

St Molios Church Magazine



JANUARY 2021



We Wish You Every Blessing in the Years Ahead



It is with sadness that we realise we no longer have Angus at the helm of the life of our *congregations* in North Parish Arran. Someone in Brodick had the brilliant idea that to show our appreciation to Angus we commission the composition of a pipe tune called 'The Reverent Angus Adamson'. In the photo we see Sylvia Alison our lead treasurer presenting the framed composition to Angus a few weeks ago and here is his

response.

"I have been deeply touched by all the lovely sentiments expressed in cards and emails received since my retirement from ministry back in September. The generosity and kindness shown towards me since then has been overwhelming, summed up in quite simply the most perfect gift of being presented with a pipe tune composed for me by Fred Morrison to mark the occasion. To all who contributed to that in any way, please accept my deepest heart-felt thanks."

Angus

A Letter from Our Interim Moderator of Parish of North Arran

Rev. Dave Sutherland

Dear friends,

A happy, if slightly belated, New Year to all of you.

Current restrictions mean that getting across to Arran to meet with you will have to wait so, in the meantime, maybe just a brief introduction as the only way to see each other is on Zoom. I've been the minister at Ardeer linked with Livingstone Churches in Stevenston since 2017. I completed 30 years' service with Tayside Police in Dundee in 2010 and moved from Auxiliary Ministry to full time ministry completing my BD at St. Andrew's University and then a probationary period in Glasgow and then a charge in Dumfries before coming to Stevenston.

I came to faith in 1993 and felt a call to part-time ministry shortly afterwards. I trained as an Auxiliary Minister from 1997 and was ordained in 2001. I have a call to a ministry of health and healing and over 2020 I completed a course in pioneer ministry. Beyond that though, I believe that we need to look at how we are church today and what that means for us, especially as the church nationally now focusing on the Radical Action Plan. The pandemic has further stretched the church.

2021 has not quite started as we would all have hoped or prayed for with further restrictions in place to manage the pandemic. As we adjust our life to these restrictions, we also need to have some patience as the vaccine programme rolls out.

But we are not alone in all this and in all circumstances, we turn to our God. Jesus told His disciples "I will be with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). We keep our focus on Jesus and take the time and space to ask what He is saying to us and what that means for us. It's a process we need to go through, a process which constantly reminds us that we are not alone in all this.

Speaking about not being on our own, I'd like to invite to you to Coffee & Company on Wednesday mornings on Zoom at 10.30am. We spend some time in worship and prayer and then use the breakout rooms to chat. You need to bring your own tea or coffee, biscuit or cake though.

I look forward to meeting with you at some point soon.

May God bless you and watch over you. May He make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you. May He smile on you and give you peace.

With every blessing

Dave

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**From our Locum Minister to Arran North Parishes Mrs Elizabeth Clarke**

Hello folks,

January 2021

It just seems like yesterday that I was training to be a Reader under the watchful eyes of Angus and Jean, and yet here I am, appointed to be your locum until we have a new minister. It is an honour and a privilege to serve the North Arran Parishes – I hope I will do your faith in me justice. My email address and phone numbers are at the end of this wee homily.

Somehow it seems that January is considered by so many to be a rather bleak and dreich month. And perhaps this year with us back in lockdown, it seems even worse. Yet if this pandemic has taught us anything, it has shown us that we should never take people or things for granted. For in the blink of an eye things can change.

I am sure that we are all looking forward to the moment when we can be safely reunited with family and with friends: To that time when we can go out and meet over a meal. To go to a show, a concert or some sporting event. To get back to Church. All simple, ordinary everyday things which have been suddenly taken away from us.

The sense of looking forward to something plays an important part in faith as we find throughout the pages of Scripture. Noah looked forward to the end of the flood and being back on dry land, Joseph looked forward to being

reunited with his brothers, the Israelites looked forward to being free from captivity in the land God had promised them.

And in Luke's Gospel we find two individuals who had looked forward for so long until at last their hopes were realised. Simeon, a righteous and devout man who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Saviour for himself.

So it was that he came to the temple and taking Jesus in his arms declared "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

In that instant, in that one encounter, Simeon found that his hope in God had not been disappointed. He had looked forward, he had trusted and he was not left disappointed.

