

September 2021
Issue No 49

Reflections

The magazine of Kay Park Parish Church Kilmarnock

a welcoming church in the heart of the community

**WE'RE
BACK!**

SERVICES WILL BEGIN

AT 11.00 am

**FROM THE FIRST SUNDAY IN OCTOBER
WITH OUR HARVEST SERVICE**

**It will be lovely to see you back
again! We've missed you. Until then,
services will be at 10.30 am**



From the Minister...

Recently a colleague asked an interesting question, 'What is your 'why', your mission, your purpose?' in 5 words or fewer? He was referring to the mission of the church, but you could ask the question in a more general sense also. Indeed, many people have found that one impact of the pandemic has been that they have been thinking more deeply about their life. Much has changed including how we work and play. Meeting with people has involved seeing them through a window or a computer screen. As restrictions have eased, we are returning to a fuller life however the long-term impact of this pandemic will be seen in our society for years to come. All this change, old normal, new normal is exhausting but there are opportunities too for growth and renewal.

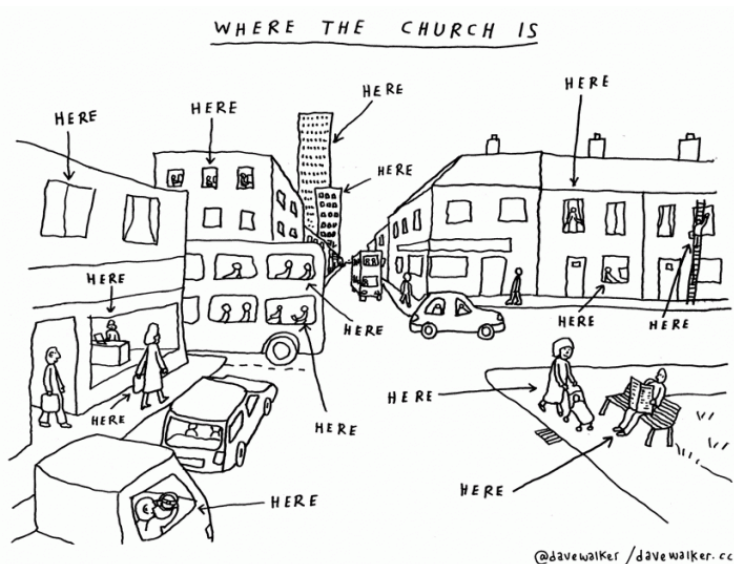
Is the church a building or the people of God?

We have adapted to not being able to meet in church by using the wonders of technology with our online and telephone services. Our online worship team have done a brilliant job, thank you to Alex Ferguson, Allan Hamilton, Mike Higgins, Fiona McBride, and Paul Scoular. The final online service from our team was on Sunday 22 August.

We are currently posting a link to 'Church Online Kilmarnock' lead by Rev Jim McNaughton and Rev Taylor Brown. In the future we hope to work with Jim and Taylor in supporting what they are doing. Using online media will continue to be an important means of communication for the church in the years ahead to help people who are unable to attend church and to engage with those who might never come across the threshold of a church building. Indeed, going forward we hope to be able to 'live stream services' which again will give a wider access

to people who cannot come to the building.

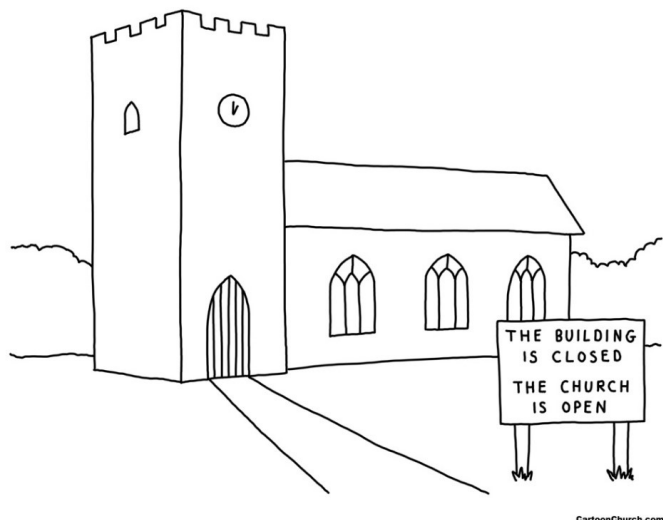
However as good as online can be it is not accessible to all and sitting looking at a screen is not the same as worshipping God together in community. The joy of gathering for worship is in meeting with one another and God. Sharing the experience together with others. Each person who comes to worship brings something important. Of course, church is not only the building church it is the people of God and where we are 'God is'. We are the



hands and feet of Christ in the world today. However, going forward there are some important questions to ask ourselves about where we feel we are in our own faith journey and in our relationship to church. For example, what does our Christian faith have to say to us in these ever-changing times? How will we encourage one another in our journey of faith, especially if we choose not or cannot meet with others Sunday by Sunday or at other times.

Who is Church for?

'Everyone' I hear you reply, but really? So many of us want things to be the way they have 'aye been'. We moan about changes that we don't like without considering that there might be a reason why the change may help or assist others. This relates to everything from the type of chairs we sit on to the content of the worship. We follow a Saviour who calls us to *prefer one another's needs*. But I am not sure how good we are at doing that?



