



**Ballantrae Parish Church  
&  
St Colmon Parish Church  
Newsletter**

**October & November 2020**

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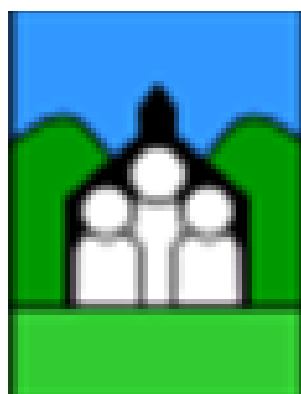
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Ballantrae Church



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**December newsletter deadline: Sunday 22nd November**

# From Your Minister

Dear Friends,

I hope that this magazine finds you well. We are still facing frustrations and restrictions caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. For some this time is a great struggle and our prayers are especially with those who have lost loved ones or have faced severe illness over these months. Others are struggling with a sense of isolation or are disappointed not to be able to meet up as freely with family and friends. We are all facing unprecedented times and need to encourage one another and to remember that God is with us in all that we face.

I often think back to the Hymn "Count your blessings". I had never come across the hymn before I began to prepare to conduct my first funeral. I was told that the hymn really summed up the man's life whose funeral I was preparing and how he enjoyed singing the words from it. It is a lovely and simple hymn, but one that helps us to keep perspective in life. Rather than focusing on the negatives we should be thankful for all that we have and enjoy. There are always people worse off than us.

The hymn says:

When by life`s billows you are tempest toss`d,  
When you are discouraged thinking all is lost,  
Count your many blessings name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done

Ch: Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;  
Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done

(Redemption Hymnal 427)

May we thank God for our blessings and seek to encourage one another in these days.

Every blessing,

Rev`d Theo Corney

# Points for Prayer

**Some verses from the Psalms to encourage us in these troubled times:**

“To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul, in you I trust, O my God.  
Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and  
teach me, for you are God, my Saviour and my hope is in you all day long”.

Psalm 25

“Commit your way to the Lord, trust in him and he will do this: he will make  
your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the  
noonday sun.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him”.

Psalm 37

**Some prayers from the weekly prayer booklet sent out by Christine Stewart,  
Presbytery Prayer co-ordinator:**

Loving God, open our eyes and show us the needs of others. Teach us how to  
reach out where we can. Above all teach us the importance of taking time to  
pray lovingly for those we know and situations we learn about.

Lord God, in this new wave of concern over Covid 19, we pray for all those  
trying to help us live safely and well through these times. Grant them  
inspiration, knowledge and understanding.

Lord, grant your Church grace to know how to encourage faith and worship  
through these difficult days. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.



If you would be interested in receiving Christine's weekly prayer booklet, let  
me have your Email address or phone number. Pat Guthrie:

[p.h.m.guthrie@btinternet.com](mailto:p.h.m.guthrie@btinternet.com)

# CHURCH SERVICES

## Ballantrae Parish Church

We meet every Sunday at 11:30am in Ballantrae Church.

Prior to lockdown a service was held in **Glenapp Church** at 3pm on the first Sunday of each month, and will resume when restrictions allow.

## St Colmon (Arnsheen Barrhill and Colmonell) Parish Church

We meet every Sunday at 10am in Colmonell Church. We are currently unable to hold our monthly services in the Kirk Hall due to its size in relation to the two metre distancing restriction.

Our monthly service in **Barrhill Memorial Hall** is currently unable to go ahead due to the closure of the hall, but will resume when the hall reopens.

Each week's sermon is currently available to read or watch as a video on the Ballantrae Church Facebook page.

## Ballantrae and St Colmon Sunday Schools

Ballantrae Sunshine Club and St Colmon Sunday Club are not able to meet at present, but are looking forward to restarting when it is safe to do so.



# Proposals for New Parishes

In light of a decline in attendance and income in the Church of Scotland in recent years, now exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, Ayr Presbytery is exploring new ways in which local churches can work together in a financially viable manner. The Church of Scotland faces significant challenges in the coming months and years. A webinar from the General Trustees provides a background for discussion on the issues that need to be considered in developing a future plan.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/watch-the-assembly-trustees-webinar>

Underpinning all that we must consider are issues such as:

- the income through Ministry & Mission which has fallen so that even if sufficient ministers were available to fill the posts in Presbytery Plans, they could not be afforded.
- The loss of income for the Church of Scotland this year is anticipated to be between 20–30%.
- Buildings used for worship need to be able to meet the description “well equipped spaces, in the right places”.

