



The Church of Scotland

stepps parish church

# PROSPECT

[www.steppsparishchurch.org](http://www.steppsparishchurch.org)

At the heart of our community,  
celebrating faith and life to the full,



Scottish Charity No. SCO14212  
December/January 2021, Issue 396

# Pastoral Letter



*Just what makes that little old ant  
Think he'll move that rubber tree plant  
Anyone knows an ant can't  
Move a rubber tree plant  
But he's got high hopes  
He's got high hopes  
He's got high apple pie  
In the sky hopes  
So any time you're gettin' low  
'Stead of lettin' go  
Just remember that ant*

*You have to be “of a certain age” to have any memory of this song. So, my younger readers might like to listen on Youtube.*

***He’s got high hopes...*** *Are your hopes high? Maybe they are pretty low as you continue to struggle through these troublesome times.*

*What chance is there that we are ever going to see an end to all that Covid has brought us?*

*What chance did the little old ant have to move that rubber tree plant?*

*What chance would we have given for the world having a vaccine for Covid 19 before the end of the year?*

*Yet, as I write, we have had a week of better news... no, more like good , and encouraging news. There are now several vaccines near ready, each offering around 95% effectiveness against the virus. Maybe, at last, following all the tragic news, we can allow ourselves some measure of hope. The scientists have worked long hours to develop these vaccines; many valiant volunteers have held out their arms for the jab, hoping that their small part in the trials will help the world have hope.*

*Soon you may be leaving the clinic with a sore arm but still singing "I've got high hopes!"*

*Hope*

*As you see from the top of this letter and on the banner at the front of the church, our theme for Advent this year is **Hope is Born.***

*We often focus on hope during advent but this year, with the help of Christian Aid, we will make **Hope the Word for Advent 2020**, I cannot think of a time in my lifetime when the world has needed hope more. For so many hope has been sparse and elusive. So many suffering illness and, so sadly, many mourn the death of a loved one due either directly or as consequence of the virus. Looking to the future, 2021 looks bleak for so many; hardships, loss of employment, more and more folk dependent on food banks, these are only a few of the challenges we will face.*

*Yet, I believe with every fibre of my being that **Hope is Born.***

*“For to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,  
who is the Messiah, the Lord”*

*There is Hope, not in the common use of that word like “I  
hope it will not rain today” or “I hope my teams wins on  
Saturday”. Not just any old word but The Word. The Word  
made flesh born among us. Jesus, born to love us, born to  
bring is Life; Life in all its fulness, Life in abundance, Born  
to be The Hope of the Word.*

*I leave you with another song that will, alongside Kathy  
Galloway’s song that Lorraine mentions later in this  
Prospect, serve as our theme song for advent.*

*1. O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in the dark street shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
**The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.***

*Yes! There, in Phillips Brooks’ wondrous words, is the  
answer. The answer to every question, every worry, every  
dark time. All our fears are met and vanquished by Hope,  
Hope is Born in Bethlehem and Hope comes, still, in that  
little town of Bethlehem and across all space and time.*

*I join with Philippa and Elaine in wishing you all the  
blessings of the Christ Child and all of His Hope for 2021  
and all years to come*

*Love Gordon*

## **Thanks to Yvonne**

*This issue of Prospect is the last edited by Yvonne Wallace. Over these past years, Yvonne has done a remarkable job in editing our parish magazine. It has never been an easy task. She has had to cajole and push folk to get 'their copy' in on time and then worked to cram all the words into their places. It has been difficult at times but it is also obvious that it has also been a labour of love; love for her church and love for her Lord. We join in thanking her for the valuable ministry she has carried out in her time as editor. We wish her and her family all God's blessings. Gxx*

## **Christmas Hope in a Covid World**

When set to task writing this month's Prospect, I don't mind admitting to you all that I struggled somewhat this month. We all love the buzz and excitement on a Sunday morning as we cheerily gather and hear the buzz around the Church. If we are lucky enough, we often hear snippets of the children rehearsing for our Nativity, see the ladies preparing our much looked forward to tea and coffee's. We know they'll delight us with some festive treats as we look forward to some after church fellowship. The ladies preparing the flowers each Sunday and making plans to decorate the church. There is a great feeling of

anticipation and expectancy and excitement builds as we think of gift services, carol concert's and parties to look forward to but not this year.

