

# BRIGHT LIGHTS



For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given  
Isaiah 9:6

Winter 2020

# Brightons Parish Church

## A Message from the Manse

Dear friends,

We are coming up to Advent and most likely we approach this with a greater sense of uncertainty than we ever have: uncertainty about what lies ahead for our world, community, family and congregation. There is much happening in our world and church today – on the one hand we have Coronavirus and its affects upon us all, and on the other we have ongoing conversations about the future shape of the Church of Scotland across the Braes and from this significant decisions will need to be made in the New Year. How are we to approach such an Advent? Can we recover joy, or at the very least a measure of hope?

I am reminded of the opening chapters of Matthew's gospel wherein we read the familiar words re-telling of the birth of the Messiah, Jesus the Christ – the promised King who would begin to set the world aright, bringing forgiveness of sins (Matt. 1:21) and securing for us an 'eternal encouragement and good hope' (2 Thess. 2:16). In the first chapter of Matthew, we read that one of the names of Jesus will be (and is) 'Immanuel', which means 'God with us' – and that is great encouragement: that Jesus is with us and He has been with us as a human being, knowing and sharing every sense of despair and worry that we might ever have felt.

At the same time, this revelation of Jesus is told by the angel to Joseph, in a dream, and upon the eve of Joseph potentially divorcing Mary since she has been found to be inexplicably pregnant. Joseph's – and Mary's – plans have been completely upended by God! The world as they knew it, they world as they thought it would be, is no more – they must have felt a great measure of uncertainty, maybe more so than we do. Yet into this situation the message from God is that this child is His and He is Immanuel, God with us – with us in the flesh and with us now by His Spirit.

Sisters and brothers, we face a winter, we face Christmas celebrations like we have not had for generations, and we face decisions as a Church that few of us would ever wish to take, but there is hope – God is with us. He has shown it two thousand years ago and was faithful then, revealing the depth of His love and grace when it was least deserved, so we can be confident that He will be faithful now and be with us in these days as well.

I pray that you and your families, will know the hope of the Advent message and that together, as the people of God in this Braes area, we will shine a bright light of hope to neighbour, friend and family as we remember that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us – now and for all eternity.

With love to one and all,

Scott

November 2020

## Guiding the future direction for Brightons Parish Church

On the 26<sup>th</sup> October, the Kirk Session approved a purpose and set of four values that will underpin who we are and what we do at Brightons Parish Church. This was developed from discussions within the congregation over the past 11 months and will guide us as we seek to participate in God's mission within Brightons and the wider Braes area.

The agreed purpose is:

- **We seek to invite, encourage and enable all ages to be disciples of Jesus Christ.**

This purpose statement is from the '*Church Without Walls Report*' (2001) wherein the Church of Scotland General Assembly defined this as the core calling (purpose) of the Church, and so we also consider this to appropriately describe the purpose of Brightons Parish Church.

Underpinning and giving detail to this purpose are a set of four values which themselves are interlinked. Each value has a summary statement, as detailed below, but they also have fuller descriptions and supporting biblical references, which are available should you wish to review them.

The agreed four values are:

- **Meeting** - meeting with God in a personal and life-changing way.
- **Family** - a family of all sorts of people, journeying in community towards wholeness.
- **Growing** - maturing in faith and character as God's people.
- **Sharing** - sharing our lives and the good news of God's love in word and deed.

As we seek to embed the purpose and values into our ministry and worship at Brightons they will feature in sermons and teaching materials. You will see them in our various communication media (newsletters, newssheets, website, Facebook page etc.) and they will become familiar. However, if they are to have any true value, then they must be more than simply words: they are to be lived out by us all and shine in all that we do and say, so that they shape our plans and labours, particularly within our various teams and the decisions we make for the future.

We offer this update to you for prayerful support.

*James Falconer and Scott Burton*  
*on behalf of Brightons Parish Church Kirk Session*



## Update on the Braes Churches Hub

Presbytery agreed at the end of October 2020 to accept the proposed Presbytery Plan, wherein the Braes Churches would work towards becoming a “Hub” and together have two full-time Ministers as well as two Ordained Local Ministers (OLM) and one Ministry Development Staff (MDS) member, whose role would be focused on mission.

