

# Faith and Fellowship

The Quarterly Magazine for Ardeer/Livingstone Linkage



*For to us a son is born, to us a son is given*

*Isaiah 9:6*

**December 2020**

## Who's who?

### **Minister**

Dave Sutherland, 27 Cuninghame Drive,  
Stevenston KA20 4AB  
01294 608993  
[DSutherland@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:DSutherland@churchofscotland.org.uk)

### **Ardeer Parish Church**

#### **Session Clerk**

Mrs Kay Tudor 01294 470008

#### **Treasurer**

Mr Jim Dunwoodie 01294 466895

### **Livingstone Parish Church**

#### **Session Clerk**

Mr Sandy Hershaw 01294 466293

#### **Treasurer**

Mr Finlay Kerr 01294 553265



### **Telephone Service: 01294 444370**

Press 1 to listen to the weekly service

Press 2 to listen to the weekly reflection

Press 3 to listen to the talking version of Faith and Fellowship

*This is a local call and the cost of the call will depend on the contract you have with your service provider.*

*We apologise the delay in getting Faith & Fellowship to you but the delay was as a result of needing to get important information confirmed before publication.*

*For unto us a son is born,  
To us a son is given,  
And the government will be on His shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting father, Prince of Peace.  
(Isaiah 9:6)*

Dear all,

As you know, we're now in the season of Advent, a time for waiting, with expectation, for God to fulfil a promise of redemption for his people, and we wait in the knowledge that God has acted, to us a son was born, to us a son was given.

God has given of Himself for the people He created and loves, He gave His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Christmas this year will not be like previous years. Services will be a mixture of pre-recorded and Zoom meetings and they're listed further on in the magazine. Some you will find on YouTube through the Facebook pages, others will be through Zoom and to be fully involved, such as in the Christingle service, you'll need to make a contact so that we can send you a bag of materials to make the Christingle.

This is a really difficult time and we're seeing all sorts of changes, some of which will be temporary and others still will have a profound effect on how we live, work and worship our one true God into the future. This year, the General Assembly was postponed from May to October where we met on line over a Friday evening and all day Saturday.

Arrangements have been put in place to allow congregations to fill vacancies and decide on issues of appraisal without having to meet in person. The General Assembly agreed to meet again in May 2021 but the decision of meeting in person in Edinburgh or meeting online again will be made early in 2021.

I had the privilege of conducting 2 marriages in October, with all the restrictions placed on how these marriages can take place. I bless Lee and Kathleen and Emma and Bradley in Jesus name. Presbytery appointed me as Interim Moderator to the North Parish on Arran following Angus Adamson's demission. I was also able to be at Douglas Creighton's ordination and induction to the linked charged of East Neuk Trinity and St. Monans in the newly formed Presbytery of Fife.

How we worship may change, how we serve God in this place may change but I want to remind us all that our God does not change (Malachi 3:6). He loves us and He has redeemed us through His Son, Jesus Christ, and as we wait this advent, let's remind ourselves of the hope, peace, joy and love.

The hope, trust and faith we have in God and His faithfulness to us, the peace that we can share through our relationship with the God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the joy we know in knowing our God and realising what He has done for us in Christ Jesus and the love that He has for us, love is patient, love is kind, love never fails. That love is *agape*: the love that God has for each one of us and the love we can read about in Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 13).

Maureen and I bless you all in the name of Jesus that the Father will touch you with hope, peace, joy and love.

Your minister

Dave



## **The Union of Ardeer and Livingstone Parish Churches.**

On Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th November 2020, both Kirk Sessions met separately to discuss issues around the forthcoming union and specifically a proposal from the General Trustees of The Church of Scotland, the property holding arm of the Church, to enable the union to go ahead without any liabilities. The purpose is to enable the united congregation to focus on worship and mission.

The Ardeer Kirk Session met on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020 where having been circulated in advance, a condition survey report on the Ardeer church building, commissioned by Presbytery of Ardrossan, was considered.

