

The **Lych Gate**

The Newsletter of St Machar's Ranfurly Church



April 2020

Volume 22 Issue 2



MINISTER'S LETTER

From the minister

As I write this on the 25th of March, likely a couple of weeks before you read this, we're only just a few days into 'lockdown'. My head is still trying to get around the implications for work and home life. I feel tired from experimenting with new technologies and ways of getting stuff done. In normal situations I rather enjoy this kind of experimentation, but when suddenly it is forced upon you, it can be rather stressful.

I'm an extrovert who likes gatherings of people and I also treasure time by myself to concentrate and work. Both these scenarios are going to be in short supply in the coming months as we are forced to work from home in lockdown as a family of five!

For each and every one of you, your normal lives will be disrupted in many ways due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We have asked a number of church members to write down what their experiences are. You can find this further on in the magazine.

We all, young and old, experience some kind of loss. We experience a loss of freedom, of physical connection, the ability to meet with colleagues, friends and family. For some of us this crisis brings very real health concerns about ourselves or our loved ones, and the necessary but frustrating restrictions on how we can give or

receive support. For some of us this brings very real concerns about our livelihoods and ability to provide. And many of us will painfully miss the ability to gather together as God's family in church. Paul says in his letter to the Corinthians 'If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.' (1 Cor 12:26-27). In this strange and frightening time, we cannot physically meet as the body of Christ, but we can and should reach out to one another to share each other's burdens. We can do this by calling up those we know might be struggling or making contact through social media. If anyone has a specific concern about someone, please contact me (01505 612975) or hanneke.marshall@churchofscotland.org.uk

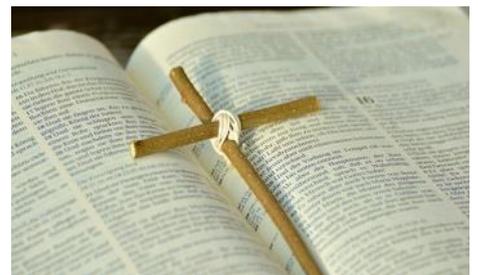
We occasionally sing the hymn 'I am the church, you are the church' which has the verse: *'the church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place, the church is a people'*. This is true, now more than ever. Even though we cannot gather physically in the church building, we all who follow Jesus are called to **be** the church, for one another and for the world.

Jesus promised to be with us always, to the very end of this age (Matthew 28:20) so we can be sure that in the midst of all our fear and struggles, he will meet with us and strengthen us, wherever we are. During this time of Lent and into Holy Week, as we follow him, on his way to the Cross, we remind ourselves that he has struggled and suffered, taking on the powers of evil and death, and has come out victorious on Easter day. Now we know *there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, that is in Christ Jesus our Lord – neither death nor life, ...neither the present or the future... nor anything else in all creation* (from Romans 8:38-39).

I hope and pray you will hold on to this assurance in the days and weeks to come.

May God bless you and keep you,

Hanneke



SIGNS OF SPRING



MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION

As a family we are currently in quarantine as Aaron unfortunately has developed cold like symptoms so following government guidelines we as a household have self-isolated for the 14 days.

Our Children Hunter (4) and Harrison (14) are also at home with us embarking on a new adventure that is homeschooling.

We are currently on day 2 of isolation!

We worry for our children, our parents and our sister's and extended family that this virus affects everyone differently and some mild and some more severely.

We are concerned for all the "Key Workers" who are being put in danger because a select few people who aren't listening to the government and don't acknowledge that they are causing harm. We are concerned that with one of us having been classed as Key Worker that we put our family at risk every time we leave the house.

We are concerned that no matter what we do it won't be enough to keep everyone safe and that we will lose someone we love.

We will miss our families & friends, we will miss meeting up with our parents almost every day and of our sister and niece and nephew every week. We will miss the physical contact.

We will miss the routine of normal life and disciplines that come with it. Life has become very different.

We will miss church and our church family, getting together and planning for Easter, craft and story time with the junior church and rehearsing for our Junior led service.

We hope that people understand that we all have a part to play, that by following the social distancing and staying at home that we can shield the most vulnerable in our communities and church.

We hope that in the age of technology we can find ways forward of keeping in touch and delivering God's message, to be kind to one another and support one another in times of darkness.

