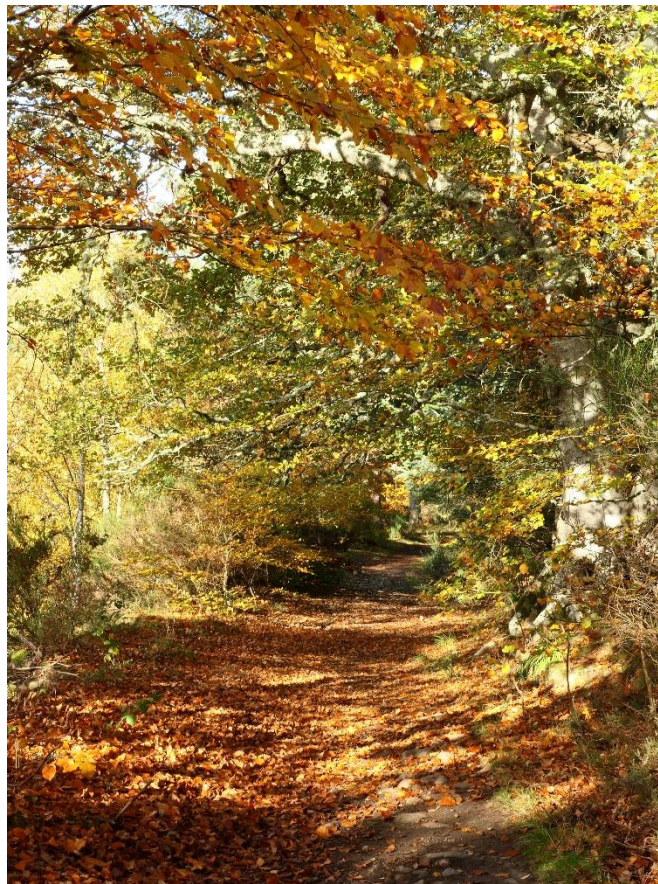


# The Anchor

The magazine of Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Church

## Autumn 2020



*Be anchored in life.*

*Be anchored in love.*

*Be anchored in what you believe.*

Living in the love of Jesus in the rural Highlands

[www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk](http://www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk)

SC: 003866; 014918

## A word from Seoras -

### COVID Opportunity

Both Remembrance and Christmas look like being pretty different this year: Less parading, less visiting, less lots of things. While there is a down side to this and it is the result of a serious problem; I do wonder if it provides an opportunity many of us have been indirectly alluding to for quite some time. Both occasions have had people saying: "This thing seems to have grown arms and legs." "We've lost sight of the real meaning and got caught up with all the fuss and nonsense". I realise that not everyone shares these sentiments but they are common enough to make them at least worthy of consideration.

It seems to be part of the human condition to want to be adding to things: tinkering and tweaking. Improving that which was actually ok as it was. There is a positive place for this: otherwise we would not have benefitted from the many modern conveniences we take for granted today. When it comes both to Remembrance and to Christmas: I think we have added so many arms and legs over the years that we could be forgiven for having lost sight of the main body or point of either.

Some of the things we have added were for a time but have become so much part of our routine that they seem as though they have always been and forever should remain. We always have the pipes or the party or whatever. Well let's not get too upset about the fact that things will not be the same. Let's take the opportunity to pause and to reflect on the reason for Remembrance and on the Christ of Christmas. These people didn't put themselves in harm's way by obediently obeying commands in sacrificial service so we could choose to ignore guidelines and put

ourselves and others at risk. To do so shows little respect for those we claim to remember.

The Lord Jesus Christ didn't come so we could get into debt buying presents for people who neither need nor appreciate them. I'm not against the giving and receiving of gifts. Giving and receiving are both good. I just think that some of us have become so caught up with what Christmas has become that we have lost sight of what it was supposed to be about. Jesus, the Christ of Christmas, came to give his life for us so that we might believe and be given the right to be called the children of God. The gift of forgiveness through faith in Jesus is the greatest gift of all. Things will be different this year. Take the opportunity to refocus on what matters and on who matters with a view to ditching some of the nonsense and reclaiming that which life was always meant to be about.