Representatives of Presbytery were present,

Mrs. Jean Hunter; Presbytery Clerk

Mr. Brian Murray; Convenor of Presbytery Property Committee

Rev. Jonathan Fleming; Convenor of Presbytery Appraisal Committee

After questions and discussion which highlighted the extent of the recommendations of the survey report and the financial situation of Ardeer Parish Church, the Kirk Session noted that the report indicated repairs in the region of £200,000 (including VAT) are still required despite all the previous works. There is currently a significant shortfall in terms of the Mission & Ministry allocation and there remains liability for the elders regarding a significant amount of the lottery funding. The Kirk Session unanimously agreed to:

- Accept in principle the proposal from the General Trustees
- To the closure of the Ardeer Church building at the point of Union
- To consider if the building can be used for some worship or prayer during the interim period, this would depend on the required risk assessments

The Kirk Session also requested that the Union could be progressed as quickly as possible and that development of the Union meant looking at working with a clean slate. It was also

emphasised that there was a need for a new name for the united congregation.

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Livingstone Kirk Session met and after discussion:

1. Agreed to the proposal from the General Trustees but wished to emphasise that acceptance was only on all points mentioned being included in the Basis of Adjustment for the Union. These are:-
  - a. The General Trustees would take over full administrative responsibility of the closed Ardeer church building from the date of union – insurance, regular inspection and disposal.
  - b. The proceeds from the sale will be used to first of all pay back any proportion of grants from HES /HLF that are required, to pay outstanding M&M from Ardeer Kirk Session, together with legal and management costs involved with looking after the building and its sale. Anything remaining would be credited to the new Kirk Session, while any loss would be absorbed by General Trustees/Assembly Trustees.
2. Following an update regarding the building work at Livingstone Church building, it was agreed that the group looking at the risk assessments would reconvene and progress the re-opening of the building.

In effect, this means at the time of union, the Ardeer building would close and be managed by the General Trustees until it is disposed of. The united congregation would have one place of worship, which would be the Livingstone Church building. There would be a new name for the congregation, and we need to work to develop that united congregation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this situation with me.

With every blessing

Dave

## **Keeping in Touch**

You'll maybe remember that in the September issue, we spoke about the need to make sure that our records were accurate and up to date. Thanks to the many of you who have responded and your responses are being collated on a database.

This allows us to communicate with you as you wish although some of it may take a wee bit of time to get it all together. However, maybe you've forgotten but it would be good to get some more responses from those who have yet to respond to help us as we work towards the union of both congregations.

It may be that we'll send out update forms again to those who we haven't got a response from. We are trying to get the best way to communicate with you but a "no response" leaves us with an uncertainty in how we can do that.

## **Questions Answered: Missional Communities**

At the beginning of the year, boxes were available in both church buildings for you to ask questions about what's going on. The intention was that by the end of March/April, we would have had a meeting to go through these questions in person. The lockdown prevented them from happening and I had hoped that we would manage something later this year.

The restrictions on meeting together has prevented that and so it seems that the best thing to do in the circumstances was to begin to answer some of these questions in the magazine.

During 2018 and 2019, a group of members from Ardeer and Livingstone Churches took part in a Learning Community event organised by Church of Scotland Priorities Areas, and supported by the Cairn Movement.

In March 2019, this group put together a plan which the Kirk Sessions adopted and later re-affirmed when agreeing that Brian Devlin, the Community Mission Worker, and I would participate in the Pioneer Ministry course run by Forge.

That plan had 3 strands to it: UP, IN and OUT.

UP: was mainly in context of running the Stevenston Convention which was not possible this year due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

IN: was about developing positive worshipping communities. This is about looking at the union of the congregations and how we be one church family.

OUT: was to reach out into the community and to develop missional communities.

A missional community is a group of people, perhaps up to about 20, who meet together. They are drawn together because they have something in common and as part of their meeting together, they then have an opportunity to talk about God, their faith and their lives.

This group would meet where they feel appropriate, a house, a meeting room somewhere, for example. Their meeting time and place would most likely not in a church building, or at a time when the main diet of worship was on.

This missional community is different from a house group or Bible study. One example of a missional community is a group of men who meet together because they all like to play football. They meet to play but then they also meet socially where they speak about life and faith.

