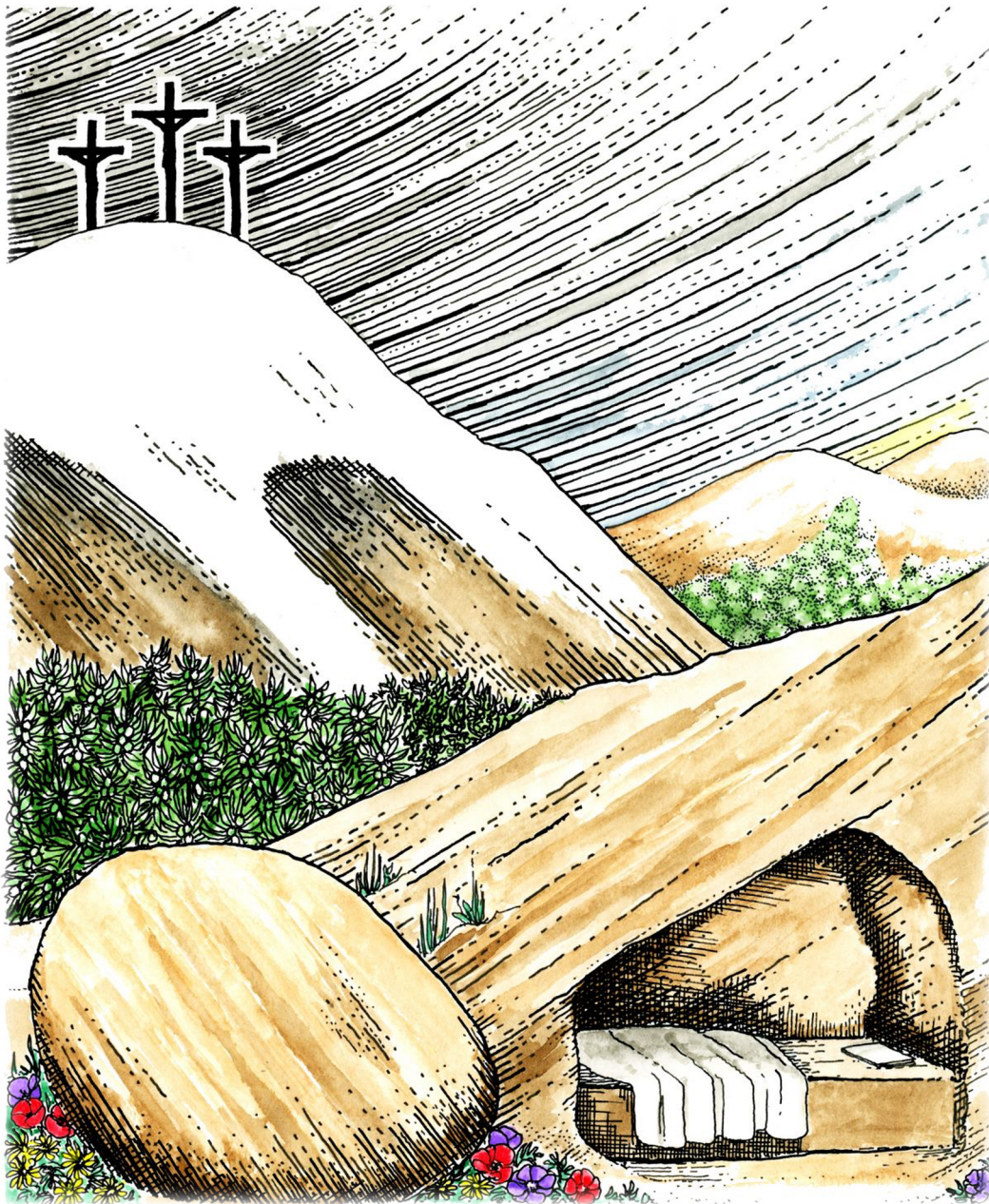


KNEC NEWS



March 2021



Kirknewton and East Calder Parish Church of Scotland
Scottish Charity No: SC006973



Behold, I am making all things new

(Revelation 21:5; Isaiah 43:19)

I'm looking forward to reading the new things people have discovered during the Covid pandemic. And it seems appropriate that as we begin Lent (17 February) that we think not just of giving things up but of starting new things.



I started two new things in the last year. Firstly, I started (again) to learn Scottish Gaelic and was doing well until Covid struck in November and stole the energy needed to keep up my continuous daily streak on a very popular mobile phone application (app). Being naturally too competitive, I took my failure badly.

With ongoing fatigue issues, I've not yet managed to recover the passion for learning but I hope that will come again.

