



## The Link

The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church

Linked with Denny Old Parish Church

Spring 2021

**Fasting: “Jesus answered, “Do you expect the guests at a wedding party to be sad as long as the bridegroom is with them? Of course not! But the day will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.” Matthew 9:15**

As we know that the season of Lent has begun on Ash Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February, I want to focus on Lent which is a time for us to review our celebration of Lent and Easter. Folks, Lent is associated with fasting, self – deprivation, self – punishment and self- discipline.

Jesus’ disciples did not observe official religious fasting. When Pharisees asked Jesus why your disciples do not fast at all? Jesus’ response was **“As long as the bridegroom is with, they don’t need to fast, but the day will come when they will fast.”**

As we are aware that the period of fasting or Lent leading up to Easter in our Christian Calendar is associated with Jesus’ fasting in the wilderness in preparation for his mission, however, the whole of his earthly life led up to and was fulfilled in his death and resurrection.

We cannot go through what Jesus went through. What we can do is take the signals for true living which he gave in his earthly life and be instructed by them for our own growth in faith.

The bridegroom (Jesus) is with us as a living presence as we move through Lent and beyond! It is presence of the bridegroom that we

prepare to understand more deeply and assimilate into our own lives the character of his earthly life and the empowering he is willing to provide for our growth in the kind of faith he displayed.

So, my dear brothers and sisters, Jesus empowers us to observe Lent in whatever capacity or way we can. It is now up to us to decide what we can do during this Lent in our response to the bridegroom's call to us. Present circumstances and global pandemic have made us think to look around ourselves to the needs of the people in our neighbourhood and in our community. Whatever you have decided to do in the Lent, remember the people around you and help them. That is one of the purposes of the Lent along with spiritual overhauling.

So, my dear brothers and sisters spend more time in prayer, reading the scriptures and reflecting on them and make yourselves ready for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter morning, not just as a remembrance and celebration, but also truly accepting and welcoming Jesus into our lives to receive an abundant life on this earth and an eternal life later.

May God bless you all. Amen

Rev. Raheel Arif

### **The Power of Love**

In this restless world of struggle

It is often hard to find

Answers to the questions

That disturb our peace of mind

And our hearts are lost and lonely

As we search to find the key

In the meaning of all living

And to immortality.

But we'll never find the answers

In science, graphs and charts

For the only real solution

Must be found within our hearts.

For the answers to all living

God holds safely in His keeping

And only when we know Him

Will we find what we are seeking –

For to know Him is to love Him

And to love Him is to find

The answer to all questions

That fill every troubled mind.

*Helen Steiner Rice submitted by Carol Richmond.*

### **Diamond Celebration**

60 years on Jim and Winnie Kemp celebrated their Diamond Wedding on 4<sup>th</sup> February. Jim, originally from Stirling, met Winnie in the Piazza Ballroom where they enjoyed dancing and the rest is history! They were married in Bonnybirdge Parish Church on February 4<sup>th</sup> 1961. They have one son, Colin and are grandparents to three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

We will be in good company sending them Best Wishes and Good Health along with the Queen who sent a message of Congratulations.

Unfortunately, since I put together this article Jim has passed away on 15<sup>th</sup> March. Such joy and happiness then such sadness.

I am sure everyone would join me in conveying our sincere sympathy to Winnie and her family.

### **Christian Aid 2021**

#### **Christian Aid week 2021 runs from 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> May.**

Envelopes for your donations will be available in Church during this week. If you can help in any way then please talk to Sue Storrar or Jean McCheyne. Unfortunately, as yet we are not able to have a grand event in the Church buildings but some of us may be looking for sponsorship to help raise funds in some way. We will let you know.

### **Thank You**

May I take this opportunity to thank all our friends at Haggs Church for their kind thoughts, cards, flowers which I received recently on the death of Murray. To know Gods love through your messages has helped immensely.

Jean McCheyne

### **Activity to do with Children on Easter: Fill the Egg**

You will need: a large chocolate egg and lots of smaller chocolates and sweets (such as Buttons, Milky Way Stars, Rolos, Munchies, Maltesers, fun size chocolates, Skittles, Starburst), sharp knife, and tray.

Talk about the egg symbolising the stone from Jesus' burial area and then cut the top of the egg off using the knife and talk about finding the tomb empty, just like the inside of the egg.

As you talk through the next section ask the children to start filling the egg with all the other sweets that you brought: they need to open the packets and fill the egg up as far as they can.

As they fill it up talk about the different shapes, colours, sizes, smells representing the people around the world who believe and follow Jesus. Our lives can be empty like the tomb and egg but with Jesus in our lives we are filled with love and grace.