We had a plan which quickly had to change to plan B and alas Tier 4 restrictions were imposed and so we must now have another plan. Amid our frustrations and disappointments, we postpone or amend and alter all these much-anticipated preparations.

How do I begin to write our monthly issue with the constant changing and limitations we face? Words that normally flow easily for me escaped me this month. That is until Gordon shared his thoughts with me as we prepare to face a very different season of Advent as a congregation.

How do we prepare for Advent in these challenging times? In a word **Hope!** It was Gordon who reminded me that ***Hope is Born at Christmas.*** One small word but one which means so much. We must ***Hope*** and pray that in this COVID-19 world we don't lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas. I make no apology for shouting the word from the rooftops as ***hope*** is something, we all cling too and long for in returning us all to as near a sense of normal as we can possibly return to. It will be a very different season of Advent this year, no festive singing or

sharing or hugs, but *hope is* what we must continue to hold onto. There is so much to *hope* for. A return to life as we knew it before COVID-19, a vaccine, a holiday, an end to all pain and suffering and hardships. We each will have our own hopes and prayers and concerns for the future but together as a Church we will all get there together and I promise you all that next year we will have the biggest of celebrations. For now, however please know that we miss you all and long to welcome everyone back in our midst.

Let me use this opportunity to wish you all the most blessed of Christmases and a peaceful New year.

Yours affectionately

***Lorraine Robertson***

***Session Clerk***

## **Christmas Mail**

We have decided to continue with our usual church Christmas mail again this year as we know so many of us have been estranged or isolated and will not be able to share your usual festive greetings with each other. Angela Orme has very kindly offered to oversee the arrangements this year and has been busy



recruiting some volunteers to help manage the deliveries along with some help from the Boy's Brigade who have volunteered to be of some assistance in helping with deliveries. Post boxes will be in the church and in the entrance to the large hall from Thursday the 26th of November between 10-12.00 am and run for the following two Thursday's until the 13th of December before sorting and delivery the week commencing 14th of December. Additional volunteers interested in helping can contact Angela Orme on **0141- 779-2206**.

A donation of 30p per card or £1 for 4 cards is suggested to avoid handling small change. Please make sure all addresses are local to Stepps for ease of delivery with the correct name and address shown in full.

## **World Mission: News From Palestine - A Landscape of Broken Dreams**

The following article is taken from a series of Coronavirus Updates from Church of Scotland partners throughout the world. In this article, the Rev John McCulloch, Minister of St Andrew's Jerusalem & Tiberias, reports on the challenges



facing Palestinian communities across the West Bank

**It was the French author Jean-Paul Sartre who once said that 'life begins on the other side of despair'.**

The challenge for many of our Palestinian friends trapped in the occupied Palestinian Territories, is that Covid has turned an already desperate situation into an impossible struggle. There is real despair amongst the Palestinians, as everything seems to be stacked against them. With a collapsed economy, no government furlough scheme to help those who are out of work, a fragile health system, and surrounded by walls and checkpoints; it is little wonder that many are losing hope.

On a geopolitical level, the normalising relations between Israel and other Arab nations is serving to entrench the injustices of Occupation, and the Palestinians feel abandoned and trapped. With fewer internationals here because of travel restrictions, settler violence and house demolitions have been on the increase.

A few weeks ago, after a month of lockdown in Israel, I was able to travel from Jerusalem to Area C of the West Bank to visit and accompany some

of the Church of Scotland's partners there. On three consecutive days, I visited communities which are struggling under the double blow of occupation and pandemic.

On one of the days I travelled with Rabbis for Human Rights, a long-standing partner of the Church of Scotland. It is a group of Rabbis who are advocating for an end to the Occupation. They rebuild Palestinian homes that have been destroyed, offer protective presence from settler attacks, and fight for their human rights.

We drove through the scarred landscape of checkpoints, walls, and barbed wire, to an olive grove which is situated between two illegal settler outposts. During this year's olive harvest, this Palestinian farming community have been attacked by armed settlers. Some of their trees have been burnt and destroyed.

