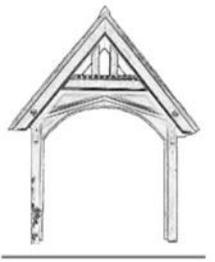


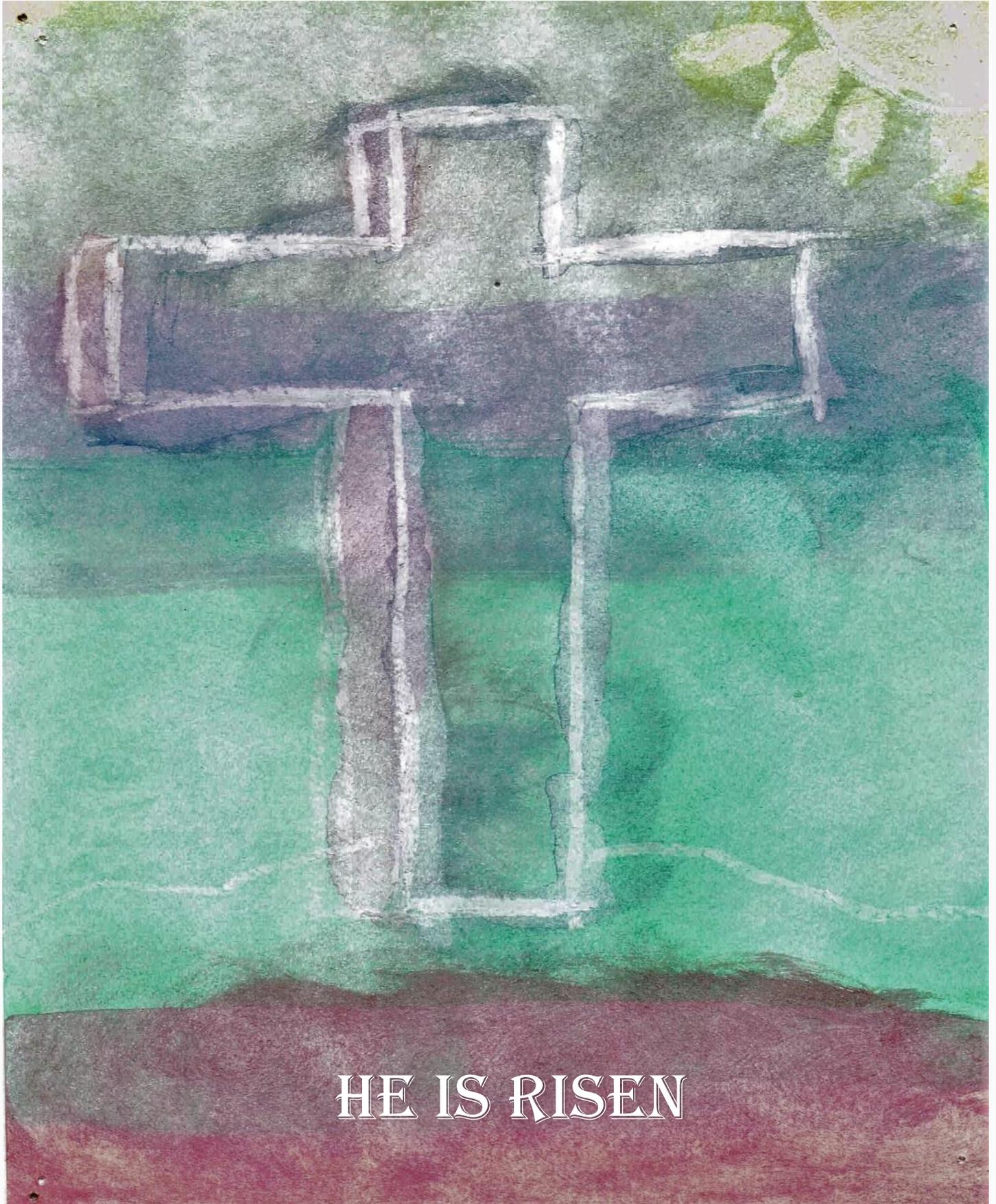
# The *Lych Gate*

The Newsletter of St Machar's Ranfurly Church



April 2021

Volume 23 Issue 2



HE IS RISEN

## FROM THE MINISTER

Psalm 22 is a psalm that is often read during Holy Week, and for good reason. Jesus took the words of this psalm - that he likely knew off by heart - on his lips while he hung dying on the cross. There are various sentences and images in the psalm that seem to directly relate to what Jesus is experiencing.