The Kirk Sessions of the Braes Churches also met at the end of October for a conference and reviewed a number of example Hub models, giving feedback on the various options as well as sharing our hopes and fears. The Kirk Sessions, in September, had also agreed to appoint two representative elders from each Kirk Session to work with the Ministers, Interim Moderators, OLMs and Locums on taking forward feedback from this conference and drafting a proposed shape of a Hub for the Braes Churches.

As of 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the representative group had held their first meeting and reviewed the feedback. They will meet again on the 16<sup>th</sup> November and still hope to present a first draft of a proposed Hub model to all the Kirk Sessions before the Christmas break. Kirk Sessions will then be able to give feedback on the draft and help the representative group to refine things. This “back and forward” communication will continue until a Hub model has been agreed, which we hope will be early in the New Year. Around the same time, we hope to put out a shared statement from the representative group to all congregations.

Please note that the work of the reps is in relation to the shape of ministry and not buildings, which will be a later matter of discussion amongst the Kirk Sessions as Presbytery require us to make a decision by April 2021 on the long-term future of our buildings, and when we have more to share we will keep you updated.

Please do be praying for all involved in these discussions, particularly the representative group, but each Kirk Session as well. Ask the Lord to give us His heavenly wisdom which, as James said, ‘...is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.’ (James 3:17)

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Scott Burton



## News from our Junior Sunday School (and some wider Sunday School news)

Our Junior Sunday School has looked very different to normal, this session!

First off, we have a much earlier start of 9.30am, when some of us are still wolfing our breakfast (leaders and kids!). Secondly, we have new technology to deal with, as we navigate our way around Zoom! Thirdly, we're not always wearing our Sunday best (unless our best PJs count??).

But what hasn't changed is Jesus' constant presence and love for us during this time, and also our amazing group of leaders, ready to share God's word with our Juniors.

The Moving Up service on 16<sup>th</sup> August saw Isla, Amber and Zoe move up to Triple S and Ethan, Samuel, Anabella, Emily and Ava move up to Juniors. We began our session dealing with some difficult situations that our Juniors might find as they went back to school. We learned how Jesus was always with us, helping us deal with our worries; how it's important to show friendship and build each other up; and how we can have the joy of knowing that God cares for us so much.

We've loved using the Storybook bibles that our Juniors received when they moved up. Each week they 'bring them with them' and read along with the leaders as we tell the story.

After our October break we've been exploring the importance of putting our roots down in Jesus, and we have nearly mastered learning our memory verse 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105)'. We've found a really good way to remember this is by singing along to the song 'Thy Word' by The Radikids. If you have Spotify, try this link

[https://open.spotify.com/track/1KPEXVxvARUfo4P7ieZIH7?si=co2\\_aZ-CSgyVn3N84w90xQ](https://open.spotify.com/track/1KPEXVxvARUfo4P7ieZIH7?si=co2_aZ-CSgyVn3N84w90xQ). Top

tip: best listened to whilst dancing and waving a torch! Next we'll be learning more about the Christmas story as we look forward to celebrating the birth of our Saviour.





## **Other News**

We know online sessions don't suit everyone, so the leaders of all the groups have come up with a survey for parents/carers, to complete so we can get our online sessions right for our young people. We're also exploring ways to meet physically, so watch out for news from the leaders of your groups. We have risk assessments and training to complete before we can do this and, as I write this in early November, these are well underway.

The Covid restrictions also mean that we won't be able to have our normal Nativity Service that we so enjoy taking part in. We are planning a Nativity Service, of sorts, so look out for that on 20<sup>th</sup> December!

*Judith Norton,  
Sunday School Superintendent  
on behalf of the leaders in the Juniors SS*

## **Our Sunday Schools / Youth Groups Moving Up Service**

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August we marked a special day in our Sunday schools and youth groups as we celebrated those who were the oldest in each group moving up to their next group. We normally mark this day just after the Easter holidays but since we'd been in lockdown we felt it right to hold this back till schools resumed.

For those moving up a group, one of the leaders in each group 'presented' them with a bible or bible storybook from the church, as a reminder of God's love for them. We pray that they discover more of God's love as they use their bible and turn to them whenever they need.

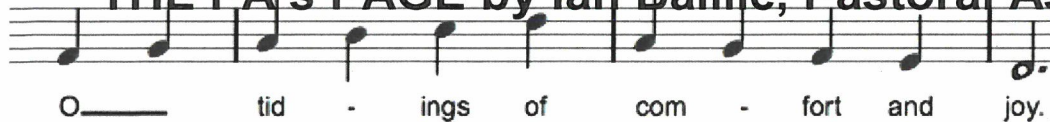
You can see all those moving up mentioned in the service on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2020 which is still available on the Brightons Parish Church YouTube channel (<https://youtu.be/aLdDPgiCbXs>).

