



# The Herald

Castlehill Parish Church

Autumn 2021

## **Editorial**

In these days it is easy to dwell on the negative aspects of our world, our environment, in our own lives and even in the forthcoming changes within our Church organisation. It seems inevitable that we come face to face with them every day. But if we look more deeply, we find so many good things too. Eighteen months ago, we would not have had our services online, and already there are many who cannot attend Church and are able to use technology to enjoy being part of the Sunday services. The generosity of our members in contributing so much to the Food Bank, something many did not do before. Perhaps more consideration for others and appreciating more the events and organisations that we used to attend.

Prince William in his deliverance to the General Assembly perhaps thinking about the contact we have through social media, emphasised that “the Church was not a building, but a community bound together by a common creed and shared commitment to serve”. But the benefits of going to the Church; taking part in worship and meeting our friends cannot be over emphasised.

We now anticipate the start of our winter activities and while we are still apprehensive about going along and still a bit unsure if they will start again, meeting each other in person again will be something we all look forward to. We have tried in this issue to look forward to a bright and hopeful future and even in looking back we recall happy memories.

Let us move forward positively and taking care of one another.

**Wellwood Grierson, Editor**

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**Church Website:** **[www.castlehillchurch.org](http://www.castlehillchurch.org)**

**Charity Number** **SCO01792**

## **Have your say**

If you have any comments to make on the Magazine, please feel free to do so by letter or email to [herald@castlehillchurch.org](mailto:herald@castlehillchurch.org) We are always pleased to consider any articles for the Magazine from members of the congregation, These can also be sent to the same email address.



## From the Manse



Dear Friends

As I write this, we are approaching a month into greater freedom from pandemic restrictions than we have known for some eighteen months. Many aspects of life are again open to us but there is a natural wariness and caution to be sensed from probably a small majority of the population. In Church terms, we can now accommodate the congregation in the sanctuary and, albeit wearing masks, we are allowed to sing again. We still maintain Track and Trace each week; distancing is still possible and we shall continue to provide hand cleansing gel for use before and after the services.

Distancing in the corridors is still recommended as 2 metres. In terms of our halls, all organisations, Church and external, have had to submit and have external approval of risk assessments and we continue to monitor adherence to these on a regular basis. Our aim is to enable the maximum possible safe enjoyment of our activities in a manner than no one feels in any way at risk, rather feels comfortable and increasingly confident in engaging with others. We are not experts, but we have expended a lot of time and energy in trying to ensure that we follow the regulations and guidelines as faithfully as possible. That said, it is important that if anyone feels unsure or uncomfortable about the way things are organised at Castlehill, you share that with us so that we can amend our practice appropriately. Please do not hesitate to do so.

This is a time of considerable upheaval for the Church of Scotland and for all congregations in Ayr Presbytery. We are currently undergoing a challenging planning exercise which will see the number of charges in Ayr Presbytery reduce from 32 to 19 and sometime afterwards will see a reduction by 30% in Church property. No congregation will remain unaffected: the need for this is driven by the drop in Church population and the related financial shortfalls which have meant that our Church nationally has had to rely exclusively on reserves to meet annual costs. In relation to Castlehill, two options are proposed:

Union with Ayr St Leonards

Joining a Team Ministry which would see the union of Castlehill, St Leonards, Alloway and Fisherton.

Alternatively, congregations can propose a third or fourth option, providing it meets with some measure of agreement from the relevant congregations. The outcome – which will be decided by three representatives from each congregation [not including the minister] – will go to the Mission Committee in November, the Presbytery in March, and assuming concurrence, will go to the Faith Nurture Forum nationally thereafter. A decision on a Presbytery plan must be reached by December next year in every Presbytery in Scotland.

This will involve many meetings for our representatives, Margaret Devlin, Margaret Graham and Alan Jack, followed by consideration of their reports by the Kirk Session. Can I ask you to make any comments you may have on this subject to one of our representatives so that they can be relayed to Session and the local group committee for consideration.

It is, I believe, important that a sharing of views takes place. The only thing that is certain is that the outcome will have to be a consensus of opinions so not everyone may be happy. At present, what is essential is that we participate fully in this procedure and that we continue to live as the Church for the wider community. Your prayers for this time are requested so that we might seek faithfully to establish Christ's Church in South Ayr in a way that reflects not our plans but God's plans for his people for the foreseeable future.