We hope that if we work together we can make sure everyone has what they need and that the vulnerable are also cared for.

We hope that will shall meet again!

We are thankful for our family as we support each other through this crisis, we are thankful for our continued wellbeing and for the wellbeing of those around us.

We are thankful for the community spirit that has been shown and the support of our neighbours.

We pray for our communities and vulnerable, we pray for our key workers, care givers, front line NHS, Clergy and all essential workers in manufacturing and alike

during this time of darkness, we pray for the love of god to show us the way forward.

Guide us through our uncertainty and bring us together in a way in which we have forgotten, due to busy lives.

We pray that during this time of reflection that we find happiness and meaning.

We pray for those that have lost loved ones, and those that can't help but feel lost, lonely and helpless as we watch those around us fall ill.

We pray for a vaccination to be found and rolled out sooner rather than later.

Help us reconnect with ourselves and families and with God and reaffirm our faith.

We pray that we will meet again.

Philippians 4:6-7

New International Version (NIV)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Amen

Naomi Butterworth (writing on behalf of Aaron, Naomi, Harrison and Hunter)

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

From the words of Pope Francis :

Fast from hurting words and say kind words

Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude

Fast from anger and be filled with patience

Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope

Fast from worries and have trust in God

Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity

Fast from pressures and be prayerful

Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy

Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.

Fast from grudges and be reconciled

Fast from words and be silent so you can listen

MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION (CONT'D)

I am working from home. I am concerned for everybody particularly those vulnerable members of our community. Physical well-being is very important but we also need to be mindful of the mental health implications of prolonged periods of isolation. I will miss contact with family and friends, including church friends.

I hope that we can all remain kind and considerate and think of others, not just those we know and have in our lives but people who for example are homeless or rely on food banks. Random acts of kindness are more important than ever. I am thankful for the many good people I know and those I don't know personally but who are making a real

effort to help and support some of my loved ones who are vulnerable. My prayer is that in time a vaccine will be found. In the meantime I pray to God to give us the strength and resilience to face the challenges that lie ahead. We will come through this with God's help.

Whilst I am self employed I am working from home and "self isolating" I am concerned that selfishness and total disregard to safety that so many people are ignoring "warnings." This could have a devastating effect on our and their loved ones. I am concerned for the elderly and families who cannot "get together." - for all the workers in many sectors who are placing themselves at risk to ensure our safety and the health of all those people that mean so much to us. For the many households who will be worrying about their own and their families "financial security" I will miss coming to Church and visiting family in Fife. I will miss: Business Groups, being unable to continue the "hands on work" with Rotary, curling, the monthly 41 Club meeting and my work and the many business colleagues that I interact with.

I hope that Society will "listen" and act and that the selfishness will cease. I hope that Scientists will find a vaccine for this horrible virus and that we can be able to have the opportunity to again care for those less fortunate . I am thankful for a home, a caring wife, family who keep in regular contact and that I can hopefully continue to interact and assist clients. I am thankful for the ability to keep in "touch" with St Machar's Ranfurly Church through Hanneke's excellent "on line " services etc. My prayer is that we trust in our beliefs and that you like I have done, take comfort in the following passage.

Footprints
One night I dreamed a dream. I was walking along the beach with my Lord. Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the

sand, one belonging to me and one to my Lord.
When the last scene of my life shot before me I looked back at the footprints in the sand. There was only one set of footprints. I realized that this was at the lowest and saddest times of my life. This always bothered me and I questioned the Lord about my dilemma.
"Lord, You told me when I decided to follow You, You would walk and talk with me all the way. But I'm aware that during the most troublesome times of my life there is only one set of footprints. I just don't understand why, when I need You most, You leave me."
He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you, never, ever, during your trials and testings. When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Bill Christie

