

BRIGHT LIGHTS



Spring 2021

Brightons Parish Church

A Message from the Manse

Dear friends,

It is strange to look back at last year's article around this time and note how carefree and ignorant it was of how the world could so quickly change. Sure, there was mention of change, but not on the scale we have faced as a world since then, and not on the scale we are going to face as a church in the coming months. Coronavirus has been a monumental world event and its repercussions will be reverberating with us for generations to come; you likely can name any number of effects upon your own life, from isolation to extra stress and worry. Within the church, you will be hearing in the coming weeks of what we will be facing in the very near future and it will significantly affect all the Braes churches and the impact of these too will be felt for generations.

In such times, in such uncertainty, where do we each choose to turn? To TVs, radio and newspapers for the perspectives of world leaders and opinion pieces? To Netflix and Disney+ for a measure of escape? To friends and family, from whom we have become so isolated this past year?

I wonder, brothers and sisters, are you turning to the Lord? Nothing takes Him by surprise; He knew what was coming. Indeed, His foreknowledge is clearly seen in the material we have been reviewing on Sunday mornings through the gospel of Mark – Jesus knew He was going to the Cross and yet He still chose it, for love of you and love of me. Do we place our trust in such a Lord and Saviour? Do we know the embrace of the One of whom we sing is “closer than a brother”? His invitation stands open to one and all; it is not just for the few or spiritually mature, so please seek Him out – and if you are unsure how, do strike up a conversation with me or your elder, reach out to us, because you do not have to journey through this alone.

These are uncertain times dear friends, both for the world and for our Braes churches and the effects will be felt for a long time. But there is an even greater event which left an aftershock upon the cosmos for the last 2,000 years and which will echo into eternity: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! As the Apostle Paul reminds us in Colossians, the death of Jesus was to ‘reconcile all things’ (Col. 1:20) and His victory was over all powers (Col. 2:15) including death itself.

Friends, in these unprecedented times, it is easy to have our hearts and minds focused on the day-to-day, on the very real difficulties we face. The early Church did this as well and yet Paul's encouragement was to ‘set your minds on things above’ (Col. 3:2), to ‘let the message of Christ dwell among you richly’ (Col. 3:16) and to ‘devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and

thankful' (Col. 4:2). Can we learn from their experience? Can we learn a different way of being church such that we have something to offer the world? Will we choose to let the message of Easter reverberate in our lives and through us to the wider Braes area that others might find the hope of Easter as well?

We are dearly going to miss sharing in our usual Holy Week service and all-age Easter celebrations, but I invite you to tune in for the Maundy Thursday*, Good Friday* and Easter Sunday services online, or catch up with them via CD, DVD or the telephone recording. Please do get in contact if you would like help accessing one of these sources.

In whichever way we connect with our risen Lord this Easter, I pray that each of you will have the hope He gives echoing in the depths of your soul that together we might share the message of God's love and victory afresh in the year to come.

With love to one and all,

Scott

** to be live-streamed on the Braes Churches YouTube Channel*

Congregational Roll Update

New Members by Certificate of Transfer

January **Mrs Angela Sinclair**
 Mr Mark Sinclair

New Members by Resolution of the Kirk Session

December **Mrs Edna Oliver**
 Mr Alan Oliver
 Mrs Chloe Kirton
 Mr Jon-Luke Kirton
 Mrs Dixcee Spencer

“...keep the unity of the Spirit, through the band of peace. There is one body and one spirit... to one hope when you were called one Lord, one faith....” Ephesians 4:3-5(NIV)

Deaths

February **Mr Tommy Thomson**

March **Mrs Carrie Thomson**
 Mrs Mary Munro
 Mr Joe Hampson

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.” 1st Corinthians 15:55-57 (NIV).

Remembrance Book

The Remembrance Book is available for any new insertions. For further information /details then please contact Robert Callahan Tel 713416 or email robert@falkirkgym.com

Pastoral Care Team

Safeguarding Co-ordinator Appointment

Linda Campbell has retired from the role of Safeguarding Coordinator after 4 years in the role. We are extremely grateful for all the work she has done over that period in consolidating our Safeguarding provision.

We are pleased to announce that **Irene Stewart** has succeeded Linda as Safeguarding Coordinator at Brightons Parish Church.

Here are some comments by way of introduction from Irene:

"I joined Brightons Parish Church almost two years ago, transferring from another Church. The excellent teaching and the warm fellowship helped me to settle quickly.

I am a member of the choir, missing singing at the moment of course, and enjoy working with the children in Triple S. During lockdown, I have been able to get to know more people through taking part in the Thursday Evening Live Prayer particularly.

In my professional life, I am Assistant Head, Pastoral, at a school in Edinburgh, where I am also Child Protection Coordinator. This expertise will help me greatly in the role of Safeguarding Coordinator and I look forward to taking on this additional responsibility within the Church.



We are sure that Irene will make herself known to all of us involved in working with vulnerable groups. She can be contacted via e mail at **safeguarding@brightonschurch.org.uk** or on **01324 310592**.

The care and nurture of all at Brightons Parish Church is so very important and we are delighted to have Irene take up this crucial role.

James Falconer
Clerk to BPC Safeguarding Panel

A Message from our Pastoral Assistant



“Lord teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” Psalm 90:12. Our days, as well as being numbered, can be happy or sad and this past week I shared one of those sadder days with a family who had lost their father and the service concluded with this all too familiar hymn:

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Psalm 90 involves the Psalmist's honest reflections about life and its currently harsh circumstances, and also pleads for the Lord his God to rescue him and his people. All of us are troubled by the circumstances around us and, as the Psalmist reminds us, we too need perspective. The pressure of unusual circumstances, changes in our daily routines, and the necessity of developing new skills.

The virus that plagues the world is real. For many people it is life-threatening and for all of us it is a life-threatening prospect. All of us know there are basic health practices we must seriously follow, not only for ourselves but on behalf of others. We owe it to one another to pay attention and to advise one another, to check on one another, and to serve one another. It's what we believe and confess as Christians, and these days test us to live out our faith.

Health fears and financial fears bring with them fears for safety. We have to protect our loved ones, our children, our parents, the elderly, and all those who fall within the orbit of our love and care. That's true of every individual and family member among us, and it's a mandate that all of us at Brightons feel as well for one another.

Fear can promote faith, but there are times when it challenges faith. One day the curse over this broken world will be lifted at the final return of Christ; and God will raise the dead in Christ and create a new heaven and new earth, where there is no more mourning or crying or pain (Revelation 21: 1-4). We must face these days of fear and testing—not passively accept them or capitulate to them. These can and should be days of renewed worship, rededicated service, care, friendship, work, and love.

To follow Christ is to be a people of hope. And our hope is not in vain, because it is invested in the creator God of the universe, who has extended Himself lavishly on behalf of His children. He is worthy of our trust, and He can aid us in conquering our fears. “Be of good cheer,” our Lord said, just before his own horrific death on our behalf, “I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

“May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us, establish the work of our hands for us, yes establish the work of our hands!” Anything we do without the Lord’s help and blessing amounts to nothing. Let us continue to pray fervently as we see the statistics rise and now know of many of our members having had their first vaccination. Despite the tunnel being long and with a few twists along the way, we may be beginning to see some light at the end. We may associate the hymn Abide with me with sadness but with words like “I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless, Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness”, we can look forward with hope and joy in our hearts as Easter approaches to a risen Saviour who triumphed over the grave.

And daily remember this line “I triumph still if Thou abide with me”!

Ian Baillie
Pastoral Assistant



Who can believe it that we are nearly at the end of another year at Girls' Brigade! 2020/2021 has certainly been very different for us all as Officers and Girls meeting every Wednesday and Thursday evening on Zoom, but we are so thankful that we have been able to do this and keep in contact.

Explorers

We have had eight girls attend regularly on a Thursday evening and over the session our theme has been 'Travel and Transport'.

Since August we have been travelling through the Bible looking at various stories. Creation, Noah, Moses, David and Goliath, the Christmas Story, the Good Samaritan and Feeding the 5000. The girls have also learned about Advent and leading up to Valentine's Day all about Jesus' love for us. In the last few weeks we have started looking at some of the parables and to finish our session we will be looking at the Easter Story. We have also learned some new action songs to go along with our Bible stories which the girls have all enjoyed. On our first week back after Christmas the girls were asked to show us one present they had received at Christmas and it was so encouraging to see that two of the girls had received new Bibles and another girl showed us a couple of weeks later that she had borrowed two Bible story books.

At the start of the session the girls were all given a passport and have filled these in when they have learned about different countries throughout the World. They have learned where they are in the world from maps, what their national flag looks like, what kind of food is eaten in that country and many more interesting facts relating to the country. The girls also learned about Girls' Brigade in other countries.

The girls have taken part in a variety of games and quizzes, learned a Bible verse and learned through Makaton on how to sign it. They have also made various craft items throughout the year which they have all enjoyed doing.

Sandra Blair, Officer In Charge

Juniors

At Juniors we have had 11 girls attend regularly on a Wednesday evening. Each evening we start by talking to the girls about their week and what they have been up to whether it be at school, with family or friends. It is great to hear all their news.

The girls have been taking part in various games, guess the sounds, give us a clue, various different scavenger hunts, blind drawing, musical statues, memory games, quizzes and pyramid tower to name just a few. They learned a dance at the start of the session, have made various crafts, designed a Christmas card to go out to some of the old people's

homes in the area. They made pom poms to hang on a branch along with hearts they had cut out for Valentine's day and will be using the branch again in coming weeks for an Easter one. Just like the Explorers the girls have been learning various Bible stories and in recent weeks we have been looking at some of the Parables Jesus told.

In January we had a visit on Zoom from Christina, Officer In Charge at Juniors, to introduce to the girls her twin daughters Naia and Amara who were born just after we had finished for the Christmas break which was a little earlier than she expected. It was so lovely for the girls to see them all and we look forward to having Christina back with us again when we start back next session. We will maybe meet the girls in person one evening at Juniors.

Brigaders

Brigaders this session has been very different. We have had 8 girls attending regularly each Wednesday evening. Badgework has been different too. We have been looking at Journeys - ones we have made, ones we look forward to making in the future and what items we like taking with us on a journey etc. For our spiritual section we have been looking at Paul's journeys. The girls have taken part in a range of quizzes, scavenger hunts, five-second challenges, made origami heart bookmarks, an origami poppy, designed a haggis monster, played who can put the most socks on one foot in 30 seconds, baked oat biscuits and made a microwave chocolate mug cake which all turned out and no girls made a mess of their microwaves. It seemed that the only people who did make a mess of their microwaves were Sandra and myself when we tried it out beforehand!!!

Maggy Dick, Officer In Charge

Service Badgework

Due to us not being able to meet in person this session, it was proving difficult for us to do something for the Service part of our badgework, so we asked all the girls from each section to buy a tube of Smarties (eat them if they wished) and fill the tube with 20p coins. The money we gather in from this will be donated to the Braes Storehouse Foodbank. We hope to be able to deliver Easter Eggs and food to them by the end of March.

Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the girls for attending each week and joining in with all the activities we have provided. We know that it has been a difficult year for everyone, but seeing you each week has been very encouraging. I would also like to thank the parents for their support. We are sorry if things were not put back in the right place in your house when we were doing any of the scavenger hunt activities!! Lastly I would also like to thank all the Officers and helpers for the extra mile they have all gone to make it possible for each section to run over the last year. I know it has been challenging at times, but we have all got through it. We hope and pray that when we start back in August 2021 we will be able to meet face to face and be back in the halls. Further details of this will be provided nearer the time.

Sandra Blair, Captain

Prison Outreach Update

Due to covid-19, the team that were going into the prison each week haven't been able to do that for a considerable amount of time now, so our only means of outreach there has been the gifts we've given at Christmas and at Easter. It means a lot to these young folk that someone is remembering them and we've received a message back from the new prison Chaplain (David Swan) about the chocolates we gave at Christmas:

'Thank you and all the church for your love and support – we have so many say to us that they are moved by the love shown – great to hear from young people that level of gratitude – of course they don't say it in those exact words!'

We're going to be giving each of the inmates a crème egg and an Easter card again this year. As we have sufficient money to cover this Outreach we don't intend to have a formal collection towards this, but if you do want to give a donation that would be very much welcome. We do recognise that we are currently living through a very difficult time.

In a timely reminder from our daily readings from the New Testament (on 6th March) we read in Hebrews Chapter 13:

'Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison'

Therefore, if you could remember all the inmates and staff in PYOI in your prayers, that would be a real blessing to them during this very difficult time.

Blessings,

Ewan and Judith Norton

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Mission Jars (Jars of Grace)

A huge thank you to everyone who continues to so willingly and regularly donate to our nominated charities.

Prospects (Scotland) will continue to receive Mission Jar monies throughout 2021. The sum donated as at 28 February stands at **£130.17**

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 cash may be deposited. Alternatively, the church website has details on how to donate.

Christmas Offerings

The Christmas offerings raised and sent to **CrossReach** was **£220** and the donations to the **Prison Outreach** **£257**. Thank you to all who donated.

The retiring offering from our March Communion will be sent to our Missionary Partners, the Duncans, in South Africa. Although we will not be having a communion service, there still remains an opportunity to give.

Christian Aid Week – 10-16 May 2021

Although there will be no door-to-door collections due to covid restrictions, there are many ways we, as a Church, can support the sterling work of Christian Aid.

e-Envelopes are a great way to donate without leaving home!

Visit caweek.org/envelope to create, personalise and send your own e-Envelope this May.

Regular Christian Aid envelopes distributed with Bright Lights

Quiztian Aid – Saturday, 8 May at 7pm

This fun-filled online quiz is suitable for all the family! Hosted by some special friends, you can sign up for more information at **caweek.org/quiztianaid**.

If you fancy being a quizmaster for a night, you can also have a go at running your own virtual quiz event. We have new quiz questions and a handy step-by-step guide at **caweek.org/resources**.

Challenge yourself and support Christian Aid!

Take on our **300,000 steps in May challenge** to raise vital funds! This sponsored fundraiser clocks in at just under **10,000 steps a day**. If social distancing restrictions allow, you could team up with others, too. Find out more at ***caweek.org/steps***.

Just a few suggestions for you to consider for Christian Aid Week. There will be something for everyone! Full details on the Christian Aid website and links from the Church website.

The need for us to address poverty has never been more evident. Coronavirus has driven a wedge into the cracks that already existed. The climate crisis is leaving people hungry, homeless and heartbroken.

This year CAW shifts attention back to the climate crisis and our global neighbours in Kenya, who continue to battle the effects of extreme weather.

Your gifts, prayers and actions could help communities withstand climate chaos: from building better earth dams to harvesting more water and sowing drought- tolerant crops.

Thank you for giving so generously to all our worthwhile charities and local institutions. We truly do care for those in need.

Maralyn Stirling and Roy Graham (Co-Convenors Community Outreach)

Coffee Morning

Dear Friends

This has so far been the longest holiday I have ever had from the 'Coffee Morning'. I certainly miss my Thursday dash up the road, to be able to welcome you all at 10am.

Sadly we have had to say goodbye to Margaret Evans, James Anderson and Tommy Thomson. It was a real privilege and pleasure to have known them all and we will miss their company.

Because of the current situation the Coffee Morning was able to offer financial support to the Pre Fives, the Guild, our church Boys' and Girls' Brigades and the Flower Fund. We have also made a donation to the Leprosy Mission, so thank you all.

I do hope you are all well and coping with the difficulties this pandemic has made in our lives. Hopefully we will be able to meet again before too long, until then, stay well, safe and take care of each other.

Blessings to *you all*,

Margaret Scott

New Testament in a Year

I know that many of you, like me, are following the New Testament Reading Plan that Rev.Scott recommended. By now, if you are managing to keep on plan, you will be well into the first chunk of Paul's letters. As I write this (January) I am just finishing Mark and moving onto Galatians.

When Scott first suggested this reading plan I had no hesitation in signing-up for it and then I started to wonder if I would be able to stick to it. I am not someone who particularly likes reading; I never look forward to reading chunks of the Bible (and I regard a full chapter as a chunk). I have read it all before; many times. I do know the blessing in re-reading it and have experienced seeing new things and gaining new understanding on so many occasions, so it has to be worthwhile. Right? Undaunted, I am ploughing on!

Now I'm not saying that I am a great example at following this plan. Sometimes I'm too busy to take time to read it; sometimes I simply forget; sometimes I don't sit down to it in the right frame of mind, not prayerfully; sometimes I do it just to tick the box! That's just the way things are and that's just the way I am.

My personal style, the approach that works for me is:

- find a quiet time and a quiet space (usually easy for me as there are only two of us in the house)
- take a moment to pray, simply asking that I can be open to the words I read
- read through the chapter
- I usually then leave it till later in the day and re-read the passage, this time taking a few notes – things that strike me, questions I have, insights I might gain
- finishing off with a short prayer of thanks.

If there is anything that I have questions on, or particular points of interest I may then search the internet to find out more. Sometimes I might search our own church website for sermons on the passage or subject – there is so much out there to engage us in understanding God's word.

There have been some ideas of having on-line discussion forums and by the time this is published I hope some of these are happening.

One of my reflections: "Is following this plan in line with our Purpose and Values at Brightons?"

- there has certainly been *invitation* and *encouragement*, and the plan does *enable* us to cover the NT in a year
- it's certainly open to *all ages* and should be helping us to *follow Jesus* as we take the Word seriously
- we are actively *sharing* as a church *family* in following the plan together
- hopefully we are *meeting* God through His Word and *growing* in knowledge as His Word matures us in faith and stirs us to live that out

You will all have your own ways of following this reading plan. Can I encourage you to stick with it, as I encourage myself to do the same - and may we all be richly blessed in doing so.

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." (Psalm 119:105 NIV)

James Falconer



Purpose and Values Wordsearch

We seek to invite, encourage and enable people of all ages to follow Jesus.

FAMILY, SHARING, MEETING, GROWING

a	x	b	w	s	e	e	k	a	h	e
f	o	l	l	o	w	q	p	l	i	n
a	g	J	s	u	s	u	d	l	t	c
m	d	e	x	m	p	h	w	a	J	o
i	n	v	i	t	e	r	y	g	e	u
l	s	s	t	l	o	e	a	e	p	r
y	v	f	b	w	a	n	t	s	m	a
o	b	a	q	s	h	a	r	i	n	g
v	n	d	u	J	e	m	b	o	n	e
e	s	s	e	J	n	b	u	x	a	g
w	e	t	f	g	r	o	w	i	n	g
J	p	e	o	p	l	e	f	o	u	a

Find the following words from our Purpose and Values:

all ages

encourage

enable

family

follow

growing

invite

Jesus

meeting

people

seek

sharing

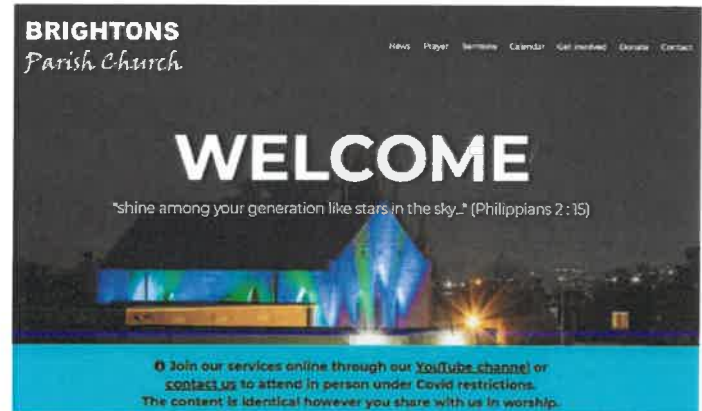
Words can be diagonal (up or down) or horizontal. No words are written backwards.

BPC Website

In November last year, after a huge amount of work, we were delighted to launch our new website. Have you checked it out yet?

<https://www.brightonschurch.org.uk/>

It brings together a huge amount of information and resources around our busy church life.



We have tried to make it look inviting, up-to-date, and easy to maintain. It is also very much community and family focused – not just welcoming to our congregation, but also inviting to those in our community (and further afield).

The key content pages are:

- ✝ [Welcome](#) - highlighting our Purpose and Values, introducing our Minister, and sharing details of our Sunday worship
- ✝ [News](#) - this draws from our daily social media posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (this ensures that there is always new and current content)
- ✝ [Prayer](#) - also draws from the social media posts on Prayer for the Braes Facebook page (these are daily so the page is always current)
- ✝ [Sermons](#) - a fabulous resource library of sermons from January 2019 to the present day (with a number of useful filters so you can easily search and find what you want)
- ✝ [Calendar](#) - containing all that's happening in and around BPC (filterable by specific areas of interest so you can make it less busy)
- ✝ [Get Involved](#) - highlighting all the groups and teams that make up our Church family and where people can get involved
- ✝ [Donate](#) - showing the various ways you can donate to our shared life
- ✝ [Contact](#) - making it easy to get in touch

We hope that our website provides an interesting and up-to-date window on our Church life as we believe this is important for both our membership and those in our community.

If you have any comments or thoughts then why not drop us a note or give us a call. You can find our contact details in the Contact page of our website!

Douglas Gilmour, James Falconer, Neil Matheson and Rev Scott Burton

‘Breathing In’ Online Event

This time last year we were preparing to have our annual ‘Breathing In’ event. The concerns about COVID were increasing and we were starting to wonder if we should be going ahead or not. Although it was an emotional day with many of us worried about what was ahead, it was also a day of real blessing and we were acutely aware of God’s presence with us. We are so thankful for that opportunity to meet together and ‘Breathe In’ God’s word as we prepared for the changes that were to come. One year later, despite finding ourselves in lockdown and unable to meet in person, we would like to make space for you to ‘Breathe In’ again. We are aware that many people are living very busy lives, and may be experiencing Zoom fatigue, so we have planned this year’s event to take this into account.

On March 27th at 10am we would like to invite you to join us for ‘Breathing In’ online. We will begin with a time of fellowship before giving you time to engage with some prayer and reflection activities. We are planning to finish at 11am. The event is open to anyone who is or has been, involved in children’s and youth work, but also parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Simply put, if you would like to come along, to take some time out of your busy schedule and ‘Breathe In’ God’s love and blessing, you are more than welcome to attend. We are aware that for some families it will be difficult to attend at 10am in the morning. We will make the resources available for those who would like to use them at a more convenient time.

If you are interested, please email the church - info@brightonschurch.org.uk for the Zoom link.

Heather McManus

Grace Course

A six week Discipleship course will commence on Wednesday 14th April at 7.30pm. on Zoom.

This will help you experience God’s gracelike never before. Experience God’s grace in a real, life changing way.

Please contact Jessie Wallace (tel 712740) if you are interested as soon as possible.

Calling a Youth Worker for Brightons

For many years Brightons has had a large youth ministry. Since January 2016 Brightons has been considering calling a youth worker, and in May 2017 the Kirk Session affirmed that “Calling a youth worker is a priority for Brightons Parish Church” and appointed the Youth Worker Committee (YWC) to progress this matter and bring proposals back to the Session. In April 2018 the committee presented to the Session a job specification, and an outline of how the position could be funded from a combination of external funding opportunities and internal support. The Committee were charged with continuing to prepare, but the Session expressed a desire to wait until a new minister was in post before acting.

Over the following eighteen months the YWC spent time in research, consultation, and prayer, seeking a deep understanding of the needs Brightons wishes to address with its youth work, and the specific way in which a youth worker would make a difference. Finally in October 2019 the committee presented its report, and the Session agreed that Brightons should start to seek funding and to fill the post subject to funding being available. This has been on hold throughout 2020 due to Covid, but we believe it is now time to pick it up again.

The vision and aim of all our youth work at Brightons is:

***To see young people of our church and parish
becoming mature disciples (Mt 28)***

In order to see this aim fulfilled, we want to see our young people:

- Increase their **positive transitions**, from searching faith to owned faith (i.e. moving along the faith journey, spiritual development).
- Increase their **capacity** to be meaningfully involved in the community, whether in church, school, the local area or globally.
- Increase their **resilience** (i.e., mental and spiritual health - a particular issue at this developmental stage).

We are already working as a church in many ways to see these objectives fulfilled. We have a range of groups and activities, and a large number of volunteers who give of their time and talents to support them.

- Positive transitions: Sunday Schools, Sunday Services and all age talks, Belong, Girls’ and Boys’ Brigades, SU groups, chaplaincy, and engaging with SU weekends and other external events.
- Capacity: in the Brigades and in Sunday School our young people help out in junior divisions and community organisations; the Brigades are training up young leaders; young people are already involved in key roles in many of our church activities (e.g., Belong, sound desk, camera, projection, teas and coffees, collection, family

services, etc). As a church we get behind our young people and support them when they are doing things: World Challenge, bake sales, car washes and coffee mornings, etc.

- Resilience: all our organisations build up our youth in life and faith; in Sunday Schools, Fun Days and Belong we seek to develop the prayer lives of those who attend; our groups foster peer group relationships which frequently last a lifetime; and the strength of support, love, prayer, and instruction from the parents and grandparents of many of our youth is hugely significant.

But we would love to be doing so much more. We need to deepen our effectiveness, broaden our reach and scale up our impact. We need to move beyond an hour or two of teaching per week to real involvement and meaningful relationships, and beyond the 60 of Sunday School or 130 of the Brigades to the 1100+ young people in our parish. Some examples of what this might mean:

- Research shows that having even one significant non-carer adult in a young person's life can be transformative for life outcomes. In our church community we can build those relationships which provide a deep support network through the challenges of life. We can also better support parents, carers, and grandparents as they support our youth.
- Building a new strategy and curriculum in consultation with our young people themselves and owned and valued by them, and providing them with safe space to share and learn.
- Training our young people, giving them the opportunity for meaningful involvement in regular church activities not just youth activities, and in school and the community.
- Running events in church and school; improving links with existing activities.
- Developing prayer and contemplation in our youth.

We as a church do not have the capacity to make all this happen ourselves. We need someone to help us - not to do it all, for God has blessed us with an abundance of people and resources - but to plan, train, organise, and inspire.

We also need extra capacity of time - time to be in the high school; time to invest in mentoring our young people; time to bring together and take forward a new curriculum and new structures for ministry with young people. This is the youth worker Brightons is seeking, to further God's ministry to the young people of our church and parish.

Please would you pray for the Youth Worker Committee as we seek to make this a reality - for funding, for the process, and for God to lead us to the right person.

If you would like to see a longer version of this report, or discuss anything above, please contact me.

Keith Wansbrough, YWC.

News from our Sunday Schools

Our Sunday schools and youth groups are continuing as much as we can during this second lockdown. When I last wrote our update some of the groups were planning to meet face-to-face, following completed Covid risk assessments and training. The Beginners and Juniors groups each managed to meet successfully on a Saturday afternoon in December for some crafts, videos and games. This was a really lovely time for both groups – for the adults and the kids – as we remembered how nice it was to see each other in person!

Each of the groups has developed ways of connecting with our kids and young people, as best as we can. We know that not everyone enjoys online sessions so we keep trying to be creative with ways we can do things now, or to plan for when we can do more things face-to-face once the restrictions start to ease.

Our Beginners are too young to engage online, so the leaders post weekly videos on the Beginners SS Facebook page on a Sunday morning at 9.30am and send out activity packs to each child so they have the materials ready for each Sunday. Having Maggy, Gillian and Alie appear on Facebook every week keeps that church connection with our young kids and helps them maintain this important relationship.

Our Juniors continue to meet at 9.30am on Zoom, bringing along their Jesus Storybook bibles to read along with their leaders. We've been working through the Old Testament since we started back in January and are due to begin the Easter story soon. We also have crafts, activities, songs, videos and prayers, as well as a chance to chat about what we've been up to that week or how school has been. A lot to fit into 30 minutes, keeping their leaders on their toes!

Triple S are also meeting on Zoom after church each week. It gets a little more difficult to engage online as the groups get older, but Heather and Irene, plus their great band of helpers work hard to find ways to keep this fun and get the message of Christ over, whilst keeping a strong focus on connections within the group. They also love taking part in Community Corner, as you can tell from their enthusiastic recordings!

Cammy Dick stepped back from leading Triple S at Christmas, and on behalf of Triple S and all the Sunday schools I'd like to extend a heartfelt 'thank you' to Cammy for the way he so faithfully came alongside our young people in Triple S and shared his faith with them. We pray that God blesses Cammy in the new areas he has started to serve in the church, particularly Huddle.

FLAIM are engaging with some of their young people online and posting out links to videos and journal entries monthly. Our young people are really keen to get involved helping others in our community so the leaders are thinking of ways they get them involved when restrictions ease. They also enjoy the joint Bake Offs with Wait For It, which we'll see in a video in Community corner soon!

Wait For It (WFI) also meet online after church, experimenting with breakout rooms in Zoom, which has been fun! The young people continue to develop their relationships which we hope will provide a firm foundation as they grow up and mature in their faith.

Other news in the Sunday Schools is that we will be taking part in the Easter Sunday Family Service and the end of session service in June, so we hope you'll join us for these. We love taking part, both on and off camera, and it's well worth the effort that goes into preparing for this. We will hold our Moving Up service after summer, given the state of flux we have again been in this year.

We also have 11 families that have signed up to be part of the intergenerational penpals idea – it's lovely to see our young people caring for our older generations.

Hopefully this has given you a flavour of what's going on with our Sunday schools and youth groups, but if you'd like to know any more please do get in touch with me. My email is ewanandjude@gmail.com or phone me on 0791 999 8300. We are also having a prayer time specifically focusing on our young people, so look out for details in the notices, as we would love you to join us and pray for them.

Judith Norton,
Sunday School Superintendent

Look for the good in everything

Look for the good in everyone

Stay safe - Be positive - And kind.

When we all pull together

We will make a difference.

Keep smiling at everyone

And the world will smile with you!

Remember God is our refuge and strength

Never more so

Than in the present and traumatic time

Anon.....

Community Outreach



Picture perfect in winter sunshine! How we long to return to the Lord's house and worship him there together again.

Like other groups, the Community Outreach team has managed to hold meetings via Zoom and continues to plan and develop outreach activities for the day we get back to "normal".

Just to update you on the composition of the committee, it is comprised of co-conveners, Roy Graham and Maralyn Stirling (Charities, Pre-Fives volunteer, etc), Liz McKellar (Friends of Jesus, Pre-Fives volunteer, etc), Norma Thompson (Foodbank contact/volunteer), Rachel Gilmour (Pre-Fives, Belong, Children's Outreach Fun Days, ideas person), Margaret Scott (Thursday coffee morning), Cammy Dick (prayer, youth work, etc), and of course Rev Scott Burton. (.....).

We meet every couple of months and try to coordinate, encourage and promote the Church's response to the various needs of the community while witnessing to our Lord and spreading the Good News.

Some of this can overlap with other teams such as Discipleship and Pastoral Care, but all activities are co-ordinated via the periodic Team Leader meetings.

Some of the activities we have been involved with in the last few months include:

Pre-Fives in the manse garden.

Gill and Rachel did sterling work with their volunteers in continuing to provide some form of respite for young mums in the area, in difficult restrictive times and in very cold conditions. This all came to a halt when we went into extended lockdown.

Community Christmas activities:

A Treasure hunt took place in very poor weather with 16 children, majority non church, taking part.

Decoration of Church front:

Lighting and displays in windows highlighted our continued presence during lockdown.

Forth-coming events include:

Easter Treasure Hunt, increased use of church windows and railings to convey the Easter message, Christian Aid week 10-16th May and a Community Litter Pick

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

We continue to maintain contact with this Charity, who reach out to the poor and hurting in the community, working with those who struggle with debt by providing real solutions to their financial problems and developing a plan to get them debt-free. They do this while witnessing to their Christian faith.

We hope to work closer with CAP in the future, but in the meantime we continue to highlight the contact details for the charity.

If you or someone you know could benefit from their help then call:

CAP Help Line – Struggling with debt or unemployment? Need some help breaking free from habits or learning new life skills?

CALL FREE ON 0800 328 0006

The CAP story**How it all started**

With a small donation and big faith, John Kirkby started Christians Against Poverty in 1996. He believed God was calling him to sacrifice his career in finance and use his knowledge of the industry to help the poor.

In his hometown of Bradford, John set off on the incredible journey of CAP. His faith adventure led him to people crippled by debt; parents who couldn't feed their children, families facing eviction and desperate people living in fear and without hope. He used his expertise to negotiate with creditors, set up budgeting systems and offer a lifeline to those trapped in debt.

John knew that people all over the country were struggling in the same way and he began looking to replicate the work across the UK. With the vital ingredients of a church to partner with, a passionate person to be trained as a debt counsellor and the faith that God would provide, four new CAP centres were opened at the end of 1998.

Since then, CAP has rapidly grown its debt centre network and expanded its services to tackle the causes of debt and poverty too. As well as CAP Debt Help, we now help people step into employment through CAP Job Clubs, help people get control of their habitual dependencies through Fresh Start and a brand new service, CAP Life Skills, to equip people to live well on a low income. Our vision is to bring freedom and good news to the poor in every community through a nationwide network of CAP projects.

If there is anything you have read here that makes you want to know more or you want to comment / volunteer then contact the Community Outreach team via Maralyn (Tel 01324 712682 or maralyn.stirling3@outlook.com) and Roy (07504062924 or roymunro13@gmail.com)

Roy Graham and Maralyn Stirling, Joint Conveners

Finance Report

As another year has ended, the provisional figures for 2020 are as follows:

Our income through the FWO and Open Plate and Standing Orders was as follows:

	FWO	Open Plate	Standing Orders	Total
	£	£	£	£
52 weeks to 31 st December 2020	26,894.78	2,129.31	98,047.08	127,071.17
Budget for the year 2020	40,200.00	8,000.00	92,000.00	140,200.00
Increase/(Decrease) vs Budget	(13,305.22)	(5870.69)	6,047.08	(13,128.83)
Increase /(Decrease) %				
52 weeks to 31 st December 2019	40,183.94	8,875.35	80,509.08	129,568.37
Increase /(Decrease) 2019 v 2020	(13,289.16)	(6,684.04)	17,538.00	(2,497.20)
Increase /(Decrease) % 2019/2020	(33.07)	(75.31)	21.78	1.93

This is an extremely encouraging position considering that for almost nine months our services have been disrupted due to the Covid19 pandemic. It is also pleasing to report that it is almost £2,000 lower than our anticipated overall reduction of £15,000. To you the members, our sincere thanks for the way you have supported the various ways to continue to support God's work during this difficult time.

During 2020 there was a further increase in the use of standing orders.

Other key income figures in 2020 were -

Other income and one-off donations £12,500

Gift Aid £26,863

Overall our income in 2020 was £7,200 less than the budget of £174,000.

Our expenditure during 2020 was £6,100 less than the budget of £150,000. There were savings in local staffing costs of almost £6,400 of which £ 5,200 was due to the use of the Government's Job Retention Scheme (or Furlough). Our building costs and other local costs were some £4,600 less than the budget, this was offset by our investment of £4,900 in installing the necessary equipment to provide live streaming of the Sunday services. It is recognised that without your financial support during 2020, the final outcome could have been very different.

The Deacons' Court in February approved the Budget for 2021 which has been prepared projecting a gradual change every quarter in the current lockdown restrictions. Hopefully, there will be a more normal situation after June /July.

Our overall income in 2021 is budgeted at £164,375 and expenditure at £149,643. There are also some £15, 000 property costs delayed in 2020 due to Covid that could be incurred if the restrictions are significantly eased.

Finally, although there is much positivity to report, there will continue to be challenging times ahead and we ask that you continue to financially support and pray for the work of the Lord in this your church.

Alan Macfarlane
Treasurer

Calling All Knitters

The World Day of Prayer Scottish Committee is hosting the International Committee Meeting in Edinburgh in 2022, where the delegates from around the world will be welcomed. They would like to provide all delegates with a 'Prayer Square' to take away with them and need knitters, advanced or novice, to knit the squares.



The pattern:

Using needles 8 and D.K., cast on 17 stitches

Row 1- 4 knit

Row 5 K2, P13, K2

Row 6 and every alternate row- K

Row -7, 9, 11, 13, 15 - K2, P5, K3, P5, K2

Row - 17, 19, 21 - K2, P2, K9, P2, K2

Row -23, 25

as Row 7

Row 27 - as Row 5

Row 29 - 31 K

Row 32 Cast off

When knitting, please say a prayer thinking about those who will be at the International meeting and WDP friends all over the world.

When the Scottish committee meet together and place the squares in the bags and baskets, a message will be pinned on the squares; "This was made by a Scottish friend who prayed for you".

Please send any completed Squares to –

Jessie Wallace, 1 Randolph Crescent, Brightons, FK2 0HA.

Sunday Reader/Prayer Rota

4th April - 27th June 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.

April 4 th	R – Rachel Meek P – James Falconer	May 23 rd	R – Isobel Scougal P – Annabella Nimmo
April 11 th	R – Andrew Robertson* P – Jason Glass	May 30 th	R – Irene Stewart P – Eric Smith
April 18 th	R – Alistair McDonald P – David MacAskill	June 6 th ** No Communion	R – Maralyn Stirling P – Irene Stewart
April 25 th	R – Liz McKellar P – Marion Graham	June 6 th ** Communion	R – Eric Smith P – Rev Scott Burton
May 2 nd	R – Martin Miller P – Richard McManus	June 13 th	R – Marion Zachs* P – James Falconer
May 9 th	R – Pat Paterson P – Rena Moore*	June 20 th	R – Sunday School Closing P – Maggy Dick
May 16 th	R – Billy Rankine P – Rachel Meek	June 27 th	R – Norma Thompson P – Jason Glass

** 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. 07787 704269 or email jeanmeek@virginmedia.com. 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
1 st April	Maundy Thursday	13 th May	Rachel Meek
8 th April	Elwyn Batt	20 th May	Elwyn Batt
15 th April	Ian Lawson	27 th May	Ian Lawson
22 nd April	Irene Stewart	3 rd June	Irene Stewart
29 th April	James Falconer	10 th June	James Falconer
6 th May	Marion Graham	17 th June	Marion Graham
		24 th June	Rachel Meek

FLOWER CALENDAR



The distribution of the 'church flowers' was temporary halted due to the lockdown restrictions implemented at the beginning of January. Following, the recent relaxing of these restrictions this will now recommence as soon as possible. There will be a short catch-up period before we return to the calendar dates below. We will continue for the present time where the flowers will not be in the sanctuary as part of the Sunday worship. 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
April	
4 th	Margo and Robert Wilson
11 th	Vacant
18 th	Thursday Coffee Morning
25 th	Marie McCormack
May	
2 nd	Fiona McLuckie
9 th	Anne Tomlinson
16 th	Maralyn Stirling
23 rd	Alan and Lynne Macfarlane
30 th	Vacant
June	
6 th	Jean Beattie
13 th	Winnie Patrick
20 th	Alan and Norma Thompson
27 th	Nancy Lees

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.

Please join with us for any or all of our Services

Thursday 1st April 7pm Maundy Thursday*

Friday 2nd April 7pm Good Friday*

Sunday 4th April 11am Easter Sunday Family Service

[Sunday 11th April 11am Morning Worship](#)

[And every Sunday thereafter at 11am](#)

*Services available on the Braes Churches YouTube channel <http://braeschurches.org.uk>

[Services available online at live.brightonschurch.org.uk](http://live.brightonschurch.org.uk)

As numbers are currently limited it is necessary to book a place in Church for these services, please call Church Office 01324 713855 or email info@brightonschurch.org.uk for Zoom access details