For the present, can I wish you and yours every blessing.

**Paul**



Harvest Thanksgiving this year will take place on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October and we shall look forward to the Climate Change Conference which will take place in Glasgow in November.



## **Truly Human**

*In addition to the battle to "get ahead," there is another:*

THIS OTHER WAR is the war not to conquer but the war to become whole and at peace inside our skins. It is a war not of conquest now but of liberation because the object of this other war is to liberate that dimension of selfhood which has somehow become lost, that dimension of selfhood that involves the capacity to forgive and to will the good not only of the self but of all other selves. This other war is the war to become a human being. This is the goal that we are really after and that God is really after. This is the goal that power, success, and security are only forlorn substitutes for. This is the victory that not all our human armoury of self-confidence and wisdom and personality can win for us—not simply to be treated as human but to become at last truly human.

## **Peace of the Mountain**

WHEN WE FIRST started living in Vermont all year round in 1967, I was reluctant to believe that it would be our last move and that our house would be the one I would die in, but I have long since concluded that this will probably be the case and accept it with comparative equanimity. And I long ago concluded something else, too. The first few years we were there, the children were still little, and our problems with them, like theirs with us, seemed little too. They were healthy and happy, and so were we. Like everybody else they had their troubles at school, but basically, they liked it well enough. They had their friends, and we had our friends, but the richest part of our lives seemed to be the part we had together—the picnics by the gentian pond, the sledding in winter, the summer trips. We were a world very much to ourselves up there on our mountain, and by and large all was well with us. But down below there was another world where, by and large, all was not well. Friends got sick and died there. Accidents happened to people we knew. Children not much older than ours got into all sorts of grief. Couples got divorced, and people lost their jobs. And farther away still, wars happened, assassinations happened, political crises happened, until there were times when it seemed to me as though the world below was a stormy sea with waves all around us as high as the hills we were encircled by, and the little patch of mountain where we lived was the only place left anywhere that was safe and dry. What I concluded then—less in a way to mar our peace than to deepen my sense of it—was that the day would come when the wild waves would wet us too, and the winds would lash us, and the great beast browsing its way up from below would raise its head and notice us at last. I concluded that even in Paradise, maybe especially in Paradise, the dark times come.

Two Reflections from Frederick Buechner [adapted ]

### Pray for Afghanistan with Christian Aid

O God of mercy and of peace,

We hold before you the peoples of Afghanistan.

Be living bread to those who are hungry each day

Be healing and wholeness to those who have no access to health care amidst the ravages of pandemic

Be their true home to all who have been displaced

Be open arms of loving acceptance to those who fear because of their gender, ethnicity, religious or political views

Be peace to those engaged in armed conflict and those who live within its shadow.

Turn our hearts and minds to your ways of just and gentle peace,

Open our eyes to see you in all acts of compassionate care

Strengthen our hearts to step out in solidarity with your suffering people and

Hold us all in your unfailing love.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who emptied himself of all but love in order to bring life in all its fullness.

Amen

**Paul**

## Dedication of Stained Glass Windows



You will all recognise this picture as it is there each Sunday before the service. The window has been admired by many in the congregation and on 9<sup>th</sup> May a dedication service was held, delayed by some time by the Covid pandemic.

Comment was made by Paul on the group who helped to facilitate the windows, Rev. John Patterson, Robert Forrester, Wellwood Grierson and Margaret Devlin. The bulk of the work however was done by Margaret, in arranging meetings and generally making sure everything followed the guidance of Church

Procedures. Paul made reference to the window depicting Mary which was immediately under the Cross on the wall. This was the position she occupied at the Crucifixion

The designer Judith Roebuck had said this had been a tricky brief and design as the shape and composition of the windows was unusual and they were small which made it difficult to include a figurative content. She decided to depict 2 main themes.

The grief of Mary as mother of Jesus in a figurative form.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ in a symbolic form but had replaced the appearance of Christ with His words from John 14 verses 27 and 28. "Peace is what I leave with you" and "I am leaving but I will come back to you".