Although the plan is to develop missional communities, that does not take away from the need to have a public worship on a Sunday, as we do now, and does not mean that we would create a missional community by telling people who are worshipping together that they must be in a missional community.

The work in creating a missional community has been hampered as a result of the pandemic but is ongoing.



## Coffee & Company

Wednesday 23rd September 2020



A big THANK YOU to all who contributed to the Macmillan Cancer Support World's Biggest Coffee Morning which was held as part of our Coffee and Company Service on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. You helped us to raise the fantastic total of £1008.75.

Thanks

Susan Gibson

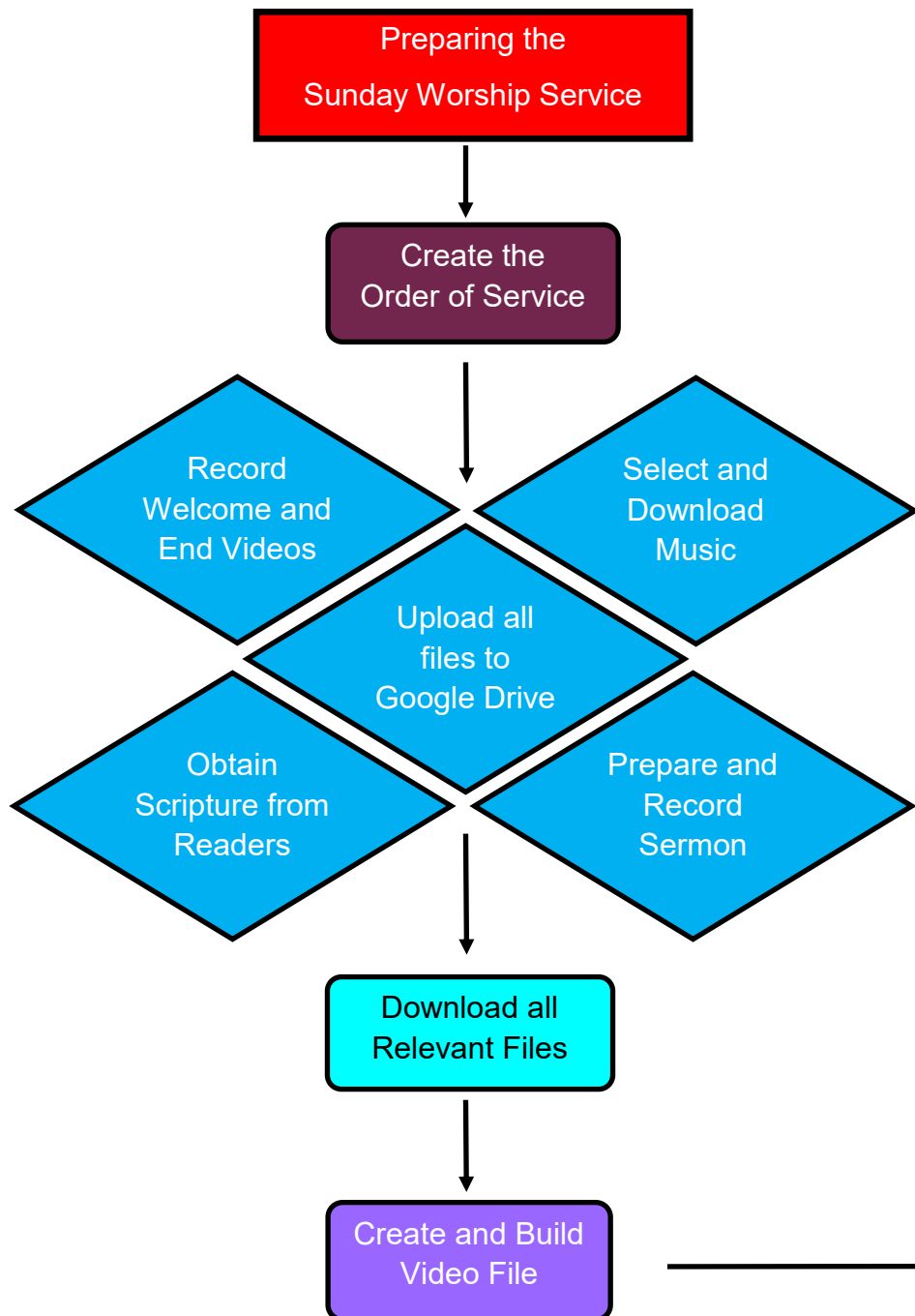
### How is the Church Service made ?