We also gave thanks to Jason Glass and Barry Hamilton who have led Wait4It for the last five years. Jason and Barry have handed over the reins of Wait For It to Keith Wansbrough and Carolyn McEwan who have moved on from leading Flaim. Doug and Rachel Gilmour, George Mann and Laura Eckles will now lead Flaim.

On behalf of our church I'd like to say 'thank you' to Jason and Barry for their hard work, commitment and dedication as they came alongside our young people, bringing God to life in their lives and actively sharing their own faith with them. We really appreciate the way they have impacted those in Wait4It over the years and we ask God to bless them both.

*Judith Norton,  
on behalf of the Sunday Schools and Youth Groups*

## THE PA's PAGE by Ian Baillie, Pastoral Assistant



It's the Winter/Christmas edition of Bright Lights and not a star, stable or manger in sight. I would over the world, not be the same likely restrictions Coronavirus will see all of us down version of different for Christmas like there will not joy" as the carol year.



imagine for many all Christmas 2020 will as any other year. The due to the present pandemic with a rather scaled festivities and very arrangements in place Dinner. It may seem be much "comfort and says to share this

Yet Luke 2:10 tells us that indeed the birth of our Saviour is a time for "good tidings of great joy that which shall be to all the people" (KJV). I'm still keeping in touch by phone and praying over the phone or on your doorstep.

If you're a contestant on the hit TV show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, you can either phone a friend, eliminate two of the possible answers (50:50), or ask the audience. "Then the king said to me, 'What are you requesting?' So I prayed to the God of heaven" *Nehemiah 2:4*

Nehemiah desperately wants to go home to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls of the city. He's filled with fear when confronted by the king over his evident despair (Neh 2:2). Bravely, he explains to the king how the city sits in ruins and remains unprotected. Now the king asks him a simple question, "What do you want?" Faced with the uncertain possibilities of the future, Nehemiah does what any faithful follower of God would do – he prays. He calls on God for guidance on how to answer this difficult question, realizing that he doesn't know the correct answer. And God answers him, guiding him to the best course of action.



You probably experience similar moments of uncertainty today. "How should I answer this person?" "What should I do now?" Maybe you have an idea about how to respond, but you're just not sure. Remember your lifeline! God is available and ready to guide you through life in prayer. He's only a "phone call" away, and you'll never have to wonder if he has the right answer.

Even Jesus reaches out to God for guidance through prayer. Leading up to the troubling events of his crucifixion, he kneels in the garden to pray, saying, "*Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done*" ([Luke 22:42](#)). From his words, we see two lessons about our lifeline of prayer.

**Not My Will.** - Our ideas about how future events will play out should leave room for, "If you are willing." What we want never has more priority than what *God* wants. We're not in control. We don't know the answers. When we trust in our understanding and jump into action without consulting the Lord, failure is close at hand.

**Your Will Be Done.** - We are incapable of fighting against God and his plans. He's in control. He knows the answers. With his awesome power and mercy, he extends his helping hand to us. Does that mean he'll keep us from experiencing pain and suffering? Not always! Sometimes he needs to refine us through adversity to bring us to freedom.

This Christmas may we continually kneel in prayer, casting our cares and anxieties on him and although there may be fewer seats at the table with Christ in our hearts we may know those "Good tidings of Great Joy".

## Congregational Roll Update

### Deaths

**October**      **Mr Neil Davidson**

**November**      **Mr Tom Logan**

*Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law. Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:55-57 (NIV).*

### Remembrance Book

The Remembrance Book is still available for any new insertions. For further information /details then please contact Robert Callahan by leaving a message on the Church Office Tel 713855 or email [info@brightonschurch.org.uk](mailto:info@brightonschurch.org.uk) and Robert will contact you.

