

# The Informer



The Newsletter of Clinkarthill Parish Church of Scotland

Issue 90: Summer 2023

## Letter from the Manse

Church Website Address [www.clinkarthill.org.uk](http://www.clinkarthill.org.uk)

*<sup>10</sup>This is what the Lord says: 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfil my good promise to bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup>For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. <sup>12</sup>Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup>You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup>I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,' declares the Lord, 'and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.'*

(Jeremiah 29 NIVUK)

In this reading, above, you may well be familiar with verse 11. I have seen this verse used as a way of trying to comfort people going through difficult times. The problem being that, when used this way, it is being taken completely out of context. For this reason, I am often hesitant to turn to Jeremiah 29:11.

When placed within context, yes the promise of God remains true: that His ultimate plans for His People involve hope and a future (we might understand this today to be the resurrection, promised by Jesus). Yet, for those who first heard this, that promised was couched in the reality of the Exile in Babylon: a period when the old familiarity of the Promised Land was lost, but the future God intended for them was not yet apparent.

As I have been learning through my Study Leave, this is called a "liminal period": a season when old certainties are gone, but the new future is not yet clear. We might recognise this in our own lives; but especially in the life of our Church. We are well aware that the old certainties and patterns are gone (or, at least, are not working as they once did); but the future God intends for us is not yet clear.

In this instance, therefore, I feel it is appropriate to turn to Jeremiah 29, and the verses quoted above. As we find ourselves in a liminal period, feeling as the Israelites likely did, (disoriented and confused), we can turn to this promise of God and find reassurance. God's intention is that His Church will always prosper. Now, that may look like our current congregation, or it may look very different; but we know that God's Church will endure even as congregations come and go. We are also assured that our ultimate hope and future remain completely secure, for they are given to us through Jesus. We can, therefore, continue to hold to the promises and hope of God, even through this season.

This passage also hints at how we might survive, even thrive, in this time. One of the authors who talks of liminal periods suggests that a rediscovery of identity and purpose allows people to cope with liminal periods. Isn't that what Jeremiah points to in verse 13? We rediscover our purpose and identity in God when we seek after Him with all our heart.

The way to deal with exile/liminality is right there in Jeremiah's prophecy! This is one of those instances my Old Testament Lecturer used to talk about - the Bible has been saying something all along; we are just playing catch up!

Another important lesson I have learned is the importance of honest leadership. In a liminal period, leaders can be tempted to make out they have the answers and know the direction of travel. This may bring comfort in the short term, but longer terms causes damage, as the leader is proven untrustworthy.

Let me, therefore, be honest. I do not know what this next season will bring. I do not know how the challenges will take shape. I do not know what destination God has in mind for us. Believe me, you are not alone in feeling unsettled!

What I am certain of is this: we are in a liminal period; and we have before us the tools to survive it, perhaps even thrive through it. We resicover our purpose and identity in God. We trust in His promises of hope and for our future. We seek after Him with all our heart - for when we do so, "I will be found by you", declares the Lord'.

Stuart

Registered Scottish Charity SC010138

**Next Issue deadline Sunday 27 August**

Email any items for inclusion in the next Newsletter to [sessionclerk@clinkarthill.org.uk](mailto:sessionclerk@clinkarthill.org.uk)



Telephone Prayer Circle

0141 632 4206



Join us in person  
at Clinkarthill Church  
1220 Cathcart Road, Glasgow



Services are broadcast live  
and can also be watched on demand  
Search for Clinkarthill Church

## HOLIDAY CLUB

The holiday club will run from **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> to Friday 11<sup>th</sup> August at 10am-12noon**. We are still at the planning stages so keep an eye out for more information.

As always, please tell your family, friends and neighbours with primary aged children about it, all are welcome. There are lots of ways you could help us either during the week or beforehand preparing the craft activities. If you want to help, please talk to either myself or Lorraine Kennedy. There will be a sheet in the sanctuary from Sunday 11th June for you to sign up to and we will arrange a meeting with the volunteers in the next couple of weeks. Even if you are less able, everyone can be involved by keeping us in your prayers.

Yours in Christ

Mary MacCallum

Email - [Mary.MacCallum@clincarthill.org.uk](mailto:Mary.MacCallum@clincarthill.org.uk)

## Friday Lunch Club

The Session finishes on Friday 23rd June for the Summer and we start back on Friday 18th August when we hope to see some old and new Diners.  
Sheila Peachey.



## Prayer Calendar - June 2023 - Tearfund

In June, the Prayer Calendar focuses on the work of Tearfund. Here is some information about the organisation, to guide our prayers. More information can be found on its website: <https://www.tearfund.org>

### Tearfund:

**Following Jesus where the need is greatest, responding to crises and partnering with local churches to empower communities.**

We are a Christian charity which partners with churches in more than fifty of the world's poorest countries to tackle poverty and injustice.

Some of what we do:

- Humanitarian Response - we respond quickly to disasters and conflicts
- Community Development - we partner with local churches to empower communities to lift themselves out of poverty
- Advocacy and Influencing - we challenge unjust practices at local and national levels
- Environment and Climate - we support those affected by the climate crisis, and work towards protecting and improving the environment

## Coronation Lunch

On one hand, the month of May seems to have flown in but on the other, it seems ages since the Coronation Lunch. I would like to thank everyone who joined us in the celebration, with a special thanks to Eleanor Campbell, Sheila Morrow Hugh McLintock and Lorraine Kennedy who helped in the planning, setting up the hall and preparing the food. Eleanor especially as she made all the flags for the table decorations, bunting, the Coronation quiche and provided for all the dietary requirements. After expenses, the net proceeds were £200 which will be allocated to the youth fund.

I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

Thanks again,

Mary MacCallum

## Garden Cafe

Our garden cafe will run over the summer from Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June until Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July from 10am till 1pm. We look forward to having this community outreach which has been welcomed by many in the church and wider community.

Stephen Kennedy

Mission and Community Outreach Team