

KIRK OF THE HOLY ROOD
NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER



SCN: SC001603

Welcome to our September newsletter, I hope it finds you well. In this edition you will see that we are moving forward and that our Church will soon be open although with limits but it is certainly "One More Step" as the hymn goes.

Kathryn Bennie, Editor. Tel: 01324 485292



Once again we write a newsletter instead of the full magazine. We as a Kirk Session are working very hard along with Ken Robertson our safety officer and Presbytery to get the Church open. We have done all the risk assessment and set up the Church according to safety guidelines from Church of Scotland. You will find things very different at the moment. We hope to open for Personal Prayer on Sunday 6th September from 2-3p.m. and each Sunday thereafter providing there is a need.

To access the Church on those days you will enter by the MIDDLE door and be met by elders who will guide you through what you need to do. Having finished your Prayer or reflection time in the Sanctuary you will exit by the main door and again an elder will be on hand. If you have difficulty going down the steps on leaving please arrange with the elder to go out the middle door where there is a ramp.

Given how things are going with regulations it is with a heavy heart that I have to let the ladies know that the Women's Association will not meet till January at the earliest. The date will be reviewed when we see how we are coping with Covid 19 and Government guidelines.

Hopefully this finds you all well and staying safe if you have any questions you would like either myself or Ronald to answer please get in touch. My phone number is 01324 486780

Helen Scott, Session Clerk



Sadly since our last newsletter we have lost two of our members:

Mr W McKenzie

Mrs Margaret Lowrie

Please keep their family & friends in your thoughts.

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."~ John 14:18



Lord where are you? Lord when I cry to you, are you there? Lord are you listening to me? Oh! Lord sorry I've wakened up, you were waiting on me to say hello!

Thank you Father for each new day and for your Blessings to my family and friends.

Please be close to people who have lost someone they loved and remind us of the good times we shared together,

Speak softly in our ear words of encouragement where our health is failing us,

We pray for your protection on our minister and family and our continuing support in being part of our church family.

Father we lift up to you our gardeners for all the hard work they do keeping the church grounds colourful and tidy.

Also our gratefulness for all the organising to preparing the church for reopening,

We give you all the praise and the glory
Amen.



The Foodbank are grateful for the continued support that our members have provided during lockdown.

The next collection will be on Monday 7th September when anyone who is able and wishes to make a donation can bring it to the church hall between 11am and 1pm.
Thanks again for your support.

From The Manse ...

OPENING THE CHURCH! WHAT EXCITES ME.

Isaiah 43:18-19 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" Come the 6th of September 2020, our church building will be opened! It is extremely easy to take this for granted and fail to see, that there is more to this than meets the eye. A few days ago, the Holy Spirit nudged me to read Isaiah 43. I have read this passage many times before, but this time it left me convinced, that as we will be opening our church building, there is more to the matter than just that. It imparted theological flavour to this seemingly ordinary event.

This passage was written during the time when God's people were in Babylonian captivity. During that difficult time, Isaiah, the prophet, reminded them of the many things that God did for them in the past. God delivered them from Egypt, and he rescued them from all their enemies. Their redemption story is the most beautiful and wonderful experience they had with God. It was with a powerful hand that he delivered and fought for them until they inherited the promised land.

What is interesting here is that as beautiful as the story was, Isaiah seems to be discouraging them from being stuck in the past. He writes, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" (v18). I am convinced this is what God is saying to us today. As we are looking forward to opening our church, we should not do so, with our minds stuck in the past. However, we should look forward in faith, expecting and trusting God to do new things among us. This is the only way, we can perceive the hand of God, in this ordinary event and be part of what God is doing now,

This exhortation was given in the context of the wilderness. God said to his people, "I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (v19). In light of the Babylonian captivity, the people of God had been experiencing a form of wilderness, a dry and fruitless season. They had lost everything they thought they thought was permanent. Right there, in their wilderness experience, God gave them words, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" (v18).

Friends, it doesn't need a rocket scientist to prove that the lockdown due to Covid-19 was a form of the wilderness experience for many of us. It was a challenging and uncertain time. However, I am excited to see our church building opened, even though there are a number of regulations that we have to abide by; sanitation, face covering, social distancing among others. It is not easy to envision how we will go about this considering the age profile of our church.

However, in this wilderness experience God has a word for us, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" (v18). The wilderness is where God brings forth a fresh moving of His Spirit, fresh ways of doing things and fresh ways of living. It's never a sign that God has abandoned us. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "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."

I am not only excited to see our church being opened again, much more than this I am excited, looking forward in faith, expecting and trusting God to do new things at a time such as this.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our funds since lockdown began. Your generosity makes my job easier and I do appreciate it. Thanks to those of you who have helped to collect envelopes, or other donations, and passed them on to me. Thanks to those who have sent cheques. It is a nice surprise to see something other than bills when the postman calls! For anyone wishing to contribute by cheque, this can be done by making it out to Kirk of the Holy Rood, and passing on to your elder, or sending to me at my home address :

15 Glengarry Crescent, Falkirk FK15UD

Our finances are doing as well as can be expected at present. I cannot really predict what our position will be at the end of the year, but we will cross that bridge when we come to it. If we end up with a shortfall, I cannot imagine we will be the only ones given the restrictions placed upon us and the extra expenses that we've had so that we might reopen at some point.

Stuart Blackwood, Treasurer

Church Family News...

Hugh and Mary Watson have decided to make a permanent move to live with their daughter at the farm in Slamannan. They made their move in July and are very settled. We are glad to say they will be remaining with us at KHR however have given up their elder districts. For the time being these districts will be covered by Betty Sutherland and Kathryn Bennie.

Ruth Rehill's grandson Heath has started Primary 1 and she reports that he is loving it!

Ronald, would very much like to meet members individually. He has asked that if you would like a visit to let your Elder know and it can be arranged. The home visits can be arranged between 10am and 6pm.