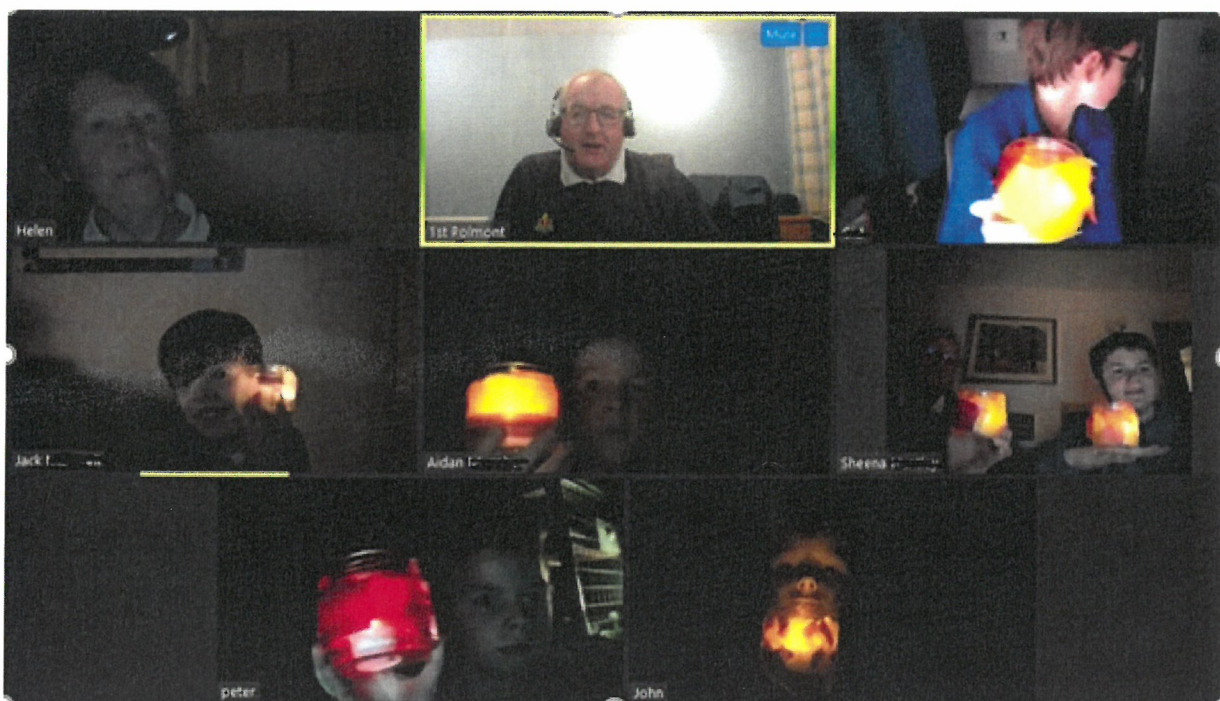
*Pastoral Care Team*

# Boys' Brigade

As you will all be aware, the start of the new session has been a bit different this year. The Junior Section and Company Section are meeting online each week using Zoom. We were not able to parade to church for the Dedication Service or for the Remembrance Service, but we were able to have the colours on show in the church for both services and I know that some of the boys watched online as the services were streamed on the church You-Tube channel.

The Anchor Boys have not started back yet, but we hope that we can meet in the church halls after Christmas. - Watch this space!

BB Headquarters has prepared some really good materials for use during our virtual sessions and we have been adapting these for our own use on our Friday calls. We have generally had around 5/6 boys on the Junior Section Zoom sessions. We start each call with a short bible message which sometimes involves a video (when the staff remember how to do this) so there is both sound and vision at the same time. The Juniors have done some craft work and quizzes along with a few treasure hunt games where the boys had to find different items around the house – I apologise now to those parents who wondered where the car keys were on the Saturday mornings after we had done this. We did try some physical exercise as well, but that is a bit harder than normal without the space to run around. We have not been able to do marching or play team games, but the boys who have joined in the calls seem to be enjoying it. Mr & Mrs Huntley even managed to join in from their caravan a couple of times! We made battery-powered lanterns which some of the boys took down to the church on 31<sup>st</sup> October. We also painted poppies onto stones on the Friday before the remembrance service. A big thank-you to Mrs Macleod who has been delivering the resources for the craftwork to the boys on the Friday afternoons ready for the evening sessions.







The Company Section calls have usually had between 16-22 boys joining in along with the staff. We have set the boys challenges, we've done quizzes and other items from the library of online resources, but I think we all agree that things will be so much better once we are able to meet back in the church halls. The boys who have been working on their Queen's Badges last session are (hopefully) getting their books ready for handing over to our Queen's Badge adviser for comment. I am not sure what will be happening in regard to a completion course for the boys, but I am hopeful that the headquarters staff will make sure nobody is unfairly disadvantaged if their books are ready on time.