Being surrounded by enemies and attacked: *Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me* (vs 16).

Being mocked and humiliated, taunted by bystanders:

*All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.*

*"He trusts in the Lord," they say, "let the Lord rescue him."* (vss 7 and 8)

Nailed to the cross: *'they pierce my hands and my feet.'* (vs 16)

His clothes being divided by his attackers: *'They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.'* (vs 18)

Crying out in agony, feeling abandoned by God: *'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'* (vs 1)

It is a psalm that uniquely speaks to Jesus' experience, yet if we have known encountered opposition or ridicule, we may also identify with the psalm writer. And if not so much on a

personal level, as Christians in an increasingly secular age we feel increasingly marginalised and derided for our faith. Many in our society consider the Christian faith outdated and laughable, and the church an irrelevant relic of the past. While this is having a seemingly unstoppable impact on the numbers professing to be Christians and the viability of our churches, we may feel abandoned by God. It is harder and harder to believe when few around us do. We cry out to God - *trouble is near and there is no one to help!*

We don't know if and when the psalm writer was rescued, but somehow - whilst they are praying their lament, they seem to arrive at renewed faith. From verse 22 the cry for help changes into an expression of confidence in the faithfulness of God. They can see themselves (in the future) once more in the company of the faithful, singing God's praises. And the vision opens wider still in verse 27 - even though they are currently besieged and ridiculed by many, they foresee a future in which *'all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord and all the families of the nations will bow down before him.'*

While Jesus was besieged, mocked and nailed to a cross; while the disciples were afraid for their lives and scattered, it was hard to see a reversal was possible. Each must have felt abandoned, frightened and alone. The disciples must have been convinced that they had wasted their lives following Jesus and nothing more would come of this movement. And yet, the vision of Psalm 22 did come to pass; the good news of Jesus as Lord would go out over all the earth and many would turn to Him. I find this hugely encouraging to hold on to at this time of church decline and secularisation. *Future generations will be told about the Lord!* (vs 30) In the meantime we can but do our best to stay faithful to our calling and trust in God. After Good Friday comes Easter, new life beyond our wildest dreams. *He has done it!* (vs 31)

Yours,  
*Hanneke*



Front Cover and Pictures by members of the Junior Church

## BACK TO CHURCH

We are limited in the number of people who will be able to attend for a service. This is currently up to a maximum of 50 which will include the sound and vision team, the stewards on the door and the Church Officer. The minister, organist and a single choir member are separate. Therefore the following booking system will again be in place. Phone or e-mail the Session Clerk **by Thursday night each week** to book a place. **Phone** between 10 am & 8 pm to **074 84 280 104**

**E-mail** - [sessionclerk@stmacharsranfurlychurch.org.uk](mailto:sessionclerk@stmacharsranfurlychurch.org.uk)

If leaving a message, please say for how many in your household you are booking. Please leave a contact telephone number. It may be easier to go into the church website "[stmacharsranfurlychurch.org.uk](http://stmacharsranfurlychurch.org.uk)" and then under "who's who" click on the e-mail id for the session clerk and

send a message.

A reply will be given by Saturday night to confirm your place.

If the number is over-subscribed, then you will be offered a place for the following week.

### **Arrival at the Church**

Please do not attend the church if you display Covid symptoms (cough, fever, loss of taste/smell) even if you have booked.

You may need to queue outside, please observe social distancing and wear your face mask.

You will be asked to sanitise your hands on entry.

All people attending Church need to be registered and their details recorded. This will be kept securely for 21 days in case it is required by Test and Protect.

On arrival, please register with the person taking the register before entering the building. If you have provided these details while booking, your name will just be ticked off as present.

Details required are

Name

Phone Number or address- Household groups need only record one main contact

### **Entry to the Church**

After registration, you will be shown to your seat by the Steward on duty.

This will probably be a different seat from your usual seat but this is to ensure we build up the congregation in an orderly manner. A one-way system will be in operation.

### **Exit from the Church**

After the service you will be directed by the stewards to exit in a controlled manner using the one-way system.

There will be no tea/coffee served.

Everyone must continue to observe social distancing and must not congregate in the grounds outside.

Please keep your mask on until you're outside the Church grounds.

