



NEWSLETTER

**CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
SCOTTISH CHARITY No. SC001976**

ISSUE No. 32

JULY 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

As a church family,
we seek to grow closer through fellowship,
more compassionate through outreach,
and stronger through worship.
We aspire to be a caring, inclusive community
within a spirit of Christian love.

Our focus will be to:

- † Connect with the youth in society
- † Support the elderly and vulnerable
- † Put our church at the heart of the community



FROM THE MANSE

Oh, where does time go to? It's now a year since I came here and, my oh my, so much has happened. One observation has been the realisation of how unpredictable the weather is. As you all know, you can experience four seasons in one day. And for me this has been a true reflection of what has been happening in our family.

When we moved here last year, it was toward the end of the school year and our two wee ones joined Kirn Primary School. I remember when we left them at the reception, our daughter was so overwhelmed, which was so unlike her. She's normally very bubbly, but not on this day. So, I waited patiently for them to come back home and tell me how the day had been. It was a huge relief for Emily and I as parents when they both came back excited, already having made connections from day one.

And this has been the story of our lives this past year - making connections. I am grateful to all of you for going out of your way to make sure that we feel at home in the Cowal Kirk family. We have settled in so well. Many of you have made sure that shortbread is always available in your homes, and I have enjoyed having it in the comfort of your homes. Some of you I am yet to knock on your doors, and some might have seen the card that I slipped through the door just letting you know I had been but had missed you. You can rest assured I will be back.

It has been an incredible journey for us all as we travel a path that no one has known. Just as the weather is so unpredictable so has been the journey. What stands out for me has been the friendships that have developed over this past year. It has been a joy to watch and experience the warmth that is growing amongst us. Together we can do so much

As we continue to journey together, I would like to thank you for your prayers, support and company. It is such a pleasure and a privilege to serve you as your Minister.

With love and blessings, *Everisto*

FROM the (new) EDITOR

As mentioned in last month's Newsletter, Marion has stepped down as the Editor, having undertaken that role for probably more years than she cares to remember. We are very grateful for her diligence in providing us with lots of church information, stories, pictures and articles over that time, and trust that she will enjoy the hours of free time now at her disposal?

It therefore now falls to me to take up the mantle, to which I can add - once again - as I was the Editor of 'Kirk News' (at the High Kirk) for a good number of years.

But to that end, I have a few questions. Apart from presenting any reports I receive, I'm wondering if you have any other suggestions as to how to fill the pages. What would you like to see? Are you happy with it as it is, or can you suggest any changes we could make? Would you like more stories from members? Or photographs? Or quizzes? Can you tell us what's happening in your circle? Or would you like to hear about what is in the planning? Would you object to adverts? And are you happy with the frequency? And what about the title? Can you think of a name that would suit our new united format?

For now, I'm just throwing these suggestions into the hat and I'll wait to see what, if anything, flies out.

Be assured I will do my best to provide a newsletter that will keep you informed and, hopefully, sustained and perhaps even entertained as we seek to serve our Lord every day of our lives.

Sincerely, *Rev. Ruth Griffiths*

MID - WEEK WORSHIP

Services will be held in the Hanover Street Hall on Wednesdays at
11am as listed below ~ **All are welcome** ~

July 3rd	Rev Sandy MacPherson	*August 5th	Jeneffer Zielinski
July 17th	Marion Fyfe	August 19th	Simon Wallace

* Please note: due to the Holiday Club, the August 5th service will be
in St John's Hall.

PREACHING ROTA

Sunday	7th July	Kim & Sandbank	4th August	St. John's
	14th July	St. John's	11th August	Toward & Innellan
	21st July	Toward & Innellan	18th August	Kim & Sandbank
	28th July	Kim & Sandbank	25th August	St. John's

Deep Sea Divers Holiday Club

Plans are now well underway for our holiday club this August. We are so excited to be organising this for the children of Cowal, and we truly hope it'll be a lot of fun as well as a huge blessing for the families.

We will have games, crafts, sports, songs, bible stories and a whole lot of other surprises up our sleeve, so it's bound to be a week of FUN and ADVENTURE.

Diving into the bible, we will be introducing the children to Jesus, and some of his water adventures too; so please pray for all the children taking part, as well as for the team involved. Pray, too, that the planning and the logistics go well, and that God will help us with even the tiniest details. Pray for the volunteers from the Cowal Kirk, Dunoon Baptist and eXp, all coming together as one to truly bless these wonderful children.

Lorna

P.S. If you know of anyone who would like to sign up, or if you want to know more - please follow the link on the poster, or email me at:



familiesworker@cowalkirk.org.uk

COWAL HIGHLAND GATHERING

The Haven

For more than 10 years the local churches have come together to offer teas, coffees and biscuits to visitors to the Cowal Games, in a Marquee on the top field.

This is a Mission opportunity financed by the Augusta Lamont Bequest, and it is the only location, amongst all the amazing other entertainment on the top field, that offers seated accommodation - to enjoy the sunshine or to shelter from the rain!

Over the years we have had loads of visitors from overseas, as well as a great many locals, who are happy to have a chat, or pour out their worries to the supportive listening ears. Tracts and copies of scripture are made available, and there are also games for young people and children.

