

The Informer



The Newsletter of Cliccarthill Parish Church of Scotland

Issue 66: February 2021

Letter from the Manse

Church Website Address www.cliccarthill.org.uk

¹Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11 NIVUK)

As many of you will be aware, my Grandmother recently passed away. Firstly, I do want to thank everyone for their kindness and support during this difficult period, especially those who have been praying for me and my family.

While this has been an upsetting time, two thoughts occurred to me, which I wanted to share with you. The first is a real feeling of blessing: there are not many people who can say they made it to their 30's and still had all 4 grandparents present in their lives. I am thankful that I knew all my grandparents, and for so long.

The second is a realisation of how much faith helps us in difficult times. As a Christian, and a Minister, I knew this; but sometimes personal circumstances can take something we've always known and help us appreciate this more deeply.

My Gran McNeil was a faithful Christian, and so I resist talking about the Gran I've lost: for I have not lost her! For her, this earthly life is over, but she is now face-to-face with Christ, resting in God's presence, awaiting the resurrection. That knowledge and belief has been such a comfort in recent days, and reminds me of the power faith can bring into our lives.

Death is perhaps an extreme example, but we are all facing difficult times. My encouragement to you would be to grab hold of your faith with both hands, and hold tightly to it. Seek God, for He will give you the strength and perseverance you need. Feed your faith by reading the Bible and by praying. All these things will be beneficial and help us get through the next few months.

God bless you,
Stuart

On a practical level, I'm grateful to Roger who, in his letter, outlines some of the things coming up in the next few weeks which will require some volunteers. I commend his letter to you. We also have a few ideas in the works to encourage prayer, Bible readings and reflection, so please look out for those and make use of them when they become available.

We will endeavour to communicate with you as speedily as possible as the situation changes: we hope to have some clarity by the end of February. And, as usual, here is a reminder of how you can still participate in service of worship, every Sunday at 11am.

On Zoom

If you have a computer, laptop or smartphone, you can either use the Zoom app, or visit www.zoom.us.

Alternatively, on a normal telephone, you can dial 0131 460 1196.

(Remember - if you have a phone package which grants you a free-hour, you may need to hang up and dial back in to avoid being charged for the call).

Either way, when asked, please input the following information:

Meeting ID: 960 694 6264

Passcode: 012230

On YouTube

Simply visit www.youtube.com and search for Cliccarthill Church.

You will be directed to our YouTube channel. The live stream will become available at around 10:55am.

From the Session Clerk

As I write, the Covid-19 restrictions are still in place and no immediate prospect of returning to church services with a congregation in the building. 2020 has been an exceptional year for all the wrong reasons. Eleven dear friends have passed away; others have had serious illnesses to contend with and some encountered Covid-19. Our lives were completely turned upside down with lockdown, then easing over the summer only to be followed by a return to lockdown over Christmas and into the New Year. Nevertheless, there have been good things happening too! A lot of us will have received the vaccination by the end of February and that is to be welcomed. Our worship continues through Zoom each Sunday, and our Prayer meeting each Wednesday. Do please join us in these.

As and when restrictions begin to ease, we will let you know about Sunday worship as soon as we can, and we will open the church on Friday afternoons for personal prayer. We will have study material available during Lent which starts on 17th February, hopefully by Holy Week we can gather for worship, even in limited numbers. We plan once again to distribute an Easter Card throughout the parish, and if you can volunteer to hand deliver some of these from 22nd March or thereabouts, please let Gordon Macfarlane or me know.

Mount Florida Community Council are organising "[Window Wonderland](#)" on Saturday 7th March; so check it out and see if you can light up your windows that weekend. Our church has completed additional wiring which allows us to flood light the large memorial window overlooking Cathcart Road, and we may be able to light up in the large hall too. If you have any ideas on this, do let us know.

We hope we can really make use of our garden area as soon as possible for meetings, and family events, especially after Easter with warmer weather, and over the summer months. But all the plans I have mentioned will depend on what the government allows us to do and our continuing success in fighting Coronavirus. We can but hope and pray. God bless.

