

INVERKIP CHURCH NEWSLETTER SPRING 2022





Please continue to collect your used stamps to support The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) and their pastors.

In response to the financial collapse in the country, the pastors in Syria and Lebanon initiated in 2021 a scheme where they gave half of their salary to establish a relief programme as an expression of support to the neediest families around their congregations. NESSL is a partner church of the Church of Scotland. The financial situation in the Synod has affected their ability to pay pastors salaries. Despite this, pastors are reaching out to the needy in their congregations in a sacrificial way.

Please pass on your used stamps to Joyce Brown, leave them at Church Door, or in the Church Hall.

INTERIM MODERATOR



What if our church had £1m in the bank? Would that be a good thing? I doubt it...because we would never need to change, we could keep things the way they have always been. Then we could die in peace.

What if Jesus hadn't been arrested, tried and executed? The disciples wouldn't have had all that heartache—but then, none of us would know anything of resurrection.

And there are no shortage of worries and fears; internationally, locally and in our lives which would bow us down and have us longing for new starts, for resurrection.

It's Easter—the time when God tells us we cannot stay the same, and transforms our disasters into dances!

Happy Easter!

Alan

PASTORAL ASSISTANT

Lynsey Graham

I started officially as your Pastoral Assistant on 10th January and as I sit reflecting on the past few months, what a blessing it has been! Three years ago, I met Chris at the Worship Leaders Course – introduced by Morag Cowe!

It's wonderful being able to see him going off to Glasgow University to study Theology and great to be able to lead worship myself and be here for you all.

During the pandemic, as many of you know, I was working in Palliative Care and now I am working in Long Term Condition Management as a Physiotherapist.



It has been a lot juggling both jobs and helping my daughter Sarah with her upcoming National 5 (4th Year) exams. To complete my stalking of Chris entirely (!!) I am also off to Glasgow University in March to study a short course on Eldership and Local Church Leadership.

In the February half term Sarah and I went to Wales where we enjoyed a hot tub lodge under the stars in what's known as a Dark Skies area. It was a chance to really stop and reflect on everything that has happened with the pandemic and changes of jobs and losses we have experienced and also all the new people who have come into our lives and the opportunities to serve that we have now.

At night in Wales, you can see the stars so clearly and the only sound is the occasional bird of prey in the distance. We felt a deep sense of peace as we prayed for everyone and for God's guidance in the months ahead.

It's important when you are feeling overwhelmed and busy to take a little time away with God. It can give us a renewed perspective that what we are doing is the Lord's work and that it is sacred work, whether that be caring for someone or fulfilling another important role in the life of the Church or even work that you have done in the past. First Corinthians tells us that in the Lord our labour cannot be lost. When we get older it can be hard to find ways to serve, especially if you are housebound. Remember prayer is vital to the ongoing work and mission of the church and we can do that anywhere, at any time and bring God's light to any situation.

God bless you

Lynsey

Mob 07594424526

Email lynseychurch847@gmail.com

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” – Isaiah 40: 31

SESSION CLERK

I pray that peace will be with the Ukraine and its people soon.

Watching the terror that has been brought to the country and its people has been mind numbing.

The Church has been getting busier on Sunday mornings with the relaxation of Covid rules. It has been a long journey but hopefully the end is in sight. It is lovely to have Baptisms again in the Church and be able to have increased numbers in the Church. Hopefully Sunday School and Creche can start again soon.



At the end of 2021 the Session was asked to provide a Mission Audit to Presbytery. I have included this in the newsletter for you to see what we provided. The Church has been advised that the number of ministers will significantly reduce in the next few years and the ability to call a minister has been put on hold until Presbytery come up with a plan. By providing the Mission audit feedback and completing an AMBA audit the Presbytery will collate our details and provide us with a plan.

I worked with Susie at the beginning of March with completing an Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA Audit) for Clyde Presbytery. The audit is being carried out for all Churches and Halls in the Presbytery. This is to show what the status is of all the buildings in order that Presbytery can decide the best way forward for all. It will mean that throughout the Presbytery that some buildings will close. It covered such things as location, usage figures, structural integrity, health and safety, fire safety, heating systems, audio visual systems and water risk assessments. The auditor went away from Inverkip we thought with a very positive feeling that we are working well in Inverkip. We did have areas re the roof that he did mention which needs attention. We are aware of this but have issues with bats which has delayed works.

I attended a meeting with David, Douglas and Lynsey at the beginning of March which was attended by representatives from all Churches in the Clyde Presbytery. We were to discuss our thoughts for the future and we were advised that change is inevitable but it is how we work with change to our strengths will be to the benefit of the Church moving forward.

We have been blessed with great services from the Worship group, Lynsey and Rev Liz Geddes since Archie retired and feel we stand in a good position. Please contact me if there is anything you think we should be doing.

I hope you all have a peaceful Easter.