God bless,

*Seoras*

### **A word from the editors -**

Anchors remind us that when life's winds blow and seas get stormy, we all do our best when we're tied to something solid and true.

In this Autumn's edition, we have asked, among other things, for contributions reflecting lockdown and your thoughts on the subject. Some are quotes, some are originals and some are anonymous! We have also tried to incorporate a bit of humour here and there.....



## Unearthed by Elspeth Colburn -

When some great sorrow like a mighty river  
Flows through your life with peace  
destroying power,  
And the dearest things are swept from sight for ever,  
Say to yourself each trying hour,  
"This too will pass away."

Author Unknown

## Young Life International - Sept 2020

Even though there has been a lockdown, ministry with young people has not stopped.

During the first three months of lockdown, the Young Life International team hosted a weekly online youth club with an average attendance of 11 young people.



**LAURA**  
(via Zoom)

Through the summer the Young Life International team met in small groups with young people in accordance with guidelines. Attached is a photo of Margo and Kate gathering with some Kiltarlity girls, Laura joined via Zoom. Not pictured are the Gaults and Meiers who also spent time building relationships with young people over the summer.

Off the back of studying Mark 10:45 (Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve others), teens in Kiltarlity did service projects around the community. This included cleaning up around the school, a village litter pick, and helping a family with work in their garden. The service projects encouraged putting faith into action and modeling Christ in the community.

Now that school has started, small group Bible studies have resumed on Friday afternoons. Pauline is hosting an afterschool lunch and Bible study for a small group of young people at her house. The Dahls are doing the same thing in Kiltarlity with another small group of teens. Both of these afterschool get togethers are in compliance with current government guidelines.

Please pray the Young Life International team continues to connect with young people in practical ways. This is more difficult now that school is back in session.

Thank you so much for your prayers and financial support. Without them, ministry would not happen!

*Richard Dahl*

**I asked the lion in my wardrobe what he was doing. He said 'Narnia business'.**



## Guild News -

We in the Kirkhill Guild see no way of resuming meetings in the current climate and so we are looking ahead to Session 2021/22 with hope and renewed vigour. Now that we are an official union more members from Kiltarlity would be so very welcome. As a way of marking this coming together, I would like to ask all of the guild members, possible new members and members of the congregation to take some time to put pen to paper in verse, or in any way, to share what Covid-19 has meant to them. Pieces can be signed or not, depending on content. We have a view to making up a booklet to be kept with the Guild Record for posterity as a reminder of how Covid-19 impacted on our lives and loved ones and how we came through it, though the last verse can't yet be written.

All items to be given (delivered or electronically) to -

*Moir McDonald, Jeanette McLellan, Mary Bell or Maris Elkin.*

## Adopt a Child Inverness

A vacancy has arisen for a church representative to liaise with the local group "Adopt a Child". Please see article below and if interested contact either Kay Munro, Kirkhill, tel 01463831237, or Ellenor Thomas, Kiltarlity tel 01463782289 for further information.

Adopt a Child Inverness is a child sponsorship charity., registered in Scotland. The charity founded in 1999 now supports 10,000 children living in poverty in Guatemala and Albania, and in addition through a range of projects helps the wider community. It is staffed by 5 part time employees through its office at Culloden, this being the headquarters for UK and Ireland. There are another 8 bases in England and Northern Ireland.

The children who are supported through this charity live in their own homes in their own country. The charity is supported by Inverness Chamber of Commerce and for further details see [www.inverness-chamber.co.uk](http://www.inverness-chamber.co.uk).

Isobel Garvie



Over lockdown I took inspiration from Captain Tom Moore and decided to do some fundraising of my own. I choose to walk 8km every day for one week, with my dog Bramble of course! I had to juggle this with my schoolwork and music practise which was what made it trickier. The charity I chose was St Mungo's, which I had



heard about from the newspapers. St Mungo's is a charity that helps homeless people find a house, find a job and generally have a better life. I realised that homeless people's only income is begging and so if there are fewer pedestrians than normal then they will find it more difficult to get money. This made me think about how lucky I am and so I decided to try and do something to help.

