

# St Molios Church Magazine



April 2020



## The Church

Every blessing, Jean Hunter

I came across this poem by Alison Britchfield 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and wanted to share it with you.

“I share this reflection on our current church situation. Just a thought to ponder, at a time when we thought this could never happen, it has and public worship has been suspended.”

‘Christ’s church is not closed, the doors may be shut,  
The lights out in the building up the street,  
But the Church is not closed.

We may be told to stay at home, self-isolate, we may be ill or too frail to come, we may be disillusioned with the institution, or with God,  
But the Church is not closed.

The church cannot close because it is not a building,  
The church is you and I, and every child of God, who feels the tug of His love and senses His presence, even in the darkness, even in the loneliness, even in fear or sorrow,

The Church is open, though the building is closed.  
It will stay open as long as his children stay open to God, and seek his presence wherever they may be.  
This day Christ says to you “I am with you always.”

So, take this moment to enjoy his companionship,  
To be still to give thanks and to hand over your cares,  
And know that you do so in company with God’s family,  
Not only in our building but all over the world.’



Dear All

When with the heaviest of hearts I announced on the 10<sup>th</sup> March my painful decision to demit as minister at Brodick lw Corrie lw Lochranza & Pirnmill lw Shiskine, I, nor anyone else present, could for a moment have envisaged the current situation we now find ourselves in as the impact of the Corona Virus is felt nationwide. Whilst my reasons for feeling utterly compelled to give up my charge **remain the same**, circumstances in all our lives have altered beyond imagining. To walk away from ministry here in North Arran at such a time, especially when as never before in modern times, people both within our congregations and beyond in the wider community are seeking spiritual support and comfort, would I feel be a gross dereliction of my calling to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland and as your minister in particular.

I have therefore now intimated my decision to the Presbytery Clerk not to demit my charge on Easter Sunday as planned and I will endeavour to the very best of my ability to continue to discharge my duties as minister of the North Arran linkage, for as long as I possibly can, until the situation or circumstances dictate otherwise.

In the present circumstances it will be a very strange Easter, no family, friends or visitors to welcome back and our churches empty and locked to keep people out. At least thanks to modern technology, Jean and I are managing to record and send out weekly worship via the church websites. Keeping in touch via e-mail and phone too ensures we can communicate with everyone, especially those who need a little bit of pastoral support. Unfortunately, Montrose House and the hospital remain out of bounds, but we continue to pray for those completely shut off from the outside world, trusting them to the care of wonderful and dedicated staff striving heroically in the front line of the fight against Covid 19.

But if the message of Easter tells us anything, it is that after the darkness of the tomb, comes the joy of resurrection. The love of God cannot be shut away from the world, nor can the world shut it out. It continually seeks to break free and

it is constant in the rain and the sunshine of our lives, both in the here and now, and for all eternity.

Although for now, we cannot know how long this present crisis will last, we continue to hope that sooner or later better days do lie ahead. One thing is for sure, the wonderful fellowship we share at St Molios and the wonderful community spirit we know here in Shiskine, will see us through.

Until that hoped for time comes, may the joy at the heart of the Easter message seep into your very being and restore your weary souls, for Christ has risen, he has risen indeed. Halleluiah.

Angus

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**Jesus Christ Is Risen Today!**

*‘And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty’* (1 Corinthians 15:14)

John and Charles Wesley soon found themselves out of favour with many fellow Anglican ministers who spurned their fiery evangelistic preaching. Many pulpits were closed to them.

A friend from his Oxford days, George Whitfield, 22, who was having the same trouble, began preaching in the open air. In London, he asked Charles to stand with him as he preached to thousands in the open air at Blackheath and Charles, too, got a vision for reaching the multitudes.

He made his first attempt in the outskirts of London. “Franklyn, a farmer, invited me to preach in his field” he wrote. “I did so to about 500. I returned to the house rejoicing”. Soon he was preaching to thousands. “My load was gone, and all my doubts and scruples. God shone upon my path; and I knew this was his will concerning me”.

A man names Joseph Williams heard Charles in Bristol: “I found his standing on a table-board, in an erect posture, surrounded by, I guess, more than a thousand people, some of them fashionable persons, but most of the lower rank of mankind. He prayed with uncommon fervency. He then preached about half an hour in such a manner as I have scarce ever heard any man preach, I think I never heard any man labor so earnestly to convince his hearers they were all by nature in a sinful, lost, undone, that, not withstanding, there was a possibility of their salvation through faith in Christ, all this he backed up with many texts of Scripture, which he explained and illustrated, and then by a variety of the most forcible motives, arguments and explanations, did he invite, allure, quicken and labor, if it were possible, to compel all and every one of his hearers to believe in Christ for salvation.”

Charles Wesley still preaches today in much the same way through his ageless hymns which are sung around the world each Sunday. Perhaps his most exuberant anthem is the one he simply called, “Hymn for Easter Day,” published in 1739. It originally consisted of eleven stanzas. The “Alleluia’s” were added later, but appropriately, for this is a hymn one never gets tired of singing;

Jesus Christ is risen today, *Alleluia!*  
Our triumphant holy day; *Alleluia!*  
Who did once, upon the cross; *Alleluia!*  
Suffer to redeem our loss; *Alleluia!*

A wonderful Hymn we usually sing on Easter day, sadly not this year.

Easter Blessings to you all.

Jean Hunter

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**For those that take Life and Work the April Easter copy is in the vestibule and can be collected individually.**

## **A Letter from the Moderator of Ardrossan Presbytery**

*Dear Friends,*

*March 2020*

*As we approach Easter this year it is like no other approach to Easter in living memory. Church Services have been cancelled and there will be no services during Holy Week, no early morning services on Easter Sunday morning, like the ones on Bigholm Hill just outside Beith or on the beach at Whiting Bay. Both services I have attended. These early morning services are held in quiet places, and the peace that we feel makes us all think of why we celebrate Easter, the resurrection of Jesus.*

*Jesus had been betrayed by one of his disciples, Judas, and he must have been apprehensive of what was to come when found guilty of a set up crime and nailed to the cross. What joy we now know on Easter Sunday when the women found the stone was rolled away and the tomb empty, Jesus was no longer there. But at the time, did the women have a feeling of fear, just as we all have a feeling of fear at this time of the Coronavirus? Everyone is now to isolate to try to beat this virus. For my wife and I there will be no trip over to Arran, where we usually celebrate Easter, no hugs from family and grandchildren, hugs that are so needed when things get difficult. The time ahead will be difficult and uncertain for each and every one of us, we may have fears when illness strikes, when jobs are lost, like the fear the women had when they found the empty tomb.*

*However, when this emergency is over we will all be able to celebrate with our families and friends and receive the hugs we miss so dearly especially from our grandchildren.*

*I hope and pray that you will all be able on Easter Sunday to take time to think of the Easter story, the story that Jesus is alive and like God is with us all in good times and sad times.*

*May God's blessings be with you all and your families at this difficult time.*

*R. Allan Richardson*

**If You've Ever Lived on an Island**

©J. Earnhart, 1992

**If you've ever lived on an island  
If ever you've lived by the sea,  
You'll never return to the mainland  
once your spirit has been set free.**

**If ever you've smelled the ocean  
or tasted the salt in the air;  
You'll know you've discovered a haven  
that is uncommon, precious and rare.**

**If ever you've seen the whales play  
or watched the eagles in flight  
You'll remember, again, why you live here,  
and why it feels so right.**

**If ever you've seen the sunset  
as the ferry passes the shore;  
You've seen the beauty of the island  
that will be with you forever more.**

**If ever you've heard the seagulls  
the waves, a foghorn, the winds;  
Then you've heard the song of the island  
and the peaceful message it sends.**

**Indeed, if you live on an island  
if you're lucky to live by the sea  
You'll never return to the mainland,  
as your spirit has been set free.**

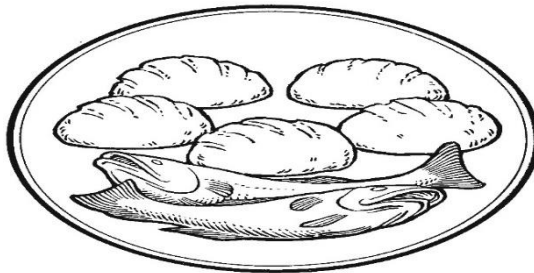
## Doing Church Differently

Sunday 22 March '20

On Sunday 22 March we had our first Sunday with empty churches and for many of us an interruption to our traditional place to be each Sunday. John and I spent our time at 11a.m. listening to Angus and Jean's prayers and message to us in the Parish of North Arran interspersed with our choice of hymns. A big thank you to them for, at fairly short notice connecting with modern technology and to Hamish Bannatyne for getting it into our church website and YouTube.

Immediately after worshipping at home BBC one had a time for reflection led by Fr, Michael, a Roman Catholic priest, and Lorna Hood, one of our former moderators of the Church Of Scotland – interspersed with great hymns from Songs of Praise each gave thought provoking messages for Mothers' Day and for 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent.

We are always being encouraged to think of different ways of 'doing church' and now we have it 'forced upon us' by the limitations on our lifestyle. I hope we can all embrace this way of worshipping together in our homes. This is a time for us to take time to pray for each other and to see this as a time of reaching out to our communities to give them hope and to draw them into our faith community.



## Media and Websites for Sunday worship

Radio four 8a.m. St Molios Church website; Sanctuary First: West Kilbride Parish Church and many church website Facebook sites.



## Parish News

Of course, we are all aware that for two weeks now all activities in the church and church hall have stopped and now all Churches of Scotland have been told to close. At first we thought we might have been able to hold our Holy Week Labyrinth in the church as people enter one by one and handwashing and hygiene procedures could be carried out. However, when the order to actually close the churches came this idea had to be abandoned.

**Stated Annual Meeting** was held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March when 22 of us gathered to catch up with all that had been happening in the past year.

This was followed by a very interesting and amusing presentation by John Clarke about his career path and many of his now hidden skills. Perhaps we should ask everyone of us to tell us about their lives!! Thank you, John.



We then had a delicious pot luck supper.

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**The Guild** on 17<sup>th</sup> March we held our last meeting for the foreseeable future. Thirteen of us gathered and heard of the immediate cessation of meetings together socially or for any other reason. Appropriately, we heard about huge gathering of youth in Taize France where thousands of young people – mostly 16 – 25 year-olds meet for a week at a time from February to October, coming from all over the globe. It is a special place that ‘speaks’ to young

people about issues affecting their lives, where they learn about worship and about themselves with no judgement about where they are in the life's journey and no pressure, bar reflection times to say, "This is the way".

As usual we had our none-to-short time of refreshments, fellowship and laughter. We look forward to being together again.

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**If you know of anyone who collects their papers everyday and would like a copy of this magazine please let them know they are available in the Harbour shop. Please just take one.**

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### **Deaths**

#### **Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the Life"**

3<sup>rd</sup> March                      Alexander McEwan Dale of Pirnmill  
Funeral in St Molios Church on 10<sup>th</sup> March

28<sup>th</sup> February                Elinor Stewart Campbell Kinnaird of Shiskine  
Funeral In St Molios Church on 13<sup>th</sup> March

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### **World Mission 2020 Stamp Appeal**

In 1986 a remarkable visionary woman Pearl Stephen began a women's project in the garage at the Scots Kirk in Kandy, Sri Lanka. Her husband George was the minister. Out of that garage an organisation grew to become the Women's Development Centre (WDC). Pearl set up a school for disabled children to provide special education and rehabilitation. Community development work included work with commercial sex workers who were vulnerable to HIV. But WDC is best known for its work with victims of sexual violence.

Pearl died in 2013 and her daughter-in-law, Sashi has taken over the leadership. Like Pearl, Sashi combines total commitment to the girls in WDC's care with a love and compassion that does not judge.

WDC can accommodate 50 girls and young women under the age of 16 who have been raped or abused. Some of the girls have been abused for years before they become pregnant.

Sashi and her team at WCD care for and heal girls who are vulnerable and often discarded by their families. Every penny raised by the Stamp Appeal this year will go to supporting these women who have been through so much and will help towards giving them hope in the future.

*Plases save any stamps you receive and trim the surrounding paper to 2cm. They'll be sent off when we start meeting again.,*

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### **A Prayer for Us All**

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for the diversity of gifts that you have shared. For the beautiful variety and variance of the characters, personalities, peoples and interests that are represented throughout your church in the world.

Help us to remember that we are all one family united by your love for us all and joined together in our faith.

Remind us to put aside any personal agendas or selfish deeds, looking instead to serve one another, to love one another, to support one

another, especially at this extraordinary time – just as Jesus taught us to do.

Heavenly Father open our eyes, hearts and hands to help to see that as we worship together, we grow stronger in Christ until your grace and goodness will be revealed to all.

In Jesus name we pray – AMEN

Fr Prayer Focus World Mission Mag Feb/Mar

## ***Some Useful Contacts***

### ***In St. Molios Church in the Parish of North Arran***

Telephone no.

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	Mrs. Elizabeth Clarke	860219
	Mr. John Clarke	860219
	Mrs. Evelyn Hamilton	860233
	Mrs. Helen Kerr	860498
<b><i>Session Clerk</i></b>	Mr. John Kerr	860498
	Mr. John Lammie	860418
	Mrs Elizabeth McCarthy	860727
	Mr. John McCarthy	860727
	Mr. Murray Stewart	860479
<b><i>Deacons' Court Clerk</i></b>	Mrs. Elizabeth Clarke	860219
<b><i>Organist</i></b>	Mr. John Clarke	860219
<b><i>Pastoral Support Team</i></b>		
<b><i>Coordinator</i></b>	Mrs. Eileen Johnston	860227
<b><i>Magazine Editor</i></b>	Mrs. Helen Kerr	860498

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Articles for the next magazine should be handed to Helen Kerr or sent to Helen Kerr [kerrjh@btinternet.com](mailto:kerrjh@btinternet.com) by Wednesday 15 July 2020.

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