

### **FLOWERS AT ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH CHURCH**

Due to a number of changes brought about by Corona Virus, we no longer have a Flower Committee.

However, we do recognise that many people enjoyed making a donation for flowers to mark an anniversary or a special occasion and it is indeed lovely to have fresh flowers in the church which then can be delivered to someone who is ill or who would be cheered by the gift of flowers.

If you would like to donate flowers for a specific Sunday, you are welcome to purchase flowers and put them in a vase on top of the font. There are scissors, vases etc in the utility room near the front door and the church is open every Thursday afternoon between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.

There is a calendar situated inside the vestibule at the front door of the church to which you can add your name on the Sunday that you would like to have your flowers in the church.

If you are unable to take the flowers into the church yourself, there is a small group of people who are willing to do that for you. This can be arranged by calling Sandra Cain on 321685.

### **CHURCH CHOIR – Finding Voice and Fellowship – Rhona Gourley**

After eighteen months of silence from the choir stalls, it is exciting for choir members to find their voices again. Much has changed since March 2020:

Services are now live streamed simultaneously with the live event, long standing members of the choir have retired or left for other reasons, introits are more suitable to the style of service and rehearsals are now a joint affair between Fairlie and St Columba's.

These changes are all part of the choral journey Church musicians take on as they continue to bring the power of music in worship to you.

This all sounds a bit serious, so maybe I should say, what a joy it is to work with our linked choirs.

We meet every Thursday at 2.00pm and alternate between the two churches. We are small in number but big on commitment to singing the Lord's songs.

Apart from singing., one of the highlights of Thursday rehearsals is being part of the strengthening fellowship between each other.

Could you be part of this essential area of worship? If so, please get in touch with me or any choir member.

### **Comings and Goings**

New members to the joint choir are:- Stella Cliffe, Doris Corkindale, Jean Jackson and Joan Rae.

May I take this opportunity to thank Isa McManus and Margaret Kennedy for their sterling service to St Columba's Choir. They have decided to step down and sing from the body of the Kirk. They will be missed.

***LARGS: ST COLUMBA'S PARISH CHURCH***  
Gallowgate Street, Largs      Scottish Charity No. SC002294

-----www.largscolumba.org-----

# **LANDMARK**

**DECEMBER 2021**



## MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends at St Columba's,

*We have certainly skirted with the deep mid-winter over the last few weeks of November and into early December. And with the hike in energy prices, I hope that you are managing to keep warm, and safe.*

*Advent and Christmas can be times of mixed challenges. Some people can feel the pressure of expectation, looking for the perfect gift for family members, whereas others don't have family members around and can feel the pressure of loneliness. It is the hope of everyone at St Columba's Parish Church that we can help alleviate some of the pressures at this time of year.*

*In this world where all we seem to hear about at the moment are issues of concern, feeling that you are part of something is so important. Within the Christian Church we recognise that, while we may not know everyone else, we belong to a wide body of people who follow the ways of Jesus Christ, whose birth we are preparing to celebrate. And if there was one thing that Jesus did which we can all learn from, it was about making those who were struggling in life, for one reason or another, feel welcomed and loved and included.*

*One of the stories which I recall involves the dreaded tax collector, Matthew. Since tax collectors collected taxes on behalf of the Romans, and took an unknown percentage of the cut for themselves, others saw them as traitors. Therefore, everyone despised them, and they were avoided. One day, Jesus finds Matthew sitting at his tax booth and calls Matthew to follow Him. He immediately leaves everything behind and follows this teacher. In Jesus' day, the phrase "follow me" would have been something that Rabbis would only say to people who they believed met their high standards and criteria. However, Jesus says this to Matthew while he is still at his tax booth. It is as if Jesus immediately recognises Matthew's worth as a human being, more than others can see it.*

*The outcome of this story is that Matthew throws Jesus a celebration meal and invites other fellow tax collectors to come along to meet this man. Eating a meal would have been a big deal, as you would only share a meal with someone you called family. So, contrary to how Matthew had been treated beforehand, being alone and excluded, by doing this Jesus was welcoming Matthew as part of His family; saying to him that he 'belonged'.*

*As I mentioned above, over the next few weeks St Columba's Parish Church will be open at different times. Please, if you feel lonely or stressed because of the way society has piled pressure onto this season, just come along. No one will question you as to why you have come. Like the rest of us, you will just be accepted as you are; and hopefully come to know that you belong.*

*I hope that the build up to Christmas is gentle for you, and not too overwhelming; and that the New Year is not too lonesome. There will always be a listening ear waiting for you, if you would like to have a chat. Please stay safe and warm, and may you know the peace of Christ, which passes all our human understanding!*  
Yours in Him.

**Graham**

### **GOD'S FAMILIES – Gillian McEleny**

Our first session of 2022 will take place on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January from 10.30 – 12 noon.

God's Families is Church - but different - and everyone is welcome to come along. The format is informal with free play for younger children, crafts and games for older children centred round a bible story.

Bacon rolls and coffee are served to all the adults while the children enjoy a tasty snack.

If you have not been to God's Families before, why not come along and give it a try?

We would love to meet you and you can be sure of a warm welcome.

### **LARGS UNITED GUILD – Christine Gallettie**

The first session of the United Guild has been very successful with good numbers attending each week, enjoying the fellowship and interesting speakers. We now have over 100 members, including several gentlemen. We held a **CHRISTMAS BIG SING** on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 in St John's Church followed by refreshments in the Dunn Memorial Hall which was well attended. An offering was taken in aid of local charities. A warm welcome awaits anyone who would like to join with us on Monday afternoons in the Dunn Memorial Hall at 2.00pm each week.

### **RETIRING ELDERS – Fulton Murdoch**

(No longer being Trustees but still retaining the office of Eldership)  
At the service on 21<sup>st</sup> November which was the end of the Christian Year, the Minister and congregation recognised the many years of service the Retiring Elders had put in: Dorothy Houghton, Agnes Butler, Margaret Kennedy, Brian Jackson, David Hendry, William McNaught, Kenneth Welch, Isa McManus, Donald Wallace, Anne Bell, Agnes Lyon, James Rankin, Alister Hewitt.

Mr Brian Jackson was also recognised at this time for his previous work as Church Office Manager