

# Parish News

EAGLESHAM PARISH CHURCH



**Eaglesham - a winter wonderland**



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## Deaths

Sept 11. Theresa Home, 57a Gilmour St  
Sept 12. John Speed, 15 Moor Rd  
Nov 10. Ann Gellately, Three Bridges Care Home  
Nov 13. Fiona McAllan, 18 Bonnyton Dr  
Nov. Rena Milligan, 3 Craighlaw Ave  
Dec. Sheila Fleming, 85 Holehouse Rd  
Dec Fiona Raitt, 80 Alexander Ave  
Dec. Graeme Hunter, 3 Bonnyton Dr  
Jan 6. Robert Rennie, 10 Polnoon St

## Team Convenors

Outreach - Giles Blair  
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Pastoral Care - Scott Whiteford  
Youth Strategy - Tom Mann  
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## Keep in touch with church activities

- Website.....[www.eagleshamparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.eagleshamparishchurch.co.uk)
- Facebook.....Eaglesham Parish Church  
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## From John Lloyd

Dear friends

I hope you all have a very happy New Year. Certainly 2020 turned out to be a great disappointment with the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic overshadowing almost everything else that we would normally enjoy.

As far as the Church life is concerned we were unable to celebrate the main church festivals of Easter and Christmas and our Sunday services became a victim of the pandemic. Weddings and Baptisms also were also included in those church orientated family events which could not one shared without severe restriction. Funerals could only be attended by a few close family members.

Our social life was curtailed by the limitations put in place to avoid close contact with others, including our own families. Our sources of entertainment such as theatres, cinemas sporting events, restaurants, shops, pubs all had to face periodic closure. All, of course, to prevent the steady rise in the spread of the virus.

What then can we expect from a new year? Will it be a happy one as our traditional greeting suggests. Although there is little evidence that the virus itself will offer us any consolation we have the introduction of a series of vaccines which have given us real hope for a defeat of this unwelcome intrusion into our daily lives.

Our church has endeavoured to use modern communications to keep the gospel message available to us. Video messages have been published on Facebook and Youtube and a number of people have viewed them, on some occasions even more than would have attended a traditional Sunday service.

With the essential help of the vaccine and the ongoing observation of the Covid19 rules I am confident that 2021 will gradually restore as much of normal life as possible.

The church will I am sure be actively engaged in the search for a new minister and our traditional worship will finally begin again. Most importantly we will be able to function once more as an active Christian Community able to engage in the life of our

village and reflect the message of the gospel in all that we do.

Your friend in Christ

John Lloyd

Locum Minister, Eaglesham Parish Church

## A Favourite Biblical Text

A favourite bible text of mine is from 1st Peter ch 5 v7.....

" casting all your care upon him for he careth for you" or in NIV "cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you"

This wonderful assurance may particularly resonate at this time of uncertainty and anxiety as we recall Peter's message to the Christians scattered across Asia Minor, encouraging them in time of trouble.

The considerable number of Eaglesham folks familiar with the Island of Arran will have seen the cairn on Lamlash seafront commemorating the dreadful Clearances suffered by the population in Sannox (no, it was not only in the Highlands!). Having been "cleared" from their homes and land, they were led on the long walk from Sannox to Lamlash where they would board a ship taking them to Canada. As they prepared to leave their homeland for ever, the Rev Mckay preached from this text on the grassy mound on the sea front. The message from Peter for his flock and the message from The Rev Mckay for his, 1800 years later is as relevant as ever and in these challenging times reminds us of God's caring for us as we take our anxieties to him.

Brian Fraser

## Christian Aid Scotland Gathering

This is an annual event which this year is on-line. Feb 16 from 10am to midday. Join them to hear about some of their partner work with staff from Christian Aid Ethiopia. The event will also look forward to COP 26 and discuss how to be involved in the fight against climate change. To register for the meeting email [edinburgh@christian-aid.org](mailto:edinburgh@christian-aid.org).

## Parish News

Firstly may I wish you a peaceful and happy 2021. I do find it difficult to wish people a good New Year as so many have faced or are facing so many challenges and sadness. The year 2020 was a difficult one for all. I do however hope that 2021, with the vaccine being rolled out, will gradually bring a happier and more sociable time.