Kind Regards

Ewen

INVERKIP CHURCH MISSION AUDIT

Inverkip church is the sole religious and Christian presence in Inverkip and serves an ever-growing community. Inverkip as a village will see further expansion in the next 10-15 years with a housing development planned with between 650-1000 dwellings. This gives the Church a great opportunity to expand and spread the message of God. Inverkip Church provides new residents with a 'welcome pack' which gives details of services, activities etc and contact numbers for local groups. Our church's aim is to nurture and expand the faith of both believers and non-believers within Inverkip Parish. We hold Sunday Morning worship which is currently lead by members of a team of congregational members from both Inverkip and Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Church who are qualified to do so. "Soul-Searching" services, a joint enterprise between our two churches, are held monthly on a Sunday evening are run by a different team again made up of members from both churches.

We have an active Eco Group who organise regular village litter picks with many members of the community volunteering to help. The eco group also collects old papers and magazines which a local company shred for use as packaging. This generates income of 10p per kilo which is used to fund other eco activities. As well as collecting donations for Starter Packs at Church on Sundays the Eco Group holds a monthly drop off at the church hall which allows the wider community to donate to Starter Packs and the Inverclyde Foodbank and where we also collect empty medicine foil blister packs for recycling, old spectacles and stamps which support projects in Africa. There is also Fair-Trade produce available at these times.

Before covid put a stop to such events the church ran quizzes and folk nights which were open to the whole community.

Inverkip also holds a Messy Church once a month which provides an alternative venue and form of Christian learning and worship for families who may be unable or unwilling to attend a Sunday morning service. Café Church is held within a non-religious setting which further helps those who may feel nervous about entering a church building.

We have a book bank which is primarily used by the older members of the community and supports many local good causes. Our Church Hall is very well used by the local community, by church-based groups such as the Guild, country dancing and badminton. External groups such as the SWI, Scouts, Guides, keep fit and Bootcamp.

Inverkip Church is very active on social media with our postings regularly reaching several thousand people. Our Church website is a 'go to' for anything to do with the church as is our Facebook. Plans are afoot to record and stream services from Inverkip Church but in the meantime services at Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Church are recorded and streamed each week and DVDs of the services are distributed to house bound members in Inverkip who are unable to access them on the internet.

At various times of the year we hold joint ecumenical services with Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Church and our adjoining Roman Catholic Church, St Josephs and St Patricks, and have a good relationship with Father Berry. We have a very active Pastoral Care team which is very good at identifying those in need and catering to their needs.

For the last two years, in the absence of a Sunday School, all the pupils in Inverkip Primary school have taken part in a competition to design a Christmas Card for Inverkip Church. The winning design was printed on cards which were then delivered to every household in the parish. The cards listed all the services and events being run by the church over Advent. During advent in 2020 we held an outdoor Light night for the whole community where people were invited to come along and light candles and write subjects of prayer on wooden discs which were then hung on our outdoor Christmas tree. Because of the popularity of the event and the response from the community it was repeated in 2021 and will become a part of our church's celebrations ongoing. We also distributed 'Goody Bags' to elderly people in the community which contained a message from our Interim Moderator, quizzes, a Christmas cake, shortbread, a candle, a tree decoration and a satsuma.

As a Church we are focused on a 10am service. We are sometimes blinkered and do not see how many people the Church is connecting with. As Christians the time and day of attending Church is not what matters but the attending and worshipping is what counts.

Our church needs to find new and innovative ways to bring more children and young people into God's family. This could be done by trying to be more active within the schools and this role would be a key objective of any future minister within the parish. Since lockdown this has been challenging and the school has not been able to use the Church for its Easter, Christmas, and end of term services. We would like these to resume this as soon as Covid allows. We also want to resume running a Sunday School, which had stopped due to covid, but need to recruit new leaders.

We have three active worship leaders within the congregation which has been a real blessing and has helped many within the church strengthen their faith with many different voices preaching in different styles. We had employed a Pastoral Assistant who has recently left the parish to commence full time ministry training. Fortunately, we have managed to fill the vacancy and our new Pastoral Assistant will start at the beginning of January 2022. This appointment has been made jointly with Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay using a unique funding mechanism within the presbytery where both Churches pay the bulk of the salary with a smaller top up from Presbytery. Over the past 3 years this role has helped to further and nurture the faith of many people throughout the Parish and brought many new individuals to God. We hope that through our new assistant this will continue. The previous assistant also introduced our congregation to different styles and forms of worship such as the Café Church and became a member of our Soul-Searching team and praise band. This is a good role for allowing individuals to test the waters to see if they are suitable for ministry by working closely with a full-time minister.

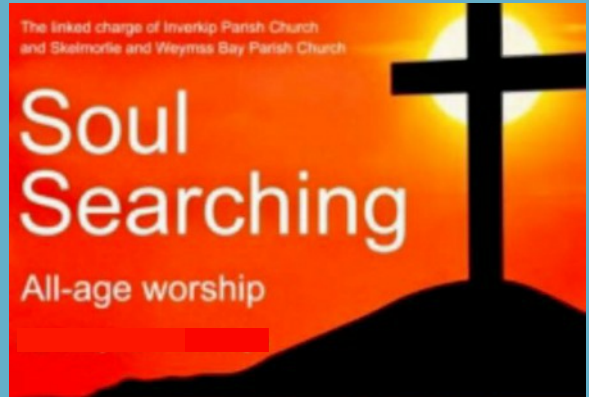
Inverkip Church is not unaware of the challenges the Church faces nationwide, we at Inverkip are not immune to these challenges with an aging congregation and a national shortage of ministers. We could be vacant for quite some time but are fortunate to have our worship leaders and a retired minister within our congregation who have worked together with worship leaders and a deacon at Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Church to provide services of worship covering both churches. Our new pastoral assistant will also be joining the team. We recognise that there is a great deal of pressure on presbyteries due to the lack of available ministers, and that we must do what we can to ensure a continuity of worship within our parish. Nonetheless the desire of the congregation to appoint a full-time minister is key as often they can be the difference between a vibrant and forward-looking church, and a stagnant or contracting one. Our neighbouring linked parish, Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay, also faces demographical challenges so greater collaboration will be required. Both Churches hope to target the youth demographic and increase their participation within worship. Inverkip as a village has had a religious presence for over 800 years and whilst we must change and evolve to grow, we must also respect the history of the kirk so that future generations remember those who worshipped there before them. As a Church we feel we must have a presence in the village and, with the addition of more houses to the area, this will be imperative.

SOUL SEARCHING

Since the last newsletter we've had some great services!

In December our theme was advent but there was no sign of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the wee donkey. We started our service with a dramatic advent meditation in the dark (based on Isaiah who foretold Jesus' coming) and then we brought Jesus' light into our evening with songs, readings, reflection and Christmas carols. What a special evening!

In January Chris opened with a moving tribute to Bill Wright who we miss greatly. Then we explored New Year Resolutions and new beginnings in short readings and reflections from our worship leaders.



In February we tackled the 10 great commandments. Ian had big shoes to fill playing Moses as he tried to negotiate with the people of Israel to get their acceptance of them. Needless to say he didn't get the answers/acceptance that he expected!

It was a bit quieter in February. Hopefully the lighter nights will encourage more people to come back, or join us for the first time, at our next service on 27 March 2022 at Inverkip Church Hall. Remember to join us from 6pm for some tea, coffee and fellowship before the service.

Jac, Lynsey, Morag, Ian, Siona, Muriel, Jennifer, Chris & Graham

TREASURER'S REPORT

The 2021 accounts have been examined by Robert J Henderson LLB CA from Henderson & Company. We thank him for all his work. As always, my thanks also go to the Finance Committee who have helped with the banking duties, gift aid claims and preparing accounts. I'm pleased to say that during 2021, Inverkip has had a good year financially. Excess of receipts over payments was £6,436, and there are adequate unrestricted cash funds of £55,018 available to meet ongoing requirements.

The main points that I'd like to draw your attention to are:

Total receipts increased compared to 2020. Again it was a challenging year due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic/lockdowns but your support for National Giving Day gave a much needed boost to church finances in the last quarter of the year. We also received a legacy from the Estate of the late Robert Lindsay Hoey specifically to be used for the Fabric Fund of the Inverkip Parish Church

The largest expense is Ministry and Mission allocation that is used by the Church of Scotland to fund ministry work both within Scotland and abroad. This year's amount was consistent with previous year but you may be aware that M&M is changing from next year. I'm not sure how it will affect us yet but I'll let you know as soon as I have more information

We have been able to provide laptops for Inverkip Primary School and support many non-profit organisations such as, World Day of Prayer, Inverclyde Foodbank, Starter Packs and Poppy Scotland. The Christmas Eve retiral offering for Shelter Scotland was transferred to them in January

I hope that everyone enjoys reading the accounts in more detail which will be available at the Stated Annual Meeting after the morning service on **Sunday, 3 April**. If you have any questions then please let me know.

Thank you.

Jac Seggie

SENIORS KEEP FIT

Recommencement of classes in January was delayed by a week to allow Grace Gilchrist (our fabulous instructor) to be given the all clear from an accident which saw her wrist encased in plaster. I can confirm she is back and as good as ever!

Just in case you were wondering why we are sitting in this photo, we are muscle training our upper body! The weights we use come straight out of the kitchen cupboard - 410gm tins of beans, tomatoes, soup (we don't mind what they contain) - so they are to hand if you wish to practice at home. Grace is shown in the picture with her weights too, so no excuses!

Numbers remain high, despite having said goodbye to Barbara McDiarmid at the beginning of February as she was relocating, and others have left due to health related problems. Whilst we no longer have a "waiting list" we are still asking anyone interested in joining us to contact myself or Glenda Horton, and not just turn up. This is purely due to Covid rules regarding the numbers the hall can hold.

I looked up the Google definition of Spring: "It is one of the four temperate seasons, succeeding winter and preceding summer" so after the dreadful weather we have had recently, let's hope its not too long before it arrives.