The other new thing I did was join the Scottish Beekeeper's Association and the local beekeeping association. And I've signed up for a beginner's beekeeping course.

Beekeeping is something Sarah and I have talked about over the years and probably had in mind as the sort of thing we might keep for retirement. But maybe the pandemic has sharpened that sort of thinking. Tomorrow isn't guaranteed to any of us so there's always a risk that if we put things off they might never be seen. I'm not saying you'll be seeing a beehive in the manse garden anytime soon but who knows? *(I realise it's probably safer to site a beehive elsewhere).*

These two things aside, having had Covid has forced me to learn to ration limited energy and I hope this has given me an empathy I never had before for people who live with ME or with other long-term conditions affecting their health. If that is you, then I think I'm beginning to understand something of what that feels like.

The Gospel and the Easter Story is all about God bringing light from dark, good from evil, health from illness, fullness from emptiness and so on. The One sent to save was killed by those who needed saving. In refusing to engage in violence (yet still resisting the powers of evil), Christ reveals the true love of God, willing to lay down his life to save others.

Now the Spirit of Christ is with us to help us to take up our own cross, learn to die to our own ego and discover our true self in what is, I wonder, a kind of ongoing resurrection.

On the most basic level, we learn to die in our relationships with others. For example, think of a parent or a husband 'dying' to their own desires in favour of their children's welfare, or their wife's. And, if you're like me, we don't always get it right. In fact, we fail time and time again. But that's ok, because it's as we strive after goodness and righteousness and fail, that we realise how broken and flawed we are. And only then do we learn to rely on the Spirit to transform us into Christ likeness (the true and perfect image of humanity). And that takes faith.

In a sense we are always learning anew and being made new. We are being continually raised from death to life because Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again! (perhaps in ways we never thought).

May the Easter hope in the Spirit propel us forward as we emerge together from the darkness of Covid into the light of Christ life.

Grace and peace everyone,

Alistair

PS As I write this, we are still unsure of Covid restrictions but here's hoping that we can begin to meet for worship in person soon, maybe for Easter? We hope to continue to have church online for those who might prefer that format.

Climate Change

In this month's Life & Work magazine there is a really good letter from Douglas Moore, entitled 'Now is the time'.

In the letter he calls for churches to take action on climate change to play our part in the Scottish Parliament's target of cutting emissions by 75% by 2030 especially with the UN climate summit at the end of the year in Glasgow.

Douglas is right to say that this is Scotland and the UK's chance to show leadership and commitment to the world by implementing measures that will begin to make a difference.

He says this, "Surely now is the time for us as Christians in Scotland to tackle the problems we as churchgoers face? After the pandemic, we will, thankfully, return to our places of worship. However, how many of the places, dear in the hearts of many, are fit places as we consider the impact of climate change around the world? How many of our buildings are fuel efficient? How many face costly repairs that will keep them going for a few years until more costly repairs are needed (and funded by often a dwindling, congregation)? Is it not time to show that we are serious about our commitment and show the world that we mean what we say? If we mean what we say, then we must act as well as talk. It will not be easy; it will mean the closure of much-loved buildings that will contain many cherished memories. Places of worship that have served their purpose for so long but now not fit for twenty first century needs.

However, now is the time to consider our legacy for those still to come. To look at new ways to worship, perhaps in purpose-built, energy efficient buildings that could be shared with more than one denomination? Perhaps to rationalise our congregations so that more can worship in fellowship under the one roof rather than a few churches scattered around the town; each being heated and lit for a service where one building would suffice? There are many ways we, as people of God, can show leadership in this matter. Surely now is the time to do it."

There is plenty of food for thought in this challenge to us. Let's pray for creative ways forward so that we can build back better after Covid. And let's play our part in making COP26 (1-12 November) a success.

(PS the Kirk session has appointed a team to look at the future of our buildings. If you'd like to be part of that discussion then please let Alistair know).

Nuclear Weapons

Also in this month's Life & Work magazine is an advert to join Christian CND. You can find out more at <https://christiancnd.org.uk/lifeandwork/>



As members will recall our meeting on March 3rd, 2020 was the last time KNEC Guild met in the church hall.

Due to covid restrictions it was not possible to hold the Guild AGM at which a new President would be elected and committee members confirmed or replaced. The existing leadership team had already served an extra year over and above the usual three-year term of office whilst seeking to identify new leaders.

Changing the leadership team gives the opportunity to bring forward new ideas to keep us relevant in today's ever-changing world.

If we are to continue to have a Guild at KNEC we need a new leadership team. The suggestion is that a small committee be formed to consider the way forward.

