

Faith and Fellowship

The Quarterly Magazine for Ardeer/Livingstone Linkage



The LORD will give
strength to his people;
The LORD will bless his
people with peace.

- Psalm 29:11

Issue No. 86

JUNE 2020



Editor's Letter

Welcome to the June 2020 edition of Faith and Fellowship. As I write this, there is cautious discussion of easing lockdown. Schools may get to return before the summer holidays kick in and limited interactions between households is being allowed. Only time will tell whether this easing will continue or have to be reversed.

Like many, lockdown has impacted upon my work life with some aspects being moved online while others have to be put on hold. I'm looking forward to going in to work at some point in the future when it is deemed safe to do so. When it comes to socialising, my friends and I simply increased our usage of pre-existing means of communication like WhatsApp and Discord. In fact, I think my social life has been busier than before with more regular communication with friends overseas and reconnecting with others. It's been really nice. The most difficult aspect has been my parents. Both are part of shielded groups and I don't enjoy being the meanie that makes them stay at home. However there has been the occasional shopping trip when they strictly get to stay in the car, so sometimes they get the carrot instead of the stick.

The church has also had to undergo quite a few changes to meet the challenges of lockdown. Before Covid, there had been some discussion around the idea of a Union without buildings. At the time, it was thought there would be months if not years to prepare and plan for it but clearly things haven't quite worked out that way. Lockdown has refocused the church onto digitising many of its services and functions. The Sunday Service is always available online on the church website where I'm sure you also found this online exclusive edition of the magazine. There have been regular Coffee Mornings every Wednesday held on Zoom, dubbed 'Coffee & Company', where church members get together to chat and share a little worship. I would positively encourage anyone to join us, it's really nice getting to see other church members and I certainly get to see more people than I used to on a Sunday. If you are interested, please contact the Minister on how to join.

One issue which has arisen has been that of communications. Particularly with those without a presence online. Part of a solution to this is discussed later by Ross in a short article. Another difficulty the

churches have faced has been that of finance. Donations received are down considerably and something will need to be done. As the church increases its online profile, I believe that there is opportunity to search for novel ways to raise funds. We could set-up a church PayPal account to accept donations on the church website. A Patreon account would allow regular donations to be made online, although use of this platform may require careful consideration. Maybe we could have our own merchandise for sale on an online store.

If we are going to have a non-traditional church, we are going to need some non-traditional ways of funding it. It won't be possible for the church to carry on as it did before. This crisis has forced us to change our methodology and we should make full use of this chance to implement some long overdue reform. As a young person, I don't just want the church to survive but to thrive! Without change, it won't.

On a brighter note, one of the first things to do before a Union is to decide upon a name. What are your thoughts? Send in your suggestions to the magazine for the next issue!

See you on Wednesday, God bless.



Minister's Letter

They will come from Egypt, trembling like sparrows, from Assyria, fluttering like doves. I will settle them in their homes, declares the Lord. Hosea 11:11

Dear friends,

How are you? How have you been getting on? Although the lockdown has relaxed a bit, we're still needing to take care, to look after ourselves and each other. We still need to pray, in fact prayer is needed even more, prayer for the NHS, prayer for staff and residents of Care Homes, prayer for those who are affected by Covid19, those who are mourning.

We also need to pray for the church. If you've seen the Assembly Trustees Webinar which is now on the Church of Scotland website, you'll have seen the serious issues that the Church of Scotland is facing, not only the national church but also local congregations.

There's some hard decisions to come and we won't like them all as there will have to be significant change. Every Presbytery Plan will have to be reviewed and hard decisions made on congregations, buildings and ministries.



I believe, though, that God is calling His people together. He's calling people to loose the idols that they've been holding on to and worshipping for years: idols of buildings, traditions, religion. God is looking for His children to follow Him, to be His disciples, pilgrims, focusing on who Jesus is and finding new ways to worship Him, our one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life and He is the Gate for the Sheep. Jesus Himself said that "No one comes to the Father except through me" John 14:6

There are more and more people searching, looking to pray and for prayer, joining in with church services on-line, and many of these people would not set foot in a church building for a variety of reasons. As we try to see a way forward, which many are referring to as the "new normal", many people are coming from many different places, trembling, fluttering and the Lord declares that He will settle them in their homes.