Anne Skedd



FOODBANK AND STARTER PACK COLLECTION

Your continued support for these wonderful organisations is even more important now with rising costs which will hit the poor harder than ever.

Here are the dates for the April-June collections at the Church Hall, Bonomy Room or call Jean Benson (520975) for uplift.

Tuesday 19 Apr, 17 May, 14 June 6-7 pm

Wednesday 20 Apr, 18 May, 15 June 1-3 pm

On these dates we can also take newspapers/magazines for recycling by White House Products, used medicine foil bubble Packs, plus old spectacles and stamps.



Foodbank - Urgent Items – Tinned Fruit, Rice Pudding, Custard, UHT Milk (1 L), Breakfast Cereals
Also required – Soup, Rice, Pasta Sauce, Tinned Meat, Tinned Veg, Beans, Coffee, Tea Bags, Sugar, Biscuits and Snacks.



Starter Packs - Kitchen Towels, Kitchen Cleaner, Bathroom Cleaner, Cleaning Cloths and Tea Towels.

Hygiene items needed, Shampoo, Ladies Deodorant, Gents Razors, Soap. Bubble Bath and Shampoo for Children and Babies. Good quality bedding also acceptable but no duvets unless new.

Jean Benson

FAREWELL

On Sunday, 20 February, we said a fond farewell to one of our members, Barbara McDiarmid. Barbara and her husband Donnie have moved to the Livingston area to be nearer to family. We wish them all the very best.



CHURCH FLOWERS

Once again thanks to all who contribute to putting flowers in the Church Sunday by Sunday, and to all who help deliver them. If you would like to help by putting flowers in the Church please let me know as they are always greatly appreciated by anyone who receives them.

Joyce Brown

COUNTRY DANCING

Our class continues to enjoy good numbers to keep us dancing. Many thanks to all members for support. As Easter is later this year we will continue class until 7th of April. COVID allowing we hope to hold a wee celebration on last night. It is not easy to confirm too soon but I will keep you posted.

Gaye McIntyre



CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

Can all scheduled hall users please notify me when they are not meeting

Joyce Brown - 01475 521215.
joycebrown@hotmail.com

If you experience any problems with the heating in the Church Halls please contact **Douglas Vallance 07599 074579**

PLEASE DO NOT ALTER THE CONTROLS

THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The service was held at Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Church on 4th March. The theme was – “I Know the Plans I Have for You”

I know the plans I have for you, Plans that you do not yet know; Plans to prosper you, not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future. So, whatever you are going through right now, Be assured that I am with you and that rainbow days will be ahead.



48 people attended with members from Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay St Patricks & St Josephs & Inverkip taking part Siona provided the music. £248.90 was collected and sent to WDOP Scotland who have donated it to the Ukraine appeal. A very big thank you to all .

Joyce Brown



**KEEP
CALM
AND**

**DO NOT TOUCH THE
THERMOSTAT**

John is bowled over to win coveted national award



Congratulations to John McCartney who has been recognised by Bowls Scotland with a National Volunteer Award for his services to sport. He started running introductory sessions, along with his daughter Lorna, inviting people of all ages to come along and try bowling

which resulted in 30 new members for the Gourock Park Bowling Club. Just one of the many initiatives John has been involved in

FAMILY NEWS

New Arrivals Congratulations

Logan Charles McNicol. Mum & Dad
April & Ross

Rowan Alexander. Mum & Dad Claire
& Murray



Logan Charles McNicol

Special Birthdays

Jack Benson

Betty Howie

Jill McAdam

Irene McNeilly

Congratulations

On passing your driving test
Ayrn Burke & Anna Darroch

On your Engagement
Aimee Tyreman & Andrew
Calum

Congratulations on your Silver Wedding Anniversary - Joan and John Powe

Congratulations on your Retirement - Hilda Adams

The following Church Members have sadly passed away since the last newsletter:

Anne Stewart and Ann Mitchell

LIGHT NIGHT

What do you need in the middle of a long dark winter with the threat of Covid still very much present?

How about lighting up the environment around the church with fairy lights and candles?

So that is what we did. We gave people a chance to come along and write a prayer for a loved one, either gone before or still with us, and hang it on a wildlife Christmas tree. They could also light a candle of their own in our prayer tent and this year, if they wished, spend some quiet time in the church itself. There was also the opportunity to bring along gifts for the Salvation Army to hand out to children who might otherwise have a pretty poor Christmas.

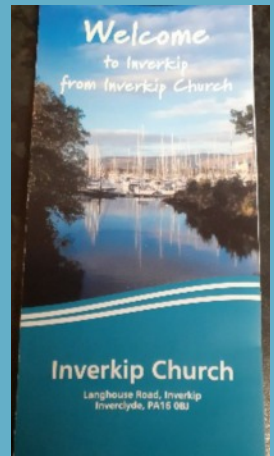
For the second year running we were very lucky with the weather but mindful of the cold we provided hot drinks and biscuits for all to enjoy. I think this will become a permanent fixture on our church calendar so keep your eye out for this year's date in early December.