Being part of such a committee would not commit anyone to become an office bearer but would allow a variety of options to be examined.

Please contact either the Treasurer or the retiring President if you are prepared to join a small group to consider the future of the Guild here at KNEC.

Thank you,



The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium (Walter Wink, 1998)

I wish I'd read this years ago even although it is still very relevant to the world we live in today. Essentially, the book is a call to follow Jesus' "third way" (neither violence nor passive non-violence) to discover creative non-violent resistance to the powers which seek to enslave, oppress, dominate, steal, kill, destroy and make people's lives poorer.

Although it's the last chapter in the book, Wink points out the fundamental necessity of rooting all non-violent love for enemies in (intercessory) prayer, prayer which changes and liberates us from the inside out.

"History belongs to intercessors who believe the future into being ... (intercession) changes the world and it changes what is possible to God" (185-6), and "When we fail to pray, God's hands are effectively tied" (196).

He doesn't see prayer as us pleading to a benevolent God but rather, in prayer, we *order* God to bring the kingdom near.

The "Powers" are the organisations, governments and other systems in place in the world and their divine vocation is general welfare. When a Power loses this vocation, it needs to be reminded of its true vocation and held to account.

When power is abused it is often with the use of violence. But such violence cannot be met with further violence in order to try to reach peace. Wink points out that the myth of redemptive violence is endemic in our world and it's not the way of Jesus.

Jesus' "third way" allows for creative non-violent resistance. For example, in Matthew 5, turning the other cheek, giving your coat as well as your outer garment and carrying a soldier's pack a second mile, were all examples of resistance designed to surprise the aggressor and make them think twice about their aggression.

Wink thinks the church has failed to train people in the ways of non-violence and, more often than not, has backed a just war strategy, justifying violence as a 'last

resort'. Despite this, there have been some very successful non-violent resistances in the past, such as Gandhi's opposition to the British in India.

On an individual level, what it boils down to, is whether or not we can see God in our enemy. If we begin with asking ourselves, "how can we find God in our enemies?" Then we are on the road to fulfilling Jesus' command to love your enemies (Matthew 5:44).

God of love,
You love, and have forgiven all people.
May we see you in them,
And love them,
As you have loved us.
In Jesus name,
Amen.

Alistair

FUNERALS

Mrs Margaret Stark on December 17th at West Lothian Crematorium

Mrs Charlotte Try on December 21st at West Lothian Crematorium

Mrs Joan Johnston on January 15th at West Lothian Crematorium

Mrs Sandra McGill on January 29th at West Lothian Crematorium

Mr William Kennedy on February 5th at Kirknewton Cemetery





A year to remember or forget?

Thanks to those who shared their “LOCKDOWN” thoughts and activities.

We've bought ourselves a roll-up jigsaw mat. With a two-year-old spaniel in the house, it would have been crazy to leave a half-finished jigsaw sitting about! We've also purchased a jigsaw called 2020, which is a collage of all the events, rules, milestones, and the new vocabulary that defined the pandemic year.



We haven't actually started it yet but, once we've done it, we will be happy to loan it to other jiggers (suitably sprayed with antibacterial!)

Fran

*It's been nearly a year now since our churches closed,
But we haven't stopped singing His praise
Each Sunday, at ten, we gather
Though we're all in our very own space,
And with Alistair's lead, we join as one
Isolation gets a slap in the face!
We pray and we sing, tune into His Word,
We're bound by a Faith, strong and true
And we know, that in time, God will open our doors
And we'll get back there again in our pew!*



Norma

Dear All,

As we stride purposefully into the third month of 2021, I am delighted to have the opportunity to write a few lines to say thank you for listening to my music each week, whether that is online or via email.

The transition from Live performance to recording has not always run smoothly but I am delighted that I am able to contribute in some small way to our online services.

Recording was never a really serious issue until lockdown as no one was ever likely to hear my recordings! The red Record button throws me completely, I make silly mistakes, play too fast, too slow, not enough verses, too many... the list is endless but Alistair, if you are reading this, I really do enjoy recording hymns and songs for you and feel it a great privilege to be part of our Church family.

Another challenge and Home-schooling parents, guardians and grandparents, will appreciate how Google Classroom has become part of our daily lives. Assisting pupils with their work at home has also been instructive as I have to know about the subjects I am working with, so crash courses in Biology, History and PE theory are my new daily tasks but enjoyable nonetheless.

Lastly a big thank you to all who take part in our daily Church Chat and our Bible in One Year group, shared prayers, worship, songs and general chit-chat has become a vital and most inspirational part of my life both within and beyond our Church family. My thanks to you all, I miss seeing you and meeting at church but send my best wishes and prayers for good health.