The service of dedication followed the two themes and the hymns were very appropriate to the symbolism of the windows The hymns were brought to life by the voices of Carol Thomson and Ross Fettes, a grandson of Robert Forrester. It was a great pleasure to have Ross there supported by Robert's daughter and family. The opportunity was taken to thank Robert Forrester, not only for his input into the progress of the windows but also for the work he did through the years for the Church in his various capacities.

It was sad that he never was able to see the completion of the windows. This was a moving service and enjoyed by the attending members of the congregation.

## Finance

We are more than halfway through our financial year and income is understandably less than normal due to the lockdown periods. Groups which use our halls have started again and we have some new hall users. This brings welcome income.

Regular expenditure by standing order and direct debit is £3197.22/month. This does not include gas and electricity charges which for the previous three months were £688.36 for gas and £591.59 for electricity. These amounts will increase as we go into autumn and the winter months.

Fabric expenditure to date was £5906.72. Over the coming weeks three broken windows in the church will be replaced, the fascia board at the front of the church will be replaced at a cost of £1725, someone climbed onto the North Hall roof and the resulting damage will be repaired, the monobloc paving in front of the church has sunk in places and will be lifted and re-laid.

Our Property Group work hard to keep the buildings and grounds in good condition. They carry out tasks themselves where possible, but many jobs need the expertise of tradesmen which comes at a cost. Clean up days are organised and anyone who is able to help would be made welcome.

Our Ministry & Mission payment was £3875.50 /month for 12 payments. The Stewardship & Finance department agreed we could reduce this to £2000/month from March, but we will have to pay the shortfall of £18,755 in December.

If you are a taxpayer and use a standing order or FWO envelopes or the Wee Kirks to give money to the church we could claim 25% of the amount given back from HMRC if you sign a Gift Aid Declaration form. Contact Margaret Devlin Tel. 01292 445118 for a form or it can be downloaded from the church website [www.castlehillchurch.org](http://www.castlehillchurch.org) under the publications section. Completed forms should be returned to Margaret.

**Margaret Devlin**

## Pause for Thought

Dear Lord,

Every single evening  
As I'm lying here in bed,  
This tiny little Prayer  
Keep running through my head:

God bless all my "family"  
Wherever they may be,  
Keep them warm  
And safe from harm  
For they're so close to me.

And God, there is one more thing  
I wish that you could do;  
Hope you don't mind me asking,  
Please bless my computer too.

Now I know that it's unusual  
To Bless a motherboard,  
But listen just a second  
While I explain it to you, Lord.

You see, that little metal box  
Holds more than odds and ends;  
Inside those small compartments  
Rest so many of my friends.

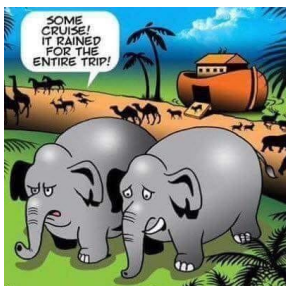
I know so much about them  
By the kindness that they give,  
And this little scrap of metal  
Takes me in to where they live.

By faith is how I know them  
Much the same as you.  
We share in what life brings us  
And from that our friendships grew.

Please take an extra minute  
From your duties up above,  
To bless those in my address book  
That's filled with so much love.

Wherever else this prayer may reach  
To each and every friend,  
Bless each e-mail inbox  
And each person who hits 'send'.

When you update your Heavenly list  
On your own Great CD-ROM,  
Bless everyone who says this prayer  
Sent up to GOD. Com



**Complaining about a silent God while your Bible is never opened is like complaining about not getting texts when your phone is turned off**

When I was young and went on long car journeys, in my dad's car with mum and two brothers from Inverness to Glasgow or the Aberdeenshire coast to St Cyrus to visit aunt or uncle and other family. One of the games we played was to take the letters of car registration numbers plates, then see what words or sentences we could make up from them. My dad's car the registration was "KST 890" translated into "*KEEP STRAIGHT on TOWARDS* your destination or goal".

On another occasion when browsing to buy a new car myself, my son aged seven whilst walking through the showroom said "Dad we need to buy this car!" It had nothing to do with make, model, colour or number of doors.