We spent the day listening to their stories and picking olives with them, as the army and settlers looked on from a distance. We then sat under the silvery green shade of an olive tree and joined in an act of worship. A Jewish Rabbi sang a song, a fellow Christian minister said a prayer, a Muslim leader shared some thoughts.

The following day I was with a Palestinian UN worker, visiting a family just outside Bethlehem

whose home had been bulldozed. All their belongings were lying outside. As we sat on plastic chairs with the family, drinking Arabic coffee amidst the rubble of their home; on the hill opposite, Israeli settlers were watching us. We listened to the story of the family, who not only have lost their home, but now have no work, no income, no help from the local authorities. The father told us how his leg had needed to be amputated, and with no money for a prosthetic replacement, it now made it impossible for him to work. Not that there is work in any case.

The third day that week, I visited the Tent of Nations, in the hills to the west of Bethlehem, to help them with their olive harvest. Surrounded by settlements on all sides, we harvested the olives with a group of young Jewish volunteers. In the afternoon we shared communion at the Olive Grove Chapel, amidst the threatened olive trees. As part of our communion liturgy, I included these words:

*And on the night before your crucifixion,  
you sweated drops of blood amidst the olive trees.  
You chose to drink the cup of suffering for our  
sake,  
and when the soldiers came and arrested you,  
you refused to meet violence with violence,*

*to teach us a better way,  
and to establish a new kingdom here on earth.  
A kingdom where love conquers all.  
A kingdom where all dividing walls are brought  
down.  
A kingdom where love extends, even to our  
enemies.  
These three days in the West Bank took me to a  
landscape of broken dreams.  
If there is any small sign of hope, it is to be found  
by those who are willing to reach out beyond the  
dividing walls and embrace the other, and in  
remembering that we worship a God who is not  
distant from human suffering.*

## **LHM Update**

Following last month's news about proposed staff redundancies at LHM, it is great to be able to report that the extension of the Government Furlough Scheme has enabled these redundancies to be cancelled.

Some, but not all, staff are back helping to deliver essential support to those affected by poverty and homelessness. Every weekday, LHM is providing emergency food and clothing packs to those in need.

As reported last month, the usual Glasgow Winter Night Shelter hosted by LHM has been replaced by the Glasgow Overnight Welcome Centre (GOWC), based in City hotel accommodation. It is encouraging to see so many homeless charities in the City pulling together to ensure this will be properly supported. LHM has committed to providing daily weekday lunches to residents there throughout its period of operation from 1st December to 31st March.

In the week leading up to Christmas, LHM in conjunction with the charity Social Bite plan to deliver 100 microwaveable meals in addition to delivering Christmas Day meals to the hostel residents in East Campbell Street and to those at the GOWC.

*LHM send their sincere thanks to those in our congregation who have donated towards these efforts.*

## **WFO 2021**

For those who give their church offerings using WFO envelopes, your envelopes for 2021 should be delivered with this edition of Prospect. If you receive envelopes which you no longer wish to use, please return them to your Church Elder.

Conversely, if you would like to give in this manner, please contact Liz Ashmole (779 1086) to request a set of envelopes. Thank you.

## **Advent and Christmas Activities**

Preparations for our Advent and Christmas activities are sadly restricted this year as we continue to face local and national Covid-19 restrictions. We have however planned the following events detailed below. We hope that you will be able to join us for some or all the activities as we prepare to welcome Christ into our world.



On the first Sunday of Advent, 29th November, churches across the UK will join together for Carols for **Christian Aid**, singing ‘When out of poverty is born’ in our services and

standing in hope with our neighbours near and far.

This year we have learned that together we can face a global crisis. Now we stand in solidarity with our neighbours still facing crisis, with a love for our neighbours that builds hope.

We hope that this Advent prayer chain will help you to create a decoration in time for Christmas and to cultivate a sense of waiting with hope as your journey towards Emmanuel, God with us! We invite you to create a prayer chain by making one loop of the chain each day in Advent, taking a few moments every day to reflect and pray for what we are all waiting for – for God's vision for the world to be realised. Christian Aid will offer a prompt or question for each day of advent so please follow us on our Facebook page if possible or log into our website page to see the link for the resources.



### **You will need:**

- Some A4 pieces of paper
- A ruler and scissors to cut a 1.5cm strip each day



- Pens or pencils Glue stick or sticky tape
- Five minutes every day of Advent!