Obviously there have been no battalion competitions due to the current restrictions, but we finally received word that the Junior Section has been awarded the overall efficiency trophy for last session.

At the time of writing, the result of the Company Section trophy has not been declared. It has actually taken longer than the USA elections to get the results finalised, but I am sure there will be no legal challenges if the result goes against us. Well done to all the boys who did so well in the various competitions last session and I hope we are at least able to have some of the normal competitions in the new year.



Unfortunately, there will be no BB Christmas post this year. The logistics of selling stamps, collecting and sorting the cards, then getting them delivered, means it is just not practical to do it this year. Sorry to anyone who was hoping to use the service again this year, but hopefully the company will be able to offer it again next year.



## **Job Vacancies**

When we do start back meeting as normal, and certainly looking forward to next session, we will be looking for more people to come along and work with the boys and support the staff who have been involved in BB for many years. Have a think about this – were you or was your son / grandson / brother / father ever in the BB or do you know someone who was in the BB? If the answer to any part of that question is ‘yes’, then you sound like the kind of person who would be able to help. Maybe you feel you don’t want to become involved in the same section as your son is in – that’s fine, there are 3 sections to choose from. We need enough staff to ensure we can continue to offer the Boys and young men of Brightons and the surrounding villages a Boys’ Brigade company to be part of. Some of us have been officers for 40 or more years and might be looking to take more of a back seat in the future. The minister has often challenged the congregation here at Brightons to ask whether they could do more to help in the life of the Church here in Brightons. This might just be the opportunity you have been waiting for to come along and make a difference.

The pay is exactly the same as it always has been – the opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of the Boys who come along while furthering the **Object of the Boys’ Brigade**.

**“The advancement of Christ’s kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness”**

*Please feel free to contact me for more information.*

- *tel – 01324 713855 any message left will be forwarded for the Captain to contact you.*
- *email – [bb@brightonschurch.org.uk](mailto:bb@brightonschurch.org.uk)*
- *via the 1<sup>st</sup> Polmont BB FaceBook page*

*Billy Rankine - Captain*

## **Stop Press**

### **The Tear Fund Big Quiz:**

Many thanks to all who supported the quiz on Zoom on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November. The donations total to date is £470. There is a further addition for gift aid from these donations amounting to £68.75.

## BELONG- Celebration of Light – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020

While the wind blew, the rain fell and darkness threatened to extinguish the enthusiasm of young hearts and minds, around 10 families prevailed and lit up the front steps of the church with a large number of (led) candles representing Jesus, the Light of the World!

The celebration of light, organised by a few families within the Church to coincide with Halloween or All Hallows Eve, included a treasure hunt with large-scale symbols formed of lights as clues. When pieced together and submitted online, the clues formed a Bible verse, Isaiah 9:2, *“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light”*, a reminder that as followers of Jesus we can know the love and grace of God.

Please continue to pray as a Church that we might fulfil Jesus’ great commission and share the Good News, so that *“on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.”*

*With thanks to Rachel Gilmour for coordinating.*



## FLAIM - Forever Living Alive in Me!

This year, FLAIM, our group for young people in S1-S4, has moved largely online and has seen almost complete renewal, with around 6 young people moving up to Wait4It whilst more than 6 have moved up from TripleS. We’ve experimented with several forms of online activities, quizzes and study materials, even videos and discussion of a very topical movie, Black Panther (soon after the Black Lives Matter movement and after the passing of Chadwick Boseman, the lead actor and an active Christian).

Since lockdown, we were also able to meet once for outdoor group-based activities- lunch, craft and rounders/football in the park (see photo).

That’s the good news. Now for the bad: we’ve lost at least 1/3<sup>rd</sup> regular attenders due to the move online. It’s very hard to engage young people in Zoom calls, particularly those who like physical activities and those who are uncomfortable being on video calls (more common than you would think for teenagers). Please pray for the FLAIM leaders as we plan and lead sessions to inspire and get our young people actively and regularly reading their Bibles. And pray for our young people, particularly those finding it hard to engage. Thanks!

In the lead up to Christmas, we’re discussing the origins of life, the authenticity of the Bible and what Jesus did for us, with the help of some excellent videos produced by Scripture Union!



If you know of a young person who would like to join FLAIM, please contact us at:

[flaim@brightonschurch.org.uk](mailto:flaim@brightonschurch.org.uk)

*Douglas & Rachel Gilmour, Laura Eckles, George Mann*



## Friends of Jesus Group

Our Group continues to meet fortnightly on a Thursday evening on Zoom where we sing, hear a Bible story, pray and sometimes even do a craft or a game!! As we learn more together about our friend Jesus, we've also been learning lots about Zoom and how to use it effectively - it's still a work in progress!! For everyone involved in Friends of Jesus it's been important to keep in touch with each other and there is lots of waving and laughing at our meetings. Many of our friends with learning disabilities are very isolated and not able to get out to their usual day services and activities - one parent commented that Friends of Jesus Group is the highlight of her daughter's fortnight. Please continue to pray for families and carers at this time.

Some of our friends with learning disabilities are not able to come onto Zoom but we're keeping in regular touch with them.

If you would like to come along to visit the Friends of Jesus Group please get in touch - or if you can make a short film of yourself saying hello to the group please send it to me.

Ivy Blair



## Prospects Across Scotland

If you have not already got all your Christmas Cards perhaps you would like to support our work by buying our first ever Prospects Christmas cards. They are £3 for a pack of 10.

Ivy Blair

[www.prospectsacrossscotland.org.uk](http://www.prospectsacrossscotland.org.uk)



## **Blythswood Shoebox Appeal**

We want to say a big thank you to everyone who donated a shoebox this year. With the ongoing restrictions in place I was not sure how it would happen this year.

But with your support we managed to send 117 boxes which will be gratefully received by those in Eastern Europe. 44 of these boxes were provided through the support of the Guild and hard work of Irene McNab.

Below is just a little story that highlights the joy and help they bring,

### **Larisa's Story,**

A soft toy, a toothbrush, a pink rubber ball and crayons. When you are three, everything is new. When a kind person, far away, has sent you a whole box full of new things to be explored and wondered at, it is very exciting. Larisa doesn't know it, yet but crayons are the first step along the road to school, literacy and a future as she learns to hold a crayon that leads to a pencil and writing.

The challenges that she faces ahead are great. Her mother language is Romani but her schooling will be taught in Romanian. Her mother learned to read through another Blythswood project Talita Kum so she will be able to help her daughter.

Thank you again for your continued support.

*Jim Dick*

## Christmas Prison Outreach

This year we're again planning to give a bar of chocolate and a Christmas card to all the inmates in Polmont Young Offenders Institution, and we would really appreciate the congregation's help with this.

It's not widely advertised, but our church is actually quite involved in prison ministry;

- Some of our congregation have been supporting the families of the prisoners by providing teas and coffees and fellowship during their visits,
- three people from our congregation have been going into the prison every week for over five years - to build relationships and to teach the inmates about Jesus (they were even locked in on Christmas Day themselves for a few hours one year when the power and back-up generators failed!),
- Scott had started going in weekly before lockdown.

Unfortunately all of that ministry had to stop due to Covid-19 and we are very conscious of the isolation that these young folk are experiencing this year because of this. Visits, activities and time outside their cells have all been heavily restricted and it must be a terribly lonely time for them.

We don't know the inmates' backgrounds or what they experienced in their childhood, we don't know why they did what they did, and we don't know their future. However, we are called to show love to the people on the fringes of society – the poor, the needy, and the outcast - so if our actions lead a single one of them to being saved, then it's worth it.

There are between 350 and 400 inmates in the prison at the moment and we're aiming to spend about £1 each on a chocolate bar for them.

We know that times are difficult just now, but if you are able to, we would be really thankful for any donation (no matter how small), towards this ministry. If you are able to make a donation, there are a

few options available to you:

1) Church Web-Page

Use the web-based donation tool – 'PayPal' on our website.

<https://www.paypal.com/gb/fundraiser/charity/3922508>

2) Cheque

We have a locked post box at the church hall door.

These should be made payable to Brightons Parish Church and posted to the Church at Main Street, Brightons, Falkirk, FK2 0JT. Please do not post cash.

3) On-Line Banking

If you require these details, please contact either the Treasurer or the Session Clerk at [info@brightonschurch.org.uk](mailto:info@brightonschurch.org.uk) or call the Church Office tel. 01324 713855 and leave a message and we will contact you.



If you just quote 'Prison' on the envelope or the transaction, the money will definitely go to the right place. Thanks in advance for any help you may be able to provide on this.

# OUTREACH



## **Mission Jars (Jars of Grace)**

Once again, a huge thank you to everyone who continues to willingly fill money bags, envelopes and our special Mission Jars.

**Prospects Across Scotland** will receive Mission Jar monies from July-December 2020. Donations, as at 6 November 2020 **£68.09**.

With lock-down, folks have not been able to hand in loose change at our Church building. However, there is a secure post box located at the entrance to the halls where cheques may be deposited. Alternatively, the church website has details on how to donate. Cash may also be handed in to Maralyn Stirling at her home for counting and banking

A short video outlining the work of **Prospects Across Scotland** and presented by Ivy Blair, served to highlight the charity's excellent support for people living with learning disabilities in our community and beyond. Our own Friends of Jesus Group receive support from this charity.

Another charity will be chosen for the January-June 2021 period. Details to follow later.

## **Christmas Retiring Offerings – Supporting CrossReach**

The Church of Scotland's Social Care arm – **CrossReach** – has over the years received our retiring offerings from the Christmas services. This year, we will continue to support CrossReach with our Christmas retiring offerings. If you would like to contribute to this charity, please use the Paypal Donate page on our website, or post cheques to our Treasurer, via the secure post box at the entrance to the halls to Brightons Parish Church Main Street, Brightons, Falkirk, FK2 0JT. Cash donations will be accepted by Maralyn Stirling at her home.

CrossReach has been at the forefront of high quality social care for over 150 years and today is one of the largest care providers in Scotland, with experience across a broad range of services including:

Counselling/**homelessness**/offending and prison visiting/care homes/specialist dementia services/learning difficulties.

Thank you for your continued generosity in charity giving.

*Maralyn Stirling/Roy Graham*

*Note from the Treasurer – If you are also supporting the Prison Christmas Outreach then the donations can be combined, but **please** advise the split for any combined donations.*



## Finance Update

As this very extraordinary time for us all continues, this report to the end of October was presented to Deacons' Court on the 10<sup>th</sup> November.

	<b>FWO</b>	<b>Open Plate</b>	<b>Standing Orders</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
43 weeks to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019	33,349	7,256	65,561	106,166
Budget to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	32,820	6,600	76,680	116,100
43 Weeks to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020	20,867	2,072	80,542	103,481
Increase/(Decrease) vs Budget (11,953)		(4,528)	3,862	(12,619)
Increase/(Decrease) % vs Budget (36.79)		(68.61)	5.04	(10.87)

The decrease in the FWO, Open Plate and Standing Orders of £12,619 is in line with our updated forecast of a decrease of around £15,000 for the year to the end of December. Overall our other income streams such as gift aid, donations and other miscellaneous income are in line with our original budget. To you the members, our sincere thanks for the way you have continued to support God's work during this Covid pandemic when we have been unable to meet for regular Sunday worship. Your willingness to support the various ways to contribute that were initiated away back in April is very much appreciated.

The total expenditure at the end of October is just over £17,000 less than our budget. Almost £9,500 is due to the delay in planned expenditure on property repairs which will be carried forward to next year. Some £6,200 is in staffing costs of which almost £4,000 is due to the use of the Government's Job Retention Scheme (or Furlough) for two members of staff, the organist and the cleaner. Other local costs are some £1,500 currently lower than the budget.

At a previous Deacons' Court it was agreed to commit a sum of £4,000 to provide live streaming of the Sunday services. This in-house Project has been led by a number of our 'Tech Team' with assistance from our Property Team and following a couple of trial live services during November is due to go live on our Covid-restricted return to worship in the Church on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

Your continuing ongoing support and generosity during this extraordinary time for the Lord's work is extremely gratifying.  
In the meantime, stay safe and in good health.

*Alan Macfarlane*

*Treasurer*

*On behalf of the Finance Team*

# FLOWER CALENDAR



The distribution of the 'church flowers' will continue but will not be in the sanctuary as part of the Sunday worship for the time being. They will be purchased and distributed by a member at this difficult time with prayers and thoughts to spread a little light in dark moments.

	NAME
<b>JANUARY</b>	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Wendy and Jim Dick
10 <sup>th</sup>	Jessie Wallace
17 <sup>th</sup>	Lesley and Ian Baillie
24 <sup>th</sup>	Sandra and Bill Smillie
31 <sup>st</sup>	Anne Tomlinson
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
7 <sup>th</sup>	Sheila Colebrook
14 <sup>th</sup>	Vacant
21 <sup>st</sup>	Rev Sandra Mathers
28 <sup>th</sup>	The Choir (Annet Sellar)
<b>MARCH</b>	
7 <sup>th</sup>	Netta Oliver
14 <sup>th</sup>	Anne Miller
21 <sup>st</sup>	Janet Innes
28 <sup>th</sup>	May Young

The current process of being contacted at least a month in advance to confirm that you are still wishing to donate to the purchase of the flowers (a flower fund) will continue and the member purchasing and delivering the flowers is being reimbursed from the flower fund.

The calendar for 2021 has a few vacancies and for more details please contact Ian Baillie in the first instance.

# Sunday Reader/Prayer Rota

## 3<sup>rd</sup> January - 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021



As we come together as a congregation each Sunday (live / streamed online) we give thanks for those who contribute to our services and enrich our worship as prayer leaders or readers.

January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	R – Alan Curr P – James Falconer	February 21 <sup>st</sup>	R – Ian Huntley P – Rachel Meek
January 10 <sup>th</sup>	R – Cilla Graudas* P – Jason Glass	February 28 <sup>th</sup>	R – Charles Lees P – Lorna Coulter*
January 17 <sup>th</sup>	R – Elaine Finlay P – Marion Graham	March 7 <sup>th</sup> **	R – George Mann P – Eric Smith
January 24 <sup>th</sup>	R – Jennifer Gallivan P – Rena Moore*	March 14 <sup>th</sup>	R – Jessie Wallace P – Annabella Nimmo
January 31 <sup>st</sup>	R – Sharon Glass P – Donald Meek	March 14 <sup>th</sup>	R – Marion Zachs* P – Annabella Nimmo
February 7 <sup>th</sup>	R – Margo Graham P – David MacAskill	March 21 <sup>st</sup>	R – Ann Herd P – Irene Stewart
February 14 <sup>th</sup>	R – Christine Jones* P – Richard McManus	March 28 <sup>th</sup>	R – BB /GB Closing Service P – See Captains

\* We are delighted to welcome into our worship services members of Blackbraes and Shieldhill congregation as part of the Braes Churches area

\*\* Decision re Communion dependent upon the restrictions in place at the time.

If you are unable to do your prayer/reading, or have arranged a swap with another person, please contact as soon as possible Jean Meek Tel.713855 and leave a message or email [info@brightonschurch.org.uk](mailto:info@brightonschurch.org.uk) If your name has not appeared for some time or you would like to be added to the rota please also contact Jean. Thank you.

### Thursday Online Prayer Time at 8.15pm.

Date	Leader	Date	Leader
7 <sup>th</sup> January	Elwyn Batt	18 <sup>th</sup> February	Elwyn Batt
14 <sup>th</sup> January	Ian Lawson	25 <sup>th</sup> February	Ian Lawson
21 <sup>st</sup> January	Irene Stewart	4 <sup>th</sup> March	Irene Stewart
28 <sup>th</sup> January	James Falconer	11 <sup>th</sup> March	James Falconer
4 <sup>th</sup> February	Marion Graham	18 <sup>th</sup> March	Marion Graham
11 <sup>th</sup> February	Rachel Meek	25 <sup>th</sup> March	Rachel Meek



## Please join with us for any or all of our Christmas Services

Sun 13<sup>th</sup> December 6:30pm Lessons and Carols\*

Sun 20<sup>th</sup> December 11:00am Family Service#

Thur 24<sup>th</sup> December 6:30pm Family Watchnight\*

Thur 24<sup>th</sup> December 8:00pm Zoom Pre Christmas Chat<sup>x</sup>

Thur 24<sup>th</sup> December 9:00pm Watchnight#

Fri 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:00am Sharing Gifts and Greetings<sup>x</sup>

Fri 25<sup>th</sup> December 10:30am Christmas Service\*

Sun 27<sup>th</sup> December 11:00am Morning Worship#

Tue 29<sup>th</sup> December 6:00pm Zoom All Age Quiz<sup>x</sup>

Thur 31<sup>st</sup> December 8:00pm Zoom Pre Hogmanay Chat<sup>x</sup>

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> January 11:00am Morning Worship#

\* Services available on the Church YouTube channel  
<http://live.brightonschurch.org.uk>

# To book a place in Church for these services, please see below

<sup>x</sup> To participate, please call Church Office 01324 713855 or email [info@brightonschurch.org.uk](mailto:info@brightonschurch.org.uk) for Zoom access details