Roger Gann, Session Clerk

Thank You

I want to thank all my friends at Clincarthill who have supported me during my recent illness and my stay in hospital. Your kind prayers, cards and gifts have helped me enormously during what was a difficult time. Thank you so much, it's greatly appreciated. God bless,

Isobel Penny

Thank you to all in the congregation for your very generous presentation marking my retirement from Clincarthill. It was so good to be with you in December and spend time in worship. I'd like to take this opportunity to finally thank all the musicians who have given of their talents in leading worship with me. All the singers in various choirs, guitar playing ministers, young (and not so young) instrumentalists in Mount Florida and especially latterly Carol Bolland, Isabel McColl and Carol Wood for their singing and Julie Green, Claire and William Johnston for their excellent musicianship. What a special, privilege to worship alongside such amazing musicians and my own daughter!

Thank you again

Linda Fraser

The Mission and Community outreach team are keen to get your views on how we can have a positive impact on the local community, especially in these challenging times. We want to make sure the church is Salt and Light and making a difference to people.

We know things will be different when we gather again. Some questions for us all to think about. How ready are we to welcome a stranger in our church? Many folk have struggled with lockdown and their mental health. Are we ready and willing to take time to care for others? This will require us to be ready to try new things to bless others.

One community event the church is hoping to take part in is the Mount Florida Window Wonderland on 6th and 7th March where the church will be lit up and be a focal point of the community event. More details will follow on the Facebook page in the next few weeks.

We need to think about how we create a community of faith rooted in love. We are keen to do events over the Summer in the gardens such as the garden cafe idea again.

Building each other up is priority for serving each other and the community.

Stephen Kennedy

Prayer Diary

“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!” Matthew 7: 9-11

In your prayers this month give thanks for:

- # the furlough financial support scheme
- # the rollout of Covid-19 vaccination
- # the technology that allows contact between friends, families and church to continue
- # the fast- growing number of people accepting Christ as Saviour and Lord, particularly in Iran

In your intercessory prayers this month also remember:

- # those feeling isolation and loneliness exacerbated by the lockdown measures
- # children and young people having to adapt to disruption to their friendships and education
- # families struggling to meet the challenges of changed routines because of lockdown measures
- # individuals and businesses who have accrued debts due to unemployment, business closures/reduced services and the strained financial situation globally
- # straightforward and effective procedures for import and export of goods between the EU and UK
- # the country of Iran –
 - 1) The persecution of the Christian population
 - 2) The hardships being experienced by the general population due to economic sanctions
 - 3) The growing problem of drug misuse
 - 4) Its nuclear and missile programmes
 - 5) Its influence on stability in the middle east

Notes/personal prayer topics/answers to prayers



Telephone Prayer Circle

0141 632 4206



Next Issue

Email any items for inclusion in the next Newsletter to sessionclerk@clincarthill.org.uk

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Bible Reflection 6

This is an opportunity for us to engage, in a prayerful way, with a passage from the Bible. It might be helpful to have a notebook handy so you can write down what comes to you during this reflection.

We begin with a prayer inviting God to be present with us through His Holy Spirit, asking for what He wants us to hear and pay attention to.

The suggested method is to read the passage a couple of times and be aware if there is a word or phrase which grabs your attention. Allow that word / phrase to 'sit' in our minds for a few moments, then use the following questions to help listen to God, you don't need to use all the questions at once they can be gone through over the next few days.

The verses below give an image of how we in the eyes of God—a little child, His son or daughter.

- Can you imagine yourself as a little child? Perhaps a memory from when you were a child will help
- How does it feel to be welcomed as a child of God?
- Remember our Good, Good Father, sees us without our sin, without our mistakes—just as an innocent child. What would you like to say to Him with all this in mind?

When you are ready note down what God has been saying through this passage. Finish your reflection time with a prayer—perhaps the Lord's Prayer or the one below or something familiar to you.

Mark 9: 36—37

³⁶ He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them,

³⁷ 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me

Prayer

Loving God and Father, we thank You for Your kindness and mercy. We pray for a better understanding of what it means to be Your child. Remind us of our own human childhood—the things we got up to, the fun of playing with friends, the teaching by our family and school, most of all for the love of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our brother and friend.
Amen