Over the course of the whole week I managed to walk 60km - all within 5 miles of our house! I discovered many new walks in Ruttle Wood including a tiring 10km one. For most of my walks, I was accompanied by my mum but there were a few walks on my own. I had many different people sponsor me which helped me to raise an amazing amount of £400! I, and St Mungo's, are both incredibly grateful for this amount of money and I would thoroughly recommend fundraising for anyone else out there considering it. It was a fun thing to do during lockdown, it kept me (and my dog) fit and, most importantly, it raised money for a great charity, so it was a win-win situation!

*Isobel*

*I am sure Isobel would be delighted to receive any more donations for her charity.*

## ART

I think, therefore, I am.

Thou art, therefore, I think.

Thy thought begets thine art.

But for thy thought, I am.

I am, therefore, thine art.



Laura Guthrie has been a joy every Sunday on Zoom with her lovely singing. She is an author and, as you can see below, a poet. I have dotted the poems throughout the magazine. Home grown talent!

## HAIKU

I

Sun's light, blocked,  
smothered.  
Forbidden to rest in peace.  
Fumes adorn its grave.

The crashing ocean  
wrecks ships, is loved for its  
power.  
Soft brooks are drowned out.

Coffee. Roadside bench.  
A kitten wrestles a leaf.  
*I should be at work...*

While stuck in shielding

*Laura*

a girl in a wet garden  
plays 'mountaineering'.

Brain waves charter  
thoughts.  
Could we ever break the  
code?

Yes. I hope never.

"Follow the river."  
I stood behind it, waiting.  
There you'll find my cottage.

To find the way home  
be open-eared in silence  
and hear an arrow.

**Faith is not like a raincoat only to be worn on drizzly days.**

Something to think about -



Each year **Prison Fellowship Scotland** is privileged to support families affected by imprisonment through its **Angel Tree Project** providing gifts to children affected by imprisonment. Last year we were able to give more than **1300** gifts in 14 out of the 15 jails in Scotland and provide an extra bit of happiness to families who are often going through a very difficult time.

This year we want to be able to partner with all 15 prisons and we hope that you will help us do this.

This year has been challenging for all of us due to Covid but Christmas isn't cancelled and families need our help this year more than ever. Let's use this Christmas season as a time to show God's grace by being generous in our giving



In our newsletter, you may have read how last year a young family from Glasgow were so overwhelmed when George dropped off a box of gifts on behalf of their Uncle who is serving time in prison that they said:

***"they had never experienced such generosity from a stranger"***

Although in previous year's we have welcomed it when actual gifts for children were bought and have been able to pass these on, this year, due to the Covid restrictions, we are aiming to raise **£5000** which we can divide among the different jails in Scotland to provide gifts to the children of prisoners.

It might be that you could also approach your Church to help us realise our goal.

If so please feel free to pass this message on or contact us at [office@pfscotland.org](mailto:office@pfscotland.org) where we will give you resources to fundraise on our behalf.

Help us to help the many families affected by imprisonment this year and to end 2020 on a positive note, your generosity and efforts are appreciated more than you know.

#### **NEXT STEPS!**

- Get your Church to support The Angel Tree Project
- Give online using our website <https://www.pfscotland.org/angel-tree>
- Send a cheque to our office

Any questions email [office@pfscotland.org](mailto:office@pfscotland.org) or call us on [0141 266 0136](tel:01412660136)



**Something more to think about -**

**LifeLines FAQs**

**Who can be a Prison Fellowship Scotland Letter Writer?**

Those wishing to be a Letter Writer for the PF Scotland LifeLines programme should be a practicing Christian belonging to a local church, be over the age of 18 and be willing to commit writing letters on a regular basis

### **How often will I be expected to write a letter?**

We suggest that you commit to writing a monthly letter, you may be willing to write more often but it is best to not over commit.

### **What training and support will I receive?**

To become part of the programme you will have to attend a PF Scotland LifeLines training. Initially, due to Covid restrictions, this will probably be an online programme. Once you are an approved letter writer, we will always be there to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

### **Will I have to use my home address for the letter-writing programme?**

No, for security reasons we don't permit LifeLines letter writers to use their own address. We will have a PO Box set up and all letters both from letter writers and from prisoners will go to this address and will then be posted on.