Once again we have been required to close our church buildings and so cannot share in communal worship. I do hope that you are however able to access our ongoing digital worship to allow you to share in hearing God's word and praying together. We are still all God's family even when we cannot meet together. Many thanks to John Lloyd for continuing to provide his sermons online and to Gillian Norval for weekly prayers which are on our Facebook page and Website – as well as providing a monthly prayer sheet for those who are in the prayer group. Our family/children's talks have been provided by different people and our thanks to those who have been able to help. If you would feel able to contribute one of these that would be very much appreciated. I would like to thank Anna Blair for her contribution to the services and also to Jack and David McPhail and Ryan Robson for their work in streaming and recording the Kairos and the Christmas services – it is great to see our young people contributing so actively to our church.

The foodbank donation point at the Carswell Centre continues to be well supported and allows us to work with the community to help those in need. Many thanks to Jim French and Mary McGill for all their hard work in running this. If you feel able to help with this I am sure Jim and Mary would appreciate an occasional break!

The Kirk Session have recently agreed to give permission to Freya Young (who runs the Eaglesham Street Library) and the Community Council for a weatherproof box to be located in the grounds of the Carswell Centre where food and toiletries can be stored for anyone in the local area to access when in need even if they are not being supported by a foodbank. The food box will also contain messages of hope and bible readings for people to access. This will be in addition to the foodbank donations which will continue to be sent to Castlemilk where there is great need. We have also offered the use of our halls to the NHS as a vaccination Centre if needed.

Currently we are in the process of creating a Nominating Committee to progress our vacancy and seek a new minister for Eaglesham. Please pray for those who have been nominated and for a suitable candidate to be found to lead us as a church going forward. If you have an email address and have not yet provided this to us please do so in order that we can communicate more easily with all members especially regarding the vacancy. Send your email to [office@eagleshamparishchurch.co.uk](mailto:office@eagleshamparishchurch.co.uk) and we will add you to the list.

We also have a team from the Music and Worship team who are investigating how we can enhance our digital offering of online services. Hopefully this will mean more services available online in future.

I am very aware that during this challenging time many people may be feeling very alone. It may also be that you are suffering due to a sense of loss – loss of a loved one, loss of employment or so many other things that are missing from our lives at present. If you are in this situation please contact either your elder, our locum minister John Lloyd or myself. Although we cannot visit you, we will be very happy to share a chat or prayer on the phone. As I said above, we are all members of our church family. We can support each other through these times until we are able to meet again.

God bless

Sheila Lamont

### Smiling in the face of adversity

George lived alone and was in failing health due to diabetes with his right leg at risk. The time came when he needed an above-knee amputation. He had never talked about adversity. I visited him in hospital after the operation thinking that this might be the time I could help him come to terms with things. 'How are you?' I enquired. 'Not bad but it's good you have come. There is something I need help with'. This is it, I thought. The moment of revelation. George looked me straight in the eye with a serious expression and asked....'Do you know anyone with size 9 feet who would like a gift of 14 right shoes?' The whole ward was filled with laughter.

from Look well to this Day by Rev Tom Gordon

## Music and Worship Team report.

Recognising the challenges which we face as a Church during this period of lockdown, some months ago session formed a Music and Worship Team to bring forward recommendations on the best way to make worship accessible and meaningful to as many people as possible.

A limited number can attend the Sunday service, but could we make the service available in another format? Our discussions have centred on two possibilities:

- Record the Sunday service and then download it on to something like You Tube for viewing at any time.
- Live stream the service so that those with computer access could watch the service, whether they were members or not.

The group have met - virtually - on a number of occasions and have addressed several issues :

- a. What digital equipment do we currently own?
- b. Can we use this equipment in both the Carswell centre and the main sanctuary?
- c. What new equipment would we need to purchase?
- d. How big a team of volunteers would be needed to deliver either option?
- e. How far should we take this project at a time of vacancy when we cannot know the attitude of our new minister to digital worship methods?

The group, under the convenorship of Wendy Armstrong, has reached some provisional conclusions :

- We think improving our ability to use a form of digital worship is desirable, both for our own members and as a possible means of reaching a wider audience.
- We recommend concentrating on the main sanctuary in the first instance.
- We plan to ask the session to authorise the purchase of such equipment as is needed to allow quality recording of a Sunday service.
- Anything which we do purchase must be capable of being integrated into a system which will allow live streaming.
- Ideally, all equipment should be portable in order to allow use in both places of worship.

Even if we purchase modern and efficient equipment we will depend on volunteers to commit themselves to learning the system and then managing the process Sunday by Sunday as members of a team. It may be unwise to spend large sums of money until we know the attitude of our new minister towards digital worship.

