



love, peace, and joy

FROM ST NINIAN'S STONEHOUSE

st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk

Worth the wait

We wait.

Surely things will change for the better soon...

It turns out waiting is hard. We're not very good at it. We get bored and distracted and angry. We decide that the rules don't really apply to us. Or we think that just a little bending of them won't do any harm.

'Wait' is one of those interesting words with two meanings. When we wait for something it's a time of expectation as the time counts down until the thing we wait for happens or arrives. That can be really hard when we don't quite know when it will happen, or how. In Advent we wait both to celebrate the birth of the Christ-child and also the coming of the kingdom of God. That's been a long, hard wait.

The other kind of wait is to wait on someone, to serve them, like a waiter in a restaurant. We can be attentive to someone else's needs, make sure they have what they require. Put their needs first.

Perhaps this Advent the second kind of wait, might be worth a try. When we wait on people we bring about the kingdom of God in those small actions of service. The change is in our attitude, away from what we want and towards what others need... and that brings us closer to the Kingdom of God.

I wish you ever blessing in all your waiting this Advent and a peaceful Christmas filled with hope and love.

Stewart

Session Clerk News

Hi folks!

Well here I am, writing my last letter as session clerk. I can't believe it's been over 23 years; years of joy and sorry, or busy times, but most of all times of fellowship and companionship.

I would like to thank all who have supported me over the years. It has never been difficult to ask for help and receive it with much gratitude.

It as a very emotional day on Sunday 7th November when I was presented with a beautiful gift from the congregation and session. I was overwhelmed at your kindness and I will buy something to keep with the money. The cross is beautiful and has pride of place on my sideboard.

I have enjoyed my time as session clerk and wish Fiona all the very best as she takes up some of my duties. I am sure you will support her in her new venture.

I am still going to keep on the pastoral side of things so will still be around!

May God Bless you and thank you again for all your kindness.

Margaret MacGregor

Hello everyone!

I am assuming you will have heard, or read, that Margaret MacGregor has retired as session clerk. I now write to introduce myself as I have been given the opportunity to take on this role. I will be honest with you, I'm a little apprehensive mostly because Margaret knows (nearly) everyone and everything! I'm God will guide me, giving me what I need to carry out my duties as session clerk.

Writing this, I can't believe that it is almost a week since I promised to 'faithfully carry out the duties of session clerk'. Some say that time flies when you are enjoying yourself and others say it's a sign of getting old! I am making no judgements on this, perhaps it's a little of both!

Last Sunday was such a special and emotional day. As a congregation we thanked Margaret along with Ann Anderson, Margaret Hannay, George Mathieson, and Jillian Storrie for all their work and contributions over the years. We also welcomed Joyce Davis and Brian Mackie in joining us in membership of St Ninian's.

I feel blessed to have the support of so many people as I start my journey as session clerk and I do so with great enthusiasm. I enjoy being an elder in our church and working with our community to make St Ninian's a welcoming place and open to all. I believe our church and community is about people growing in love and faith and I want to contribute to help St Ninian's focus on serving our neighbours, whoever they may be, and in sharing important life events; caring for one another.

Our Sunday service is at 11am and it would be great to see you there. I want to assure you that appropriate measures have been put in place to keep us as safe as possible. If you are joining us in worship or any events we ask that you follow the guidance. There may be various reasons why you are unable to join us in church for worship but you can continue to join us through YouTube, Facebook, and via our website 222.st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk. If you have any questions or problems accessing these links please don't hesitate to get in touch through the website or drop me an email at fiona.anderson@st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk.

I look forward to getting to know you.

Every good wish and blessing ~ Fiona Anderson

Living Proof
By Kathryn Epps

Living: Reduces the life-span by sixty seconds per minute.

How do we life
when all that we do bears an impact
on ourselves
on others
on the world around us?

Do we contemplate
each step with care, or
do we charge on
oblivious to who or
what we hurt
along the way?

Do we prioritise cost
and convenience,
or do we make the
effort to practice ethics
and fair trade?

Do we take care of ourselves
or do we in our haste
bring on self-harm?

Do we walk past the
undesirable,
or do we risk offering a
hand of friendship
and warmth?

Do we insist on an eye
for an eye
or do we bravely,
defiantly
turn the other cheek?