In the same passage there was also Anna, a prophetess and a widow, who worshipped at the temple night and day, believing that she too would see the promised messiah and she was not disappointed for her deepest hopes were fulfilled.

For these two individuals however, there must have been some dark days along the way. They constantly looked forward, they waited, they hoped, they believed that they would see God's promised messiah.

But as time marched on I wonder if they felt just as confident as they first had to begin with. There would be moments I suspect when they doubted and seriously wondered if their hopes would ever be fulfilled. And yet somehow, they never gave up.

We all look forward in life, but sometimes, when we find ourselves up against it, there is a tendency to look back, to look back perhaps at brighter days, at better times and to wish somehow we were there again. And no more so than in very recent times. Yet while life can often be understood backwards, it can only be lived forwards.

We can all look forward in life. For in the journey of faith we have a God who remains unchanging amidst all the changing scenes of life, the God who is the same, yesterday, today and forever, who calls each of us to follow him. When

the first disciples accepted that call they looked forward to a different way of life, a way of love and compassion, of challenge and sacrifice. And so must we.

In so many ways God touches our lives by his love and his strength, leading us in paths we never thought possible, fulfilling our hopes beyond our deepest imaginings and releasing our full potential. We can look forward with real hope in our everyday for the God who loved us from the beginning, loves us to the end.

And boy do we have an awful lot to look forward to once the pandemic is under control! As the song puts it – “walk on, walk on with hope in your hearts and you’ll never walk alone” My contact details:

[lizahclarke@gmail.com](mailto:lizahclarke@gmail.com), Landline: 01770 860219, Mob: 07833 251486

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“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8)

Dear Friends

At the time of writing this I have only a few weeks to work before my retirement on 19th February as Parish Assistant for the North Arran Linkage. When I first came to Arran twenty years ago, I came to be Locum for Lochranza & Pirnmill and Shiskine for 4-6 months. I never imagined being here for so long. When I came I was welcomed into the family of the Church, into the community and into homes for this I am very grateful.

In 2006 the North Arran linkage was formed and I was employed to work with Angus as a Parish Assistant. Again I was welcomed into Brodick & Corrie churches and into homes.

It is a great honour and privilege that is given to women and men to serve God’s people in the ministry of the gospel. On the one hand to be entrusted by God with the preaching of His word and on the other to be entrusted by God’s people with their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears – the

business of life. I am conscious of having been blessed in this privilege during these past years.

How true it is that we don't know tomorrow. When I arrived on Arran in February 2001 there was freedom no restrictions and at that time no signs of foot and mouth disease that was affecting the country. Then about two months later, virtually overnight that changed and this crisis affected the whole Island albeit indirectly. The fears of the farmers, shops, those involved in the tourism industry and other businesses were all affected in some way. The restrictions at that time proved to have been a necessary precaution. We were all praying for the situation and continued to pray until the crisis was over.

Here I am twenty years later and there are other restrictions this time because of the Corona Virus. We have been living with restrictions since last March and we are in lockdown again. had planned to take my closing services on 24th and 31st January in the churches but now that will be recorded on line. We make our plans but we don't know what tomorrow will bring, but however, by grace we can know Him who holds all our tomorrows. There is no substitute for knowing God in Christ Jesus - knowing His grace, His mercy, and His love today and beyond. Many things may change in our lives, in the Church on the Island but he is the one who changes not.

Whatever our fears and hopes are for tomorrow we will trust Him who knows the way ahead – for He is:

“The way and the truth and the life” (John 14: 6a)

I leave you with this – surely a prayer for us all:

*Lord grant me the gift of contentment Wherever my lot may be cast,
And keep me from always bemoaning The joys that I found in the past.
Today is so truly important For tomorrow may never be mine,
So subdue all my own inclinations Help me say “Not my will but Thine”.*

*And Lord help me cherish my neighbours Wherever I happen to be,
So the world may see from this moment Just a spark of your image in me.*

Yours in His service

Jean Hunter

Note from the editor: As many of us now know Jean retires on 31 January, followed by two weeks of due holidays. This has come on us very abruptly with the post Christmas lockdown and suddenly we realized we would not have her in our pulpit again before her retirement. She will leave such a big gap in the life of our parish. However unlike many retirees she will not be leaving us. She is an elder of St. Molios Shiskine and will still live on Arran and for that we are thankful to continue to have her friendship. Jean be assured our prayers go with you as you adjust to the next phase in your life. Thank you for all you have been and done in your ministry for two decades and over times of challenge for us in our congregations when you have held the reins of leadership during vacancies and illness of ministers.

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## ST. MOLIOS GUILD



## Guild News

On 17 November, our guest speaker was Kevin Simpson, CEO of “Malawi Fruits”, a Scottish Charity established in 2011. Their project with the Guild is ‘Growing the Future’. Ten members ‘zoomed in’ to see and hear Kevin’s presentation. Some of us had been able to meet him in person when we attended his talk at Lamlash Guild on 29.10.19.

The meeting opened with a reading and prayer by Helen on the theme of the generosity of the poor. Then Kevin updated us on the effects of Covid19. It’s a year since he’s been to Malawi in person but the 14 staff there have done very well, using mobile phones and WhatsApp for support. Cases of the virus are low, but there has been a serious effect on the economy.



Over the last thirteen years, better healthcare and clean water schemes have led to a big increase in Malawian population, with a high percentage of young people. Traditional subsistence farming can't produce enough food, so new methods are essential. Malawi has 2 seasons, 'rainy' and 'dry'. Providing solar pumps for irrigation enables a second crop in the dry season. This can be a 'cash crop' which gives a family money for improved housing and better education. Growing paprika (used as a natural colouring worldwide) is now established, and new projects include sunflower oil production.

'Growing the Future' provides training and support for young people, covering crop-growing, harvesting and marketing. Contacts are often made through the church, Sunday school and youth choir, as half the population are in church on Sundays!

Throughout the talk, we saw many images of Malawi, the people and the project. Kevin described the people as 'happy, content and generous'. He has missed being with them and hopes to make a trip to Malawi as soon as possible.

We had our 'Christmas Tea', with a difference, on 15 December just before another lockdown. Our venue was the Golf Club Tee Room, where members and friends could be safely socially distanced. It was exciting to be together in person, and not just on a screen!

**Christmas Party when 18 of us actually met socially spaced. How exciting!**



Alison welcomed us and Helen started proceedings with a poem – ‘The Inn Keeper’s First Christmas’, then distributed printed copies of a Christmas Quiz before the Tee Room staff served the afternoon tea. Some of us were so busy eating and chatting that we forgot to turn the page over so the quiz didn’t get finished, but everyone had great fun when the answers were being given.

There was a special treat at the end when each of us could choose a lovely flowering plant to take home - a beautiful reminder of a memorable time together.

The first meeting of 2021 was on 19 January, when Guild member, Elaine Clinton, took us on a journey with her talk, “Living, learning and laughing in Africa”. Eleven members joined the Zoom meeting which started with a reading, story and prayer by Helen, asking for strength and support to help others.

Elaine began by sharing memories from childhood about making imaginary journeys with her great grandmother, and knowing then that she wanted to be an explorer and travel to Africa. In 2008, she and her husband, Ian, started to take groups of students from Blackburn College, where Ian was Principal, on trips to Africa. Many of them were disabled, deprived or insecure but through their experiences and challenges found strength and confidence that was life-changing. They travelled many roads - in South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Botswana - including dirt tracks and flooded roads. They experienced a different way of living, among wild animals, without mod cons, helping people with few resources. There were many new ‘companions on the way’, from tribes and their leaders to the Archbishop of Capetown.

The last African trip was in 2018, but the journey still continues in lasting friendships, better resources, careers which can influence for the good of others. It was really interesting to hear stories about individuals and incidents, and there was plenty of laughter among the more serious concerns. Because of a technical hitch, we couldn’t see Elaine’s slide presentation, but we hope to see her photos and hear more stories later in the year.

Dorothy Allan

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Below, Dorothy gives us more insight to the architecture and design of our church. Thank you.

Light in St Molios.

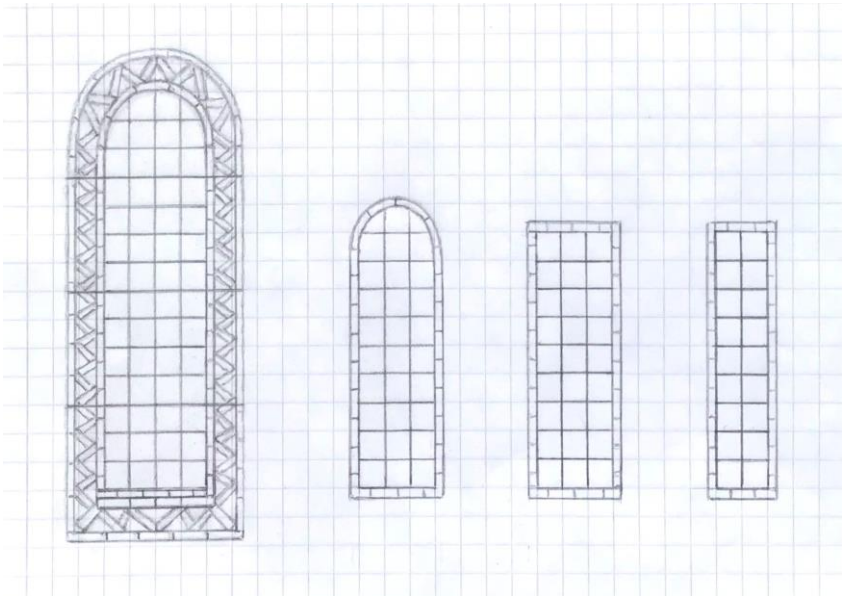
The definition of 'light' varies in different fields:

Physics : the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible

Theology : spiritual illumination by divine truth

Architecture : a window or opening to let in light

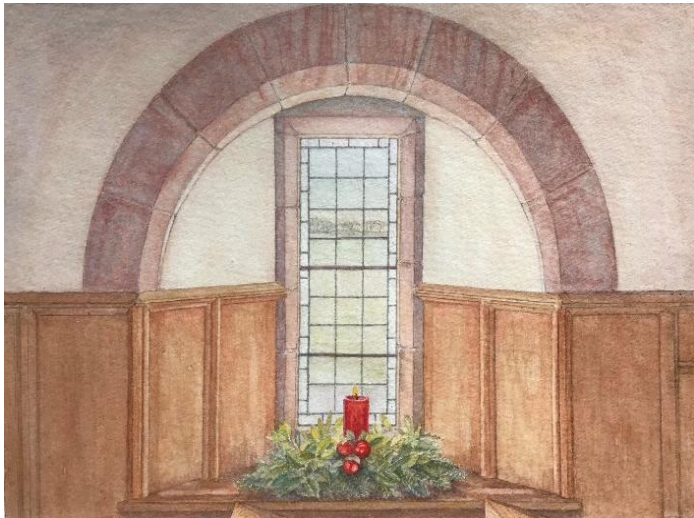
The 'lights' of St Molios have no stained glass. They are based on a simple grid pattern and are set within a plain stone recess. Here are some of the variations in size, shape and borders.





From outside, they look quite austere, and in the tower almost fort-like, but inside the body of the kirk, most of them open out within the thickness of the walls to form recesses with deep wooden sills. This is visually pleasing and also practical, as it maximises the light inside. Arches of red sandstone crown these alcoves, and they are especially beautiful during Advent and Christmas with arrangements of evergreens and candles. Light in many forms is abundant in St Molios.

Dorothy Allan



A Quote from Facebook Worth Noting

To all those parents trying desperately to ‘do’ learning at home, I had a parent tell me this week. “I missed four years of school in Bosnia during the war - four whole years with a war happening. I came to Australia at age 13 with no English and no schooling since I was 8 years old. I’m 33 and have a university degree and a very good career. The kids will be fine.



Chill. Their teachers are doing the best they can. You are doing the best you can. They are children. What they want is to feel safe and loved.”