The Music and Worship group would value feedback from the congregation. We would love to hear from anyone who feels able to be part of the digital support team and we would welcome feedback on whether you think digital worship is a good thing or not and whether we should strive for live streaming rather than simply recording our services.

Alan McKay

*'Recent research by different agencies has highlighted that over 25% of the UK population looked in to an on-line church service at some point during 2020. Our challenge will be keeping this audience interested. I've come to believe that the internet is God's harvest field for our generation'*

Very Rev Albert Bogle, Live and Work Jan 2021



## Health and Safety Update



You may remember that after a great deal of work ensuring that our Buildings (Laird Halls, Carswell Centre and the Church) were COVID safe, we were able in August/September 2020 to partially open our Halls and also open the church for worship. Some Youth groups and Kids Time Out were able to use the Halls on a limited basis.

Kairos was able to take place as usual in the Carswell Centre, and during Advent we offered two services on Sunday mornings - these were on the whole well supported. Holding two services required that we clean the touch points in the church (pews etc) between the two services. Never let it be said that the Duty/Beadle Teams are not up for a challenge (see picture)

Cleanliness is indeed next to godliness!

Unfortunately of course, increasing restrictions from September onwards further limited the numbers who could attend our buildings, and you will know that since early in the New Year communal worship is not allowed under the new extended Level 4 restrictions. So all our buildings are now sadly un-used - although we still perform a very essential service in collecting for Castlemilk Food Bank outside the Carswell twice a week.

We will wait to see when we are able to open again. The Church of Scotland has had assurances from Jason Leitch, The Scottish Government's National Clinical Director, that the Government takes very seriously the importance of churches for community and spiritual well-being, and we look forward to when we can start up again.

Wendy Armstrong, Health and Safety Administrator

## BB Update

I hope you all had a nice Christmas and New Year, as best you could under these conditions. Along with everyone else, we have had to bring our program to a temporary stop and will restart our face to face meetings when given the green light from the Government and Brigade. Up until we stopped in December, we had to make adjustments to our usual program which seemed to be working quite well.

The Anchor Boys split into 2 groups using every inch of space available to us between the Carswell Centre and the Laird Halls. Ally and Elaine have worked incredibly hard to pull together a varied program for the boys which they seem to have really enjoyed. They also managed to hold a Christmas party. In fact they held 2 parties to make sure everyone was spaced out and no one missed out [the staff would have slept well that night].

Junior Section were able to run as one in the Laird Hall whilst still following protocols and were also able to hold a Christmas party.

The Company Section program has had to change dramatically. We have really missed our band practice, drill, falling in as a company and certain sporting activities. However, the staff have worked hard to offer new activities and trips for example the indoor carpet bowls which the boys were enjoying. We also missed out Christmas quiz and fish supper which we usually enjoy with some of our BB friends.

Although there is a lot we are missing, we know that all will come back and we look forward to that. We are now moving into the 2nd half of the session and I'm not sure what that looks like just now. Four boys are going for their Queens Badge and will embark on an online course at the end of January, working towards this highest award in the BB over 2 sessions. The Jumble Sale will not take place in March but may in the summer. Once we get into spring, we will be looking at the summer camp on Arran.

I would like to thank all the staff for their hard work and dedication during these tough times. It's their enthusiasm and commitment that makes the 205 BB in Eaglesham a fun and exciting place to be. I would also like to thank the parents for their understanding all of you in the Parish for your continued support.

Stay Safe & Stedfast, Cpt. Martin Fraser

## Faith in Lockdown

What is God saying to us in this, as we seek a “new normal”? For those of us involved in faith development, how does God want us to develop, even grow in faith?

**Questions:** “Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God.” Psalm 4:1

Where is God in all of this? Extreme circumstances have a way of making us ask the big questions. Times of suffering have been described as “God’s megaphone” and can lead to a new exploration of faith, but can also attack our very foundations.

**God and healing:** “When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, ‘Don’t cry’.” Luke 7:13

Why does God allow these things, and why doesn’t he heal everyone? It’s clear that he has compassion and provides skilled, dedicated people to care and enable healing, as well as scientists and researchers who devote themselves to finding treatments and vaccines. Jesus had strong feelings about illness; for him there was something essentially wrong about illness and death, and healing was an important part of his ministry on earth.

Despite our world being described as “perfect”, it’s not as God intended. Sin came in and all kinds of difficulties followed. So although God doesn’t want anyone to suffer, maybe some of the things that have gone wrong are connected with our mis-management of the wonderful creation we live in.