Keep safe and God bless you Everyone.

Penny

DIAMOND PAINTING

Diamond Painting is a cross between Paint by Numbers and Cross Stitch. With Diamond Painting, you apply thousands of tiny "diamonds" to a coded adhesive canvas to create shimmering Diamond Art.

The butterfly on the cushion has around 5,000 "diamonds" and my current project over 20,000

Something you can spend a few minutes or a few hours on at a time (with minimum clearing up).



Jean

Extract from Session Minutes of 24th November 2020 and 26th January 2021

New Board Appointments

Session noted with approval that [REDACTED] had been appointed as Board Clerk and that [REDACTED] had been appointed as Treasurer.

GDPR Annual Report

Further to the meeting on 29th September, David Gilchrist advised that only 3 comments had been received regarding the Privacy Notice, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy, Legitimate Interest Assessment Form, Record of Processing Form and Subject Access Requests procedures. No changes are required and the documents will be marked as reviewed as of 24th November.

People

(1) Session noted with approval the award of Long Service Certificates for 30 years' service to 5 members. [REDACTED]

(2) The Clerk has received an e-mail from [REDACTED] in which she gives her official resignation from the life of Kirknewton and East Calder Church as she and her husband are relocating south of the border at the beginning of February. Session noted with many thanks all that [REDACTED] has contributed to the life of our congregation. She will be missed. Session wished [REDACTED] well in their move to a new stage in their lives together.

Reopening Our Buildings

We decided in November to try to open our buildings in January. However, given the stage we are at now with Covid, Easter now seems more realistic. Certainly, initially we think there may be small numbers wishing to attend in person services so perhaps we should alternate Sundays between the two churches. Alternate services throw up the interesting discussion point of demonstrating our unity as one congregation verses the importance of having a presence in both villages. It is the intention to continue online services when we open for in person services. The Moderator suggested that we might want to consider live streaming in person services as well as recording them. A modest outlay of around £800 plus a small monthly charge would buy us a camera and mobile wi-fi. As our next meeting is at the end of February, we have time to firm up on what we want to do.

Mission and Outreach

- (1) Session expressed many thanks to those who led and participated in the 4 Advent services. On average there were 103 views with 180 views of the 4th service.
- (2) Alpha started on Thursday 21st January with 16 attending, 1 being a non-church person responding to a personal invitation.
- (3) Our normal online Sunday morning services are averaging 100 views.

EnerJ

Session noted the wonderful nativity service during Advent. EnerJ will meet on the last Sunday of each month online. Session expressed many thanks to the EnerJ team for all their hard work.

Other Services

- (1) A Bereavement Service took place online. It was a one to one service between the Moderator and a non-church person from Kirknewton. The Moderator found it very moving and well worthwhile.
- (2) Christmas Services noted as being very good.

Minister's Report

Funerals - Margaret Stark, Charlotte Try and Joan Johnston. Andre Groenewald conducted Joan's funeral.

Weddings - 2 parish weddings booked for September and October. The first session of the Alpha marriage preparation course completed online.

I have completed the First Aid for Mental Health course and have the certificate to prove it!

Livingston Churches Together is now set up on Facebook. I contributed along with other leaders to produce a series of Christmas videos. A similar thing is planned for Easter.

Monday prayer on Zoom - [REDACTED] is now hosting this regularly.

The Listening Project - 7 volunteers doing the online version of 'Get Listening' with Listen Well Scotland at the moment. No new requests for support. Recruitment of a coordinator is on hold at the moment.

Meet the Minister online has not restarted since having Covid and nor has Bairns' Rock. [REDACTED] will be a big loss to Bairns' Rock when we return in person.

Reuse and Thrive - plans are to open the retail shop in the Main Street as soon as possible; online craft events happened in February; more shop volunteers welcome.

Many thanks to [REDACTED] for all her assistance in delivering the DVD's. We need a first aider. I have a certificate but it expires in March.

News from Presbytery

It was noted that, following a further meeting between representatives of the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and West Lothian and the Principal Clerk, it was re-affirmed that a union of the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and West Lothian is designed to be a first step towards a future union of the current Presbyteries of Edinburgh, West Lothian, Lothian, Melrose and Peebles, Duns and Jedburgh.

Safeguarding

[REDACTED] thanked [REDACTED] for her significant input. On a personal level she will be sorely missed. We do need to replace [REDACTED]. Might there be a volunteer?

