

KNEC NEWS



June 2020
Digital



Kirknewton and East Calder Parish Church of Scotland
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We live in interesting times and our times are in God's hands

Jesus shouted, 'if you are thirsty, come to me! If you believe in me, come and drink! For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water will flow out from within'.

(John 7:37-8)



We all react differently to the current state of things. Most of us don't like the reduced contact with others, especially friends and family. It's just not the same as it was before the lockdown.

Did we take things for granted before? Maybe. Maybe not.

Will we do things differently in the future? Maybe. Let's hope so. Because there are many potential good changes that may emerge in post pandemic times.

Perhaps we'll take climate change a bit more seriously. Maybe we'll make more of an effort, wherever possible, to make more use of public transport rather than driving or flying. We might even manage to walk or cycle more.

We might think more about where our food and other things come from and we might choose to buy more locally produced things.

I wonder if we will continue to make more use of technology to communicate with each other. It looks like we will.

And what about the church? How long will it be until we are able to gather together in the same place for worship? Will it ever happen again in the way it did in the past?

Some have made statements like, 'the church was never a building. It was always the people of God'.

This time has been a challenge for everyone, and it has certainly been an opportunity to pause and ask the question, 'what does it mean to be the church?'

If our primary purpose is to worship God, through loving God and one another, then some of us would claim that we've been able to do that unhindered by this virus. It hasn't stopped us worshipping God or seeing God at work.

In fact, some would argue that they have encountered God in ways they may not have had it not been for this great interruption. God has been speaking as clearly as ever.

One remarkable thing has been the increased general interest in matters of faith. A recent survey showed that more people than ever before are turning to prayer or tuning into online worship. There's even now a plethora of religious programmes on the TV and radio on a Sunday, something that hasn't happened for years, if at all.

Our own Easter Sunday service had 600 views and one of our Bairns' Rock videos has been viewed over 1,000 times.

Even those of us who are confident in using technology are having to discover new ways of maintaining communication. Some of these have been a joy, like using Zoom for a virtual coffee morning.

I wonder if these new technologies can be an easier way for people outside the church to connect with church. Some of it can be fairly anonymous, like watching the services online. And who knows where that might lead? For many, it's easier and safer to watch church online than taking the risk to step across the threshold of a church building for the first time.

It would seem that in the new normal, post pandemic, the church would be amiss not to continue these new connections and build on them.

And how can we help ensure that people who are currently not online, are not left behind? I know many of you are addressing that question, through telephone calls, sending cards and letters and occasional socially distanced chats.

By the way, all the online services are now available on DVD for those who have a DVD player, so please let me know if you'd like copies made.

One thing is sure. Our times are in God's hands and God's Spirit is moving in and through us. Streams of Living Water are flowing still. Christ is alive and bringing life all the time. And we are the Body of Christ.

Whatever we choose to do in the new normal, I pray that we will together seek the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and that all will see and experience the Kingdom of Heaven more clearly.

Grace and peace be with you now and always.

Alistair

Funeral

Mrs Rena Maguire from Whitburn on May 1st at Mortonhall Crematorium



Extract from Session Minutes of 31st March

This was a virtual online meeting.

Listening Project 4 people (the Minister, 1 person from the congregation and 2 from out with our fellowship) completed the advanced 2 day Listening Well course to be accredited listeners on the Pilot.

Community Social Enterprise (Reuse and Thrive) OSCR has agreed the charitable status. The website is being developed. The Trustees met (virtually of course) on Monday 30th March. The opening of the shop has been postponed.

Mission and Outreach Team [REDACTED] presented a paper to Session. Session approved the following:

- A Mission and Outreach Team, reporting to the Kirk Session, should be re-introduced.
- The Team should have an “arrange” remit.

Session also agreed that everyone has a part to play in mission and outreach. Session also gave thanks for the army of people performing mission and outreach every day and noted that the new Mission and Outreach Team would be no more than a support for them if required.

Regarding suggested mission and outreach events, there was particular support for involving Calderwood, Church in the Community, Alpha and Informal Services involving the kids and parents of organisations and hall users.

Comment was also made that now that we are finding out how powerful technology and social media can be in the Covid-19 emergency, perhaps we can use technology more in our mission and outreach.

Church Health Check The overwhelming view was that we need to have a face to face discussion so the subject should be put to one side until circumstances allow us to do that. In the meantime, the report will remain confidential within Session.

ECO Congregation [REDACTED] has issued the checklist to the group and awaits responses. She had planned to co-ordinate the responses and then set up a meeting to discuss the action plan. In light of the current situation [REDACTED] will still coordinate the responses; but the meeting will be put back until normality resumes.

Boys' Brigade As advised at the October meeting, Jean and David Gilchrist tendered their resignation from their BB leadership roles and they will now leave the 1st East Calder Boys' Brigade on 31st May.