As an overall yardstick the Trustees have had in mind the need to appraise work by reference to one or other of the first three of the five marks of mission which have gained widespread ecumenical acceptance. The fourth and fifth marks are of great importance but, especially in a time of crisis, only in conjunction with the first three:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.
3. To respond to human need by loving service.
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

## Presbytery of Ayr

### Notes from a meeting of South Mission Focus Group in February 2020

The Mission Focus Group for the South part of Ayr Presbytery has met and agreed a possible way forward which allows for the reduction of full-time ministers of Word and Sacrament from seven to five. They are aware that their suggestion is not easy to accomplish but, in light of the call to be radical and think differently, they have the basis of a plan which, over the next few years, provides the requisite reduction in ministry without the closure of congregations.

In summary the proposed plan to date is that the South Area Parishes of the Presbytery of Ayr will be reorganised into two large Parishes in addition to Alloway Parish:

- North Carrick Parish incorporating Maybole, Crosshill, Kirkoswald, Fisherton, Kirkmichael and Straiton.
- South Carrick Parish incorporating Girvan North, Girvan South, Barr, Dailly, Ballantrae and St Colmon.

To achieve this plan, the following steps are required:

- Presbytery, in collaboration with the relevant congregations, prepare a Basis of Charge for an unrestricted call to South Carrick Parish (possibly based in Girvan), and to North Carrick Parish (possibly based in Maybole).
- The congregations of Girvan North, Girvan South, Dailly and Barr continue their constructive dialogue toward union, including the continuation of joint Kirk Session meetings.

## **Area Mission Priorities**

### **Alloway:**

1 full time stipendiary ministerial post, 1 youth worker/schools and family worker.

Grouping mission priorities and action plan to be agreed.

### **North Carrick Parish:**

2 full time stipendiary ministerial posts; eligible for 1 ordained local minister/auxiliary ministers (subject to availability), plus other local staff to be agreed.

- Fisherton
- Kirkoswald
- Maybole
- Crosshill
- Kirkmichael
- Straiton

Grouping mission priorities and action plan to be agreed.

### **South Carrick Parish:**

2 full time stipendiary ministerial posts; eligible for 1 ordained local minister/auxiliary ministers (subject to availability), plus other local staff to be agreed.

- Barr
- Dailly
- Girvan South
- Girvan North
- Ballantrae
- St Colmon

Grouping mission priorities and action plan to be agreed.



## Among the questions to be addressed

- Each large Parish to have 2 full time ministers serving all congregations (this will not affect any serving Minister).
- The possibility of existing ministers with unrestricted tenure serving in what would be a larger single Parish – effectively two systems running side by side.
- Nationally funded complement 5 full time stipendiary ministerial posts; ? Ministries Development Staff.
- Permission to call a Minister to North Carrick Parish, with the understanding that they will be based at Crosshill and Maybole in the first instance.
- Permission to call a Minister to South Carrick Parish with the understanding that the congregations of Girvan North, Girvan South, Barr and Dailly are working toward the basis of Union.
- The basis of a call for both Parishes should be general enough to include the vision for all parishes to work together.
- Practicalities of financial and pastoral responsibilities for congregations.
- Which congregations have input to a nominating committee.
- Parish boundaries will require changing with an equity of cover for all the congregations.
- Pooling of experience and resources across all the Parishes.
- Identification of appropriate people within congregations to undertake Presbytery training relating to Worship Teams, funerals, pastoral care and, if appropriate, working with children and young people.

28-09-2020

# Professor Jason Leitch in Life and Work

Extract from *Life and Work*, October 2020 issue: Claire Strain read the article and felt reassured that someone with a Christian belief is guiding us through this difficult time.

Professor Jason Leitch is National Clinical Director of Healthcare Quality and Strategy and advisor to the Scottish Government. From childhood, Jason and his family have always been involved with their church, and Jason says he can't remember a time when it wasn't part of his life.

"In 2005, I was offered the chance to go to the USA and study for a Fellowship at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. It gave me a great deal of insight into systems improvement and how they affected health and care systems. Once you start working with public health systems, you can help people from a population perspective, and make life better for everyone. Gradually I began to see the bigger picture, how everything was connected, and when I got back to Scotland, got a part-time job with the Scottish Government while still maintaining my job as a surgeon for half the week."

Gradually Jason moved into different and more senior advisory roles within the Scottish Government, firstly becoming the Clinical Lead for Quality and more recently he became the National Clinical Director.