WELCOME PACKS

The Mission and Outreach team continue to give out the Welcome packs to new people moving into the village, and they rely on being told by church members and the community if they have any new neighbours.

The packs contain a small plant or candle, a bar of FairTrade chocolate and the Church Welcome leaflet. Please let Jean Benson know if you have any new neighbours Tel: 520975.



SCOUTS

After rounding off 2021 with a trip to see Cinderella at the Beacon, the Scouts camped at South Newton, taking a chance to learn some camping skills after such a long time having to avoid camping. They took the opportunity to walk on the moors between Kilmacolm and Inverkip and found an old disused light railway platform with rails and shed from past days of grouse shooting. The Troop is now looking forward to a programme of regular camps throughout 2022 with a summer camp in the Lake District in August.

Andy Yarr

I. Scout @ 85th G&D

Mob: +44 7747 457 320

GUIDES

Since before Covid Jenny has taken a back seat in Guides and passed the running of the unit over to the younger leaders and they are now running it between themselves, with occasional input from Jenny. With the younger leaders running it there are times where we may need the help of parents, as they are tied up with study etc, if no parent help when requested the girls may have to miss an evening, it will only be an odd occasion where we request help.



During lockdown we held zoom meeting with the girls and the girls got to make cakes in a mug at home. Unfortunately, since we have been allowed to meet in person again our numbers have fallen drastically, from over 20 girls to 7 though some of the girls do seem to like the smaller

number. Over the past few months, the girls have enjoyed a movie night, with popcorn and a night of dancing. They have earned the fitness badge through creating their own fitness plan and trying out dance styles together using the projector. They have also earned their mixology badges, by taste testing different fruits in mock tails and creating their own recipes. They planned and carried out a mixology party and made drinks for everyone! For thinking day, they thought about what guides means to them creating posters, and most recently have made kindness jars, where they wrote nice things about each other on lollypop sticks. Over the next few weeks, we are planning glow in the dark night, a tiktok themed party and a Karaoke night! This summer we have an outing arranged for them with the theme 'All the fun of the fair'.

If your daughter is aged 10 or over and would like to join guides please register her interest at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/> and one of the leaders will get back to you.

Jenny Scott
Leader

CUBS

This term we welcomed and invested new Cubs from our Beaver Colonies, which continue to grow in numbers.

Back in December 2021 the 85th Group enjoyed a trip to the Panto at The Beacon. We had a fun packed night.



We also took part in assisting the Church Eco Group with their litter picks and will continue to do so this year which includes the Wemyss Bay Eco Group.

This term we are concentrating on Adventure, Outdoors, Astronomy, Hikes, Entertainer, International, Personal Safety, Teamwork and Community

Impacts badges. We will be participating in the Red Cross & Kindness Scheme as part of our Community Impact Badge (the Scouts – A Million Hands) where we will be completing activity packs and the Cubs will also choose a local charity identifying their needs, plan action and take action.

Small acts of kindness can help the Community, family and yourself.

Coming up: we have Spring Camp in South Newton, Kilmacolm (for older Cub members), 85th Group Camp and a Theme Camp as our end of term event.

The Cub Pack continues to develop their teamwork skills, taking part in games and activities.

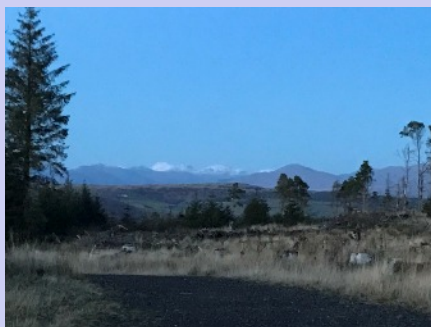
Thank you to all the Parents, Leaders and Young Leaders who ensure a successful and enjoyable term.

Yours in Scouting

Janice McAdam

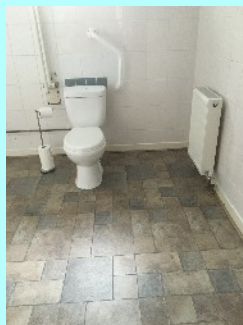
Cub Section Leader

85th Inverkip and Wemyss Bay Cubs



PROPERTY GROUP

Sanitary-ware is not usually photogenic, but the new toilet and flooring has certainly improved the appearance of the Gents'/Accessible Toilet in the church halls! Many thanks to Jim and Peter for the makeover, which included a fresh coat of paint. The kitchen window and the two small windows in the ladies' toilet have been renewed.



In common with practically all Church of Scotland churches, we have been subject of an audit of our church building and (separately) the halls. There was a standardised format to the assessment and it did not always allow for detail or nuance. Nevertheless, the auditor took time and care to record the requested facts and evidence. The results of the audit (and those of the other churches in Clyde Presbytery) will lend to the Presbytery Plan. To briefly summarise my interpretation of the findings.....the central location of the church building and recognition of its importance by the community is an asset. It is accessible, spacious and makes use of technology, although the fixed seating and paucity of adjacent rooms limits its potential for alternative uses other than worship. The chronic issues of damp were noted, but also the clear and affordable plan for their remedy in realistic stages. The church halls were recorded as being well-used - by church and community alike. They present a safe and hygienic environment, but, are presently only partially accessible for people dependent on wheelchairs. The fabric of the building is sound and it is maintained with relative ease.