I asked him why to get the answer it's "*THE GRAHAM FAMILY VEHICLE*".

The registration was "C 236 GFV" and yes I did buy the car.

Most people that know I have an interest in railways particularly steam locomotives or trains. When before British Railways back the overall name for railways in Great Britain. There were three main companies: LMS - London Midland Scottish running from London Euston to Glasgow Central; GWR - Great Western Railway from London Paddington to Penzance in Cornwall; LNER - London North Eastern Railway from London King's Cross to Edinburgh Waverley on to Aberdeen.

If we take the initials of these railways in a similar way to the car registrations you can use them to remind us of our relationship with God and Jesus Christ.

LMS - London Midland Scottish - "THE LORD is MY SHEPHERD".

GWR - Great Western Railway - "GOD'S WONDERFUL RAILWAY"

His church is the resource we know of as believers sharing our faith with others.

LNER - London North Eastern - Our "GOD's LOVE is an NEVER ENDING RESERVOIR of love to us all.

God communicates through the everyday things all around us , if we take time to listen or see him working for us. Is he speaking to you today?

Perhaps you've heard the story of the chicken who proposed to the cow that they make the farmer breakfast. The cow cheerfully responded: "I'm in! What will we give him?" The chicken replied, "I'll supply the eggs, and you supply the meat." The cow sadly replied to the chicken, "For you that's devotion, but for me it means total sacrifice." And she walked away.



## A Memory for us all

Someone whom we all knew, loved and a source of fond memories was our Interim Moderator of a few years ago, Ian McDonald. Many of our congregation had special memories and I particularly enjoyed his company, even although he continually reminded me that he was a week older than I was. [Editor]

I am sure that the following story will be of interest to many and remind us his time with us.

### Holiday with a twist

Due to these trying times the wife and myself decided to spend a few days up north in the Isle of Skye instead of traveling abroad. I could not believe the scenery in this part of the country absolutely beautiful. We then ventured a little further up to Applecross and if you think Glencoe is some place, well it has nothing compared to Applecross this place is frightening with single track roads along the sides of mountains, oil rigs in the distance and way below ships in dry dock.

The whole trip was breath taking.

On the way back we thought we would take a small diversion to Kilchoan and see the resting place of a man who influenced me many years ago. When I say a small diversion, it included two ferries and single-track roads that a tractor would struggle on.

However we made it and finally arrived at the graveyard where the late Rev Ian McDonald rests with his wife.

To get to the graveyard we drove up an old lane then walked up a path in a overgrown field to finally get there.



Then the problem began, the graveyard was overgrown and there were numerous headstones with the name McDonald on them we came away with a number of pictures of headstones with his name but not certain we had the correct one.

I said to Anne. Mr McDonald could have made that easier.

Anyway, we had a ferry to catch to the Isle of Mull so we had to go.

At the ferry terminal we arrived just as the boat was departing (missed it) we then checked out if we get the next one, can we book onto the departing ferry to Oban (it was fully booked) so we had to drive back the 210 miles by road a lot of it single track.

As we started our return journey we had to pass the graveyard again so we thought let's try again, and low and behold 20 yards inside the old rickety gate we came across this headstone that confirmed it was Mr McDonalds.

Did he help us by making us miss the boat?

This man married Anne and me, christened my two daughters and came and visited me numerous times, he was a great man.

I've posted a picture of his headstone and the view he has over the sound of Mull.

A fantastic 4 days and 755 miles up north.

[Courtesy of the Tarbolton Times]



Christian Aid is still working hard in regions of the world where help is needed. Needless to state that fund raising has been difficult during the pandemic, but Christian Aid is still doing what it was set up to do. Its latest campaign is 'Sisters Stronger Together' focussing on setting up eco businesses in Malawi. Christian Aid will also be at COP26 in November.

Christian Aid would like to remind people about Will Aid where the organisation is remembered in folks' wills.

In case some of you weren't informed about the wonderful results of the Christian Aid fund raising at Castlehill a few months ago, here are the figures:- Donations reached £1224. Gift Aid was applied to £985 which increased the total by £246 giving a fantastic final total of £1470. In addition, the congregation had fun counting steps during the month reaching the incredible aggregated total of **3,206,857**.