"It's one of three clinical leaders who provide advice to the politicians," he says of his role. "We work for the Chief Executive of the National Health Service. There is also a Chief Medical Officer and a Chief Nursing Officer. We all have slightly different roles, but we have responsibility for the clinical advice to the Government of the day. It is not a political role. My particular responsibility is for safety and quality."

Of Covid 19, he says, "We are certainly fighting against something, and it's a unique situation. No one has seen a global pandemic in the modern era like this. The World Health Organisation have helped and guided us with as much knowledge as we could gather."

"This virus has not shaken my faith in the least," he says. "It has, in some ways, made me more reliant – more relentless. It has taken a toll for sure, on my family life and my leadership role in the church. My wife is a teacher, so she's on the front line herself. We've both been working from home more, but at the moment, my life is absolutely full-on and quality time is scarce."

"We will all get through this," he said. "But we might have to accept that we will get a new version of 'normal'."

# The Slippy Stane

Ca' canny thro' this weary warld  
And pick yer steps wi' care,  
And never dae yer neighbour wrang  
But aye dae what is fair.  
Men fa' and never rise again  
Wha never fell afore;  
There's aye a muckle slippy stane  
At ilkabody's door.

And gin yer neighbour chance to fa'  
Ye mauna let him lie,  
But gie a hand to help him up  
As ye are passin' by.  
The case may be yer ain some day  
Though guides ye hae in store;  
There's aye a muckle slippy stane  
At ilkabody's door.

There's slippy stanes where'er ye gang  
By cottage, hut and ha',  
And ye maun pick your steps wi' care  
Or ower them ye may fa'.  
For emperors and Kings hae fa'en,  
Forbye there's mony a score.  
There's aye a muckle slippy stane  
At ilkabody's door.

Ca' cannily and watch your step  
And dinna cease to pray,  
That He who guides the sun and stars  
Will help ye on your way.  
Step by step He's lead ye safe  
And from His boundless store,  
He'll help ye o'er each slippy stane  
Right up to Heaven's Door.

# Blythswood Shoebox Appeal 2020



Leaflets are now available from Ballantrae church and the boxes will be going to Moldova this year. This is an important charity to support as everyone who receives a shoebox gift greatly appreciates it. Once filled, please contact Claire Strain (831246) for collection as we cannot use the church building as a gathering place this year. Thank you!

## Filling Station



While the Girvan Filling Station is currently unable to meet, many Filling Stations in Scotland and around the UK are continuing to meet virtually. Information on how to join in a virtual Filling Station meeting can be found at <https://thefillingstation.org.uk/>.

# Bandawe School for the Deaf

I have received a letter from Stuart Chiwona, Head of Bandawe School for the Deaf in Malawi, asking for urgent help now that schools have reopened, but are expected to provide Covid-safe facilities. In particular he is asking for funding for Chlorine, Hand Sanitizer, Foodstuff, Utility Bills, Additional Buckets and Transparent Face Masks. I would like to tell you all a little about deafness in Malawi in the hope that you might be willing to assist the children at Bandawe. I could easily write a ten thousand word essay on the subject, but will endeavour to keep this short.

The problem of deafness in Malawi is much greater than in the UK; due to three main factors: Chronic untreated ear infections that destroy the middle ear; severe malaria; or treatment for meningitis or malaria with drugs that are potentially toxic to auditory nerves. Class sizes in schools are more than three times those in the UK, with no support from classroom assistants for children with special needs. Therefore it is impossible for children with severe or profound hearing loss to learn in mainstream schools. There are only five primary schools and one secondary school specialising in hearing problems for the whole of Malawi.

Bandawe has about 80 children coming from all corners of Malawi. It is a government primary school, but never receives funding sufficient to cover all its needs. Parents are asked for £25 each term, but this is not mandatory, and many families struggle to pay transport costs, let alone pay the school a voluntary fee. Every term the school begs for funds for food from well-wishers, and term ends early when food runs out. But the Covid-19 pandemic has increased their financial difficulties.

Bill and I have been very involved with Bandawe for the past twelve years and are full of admiration for the dedicated staff who provide an environment for young children a long way from home that feels like one big family. The children are such a happy bunch who love the opportunity to receive an education, as well as thriving by being amongst children with the same disability as themselves.

If you would like to learn more about Bandawe or help financially please contact me on 07590975040.