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### Greetings from the Treasurer

2020 was not a good year for the church which was only open from 4<sup>th</sup> October to 3rd January 2021 before being closed again. I am relieved to be able to say that as far as our income from the weekly offering goes, we are not so far adrift from that of a normal year. More people are now paying directly into the church account and many others have, either by post or through my door, given in their offerings and I thank them all for doing this. The biggest problem has been the lack of income from other sources – our weekly coffee mornings and annual sale of work and regular holiday visitors. 2021 does not look much better but I hope that the congregation will continue with the financial support it has been giving throughout 2020. Bank details if anyone would like to give direct through the bank –

Name - Shiskine Church of Scotland

Account No - 00826640

Sort Code - 80-05-84

Please put your name as a reference      By post -Ty Mawr, Blackwaterfoot,  
Isle of Arran KA27 8EU

**Prayer for Health and Healing** During lockdown some of the group have been praying in our own homes at 12 noon on the last Wednesday of each month and on our own praying by name for the list that Jean provided for us. If anyone would like to join us please contact Helen Kerr 860498 and she'll see you get the up to date list. We are all in need of prayer but there are special times when individual need it particularly. If you know of anyone who needs our prayers please let Helen know.

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'Greetings and Thank You's'

Many of have missed meeting friends and family for the best part of a year. Others just want to send good wishes or some just want to say Thank you'

Firstly our sincere thanks to Jean, Liz and John Clarke for all their hard work preparing, recording and providing us with the opportunity to worship online in our homes each week. Services continue on www.stmoliosshiskine.org.uk

We say a big Thankyou to Liz Clarke for agreeing to be our locum minister at this time, Liz and John sent season's greetings "To Jean and Everybody greetings and hope for a better year in 2021"

From Helen Knight "To all at St Molios Church It's been a pleasure following you on Facebook and Youtube these past months. Wishing you health and happiness during the coming year and praying it will be a better year for everyone. God bless."

And from Nayra, a young lass who worked at the Kinloch. She worshipped with us each week in October and November. She says."For the community of the church of St Molios Shiskine I wanted to thanks you for your quality welcome in your church and your nice treatment and friendly too. And thank you too to Liz Clarke and Jean Hunter for your services."

And from George and Marjorie (Bannatyne) "To Jean and Everybody. Here's to a better 2021. Stay safe.'



Although we have so often thanked our Key Workers. A term that extends to many people who have worked to keep our services functioning – in health, care, safety, food on our tables and public transport and posties. A special thanks to those in our local communities – the volunteers who have delivered medication and food to so many of our homes for almost a year.

The Deacons' Court is happy to announce that John McCarthy has been appointed Clerk of the Court on the resignation of Elizabeth Clarke who as our Locum Minister will be a busy person. Many thanks to Liz for the years she has given to this task and to John for taking it on.



PAUSE FOR REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Is our Grace Cheap or Costly?

An extract from 'A Testament to Freedom' - from the Essential Writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran Pastor who was imprisoned by the Nazis for four years before his execution just weeks before the end of WW II.

“Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is costly because it calls us to follow and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs us our life, and it is grace because it gives us the only true life, costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner.

Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of His only Son ‘You were bought with a price’, and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all it is grace because God did not reckon His Son too dear a price to pay for our life but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.

Prayer: Holy Trinity God of all humanity we humbly acknowledge you as our Creator, Sustainer of life, Redeemer and Friend.

Help us to relax in your awesome presence, to clear from our hearts and minds the clutter of our everyday lives with plans, anxieties, joys, doubts and fears and let your Holy Spirit guide us to be still and know that you are God.



Forgive us when we crowd you out of our daily lives with distractions. Lord how you long for us to take time to be in your presence, to tell of our love for you, our gratitude for the blessings you shower on us day by day and to hear us say how much we want to follow your Son and serve you.

Help us each day to see Jesus in all the people we meet or hear or read about. Make us quick to listen to what others say and to be slow to pass judgement when we have not walked in their shoes.

We pray for all in our country who are affected by the circumstances in which we live today; for all who are grieving for lost loved ones, for all our NHS workers weary with the heavy workloads and multiple deaths, supporting those separated from their nearest and dearest in times of crises.

We pray for global national leaders that they can cast off all arrogance and humbly seek wisdom and grace to learn how to lead their people through the pandemic and conflicts.

Bless, encourage and grant patience and compassion to all those who work to support and assist those who have fled conflict and left all worldly possessions behind. May we be a welcoming nation towards all who seek refuge in our country.

May we always remember the costliness of the life that we are offered through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus and that in following Him we may learn that His burden is light and His yoke is easy.

In His name we pray.

