



### Church Bulletin,

### Communion: 1st March 2020

**Where does the Time go?**

# It’s a question I hear myself ask with increasing regularity these days. No sooner have you planned something than the day arrives and I hear my mother’s voice asking that old familiar question “Where does the time go?” I always wondered if she ever found out the real answer to that. But disappear it does and as we run to keep up with the speed this world, we live in moves it it’s hard to slow down and keep up with all that is changing around us. Here in Larbert Old it seems that we have faced more than our fair share of Changes and it doesn’t seem to be slowing down. The Church of Scotland is facing massive changes at the moment and the timescale given to us is very limited indeed.

# Meeting in Edinburgh on 21 November 2019, commissioners gave their support to a report from the Assembly Trustees recommending the merger of the four central councils of the Church into two new agencies: ‘Faith Nurture Forum’ - a merger of the Ministries Council and the Mission and Discipleship Council--and the ‘Faith Impact Forum’, a merger of the Church and Society Council and the World Mission Council. The first priority for the hew agencies is to decide what work should be discontinued, what should continue and what might better be devolved to Presbyteries. Further; the 2019 General Assembly instructed the Trustees to achieve a reduction in central administration costs of 20%-30%. At the same time the structure of Presbyteries is undergoing reforms with the goal of reducing the number of Presbyteries from 45 to around 12. That work is already underway and overtures on Presbytery mergers are expected to go to the 2020 General Assembly. If we indeed are to move forward if we are to progress, then Change we must. “Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.” ~Georg Bernard Shaw

# The Kirk Session of Larbert Old is very much a part of these discussions and along with our friends in Dunipace are at the forefront of providing ground-breaking and radical ways by which these targets might be achieved with our Partnership way of operating. We are meeting regularly with all the Churches in our area working together to shape the new ways in which our Church will operate.

# Time has not stood still for us at Larbert Old and over the past few years we have gone from being a Church reeling after events, uncertain of its future and placed in Guardianship, to a Church which is growing and thriving, our recent Local church review has shown us to be in good order and presbytery are now to look at our position regarding Guardianship.

# Larbert Old have shown that we can overcome adversity and we are now leading in the changes that need to take place in our beloved Kirk, so that it might overcome the issues before it.

# I am excited about where we are going, nervous about what we will encounter and confident that the folks here, that make up Larbert Old, will be there at the front ensuring that The Lord is still worshipped in the Church at the Cross for years to come. This coming year we will begin our celebrations to recognise 200 years of Larbert Old. Where does the time go?

# Many Blessings

# Iain

**The Difference**

(I got up early one morning and rushed right into the day

I had so much to accomplish that I didn’t take time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me and heavier came each task,

‘Why doesn’t God help me?’ I wondered,

He answered, ‘You didn’t ask’.

I wanted to see joy and beauty,

But the day toiled on, grey and bleak,

I wondered why God didn’t show me,

He said ‘But you didn’t seek’.

I tried to come into God’s presence;

I used all my keys at the lock,

God gently and lovingly chided,

‘My child, you didn’t knock’.

I woke up early this morning

And paused before entering the day,

I had so much to accomplish

That I had to take time to pray.

# My dear friends,

I’m now into my fourth year with you. So much has happened in that time, yet it hardly seems that long since I became involved in Larbert Old. I’m reminded of a time back in 1981 when I was appointed BB Captain of the 2nd Bo’ness Company. I had been in the BB since 1958 as a member of the Life Boys never imagining that someday I would lead the Company. In 2017, I retired as BB Captain for the second time. In 1984 I was ordained as an elder at Bo’ness St. Andrew’s. I was new to the workings of a kirk session and was in awe of my fellow elders. I have been presbytery elder at Bo’ness St. Andrew’s for the past ten years.

As you may know, I am a “Burns man” and this year have attended a number of Burns Suppers participating in a number of roles ranging from piping in the haggis, addressing it, reciting poems including Holy Willie’s Prayer and my favourite “Tam O’ Shanter”. In “Tam”, the poem goes:

“Nae man can tether time or tide, the hour approaches Tam maun ride, That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane, that dreary hour he mounts his beast in, and sic a night he taks the road in, as ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

This epic poem was written in 1790 by Burns and takes around 17 minutes to recite.

Time is something we have no control over. In today’s world with all its pressures, we never seem to have enough of it. This is something I spoke of the last time I conducted worship in the church. For some people, time becomes the enemy. They are continually fighting it, never winning.