### **Access to our Service**

#### **Online**

If you are unable to attend Church, all services will be available online. Any of the following ways will let you gain access to the services, which will be livestreamed to our YouTube channel from the church:

- Go to our YouTube channel (Google: St Machar's Ranfurly Church YouTube) – if you click subscribe then it will be easier to find each week.
- Via the Sunday Morning e-mail. Within the e-mail there is a link to click which will take you directly to our YouTube channel. If it is at the same time as the service (10:30 am), you will see the live service
- At other times you will be able to see a recording of the latest service.

If you would prefer a printed copy of the Service please let your Elder know.

# Happy Easter

## CHURCHES OF THE WORLD

### Auld Simon - Auld Kirk Lochwinnoch



Another Church on our doorstep which we have passed many times and until our Lockdown walks we probably would have continued to ignore it.

Located on the right hand side of the road out of Lochwinnoch, heading for Kilmacolm, this is the gable end of what remains of the Auld Kirk.

It was the first post Reformation church in the area. The Kirk was dedicated to St. John and was cruciate in form. In 1576 Ninian

Sempil was elected “reider” prior to the appointment of a minister. The aisles were named after two principal local families, the Sempills and the Glens of Barr. It was around this church that the Kirktown of Lochwinnoch developed.

The original building eventually fell into disrepair and was restructured around 1692. In 1729 the crow-stepped stone gable was added to prevent further weather damage. The clock was added and inaugurated two years later on Hogmanay 1731.

By the early 1800’s, an increased population, the development of McDowel’s “New Town of Lochwinnoch” and disrepair to the kirk building, resulted in a decision to build a new parish church. This was established in 1808 on its present site in Church Street and the dedication to St. John continued until the Church closed last year.

The plan to demolish the whole of the Auld Kirk was objected to by the weavers who lived and worked

in its proximity and an agreement was reached that the south west gable and clock would remain standing.

The bell tower and clock has come to be known affectionately as “Auld Simon”. Local folklore suggests it was named after one of the weavers who wound the clock up.

The bell is original (1729) and weighs less than one hundred-weight. The first clock face was wooden, being replaced by the present slate one. The winding mechanism was originally set up for 7 day operation but in 1920 part of the tower was converted to accommodate a village morgue and the mechanism was changed to a 3 – 4 day operation.

On the weathervane, a plough turns with the wind, moving the direction arms of a thistle (W), a rose (S), a shamrock (E) and a diamond (N). The original was replaced by a replica in the 1960’s crafted by Mr Jim Brown, the village blacksmith.

Dennis Taylor

### APRIL QUIZ (BOOKS OF THE BIBLE)

		Answer
1	Not a shiny surface – cut it down	
2	Play a banjo elegantly to find it	
3	She is French to start with	
4	Hid a boa uncurled	
5	Ha! A gig! When rearranged	
6	Hosanna humorously included it	
7	Mix hen pizza ha!	
8	Fire survivor	
9	Manors are rebuilt for another	
10	Pipe on main highway	
11	If it’s warm its tepid	
12	Knieval surrounded by food parcels	

**February Quiz Answers:** 1. Pear 2. Kiwi (fruit) 3. Mandarin 4. Olive 5. Apricot 6. Clementine  
7. Raspberry 8. Currant 9. Fig 10. Gooseberry 11. Pineapple 12. Tangerine

## CHURCHES OF THE WORLD

### Amber and the Bible



In the Bible, Amber spiritually signifies the Healing Power of God.

In the Old Testament in the Book of Ezekiel this colour is found. Chapter 1 Verse 4: *“And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire”*

And there is also a mention in Numbers Chapter 11 Verse 7: *“Now manna was reminiscent of coriander seed with an appearance similar to amber”*

This reference is to the colour and not to the resin. It probably refers to a metal of that colour or perhaps do we think that the resin Amber may have been in existence in the time of the Bible? A thought to ponder perhaps.

We were therefore interested to find out more about the resin Amber which is found in the Baltic Sea. On a visit to Lithuania on the Coronian Peninsular we visited the small town of Palaga. On the outskirts of the town is the Botanical Gardens and in

the grounds is the Neo-Renaissance Tisk Evilus Palace. Inside this beautiful building is the world’s first Amber Museum. When we were there we witnessed a demonstration which showed that genuine Amber when placed in water will float whereas any other will sink.

The photographs show a case of Amber and also a small piece inside of which a lizard had been fossilized.



## BOYS BRIGADE



It has been a difficult year for the Boys Brigade but the 1<sup>st</sup> Bridge of Weir Company seems to have been doing as well as any in the Paisley and District Battalion.

The Company Section (primary 7 to age eighteen) have been meeting on Friday nights since last August with a mix of indoor, outdoor and Zoom meetings dependent on the rules applicable at any one time. Outdoor games in the park have been particularly popular and with the benefit of lighter evenings and more relaxed rules we hope to return to those after Easter.

Zoom meetings have also been well supported with not less than twenty boys on Zoom every Friday this year. The boys take turns to set a quiz which is generally too difficult for the officers and we also have scavenger

hunt, taskmaster and various tests of skill, ingenuity and intelligence.

We have sixteen boys currently at different stages, working to achieve their Boys Brigade Queen’s and President’s Badges and Duke of Edinburgh bronze and silver awards. Some training is coming up on-line and we have pencilled in dates for three lots of expeditions in the summer. The longest of these is for three days and two nights mostly on the Island of Bute and we very much hope that these will all be allowed when the dates come around.

Last year before we were locked down we did a sponsored walk from Bridge of Weir to Kilmacolm and back and raised £540 which was then price matched. We were able to give £540 each to the Poppy Appeal and BB Company funds and the Regional Fundraiser for the Poppy Appeal is coming to talk to us on Zoom.

The Juniors (primary 4 to 6) have also been meeting on Zoom each Friday evening and the boys (and leaders)

have enjoyed a variety of activities and games as well as a Bible lesson each week. The competitive spirit remains whether it be in the treasure hunt, picture quiz, battle ships, after eight challenge or many other games. We have even had some physical fun including Mr Watson’s keep fit (not quite Joe Wickes), Mr Brodie’s traffic lights and the quarantine shake! Other activities have included crafts, recycling, superheroes and learning some sign language.

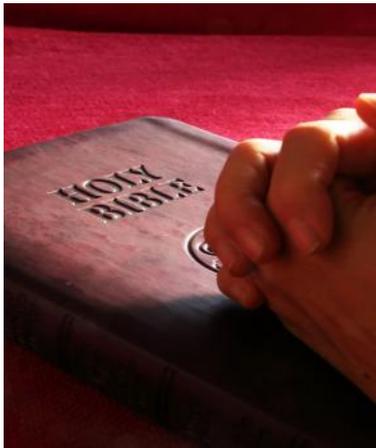
Although the Juniors miss meeting face to face (and playing dodge ball!) it has been really encouraging to be able to keep going online. The Juniors have participated enthusiastically during this long period of lockdown. The Anchor Boys (primary 1 to 3) are a bit young to be entertained on Zoom but hope to return to normal meetings after the summer.

Paul Birch  
Company Captain.

## EASTER OUTREACH

### Mark's Gospel Readings

The entire gospel of Mark has been read by members of Freeland, St Mary's and St Machar's Ranfurly churches. These will be posted in daily instalments during Holy Week on our YouTube channel [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ0gpjwTSdIJs59\\_WyEWdKw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ0gpjwTSdIJs59_WyEWdKw) starting on Palm Sunday and finishing on Easter Sunday. There are 2 or 3 chapters read at a time in various locations around the village. It is a great way to hear the grand sweep of Mark's narrative and follow Jesus' story right through.



### Holy Week and Easter Trail

Walk the story of Holy Week and Easter: an Easter Trail has been set out in the village starting at our church. At each point on the trail you will find a big board with an artwork and a summary of the events leading up to Jesus' death and resurrection. For children there is a free bag to collect at the Lych Gate with instructions and various items needed on the trail. For adults there is a laminated prayer sheet in the box along with a small palm cross. Please sanitise your hands before opening the box. The trail will be up from Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> of March until Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April. You can do it in instalments if it is too far to do in one go.

## CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 10-16 MAY 2021

A big thank you to everyone who helped to keep Christian Aid Week going last year by donating through the rather hastily arranged "e-envelope". Although the total amount of funds raised was below previous years, they still made an important contribution to the vital work of Christian Aid in fighting poverty.