Amen

NO TRUER WORDS SPOKEN!

Below is an extract from the reported statement of Ugandan President YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI urging his people to conform to restrictions.

"In a war situation, nobody asks anyone to stay indoors. You stay indoors by choice. In fact, if you have a basement, you hide there for as long as hostilities persist.

During a war, you don't insist on your freedom. You willingly give it up in exchange for survival.

During a war, you don't complain of hunger. You bear hunger and pray that you live to eat again

During a war, you don't argue about opening your business. You close your shop (if you have the time) and run for your life. You pray to outlive the war so that you can return to your business (that's if it has not been looted or destroyed by mortar fire).

During a war, you are thankful to God for seeing another day in the land of the living.

During a war, you don't worry about your children not going to school. You pray that the government does not forcefully enlist them as soldiers to be trained in the school premises now turned military depot.

The world is currently in a state of war. A war without guns and bullets. A war without human soldiers. A war without borders. A war without cease-fire agreements.

The army in this war is without mercy. It is without any milk of human kindness. It is indiscriminate - it has no respect for children, women, or places of worship. This army is not interested in spoils of war. It has no intention of regime change. It is not concerned about the rich mineral resources underneath the earth. It is not even interested in religious, ethnic or

ideological hegemony. Its ambition has nothing to do with racial superiority. It is an invisible, fleetfooted, and ruthlessly effective army.

Its only agenda is a harvest of death. It is only satiated after turning the world into one big death field. Its capacity to achieve its aim is not in doubt. Without ground, amphibious and aerial machines, it has bases in almost every country of the world. Its movement is not governed by any war convention or protocol. In short, it is a law unto itself. It is Coronavirus. Also known as COVID-19 (because it announced its destructive presence and intention in the year of our Lord 2019)

Thankfully, this army has a weakness and it can be defeated. It only requires our collective action, discipline and forbearance. COVID-19 cannot survive social and physical distancing. It only thrives when you confront it. It loves to be confronted. It capitulates in the face of collective social and physical distancing. It bows before good personal hygiene. It is helpless when you take your destiny in your own hands by keeping them sanitized as often as possible.

This is not a time to cry about bread and butter like spoilt children. After all, the Holy Book tells us that man shall not live by bread alone. Let's obey and follow the instructions of the authorities. Let's flatten the COVID-19 curve. Let's exercise patience. Let's be our brothers' keeper. In time, we shall regain our freedom, enterprise and socializing.

In the midst of EMERGENCY, we practice urgency of service and the urgency of love for others. God bless us all."



Editorial Note: *The above is written by a president whose country has suffered decades of war in the last century. They are well acquainted with war in their midst, in a way we in U.K. have not been until now.*

Winter Walk

Thank you for this calm day
when blues and greens are softened
and distant sounds are muted
enabling me to hear the Greyling Geese
feeding in a nearby field.

In misty light like this
the bright, white buds of Snowdrops
down beside the burn catch my eye,
as do the little golden lights
of winter Gorse.

The sheep are lying down
warm and dry beneath their woolly backs.
It's a day for going slow
for giving thanks that storms have passed,
for dreaming of the spring to come.

Now beside the shore,
I hear the hushing, sighing of the sea,
the Curlew's call,
and watch some seals seek out their favourite rocks
and settle for an afternoon of being.

by Dorothy Allen 22/01/20

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## ***Useful Contacts***

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

|                                     |                        | Telephone no.          |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Interim Moderator</b>            | Rev. Dave Sutherland   | 01294 608993           |
| <b>Locum Minister</b>               | Mrs. Elizabeth Clarke  | 860219                 |
| <b><i>Elders</i></b>                | Dr. Alan Burnett       | 860742                 |
|                                     | Mrs. Elizabeth Clarke  | 860219                 |
|                                     | Mr. John Clarke        | 860219                 |
|                                     | Mrs Jean Hunter        | 860380                 |
|                                     | 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                 |
| <b><i>Deacons' Court Clerk</i></b>  | Mr. John McCarthy      | mob.07870643011 860727 |
| <b><i>Organist</i></b>              | Mr. John Clarke        | 860219                 |
| <b><i>Pastoral Support Team</i></b> |                        |                        |
| <b>Coordinator</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 by Sunday 17 April 2021.