In 2023, a total of £800 was donated to the Cowal Hospice Trust and we would love to raise even more funds this year.

Sign up sheets for 2 hour shifts on Saturday, 31st August will shortly be circulated. Please come and see us - or better still come and help!

50 Golden Years

On Thursday, 27th June, Tom and Fiona Irvine celebrated their Golden Wedding with family and friends, a number of whom had



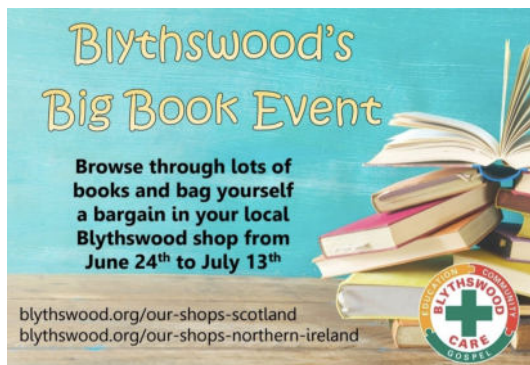
travelled quite a distance to be with them on this auspicious occasion.

And so it was, also on a Thursday, exactly 50 years ago, that they were married by the Rev. Andrew Taylor at the Union Church, Greenock.

Congratulations!

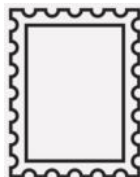
Blythswood Big Book Event

Running for 3 weeks across their shops in Scotland and Northern Ireland (of which there are 16 in Scotland) is the Blythswood's Big Book Event — one not to be missed. They will have lots of books available at bargain prices, including a load of great Christian books. From inspiring testimonies from their project partners, to quality Bible commentaries, to lots of other great books to encourage you in your walk with Jesus; there's something for everyone. The nearest shop to here is probably the one in Callander, but their website also mentions that they're on eBay, which may be easier to make a purchase in order to support their work.



CofS Stamp Appeal

It has been decided to send any used postage stamps that have been collected to assist the Church of Scotland's Stamp Appeal.



This year they are supporting a community-based agroforestry initiative called Firmly Planted. Their ambition is to make a sustainable impact across Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe by establishing tree nurseries, thus addressing food insecurity, deforestation,

climate change and youth unemployment. **Boxes will be available** in each church building, so please bring along all your used postage stamps and place them in the boxes. They will then be sent on to help the Appeal.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9

Care Home Worship

Services over the summer will be as follows:

Ashgrove:

Tuesday, 9th July & Tuesday, 6th August at 2pm.

Ardenlee:

Tuesday, 16th July & Tuesday, 20th August at 2.30 pm.

Any help on these occasions will be much appreciated.

I'm on a Committee!

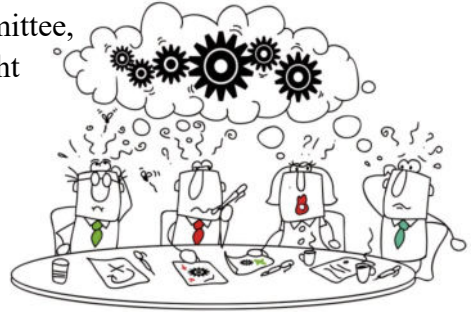
Oh, give me some pity, I'm on a Committee,
which means that from morning to night
we attend and amend and contend
and defend,
without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur;
we defer and demur,
and reiterate all of our thoughts.
we revise the agenda with frequent addenda,
and consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we support and oppose,
and the points of procedure are fun!
but though various notions are brought up as motions,
there's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but never dissolve,
Since it's out of the question for us.
What a shattering pity to end our Committee,
Where else could we make such a fuss?

Anon



Easyfundraising

This was mentioned in last month's newsletter, but it's well worth repeating, because members using the EFL link will raise funds for Cowal Kirk.



How it works: A large number of brands or retailers pay a commission to Easyfundraising, then when you start your on-line shop, you use their website or app, and they can see that it's through that link that you've reached them. If you then make a purchase, a commission is generated, and Easyfundraising turns that into a donation - magic!

Why don't you give it a go? It doesn't cost you anything extra and Cowal Kirk benefits. Website: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>

1st Cowal: Celebrating our Success



It has been a busy few weeks for us at the 1st Cowal Boy's Brigade and Girls Association.

We've been joined by the Dunoon Coastguard who took all our young people through a session on water safety as part of the lead up to the summer holidays and we had 41 young people join us at Hunters Quay Holiday Village for an activity day.

Our young people played Laser Tag, Adventure Golf, had mini sports day, did some climbing, took up Archery and managed a shot at the bouncing pillow. They were all worn out when handed back to their families at the end of the session, with our leaders retreating to a dark room for a few hours to recover!

On Wednesday 19th June, we were joined by our young people, their family and friends, members of the Cowal Kirk and the wider community to present almost 60 young people with 158 awards, as a result of their hard work and attendance at the 1st Cowal.

Ret. Lt. Col. Pete McDill, DL, was invited to hand out awards to all our young people and spoke about his role as a Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Dunoon and Cowal. Our young people were fascinated by his sword and medals, with lots of families staying behind to get a photo with both Pete and his sword.