However, that is not the same for everyone. For some, time is still the enemy for a completely different reason. Life seems to stand still, loneliness and boredom rule their lives. One day flows into another – never seeing or speaking to a relative, friend or neighbour.

Perhaps it’s time for those who are at one end of the time spectrum who never seem to have enough of it to think of those at the other end who seem to lead an interminably long day or week or month and ask themselves “what is my life all about?” “Can I achieve a balance”?

Well, perhaps it’s a time to look at the scriptures, especially in the book of Ecclesiastes Chapter 3

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,

a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

What do workers gain from their toil? I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.

Later this year I “celebrate” a landmark birthday. I wish it weren’t so but there’s not much I can do about it. I just pray that I can live my life day by day, week by week and count the many blessings that God has bestowed on me. After all 70 is only 21 Celsius!!!

Every blessing to you all.

Walter.

**A Borders Psalm**

 Wha is my Shepherd, weel I ken, The Lord himsel’ is he;

He leads me whaur the girse is green, An’ burnies quate that be.

Aft times I fain astray wad gang. An’ wanner far awa’;

He fins me oot, He pits me richt, An’ brings me hame an’ a’.

Tho’ I pass through the gru’some cleugh, Fine I ken He is near.

His muckle crook will me defend, Sae I hae nocht tae fear.

A’ comforts whilk a sheep could need, His thochtfu’ care provides;

Tho wolves an’ dogs may prowl aboot, In safety me He hides.

His guidness an’ His mercy baith, Nae doot will bide wi’ me;

While faulded on the fields o’ time, Or a’ eternity.

**We have much to be thankful for at Larbert Old…**

Our gifted income in 2019 including tax recovered on Gift Aided donations was over 5% higher than in 2018, and we received three legacies which totalled over £47,000. We also have significantly increased our rental income for the use of our Halls by church and community groups. The increased rental income is welcome, but more important is the increased use of Larbert Old premises within the community.

On the costs front we are saving money and maintaining standards on the cleaning charges; we are paying lower fuel bills from the new church heating system, and during the year we replaced the subsidised minibus service with volunteer drivers who now bring the ex-minibus passengers to church Sunday by Sunday.

2019 saw the completion of the new heating system in the church, the construction of the new access ramp to the south door of the church, and the installation of the accessible toilet in the north vestibule. We were gifted a total of £13,000 from two trusts in Glasgow towards the costs of these works, but the rest came from our own Restoration Fund. Thanks to further contributions and the legacies received we have over £68,000 in the Fund today, and we will be planning the next steps in the spring. Join in and have your say on the priorities…………

Treasurers inevitably concentrate on money, and money is important to enable the ministry of Larbert Old Church to reach its congregation, membership, and parish and community at the western end of Larbert and beyond. It has been good to note that more members have joined in monthly giving during last year. I want to record, on behalf of the Kirk Session, our thanks to them, and to all of you who so faithfully give month by month over the years. It would be wonderful if more of those who retain their membership but do not contribute towards the ministry of their church would start to give on a regular basis.

I know all too well that there are many calls on our money month by month, and that all too often there is a struggle at each month end. Costs go up at home; costs also go up at church. The beginning of the year is the time to review your giving. Please reflect on when you last increased your monthly standing order. Please consider whether you could write a codicil to your will to leave some money to the church. I will be happy to meet with you to discuss either possible routeing for your giving. Please call (562195) or speak directly with me at church.

Larbert Old is a great Christian church family, reaching out in its ministry. If you are able to join us in worship, you will be very welcome. If you cannot come for whatever reason, please show your support financially, and also prayerfully. Please join in where you can………………….

Alistair Simpson.

**Property**

# The work in connection with the Disabled access and the Accessible toilet was completed by the end of 2019 and we have received the £13,000 in grants from the Charitable Trusts involved. Both of these facilities were required under the Equality Act of 2010 so we are now compliant. The church heating system appears to be achieving the comfort levels anticipated during the Winter months and the reduction in gas consumption is very significant. Not only saving in running costs but contributing to a greener planet.