I am at home with Drew, my husband and our younger daughter, Rebecca. She usually shares a flat in Denniston but they all decided it was best to go home to be with their families at this time. I am currently working from home. I am a teacher so this is a bit tricky but the school has set up ways that we can communicate with our pupils online. I am concerned for my mum, who is 85 and lives on her own and my sister and I are supporting her with shopping, phone calls etc. My mum is being amazingly stoic, as she has always been throughout her life. I am also concerned for our elder daughter

who works in America. It is hard having her so far away, but she has lots of fantastic friends and we have skype! I will miss meeting up with family and friends. I really missed going to church on Sunday but greatly appreciated Hanneke's online service. It was lovely to feel that our church family were still connecting with each other by watching the same thing and receiving the same message. I hope that we, and our loved ones, all come through this. I hope that there will be jobs for people to return to. I hope that we can help each other to stay calm and reduce the anxiety of

this time I am thankful for my friends and family, the positive aspects of social media that are helping people across the world stay in touch and the chats across the street with neighbours. I am thankful that I live in the 'first world' and have access to health care and food supplies. I pray that God gives us the strength to get through the coming weeks. I pray that He can still the spasms of anxiety that are crippling many of us. I pray that we will feel God supporting us and be able to lean into Him.

Margaret Richardson

GUILD NEWS

In the present situation all Guild meetings are cancelled. However the picture below taken on March 7th 2015 at the Guild Spring Fayre is relevant.



With the present situation you could have fun creating similar chicks by following the pattern below:

Required

Size 10 needles (UK old size)

Double knitting wool

Cadbury's creme eggs or eggs of

similar size

Cast on 36 stitches

Knit 8 rows in garter stitch

Row 9. Increase 1 st at each end of row

Row 10. knit

Row 11. As row 9

Row 12. Knit

Row 13. As row 9 (42 sts)

Knit 3 more rows

Cast off 11 sts at beg on next 2 rows. (20 sts left)

Knit 11 rows



Leave long thread to draw through sts. Fold in half and sew up. Fill the head cavity with cotton wool if

required

Embroider eyes and add felt beak Perfect size to hide a Cadbury's creme egg (or similar) inside.

Making Up Instructions

Its much easier to sew the eyes (one stitch of black wool for each eye) and to sew on the beak before sewing up the chick.

Also sew a row of yarn, along the row between the head and body, to gather up later, to accentuate the head shape.

When the chick is sewn up, this thread is pulled gently and only slightly to accentuate the head.

Sew from the wrong side to the right side of the item

Now add a creme egg of choice.

MODERATOR VISIT

The General Assembly this year and the "Heart and Soul" in Princess Street Gardens have been cancelled due to the Coronavirus. The new Moderator Designate for 2020-21 is Rev. Dr. Martin Fair, minister of St. Andrews Parish Church in Arbroath.

Looking back, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland visited St. Machar's Ranfurly Church in 1978. Below are members of the Kirk Session greeting him.

21. Alex Lyle 22. Michael Hepburn 23. Jim Kerr
24. George Lyle 25. Ian Alston
26. Dr. J Martin Young 27. Bobby Hart 28. George Haig

14. David Fraser 15. Roy Paton 16. Bill Buchanan
17. Stuart Buchanan 18. Stuart Cook 19. Hector Munro
20. John McKenzie

8. John Hannah 9. Alf Barker 10. Jim Ellis 11. Russell Paterson
12. Ronald Aitchison 13. Stanley Chalmers
1. Mary Craig 2. David Mitchell 3. Bill Paterson
4. Peter Brodie (Moderator) 5. Ronald McLeod
6. Louise Hogg 7. Jim Smith





Christian Aid Week 10-16 May 2020

Christian Aid Week will take place this year from 10 to 16 May. Or will it?

At time of writing, mid-May is seven weeks away. The Lych Gate newsletter is only issued bi-monthly, so this notification of Christian Aid Week has to be included in the April issue.

But everything seems to be being cancelled or closed just now as part of the national response to stem the spread of the covid-19 virus.

So, will Christian Aid Week be cancelled? NO! – not unless we can somehow “cancel poverty” by then, which seems a tad unlikely! Every year, Christian Aid Week is the highlight not only of Christian Aid’s fundraising efforts but also its vital role in raising much need awareness of the plight faced by our poorest neighbours around the world, and the positive role we can all play in combating poverty and its underlying causes.

Throughout the UK, Christian Aid Week raised more than £7.5million last year. Scotland, as usual, punched above its weight, raising more than £1.1million. The various fundraising activities, involving 10,000 churches and 40,000 thousand volunteers, are rightly described as the largest collective act of practical Christian witness in the UK.