Councillor Audrey Forrest also joined us to present the High Kirk Trophy. This award is given to the Best All Round Young Person within the Company and is chosen by our leaders. This year, it was an easy choice, with Noah Fulton displaying all the traits we thrive to instil in young people at the 1st Cowal.

For the first time ever within the 1st Cowal, we were able to award our Discovery Badge, the third highest Badge in the BB. These are given to young people who are active within the Company, who have completed a faith journey element and volunteer within either the Church or the BB for a minimum of 3 hours. Elise Wilson, Alexia Wilson and Nico Wilson were the recipients, and will now move on to their Presidents' Badge - another first for the Company!

In addition to this, each and every Anchor (our 5 to 8-year-olds) was presented with a Beginners Bible, thanks to the support of an anonymous donor. This led to plenty of chatter in the pews as the young people began exploring their very own Bible before they even left St. John's Church.

As you may be aware, we've had a waiting list for Anchors and Juniors for most of the past year, with parents and guardians looking to put their young people on our waiting list from the age of 3. I'm delighted to be able to share the news that we have an additional two volunteers going through their PVG and onboarding process, and we're hopeful that another couple will shortly be joining them!

Our volunteer team have given up around 1,100 hours over the last 35 weeks to make the 1st Cowal what it is, and we absolutely couldn't do it without them. Being the fastest growing youth group in Cowal is certainly something we're all incredibly proud of!

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of the Cowal Kirk, giving us a home in Hanover Street Hall, and for that, we are extremely thankful!

We would ask for your continued prayers for success - and extra volunteers - as we take a break over the school holidays. Our last week was Wednesday 26th June, but we will be back on Wednesday 4th September.

We are the 1st Cowal Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association. We have Faith in young people and help them to experience "life to the full." (John 10:10)

Jamie, Captain.

Christian Aid Cake Event

A huge thanks to everyone who came and either donated and or bought (and ate?) the wonderful selection of cakes and cookies after Church on Sunday 23rd June. All monies raised will be added to the collection for Christian Aid.



The total sum (which will be enhanced by the inclusion of Gift Aid) is a magnificent **£1,000 !!**

FOR THE ‘SHUT-INS’

From Rev. Sandy

Dear Friends,

I once heard it said that a good hymn is worth ten sermons! Whether or not that is the case, over my fifty years as an organist and choirmaster I came across many, many hymns which I felt were profound and which carried a very real, vibrant message of faith and belief.

Not least of these was - and is - a hymn entitled ‘It is well with my soul’. Sometimes also known as ‘When Peace Like a River’, I personally regret that the hymn has never featured in a Church of Scotland hymnary, for its words embody comfort, reassurance, and strength.

It was written in 1873 by Horatio Spafford and is sung to a tune composed by Philip Bliss.

Spafford had been a successful lawyer and property investor, but the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, and the economic downturn two years later, resulted in him being ruined financially.

He planned to travel with his family to the UK, to participate in an evangelistic campaign, but a late change of plan meant his wife and four daughters travelled ahead of him. The ship on which they sailed collided with another vessel, sank quickly, and all Spafford’s daughters drowned.

Shortly after, Spafford himself set sail and, as his ship passed the spot where his daughters had died, he felt moved and inspired to write the hymn.

Originally comprising six verses, its refrain runs:

‘It is well, it is well;
With my soul, with my soul;
It is well, it is well with my soul.’

Not least given the event which caused the hymn to be written, its words are hugely moving. They remind us of God’s presence and support in every aspect of our lives; they offer reassurance in the faith, and they look forward to the future in hope.

There are many poignant recordings available online, but here are the words of the last verse; words which, I believe, inspire us with renewed spirit and confidence:

‘And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
A song in the night, oh my soul!’

Every Blessing, Sandy

Fund Raising News

This month has been another hectic one for the fundraisers, what with some shop staff on holiday and one or two others not too well, so I am really grateful to all those who stepped in to fill the gaps.

But there's a funny thing that happened this month: We were gifted a bicycle by Anne's daughter, including the jelly seat and the safety helmet. It sat outside the shop carefully tied to the railings. We took it in every evening ... until one night we didn't! The following morning Rosemary was heading to Largs via Western Ferries and noticed a bike tied up to the railings, still with its price ticket on! She phoned me, and Joe and Ann Rhodes kindly went out to collect it. We joked that we couldn't even give it away, but then we actually sold it the following day!

What is life without a laugh?

We have to thank Ruth for making our Beetle cards larger and easier to manage, because a game of Beetle will be the next of our monthly "Meet and Greet" events. **On Monday, 1st July.** Remember, these events will be on the first Monday of every month; the afternoon tea is FREE, but please bring a small item for the Raffle.

Those who attended the Bingo event stated: "the afternoon was a hoot; what with the banter and all the fun, we were in absolute stitches. Added to that was a fabulous tea - it was all well worth coming back for!"

So a great big **Thank You** from Lawther and all the fund-raising team.

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Please note: The **deadline** for the August newsletter is **Monday 22nd July.**

Please email your contributions to EDITOR as above – thank you.