## **Advent waiting**

Although Advent is traditionally a time of waiting, the busyness of modern life and preparing for all the trappings of Christmas means that this doesn't usually feel like the case. But 2020 has been far from a usual year. For many people, there has been a lot of waiting: waiting for news, waiting for jobs, waiting to hold loved ones close, waiting and watching for the new normal. Such waiting has been hard. Our Christmas Appeal highlights the story of Mekonnen, who alongside his community in Ethiopia, is waiting and watching for the rains to come so he can water his cattle. He, like millions of people around the world, is still waiting for climate justice. The year of 2020 was due to be a crucial year for climate justice, but the UN climate conference that was to be held in November in Glasgow has been postponed until 2021. People in vulnerable and marginalised communities are bearing the brunt of the climate crisis – 2021 must be a turning point. We invite you to pray with and for all those waiting for

climate justice as you create your prayer chain this Advent. Since Advent starts on Sunday 29 November there are 26 links in our advent prayer chain. We also encourage you to sign up to our virtual prayer chain to join with those praying around the world for climate justice in the lead up to COP 21. Our watching and waiting in prayer is more important than ever.

## **Candle-lighting**

We will continue the tradition of lighting the candles on our Advent crown each Sunday. Each candle has its own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the colour violet is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, atonement, and sacrifice.



The **First Sunday of Advent** candle represents **Hope** for all God's people and this year will take on particular significance and poignancy for us all and as such we have decided to share this Christmas message of Hope with our community in these difficult and trying times.

## **Charlie Brown Tree**

Christmas would not be Christmas in Stepps Parish Church without our beloved Charlie Brown Tree a particular favourite of Gordon's.

## **Share your Christmas messages**



We may be separated but we still want to hear from you all. Help us to decorate our poor little *Charlie Brown Tree*.

**Send us your Christmas messages.**

We have a selection of Christmas baubles and Tags that are waiting to be filled in.

Why not pop along to the Church as you go for your daily exercise and pop into the Sanctuary on a Thursday and leave your Christmas prayers, blessing or messages of Hope or pop them in our mailbox outside.

For our younger attendee's or the young at heart perhaps you can share with us your Santa list wishes and we can read a selection of these out in the coming weeks.

***“Jesus is the Light of the World”***

**John 8 Verse 12**

Prepare a festive Candle using your Christian Aid candle shield to stand with our neighbours near and far and celebrate the hopeful light Emmanuel brings this Christmas. Share a photo of your candle on our Facebook page or social media using the hashtag #lovebuildshope.

Or for those not sure how to do this send it onto Ailsa or myself and we will aim to bring together as many of them together as possible in our video streamed service and share on our Facebook page.

## Sing along with us as we celebrate the Season of Advent



Sunday the 29th of November has been suggested as the proposed date for **Carols for Christian Aid** however as we will remain in Tier 4 we would like to invite you all to sing along at home using the words to help you but we “*Hope*” to host a virtual Carol concert online as an alternative to our usual Watchnight service and ask you all to prepare your Christian aid Candle Shield to use. Send us in a photograph of your decorated Candle shield and we can share it on our PowerPoint slides and on our Facebook page.

## **“When out of poverty is born”**

When out of poverty is born a dream that will  
not die a landless, weary folk find strength to  
stand with heads held high, it's then we learn  
from those who wait to greet the promised  
day: 'The Lord is coming; don't lose heart Be  
blest: prepare the way!'

When people wander far from God, forget to  
share their bread, they find their wealth an empty  
thing, their spirits are not fed. For only just and  
tender love the hungry soul will stay. And so,  
God's prophets echo still: 'Be blest: prepare the  
way!'

When God took flesh and came to earth, the  
world turned upside down, and in the strength of  
women's faith the Word of Life was born. She  
knew that God would raise the low, it pleased her  
to obey. Rejoice with Mary in the call: 'Be blest:  
prepare the way!'

***Words: Kathy Galloway, provided with  
permission Suggested tune: Kingsfold***

## **A Journey Through The Saints**

Whilst in our faith we do not venerate saints, we  
do recognise them as outstanding Christians who

we respect and honour. They are the heroes of our faith whose godly lives deserve to be remembered. Over the next year, we will look at some of the well-known Saints, and a few of the lesser known.