I want to bless each one who reads this and so as you read the blessing that follows here, say your own name where you see *name*. I bless you, *name*, in the name of Jesus Christ that He will settle you in your home. Amen

Dave

Prayer Thoughts



You will have watched or read the scenario. The main character finds themselves in a seemingly impossible situation with no escape. Yet, as we continue with the story we learn of the miraculous escape, the deliverance from danger. At the moment, we the church, can be seen as the main character. Not long ago, to the observer we were defined by our buildings. That image took a knock when we find that the buildings have problems. Ah, but we the church have another difficulty

to deal with, enter Covid-19 and the changes that the virus has imposed on society in general. What now for the church? The obvious answer for us all is prayer. I hope that many of us took the opportunity to join with the 'Thy Kingdom Come' movement and follow the prayer path between Ascension and Pentecost. How encouraging it was, especially the Pentecost service, involving different branches of God's church and people of different races and abilities. I am reminded that we should not be a church inside four walls looking in, but God's people looking out, being seen, and engaging with the world, bringing the good news of the gospel by our love and concern for others. Many of our own congregation have been doing just that through phone calls and support for friends and neighbours. My prayer is that we continue along that path using the gifts that God has given us.

Themes

Approach: come before God humbly but in the knowledge you are there at His invitation.

Confession: review your prayer life and ask God to forgive its weaknesses.



Thanksgiving:

- Ministry – give thanks for Dave Sutherland and his ministry with us and Brian Devlin in his role. Remember also the Christian output on radio, TV and internet.
- Church Website – give thanks for the work Ross does in maintaining our website, keeping things up to date and streaming services.
- Session Clerks – give thanks for the continuing work done by Sandy and Kay as they keep the administrative wheels turning.
- Communicators – give thanks for those who have kept in touch across the congregation giving friendship and encouragement. Not forgetting Alan in compiling and organising the magazine.
- Pentecost – give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide and comfort us.

Intercession:

- Prayer Life – pray that everyone engaging with ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ will continue to be active in prayer and that prayer will be a key part of our walk with God for all of us.
- Bereavement – pray for all those who have suffered the pain of loss of a loved one especially when the support can only be from a distance.
- Covid-19 – pray for all adversely effected by the impact of the virus on work and everyday life.
- Stevenston – pray that the churches will be able to respond to the needs of the townspeople, particularly those suffering hardship.

Session Clerk's Letter



Where do I start, as it has been quite a long time since I had to write a wee report. Alan asked for a wee update so I will do my best to make it a wee update. So many things have happened, and Church is not the same place as it used to be before Covid-19. We are no longer allowed to go into the church buildings, so doors are closed and that applies to both Churches Ardeer and Livingstone. A question you may want to ask is: ‘Will we ever get back?’ The answer to that one is: ‘I don’t know’. We will remain closed for the foreseeable future; all church business is for the time being held virtually.

During the time that we have been closed, Dave has recorded a weekly service that you can join in or tune in to weekly on the Livingstone website. If you have access to a smart phone or iPad, you can also ask Dave about the Blessings Course held virtually at 7pm Sunday evening at the manse and our newest get together worship is on a Wednesday morning at 10.30am to 11.30am called ‘Coffee and Company’ where there is a reflection on one of the Psalms, prayer and a time to blether. I’m sure you will enjoy it, give it a try!



I promised I would keep this short, at our recent Session meeting last night, June 2nd, we were Joined by the Rev. Jonathan Fleming as a representative of Ardrossan Presbytery. He gave us a short outline on how things might look in the future but as yet nothing set in stone. What he did tell us was that Church will not be the same as we have known it, change is inevitable and we will have to move and adapt to it. Both treasurers gave reports on the financial position as it is at the moment.

All going well we will be kept informed and thank you for your patience.

God Bless,
Kay Tudor. (Ardeer Session Clerk)

Livingstone Finance Report

Below is a summary of the main funds for January 1st to May 1st2020

General Fund	Balance (01/01/2020)	£3672
	(01/05/2020)	-£2760
Fabric Fund	(10/01/2020)	£4746
	(01/05/2020)	£3980
Bank balance	(01/01/2020)	£17132
	(01/05/2020)	£10196
Outstanding payments due:		
Presbytery dues		£840
Travel Expenses		£243
SSE closing account	(due 01/06/2020)	£1640
Smart Gas meter	(due 01/06/2020)	£214
Non-smart meter (Est)	(due 05/06/2020)	£900
Christian Aid		£3200



To illustrate the effect of the lockdown, compare February to April. Neither of these months had any exceptional items.