# At present we have around £60,000 in our restoration fund and there are several projects under consideration, which will readily consume that sum, At the moment, further expenditure on the slated roofs of the church and original hall are the most important areas so that we can achieve a wind and watertight situation. The present slating on the hall roof probably dates back to 1905 and is simply no longer fit for purpose. The extensive work required to the South slope of the church roof relates to poor decisions and workmanship carried out in 1997 when the existing slating was only overhauled in lieu of renewal, as a part of a larger project supervised by professional advisors and Historic Scotland, who funded half of the overall cost of £150,000. The only excuse I can offer on their behalf, was that the budget was too tight for the work required and corners had to be cut. The design and construction of our church made inspection of some potential trouble spots impossible without initial damage to the fabric

# As you will be aware, the long-awaited income from the Ferguson Trust, which we had hoped would contribute significantly to the maintenance and repair of the fabric of the church and halls, has produced no income to date. Whether its investments will make a significant contribution to our 2020 property costs is doubtful and cannot be included in a budget.

# It has become clear to me during my present stint as Property Convener, that over the years, our church property has suffered from underfunding, the normal maintenance of the basic fabric of the buildings was neglected while the congregation was busy working to raise considerable sums for some new project

# Until 1927, the local landowners, known as Heritors. had a legal duty to pay for the upkeep, repair and maintenance of Parish churches, and when this duty was abolished, congregations were faced with setting up fabric funds for the first time. Many Parish churches took the decision to introduce seat rents to be set aside as a fabric fund but Larbert Old assumed that once the congregation understood the changed circumstances, they would naturally increase their giving to compensate. This was a mistake and for the last century funding regular maintenance has been a problem.

# History Note; At the peak of Membership numbers, during the Ministry of Rev. Walter Gordon, 1943 to 1962, the membership increased from around 1600 to 2300 The average giving per member increased from around £1 PER YEAR in 1943 to £2 PER YEAR in 1961 By 1968 giving had increased to an average of £2.25 PER YEAR Is it any wonder that the property was neglected !!! and just to prove a point, a beautiful new manse was purchased, the two-storey part of the halls was built and a new car purchased for Rev. Walter Gordon as a result of separate fund-raising efforts.

# Ronald Cheape,

# Property Convener

# Pastoral Care

On 13th December 29 ladies and gentlemen met for a very enjoyable afternoon when we were entertained by a wonderfully lively group of children from the Village School. The children’s enthusiasm and enjoyment set the tone for a very happy afternoon.

Plans are underway for an outing in the Spring, when we hope more members of Larbert Old will join those who regularly come. More information later.

Joy Simpson

**Church Flowers**

As usual I am appealing for people to place and/or deliver flowers from the church. There are a few people who readily help when I ask them for any particular Sunday, but it is always nice when someone volunteers.

Joy Simpson

Social Committee

The social committee organised another very successful Christmas Fayre on Saturday 16th November 2019. It was very well attended by members of the congregation along with many family and friends as well as by many people from the local community. The atmosphere was vibrant and friendly. Many members also very generously donated to the various stalls. Thanks to all. Over £2000 was raised!

McRobert Pantomime

On Saturday 7th December over fifty members of the congregation including members of their families enjoyed an afternoon of fun and laughter at the McRobert Centre in Stirling to see Rapunzel. Afterwards most people came back to the church hall for fish ‘n’ chips and a time of fellowship.

Future Events

Quiz Night- Sat 22nd Feb 2020 7:30pm

£5 entry, BYOB and nibbles, selection of crisps will be on tables, maximum of 6 per team

More details on the following events will be confirmed nearer the time

Choir- Tues 28th April 2020

Afternoon with Bob and his keyboard – Friday 29th May 2pm

Car Treasure Hunt- Sat 15th August approx. 4pm

Christmas Fayre – Sat 14th November 2020 10am -1pm

 **2nd Larbert Boys’ Brigade**

Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe that by the time you read this article we will be almost two months into a new year and a new decade. Doesn’t time fly when you are having fun? It has been the usual busy time for the boys in the Company across all sections, all mainly positive.

As usual I start with my pals in the red jumpers, the Anchor Boys. Numbers are up a little since the start of the session and every new member is a welcome addition to the section. Lynne, Isabel and the Queen’s Badge boys continue to do sterling work and are now being helped by a mum who comes to teach crafts with them once a month. The boys love it, the things they do are new and fresh and involve lots of mess. The boys, and Larbert Old, once again played host to the Anchor Boy Fun Day where eighty-four boys from nine companies came for an afternoon of activities. I was there in a tea and coffee making capacity leaving the specialists to do their stuff with the boys.

In the Junior section, they are as lively as ever but I would like to see their numbers grow especially as nearly half move up to the Company Section next year. They are busy entering as many competitions as they can. The big one is the Maze Marching on the 7th of March. We played in the Battalion 5-a-sides and despite having only four boys in our team did really well losing one match to the eventual winners by a goal and winning the other two fixtures. Well done my heroes. If only we had five - who knows?