We start with two very familiar Saints, particularly apt to remember at this time of year:

**ST. ANDREW** – Scotland's patron saint, Saint Andrew, was an apostle and brother of Peter. He was a fisherman by trade and his home was at Capernaum. He is commonly called the first disciple and he is mentioned in the Bible, notably for helping to feed the five thousand and in the episode of the Greeks wishing to meet Jesus. He is said to have travelled to Greece to preach Christianity where he was ultimately crucified at Patras on an X shaped cross and hence this is represented by the diagonal white cross on the Scottish saltire flag. St. Andrew is also the patron saint of Greece and Russia.

**ST. NICHOLAS** - St. Nicholas was born during the third century in the village of Patara in Asia Minor. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you



own and give the money to the poor,” Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

His reputation for helping the poor and giving secret gifts to people who needed it led to his modern day association with Santa Claus.

The most famous story about St. Nicholas tells how the Christmas custom of hanging up stockings to put presents in first started! It goes like this.....there was a poor man who had three daughters. The man was so poor that he did not have enough money for a dowry, so his daughters couldn't get married. One night, Nicholas secretly dropped a bag of gold down the chimney and into the house (this meant that the oldest daughter was then able to be married). The bag fell into a stocking that had been hung by the fire to dry! This was repeated later with the second daughter. Finally, determined to discover the person who had given him the money, the father secretly hid by the fire every evening until he caught Nicholas dropping in a bag of gold. Nicholas begged the

man to not tell anyone what he had done, because he did not want to bring attention to himself. But soon the news got out and when anyone received a secret gift, it was thought that maybe it was from Nicholas.

## **Christmas Morning Service**

Join us for Worship on Christmas morning at 11.00am in the church as we celebrate the arrival of the Christ Child. This will be a short, informal Family Celebration Service. You are asked to bring along a present that you have received and share together a time of joy and celebration of our Saviour's birth. "Wishing you all a Joyous and Peaceful Christmas and may your New Year be Happy and filled with the Hope that the season brings.



# **LHM 2020**

## **CHRISTMAS APPEAL**



**KEEP THOSE AFFECTED BY HOMELESSNESS  
WARM THIS CHRISTMAS**

with a

**WINTER WEATHER PACK**

Winter Weather Packs contain; gloves, hat, scarf, face mask, and a phone number providing access to support and chaplaincy services. Each pack will be delivered to an individual who finds themselves isolated and affected by homelessness this festive season.

You could sponsor the cost of a Winter weather pack at £12 or simply make a donation to our Christmas Appeal and help us to continue to care for and support those who are isolated and without a home over the festive period.

**HELP US SHARE SOME WARMTH THIS WINTER.**

**THANKYOU.**



## **Charity Appeal Christmas 2020**

If you have not already guessed by now this year it was agreed the ongoing restrictions makes it difficult to fully open our doors to host our usual Christmas Eve family and Watchnight services which deeply saddens us. It was decided that we would only have one designated charity this year for our Christmas Charity Appeal. We have therefore decided to support the overseas Charity Christian Aid and urge you all to consider giving to our Christian Aid Partners who need our thoughts and Prayers this Christmas and beyond.

***This Christmas, love builds hope in some of the world's toughest places.***

This Christmas we're fundraising for families still facing crisis around the world. When the rains stopped in Kawite's village in Ethiopia, her and her daughters walked for five hours a day to collect water. Her family often went hungry and her children missed school. When the prolonged drought was becoming unbearable, Christian Aid and our local partner worked alongside the community to build a local pond, to provide safe, reliable water. The community pond saves Kawite hours of precious time she can spend at home

with her family, and the other support from Christian Aid's partner has empowered her to put food on the table and build a better future for her community, her children, and her baby on the way. She said 'The pond is not only for me. It has changed the life of this village.' This Christmas we're building hope for more families still facing crisis. Your gift could restore a water source, provide seeds that grow in drought, or provide a platform to empower women.

Donate online using our JustGiving page for Christian Aid's campaign - Christmas 2020, which is live and ready to receive donations. We'll send the money you raise directly to Christian Aid every week, so you can focus on your fundraising. Alternatively Christian Aid envelopes are available within the church or can be made available to you on request.