This year, Christian Aid Week will take place from 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May. Covid restrictions permitting, we're hoping to return to some of the traditional "red envelope" house-to-house collecting, supported by continued use of the e-envelope. The work of Christian Aid is more important than ever this year. In this country we have been blessed over the past year to not only have a fantastic health service and a comprehensive vaccination programme but also the government resources to mitigate the severe impact on the economy. The poorest communities of the world have none of this.

As a result of the combined impact

of the pandemic, conflict and climate change, global "extreme poverty" (defined as living on less than \$1.90 a day) is expected to increase for the first time in 20 years. The pandemic is forecast to push an additional 100 to 150 million people into extreme poverty by the end of this year. So, please give even more generously this year if you are able!

Further details on the e-envelope will be emailed to everybody on the church mailing list. In the meantime, find out more about Christian Aid at

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

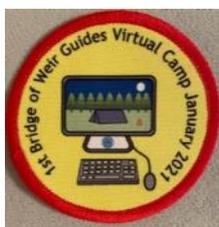


## 1<sup>ST</sup> BRIDGE OF WEIR GUIDES (WEDNESDAY GUIDES)

Since the New Year when lockdown restrictions were reintroduced, our weekly meetings have continued virtually over Zoom. At the end of January, we held our second virtual sleepover camp with the Guides. As well as the weekly meeting on the Wednesday evening that week, we held Zoom meetings over the Friday evening and Saturday morning.



Prior to 'the camp' we sent out an activity pack containing some challenges and the kit needed to take part. First, we asked the Guides to design a badge and had some fantastic entries. We asked another Guider from the District to judge the designs. We will now get the winning design made up into a badge for everyone who took part (the winning design is included with this report).



At our last sleepover we asked the girls to build a den to sleep in but this time we asked them to design a pillowcase. Again, we had some very artistic pillowcases; we definitely have some very talented girls in our Unit.



On the Friday evening we made Lemonade Scones virtually together for supper. Made with only flour, cream and lemonade they really were delicious.



On Saturday morning we had a session of 'Laughing Yoga' it certainly was great fun and certainly

brightened up our Saturday morning. We finished our session making geodesic shapes out of sweets and cocktail sticks.

During February we continued with our Skill Builder activity packs, but we also celebrated Pancake Day with another online cookery session. We made traditional style pancakes and also tried pancakes made with banana and egg. They were both delicious. On the closest Wednesday to the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, we celebrated Thinking Day when we think about our sister Guides in different countries around the world.

At the beginning of March to celebrate Mother's Day, we decorated glass light bottles using glass art pens as presents for our Mothers or Grandmothers. As St. Patrick's Day falls on a Wednesday this year we are going to make Irish Soda Bread Furls together – on Zoom of course! To finish off before the holidays our Easter craft will be using chocolate cream eggs. It's always good to start the holidays with some chocolate!

Christine Haddock  
1<sup>st</sup> Bridge of Weir Guides

## OLIVE TREE SCOTLAND



In time for Easter the Olive Tree has NEW stock, more oil and dates and the promise of beautiful silver olive leaf jewellery direct from Bethlehem – next week! The wee room under the house and with outside access is safe

and secure but we can deliver also..... The need in the West Bank and #Gaza has never been greater – so every little sale here is a huge help in a desperately Covid ravaged Bethlehem and around.

Please pass on our details to all who may be interested

Juliet and the OT team

### Spring/Summer Brochure

March 2021

A selection of crafts from the Holy Land sold by Olive Tree in Bridge of Weir. All profits go to aid educational and medical charities in the West Bank and Gaza.

To arrange a visit or purchase please phone 01505 612963 or email [olivetreescotland@gmail.com](mailto:olivetreescotland@gmail.com).

Delivery possible in some areas – please ask.

[www.olivetreescotland.org](http://www.olivetreescotland.org)  
01505612963

# NOTICES



## Bridge of Weir Easter Trail

Sat 26th March - Sun 11th April

Walk around Bridge of Weir and discover the story of Holy Week. Pick up a free children's bag and prayer sheet at St Machar's Ranfurly Church and follow the map and discover all 8 stations.