For Christian Aid itself, the

planning of each year’s Christian Aid Week involves lead times of many months not weeks. The central theme has to be chosen. Print material, presentations, Donation envelopes, videos, church service outlines, children’s activity sheets, etc. all have to be produced. This year, the theme is “Climate Justice” – shining a light on the very real impact of climate change in creating terrible poverty in countries and regions suffering from severe drought in some cases and severe flooding in others.

And then along comes the covid-19 virus!

In this country, it seems that the vast majority of the general population are likely to experience relatively mild symptoms or possibly no symptoms at all if they contract the virus. But there is real concern to protect our elderly and those with underlying health problems for whom the virus poses the biggest risk. And also a determination to protect and adequately resource our NHS. People are fearful, and understandably so.

Fear is fuelled by our imagination. But if it helps to take our minds off our immediate situation in Scotland try imagining this:

what if we lived in a country that was already one of the poorest in the world?

where severe droughts have decimated food production?

where the immune system of the general population is already compromised through malnourishment and the aftermath of HIV/Aids?

where there is barely a health service at all, let alone one

that can be promised “*all the resources it needs*”?

where the government lacks the skill and resources to attempt any kind of corrective measures to get the economy back on its feet?

... and then along comes covid-19 !

No, Christian Aid Week will NOT be cancelled – well, not if I have anything to do with it! Christian Aid Week in 2020 will no doubt be difficult. It will no doubt be different. But we have absolutely no right to give up at a time when the need for our support is greater than ever.

It is not possible at this stage to say what form our fundraising should take. We have been advised that the usual house-to-house collections are not permitted. Neither are “Big Brekkies”, which involve social gatherings and the sharing of food. But every year Bridge of Weir raises nearly £6,000 for Christian Aid (more once Gift Aid is taken into account).

Your commitment and support will be needed if we are to sustain this level support for the vital work of Christian Aid.

Further details will follow nearer the time – mainly by email, Facebook and the church web site, since Sunday services have been suspended for a while. In the meantime, ideas, suggestions, comments and expressions of support would all be welcome.

Dave Macdonald, Bridge of Weir Christian Aid Week coordinator.
(dave.sonas@outlook.com)

1ST BRIDGE OF WEIR GUIDES

Since the start of 2020 we have had another action-packed session of Girlguiding in St Machar's Church Hall. In January we continued with our activity programme of Skill Builders and Unit Meeting Activities which included making birdfeeders from oranges. Some of you may have spotted some of these tied to the trees around the church which have been filled with bird seed.

We had planned to travel to Dundee for Girlguiding Scotland's Thinking Day event on the 22nd February but because of severe flooding on the railway line between Glasgow and Dundee travel became extremely difficult. Although we didn't make it to Dundee we all thoroughly enjoyed going to the cinema in Glasgow followed by a very popular visit to Burger King to round off the hastily reorganised day out. For our own Thinking Day evening in the Unit we savoured the culinary delights of food from around the world and staying closer to home the girls gave a presentation on what was

great about living in Scotland and Bridge of Weir. At the end of the month we had the usual Pancake fun on the Wednesday night closest to Shrove Tuesday. As well as making and, of course, eating pancakes, we challenged the girls to make their pancakes into animal shapes using a number of other tasty, edible items.



In March, we had a 'fantastic' evening at the Apple shop in Braehead movie making. In small groups the girls were given an Ipad and had to make up a short movie on whatever topic they liked. Everyone really got into it and all the movies were brilliant. I think

we definitely have some budding movie directors and actors in our midst. We will continue the month with a sea-glass craft session and hope to finish off the month with a trip to the YMCA in Paisley for a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) workshop.



Christine Haddock
Guide Guider

APRIL QUIZ (BOOKS OF THE BIBLE)

		Answer
1	For essential parts of sentences	
2	Damage a thousand	
3	Is she hurt when deranged?	
4	If it's warm it's tepid	
5	Sounds like a silicate material	
6	Live cut is broken	
7	A task	
8	Is it the KKK AA hub? Or not?	
9	A cake mixed as I set for one	
10	Ye motor nude to get one	
11	Seeing's believing it's another	
12	Preserve reversed compass bearing	

February Quiz Answers: 1. Vienna 2. Beirut 3. Dublin 4. Havana 5. Canberra 6. Stanley 7. Athens 8. Ankara
9. Budapest 10. Seoul 11. Jerusalem 12. Nairobi

LETTER OF THANKS



12 February 2020

Thank you!