The Property Group are committed to ensuring that the buildings support the evolving worship and mission of Inverkip Church. My thanks to the members for their hard work and bright ideas, and also to the many others who chip in from time to time. Any help is *always* welcomed, so please don't hesitate to come forward if you too would like to contribute.

Susie Gemmill

Property Convenor

INVERKIP CHURCH - EASTER SERVICES



Monday, 11th April

7 pm Passover Meal at Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Church Hall

Tuesday, 12th April

– 7 pm Service at Inverkip Church/Hall – Jac Seggie

Wednesday, 13th April

– 7 pm Service at Inverkip Church/Hall - Jac Seggie

Thursday, 14th April

– 7 pm Maundy Thursday Service & Communion at S&WB - Liz Geddes

Friday, 15th April

– 7 pm Good Friday Service at Inverkip Church – Liz Geddes & Marion Stewart

Sunday, 17th April

– 7 am Early Easter Service outside Inverkip Church

10 am Family Easter Service – L Geddes, I Cowe, M Cowe, M Stewart

If you have any news, pictures, comments or suggestions for the next newsletter - we'd be delighted to hear from you.

inverkipchurchnewsletter@gmail.com

The deadline for the Summer edition is likely to be early June and will be announced in due course.



Jimmy Law and his friend Forbes Dowling are raising money for Breast Cancer UK by taking part in the Glasgow Kiltwalk on 24 April 2022 to help support two of their close friends who both have been diagnosed with breast cancer. They have been receiving lengthy treatment and it has given them both a huge lift to know that Jimmy and Forbes are walking the 22.6 miles for this worthy cause.

Any money raised by them will be topped up by 50% from the Tom Hunter Foundation. They are aiming to raise £2,000. Donations, however small, can be made via this link

<https://glasgow.thekiltwalk.co.uk/fundraising/GlasgowKiltwalk2022-JamesLaw>



Scotrail have agreed to match any money raised and this will be given to Ardgowan Hospice, so both charities will benefit.

“Knowing readers of the Church Magazine will be with us in thought and prayer on 24 April will spur us on to cross (hobble) the finishing line.”

Many Thanks

Jimmy and Forbes

UKRAINE APPEAL

Inverkip woman, Amanda Scott, felt compelled to take action after watching the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and, with the use of the Church Hall and many many helpers, a fantastic amount of donations were received.

Clothes, shoes, toiletries, nappies, baby milk, pharmaceuticals from Inverkip Pharmacy and cash donations. A huge thank you to everyone involved.



Huge effort for Ukraine
ENCOURAGED efforts to help
received through
By Amy Shearer

THE RURAL CENTENARY



The Inverkip SWI (The Rural) celebrated it's 100 year birthday with an afternoon tea at The Clyde Tearoom in Skelmorlie and, after more than a year without being able to be together, it was a lovely afternoon of delicious food and lots of chat. Helen Howie cut the cake, along with the Federation chair woman.

Inverkip SWRI, as it was then known, met for the first time in November 1921 with Lady Alice Shaw Stewart as president. On that evening 82 ladies joined with a membership of 2 shillings. Reading the old minute books and treasurer's accounts are fascinating, even I know some of the names in them ! In 1927 the fancy dress dance had to be held over 2 nights to prevent crowding in the hall and you could bring your partner for a donation of 1/6d. There was a prize for the best dressed lady but the dress had to be made of paper !

Margaret Anderson thanked everyone for coming, by way of a rural diary of someone at the first meeting, then through the eyes of her granddaughter, and finally her ghost.

We thank ICE for a donation and Inverkip Church for giving permission to plant a tree to commemorate our 100 years here.

Kate MacPhail





**We're back!
Thursday
31st March
7pm**

We are delighted to announce that Cafe Church will return on Thursday 31st March at 7pm in the Wemyss Bay Station Cafe!

See you all there.

AT THE BIRD TABLE

Today, as I write this epistle, the sun is shining, the sky is clear but an icy easterly wind is blowing. Winter has not yet loosened its grip but Spring is just around the corner, or is it? What, with global warming etc., is going on with our seasons?

According to The Britisher Geographer “The climate of the British Isles is, as you might have guessed, rather changeable but can be classified as a Temperate Maritime Climate.



Temperate maritime climates are characterised by the absence of extreme climatic conditions. This generally refers to mild winter temperatures and warm summers. Rainfall is frequent but not extreme and the climate generally is free from hazardous atmospheric systems”. So now you know, but what I want to know is when will we progress into Spring, Summer etc?

According to the Meteorological Office there are three methods: meteorological, astronomical and phenological.

The first is the method used by the Met Office, basically for simplicity and consistency.