**God and Prayer:** “We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.” Romans 8:26

Sometimes the words are hard to find, especially the “right” words when it comes to praying. We’re careful - probably too careful - in approaching God in prayer, even though he loves to hear from us. Recently I’ve felt like the persistent widow in Jesus’ story, the person who pesters God in prayer with the same requests. Above all, it’s a prayer for this to end, for healing, for some kind of normality. God does answer prayer, so don’t give up.

**Fellowship:** “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

“Fellowship” is an old fashioned word, yet it seems to sum up what we’ve been missing. It’s great to praise God and to worship him, no matter where we are, or when. But I’ve really missed being able to chat and to sing God’s praises with others. Maybe fellowship is really a holy “togetherness”. Thankfully, we’ve been provided with technology which gives lots of opportunities to give some semblance of this, even though it’s not the same as being together.

**Keeping In Contact - the “plug”:** “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds.”

This is when we plan for the season of **Lent**, leading up to Easter, the very core of our faith. One way to encompass all these things is to be part of a small group. This can work almost as well online when the challenges of technology are overcome. It’s worth it.

There will be material for individuals or groups on the church website in February. This is available for everyone, including, but not exclusively, for DNA groups. In getting to know others, there is freedom to ask some of the big questions, and to share our faith as well as our doubts.

For more information, keep an eye on the church website at [www.eagleshamparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.eagleshamparishchurch.co.uk)

or contact Gillian Norval at [gilnorval@hotmail.com](mailto:gilnorval@hotmail.com) or (01355) 303632

And to explore the big questions more, Maxwell Mearns Parish Church are running an **Alpha course** online from Sunday 31st January. For details see [maxwellmearns.org](http://maxwellmearns.org)

## Tutti Fratelli

The Covid effect has allowed me more time to look up some of the articles which form part of the e-mail traffic coming from colleagues or organisations. One such was the latest encyclical from Pope Francis - Tutti Fratelli which translates as 'we are all brothers and sisters'.

This is written with a recognition of the challenges and distortions, political and personal, which face us. He reflects on St Francis whose openness of heart transcended difference of origin, nationality, colour or religion at a time of conflict and crusades; and on 1John 4,16. 'God is love. Those who abide in love abide in God'. From this he develops the theme of fraternity and fraternal love with two major strands. One is reflected in the story of the Good Samaritan - do individuals and institutions involve themselves or pass on the other side when the frail or vulnerable need help? The other is that we must learn to live together without being the same, not forcing a fixed set of views or practices. From this the encyclical addresses a range of issues.

The idea of rights becomes particularly important in relation to the actually or potentially disadvantaged with the concept of private property secondary to wider needs and concerns.

Migrants are deserving of the same basic rights as others. There is a need to address issues in those countries that force migration but migration brings with it the opportunity of cultural exchange and enrichment of society.

Political activity has real potential in promoting fraternal love particularly if it is not simply secondary to economic interests. Politics should be seen as a lofty vocation serving the common good and involving genuine dialogue.

Dialogue is central, listening and appreciating the significance of what others say and not the 'parallel monologues' which can dominate the media. This includes dialogue between different disciplines and areas of expertise. No-one can possess the whole truth in the same way that no individuals or groups can satisfy their every desire.

Issues need to be addressed at all levels but internationally the UN working as a family of nations for the common good is essential. Two priority issues are addressing hunger and eliminating people trafficking.

Dialogue and recognising past truths open the possibility of reconciliation and forgiveness rather than revenge as in South Africa. This does not absolve us from confronting injustice. Forgiveness is individual, not societal. The Shoah must not be forgotten.

Resort to war and the death penalty are specifically condemned. The concept of a just war can no longer be supported and the elimination of nuclear weapons is a moral imperative.

Finally the importance of dialogue between different faith groups. Sharing accumulated wisdom as well as reflecting on past failures can help shape the ideals and hopes of society. There is a specific importance in denouncing violence and especially terrorism. And a journey of peace involves the recognition of religious freedom.

The importance of this encyclical is in suggesting a blueprint for social and political interaction - something that can perhaps be sorely missing from political discourse.

Duncan MacIntyre

### And a contribution from Tearfund.....**5 Steps to a Better World**

Respond: Share vaccines and resources with the poorest countries so we fight the pandemic together.

Reset: Cancel all developing country debt payments due in 2020 and 2021 and release emergency funding to help them respond to the crisis.

Recognise: Acknowledge the key role that faith communities, including churches, in the global South play in building a better future, and include them in development plans.

Recover: Act to ensure global recovery creates a better world for people in poverty by supporting small business, closing tax loopholes, and aligning with climate agreements.