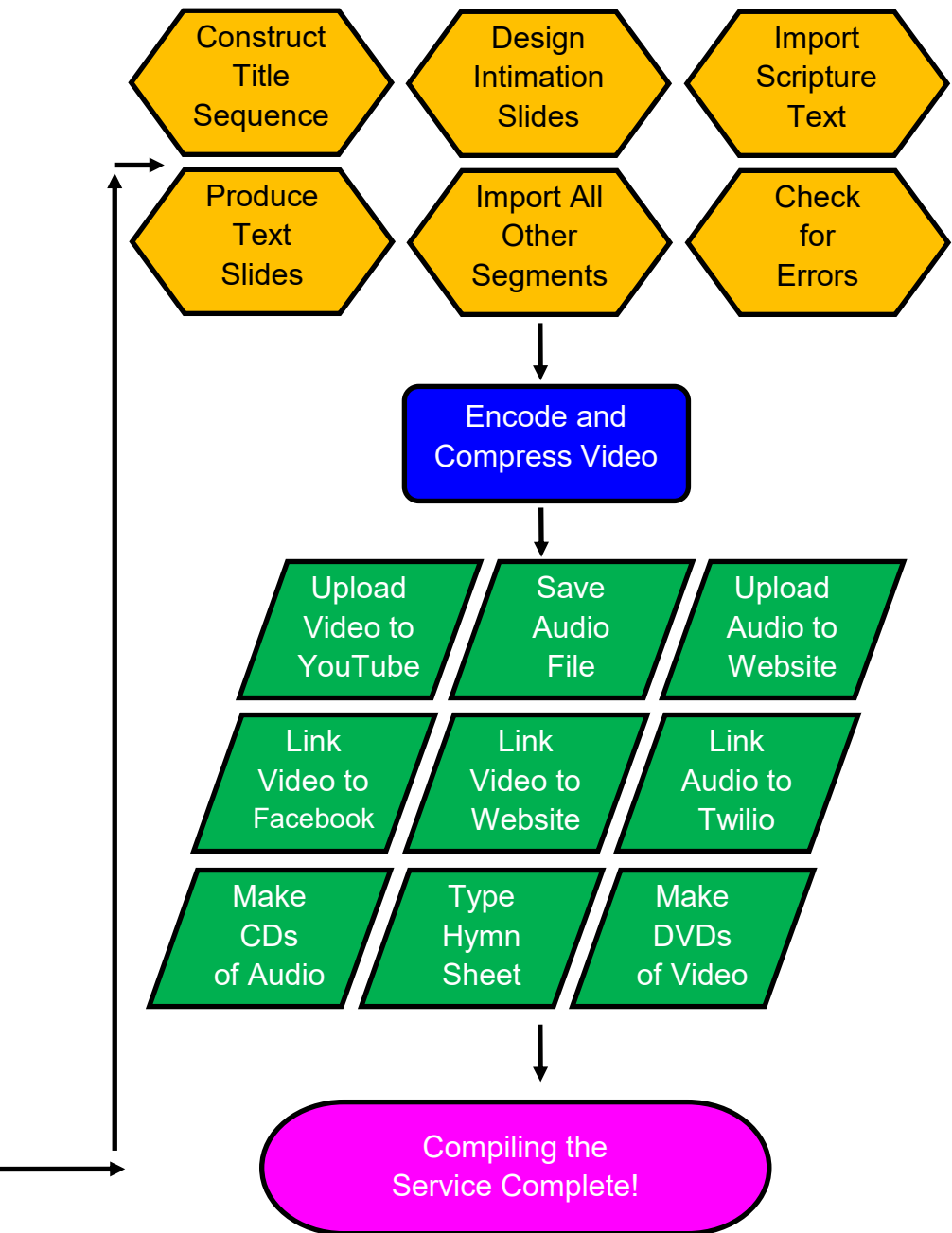
We, unfortunately, have not been able to engage in physical church services since Lockdown began in March. We have however, been able to participate in church services through by other mediums, e.g., website, 'YouTube', CD, DVD, Telephone audio access.