Meteorologically speaking, the seasons are three-month periods. Summer is June, July and August. Simple, Eh?

Then we have the Astronomical method – easy peasy, clock the Sun moving between the Tropics (Capricorn and Cancer) apply some mathematics, find the summer and winter solstices, add in the vernal equinoxes and that’s it, nothing simpler!

Both these methods use the calendar, but phenology uses changes in plant and animal behaviour - such as animal migration, types of plants, changes in colours - to determine when the seasons begin. But jist a meenite, haud the bus!!! Farmers, sailors, gardeners and folk who works outdoors have used this method together with observations of the weather for eons to determine the seasons.



Why do I mention all this? Well, because we have forgotten how to observe and use the information that nature provides. Skeins of Geese flying North, birds gathering nesting material, the arrival of migrant birds from warmer climates, frog spawn in ponds, these are all signs that spring has arrived. Don't worry however, the Met Office says it will be on the 20/21 March.



Meanwhile, at the birdtable, we've been seeing the usual garden birds. Due to the, dare I say, milder winter weather, we haven't had long periods of snow and ice denying birds access to food in the fields. We did however, at the beginning of February have a couple of male Bullfinches (on two occasions) foraging on the ground for seed pods from a Fuchsia bush. Long-Tailed Tits have also been putting in appearances on the fat-ball feeder in their small "gangs."

In the meantime, keep feeding and watering the birds.

Take care, keep safe and enjoy your bird watching, Dunnock.

P.S. the snowy picture was taken in Ardgowan Estate 2018 – the Beast from the East.

Dunnock



The Eco Group

The past year has continued to present some challenges due to lockdowns and social distancing, but the Eco Group has endeavoured to keep up momentum with their activities and initiatives. The litter picking group – “Litterkippers” has



been able to meet each month to tackle the many litter issues which our community faces- general littering around the village and beaches, fly tipping and marine litter washed up on the shoreline. Over the year, the group collected a total of 345 bin bags of litter from around our community, which doesn't include all the larger fly tipped items unable to be bagged. Our thanks go to all the volunteers who have turned out in all weathers to help to make a difference. There are several community litter picking groups across Inverclyde who decided over the past

year, to work together collaboratively to have a greater voice about local environmental issues, with a member of our group representing Inverkip. The group has regular meetings on Zoom, and ambitiously worked together to organise an Environmental Workshop in October 2021 at the Beacon Arts Centre, with 40 attendees representing education dept, local councillors, MP, MSP, Scottish Water, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Marine Conservation Society, Clyde Marine Plan, and several young people from local high schools. Another team member regularly attends local community engagement meetings with community council and community education, looking at wider issues affecting our area.

Litter Pick Dates:-

Sunday 24 April 1300-1500

Saturday 21 May 1000-1200

Saturday 18 June 1000-1200

Sunday 24 July 1300-1500



Our newspaper and magazine collection has continued throughout the year, and delivered regularly to White House Products in Port Glasgow, who shred them and use to package their products. A small donation is made per kilo and is used to fund eco projects. The church continues to have monthly collections for Inverclyde Foodbank and Starter Packs Inverclyde. The Eco group used this opportunity to offer refills of Ecover washing up liquid, which had become increasingly popular with many members over



the previous year since it was introduced. Empty medication packs can also be dropped off and these are then taken to a local collection point for recycling.

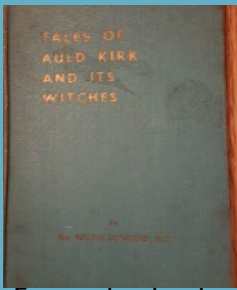
The past year has continued to be challenging to sell fair trade products with limited opportunities but the group continues to promote local fair trade events and global issues through social media.

Following on from the success of the event the previous year at the beginning of Advent, the church hosted a Light evening outside the church where members of the community could come along and write a message to remember someone on a small wooden disc to hang on our Christmas tree outside the church. The tree was decorated with eco/bird friendly decorations, with baubles made of fat balls and garlands made of monkey nuts and cranberries.



Our thanks go to all those who continue to support our eco initiatives, and we look forward to being able to continue and develop over the year to come.

Lynne McBain



TALES OF AULD KIRK AND ITS WITCHES

By Rev William Crawford. MC

Continued from the previous issue:

Smuggling Days in Auld Kirk

From what has been said, it can be readily imagined what went on as a common occurrence, in the village a hundred years ago. From its proximity to passing vessels, its quietness and its distance from the port of Greenock, Inverkip bay offered an ideal spot for the smuggler. The procedure generally adopted was for the expected ship to have ready its contraband goods or packages made up into a watertight bundle to which was attached a small float. This was thrown into the bay. When darkness fell, the smuggler put out his boat and by means of the float recovered the load, taking care when he returned that the revenue officers were not in his vicinity. After that, it was an easy matter to hide the stuff until a favourable opportunity presented itself to convey to a centre of distribution.