## DIARY

### CONGRATULATIONS



to  
Jim Gourley who celebrated his 90th  
birthday on 21st of January



#### March

Sunday 28th	10.30 am	Morning Service - Palm Sunday
Monday 29th	7.30 pm	Holy Week Service—Freeland Livestream
Tuesday 30th	7.30 pm	Holy Week Service—Freeland Livestream
Wednesday 31st	7.30 pm	Holy Week Service—Freeland Livestream

#### April

Thursday 1st	7.30 pm	Maundy Thursday Communion in Church
Friday 2nd	7.30 pm	Good Friday—St Machar's Ranfurly
Sunday 4th	10.30 am	Morning Service - Easter Sunday with Communion
Sunday 11th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 18th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 25th	10.30 am	Morning Service

#### May

Sunday 2nd	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 9th	10.30 am	Morning Service - Sacrament of Holy Communion
Sunday 16th	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 23rd	10.30 am	Morning Service
Sunday 30th	10.30 am	Morning Service



## 2ND BRIDGE OF WEIR GUIDES (TUESDAY GUIDES)



Tuesday Guides had their first face to face meeting for 2021 outdoors in the Church grounds. We had 10 Guides attend. It was lots of fun to meet again and to be able to catch up on everyone's news. Apart from one unscheduled heavy rain shower everything ran fairly smoothly. We spent the time with a little craft decorating papier mache eggs for Easter which were filled with packets of sugar eggs. There was an Easter Egg hunt for everyone around the church grounds to warm us all up following the rain. After a bit of a tidy up we went to the far end of the garden for a boiled egg rolling competition. Everyone's egg was marked with their name or initials; each Guide took their turn from the same spot; eggs were not allowed to be thrown but should have been gently rolled down the slope. Shona was dispatched with a torch to check on the egg which had travelled furthest. Loads of laughs and quite competitive! To conclude the girls had an opportunity to make suggestions on what activities they might like to do in the coming months when and as we are allowed to meet.

Moira Johnston



# CONTACTS

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 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**

## ROTAS

Date	Stewarding	Cleaning	Registration
March 28th	Norma Hancock & Morven McLeod	Norma Hancock & Morven McLeod	Dennis Taylor
April 1st	Scott McLaughlin & Judy Evans	Naomi Butterworth & Judy Evans	Dick Hughes
2nd	Margaret Richardson & Jennie Durward	Margaret Richardson & Jennie Durward	Dennis Taylor
4th	Mary Taylor & Dennis Taylor	Mary Taylor & Dennis Taylor	Dick Hughes
11th	Jane Shepherd & Philip McCulloch	Jane Shepnerd & Rosemary Taylor	Dennis Taylor
18th	Norma Hancock & Marion Reid	Norma Hancock & Pamela Wilson	Dick Hughes
25th	Morven McLeod & Bill Robb	Morven McLeod & Anne Yeaman	Dennis Taylor
May 2nd	Mary Taylor & Dennis Taylor	Mary Taylor & Dennis Taylor	Dick Hughes
9th	Sarah McNaught & Fred Schellekens	Sarah McNaught & Fred Schellekens	Dennis Taylor
16th	Agnes McKechan & Scott McLaughlin	Agnes McKechan & Naomi Butterworth	Dick Hughes
23rd	Norma Hancock & Judy Evans	Norma Hancock & Judy Evans	Dennis Taylor
30th	Margaret Richardson & Philip McCulloch	Margaret Richardson & Rosemaary Taylor	Dick Hughes
	<b>Sound and Vision</b>		<b>Vocalist</b>
March 28th	Beth Robertson & Lois Marshall		Helen Bullen
April 1st	Lukas Marshall & Drew Richardson		Coral McLaughlin
2nd	Harrison Butterworth & Naomi Butterworth		Alex Bullen
4th	Greg Millar & Lois Marshall		Margaret Richardson
11th	Harrison Butterworth & Naomi Butterworth		Fred Schellekens
18th	Greg Millar		Archie Butter
25th	Beth Robertson & Lois Marshall		Helen Bullen
May 2nd	Lukas Marshall & Drew Richardson		Coral McLaughlin
9th	Harrison Butterworth & Naomi Butterworth		Alex Bullen
16th	Greg Millar		Margaret Richardson
23rd	Beth Robertson & Lois Marshall		Archie Butter
30th	Lukas Marshall & Drew Richardson		Fred Schellekens

**Editorial Team**  
 Dennis Taylor  
 Mary Taylor Marion Reid

Contributions for the next issue of *The Lych Gate* should be with the Editor by **Tuesday 18th May 2021**.  
 Please E-mail to: [dennis1taylor@msn.com](mailto:dennis1taylor@msn.com) or pass memory sticks or paper copies to Dennis Taylor.