Thanks, and congratulations are due to all who donated and took part

**Allan Jack**

## Seniors Afternoons

All being well and subject to anything that might happen over the next few weeks, we are intending to resume the Seniors afternoons on **12th October, 2.30 in the Main Hall**. We will be adhering to all the instructions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all who come along.

We are all set up to go, the tea ladies are ready, the lifts are in place where needed and the entertainment is booked. All we need is you to come along. Watch for any changes that may occur but meantime put the date in your diary or on the calendar, we are so looking forward to seeing you all again. Tell your friends to come along as well, this is not just for Church members but for all who want to come along for an enjoyable afternoon. It will be good to get out again and meet your friends.

**Wellwood Grierson**

## Fabric Report

Here is your Fabric update We had a very good clean-up day (outside only) and I want to thank everyone who came to help. We are now looking at inside as we will be having a few areas needing painting as we had a leak over the winter and the ladies' toilet and the hallway got a bit of water damage.

We are hoping to get the roof and fascia boards repaired, also a cracked window at the front of the building, done in September. We also hope that the outside walkway to the main hall will be done. We have booked it in but there is a problem with builders getting supplies for their jobs which is putting things behind schedule. I hope if you see any problems with the building or the grounds you would let us know and we can get repairs done quickly.

## Social Committee

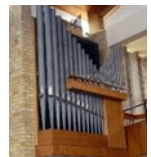
We have not met up yet but hope to do soon and get some social events organised. We are looking to do an event for Christmas as this never happened last year. I know a few of you were asking about a beetle drive so that would be considered if allowed for the new year. We are always looking for ideas so get thinking and let us have some suggestions. We all need a bit of cheer and fun after such an isolated time, watch this space for more news about events

**Liz Reid**

## Choir

Like everyone at this time, musicians have certainly found themselves in a strange place regarding performing! It is fair to say that I have missed the congregational singing on a Sunday and was delighted when Carol came on board and the music came to life again.

There is much excitement along with much apprehension now that more activities are opening up and I know that choir members are looking forward to it starting again. The choir area is all ready for us to take up our places - it will take us time for the vocal chords to be "warmed up" however as soon as we receive the go ahead for rehearsals to start within COVID guidelines we will warm up the voices and start again. I have to mention that the choir will miss Allister Anderson - our main tenor - when the rehearsals start again as he was a great support to me and great fun during the rehearsals. If there are any gentlemen in the congregation that would like to join Allan or any ladies that would like to come along to the rehearsals when they eventually start, please just come and speak to me any Sunday - we are a fun bunch.



**Liz Kelly**

### Dates for your calendar:

<b>Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Breakfast Club</b>
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	<b>National Giving Day</b>
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Harvest Thanksgiving</b>
<b>Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Seniors' Afternoon</b>
<b>Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	<b>B.B. Soup and Sweet lunch</b>



# Down Memory Lane

Following on our last magazine edition, can you cast your minds back to 2005 and 2007? Those were two years when we had two successful social events, a Wine and Cheese party and a Barbecue in the Grierson's garden at Pine Brae. The weather was kind and over 70 from the Church with friends attended each event. We raised over £400 for the Hospice and all enjoyed treasure hunts, quizzes, putting, darts and other activities. Perhaps chatting to each other was the main event.

The Barbecue was memorable for two reasons, the boards on which the disposable barbecues caught fire and the fiery trend continued when a neighbour's son and his friend carried out a professional display of pyrotechnics

There was a bar in the garage, but we will not dwell on that too much, but safe to say that it was surprising who you could meet in there

The following photos create the atmosphere but sadly portray many who are no longer with us but none the less not forgotten. See who you can spot from the past!!



**Did you see who had that last sausage roll?**



**Are you sure you do not want something else?**



**This is really serious.**



**Do you think we should have another barbecue?**



**Another one over here please!**



**Are you absolutely certain?**



**Just a sample of what they are all waiting for**



**Working out the answers**



**These were the ladies responsible for the night!**

You may recall in our last magazine that we had an article from Leslie Martin, remembering his time with the Boys Brigade at Castlehill Church. We received the following email from him in response to the piece in the spring issue.