A great deal of work has been undertaken to plan the changes required to ensure that the Company continues to provide an outreach to the Boys in this Parish. Due to the number of leaders and their working patterns it has been agreed by them that, for a trial period, the meeting times will change. While still meeting on a Friday evening the Anchors and Juniors will start at 7.00pm and finish at 8.00pm and 8.30pm respectively. The Company Section will start at 7.30pm and finish at 9.15pm.

Session agreed the following:

1. With effect from 1st June 2020, appoint [REDACTED] as Captain following completion of an appropriate course and as the Company's correspondence contact until Captains' training has been completed;
2. With immediate effect agree [REDACTED] registration as a helper until such time as she manages to complete a leadership training course.

Session thanked [REDACTED] for being prepared to take on these responsibilities and also thanked the existing leaders for their continued service which will enable the 1st East Calder Boys' Brigade to move forward.

Session once again thanked Jean and David for their 40 years of dedicated service in advancing Christ's kingdom amongst the boys in the 1st East Calder Boys' Brigade and wished them a happy retirement.

Minister's Report Since the last meeting I have been involved with - no funerals, pastoral visits, our Stated Annual Meeting, chaplaincy conference and assemblies at West Calder High School, assemblies at East Calder Primary School, a Sunday morning visit from the new Head Teacher at West Calder High School who is keen to explore wider links between church and school, interim moderator duties at Whitburn South, Presbytery planning committee meetings and helping coordinate a church and community wide volunteering response to the Covid 19 crisis. This last item has helped bring lots of people together and is

providing opportunities for us all to love our community and the people whom we all live amongst. Thank you to all who have offered support.

We are discovering new ways of keeping in touch, as well as rediscovering old ways, like using the telephone. Praying together in group calls, meeting in video conference calls, live streaming worship and Bairns' Rock and using video and audio to get the message of the Gospel to as many as possible. The church buildings may have closed but the church certainly hasn't. And the God who made us and cares for us, is leading us through this valley of uncertainty, and we will rise from the depths in Easter glory.

Session welcomed all these new ways of keeping in touch and hence keeping church open. Session accorded grateful thank to the Moderator for his hard work in keeping church open and for his gentle encouragement in these trying times.

Safeguarding. [REDACTED] attended a Coordinator Training Course in January. All the paperwork has been completed and [REDACTED] is now officially a Safeguarding Coordinator in the eyes of 121.

Stewardship The Finance Committee arranged for a leaflet on giving to be distributed by elders to all members of our fellowship along with a copy of the March edition of KNEC News. Session acknowledged with grateful thanks the hard work of David and Jean Gilchrist which made this possible.

Andrew Coutts
Session Clerk

WE ARE NOT GOING ON A BIG ADVENTURE



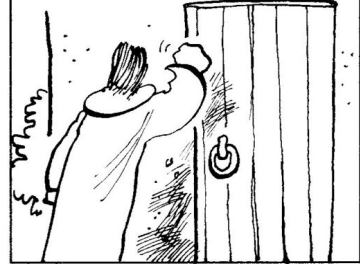
Well, not this year anyway but hopefully the Holiday Club will be back in summer 2021.

Words and Actions

JESUS HAD MANY FRIENDS - AND HE OFTEN WENT WALKING WITH THEM.



ONCE, ON A JOURNEY, JESUS CALLED AT THE HOME OF MARTHA AND MARY



MARTHA WAS VERY PLEASED TO MEET WITH JESUS, AND SHE MADE HIM WELCOME



MARY WAS VERY EXCITED TOO AND WANTED TO LISTEN TO EVERYTHING JESUS HAD TO SAY



BUT MARTHA, WAS NOT VERY IMPRESSED WITH MARY! SHE THOUGHT HER SISTER SHOULD BE HARD AT WORK. NOT SITTING AROUND - JUST LISTENING



LORD, DON'T YOU CARE THAT MARY HAS LEFT ME TO DO ALL THE WORK BY MYSELF?!



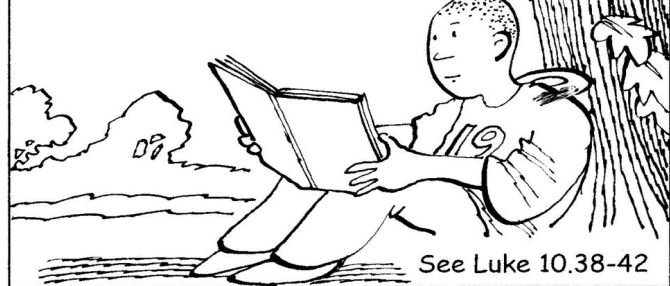
MARTHA, YOU ARE WORRIED AND TROUBLED OVER SO MANY THINGS



JESUS TOLD MARTHA THAT THERE ARE FAR MORE IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE THAN JUST FUSSING OVER A CLEAN HOUSE!



PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN LEARN, LIKE MARTHA, IS TO MAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO JESUS.



See Luke 10.38-42

CONTACT DETAILS

Kirknewton & East Calder Parish Church
c/o 8 Manse Court
East Calder
EH53 0HF
Email: knec-mail@knec4jesus.org.uk