Thank you,

Liz Ottaway

# DANIEL & THE LION'S DEN

In our family we love to read books. Every night Reuben and Simeon choose two stories for their Daddy to read to them at bedtime. At the moment Reuben's particularly likes to hear stories about any animal with sharp teeth! It is perhaps for this reason that he regularly asks to read the bible story, "Daniel and Lion's Den." I thought it would be nice to share this story with you and to think about what we can learn from this incredible story of one person's faith and dedication to God.

## Daniel and the Lion's Den



Daniel lived in a place called Babylon where there was a king called Darius. The king was very impressed with Daniel and he made Daniel one of the three governors over the whole kingdom. Because of his excellent reputation and character the king was planning to promote him to be in charge of the entire kingdom.

The two other governors did not like this idea. They were jealous because the king admired and trusted Daniel. They decided to look hard for something wrong with Daniel instead of looking out for his best interest. The only way they could keep Daniel from looking good in the eyes of the king was to look for something that Daniel was doing wrong in his work. Surely they could find a time when he was dishonest in his job or took money that didn't belong to him. They searched and searched for something bad to say about Daniel but couldn't find anything wrong.

After some thought they realized that the only way they could make Daniel look bad is if they made him break God's laws. They knew that Daniel was faithful to his God and the only way

he could do something wrong was if he sinned against God.

The two governors gathered many of the leaders that were serving in the kingdom at the time and told them their plan. They wanted so desperately to get Daniel in trouble that they began to negatively influence these people as well.



When the other leaders agreed to support their plan they went to see King Darius. Imagine being King Darius on the day his leaders show up before him. They spoke flattering words, like, "O King Darius, live forever! We have got together and have agreed that we think that you should make a law that for the next thirty days no one should pray to any other god except to you. If anyone breaks your law the punishment will be thrown into the lions' den."

Let's look at Darius' character. At this point in the story his character is missing something. Darius lacked discernment. Discernment is the ability to have good judgment or wisdom. If Darius had discernment he would have seen through the deception of this plan. The king was flattered and didn't think about the consequences. He thought it would be wonderful to be praised by the people of his kingdom. He wrote out the law and signed it making the law unchangeable. What was written must take place and no one could change the king's law.

When Daniel heard about the new law he went home and did what he always did. He opened his window, he got on his knees and began to pray asking God for help. What character trait do you see in Daniel when after hearing that he could be in danger for praying, still prays before God? He was both faithful to God and courageous.

# DANIEL & THE LION'S DEN



As Daniel prayed with his window open, his enemies came to his house and found him praying to his God. They were excited that they had finally found Daniel breaking a law. They rushed back to King Darius and said, "Daniel pays no attention to you, O King or to the law you put into writing. He still prays three times a day to his God."

Daniel's enemies were happy but King Darius was very troubled. He knew Daniel was a faithful and trustworthy man. He realised that he had been tricked into making this law. King Darius didn't want to punish Daniel but the enemies reminded him his law was unbreakable. Knowing that he had no other choice, Darius ordered Daniel to be thrown into the lions' den. As Daniel was being taken to the den the king said, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!"



As Daniel was thrown into the lions' den the king had a stone placed over the mouth of the den. Darius returned to his palace and spent the entire night thinking about Daniel. If we could see him in his room, what do you think he might have been doing? Do you think he may have paced the floors worrying about Daniel's life? Is it possible that he prayed to Daniel's God and asked him to rescue Daniel?

As soon as it was daylight Darius ran to the lions' den. When he got to the den he called out to Daniel, "Daniel servant of the living God, has your God whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?" What a relief it was for Darius to hear Daniel say, "O king live forever! My God sent His angels and He shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king."



Daniel had been protected because he was faithful to God and because he had placed his trust in Him. God sees all that we do and He knows when we are treated unfairly. The king was overjoyed that Daniel was alive! He gave orders to lift Daniel up out of the den. They brought him out and there wasn't a bite mark or a scratch found on his body because he had trusted in God. That is amazing faith!

When I read this story it challenges me to reflect on my own character. How would my friends and family describe me? Your character can greatly influence the people around you. Perhaps you can see that your friends are being unkind to someone else in your class. Will you join in or be the kind person who offers to play? In our story Daniel had an excellent character and had complete faith in God. It was through Daniel's Christian life that king Darius also came to know God. Are others learning what it means to be a Christian by the way you live your life?

Remember that God is always with you even when things are hard. God didn't stop Daniel from being thrown into the lion's den, but because of his faith he did save him from the mouth of the lions. God doesn't always remove all of our problems but will help you to get through them. You just need to have faith and ask.