Renew: Working alongside the devolved nations, make sure the economic reboot in the UK tackles the climate crisis and creates good jobs for the unemployed.



## Foodbank Update

January 2021 is the 10th month of Tuesday/Thursday collections at The Carswell Centre - hard to believe. Between 23/6 & 30/11, approximately 320 parcels were delivered to Castlemilk Parish Church. After information was kindly posted on both Facebook & EPC website we saw a huge upsurge in donations. An unbelievable 340 (approximately) parcels, including foodstuff & Christmas gifts, were donated in the month of December alone. A number of monetary donations were also received which were either used to purchase necessary food items or given directly to Castlemilk.

The December figures include 3 visits to Whitecraigs Golf Club at the invitation of the Lady Captain - thank you Ladies (and some Gentlemen too). We even had a food package donation from as far flung as a department in Glasgow Royal Infirmary - Bless.

Dec 6 also saw a large Community "pick up" using the BB minibus, ably assisted by BB officers and boys as well as Guides and leaders. Thank you all, not forgetting family support. A further "pick up" took place on Jan 10th. BB boys & officers have also been involved in sorting donations for storage and transfer to Castlemilk - this before the latest Covid guidance. This involvement will contribute towards the Boys' Queen's Badges. The next Community "pick up" will be on Sunday Feb 14th. The photos show stores in BB garage and in Castlemilk church hall.

We are often asked which items are most needed....long grained rice; tinned goods - vegetables, potatoes, meat, macaroni cheese, cheese ravioli, custard, rice pudding; sugar; jams & spreads; UHT milk; toiletries.

However whatever you can bring is, as always, hugely appreciated.

A heartfelt thank you as ever to you all for your warm, generous and so very joyfully given donations. May God bless you all in 2021.

Jim & Mary



## Walking Group

Unfortunately the group has been unable to resume its normal walks. For walkers - and others - some quiz questions to bring back happy memories of explorations until we can add to them. Where were we?.....

1. Our usual cafe is due to open when the building is watertight.
2. We can't sail but we can visit the collegiate church.
3. A medieval stronghold.
4. Glasgow's oldest park.
5. Tea, brandy, wine, rum and tobacco were carried illicitly on this path.
6. Start and finish in Glasgow but go via East Renfrewshire.
7. Walk along a canal, round a loch and finish in a museum.
8. Among the roses read lines written by twelve Scottish poets.
9. Walk beside the camellias and magnolias.
10. We pass the airfield sign only.

## Pastoral Care

We thought when restrictions eased at the end of August 2020, that we would gradually reach some sort of new normal for Pastoral Care. Sadly, this has not been possible with visits severely limited by the Tier rules.

It has been possible to continue with some traditional pastoral care throughout the last quarter of 2020. There have been fresh flowers in the Church and these have been distributed after our service to those in need of comfort. This can be for bereavement, illness, a poignant anniversary or even the celebration of a new grandchild or a significant birthday. It was possible for the delivery team to get these to the doorstep but as from the current lockdown start, we are using the services of a florist for bereavement deliveries.

Our usual poinsettia deliveries also took place with the addition of an angel for comfort at the special Christmas time. Following input from elders, 33 were distributed throughout the congregation. We are grateful to Marks and Spencer for a very good deal for this Christian endeavour.

At the beginning of December, we held the usual service for those bereaved in the Church. The Reverend John Lloyd gave a comforting service to those who attended who found it of great support as was the accompanying music played by our organist Alan. Unfortunately, there was no option to provide a cheering cup of tea.

The team are very much here to help as far as we are allowed and we would encourage people to get in touch if they need even just a chat on the telephone. Unfortunately at present face to face contact is not allowed or even delivery of a printed newsletter.

Regrettably we have been unable to continue with walking groups, social evenings or group outings due to the restrictions at the present time. We are all hopeful that the vaccination plans will lead to a brighter future where we can engage with these activities once again!

Should you need help please contact Scott Whiteford or Kay Brown

## The Guild

The Guild Committee wish all members and friends a very Happy New Year. 2020 was a very difficult year for all of us. We have greatly missed seeing one another at our weekly Guild meetings but now we look forward to 2021 with renewed hope and optimism. Although we are all once again living under tightened restrictions, with vaccines on the horizon, we have reason to hope that life will eventually return to some sort of normality. We pray that our more vulnerable members may soon be able to see and meet with friends and family safely again in the not too distant future. However, it is now clear that we shall not be able to meet at all this Guild session. As soon as is possible the committee will be meeting to plan for our 2021-2022 session starting in October.