I started my piece with a mention of things “mainly positive”. I had to make a difficult decision towards Christmas by withdrawing the Company from the National competitions as we were struggling to fulfil fixtures. While unfortunate, we have to look at the positives. The reason we had to call off was so many “older” boys were sitting their National 5 and Higher prelim exams. Schooling, and their future, will always come first and we should be glad that we keep the boys interested up to and beyond this age.

I mentioned the older boys. We have been running appropriately aged classes for them, one of which was Alcohol Awareness. We gave them a set of pictures of various alcoholic drinks and asked them to say how many units of alcohol were in them and the alcohol by volume (ABV). One of the drinks was Blue WYK (a vodka based alco-pop - never tried it, just the colour puts me off). One of the lads thought it had an ABV of 10%. Now I am not sure if he was disappointed, or elated, when an officer told him that it was only 4%. The comment immediately came back “does that mean I can have two?”. Perhaps we need further training on this subject.

Camp 2020 has already been booked for September and we are back to Moffat. This proved a success last year and with different activities and wi-fi in the centre, it should be good fun again. I already have 13 boys handing in deposits to secure their place. I have suggested that for the Kirk Session visitation, Eric Appelbe and Iain Scoular come along for the weekend. They are taking a “rain check”.

Out-with the individual sections, the Company played host to the Battalion’s Christmas Carol service on 6th December 2019. It was a very successful event mainly because of the facilities that Larbert Old can provide, a car park, a large church and great halls. Over 300 boys from the Battalion, officers and invited guests attended the service with downstairs nearly full and a good number sitting in the balcony. The night’s collection raised £500 which was donated to two local charities caring for young people. We also asked the boys to bring along something for the Falkirk Food Bank. We were later told that 240.9 kgs of food had been collected and as someone said: - “AS INDIVIDUALS WE CAN DO WONDERS TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE”. There was a wee treat for the boys leaving the church that evening as they were all given a small selection box courtesy of the Battalion. A large number of folks came back for tea/ coffee and mince pies in the halls.

On the Toilet Twinning, we are making fantastic progress having already purchased an individual loo, we progressed to trying to raise funds for a school toilet block. I thought that this might be a bit optimistic but thanks to the generous support of everyone we are nearly there. I hope to be able to make an announcement on this, very shortly.

You will also remember that we held our 24-Hour Games Marathon with 50% of the sponsorship going to a former member of the company who was seriously ill with a brain tumour which turned out to be cancerous. I am delighted to say that we will shortly be making a presentation of a cheque for circa £650 to Adam and his family. Again, a huge thank you to those who helped reach this fantastic amount.

Lastly, you will hear that the Company has donated a new laptop computer to the Church to further enhance the technology available in the Church and Halls. The boys and officers are delighted to be able to do this in recognition of all the support, physically, financially and spiritually that Larbert Old has given to us.

To finish, for those who still watch children’s telly, you might remember at the end of the Looney Tunes cartoon time, Porky Pig (no connection to the Captain) bursts through a bass drum and shouts: - “That's all, folks!"

Brian R Allan - Captain

**Easter Quiz**

1. How many days does Lent last for?
2. Maundy Thursday is known to honour the?
3. The Sunday a week before Easter is known as?
4. Jesus was heard to say on the cross, Father forgive them…
5. The week before Easter is known as what week?
6. The Jewish holiday that falls around the same time as Easter is known as?
7. What is the name of the person who betrayed Jesus for silver?
8. Over Easter what day of the week is known as the good day?
9. Who found Jesus tomb empty?
10. Name the hill where Jesus was crucified?
11. Which person denied knowing Jesus 3 times?
12. Who authorised the crucifixion of Jesus?
13. Why is Easter known as the moveable feast?
14. Which actor and actress starred in the movie Easter Parade?

**Church Support of Young Families**

*Karen has two young children and goes to a weekly Toddler Group run by her local church. She says, ‘I’ve lived here for most of my life and never really felt part of the community until coming to this group. It’s very friendly and welcoming here, with a nice atmosphere. I have made good friends and value the support and encouragement I get.’*

*Susanne says, ‘Going to the local Toddler Group is an opportunity to get out of the house, meet others and have a hot drink. It is also a link to the church and an opportunity to ask questions and explore things spiritually.’*

What are the issues faced by young families in your area? What provision and support is available to them? Engaging with families and children in their earliest years is a significant response to local need. 52% of the UK's under-5s attend a church-based toddler group. Toddler groups strengthen and support parents to care for their children. Adults and children stay together as they take part in a range of play, music, story and craft activities and parenting support and relationships are built.