Here's your page's web address:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Stepps-Parish-Church-Stepps>

Last minute Christmas shopping to do remember you can support us on AmazonSmile. We are now able to receive income from the AmazonSmile programme which will donate portion of your

spending to Stepps Parish Church as a registered charity.

Simply [click here](#) to shop through our designated AmazonSmile account or type *amazonsmile* in the search bar and follow the instructions.



### The Listening Project

The Church of Scotland is looking to hear from people 16 and older throughout the Church about their experiences of faith and church during the coronavirus pandemic.



## THE LISTENING PROJECT

Faith and the Church during the pandemic

As a Church we recognise that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected us all. We feel it is important that as a Church we listen to one another's experiences and share what we have learnt from this difficult and challenging time.

To help us do this, the Church of Scotland's trustees are initiating a Listening Project. We want to hear from all kinds of people aged 16 and older from across the Church, people of different generations, living in different circumstances in every corner of the country.

During this season of extraordinary challenges and unparalleled opportunities, this project will enable us to share our experiences; to hear one another's perspectives and, in doing so, develop a richer and more complete understanding of what has been happening and what we should be learning.

Regardless of your connection or involvement with the Church, we would love to hear from you. We want to hear from people of different generations and from all corners of the country. By taking some time to reflect and consider, it is hoped that everyone who participates will benefit personally as well as contribute to an important shared venture.



The Church of Scotland Listening Project has been carefully designed to ensure that you can share your experiences and insights with confidence, fully assured that your confidentiality will be carefully guarded.

Participation is via [an online form](#), but if you would like to arrange for someone to help you, please call the following number and leave a brief message: 07966 286617. Likewise, if you know others who would like to be involved, but who are unable to complete the online form, please encourage them to call that number. A team of trained facilitators is available to enable people to complete the form over the phone. Access to the internet or familiarity with IT should not be a barrier to anyone making their contribution.

Please share the word among anyone who has any connection with the Church of Scotland and encourage them to share their unique contribution.

## **Worship DVD**

We are now able to record our worship services onto a DVD disc which can be made available on request for anyone who is unable to join us online for our worship service. If needed please get in touch.

To listen in live to our Sunday morning worship service dial 0141 -815-1335 or catch us online each Sunday on our Youtube channel.

And finally from us all at Stepps Parish Church a huge thank you to Yvonne Wallace who has been the editor of Prospect for the last few years and has done a wonderful job in producing our Church magazine for all our enjoyment. May you now have a well-deserved rest Yvonne to enjoy your grandchildren. Our grateful thanks and appreciation for all your hard work over the years from all your friends at Stepps Parish Church.



If you have some time available or are perhaps interested, in taking over as editor please speak to Lorraine or Yvonne who will be able to talk you through what is involved.

## **A View From The Pew**

With a renewed attack by the Covid virus disrupting our lives again, every news bulletin, interview and public pronouncement talks about the threat to “Christmas”. This must be currently the most over-used word after Covid itself. The media say glibly “Christmas is threatened”.

“There might be no Christmas this year” and so on, forgetting that Christmas was a religious celebration long before modern consumerism.

They ignore what Christmas is actually about.

They think it’s about shopping, presents, decorations, and – most importantly – gatherings to eat and drink, even though this year they are risking their lives attending these get-togethers. Last year Marks & Spencer had a slogan “It’s not Christmas without M and S”, and I don’t think they meant Mary and the Saviour.

With such scant regard for the true meaning of Christmas, it’s tempting to suggest that the festival should be renamed Wintermas, and leave Christmas to the Christians, and yet .....

A survey in 2018 found that almost 55% of the population consider themselves Christian.

Having the celebration of Christmas is an opportunity for some of the 55%, who rarely go

to church to attend a school nativity play, a church service, or sing hymns and carols, and be reminded of their inner faith, so perhaps we must simply accept the free advertising and be appreciative that it stirs renewed belief, peace and contentment in so many people.

We all know how difficult it has been to keep in touch with friends during Covid, but for most people their phone, a text message or an email have been the answer. We would love to be able to keep in touch with you more often to let you know what we are doing, send any special messages we have e.g. about our online services, to say "Hello – how are you?" or pass on important information re worship.