## **Tomorrow**

A time may come when we can embrace again,  
And our touch may show our love and our compassion,  
But not now.  
Now we must stand apart,  
Joined as one in the space between us,  
For in that space, you become you and me.  
Names, known and able to be embraced by God.

Moira Martin

## **Crossreach**

### **Corona virus (Covid-19) Appeal 2020**

Thank you for stepping up to the challenge through kind and generous financial donations towards CrossReach's appeal to cover the ongoing costs we continue to experience in facing the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thanks to you, the elderly people, adults, children and families feel protected and connected and continue to receive the services and loving care they need from CrossReach.

Please continue to pray for the health and wellbeing of those we work with, the CrossReach staff team and all our wonderful supporters.

Stay safe. From Pete Cuthbertson, Donor Partnership Officer,  
CrossReach.

Maisie Mortimer

## **Schools.**

Over the past few years Jean Duff of Denny Old and myself have tried to bring our church to the local primary schools. The three headteachers have welcomed our visits and our stories. Our visits take the format of a PowerPoint presentation beginning with a bit of fun then our Christian based story then a prayer.

The latest one was entitled "Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible" as pictures of old TV sets were shown. I expect many of us still remember when our black and white TVs showed this as the BBC tried to resolve the problem.

We continued to tell the story of Daniel who was arrested then put in jail besides the lion. Patience and a determination to overcome the situation was one of his strengths as he put his trust in God.

The children still received our stories although we cannot pay personal visits until this pandemic is over. This is an important part of our ministry to the young people of the area. Jesus tells us to go and tell people about his love for us all and that is what we are trying to do.

To everyone at Higgs "Normal service will resume as soon as possible".

Moira Martin

## **BUILDING BACK BETTER**

Dear Friends,

I am writing this as the new Session Clerk for Haggs Parish Church following the retirement of Murray McCheyne at the end of last year, due to his deteriorating health.

We are all grieving for the sad loss of Murray, along with the loss of others from our Haggs Church family over the past year. It has been so tough for us all watching on TV the numbers of daily deaths, due to Covid-19, rising so sharply. It has also been incredibly difficult for us not to be able to visit and comfort friends in our community who have suffered illness or bereavement, or to attend funeral services for those who have passed away.

We have also had to get used to worshipping in different ways; either on Facebook, on the telephone or by tuning into radio or television services. Even when we managed to get back to live communal worship in our church for a few months at the end of 2020 it was socially distanced, with limited numbers, wearing face coverings and with no singing or friendly hugs.

However, it has made me realize that the structures and traditions of the church do not need to be limiting. We can still experience the joy of shared worship and Christian fellowship when worshipping in different ways. More flexible services, streamed music, increased contributions via standing orders, less formal communion and increased collaboration between churches may be the way forward in the future.

The current crisis has revealed the problems already present in our church and society and has amplified them. We should not just be looking to getting back to how things were before the Pandemic; we should be looking to improve the positive impact of our church in our community and in the wider world and 'Build Back Better'. Concentrating our energies on building relationships is more important than church buildings.

Our church should be a 'Community of love'; Jesus died for the world, not for the church. Sending out love to our neighbours; near and far, through the love of God, should be our vision and mission.

God Bless you all and I look forward to meeting you again soon, hopefully in person.

Sue Storrar

February 2021

(Session Clerk)

## **Used Stamps**

Over the year we have collected used stamps in a box in the vestibule. Thank you if you have used this and may I ask that everyone continue to collect their used stamps and bring them to Church to help good causes. Last year's stamps have been given to CrossReach to do what they do with them. Thank you for your help.

Jean McCheyne

## **UNICEF**

Thank you for responding so generously to the UNICEF Jar of Grace appeal during the Advent period. A total of £90.00 was raised from the jars. Because of the lockdown and Church closure our donation has unfortunately been drastically reduced due to lack of Soup and Sandwich lunches and special collections, etc. but every little helps in UNICEFS work with children. Thank you.

Jean McCheyne

**Deaths**

*'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'.*

March 2020	Ronald Jack, Bankview Care Home
April 2020	Gwen Hamilton, Cumbernauld
July 2020	Rab Moffat, Dennyloanhead
September 2020	Annie Mackinnon, Haggs
November 2020	Irene Thompson, Wheatlands Home George Stirling, Dennyloanhead
December 2020	R. Murray McCheyne, Banknock
January 2021	Betty Crosbie, Longcroft
February 2021	Ted Schofield, Bonnybridge
March 2021	Jim Kemp, Dennyloanhead

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