Income:	February	£2800	April	£1028
Expenses	February	£3842	April	£3762

Expenses are about the same our income has dropped by over 50%. Even before lockdown collections were not meeting costs and while Gift Aid and dividends made up most of this, we had no reserves for Mission or any type of outreach. Dividends are likely to be at least 50% reduced for the next year which further exacerbates our difficulties. Our main difficulty is contacting members who are not comfortable with using the internet for finances. Several members have set up standing orders in the past months, a few have sent me cheques (made out to the Church!) which I have deposited, so if you have been putting your Free Will Envelopes aside perhaps you might consider consolidating them into a cheque made out to Stevenston, Livingstone Church and post them to me.

I have taken £15000 out of our reserves to help cover the immediate shortfall but that will only keep us viable for a few months. If we wish to have any financial resources left, we need to take action very quickly.

Just in from the Church of Scotland Deputy Treasurer:

“Online donations: Anyone who wishes to make a donation either to the national funds of the Church of Scotland or to an individual congregation can do so by visiting this page, <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate> and by clicking on the donate button. All donations made to an individual congregation will be returned to that congregation, thus enabling members and adherents to continue to make their regular offering or to make a special donation to enable the Church's work to continue at this difficult time.”

At least the weather is nice.

Blessing to you all.

Finlay Kerr (Livingstone Treasurer)





Youth Group

Realising we weren't going to be able to run the Youth Group for some time the Core Group met online and decided that for the next few months we would try to run things online.

On 19th May we had our first meeting. Only 2 were unable to be there which was great. We had charades first which was good fun, although not easy to do from a distance sometimes!! Alexander then had everyone trying to find things in their house. He would mention an item, a pillow, a shoe etc and you had to find one and show it on the computer screen. John then ran an interactive quiz on Kahoot which we all enjoyed.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 23rd June.



West FM Cash for Kids 2.6 Challenge – a **HUGE** congratulations to the Youth Group for taking part in the West FM Cash for Kids 2.6 challenge and raising a **massive £846**. What an amazing achievement. Thanks to those who took on the challenge and also to those in the youth group, their families and friends and members of the three congregations who contributed. All this money goes to help children and families in Ayrshire and West FM Cash for Kids have been doing a lot right from the beginning of Lockdown to help local families.

The challenge was to do either 2.6 or 26 of something. Here are a few of the things that were done to raise money. Walking was by far the most popular, whether out and about or in the garden.

- walking 2.6 miles for 26 days hoping to lose 2.6 pounds
- skipping 26 times for 26 days
- for our basketball fans - shooting 26 baskets in under 3 mins.
- people were walking outside, walking on a walking machine inside, walking round their gardens
- Walking 26,000 steps over 26 days
- Cycling 26 miles
- Knitting mask extenders, 2.6 a day for 26 days

Well done Everyone



A Prayer for the broken hearted

Over the months of lockdown our congregation have lost well-loved family members and friends of many years. Not only to the dreaded Covid-19 virus but also to other illnesses. Please join in and pray not only for those whom you know but for everyone around the world who has been affected.

Let us take our sorrows to God,
Who binds up the broken hearted
And comforts those who mourn.
Bless those whose hearts are sore today.
Be close to those
Whose family circle has been invaded
And whose joy has been darkened by death.
Amen.



Views from the Pews



Coffee & company is a very informal time on zoom where we catch up with our minister Dave & friends from Ardeer and Livingstone churches. Sit in the comfort of our home during lockdown with tea/toast or whatever goodies we have in the cupboard. We are joined together in prayer and scripture and also chat to friends we are unable to see at this time. It's easy to log on to Zoom.
I look forward to Wednesday mornings!

Ann

I have really enjoyed our Wednesday morning Coffee & Company get together, particularly during lockdown when we have all had to adjust to social distancing. Zoom technology allowed us some social interaction with our church family and friends and provided us with a great opportunity to come together and pray for all those affected by the Covid-19 crisis.

Marilyn

It's been great to be able to join friends from Livingstone and Ardeer on a Wednesday morning on Zoom for a short act of worship, followed by a time to chat in smaller groups. This gives us the chance to catch up with how everyone is getting on, their news and a general chit chat. Although we are not physically seeing each other, this regular meet up brings a sense of belonging and sharing. Everyone is invited to have tea/coffee and a 'treat' during the time together.

Ken and I have found this is something we look forward to each week as we can get out of our 'wee self-isolation bubble' and keep up with friends and get to know others. Thanks to Dave for setting this up as a weekly time of fellowship.

Susan and Ken Gibson

Hi everyone I have recently joined this informal meeting at 10:30 every Wednesday morning on zoom. What a great way to catch up with friends and meet new people. It's a nice mid-week break so grab a coffee and join in the chat. Contact Dave Sutherland for the meeting password and I will look forward to seeing you there!