*"I was very pleased to hear that my article was deemed good enough to be included in the next edition of the Herald. I too will be interested to see if it brings any reaction among the older members of the congregation who may remember me or my Mum and Dad. Although I left Ayr in 1971, I know they both were involved in Church life. I believe my mum was a Brownie leader and my dad was an accomplished musician who wrote and arranged music for the choir. He was also a prolific diarist who kept a diary from 1947 to 1975. I have a diary of his from 1974 where throughout December he has been arranging music for the Watchnight service for 5 trumpets, 3 French horns, 2 trombones, bass, 2 clarinets, 1 bassoon and tympani. That must have been quite something to hear. He modestly comments that it was "very good". He sadly died in 1975. I was living in Bournemouth at the time, and flew up to Glasgow airport and was met by Sandy MacPherson who drove me down to Ayr for the funeral. My mum continued singing in the choir and working with the Brownies. She is now 93 years of age, and lives with my sister in Kilmarnock and although she is quite deaf and has poor eyesight, she is in good health. In fact, up till the pandemic struck in early 2020, she travelled once a week to Ayr (on her own) for a lunch date with some of her old friends from her choir days and also school days e.g. Helen Stirrat and Margaret Findley.*

*I will also look forward to hearing what the boys make of some of my memories when you have your Zoom meeting on Friday. "*

**Les**

The last time we published, our meetings had been taking place on Zoom with some success. The rules changed in April and we were allowed to meet outdoors. For eight weeks we met at the Old Racecourse. We used the outdoors to do some map and compass work and played some new games, everyone enjoyed the outdoor time. We also ran well into June instead of our usual finish in May.



In June we were pleased to welcome Les Martin and his wife Ellen to our Sunday service. Les contacted me earlier this year and sent in an article for the magazine remembering his time in the 17<sup>th</sup> Ayr and being in the choir with his parents. They very much enjoyed their time with us and we did too. Les's response to the item in the last edition is above.

Enrolment for the new session was on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August, we were delighted with the numbers who signed up and particularly delighted with the new boys who joined. We are still having to organise our evenings round Covid, hopefully as the session goes on we can relax a little.

Our first event of the new session will be our **dedication service on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October**. Two things of note for this service; we will be presenting three President's Badges during the service to Ryan McGeachin, Callum Murray and Benn Houston. Also at this service we will be parading our original colours which were returned to us in March 2020 after disappearing in 1997. Two of the social workers who worked with Dougald Donnelly and hopefully the minister he helped in the Iona Community will be joining us at the service. In the last issue of the Herald you may remember his social worker, Hugh, had contacted me to say they had decided that the residue of Dougald's estate should be given to the 17<sup>th</sup> Ayr. He and I met recently and he handed over £785 which was amazing. We are very grateful to the social workers for thinking of us.

**After the dedication we are hoping to host our annual soup and sweet lunch.**



We are also looking forward to our annual “camp” in November. We are heading to the Well Road Centre in Moffat which is where we should have been last November.

In August next year we will be returning to Romania for the fifth time. This is a trip we should have been making in August of this year. In the coming year we will be sharing lots of news of our trip.



The first thing to share is that my daughter, Rachel Queen, is running the London Marathon on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is an incredible feat, she has been running four times a week since March, I trained with her until she got to half marathon distance, she is now running up to 40 miles a week as part of the training She is raising money for our trip to Romania. If anyone would like to support her in her fund raising here is the address for her just giving page or if you prefer you can put a donation in an envelope marked Boys’ Brigade and put it in the collection plate. **The site will close on 4th October.**

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ScotlandsKiltwalk2021-RachelQueen>

We are going to London with Rachel for the weekend of the marathon, I will let you know how she gets on and share some photos.

**Ian Queen**

## Wee Kirks

We are hoping to start Wee Kirk collections sometime in September or early October. All our collectors are ready and willing to go and they hope to renew acquaintance with you all again. Hopefully you will be willing to see them once more. If you have any reservations let me or your collector know and we will make arrangements to collect the contents. Take care.



**Wellwood Grierson**

## Coffee Mornings

In the last issue we mentioned the Zoom sessions, organised by Margaret Graham, which were relatively well attended and enjoyed. For the month of June it was decided to trial a “live” coffee shop in the North Hall.

