God who holds all our times in his hands, and can redeem even a time such as this if we have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Blessings, health and peace to you all in Christ,

Paul

Online resources:

Information on all that is available throughout the Presbytery for young and old can be found at –

<http://www.presbyteryofgordon.org.uk/>

You can find the reflections from Valerie and our family page on our own website at –

<https://www.meldrumandbourtiechurch.com/>

VACANCY

As the old music hall joke goes, I have some good news and bad news for you regarding the vacancy at Meldrum and Bourtie.

The good news is that we have a Sole Nominee to be your next minister!

The bad news is we have no idea when she'll be able to come up and preach for the vacancy!

Rev Alisa McDonald preached locally at Belhelvie Church on 15th March this year with the Nominating Committee present, and proceeded to an interview with the committee afterwards.

The Nominating Committee met on Monday 16th March to discuss applications and considered that Alisa was the candidate with the best blend of experience and vision to lead the congregation into this next phase of shared ministry together. They asked Alisa to be Sole Nominee and she was happy to accept the invitation, but unfortunately due to the Covid-19 outbreak, we aren't able to progress things in the normal way at the moment.

In normal circumstances, she would come and preach in Meldrum and the congregation would then vote on whether or not they would like to call her to be their next minister. Alisa would then need to accept that call, allowing us to move things through Presbytery and then on to a service of induction. The problem at the moment is that services are suspended and there's no mechanism in place, either practically or in Church Law, that provides for things being done in a different way. This is hugely frustrating for everyone as you can imagine.

The 'high heid-yins' of the church are working to see if there's any work-around we can manage (several congregations are in the same place), but those decisions are made at national level rather than locally. All we can do at the moment is pray for Alisa

and her family as they wait for news and pray that some kind of fast-track solution might be found which will see her able to come and preach for the charge sooner rather than later.

This is a rather unsatisfying end to what has been some sterling work by your Nominating Committee who pulled together an excellent parish profile, wrote to prospective candidates, travelled near and far to hear folk lead worship, prepared and conducted thorough interviews with candidates and did it all in a very good spirit of hard work, co-operation and good humour. They have been working on this for over a year now, and as Interim Moderator I want to say a big thanks to Elizabeth Buchan, Dot Davidson, Keith Ingram, Jean Mitchell, Fiona Morris, Andrew McCartney, David McLelland, Willie Paterson and Pat Patrone for all their hard work and input, and especially to Eileen Oliver and Billy Dalzell who served as secretary and convenor and oversaw the work timeously and thoroughly.

It's frustrating not to be able to take the last step just now, but we hope and pray that we'll get moving again soon and before long we'll be able to reach the end of the process and the beginning of an exciting and innovative new phase of ministry here in Meldrum and Bourtie.

Every Blessing

Paul

Playlist For Life

Due to the current situation there will be no Drop-in sessions for the above but if anyone is looking for any help, or advice, please feel free to phone us. Eileen Oliver - 07775 606640, or Mhari Watt - 07780 650061.

Deaths

Mr William Chapman Westbank Care Home

11th May 2020

Contacts



Name	Position	
Paul McKeown	Interim Moderator	
Mrs Jean Mitchell	Reader	872745
Mr W Dalzell	Session Clerk & Roll Keeper	872943
Mr W Paterson	Treasurer	01467 681796
Mrs Lorna Reid	Roll Keeper	01651 873000
Focus Groups:		
Pat Patrone	Worship Group	872797
Kirk News		
Brian Reid	Editorial Rep	872794
Church Group:		
Eileen Oliver	Pastoral Care Visiting Team	873396
Facebook Page	www.facebook.com/meldrumbourtiechurch.org.uk	
Website	www.meldrumandbourtiechurch.com	

We are here to help and serve all in our community in this time of uncertainty:

Whatever your need, then please call any of the people whose contact details are listed. Between us, we will do what we can to help:

Elizabeth Buchan	01651 872131	buchan93@hotmail.com
Elaine Buck	01651 872348	elaine.buck123@btinternet.com
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[NHS – Covid-19](#)

[Kirk Services - online](#)

All that we plan to do will be subject to any further measures announced by the Government.