Kathy Johnston

AmazonSmile

Livingstone Church has recently enrolled with AmazonSmile. This means that if you or your family shop at Amazon, there is an opportunity for you to donate part of every purchase to the Church – at no additional cost to you!



What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support a charity of your choice every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.co.uk, you'll find the exact same prices and selections as amazon.co.uk, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your selected charity.

How do I select a charitable organisation to support when shopping on AmazonSmile?

On your first visit to smile.amazon.co.uk you need to select a charitable organisation to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. You will need to search for **Stevenston Livingstone**

Parish Church of Scotland and press 'Select'. Simply searching for 'Stevenston' should bring it up. Then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.co.uk will result in a donation.

It is important to note that Amazon will only donate to the Church if you purchase via smile.amazon.co.uk. It will not work if you go directly to amazon.co.uk. Your usual Amazon account and log in details will work on smile.amazon.co.uk. It is not currently possible to use AmazonSmile on the Amazon app if you have an Apple device (iPhone/iPad). You will need to use a web browser to go to the AmazonSmile website. It is possible to set up AmazonSmile on the app if you use an Android device.

Please encourage your friends and family to support us through AmazonSmile. Thank You!



Twilio

Many years ago, our Sunday services were available on cassette tape for those who were unable to attend Church. In recent years, CDs have been available and since 2015, recordings of the service have been on the Livingstone Church website for people to listen to at a time of their choosing.

During this lockdown period however, it has become apparent that some people are unable to access the Sunday service. Not everyone has access to the internet and it would be challenging to increase the existing CD delivery system at a time when travel is limited, social distancing is in place and the risks surrounding coronavirus still remain high.

We now have the solution to this – Twilio. Every week, the Sunday service will be available to listen to by phone. All you have to do is call **(01294) 444370** and press number 1 on your telephone keypad when prompted. There will be a short wait while it connects to the service – this may take up to 1 minute during which the line will go quiet.



It costs the same normal local call and these prices vary depending on your telephone provider. If you have an inclusive calls package, it will be included in this and will not cost any extra.

If you have any questions or comments about either AmazonSmile or Twilio, you can email contactus@livingstonechurch.org.uk

Children's Church



The leaders of the Children's Church have arranged a meeting online to discuss how we can find ways of meeting online with the young people from the Children's Church over the next few months, until we get back to church. It's quite a wide age group however we're hoping to use zoom to bring them all together.

Communications from Abroad

In the last week or so, I've had some email discussion with a John Thompson, who is in Izmir, Turkey, and has family connections with Ardeer Church. Here's some excerpts from a letter he sent. If anyone has information that they can share with him, I'm more than happy to give you his email address. Dave



"During this time of uncertainty and lockdown I have been again shaking the branches of my family tree to see if I could discover more information. On my grandfather Robert Hamilton's side the Hamilton and Hunter families I can trace them as far as the early 1800s as being resident in Stevenston.

My maternal grandmother Mary Gibson's family of McComb and Gibson were also long established in Stevenston. The McComb's at Townhead Street and the Gibson's later at Chemical Row, Ardeer. It is from these people that I have my Christian heritage. My grandmother later to be Labour Councillor for Kilwinning Landward

taught me the hymns and Bible stories from an early age so that my parents were a bit taken aback when I asked for a Bible for Christmas 1966 when I was not yet 6 years of age.

So the McCombs and the Gibsons had associations with Ardeer Parish Church even before it was Ardeer Parish Church! I find a Robert McComb on the first kirk session of 1895 who is my great, great grandfather. Ardeer Church opened with ceremony on the 14th June 1895 only a few months tragedy clouded the McComb and extended family with the Auchenharvie mining disaster on 2nd August 1895. McComb father and two sons were able to escape but others were not so fortunate.

The Gibsons had associations with Ardeer my great auntie Annie Paterson was still in the Guild into the 1960s and 70s having been born in Ardeer in 1898. My great grandfather William Gibson and his wife Annie McComb raised a family of ten at 13 Chemical Row, Ardeer.

My godmother May McKenzie with her parents Willie and Grace McKenzie were lifetime members. I can trace 'Auntie' May from the youth fellowship, Sunday school and through to the eldership – the duties of which she took faithfully and responsibly until no longer able to do so. It was always a treat to visit Auntie May and she would have a gift for us kids – a pencil a colouring book a scripture text."