We are grateful to Dave and Ross who very quickly mastered the challenge mounting remote church services and have continued to do so through the bulk of 2020, the required weekly frequency to a consistently high standard.

Over the following two pages, the outline process is there in graphic format, to give us an idea of what hoops now have to be gone through to get the weekly deliverance. The inspiration for this, came from a TV programme that featured during lockdown, that of Masterchef presenter, Greg Wallace, 'How It's Made' series.

Viewing now at a TV or monitor near you!





## AmazonSmile

Having enrolled with AmazonSmile earlier in the year, we recently received our first donation disbursement from them. Only a few people have signed up so far and the more people who do, the more significant the size of quarterly donations Amazon will make to the Church. 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](https://smile.amazon.co.uk), you'll find the exact same prices and selections as [amazon.co.uk](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://smile.amazon.co.uk). It will not work if you go directly to [amazon.co.uk](https://amazon.co.uk). Your usual Amazon account and log in details will work on [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk). It is now possible to use AmazonSmile on the Amazon app if you have an Apple device (iPhone/iPad) or an Android device.

If you have any questions or comments about AmazonSmile, you can email [contactus@livingstonechurch.org.uk](mailto:contactus@livingstonechurch.org.uk)

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

Thank You!

## **A Christmas Message from Allan Richardson, Moderator of the Presbytery of Ardrossan**

Dear Friends

How will Christmas be for us all this year?

As I sit quietly thinking about Christmas my mind goes back a year to when I wrote my Christmas letter for 2019, I had been Moderator for only a few months and so looking forward to my year in office. I, like so many families, was looking forward to Advent and the Watch Night Service celebrating the birth of Jesus, closing with the singing of that great Christmas Hymn 306 “O come all ye faithful” and the first line of the last verse,

“Yea Lord we greet thee”.

How all our lives changed in March when the Coronavirus hit. Little did any of us know what the rest of 2020 would be like, some were affected by the virus, some with other illnesses. It is only when we look back we realise how much we are thankful for the NHS and all the wonderful staff for their dedicated service during these difficult times. We must also remember the care home workers caring for the elderly, we are indebted to them all.

During my year as Moderator I should have visited five congregations, I only managed to visit three before lockdown. For various reasons the Presbytery took the decision and asked me to remain Moderator for a second year, this I accepted. Our lives have all changed, church services just restarting again with restrictions on numbers and no singing of Hymns.

In these present circumstances how do we prepare for Christmas? Will we be able to have family and friends for Christmas dinner? How much food do we require? It is hard to prepare but as we try we must never forget what the true story of Christmas is all about, the birth of Jesus in that stable in Bethlehem. Were Mary and Joseph really prepared for the birth? Mary gave birth in a stable as there were no rooms in the Inn. Jesus the Messiah was born and look at the joy he gives the world.

It will be strange this year during advent that we will be unable to sing Carols. However, we must always remember the real

Christmas story, the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, let us never forget this the greatest story ever told.

May God's Blessings be with you all. I hope and pray that you and your families will find joy this Christmas time and that 2021 will bring a vaccine to eradicate Covid-19. Stay safe and keep well.

Allan Richardson

### **Prayer Thoughts December 2020 : Keeping in Touch**



Prayer is an important aspect of 'keeping in touch'. Since attending the 'Priority Areas' events, I keep returning to the simple '**up**', '**in**', '**out**' triangle which was introduced by the presenters. When you consider our present situation, we are missing our '**in**' opportunities which allowed us to keep in touch by meeting together in our Sunday services. Some of this can be recovered through the Wednesday 'Coffee and Company' or 'Sunday Night at the Manse' through the medium of Zoom. It's a different kind of meeting environment and not accessible to all or one in which everyone would feel comfortable

Acts chapter 2 verse 42 to 47 gives a picture of the '**in**' life of the new church beginning with these words in verse 42;

*They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, sharing the Lord's Supper and in prayer.*

Our '**out**' too is suffering through restrictions of how many can meet and where and how. But there too there are opportunities to show that the church is present in the community through contributions to food banks for those who are being hit hardest by the pandemic. Chapter 3 of Acts tells how Peter took the opportunity of healing a crippled beggar to bring the gospel to the people in the temple.