The Tale of a Packet of Sunflower Seeds

by Valerie Mitchell (locum minister)

It seems a long time ago now, in a galaxy far, far away, but actually it was only around ten weeks, and it was in the Church Hall, that a group of us gathered to discuss Easter celebrations and the joint service for VE Day. At this point we were already aware that things might not go as planned, but so far we only expected to not be allowed into our Church building. So with this in mind we planned an alternative way for people to reflect on the meaning of Easter. We would lay out a reflective walk on the grass at the front of the church, and at the end encourage people to plant a sunflower seed in a planter so that when we did meet again it would be full of dwarf sunflowers.

Well, as you know, things changed very fast, and within ten days of that meeting we were in total lockdown. The reflective walk was shelved, to be used at another time, and I became the proud owner of 80 sunflower seeds. It said on the packet they were not for consumption, so I couldn't add them to my morning cereal. It was at this point that my: 'I'll keep that, it will come in handy one day' mentality proved its' worth as I found lots of seed trays, buried at the back of the shed. I already had bought compost for the church planter, so I set too and planted 80 sunflower seeds.

What a blessing those seeds have been! I have tended them carefully. They started off life in the front entrance hall of the house, for the front door won't be being used for a while. It was so exciting to see the first shoots appear. Watering and talking to them continued and they grew bigger. Then came the problem of 'potting on'. Into what?? Well, at this point I have to admit to using an online gardening site to purchase a large quantity of 4 inch plastic pots. The sunflowers are now all in their own pot and growing larger by the day. I did have one catastrophe when hardening them off. I left them out overnight, on a night when there was no frost, but there was a cold wind. I woke in the morning to discover that some had suffered. I was heartbroken - how could I have let them down so by leaving

them outside unprotected? Thankfully I can report that they are still hanging on, but some not doing as well as others. They have become a symbol to me of hope for the future and of keeping going through this enforced stay at home. I have also discovered the joys of growing things and now know why the term 'Nurserymen' is so appropriate! Staying at home has meant they have been cared for better than any other seed I have ever planted, - previously it would have been a case of scattering seeds and then forgetting about them and wondering why nothing grew.

This week the lockdown is going to be eased and we will be allowed out a little more. This gives us all hope that before long things might start to get back to some sort of normality. The Route Map says that we may be allowed to worship again in church around mid summer. I pray that may be so. I can then return the sunflowers to church where they can take their place in our celebrations.

Lockdown has been difficult for us all, and very hard indeed for some, but during this time a few packets of seeds have turned into rows of pots of growing plants, all with the potential to burst forth into glorious yellow flowers this summer. I hope and pray we will all be together to enjoy them!

With Blessings to you,
Rev. Valerie Mitchell
Locum Minister

PRAYER CALENDAR JUNE/JULY



Have you a special part of the Bible that you turn to on difficult times? I have been looking at the Sermon on the Mount, sometimes called The Beatitudes, with new eyes recently. These words are from the Jerusalem Bible translation.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: THEY SHALL BE RECOGNISED AS CHILDREN OF GOD

Lord, as we listen to the news and hear blame and recriminations help us to think peaceful thoughts and avoid being sucked into judging others. Bring gentleness and compassion into the hearts of all who are fearful and angry. Fear and anger can be destructive emotions and we pray that no harm will come to those who are trying to cope with these intense feelings. Be with them Lord in their struggles.

BLESSED ARE THE GENTLE: THEY SHALL HAVE THE EARTH AS INHERITANCE

We give thanks Lord for all those who have been gentle and compassionate in their care for others. We give thanks for all GP's, chemists, hospital staff, care workers and their cleaning and support teams. We pray for those who like Jesus gave their lives to save others. May they continue to be a source of inspiration and beacon of love. Every gentle act of care has been a force for good and will not be forgotten. May we continue to value these actions and never take them for granted.