We have, of course, been unable to hold our annual fundraising events, but, thanks to members' generous donations, we have been able to pay C of S Guild capitation fees, and also make first donations to this year's Guild projects, Malawi Fruits and The Sailors' Society.

Following C of S instructions, we are sorry that at present we are unable to deliver the magazine, published by Guild Headquarters, to our members.

Members and friends, let us Look Forward in Faith to once again being able to share in the worship, prayer, action and fellowship that make our Guild family so special.

The Guild Committee

**Lodging House Mission** receive support from the Guild and look forward to continued support from such as Eaglesham church in the year ahead. In line with Government guidance their day centre remains closed at present with a limited number of staff working to support those experiencing homelessness or isolation at this time. During 'stay at home' temporary accommodation is available to all who need it. The Mission work with partner agencies to make available emergency supplies to those most in need in hostels, hotels and B and B.

## **You're on Mute!**

One of the many challenges facing our Church during this pandemic has been the question of how to hold Kirk Session Meetings when we cannot gather together physically? The answer has been Zoom online. For those who unfamiliar with this concept, it involves Elders having access to a computer or smartphone and signing in online to join the meeting from the comfort of their own home. The technology allows the display of about 30 individuals on the screen at any one time. Discussion and debate can take place in a relatively controlled manner. For some this is a familiar environment but for many it has been a steep learning curve. This has been apparent at the start of the sessions where advice from spouses, grandchildren, etc can dominate the airwaves - 'rotate it upwards', 'click the Full Screen button', 'switch the light off', and so on...'.

Eventually calm is restored when the Session Clerk Sheila, controlling the technology, puts everyone on Mute and the sound of barking dogs, clanking dishes and slamming doors disappears. The format is not ideal compared to gathering physically in the same room but, in the current circumstances, it works well enough. It has the added advantage of no need to travel on cold, wet evenings and a cup of tea - or a glass of wine! - whilst the meeting progresses. It is also entertaining to scan backgrounds in other homes and glean random information such as books people like, souvenirs brought back from holidays abroad and even sporting successes.

The successful management of the mute button does seem to be beyond the wit of man in these meetings and in others I have experienced. It can be 'unmuted' by either Sheila or the individual Elder. If buttons are hit simultaneously this can cause some angst. An Elder may be seen passionately gesticulating and making a point without any sound emanating and with the audience shouting in unison 'You're on mute!'. It has been said that this phrase has become the caption of 2020.

Mute button control led to an amusing incident in one of the Session Meetings. Linda, the Discipleship Development Officer

from the Church of Scotland, who is ably assisting the Session with the rather protracted CoS procedure for selecting and appointing a new minister, was explaining some of the finer procedural process. The slight frustrations of the Session were summed up when one Elder, without realising she had been unmuted, cut the airwaves with the exclamation to her husband 'She's a stickler for detail!'. This was much to the amusement of all concerned, fortunately including Linda. We are all learning about online meetings as we go along and, who knows, when life returns to 'normal', we may still be holding some meetings online. If that's the case, there's one thing for sure - we'll still be shouting at the screen 'You're on mute!'.

Scott Whiteford

## **TPNW**

The Church of Scotland General Assembly has opposed the use or threatened of nuclear weapons for over 30 years and that opposition has recently been restated. A realisation of the worldwide humanitarian consequences of any use of these weapons led non-nuclear states into a five year consultation process resulting in a new United Nations treaty. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons comes into force on January 22nd. This follows similar treaties on chemical and biological weapons and cluster munitions.

This is a challenge to nuclear weapons states which have largely ignored the requirement in the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty to progress to complete nuclear disarmament. The moral justification for this is well rehearsed and has been restated by church leaders. "Attempts to sustain peace through the threat of indiscriminate mass destruction could not be further from the peace to which Christ calls us." [Rt Rev Dr Russell Barr]. "I just find myself baffled by any attempt to give a Christian account of why we need a more expensive way of unaccountable slaughter." [Most Rev Rowan Williams]. "I am convinced that the desire for peace and fraternity planted deep in the human heart will bear fruit to ensure that nuclear weapons are banned once and for all, to the benefit of our common home." [Pope Francis].

This has been politically divisive issue in both Scotland and the wider UK for many years but the stance of the established Christian churches in opposition to nuclear weapons has been consistent for some time. Further information can be found on the Church of Scotland website or in February Life and Work.





*More winter pictures and Church Christmas decoration which will have been missed by many*