Do we declare war to
attain our demands,
or do we sacrifice them
to
make way for peace?

Do we follow in the
careless footsteps of
our ancestors,
or do we, through
considerate living,
become proof that we are capable
of change?
And in doing so
change the world
for the better.



Christmas Eve

Family Service

7:30pm

with

Coalburn Silver Band

st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk



Dear Friends

You may be aware, following the recent announcement, that the coffee morning will be stopping after almost 40 years.

Following heartfelt discussion the present coffee ladies feel unable to continue. This is due to a variety of reasons though we believe it may recommence in a different form in the New Year.

We would like to convey our deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed over the years by providing tea, coffee, home baking, bric-a-brac, and also donations of money which helped to buy milk and sugar amongst other things.

Without that help and support it would not have been possible to donate the monies raised to assist with the refurbishment of the fabric of our church.

We would also like to thank all the ladies, past and present, who contributed their time and effort in preparing and serving tea and coffee and to the men who helped moved tables and chairs as well as washing up.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who have joined us in friendship and fellowship on a Tuesday morning over the years.

God Bless
from The Coffee Ladies

Weekly Freewill Offering Envelopes

We are living in very strange times and none of us know where or when it will end. This makes my job of organising offering 2022 offering envelopes very difficult.

Some folks have generously been giving regularly to our church by setting up standing orders, others have continued to use their envelopes or cheques and hand them to Stewart or an office bearer - thank you.

As I mentioned in a previous Link Magazine issue, each set of envelopes costs £5 so if we can save a few pounds (or a few hundred!!) it would make sense to do that.

Our counting teams disregard dates on envelopes. We only need the number and how much is inside each one and whether it's a large amount or small amount we are grateful and say thank you. So, I propose to save some money by using the 2021 unused envelopes. I will still purchase some new ones but, for people who still have some of this years or last years envelopes left, don't destroy them simply use regardless of date. This is obviously more applicable to folks who don't attend every week. Regular attenders would get a complete new set.

I would appreciate if folks could contact me, in confidence, on 01698 793591. You can speak to me personally at 2 Argyle Street or email me at annerlaw@gmail.com with your thoughts, opinions or to discuss these proposals. Otherwise you'll leave me to decide on the best course of action.

Thank you for your consideration.



The Flower Committee

Now that we can meet for Sunday services, we have started putting flowers into the sanctuary and distributing them after the service.

I am making up the rota for 2022 so, if there any new flower requests, please let me or Margaret Patrick know.

If you are new to the church, you can donate money in memory of a loved one or to mark an anniversary for flowers in the church on the nearest Sunday. After the service they are distributed to the sick, bereaved or housebound in the community. If people are in hospital, we will send a card.

Many tanks to everyone who volunteers for arranging and distributing the flowers and if you feel you would like to be involved please approach Margaret of myself.

At the service on the 7th November, Ann Anderson and Margaret Hannay were presented with bibles as they retired from the Flower Committee after a combined service of over 100 years! If you ask them, they will tell you what a rewarding ministry it can be. So, don't be shy.

Stay safe, stay well, stay blessed.

Anne T Thompson

Anchor Boys (P1-P3)
6:00 - 7:00pm

Junior Section (P4-P6)
6:45 - 8:00pm

Company Section (P6 -S6)
8:00 - 9:30

THE BOYS'
BRIGADE
> the adventure begins here



Tuesdays

3-4pm Explorers

5:30-7pm Juniors

7:30-9pm Brigaders

The Leprosy Mission - Scotland Update

I am glad to have the chance to get in touch with you all in our first Link Magazine for some time. The following is an extract from the ASK 2021 Prayer Diary, written by the International Director of the Leprosy Mission.

"Dear praying friends and colleagues

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought huge change to our world and the way we live our lives. While it has affected us, it has been devastating for the poor and, in particular, people and families who are living with leprosy. Like all disasters, be they natural or manmade, the poor are always impacted the most.

While Covid-19 has brought about unique times, they are not unprecedented. Since The Leprosy Mission was founded in 1874, there have been two world wars, a great depression, a pandemic that killed tens of millions of people (Spanish Influenza of (1918-19), and famines that have killed millions. Throughout the last 150 years, be they good times or otherwise, we have remained a Mission committed to prayer and our Lord and Master has always provided for the Mission and those we serve."