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: THEY SHALL HAVE MERCY SHOWN TO THEM

Lord guide us and show us ways that we can be merciful to others. We thank you Lord for looking after us and for all the workers who have given us a sense of normality in our lives. We remember the postmen and women, bus drivers, refuse collectors and shop assistants.

We thank you for school staff who provide distance learning and for all who make the school hubs possible. Help us to value every member of our workforce equally. Help us also to look beyond our daily lives to the wider world. May we remember those who depend on food banks and may we continue to be generous in our giving. Help us also to remember those in countries less well equipped and resourced. Move us to give what we can to help these unknown brothers and sisters who are our neighbours in the world. Pray for those who are ill and in need of basic healthcare, food and water on every continent.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN: THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED

We pray Lord that you work through the Holy Spirit to bring comfort to all who have lost loved ones at this time. We pray for comfort and healing for all those grieving and distressed after seeing many deaths and losses in their communities and workplaces. Remind us that even death cannot separate us from you, Lord. Jesus told Martha the sister of Lazarus “ I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live even though he dies: and whoever lives and believes in me will never die “. John 11 verse 25.

Dear Lord,

As we begin to step out into a different world give us the courage to follow your example in all we say and do. Help us to love you and to love our neighbours. Lift our hearts with the gift of summer and your wonderful creation and fill us with gratitude and hope for the future. Help us to be faithful believers. We ask all these things in Jesus name, Amen.

Good afternoon all.

I went into the Legion recently to drop off knitted pocket prayer crosses for them to hand out. They were very pleased to receive them.

They have a very large amount of food and other household products, plus some children's jigsaws, games and colouring books that have been donated by kind folk and shops. If you know of anyone who might appreciate some supplies of any sort, for any reason at all, perhaps you could let them know that this is available for them.

The Legion is usually open in the mornings for people to call in and collect items.

It may be that children have just got bored with the toys they have, or have run out of things to play with. It may be that it is difficult for people who are isolating to get out. Whatever the reason, there are supplies available at the Legion for local people to have.

Alternatively, if you think you know of anyone who would appreciate having items dropped off at their door, then please contact Louise on 07917 030278. If you need any further information please get in touch.

Valerie

Pocket Prayer Crosses

A big thank you to everyone who has knitted Pocket Prayer Crosses during the last few weeks. There was a great response to my appeal and so far I have received almost 200, all beautifully knitted in a variety of colours.

Pocket Prayer Crosses are small knitted squares with a cross pattern in the middle. Knitted with prayer and love, they are small enough to fit in a pocket or purse, and are a small tactile piece of comfort for those who need to know we are thinking of them. So far, each resident at Wyverie Court has been given one. They have also be delivered to Westbank for the staff and residents. In the coming weeks the Legion will be handing them out to those people who are receiving food and help from them. Each one is placed, with an accompanying note, in a cellophane sleeve to keep them clean and safe until delivered.

If you would like one, or know somebody who would benefit from receiving one, please let me know.

Valerie

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Kirk News Articles

All items for the Aug / Sep 2020 issue of Kirk News should be in the hands of the Editors, Brian Reid, or Simon Hill by Sunday, 19th July 2020.

If you know of anyone who does not normally receive Kirk News and would like to, please contact the Editor. (see Contacts table)

QUIZ SHEET

LOCAL CHURCH:

- 1) Name the year in which each of the following ministers were inducted into Meldrum & Bourtie Parish Church?
 - a) Rev Stewart Granger -
 - b) Rev Hugh O'Brien -
 - c) Rev Alison Jaffrey -
- 2) Who was the Moderator of the Church of Scotland in the following years?
 - a) 1952 –
 - b) 1996 –
 - c) 2004 –
- 3) Name three Session Clerks who were in post prior to 2010 for Meldrum & Bourtie Parish Church?
 - a) ?-
 - b) ? -
 - c) ? –

RELIGION/BELIEFS:

- 4) Which of the following is a name for the first five books of the Old Testament?
 - a) Pentateuch
 - b) Pentapolis
 - c) Pentarchy
- 5) Whom did Rowan Williams succeed as the Archbishop of Canterbury?
 - a) George Carey
 - b) Robert Runcie
 - c) Donald Coggan
- 6) Which animal is usually associated with St Mark?
 - a) A winged leopard
 - b) A winged horse
 - c) A winged lion
- 7) How many theses did Martin Luther post on the door of the Church at Wittenberg in 1517?
 - a) 95
 - b) 39
 - c) 18
- 8) Which day celebrates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem?
 - a) Advent Sunday
 - b) Palm Sunday

- c) Jubilate Sunday
- 9) Which of these is the nearest to the original meaning of the word 'apostle'?
 - a) Disciple
 - b) Messenger
 - c) Reformer
- 10) To which of the following did St Paul not write an epistle which is part of the New Testament?
 - a) Thebans
 - b) Galatians
 - c) Thessalonians

SPORT:

- 11) In which year did women first compete in the Olympic games?
 - a) 1900
 - b) 1908
 - c) 1920
- 12) What was the name of the first club Sir Alex Ferguson managed?
 - a) East Stirling
 - b) St Mirren
 - c) Aberdeen
- 13) Which football club has the nickname of 'The Bairns'?
 - a) East Fife
 - b) Falkirk
 - c) Forfar Athletic
- 14) Which Scottish team twice reached the English FA Cup Final in the 1880s and were twice beaten by Blackburn Rovers?
 - a) Queens Park
 - b) Berwick Rangers
 - c) Dundee United
- 15) What nationality is Roger Federer?
 - a) Swiss
 - b) Austrian
 - c) German

MUSIC & the ARTS

- 16) Which of the following landmark 20th century buildings was designed by the Danish architect Jorn Utzon?
 - a) The Pompidou Centre
 - b) Lloyd's of London Building

- c) Sydney Opera House
- 17) Who painted the 'Night Watch'?
 - a) Rubens
 - b) Rembrandt
 - c) Renoir
- 18) Beethoven used the words of which poet for the 'Ode to Joy' in his 9th symphony?
 - a) Goethe
 - b) Heine
 - c) Schiller
- 19) Who sang the theme song for the 1987 Bond Movie 'The Living Daylights'?
 - a) A-Ha
 - b) Duran Duran
 - c) Sheena Easton
- 20) Who had a hit in 1964 with 'Do Wah Diddy Diddy'?
 - a) Herman's Hermits
 - b) Manfred Mann
 - c) Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich
- 21) Who directed the 1946 film 'It's a Wonderful Life'?
 - a) Frank Capra
 - b) Howard Hawks
 - c) Preston Sturges
- 22) On which farm did Worzel Gummidge live?
 - a) Beaverbrook Farm
 - b) Donnybrook Farm
 - c) Scatterbrook Farm
- 23) In which year did 'The Archers' begin broadcasting?
 - a) 1949
 - b) 1951
 - c) 1953
- 24) Who plays 'Chandler' in Friends?
 - a) Matthew Perry
 - b) Matt le Blanc
 - c) David Schwimmer
- 25) How many Oscars did David Leans film 'Lawrence of Arabia' win in the 1962 Awards?
 - a) 5
 - b) 7
 - c) 12

- 26) For which area of the British Isles did Alfred Wainwright write a series of famous guidebooks?
- a) The Lake District
 - b) The Pennines
 - c) the Scottish Highlands
- 27) Who was the Roman Emperor at the time of the birth of Christ?
- a) Augustus
 - b) Tiberius
 - c) Nero
- 28) How many 'Lords a-leaping' are there in The Twelve Days of Christmas?
- a) Nine
 - b) Ten
 - c) Twelve
- 29) If you suffer from 'Homichlophobia, what do you fear?
- a) Little green men
 - b) Fog
 - c) Smoke
- 30) "Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees/That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees". Which writer claimed Adam as the first gardener?
- a) John Betjeman
 - b) Robert Browning
 - c) Rudyard Kipling

Answers in the next edition of the Kirk News.