### **How long do I need to commit to this programme for?**

We hope that letter writers will be willing to write letters for many years, experience shows that it takes a bit of time to build a letter-writing relationship but once this is established the prisoners really value the contact they get through the letter-writing programme. We, of course, understand that sometimes people's circumstances change and they might not be able to continue - in this case, we would seek to connect the prisoner with another Letter Writer.



## Can I share my faith?

We are looking for practising Christians to be letter writers, the prisoners you write to may or may not have any faith. We advise that letters are not seen as preachy but are a way of naturally sharing how God helps you in life. You may find as time goes on that prisoners ask you questions about your faith which you can respond to.

## LOCKDOWN & ME

Isn't it strange how self-isolation has been instrumental in bringing us all closer together? It's an ill wind that blows no good and for me, a real bonus of lockdown has been the joining of both our former congregations in our weekly Zoom services of worship and praise. Enforced as this may have been, worshipping together as one new congregation is to my mind the way forward. My regret is that several, mercifully not that many of us have been unable to drop in, but once this crisis is over would it not be wonderful to see our united worship become part of the "new normal"? Already both ends of the parish have got to know one another much better than before and I see building on this as being the essence of the union.

Surprisingly the word "lockdown" does not appear in my Collins dictionary. Now commonplace, what has it meant for me? Primarily, I think a feeling of profound thankfulness for what God has given me and mine - a beautiful place to live, one another and the ability to continue our church life even in a restricted way. Thankfulness for Seoras and those with the expertise and will to make this possible and to re-open one of our buildings by organising the huge I.T., Health & Safety and deep-cleaning

aspects of it all. We are fortunate but also ever mindful. I know of those who cannot enjoy the advantages we have. We pray God's comfort for those who feel trapped in their homes, who have lost their jobs and particularly for those who have lost someone dear to them.

On a more banal level, one upside of recent events for our household has been the completion at last of some long outstanding tasks many of which had been awaiting my attention for years. House painting now done, attic cleared and shed "mucked out". Bessie, our devoted black labrador has been walked to the brink of exhaustion - now begging for mercy and even hiding her lead!

Over the piece anyway, I hope I have managed to maintain some sense of perspective, the belief that out of it all some good may come and the hope that FACTS will be recycled as a new acronym - "Faith Always Cracks the System".

IDM

## Another Lockdown tale

Way back on 23rd March, thankfully not the Ides of March on 15<sup>th</sup>, I was in dread of the effects this lock down would have on my life, on church life, on community life, on all life. But here we are in Autumn, the last 6 months have passed, we came through it, or thought we did, only now to have a second lock down imposed.

All was not bad though. My cupboards were cleared, and spring cleaned, my filing cabinet was divested of so much unnecessary clutter, my house was cleaned from top to bottom, wow. These

occupations certainly took up a lot of my time. I read more books than I have in many months, I kept in touch with my friends near and far and with my neighbours - what could have been "bad" about all that. The community spirit rallied, so many folks looking out for each other.

True Christian fellowship abounded.

All that was lacking was the freedom of the open road, yet did I really mind that, I could still be out and about with my dog, enjoying the beauty of nature, through Spring and Summer.

Somehow my mind set and activities got so much into perspective.

And as for our weekly worship, what a privilege to have been able to "meet" through the wonders of modern technology, I feel that we, as now a united congregation, have made strides towards that unity, getting better able to know one another, no distance barriers or community barriers in Zoom.

And now we are perhaps about to repeat the, for some, long 6 months of restrictions on our freedom of movement, so what .... the last 6 have passed, so will the next 6, and the next 6, and the next 6 if necessary. Through Faith and Zoom fellowship we shall all come through it and be better people, citizens at the end of it all, we shall think less of ourselves and more of others. We shall trust our almighty Father God in whose hands our futures lie.

*Ellenor*

**I dusted once. It came back. I'm not falling for that again!**

## A little sign of hope....

A couple of weeks before the March lockdown, the Friday Club children in Kiltarlity sowed sunflower seeds. They never made it home, so I rescued them from the church (they were pretty dry) and planted them in my garden. The labels with the names of the young gardeners have faded, but the sunflowers grew - the tallest still in flower and 206cm - about 6ft 9in.

*Sheila*

The editors asked for some ideas on what has been happening in school because of Covid. Here are a couple of articles.