Dear Francis

Thank you for your generous donation of £497.81 to our Christmas appeal. Your support will help change lives in Glasgow.

In our appeal we tell Stuart's story, who has been volunteering and working with us since leaving rehab. It is a joy for our team to journey with him. Now in his position as a paid intern, Stuart works with our guests to encourage and advise them as they go through similar struggles to those he faced.

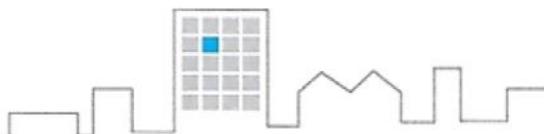


Stuart says, "Coming here [to Glasgow City Mission] gave me a purpose, right away. It gave me something to do every day – it gave me a chance to change my life."

Thank you again for your support which enables us to work with more people like Stuart throughout the year.

We send our best wishes for the New Year.

Jack Geddes
Marketing and Fundraising Manager



Scottish Charity SC001499



LETTER OF THANKS

Thank you for the kind gift of £497.80 from the services at Freeland and St Machar's Renfurly Churches collected during the Christmas period.

We are happy to report that the first eight homes have been built at Kazunzu 'Village of Hope' on the shores of Lake Victoria. The Kazunzu project aims to provide accommodation, primary education and vocational training to orphaned children in the Mwanza region. Over the summer, school expeditions will continue to contribute to the building of individual homes for vulnerable families in the Moshi region of Tanzania.

Meanwhile, our medical ships on Lake Victoria in Tanzania and the tributaries of the Amazon in Peru continue to bring health care to people in isolated areas. At the end of the year, we marked the 2 millionth medical consultation delivered via our Amazon Hope Programme.

If you would like more information about the trust or our work, please do not hesitate to contact us here in the office or via the website www.vinetrust.org.

Once again, thank you for your support of Vine Trust.

Kind Regards,



Jo MacQueen

Communications & Events Officer



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CHURCHES OF THE WORLD

Christ Church Windhoek, Namibia



The **Christ Church** (or **Christuskirche**) is a historic landmark and Lutheran Church in Windhoek, Namibia.

The church was built following the wars between the Germans and the Khoikhoi, Herero and Owambo. The foundation stone was laid on 11 August 1907, while on 16 October 1910 the church was officially dedicated. It was originally known as the **Church of Peace**.

The Christ Church was constructed from quartz sandstone mined from

the vicinity of Avis Dam. It has a mixture of neo-Romanesque, Art Nouveau and Gothic revival influences. Its spire is 24 m (79 ft) high.

The portico was made from Carrara marble imported from Italy. The clock and part of the roof was shipped from Germany, as were the three bronze bells cast by Franz Schilling. They bear the inscriptions "Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe" (**Glory to God in the highest**), "Friede auf Erden" (**Peace on earth**), and "Den Menschen ein Wohlgefallen" (**Goodwill towards men**).

During a confirmation service in the 1960 the clapper of the main bell came loose, smashed through the window and fell on the street. Window bars were installed in reaction to this.

The Church is located on a traffic island on Robert Mugabe Avenue.

Inside, down one side of the Church wall there is a massive bronze plaque with the names of

over 1000 German soldiers, marines and civilians killed during Nama and Herero uprisings in 1903-1907.

The services are conducted in German at 10.00 on Sundays. The church was renovated from 1967 to 1972. At that time the corrugated iron roof was replaced by tiles.



Mary and I were extremely lucky to see inside as the Church Officer happened to be doing some work when we visited.

Dennis Taylor

Fairoese Foikakirkjan - The Faroe Islands (The people's church)



This is one of the smallest state churches in the world. It was a diocese of the Church of Denmark Lutheran Church.

It is set in a small community and only holds approx 50/60 people. To accommodate more people a new church was built just across the valley from it.