Likewise we are keen to hear from our church family too during these challenging times.

We know not everyone is able to connect with us online so we are trying to explore other ways of getting out messages but are keen to know what you all think too.

If you would like to be included in our email list or receive communication via text message, we would be grateful if you could send us your

mobile phone number, so that we can send messages quickly and easily, along with your email address so that we can send attachments we think might interest you.

Please let me assure you that any details you give us will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and will not be disclosed to any other member or organisation within or outwith the church. We are legally bound by law to observe this .

Please send your name and telephone number for texts, and your email address if applicable to Lorraine Robertson who will update your records.

Kindest Regards

Lorraine Robertson

Session Clerk

[sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com](mailto:sessionclerkspc2020@gmail.com)

## **Carols on the Doorstep**

A nationwide Carol Service is being organised where everyone isolates on their own doorstep and joins in singing carols. The singing will be synchronised by Local Radio broadcasts nationwide, so it will be a massive, safe, carol service. There is a hymn sheet which can be

downloaded and printed. We are hoping Stepps Parish Church will take part, with members singing on their doorsteps, so with the help of your contact information we'll keep closely in touch with you about it.

Meantime, if you would like to look it up you'll find it at [www.doorstepcarols.co.uk](http://www.doorstepcarols.co.uk)

## **190th Glasgow Company, The Boys' Brigade**

All Sections of the Company continue to meet weekly for outdoor activities. So far we are gritting our teeth and braving the weather. Fortunately the ever-changing situation has not forced us to suspend meetings.

A group of Boys and Staff represented the Company at the Remembrance Sunday service. On the following Monday evening, the Company Section laid a wreath and placed Remembrance crosses commemorating Boys' family members at the war memorial. All members contributed a cross.



## How far is it to Bethlehem?

The Company are embarking on a 'Virtual Sponsored Walk' this year. Fund raising has been difficult and we have encountered additional costs so!

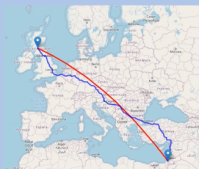


From 21<sup>st</sup> November until 21<sup>st</sup> December we need your steps!

The Company is launching a fundraiser, 'How Far to Bethlehem?' Details will be available on the Church website and 190th Glasgow Boys' Brigade Facebook page. Basically, we are asking Boys to use pedometers, FitBits or smart devices to record their steps between now and Christmas, with a view to collectively covering the distance between Stepps and Bethlehem.



## How far is it to Bethlehem?



A long, long way!

2,464.02 Miles

Or

3,965.46 Kms

Or

5,203,963.25 Steps!





If you would like to support us by sponsoring the Boys, please contact me on the details below. Your support will be much appreciated.

Colin Goodall

Captain

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## **Birthday Celebrations**

Belated birthday greetings and best wishes to Billy Hamilton who celebrated his 90th birthday on 7th November 2020. Billy and his late wife Janet were part of the team for many years involved with the former 'Humpty Dumpty' pre-school club in the church hall.

Peace and joy in 2021

Also celebrating her 90th birthday is a very special lady, Mrs Nancy MacKirdy on 27th November 2020. Nancy a local talented artist was a well kent and loved face in the congregation until her move to Stirling some months ago. Nancy and her late husband Angus were a well known duo in Stepps.

Best Wishes for her health and happiness in the year ahead.

Many Blessing

Another 90th plus = 93rd birthday has been celebrated on 12th November by Mr Bill Livingstone (husband of Audrey who is a well kent face and bundle if energy in the congregation.

Best wishes for their health and happiness in the year ahead.

Also special 70th birthday wishes to Mrs Anne Green on 21st November 2020. Anne is also a well kent face with her husband Archie.

Best Wishes for her health and happiness in 2021.

## Poem

### ‘She is Gone’

You can shed tears that she is gone  
Or you can smile because she has lived  
You can close your eyes and hope that she’ll come back  
Or you can open your eyes and see all that she’s left  
Your heart can be empty because you can’t see her  
Or you can be full of the love you shared

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday  
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday  
You can remember her and only that she’s gone  
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your  
back

Or you can do what she’d want, smile, open your eyes, love  
and go on



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