The smugglers were not always successful in eluding the vigilance of the authorities. Sometimes, if they escaped themselves, their boats were confiscated. If they were apprehended in the act, a drastic fine or a term of imprisonment confronted them. The brushes between them and the Revenue officials often resulted in severe injuries being inflicted either on one side or the other.

On a December morning of the year 1811 the early risers in Auldkirk were startled at the sight of three mounted men riding at great speed towards the centre of the village. The first with a pistol strapped to his waist was Thos Spence, chief Excise officer. The others were his assistants. Word had been carried only an hour or so earlier of a passing Highland vessel and activity among the smugglers. Spence's visit was to be more successful than he thought. Crossing the bridge over the Daff, a milk cart belonging to Thomas Finney had just turned in at the gate leading to the Big House. Something suspicious attracted the Excise officer's attention, and, hastening after it, he commanded it to stop. Under the milk cans were found 3 cases of whisky containing 10 gallons each. Returning to the street another milk cart was seen belonging to Robert Cochrane. Chase was given and this too, when examined was found to contain 5 casks or 50 gallons of whisky. The horse and cart of each were at once confiscated. The trial took place in the High Court the following June. It came out at the trial that they had been induced to accept the risk on the promise of 10s 6p for each gallon safely delivered by their friends the smugglers. Friends indeed! Each was fined £200, a huge sum in those days. Cochrane it seems was able to meet it; but Thomas Finney was sent to prison, there to languish for many months, and doubtless to reflect sadly on the folly of yielding to a sudden temptation!

In one case that is recorded at Lunderston Bay, the chief revenue officer a man named McLachlan, lost his life in an affray, and the smugglers involved only escaped the death penalty by fleeing the country. There are not many remains of smuggling days left in Inverkip now. There is a deep overhang cleft of rock, which goes by the name of the smugglers' cave in Shielhill Glen. What obscurity it had is now lost for it has been brought to every passer-by's notice by the artistic labours of unemployed men from Greenock. I doubt very much if it had much to do with smuggling. It is too far away to be employed as one of their quick hiding places. There is a cellar, however, deep and cavernous, in one of the ground floors at Point Place, covered by an old trap door, which would undoubtedly be used for this purpose. It is perhaps the sole remaining spot left in the village testifying to smuggling days.

The last reported case of the kind occurred at Inverkip 27th March 1888. It was known that a large amount of tobacco was being conveyed to Greenock. Everyone there was smoking smuggled tobacco. The shopkeepers complained that their sale of it was becoming negligible, and yet, try as they might, the Revenue officials could get no information as to how it was being brought into the town, nor where the store was kept. Incoming vessels were examined but nothing found to incriminate. At last word was received. "Try Inverkip when the Ovington passes." Ovington was a ship dealing from Hamburg arriving on 27th March. Accordingly on that night a close watch was kept. The vessel appeared as the darkness was falling, and sure enough the watchers observed a boat putting out with three men in it and sculling rapidly in the direction of the oncoming vessel. Their suspicions were confirmed when they heard a cab soon afterwards draw up at the roadside as if to await the return of the boatmen. By and by the boat returned to the shore and several cases were quickly transferred to the waiting cab.

Now was the time arranged for the capture to be effected. The Customs men sprang from their hiding place near at hand and called upon the smugglers to surrender in the Queen's name. The only answer was for the driver to whip up his horse and drive away at top speed. Two blank cartridges fired, however, on the instant induced him to halt as suddenly as he had started. Inside the vehicle was a great store of tobacco in sealed tins and a man named Walker. He turned out to be the leading spirit in the illegal enterprise. He was coachman to a gentleman in the West End of Greenock, and, unknown to his employer, had been engaged in this lucrative business for years. When the party reached Greenock a thorough search of the premises was made from which the cab was dispatched but nothing further was revealed. Later, however, in a large manure-heap a considerable quantity of tobacco was discovered buried. One estimate of the amount exceeding a half ton in weight. The case was brought up for trial in the High Court of Edinburgh in the month of May. Walker was convicted and mulcted in a fine of £83 1 and £25 expenses. The cabman got off, the case against him being found not proven. So ended the last case of smuggling at Auldkirk.

Thanks to Jim Brown for transcribing the text from the original publication.

Interim Moderator:	Rev. Alan Soresen	721741
Session Clerk:	Ewen Cameron	07394 970150
Depute Clerk:	Morag Cowe	521455
Treasurer:	Jac Seggie	529614

SERVICES

Sunday - 10am

Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday in February, June and October.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Sunday: Creche - 10am
Sunday School - 10am
Soul Searching - (monthly, with S&WB Church)

Monday: Rainbows
Badminton
Brownies
Guides (in school)
SWI (monthly)

Tuesday: Guild (fortnightly)

Wednesday: Scouts
Cubs & Beavers (in school)

Thursday: Country Dancing

Saturday: Messy Church (last Saturday of the month)

Not all groups have resumed following lockdown, hopefully all should be up and running in the near future.

Website: www.inverkip.org.uk
Facebook: Inverkip Parish Church
Charity No.: SC001079