Helen Bullen



NOTICES

Airport Runs

Greetings and good wishes to all our drivers, organisers and customers!

Airport runs are suspended. Normal service will be resumed as soon as it becomes safe and sensible to do so. Even if someone requests a run to Johnstone Station we should not take them since cars do not allow 2m of "social distancing".

I do hope that you all keep safe and well in these extraordinary times. I'm looking forward to a time when we are all allowed to travel again and business will be booming for our service. Thanks to all of you during 2019 our driving team raised £911 for Church funds. Well done and thank you!

Take care and best wishes,

Morven McLeod.



Funerals

Jesus said "I am the Resurrection and the Life...."

Dorothy Hyslop

19th March 2020

AND PEOPLE STAYED AT HOME

And people stayed home
and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their shadow
and people began to think
differently

and people healed
and in the absence of people
who lived in ignorant ways,
dangerous, meaningless and
heartless,
even the earth began to heal
and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of life
and healed the earth completely

just as they were healed
themselves.

Amazingly this was written 150 years ago, after Irish famine. Very moving and relevant Kathleen O'Meara's poem, 'And People Stayed Home,' written in 1869, after the famine

Margaret Richardson

JUNIOR CHURCH

Junior Church has been meeting on average twice a month during the past year. Parents are emailed each week before a meeting. Attendance varies, but it is encouraging to see a new family join us on a more regular basis. Mary, Lorraine, Coral and Naomi prepare sessions for a wide range of ages and this is very much appreciated by the children and parents. The Bible Curriculum

website which they had been using for prep and ideas is now no longer online. However a meeting was held on 27th of Feb to plan for the remainder of sessions until the summer.

In light of the cancellations of all services until further notice this is now up in the air. A final service of the season was planned for 21st of June.

Some resources parents and children (and any adult!) may find useful can be found at

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/easter/>

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/lent-easter-appeal/count-your-blessings-online>

CONTACTS

Minister: Rev. Hanneke Marshall
The Manse,
9 St Andrews Drive,
Bridge of Weir,
PA11 3HS

Tel: 01505 **612975**



Session Clerk: Dennis Taylor
33 St Andrews Drive,
Bridge of Weir,
PA11 3HT

Tel: 01505 **612417**

Keeping the faith

At a time when we're overloaded with information and news, it can be hard to settle and still ourselves to focus on God. I strongly recommend the **Lectio 365** app that you can download on any smartphone. It has daily 8-minute devotions that include prayers, scripture readings and time or reflection. You can either read through these or listen to these being spoken. I have found listening to this before I go to bed very soothing – or you could do this in the morning before you face the day.

Of course, you don't need apps to pray and reflect on Gods' word, you can just use your own Bible – do whatever helps you to keep reminding you of God's presence and God's promises. Each Sunday I will be posting a video of a short service on our St Machar's Ranfurly Facebook page and YouTube channel. You do not need a Facebook account to see this. The BBC are also scheduling broadcasts of church services on tv (BBC1) – check out the times (at time of writing 11:30 am). You may want to make people who don't use the internet aware of this.

Hanneke

Free Will Offering Envelopes

If you normally give to the church using Free Will Offering envelopes, obviously you cannot get these to us right now. In any case, it might be hard for you to get to the bank machines to draw cash as well. We would ask you, if you are able to do so, to switch to giving by standing order. This ensures our normal income is maintained at a time where we won't have hall lets

or normal fundraising streams.

To set up giving by standing order you need to contact your bank and ask them to transfer a set amount at a regular interval (for example each month) to our church bank account. You can change or stop this whenever you want. With some banks and buildings societies you can set standing orders up over the phone or by internet banking. Alternatively, you can

complete a standing order form and give or send it to your bank.

You will need this information:

**St Machar's Ranfurly Church,
Clydesdale Bank,
Sort Code 82-61-11, Account
Number: 9015 5171**

For a standing order form to print please look on our website under 'ADMINISTRATION' and 'GIVING'



Editorial Team

Dennis Taylor
Mary Taylor Marion Reid

Contributions for the next issue of *The Lych Gate* should be with the Editor by **Tuesday 21st June 2020**. Please E-mail to: dennis1taylor@msn.com or pass memory sticks or paper copies to Dennis Taylor.