All the covid requirements were introduced and immaculately followed by the volunteer staff. Social distancing was strictly adhered to as some photos show, It was reasonably well attended, probably about a dozen or so came along. but those who came enjoyed the “live” chat and company

It was really a success and bodes well for the start of the Coffee mornings to resume on 7th September. Already there are some good attendances, please come along

Particular thanks should be given to the ladies who organised it all, maintained the regulations [quite forcibly at times, and rightly so ], and cleaned and sanitised the hall when the morning was over,

The photo on the right gives the opportunity to recognise them and say thanks



Distance Chats





## The Guild

It has been a difficult time for all organisations this year and we hope and pray that the following year will see us back to normality with us being allowed to meet in a hall as before.



The Strategy for the Guild for the next three years is to 'Look Forward in Faith', with the Theme for next year being 'Lights and Bushels'.

The committee are busy putting together a Syllabus which we trust you will all appreciate and find at least some of it to be both interesting and entertaining.

The Opening Social is planned for the evening of Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> October and will feature the Loudoun Friends Ceilidh Band. This should set your feet tapping. It is open to everyone so come along and bring your friends.

Enrolment Night will be the following Wednesday (13<sup>th</sup> October) where the full Syllabus will be available.

It is hoped that speakers from two Projects will come along to present 'Chocolate Heaven' (from Pioneers UK) and 'Finding Homes for Vulnerable Children' (from Home for Good).



Looking forward to seeing as many as possible at the Opening Social. Until then take care and enjoy good health.



**Dorothy Jack, Secretary**

## Breakfast Club

Hopefully we will be able to start on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 9.30 am. Watch out for information soon.

**Tom McLeod**

### CASTLEHILL FOOD DISTRIBUTION HUB WELCOMES YOU!

Castlehill Church has commenced as a Distribution Hub for South Ayrshire Food Bank each week on a Friday morning between the hours of 10a.m. and 12noon.

Entry to the hub will be by the door to the halls: follow the sign in the courtyard to reach the correct door. At present someone will meet you at the door and social distancing will be observed as you are guided to collect the food.

We hope our Distribution Hub will make it more convenient for those who live on the southside of Ayr to make use of the Food Bank facilities but anyone who requires help on a Friday is very welcome to come along irrespective of your home address.

Food can be **donated** to South Ayrshire Foodbank at Castlehill on a Friday morning or on a Sunday morning.

Updated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021



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## NATIONAL GIVING DAY



**Congregations across Scotland are being encouraged to participate in a National Giving Day on the day of their choosing between Sunday 5 September and Sunday 31 October 2021. This will provide people of all ages an opportunity to reflect on God's presence with us through these challenging times and to offer gifts of thanksgiving back to God.**

Money received through this initiative will remain with participating congregations who will choose how to use these gifts. This money may be used to fund specific work, to launch a new project or simply to offset deficits, considering the challenging financial circumstances faced by many of our churches over the last year. Congregations can use the money locally or direct it towards projects at home or overseas, provided that it will be used in line with the charitable objectives of the Church. The money raised through your congregation's involvement in the National Giving Day will not be assessable for Ministries and Mission purposes.

Castlehill like all congregations has noticed a marked drop in income as a result of the pandemic. The Kirk Session and Board believe this is a timely opportunity to help rectify this situation somewhat so that we can meet our dues for this year. Please consider giving what you can to help – no matter how little, it is vital for our financial security.

**WE HAVE CHOSEN THE FIRST SUNDAY IN OCTOBER – 3 OCTOBER AS OUR NATIONAL GIVING DAY. PLEASE GIVE AS GENEROUSLY AS YOU CAN – PLACE THE MONEY IN AN ENVELOPE MARKED NATIONAL GIVING DAY AND IF YOU CANNOT BE IN CHURCH ON THAT SUNDAY, THE SUNDAY EITHER SIDE OF IT WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DONATE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH THIS!**

## What Road Will You Choose?

I've just finished listening to Matt Haig's "The Midnight Library", and I feel inspired to share the feelings and thoughts it conjured up. The book tells the story of Nora Seed, a young woman who is caught between life and death and finds herself in the Midnight Library where time stops. It is always midnight, and, with the help of an old friend, Nora is offered a unique second chance at life or should I say lives. In the Midnight Library, she has the opportunity to choose any book on the shelves.