Brent Morgan, the International Director, then went on to say thank you for the support we continue to give. It is greatly appreciated.

The last time we were able to send money away was at the beginning of 2020. I have received a few leprosy mission boxes to empty and return this year so we do have some money to send but, if you could please get any boxes or donations to me during December I will get it sent away as soon as possible. Evidently one person is diagnosed with leprosy every two minutes with more than 50% of all new leprosy cases in India.

Thank you again to everyone for their continued support with this project.

Anne Cowan

World Day of Prayer ~ date for your diary

Friday 4th March 2022 is when we are hoping to have our World Day of Prayer Elevenses in the church hall. Unfortunately last year we, like everyone else, were unable to meet together but with the help of Stewart and Yvonne we managed to do something through Zoom. So this year it will be really good to see everyone again.

The text for the service is :

I know the plans I have for you

So please put the date in your diary, phone or calendar and come join us in 2022!

Used Stamps

I am still collecting used stamps so, as we are approaching Christmas when we usually get additional mail, please try to your stamps from your cards ~ thank you.

Many thanks,
Norma Johnstone

ONE JOURNEY. MANY ROADS.

After discussions on whether to start the new session, and not sure anyone would come, we decided to take a chance and start again in September with Taylor Fashions. What a success it was! We sold 100 tickets and were mindful of Covid regulations as we set out chairs and made arrangements. It was a great night, enjoyed by all who attended. The proceeds went to church funds.

In October our minister, Stewart, gave us a very interesting talk on life as a minister during the Covid pandemic. December was our Christmas dinner which was very enjoyable with some entertainment and carol singing.

Dates for 2022 are as follows:

Monday 10th January

Christine Simmons is coming along to give us some tips on healthy living along with a demonstration on gentle exercises.

Monday 14th February

Annual General Meeting and Shoogle Gin

Saturday 3rd September

This is scheduled to be our annual outing. Arrangements still to be arranged.

Guild meetings start at 7.30pm. If anyone needs a lift please let someone know and we will collect you.

Craft Evenings

We also have craft evenings every month so, if you can knit, sew, or just want a night out for a chat please come along as you will be made very welcome.

Dates for craft evenings are:

24th January, 28th February, and 28th March at 7.30pm in the church hall.

Come along to one of our meetings to see if you like it. There is no pressure and you will be made very welcome!

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and every good wish for the New Year.

Wilma Johnston

HOPE CAFE THURSDAYS

start 13th January 2022
and then every second week
10am to 1pm

St Ninian's Church Hall
10 Vicars Road, Stonehouse ML9 3EB



come and join us

Hope Cafe Too Peer Support Group

facilitated by Jenna Harwood

every second Thursday evening
starting back on 6th January 2022
7pm to 9pm

St Ninian's Church Hall
10 Vicars Road,
Stonehouse ML9 3EB



For more information, contact:
leneonmelanarkshire@gmail.com

Hope Cafe Too



our new normal?

None of us ever imagined that 2020 and now 2021 would turn out the way they have. At the moment we are back to worship in the church, our organisations have all started back with the necessary precautions in place, but we are mindful that could all change again in an instant.

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. That's certainly been the case with our church activities throughout the pandemic. We have been providing services online now since March 2020. There is a video each week available on our website and YouTube channel, a podcast version called St Ninian's Online available on Spotify, Google Podcasts, Apple Podcast and even on your Alexa! You can even phone 01698 755533 each week to listen to the service for the price of a local call.

Sunday School, Morning Prayers and our Bible Study have all met on Zoom and we've had regular Kirk Session meetings online too.

Some of this isn't going away, not because we don't want to meet in person (we really do!) but because almost as many people join us each week on these online services as come to the building. We have doubled our congregation!!!

Of course it doesn't suit everyone, but being online has made it easier for some people to be involved who couldn't be involved before and we have friends from places like Ireland and Canada joining us regularly. We've been able to livestream a wedding and a funeral in the church to family around the world.

There are some huge possibilities online but the objective is just the same as meeting up in person... building relationships with each other, leaning more about God and worshipping together.



watchnight
Christmas Eve
11:30pm

and online at
st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk