



LARBERT OLD CHURCH OF SCOTLAND



# Bulletin

## MAY 2020

Welcome to Larbert Old's very first online Bulletin. Usually the Bulletin is drawn up some three weeks in advance of our Communion services throughout the year. However, due to the circumstances of the pandemic, we have been unable to hold our communion service in June or to issue the Bulletin in the usual way by hard copy to all members of Larbert Old Church.

We hope you enjoy reading the articles below from our different contributors. Although the church buildings are closed, Larbert Old church is very much alive and working in the community.

My dear friends,

During these unprecedented times, I don't know about you, but I took time to look up my "to do" list.

It was filled with many items ranging from the large decorating jobs to the small trivial things including sorting out old photographs.

***"OK. So how did I tackle this list?"***

I started prioritising the large jobs then working down towards the trivial, starting with decorating our downstairs bedroom. I psyched myself up and put myself in "decorating" mode – looked out the pasting table, brushes, plumb line, scissors, etc. and was all set – UNTIL – **B&Q closed, as did every other DIY shop in the area.**

I was devastated (aye right!!)

***"OK. Plan B – sort out old photographs"***

I scoured the loft, garage and cupboards to find photographs of every condition, colour and era.

It was then that the thought of decorating the downstairs bedroom suddenly seemed more appealing !!

There were literally hundreds of them.

***"OK, you're in lockdown so get on with it"***

I soon discovered why my early primary school photos were in an old school bag tucked away up in the loft. I could only have been described as the "ugliest wean in the Grange School". My teenage photos weren't much better with my "Beatles" haircut.

I came across a photo of the BP Apprentices in 1968 and looked at the length of my hair. Back came a memory of one of the foreman telling me to get a haircut. Being a "lippy teenager" I replied:

***"I was recruited for what's in my heid, no what's on it"*** – BAD MOVE.

It heralded a time of "latent retribution" – being sent to do all the jobs no one wanted, crawling through and across pipe tracks, being sent up to the top of the flare stack during overhauls and being sent into a furnace to sweep out the debris after maintenance.

***"OK you learned your lesson the hard way"*** It certainly did. Not only that. It was that same foreman who had to sign for extra leave for me to play with the Pipe Band at the summer competitions.

I was soon to learn the true meaning of “**lockdown**” – being stuck in the BP on a Saturday afternoon while the others in the band were competing in the Scottish Championships at Princes Street Gardens Edinburgh. To add insult to injury, we won the Grade 1 Championships that day and the band played through Princes Street that evening.

Today I can smile at that photograph, but I never forgot the lesson it taught me. That rash quip cost me a harsh lesson in life. Worse was though, that it was the same year I was awarded my Boys’ Brigade Queen’s Badge. I was reminded of some of the words of our object “**obedience, reverence, discipline and self respect**”.

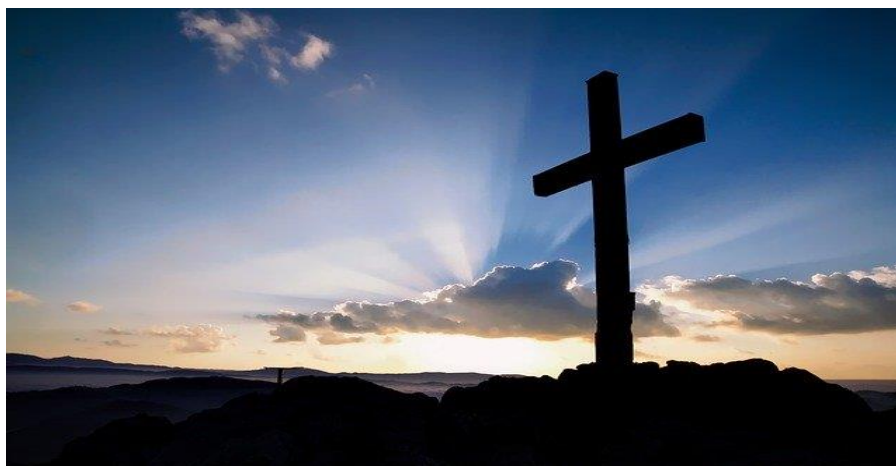
The outcome of that escapade was my sincere apology to the foreman, followed by a haircut, then had to play for my place back in the band to compete at the World Championships in Glasgow Green.

I learned to live by the rules.

As we live through this current pandemic, I’m certain that if we live by the rules rather than flaunt them, support our health and care services and act with compassion towards one another, we will come through this ready to tackle our large jobs like decorating the downstairs bedroom – ***(does anyone know when B&Q will be opening?)***

Every blessing to you all.

Walter Williamson  
Interim Moderator



## **Word from the Manse**

Hello from the Manse or rather my Study here in Bonnyside. Here we are in the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the year already, halfway through 2020 and what a lot has changed in this first half of the year.

Back in January we celebrated the New Year with all our plans and resolutions, none of us could have predicted that by Easter the world as we know it would have changed. The onset of the worldwide Pandemic due to the Coronavirus, Covid 19, has seen the way we live our lives change dramatically. Back in March the 23<sup>rd</sup> The Prime Minister Boris Johnston announced Lockdown measures which were put in place in an attempt to limit the spread of the Virus and in so doing reduce the pressure on our emergency services. We have had to listen to daily reports about the importance of Staying at Home, Flattening the Curve, Protecting the NHS, reducing the 'R Number' and washing your hands. In his announcement to the Country He said: "These are the only reasons you should be leaving your home.

Shopping for basic necessities

One form of exercise a day - either alone or with members of your household

Medical need or to provide care help vulnerable person

Travel to work - but only if necessary and you cannot work from home.

"You should not be meeting friends, you should not be meeting family members who don't live in your home, you should not be shopping except for essentials. "If you don't follow the rules, the police have power to enforce them including with fines. We will immediately close all shops selling non-essential goods, other premises including libraries and places of worship. "We will stop all gatherings of more than two people in public and stop all social events - excluding funerals".

And so, it was that we were unable to meet in Larbert Old for worship, and the Halls which were so widely used by the community and our own organisations, were also closed.

These unprecedented measures have affected the very fabric of society, and for us the way that we connect with each other has changed beyond all recognition. At the very heart of our faith is the call to love one another, to care pastorally for those in need, to meet together to worship and learn together, yet this has been taken from us. Isolation for us has meant the

removal of these things that we hold dear. We cannot see or meet other family members, meet friends, involve ourselves in any social interaction lest we stay at least six feet apart. We are unable to visit family or friends in any of our Care Homes or Hospitals and this is distressing for both patients and families alike.

Worship is now provided via the computer or over the internet, which is fine if you have the means to access or the knowledge of how things like YouTube, Zoom, Facebook, Twitter and all these alien concepts for some. Weddings and Baptisms in our Church have been postponed and Funerals cannot take place in our Sanctuary but held in either the Crematorium or Graveside with a limited number in attendance. I for one have found this to be very challenging, when visiting families is not allowed and all arrangements are done over the telephone and email. The desire to bring compassion and pastoral care is hampered and diluted by the current restrictions. I have however assured families that we will in good time have a Service of Celebration for all whom we have lost.

It is a time for us to be patient, patience is one of the rarest virtues in today's 'everything now world'. And yet patience has rarely been more needed, as many of us are desperate to break free of "stay home" isolation and get back to normality as soon as possible. We will not be able to meet together this month, as planned, to share The Lord's Supper, neither were we able to do so at Easter and this is something that I pray we will return to very soon. Of course, it is good and right to be eager to gather again as churches, and we should take [Hebrews 10:25](#) seriously when it says we ought not neglect meeting together.

We will feel the ache of what is lost when we only meet virtually, and every one of us should long for the day when "church on Zoom" gives way to "church in a room." That day will come. But we should be careful to not rush it. We should be careful to not go faster than our Government allows, or faster than those in our community can understand. We should be patient with a timeline that might be slower than we'd prefer; patient with a reopening process; patient with Church leaders feeling the pressure of this complex situation; and patient with one another as we figure out the new normal. As hard as it will be to practice patience, remember that in the scheme of eternity this season—whether it's months long or years—will be but a moment. As much as ever before, Christians should follow the advice of James(1:19). to be "quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger"

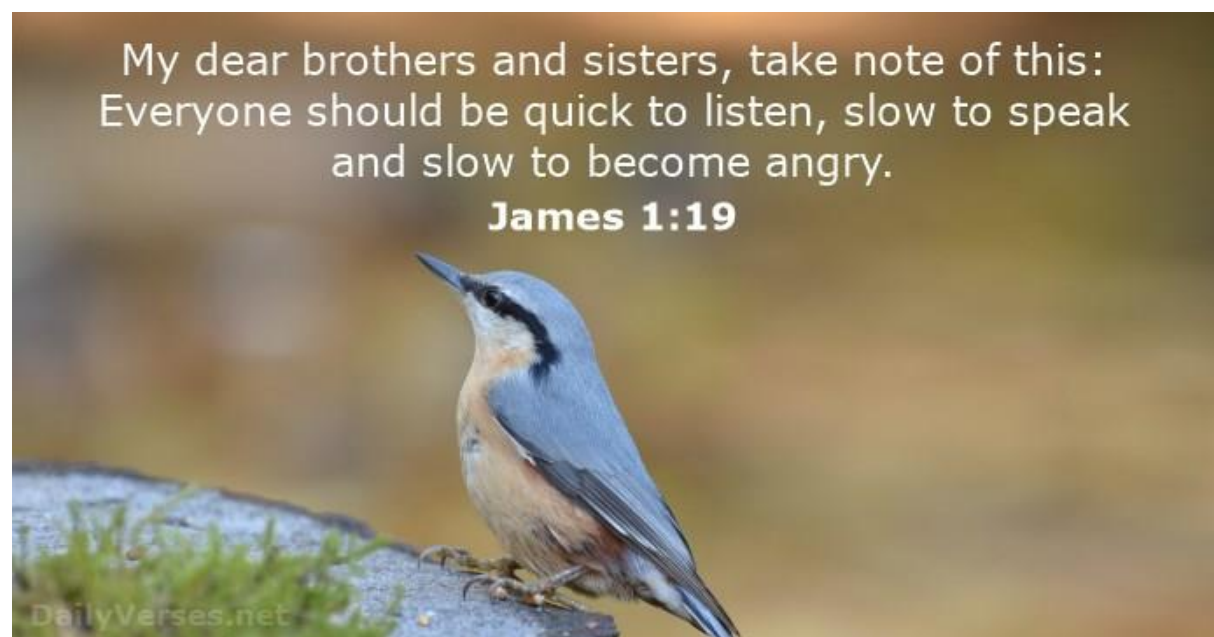
Larbert Old is still very much here and a voice in the community despite the Sanctuary not being accessed. We continue to communicate with the various groups e.g. Boys' Brigade, Sunday Club, Elders with their districts and ongoing discussions about our Bicentenary and plans as to how we will facilitate our return. I am in constant touch with many other Churches and in particular with our friends at Dunipace and Rev. Dr Jean Gallagher who sends to you all her best wishes.

Until we meet again in our Sanctuary to worship together, can I assure you that each and every one of you is in our prayers. I will continue to post a thought for the day Monday to Saturday and you can join in worship every Sunday with the Audio Broadcast from Larbert Old. If you are not able to connect to these, there are many programmes and services available both on Radio and on National Television, which I encourage you to watch, listen and take part in when you can.

I hope we will be able to be together soon, but until that day, Stay Safe, and continue to love the Lord.

Many Blessings

Iain Scoular  
Locum Minister



## Communion Roll

At the present time there are 263 on the Communion Roll. Sadly, since we last met at the beginning of March in Larbert Old for our Sunday Worship seven of our members have been called to Higher Service. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of the following:-

Mrs Catherine Leishman,  
Mr Douglas Leithead,  
Mr John Ryder,  
Mrs Elizabeth Hill,  
Mrs Jean McCracken,  
Mrs Jane (Jean) Nisbet  
Mrs Sylvia Rennie



On a happier note we extend our congratulations to Leigh and Colin Betts on the safe arrival of their daughter Gabriella Hope. Grace is delighted to be a big sister.

Mary Petrie  
Roll Keeper

## Property

Since the preparation of the March bulletin we have carried out two tasks of improvement to the Sanctuary. The four main ceiling lights, which have given problems in the past have been renewed. The new lights have LED technology, which promises better lighting, a saving in running costs and a lighting source with a very long life.

The bare plaster walls in the Sanctuary which date back to the dry rot eradication in 2015 and 2016 have been decorated.

A contract has been placed with Mylchreest & Nairns of Stirling, for the re-slating of the South slope of the Church roof at a cost of £43,000. This company carried out the re-slating of the North slope in 2017. This work has been delayed because of lockdown.

The weather during the period of the lockdown has been absolutely perfect for roofing work..... but that's life!

Ronnie Cheape, Property Convener

## **Message from the Treasurer**

We last met as a congregation in church on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Since that date the sanctuary and the halls have been closed under the restrictions imposed by the Government to cope with the Coronavirus pandemic.

Closure means no income from Open Plate and WFO Envelope offerings, but happily a large proportion of the giving to the church is by monthly standing order through the bank, and we give thanks to all our members who give by standing order. I encourage those of you who give by weekly Freewill Offering Envelopes to set your giving aside each week, ready to bring it to church when we are able to hold services of worship there again, or then to contact me to arrange for collection of your envelopes. Hopefully also those of you who choose to give your offering in the Open Plate will also set your giving aside ready to bring it to give when services resume.

We also have no income from the community groups who use our halls as they are unable to meet there. We are feeling the loss of this rental income, but also sadly recognising the disappointment that we are restricted from offering our halls for the use of the varied community groups who enjoyed their use. Closure means that some regular costs no longer apply or are reduced, and this obviously helps, but the bank figures show we are running a monthly “shortfall” of some £1500.

Happily, we have adequate “reserves” which can cover these shortfalls for a period, and hopefully part of the shortfalls will be made good when members who give by WFO envelope or Open Plate are able to bring or send their offering to the church. At the present time we can manage to send our monthly contribution to the Church of Scotland Ministries and Mission Fund, which covers our cost for ministry, and we can pay our local bills meantime.

There is, as you read above, no short-term cash flow crisis, BUT as always, and especially now when we all have time to reflect on the value of our church to us, I encourage you to review your giving. ‘The kirk aye needs money..... ‘

Alistair Simpson (562195 : alistair1939@gmail.com)



## **Bicentenary Committee**

The Committee last met on the 6th February. Although we have been unable to meet since then, there have been one or two actions that have taken place. I will also take this opportunity to update you on the current position with celebrating the Bicentenary. Dates, of course, may be subject to change due to pandemic implications.

Celebrations would commence on Doors Open Day on 19th September 2020. The intention was that the updated Church History Book would be launched that day along with various merchandising celebrating the bicentenary. The contributors to the book would lead the meeting.

The History Book now has all contributions received and in due course Ian Scott, who is pulling everything together will make arrangements to print.

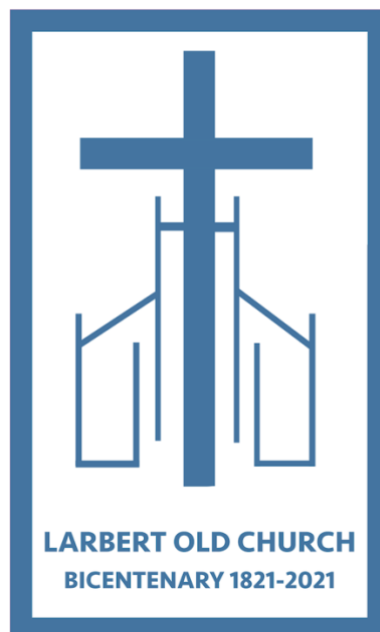
While the building work was completed in 1820, the first service to take place was on the first Sunday in January in 1821. Accordingly, the service of celebration will take place on 3rd January 2021 at 3pm when the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will attend. Letters will go out soon to local dignitaries.

A celebratory dinner has been booked for Beancross on 15th May 2021, and tickets will be made available in due course. Entertainment has been arranged.

Merchandise has been ordered and tumblers, pens, tea towels, mugs and notepads will all be available to purchase.

The Committee has other thoughts in addition to the above and much will depend on how and when the country emerges from lockdown.

Eric Appelbe  
Convener



# LARBERT OLD CHURCH



## AND THRIVING

### **Our Doors May be Closed but Worship at Larbert Old is Thriving**

We physically closed the doors of the Church after the service on the 15<sup>th</sup> March, and by the Monday morning Iain had a recording desk all but ready to use. Iain is used to being in front of a microphone having been on the radio every day with Revival FM so this comes naturally, bringing his weekly Audio Sermons 'from his house to yours'.

Over these past weeks people have been turning to alternative ways to receive the word of God and to get a daily message, and those turning to both Facebook and our website have shown an increase in usage and interest. The increase in numbers led us to rethink the banner which appears at the front of the church's Facebook page, to show that although we currently can't meet on a Sunday, we are still managing to stay in touch with not only our members but to a wider congregation.

Iain's Sunday Audio Service increases in listeners every week, with the Easter Week Services being particularly well received. The Easter Sunday Service reached across the world, all the way to New Zealand. These services are still available and are on the Church's website, [www.larbertoldchurch.org](http://www.larbertoldchurch.org).

As more and more people engage with the Facebook page it allows us to spread the word.

Iain's daily 'thought for the day' is especially welcome and the post that has had the most following was a couple of weeks ago with a quote from Mother Theresa reaching over 3,500 – all over the world.

If you know of anyone who does not like to use Facebook but would still like the link to the Audio Service on a Sunday then please contact me at [larbertoldcontact@gmail.com](mailto:larbertoldcontact@gmail.com) and I will add their names to the list to receive not only the Sunday Service but also the daily posts that Iain asks me to be posted on Facebook.

Sallie Allan  
Web/Facebook Administrator



“People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway.

For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.”

— Mother Teresa

## 2nd Larbert Boys' Brigade



Dear Friends,

I hope that this message finds everyone well and coping in these unusual circumstances. It is certainly different in the Allan household. I had forgotten what it is like to have two relatively young people in the house 24/7. You go to the cupboard, or fridge, for a “wee goodie” to find them all gone. When you question what happened, all you get is “was it in the communal area (the kitchen), therefore it is available to all and you were too slow”. So far, nothing is safe except the dog’s food and treats. Everything goes biscuits, fruit, crisps, juice, even my beer stock!!

At this time of year, the spare bedroom would be festooned with envelopes containing badges, certificates, prizes and trophies all laid out in the order that they would be presented to the boys. Checked and re-checked to ensure no one is left out. Not this year. We have had to cancel the Inspection which was to be on 22nd May. This would have been a very good year with everyone having attained the required credits for their badges and two boys attaining their Queen’s Badge and eight, yes eight - not a typo, receiving their President’s Badge. These are the two highest awards in the Boys’ Brigade and their attainment should be properly marked. I am hoping that, with Kirk Session approval, we can hold a Presentation of Awards Service in the church one Sunday morning in September rolling it into our annual Dedication Service.

Now some might be wondering what we have been doing since “lockdown”. It is a bit like the mixed messages we are receiving in the media recently. Every company has been instructed to halt all meetings, activities and outings until further notice. However, I hear of companies being involved in distributing food, medicines etc. It is all good and necessary work but goes against the instructions received from H.Q. I did look at the Company offering help but felt that it contradicted what we had been told. Also, as we would be dealing with vulnerable people, the boys would need to be P.V.G. checked or be accompanied by an officer which then caused issues with social distancing. Parental approval was another issue. What if one of the boys contracted the virus and the worst happened? Having weighed up all the factors, while it would have been good to see the boys help in the community, the risks were too great. I have a duty of care to my boys as well as my officers. I am pleased to say some boys and officers, including myself, have offered their help on a personal basis.



All is not lost during this period. I was delighted to find that the Brigade had been active and introduced – BBatHOME. This is a new initiative providing boys, of all age groups, with activities to do each week with guidance notes to officers and parents. I am pleased to say that this has been taken up by some of the boys and indeed one lad arranged a tea party, baking and making bunting for his family to celebrate VE Day. Others have been engaged in crafts and artwork with a number of rainbows adorning front windows.

Looking to the future I have to plan for next session as if we were back to normal, which I doubt, and then adjust as necessary. I have enrolled the President Badge boys for the first part of their Queen's Badge training, being a residential course at Carronvale in the hope that it actually happens. Then of course there is camp in Moffat early in September, one of the highlights of the year.

Talking of next session, I hope to welcome two new officers to the team being Queen's Men I should have discharged from the ranks at our Inspection. Rev John Brown, our Company Chaplain, has decided to step down this year having helped me out with pastoral matters since 2013. We cannot be without a Chaplain and I am pleased to say that Iain Scoular has agreed to take up the role, although this has still to be approved by the Kirk Session. I can't, as Captain, make such an appointment - see 40+ years a Boys' Brigade officer and still learning.

Anyway, all for now, please stay safe and well and I look forward to being back together in whatever capacity in the not too distant future.

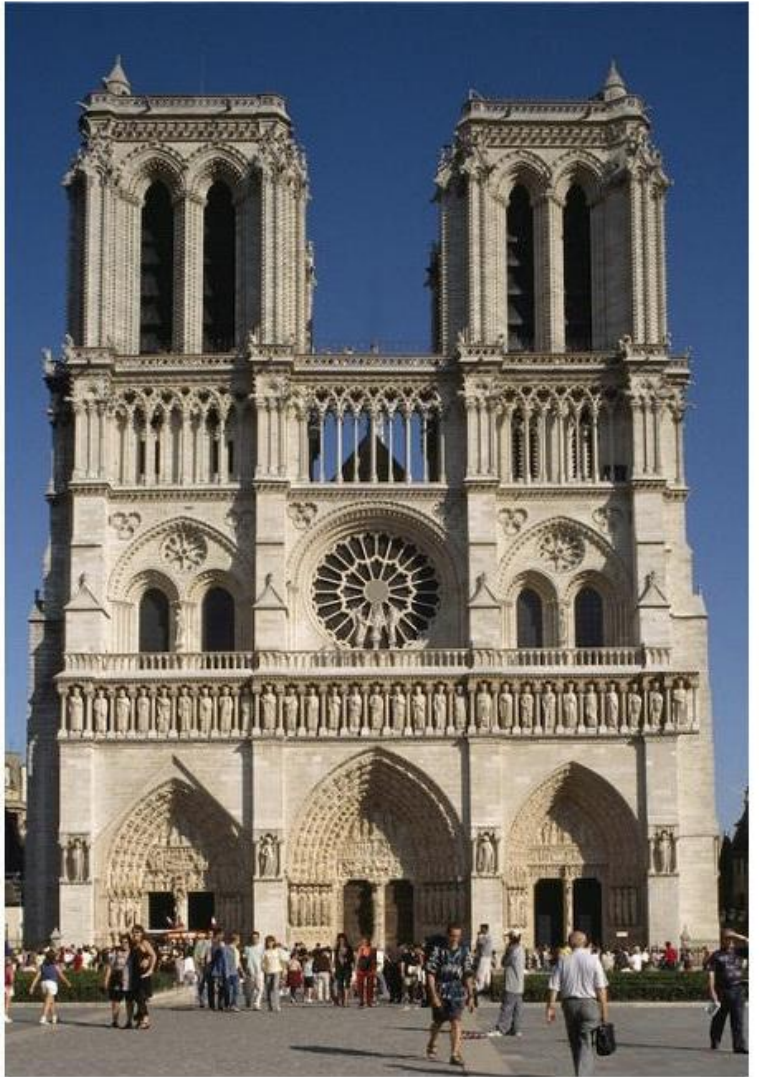
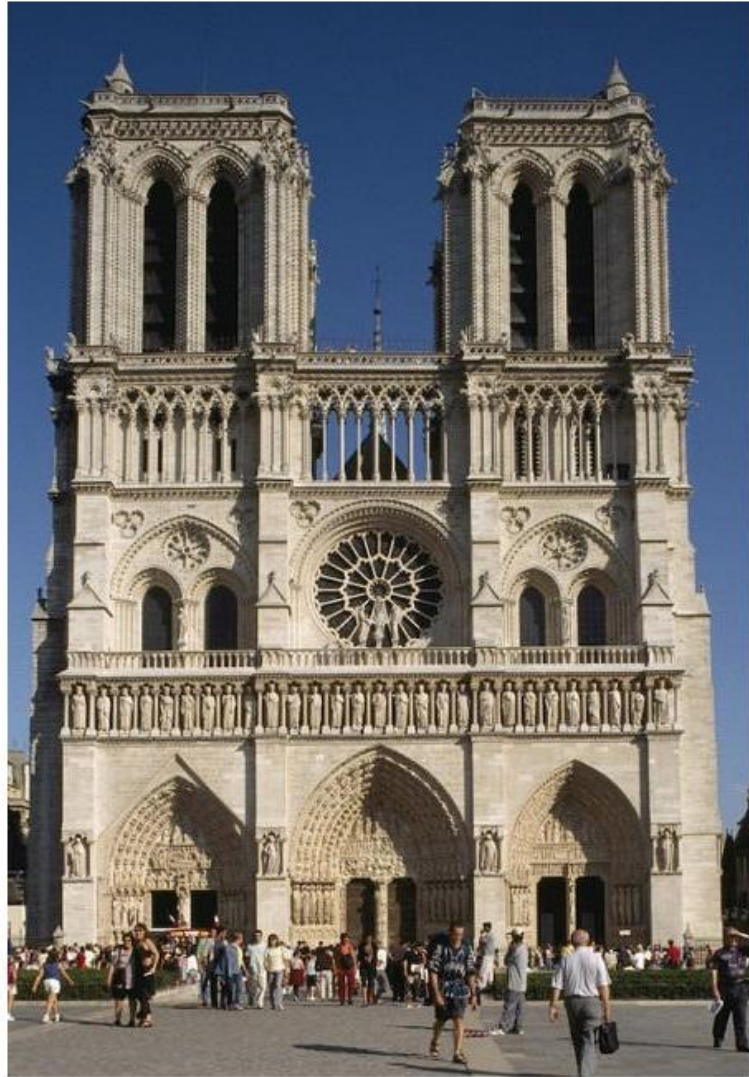
Brian R Allan  
Captain

**THE BOYS'**  
**BRIGADE**  
**> the adventure begins here**



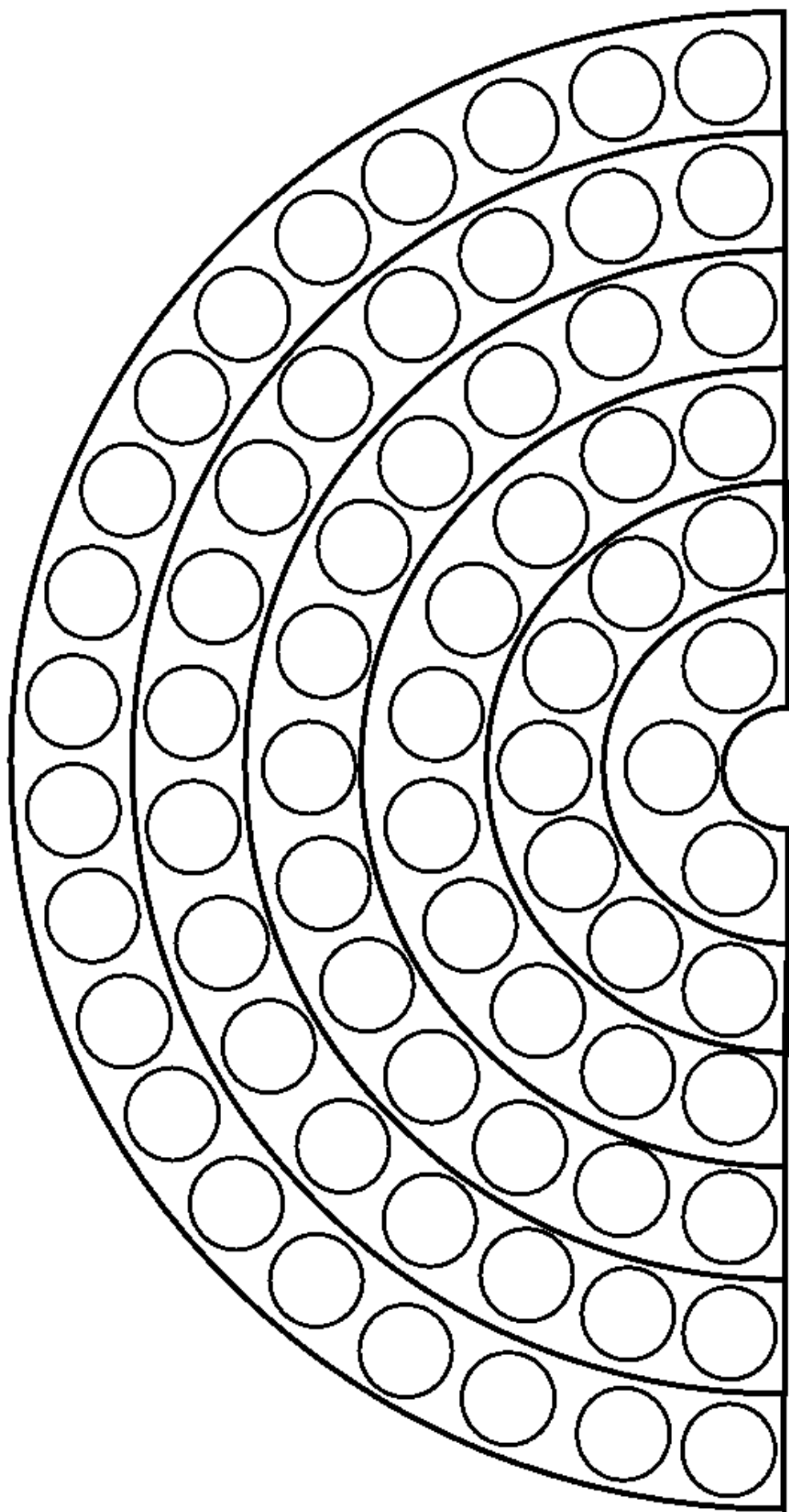
**Something to keep you busy**

**Spot the difference – there's 5 to find**



Rainbow, rainbow in the sky,  
See the clouds float on by.

For our younger members too





May each glimpse of God's goodness  
open our minds, free our hearts  
and lay bare our souls to love's truth.

AMEN



### Contact Details

<https://www.larbertoldchurch.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/LarbertOldChurch/>

<https://churchofscotland.org.uk/home>

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Interim Treasurer	Mr Alistair Simpson	Tel: 01324 562195
Property Convenor	Mr Ronald Cheape	Tel: 01324 554951
Hall Convenor	Mrs Sallie Allan	Tel: 01324 555478
Safeguarding	Mrs Sallie Allan	Tel: 01324 555478



**LARBERT OLD CHURCH**

**ALIVE**



**AND THRIVING**