Parenting young children can be an exhausting and isolating time; greater numbers of young families may have no family support nearby and mental illness among parents of young children is increasing. Support and unconditional friendship and a safe place to go with their children can provide a lifeline. This is all the more needed following reductions in local authority provision.

Churches that have an outward focus and make connections with needs in their community make a significant impact on the lives of many individuals but also see the life and service of their church growing and deepening. Through understanding and responding to the needs of young families through intentional loving, sharing, praying, and serving, these groups can have a great impact on the lives of both parents and children. The toddler group may be a person’s first contact with a church or a place where they might reconnect with church, leading on to deeper connections with faith and the church: baptism, Messy Church, bible studies, parenting and marriage courses, foodbank provision, etc.

There is a direct connection between the experiences of early childhood and subsequent adult flourishing. Where children have a good foundation in their early years, building roots of security, identity and wellbeing, educational attainment and even brain development is strengthened and improved. The single most important factor influencing a child’s intellectual and social development is the quality of parenting and care they receive. It is very encouraging to see what a contribution churches are making to support parents and young children through their support of families and young children.

Visit www.churchofscotland.org.uk for more information and ideas about church work with toddler groups.

Church of Scotland - Mission & Discipleship - Congregational Learning Team

**Words of Wisdom**

1. Give God what is right …not what's left.
2. Man's way leads to hopeless end … God's way leads to endless hope.
3. He who kneels before God can stand before anyone.
4. Are you wrinkled with burden? Then come to church for a face-lift.
5. When praying, don't give God instructions … just report for duty.
6. We don't change God's message … His message changes us.
7. When God ordains, He sustains.
8. WARNING: Exposure to the Son may prevent burning.
9. Plan ahead: It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
10. Suffering from truth decay? Brush up on your Bible.
11. Exercise daily … walk with the Lord.
12. Give Satan an inch and he'll be a ruler.

Yesterday returneth not;

Tomorrow, perchance cometh not;

Today is time; misuse it not.

**Quiz Answers**

1. 40
2. The last supper
3. Palm Sunday
4. As they know not what they do
5. Holy week.
6. Passover
7. Judas Iscariot
8. Good Friday
9. Mary Magdalene
10. Calvary
11. Peter
12. Pontius Pilate
13. The date changes every year
14. Fred Astaire & Judy Garland

# Data Protection Act 1998

## **Retention of Membership Information - Fair Collection Notice**

The Kirk Session and Congregational Board of Larbert Old Church will use the personal details which members have provided to us for the purpose of administration in connection with their membership of the Church of Scotland in accordance with the decisions of Session or Board and within the constraints laid down by the Acts and Regulations of General Assembly. Such information will not be given to anyone outside the structures of the Church of Scotland without permission.

The expression “members” includes past and present members together with those persons, not being full members, who have indicated their wish to be associated with the activities of this Congregation. Minimal information may also be included in respect of the immediate family of members.

These personal details include personal identifiers such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, method and dates of adding to or removing from the Communion Roll or any Supplementary Roll, and may also include information regarding Givings. Some additional information may be held for the purposes of Safeguarding legislation. If a member wishes, for good reason, that some information remains confidential, they have a right to request that we preserve such confidentiality, provided that we are able to maintain contact with them through normal channels.

It is possible that some data held for pastoral purposes by the Minister or Elders falls into the category of sensitive data as defined in the Act. We will use this data only for the purpose of the Kirk Session’s pastoral oversight of the members of the Congregation and will destroy it when our purpose with it has been served.

All information held by us is governed by the security, confidentiality and other Principles of Data Protection contained in the Act and members have the right under the Act to apply for a copy of their personal information and to have any inaccuracies corrected.

On behalf of the Kirk Session,

Church Contacts

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The Church Week

Sundays 11.00am MORNING SERVICE

Mondays 9.30am Playgroup in Lower Hall



Tuesdays 7.30pm Ladies Club -last Tuesday of month

Wednesdays 9.30am Playgroup in Lower Hall

Thursdays 9.45am Mother & Toddler Group in Hall

Fridays 7.00pm BBs, Anchor Boys (age 6-7) upper hall

 7.00pm BBs, Junior Section (age 8-10) hall

 7.15pm BBs, Company Section (age 11+),

 Ladeside Primary School

Scottish Charities Number: SC 000445