Each book contains a different life and version of herself that she can experience and learn from. The choices ranging from a famous rock star, an author, Explorer in the Arctic, Living in Australia, to married with a daughter in Cambridge.

As someone who is drawn to the concept of multiple lives this makes me think about how life is full of possibilities, and we should be more open to what we can do with it. We have the power within ourselves, life is for living. Even when it is not as smooth or carefree as it first appeared.

With everything that has happened during the past few years with the pandemic, I think it's important to focus on being happy, content, and grateful.

Everybody pictures different things when we think about those words but that's the great thing about our individuality, we're all different. I know for myself, I'm happy and grateful for those I love. For spending time with my parents, partner and friends, and being a creative person, I'm writing and reading more than ever.

Going back to "The Midnight Library", the Robert Frost quote, "two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the one less travelled by" is used by Matt Haig, to convey poignantly how we all have the choice to live life as it is and there is no right or wrong way. We live life uniquely and because of this wonderful book I am determined to keep being who I am and be grateful for what I have and make the most of my life. What will you decide to do?

**Kirsty Wyllie**

# Anchor Boys

Our 'normal' year usually finishes middle of May with our display night. As we know this has not been a normal year for any youth organisation. We were no exception. We have had fantastic support of resources from our HQ although Go Wild and anchor boys conjured up a lot of varying thoughts for me.

Anyway, in April we decided to take on the Go Wild Challenge. To give you an idea I've listed a few of the challenges: - making bug traps, stick people, bark and tree rubs, ant farm, creation collage, twig tower, hunting minibeasts, apple bird feeder, den building, nature bingo, tracking, seed bombs.



Our last Challenge was 'throwing' the seed bombs onto the area prepared beside the north hall. We used native wildflower seeds and this is our memorial garden for the year of Covid symbolising all our work with the Anchor Boys during 2020/21. Two months later we see the growth already.



We finished with our awards night for the Go Wild Challenge on 22<sup>nd</sup> June with all the boys' parents in attendance. A big thank to our leaders Craig, Graeme, Paul, Manne without whom we would not have been in a position to do all of this programme. Jessica is also working with us for her DofE Award.

**Margaret Graham, Officer in Charge, Anchor Section.**



## Funerals

### May

John Cockburn 44 Maple Drive Ayr

Dorothy Browne 69 Overmills Road Ayr

### July

Katherine Colvin Redford Nursing Home formerly  
Forehill Road Ayr

### August

Nessie McCreath 61 Glendale Cresc. Ayr

Hugh Morrison 5 Meadowpark Ayr

David Dunlop 8 Willow Park Ayr

Mary Charleton formerly 6 Belmont Place East



### He is Gone

You can shed tears that he is gone or  
you can smile because he has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back  
or you can open your eyes and see all he's left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see him  
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 him and only that he's gone  
or you can cherish his memory and let it live on.

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back  
or you can do what he'd want:  
smile, open your eyes, love and go on.

Advertising

Perhaps one of the pages in the magazine which is not always looked at for very long is the last page. The one that has all the adverts! It is easy to forget that some of the businesses advertising, have done so for **over ten years**. This shows a high degree of loyalty to our magazine and reflects the fact that they find it valuable to continue to advertise with us. Also, it means that you, the reader, have found them helpful and possibly recommended them to others. The fees they pay to the magazine cover the printing costs for almost two issues, which means it makes it financially worth while to produce it. I feel it is only right that we should thank them for the continued support.

**THANK YOU.**

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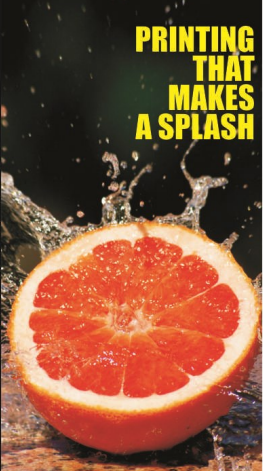
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