## From Iona -

During lockdown I have not been able to see my Grandma and Grandad but I have still had fun. I have been doing home schooling. How I was able to do home schooling is I had to go on a computer program called Seesaw. I was able to go on Google Meet and see my teacher and my friends.



My Mum and Dad have been very busy doing their work but if they are not finished and I am then I play with my sister! We have also



been doing a lot in the garden. Now we are at school it is nice to see my friends and teachers again and not on google meet! At school for lunch we have to have either a pack lunch made at home or a grab and go. In the grab and go you get to choose what you have in your sandwich. You don't get to choose what else you have but you either get a piece of fruit or some carrot slices or cucumber slices and cake. We have to eat in our class until after the October holidays. We have to put sanitiser on before we go outside but we have to wash our hands other times. It is really weird at school because we have to have to go in a different way. I go on the bus and because of covid we have to wear a mask and put sanitiser on when we get on and off. It is also annoying because we are not having assemblies. At break we cannot play with other classes and we have different zones each day. Overall though I am happy to be back at school.

*Iona Bradley*

**And from Hayley**

### *Transition to Charleston during covid*

The transition to Charleston during covid has had its positives and its negatives. In some ways it was easier during covid as on the first day we were there it was only the S6s and all the S1s. We got put into our classes and were given tours of the school. We got shown how the fire drill was done and we met some of the staff. We also then got shown how to work the cashless catering system. The second day there was slightly different as the S5s were there as well and on Friday it was only the S2s, 3s and 4s so we got the day off. Within the first two proper days at

Charleston my friends and I were already bored of the buddies helping us as we had got to know the way around fairly quickly, although the one-way system that's in place has hindered us at times. When we get to our classes, we have to sanitise our hands and spray down the tables and wipe them if they haven't already been done and at the end, we do the same. As you may have come across in the news, we are having to wear masks on the buses and in the corridors and social areas at Charleston.



The timetable has had to be altered to help with social distancing and other covid mitigations. At present each period is twice as long as normal, and we have staggered break and lunch times.

Having the double timetable means that we do less moving about and have more time in lessons as we were originally losing ten minutes of our fifty due to the "covid clean up" which helps as we are not coming into contact with the other years as much as we were. I'd say the only real negative was that we missed out on our P7 trip and we didn't get to say a proper goodbye to our Primary Schools. Otherwise I am really happy at Charleston and covid definitely hasn't changed the fact that most of us are still groaning over French verbs or being appalled at having to write a 600 - 800 word essay on the first two minutes of a film! Overall covid hasn't really changed life at Charleston too much for me and I'm very happy there.

*Hayley Bradley*

## Something of interest in today's situation -

In our household, we take the Scotsman newspaper (yes, we do pay for it....), and last month there was rather good article about a previous lockdown in the Highlands. In 1940, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty and parts of the then counties of Inverness and Argyll were placed in a Protected Area by the War Office in order to safeguard the naval defences of the far north, as well as preparing for the possibility of enemy landing. Highlanders had to queue at police stations to obtain 'proof of residence' documents to be pinned to their ID cards, and visitors to the area had to have official permits. Checkpoints were placed throughout the north - one main barrier being in Beaulieu. Fines were issued to any flouting the barriers. In one case a £2 fine or 10 days imprisonment! There was even a case of Lord Redesdale and his daughter, Deborah Mitford, travelling to their private island off Mull for a holiday - this did not go down well with the Scottish people, especially as their behaviour was defended by the Secretary for War, Anthony Eden. Sounds familiar?

*Sheila Moir*

**I tried to be normal once. Worst two minutes of my life.....**

## HAIKU

### II

Chipped coffee table.  
Toddler lurches, falls, knocks  
head.  
Table, nought. Head, one!

You, aged two, went left.  
I went right. Astonishment!  
(The table was round.)

Once, when I was nine  
the river became a path.  
I skated to school.

Moles in the garden!  
Crumbled earth marks secret  
paths  
beneath the surface.

A puddle of mud  
in a new-made bed of fern?  
No, a dappled fawn.

Bubbles swell, rise, glint,

burst chemicals over shoots.  
Why can't soap be clean?