God is showing us that adversity is not a dead end but an opportunity.

Woven into this forced separation is the friendship and comfort being given by the phone calls to people both within and without the congregation. Fellowship, hugs and even elbow bumps might not be possible, but the sound of a friend's voice can lift the shadows and bring a beam of light.

Bringing everything together is the 'up'. Echoing Romans 8, nothing can separate us from God who is always available to hear our prayers. Prayers to develop and support our own relationship with God, prayers to uphold those within our fellowship, prayers for those in the community whose daily struggle has been made more difficult by the pandemic.

James chapter 5 verse 16 offers these words of encouragement;

*The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.*

Keep praying!

## **Prayer Themes**

**Approach:** Come before God humbly but in the sure and certain knowledge that, unworthy as we are, he wants us to come to him and share his grace.

**Confession:** Bring before God your misdeeds and mistakes, asking forgiveness and the guidance to avoid their repetition.

## **Thanksgiving:**

Give thanks for those who have brought the warmth of friendship through phone calls.

Give thanks for the opportunities for fellowship given by technology and the skills of those who make it happen.

Give thanks for the remedial work carried out at Livingstone, giving hope of a future return to worship.

Give thanks for those who have worked through the pandemic for our benefit.

**Intercession:**

Pray that the current pandemic will be resolved and we can return to nearer normal.

Pray that the pandemic will bring more people to seek God.

Pray for Dave and Brian as they too deal with the current circumstances.

Pray for those who have suffered illness or bereavement.

Pray for all those whose lives have been made harder by the pandemic.

**Treasurer's Report - Ardeer**

Given that there has been no change in the position with reference to access to the church it will come as no surprise that there has been no significant change to the level of income during the last quarter.

Comparison with the equivalent period April to October 2019 indicates a 50% reduction in offerings from £17,005 to £8,461.

Expenditure during the period April to October totalled £8,814 covering salaries, insurance, energy costs, travel expenses and Presbytery dues. Following the sale of the original Manse, our monthly insurance premium will reduce slightly from October. In addition, the contract with BT for wi-fi and phone services will cease early 2021.

To date the congregation has made no payments towards our Ministry and Mission allocation of £28,000 for 2020. It is however our intention to make an initial payment of £5,000 during November with a further sum to be submitted, depending on available funding, during December. Due to our present limited income our contribution will however fall significantly short of the 2020 allocation.

**No.4 (Refurbishment) Account.**

The No 4 Account was opened during 2013 to hold both congregational donations and grant funding for the major refurbishment work on the church and halls. While a decision on the future of the Ardeer building has not yet been finalised, irrespective of the decision, it is considered that any refurbishment work on the building will not be undertaken.



As a small number of members continue to pay into this account, we will be in contact over the next few weeks advising that any future donations to this account should cease.

Please accept the Kirk Session's thanks for all your support for the church refurbishment project over the past eight years.

Jim Dunwoodie

### **Livingstone Finance Report November 2020**

I thought you would prefer an overview of how our finances have fared since the start of the lockdown and suspension of live services.

	February	November
General Fund	3969	511
Fabric fund	4030	8558
Designated Funds	266	3417
Restricted Funds	8403	4479
Beneficiary Fund	97294	88746
Joseph Little Bequest	36969	37621
Cash balance.	14389	14630

Basically the £15000 withdrawn from reserves has been used up. The Bequest Fund investments have recovered some of this loss but not significantly as you can see from the JL Bequest which has not been touched over the time period.

For the future the 18% reduction in M&M will help next year however before that we have the roof repairs to pay for. This will wipe out our funds held by the General Trustees and require another substantial withdrawal from the reserve funds. This consequently reduces our investment returns and our overall income.