A Year On

It's exactly a year since I passed over the editorship of the Livingstone Herald to Alan. At the end of June 2018, I prepared the kirk session by telling them that I would continue as editor for one final year. I felt I had been doing it long enough. New ideas were slow to materialise and the magazine seemed to me to be very set in its ways. Yet I was concerned that perhaps no one would be prepared to take it on and that after 20 years the magazine would just peter out.

When Alan contacted me and agreed to meet up with me to discuss editing the magazine I wondered if he realised what a commitment he would be making. He was young, enthusiastic and asking all the right questions. I was also pleased that at the beginning he wanted to keep the framework as it was. What I have enjoyed is the way he has

changed the Herald. Little by little he has put his own stamp on it. He has tried some thought provoking articles and he has had a very good response from the congregation.

In the September 2019 magazine, Alan tried 'Views from the pews' focusing on how churches have changed and what the church of the future might look like. A good number of contributors had a go at trying to answer this. The Christmas edition was expanded to include Ardeer's news and the magazine was produced in colour to mark the launch of the joint venture with a new title of 'Faith and Fellowship'.

In the last edition the theme was centred around prayer. Andrew Tomlinson had produced a Framework for prayer as a support to praying. Once again there were a variety of very interesting articles as several members attempted to explain what praying means to them.

Because I don't produce the magazine any longer, I planned to take some extra holidays and get away for a few days during the months when in the past I would be planning and editing the magazine. Unfortunately thanks to the current lock down, holidays have been curtailed for all, this year. I have enjoyed spending the extra time in the garden however and our garden is looking better than it has in years.



Thank you, Alan, for taking up the challenge. You have embraced it wholeheartedly and I look forward to enjoying more interesting and contentious articles in the future.

Catherine Reid.

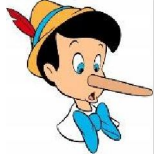
Quiz Corner

All answers will be made available in the next issue.



Who said that?

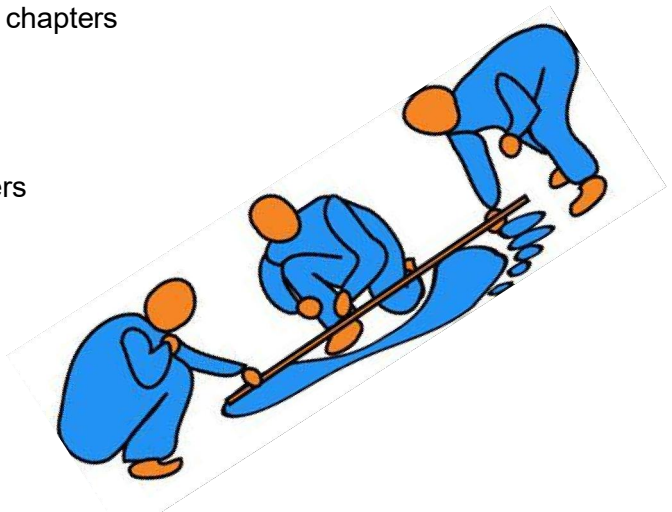
1. Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As often as seven times?
2. What is truth?
3. Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!
4. Ah, Lord God. Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.
5. How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?



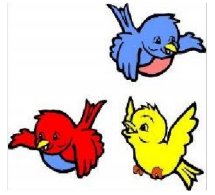
Long and Short

One of the books in the options below corresponds to the number of chapters cited. Can you identify which it is?

6. Fifty-two chapters
 - a) Isaiah
 - b) Jeremiah
 - c) Ezekiel
7. Twenty-eight chapters
 - a) Luke
 - b) John
 - c) Matthew
8. Three chapters
 - a) 1 John
 - b) 2 Peter
 - c) 2 Peter



Answers for Quiz Corner - March



Birds and Animals

1. Joseph's brothers dipped his coat in goat's blood (Genesis 37:31)
2. According to Jesus, sparrows were sold two for a penny. (Matthew 10:29)
3. The serpent is associated with evil in the book of Genesis (3:1-5, 12-14)
4. The Israelites ate quails during their time in the wilderness. (Exodus 16:13)
5. Dogs licked up the blood of King Ahab after his death. (1 Kings 22:38)



So how did you do?

- 1/5 – Looks like you do with a bit more Bible study!
- 2/5 – Not bad but there's room for improvement!
- 3-4/5 – Wow, you've got a great working knowledge of the Bible!
- 5/5 – Well done Dave.

Stevenston Ardeer Parish Church is a registered Scottish Charity:
No. SC015397.

Stevenston Livingstone Parish Church is a registered Scottish Charity:
No. SC000452.