In a sun-warmed pool  
tadpoles gather round my  
feet.  
Hello to you, too!

How could a plant grow  
without earth-drawn  
minerals?  
What would beasts eat then?

Halloween pumpkin  
made into a wholesome soup.  
Mind the tabasco!

Cloud wisps rise, grow cold,  
tumble silently in plumes:  
Airborne waterfalls.

The yellow brick road -  
said to be made of sandstone.  
Yellow brick river.



From Avril Marr -

As the bells pealed out the New Year , 2020 had a rather exciting ring to it . We had a prayer for the New Year and thanked God for all His blessings for the year that had passed and asked that He would be with us in the New Year. Later I thought of our plans for the year. A trip to my beloved Venice, another one to Orkney to see our daughter ( I would recommend a trip there to anyone who has not been , it is an amazing place) . I thought of the three painting trips that were planned ( and paid for!).

One was to Aultbea then France and later Perthshire. Then there was the three exhibitions to prepare for. We planned to open the garden for the churches and friends . Neighbours had asked if they could have their wedding photographs in the garden so there was a lot of planting and weeding to be done. It sounds as if we have an amazing garden but the views are what makes it.



Then out of the blue comes Covid and like everyone else plans are all cancelled and we are in lockdown , a very strange experience . Initially it was great , I had my husband at home , we got lots of things done in the house and garden which had needed done for ages but gradually the novelty of it all wore off and we began to miss the "old " life , our family , friends and church . There were so many things we had taken for granted previously. Then as the cases soared around the world and the death toll reached numbers which were staggering a deep cloud of uncertainty began to envelope us all.

What a blessing to be able to go to God in prayer and know that He hears and answers our prayer even when it is not the answer we wish ,as time unfolds we then realise it is the best answer in the long run . As I write this I am watching a squirrel helping itself to nuts and chasing a heron away as he tries to pinch our fish , life goes on ! So let's not be discouraged , count our blessings and be reassured this will pass and we will be able to hug our friends meet physically in church , sing and share a coffee together . Joshua 1 verse 9 says" Have I not commanded you ? Be strong and courageous . Do not be terrified , do not be discouraged , for the Lord your God is with you wherever you are.

Is that not wonderful, friends!

*Avril.*

### Healing Hurting Hearts

Healing Hurting Hurts is a Bible based trauma and grief course. It presents the Bible and applies mental health principles and teaches about trauma, grief, loss and forgiveness. In essence it helps us to heal the wounds of our hurting hearts.

Topics covered includes-

How can the wounds of our hearts be healed ?

If God loves us why do we suffer?

How can we forgive others?

Emotional trauma affects more than 1 in 7 people worldwide.

Trauma can include war, abuse, famine, and the COVID-19 pandemic. People can lose hope following trauma

"The Lord is near to those who are discouraged, he saves those who have lost all hope"

Psalm 34:18

Since 2018 The Scottish Bible Society has run 8 training courses and there are now over 130 facilitators providing the course to churches and communities in Scotland

The next Healing Hurting Hearts course will run for 6 weeks on a [Monday night 7.30-9pm starting on](#) 26th October

Please contact Marion Rennie - Kirkhill and Kiltarlity on [07799750655](tel:07799750655) for more information or

Ali MacDonald on 07871415215

[alimacdonald@smithtonchurch.com](mailto:alimacdonald@smithtonchurch.com)

Please also look at

[Scottishbiblesociety.org](http://Scottishbiblesociety.org) for more information too

We look forward to welcoming you in October

## HAIKU

### III

Summer's sky-bound grass  
dead and flat from Autumn's  
storms  
wraps dreaming field mice.

"A spring clean," they say.  
Autumn smiles; sweeps away  
dregs  
of a Summer's day.

Geese speckle the clouds,  
back and forth between corn  
fields.

Stars and oceans call...

Red carp in the pond

chart a straggling noon sun.  
Torpor will soon come.

The bats' dilemma:  
extra hours of balmy dark,  
but dwindling insects!

Lord, when, like a leaf,  
I should fall from this life,  
please,  
let me land softly.

I see not my course  
scrawled on Earth's face by  
the stars  
yet still I take of

**That's all folks! Looking forward to your contributions for the  
next edition!**