We are reducing the number of Free Will Offering envelopes to be distributed and would strongly encourage members to use direct banking where possible and request envelopes if you have no other convenient way of making your offering. If you have difficulties getting your envelopes collected don't hesitate to contact me and we'll get something arranged.

Christmas will be very different this year but the message of Christmas is still the same. May I wish you all every blessing for the festive time.

F.S.Kerr (Treasurer)

### **Christmas Services**

Currently, all services will be pre-recorded and available on the Sunday.

**Sunday 13th December** Advent 3 Joy Gift Service

**Sunday 20th December** Advent 4 Love

Nativity Service

**Christmas Eve**

7pm Christingle Service on Zoom

11.30pm Watchnight Service with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on Zoom

**Christmas Day**

11am Christmas Greetings on Zoom

***Zoom details for Christingle Service, Watchnight Service and Christmas Greetings is***

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81458359082?pwd=MkQ4YUdYQnZxZDhkUHRJSzRSV0I4dz09>

Meeting ID: 814 5835 9082

Passcode: orange

### **Sunday Night at the Manse**

We meet on Zoom on Sunday Nights at 7pm through the Sundays of Advent considering God's Word to us, looking specifically at Hope, Peace, Joy and Love as we do so. The Zoom meeting ID remains the same: 188 987 844, but you need to contact me to get the passcode.

## **Christmas Services (cont.)**

### **Gift Service**

In previous years, we would gather donated toys and money to give to the Social Work Department for families who have need of such things. However, this has changed as a result of the Coronavirus. This year we are being asked for a financial donations for Social Work to give to families who have the need of it, for Christmas presents for their children and food for the family.

Donations can be either through a cheque or bank transfer to the church, marked GIFT SERVICE.

If you would still prefer to donate a toy, then it is possible to do so through the North Ayrshire Christmas Gift Appeal which runs from Thursday 19 November to Tuesday 15 December. Its aim is to give gifts to families who, for a range of reasons, are not able to give their children a Christmas that most of us take for granted.

North Ayrshire's Health and Social Care Partnership will identify those who are in greatest need of support.

Items are being sought for all ages, including:

Toys (children); Books (all ages); High street vouchers (teenagers); Christmas treats eg. selection boxes/sweets (all ages); Supermarket vouchers (parents/carers)

Donations can be dropped off at any local library on Tuesdays, between 2-4pm or Thursdays, between 10am-12noon. Items will then be stored for 72 hours, as per quarantine arrangements.

All gifts will be redistributed in the local area and any donations of Christmas treats such as selection boxes, sweets and tins of chocolate, will be sent to North Ayrshire Foodbank for inclusion in their Christmas Hampers.

All donations should be dropped off unwrapped, so that Council staff can determine the most suitable age group to receive the gift.

## **Christingle Service**

You'll need to let us know that you want to take part in the service so that we can get a bag of materials to you for the Christingle. It's not just for children: whether you have family around you or you're on your own, you can make your Christingle and be involved. Through the Christingle, we'll share in carols and retelling of the Christmas story. This will be on Zoom. To register for the Christingle Service, either

- Email [ardeerlivingstone@gmail.com](mailto:ardeerlivingstone@gmail.com)
- Send a Facebook message to either the Ardeer or Livingstone Facebook pages OR
- Telephone the manse number: 01294 608993

We need to know who you are, where you stay, how many bags you would like, and how to contact you – telephone, email. The bags can be collected from outside Livingstone Church on Saturday 19th Dec between 2-3pm or Sunday 20th Dec between 10.30-11.30 am.

*You need to supply your own orange or mandarin!*

## **Watchnight**

Again through Zoom, we'll sing some carols together and at midnight share in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

## **Christmas Day Greetings**

We'll meet again on Zoom on Christmas morning, share greetings to one another and even wider family if you want to invite them too. We'll sing some carols and spend a bit of time with God's Word.

Thank you for reading Faith and Fellowship and thanks to all who provided material for this issue. The next issue is due in March 2021. Please send items for this issue by Sunday 1st February 2021 to:

[magazine@livingstonechurch.org.uk](mailto:magazine@livingstonechurch.org.uk)

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

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