Work continues to ensure that SG7 (register of volunteers) records only current workers. Session noted that both SG7 and SG11 (annual audit of Safeguarding) are now in electronic form.

Other Business

(1) Session agreed to conduct the morning service(s) on Sunday 25th April. Further, Session also agreed to conduct the evening services on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week (29th, 30th and 31st March).

(2) The Clerk informed Session that as at 31st December 2020 there are 285 members on the Communion Roll. There were 288 members as at 1st January 2020. We lost 4 members over the year through death and gained 1 member from Whitburn South by certificate. This 285 number includes 22 people who are not visited for one reason or another e.g. we don't know where they are.

(3) The Moderator was warmly thanked for keeping going despite suffering from Covid and still suffering lingering symptoms.

Andrew Coutts

Session Clerk



Reuse & Thrive is a new Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) based in Kirknewton and East Calder. The original idea for setting up the charity was to create an organisation that could support the local community to use its resources effectively and reduce our collective impact on the

planet. This is the core of the organisations values and based on this it aims to support the community in:

- The prevention and relief of poverty – through the provision of local shop selling good quality second-hand goods at affordable prices, also through linking with other charities to support our more vulnerable community members access quality clothing with dignity and compassion
- The advancement of citizenship or community development – through the provision of volunteer opportunities and through wider community engagement on matters of managing our resources and accessing what we need to thrive and grow
- The advancement of education – by providing classes on upcycling, recycling, crafting and general wellbeing as well as providing work experience opportunities for disadvantaged young people and those struggling to access the workplace

From its beginnings in early 2020 the organisation now has a Board of four trustees and a growing number of volunteers. Thanks to a local businessman, we have premises on the main street of East Calder and a second hand retail shop is now stocked and ready to open once Covid restrictions allow. This shop initially will be open two to three mornings a week, run by volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer please get in touch with Alistair or as below.

While Covid has slowed down the organisations plans to engage with the community more widely there are things happening that you can take part in online. We have delivered online workshops on Christmas crafting, on making hearts from wastepaper for loved ones and on 22nd Feb there will be a workshop on making pots and containers for seeds and plants, in preparation for warmer weather. These workshops have turned out to be a hit with a broad range of ages in the community.

These workshops are accessible to all ages and stages, under 8's may need an adult to help and require no special skills or equipment Please message the face book page

at Reuse & Thrive or e-mail info@reuseandthrive.org.uk for the Zoom link to take part in these.

Also look out on the Facebook page for further information about the shop opening and give-aways to try and reduce the challenges of lock down.

General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR)

It's almost 3 years since the GDPR became effective. At that time, we advised that the Kirk Session and Congregational Board had agreed a Privacy Notice outlining how we use, disclose and protect personal information. Copies of our Privacy Notice, Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Policy are available on the Church's website at www.knec4jesus.org.uk



General
Data
Protection
Regulation

Copies of the Privacy Notice are also displayed in both Churches and in East Calder Church Hall and can be viewed when the buildings reopen.

One of the requirements of the GDPR is that the information held by the Church is accurate. Please let your elder or Session Clerk know if any of your personal data have changed e.g., name, address, email address etc.

If you require any information regarding data protection, please contact David Gilchrist at knec.dataprotection@outlook.com or telephone 07900 592417.

Alpha Course on Zoom.

On 21st January, the KNEC Alpha course started on Zoom and meets online every Thursday evening (like so many of our activities, face to face meetings - replaced by technology!). The course runs for 11 evening meetings and one Saturday meeting.

13 screens logged onto the first meeting, some with 2 people online, and the numbers have remained constant as the weeks have progressed. The Alpha film series is being used (a more modern version than previous versions we have used at Kirknewton and East Calder).

As with all Alpha courses, there is lots to think about and reflect upon, with much learning, enjoyment and great benefit being shared by all.

(..... and the technology is working great).

Although we are unable to meet together at this time there are many ways for us to keep in touch. Some of the following may be of interest to you.

Do you know of anyone, wishing to watch KNEC Church services but cannot connect online? In these circumstances, DVD discs of the online services can be provided and delivered. If you know of anyone with or without a Church connection, who would find this helpful, please contact Alistair [REDACTED] to make the arrangements.



Prayer Meeting every Monday on Zoom.

Men's Group Meeting on Zoom every second Saturday.



House Group Meetings via email every Wednesday.

Boys' Brigade meets on Zoom on Friday evenings.





Online cafe continues every Thursday from 10.30am on Zoom, details from Alistair.

'Church Chat' on What's App

'KNEC Messaging' on Messenger

Website: www.knec4jesus.org.uk to access online services.

CONTACT DETAILS



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