The 'writing is on the wall' for the local church. This may seem rather grim, but it is the reality. Numbers attending church are dropping and so is income. It is likely that over the next year or so Kay Park Church will be in a united with one or two other churches under the leadership of one minister and one Kirk Session. The General Assembly of 2021 passed the 'Mission Plan Act' which is going to reshape how Presbytery Planning is carried out. Each church congregation will need to show that they are shaped by what are called the 'Five Marks of Mission' they are:

- 1) To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- 2) To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- 3) To respond to human need by loving service
- 4) To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

- 5) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Another way of putting this is as a church we are to

TELL – TEACH – TEND – TRANSFORM – TREASURE

I am excited about the possibilities that are open for us to be clearer about who we are and what we are about. But it needs everyone from the youngest to the oldest in church to come together. We *all* have a part to play, whether it is in praying, giving of our time, money, and talents, listening, caring, serving and so much more. We all need to be engaged and involved in the work and witness of the church in our community. Some churches will thrive through the next few years others will decline and die. Again, the thought of churches 'dying' may sound rather dramatic. However, remember that we are 'Easter people' who believe in resurrection and new beginnings. Our faith is not in the church it is in the Lord of the Church who died and rose again.

I am aware that many of you will have been feeling isolated and cut off during the months of lockdown. I hope that this magazine will be inspiring and encouraging for you as read. Thanks are due to Eleanor Hamilton, Shiona Thomson and the team who assist with printing. Eleanor and Shiona are intending to retire from years of faithfully work on the magazine after this year's Christmas edition. Maybe you could be part of the team in the future, let us know if you are interested?

Thank you to you all for your prayers and care for one another during what have been difficult times. Thank you for continuing to support the church with your giving and attendance when that has been possible.

In finishing I return to where I started. *What is my 'why', my mission, my purpose?* In five words or fewer, '**life in all its fullness**'. This promise of Jesus is one I believe and hold to be true. I do not know what the future holds, none of us do. But we place our trust in the one who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. AMEN.

With love and prayers

Rev Fiona.



Please bring any of the following items which will be taken to the Salvation Army Foodbank in Sturrock Street:

- Breakfast cereals
- Instant Noodles
- Meat—Corned Beef, Spam, meatballs, hot dogs etc
- Biscuits
- Jams
- Tinned fruit, tinned custard
- NO PASTA PLEASE FOR HARVEST

The Young Church in Lockdown

Our theme for the summer was 'What A Wonderful World' It's summer! School holidays, sunshine, rain, time to play and enjoy the amazing world God has given us. Let's get outside and explore the

world and see how we can care for this amazing planet.

We put together gift bags for each of our Young Church members, so about 16 bags went out in late June. Included in the bags were activities for 5 weeks of the summer holidays and these included a story, a craft for indoors, an activity

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for outdoors, a song related to the story for that week and a prayer. Our stories were all to do with 'What a wonderful world' so we had the story of creation, the story of Noah, Psalm 104, the story of the lost sheep and St Francis.

As well as all this we gave the families 2 Wonder Walks produced by the Bible Society to use when they were out for walks. These gave them things to think and talk about as they enjoyed their walk.

Also included in the bags was a Flat Jesus, which we encouraged the families to take with them on days out and holidays. We wanted to see how far Jesus travelled this summer.

As you can see from the photos, the children have really enjoyed the activities; they have learnt about God's creation, and how they can play a part in looking after this planet.



Sophie



Sam



Max



Ella



HELP THE FOODBANK

Over the years your welcome donations have gone to the Salvation Army and are distributed to the homeless and to those who are struggling to make ends meet. Moira Graham has taken on the work that Jim Raeburn carried out for so many years and for which we are very grateful.

Over the past two years the donations have dwindled. and Moira would like to ask you to consider helping by adding some of the items below to your shopping bag. On a Sunday just pop them into a bag (so that you don't forget them!) and drop them into our basket at the front door of the church as you come in. If it's difficult for you to carry the donations to

church you can drop them off at Moira's house, conveniently situated at 4 Braehead Court, or, if it's impossible for you to drop them off but you would still like to contribute, Moira would be happy to pick them up from you. Either way please give her a ring at 07966 452941.

CARRIER BAGS—Could you please bring any plastic carrier bags that you don't need to church. Moira needs them to transport your gifts to the Salvation Army, who also need them to distribute your donations.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

You might also like to start laying aside a donation each day in November that would be brought to church or picked up by Moira at the beginning of December, so that Christmas 2021 could be a little bit more special for those who need our help.

Items for donation:

Tins – soups, fish, all-in-one meals, veg, beans, fruit, desserts.

Packets - tea, sugar, pasta, pasta meals, rice, meals, breakfast cereals, dried fruit

Jars, bottles - coffee, pasta sauces, stir fry sauces, tomato ketchup, brown sauce, jams,

Toiletries - soap, toothpaste/brushes, face cloths

Goodies - sweets, biscuits, soft drinks (concentrates) crisps

No perishable food please

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'LOSS ADJUSTERS' IS BACK!

This is a group for anyone who has lost a loved one, whether recently or some time ago, but would still like to be with people who truly understand loss.

It is an informal meeting over a cup of tea, to talk or just to listen to others going through the same.

We are hoping to be back in October in the Church cafe.

Please let me know if you will be returning or if you are thinking of coming along and would like to know more. We would love to see you. There will be a warm, understanding welcome for anyone who has never been, but who has lost someone they loved over the past 18 months when we have not been able to meet.

Olive Gow

Fionna McLaughlan

fionnamclaughlan@gmail.com

01563 521923



THE SHOEBOX APPEAL 2021

Blythwood Care is a Christian charity, with a mission to transform lives through the impact of education, community action and gospel activities. We have been involved with one part of their work, namely The Shoebox Appeal for many, many years now. If you haven't been involved before, then the thought of lorryloads of wrapped and boxed gifts for families in crisis in some of the poorest parts of Europe should be enough to encourage you to join in. This year the gifts will be going to Moldova.

A form is included with this magazine, if you wish to participate, and the instructions are clearly given; you choose who you are sending the box too—adult woman or man, teenager or young child and you choose appropriate items from the list. Many people start collecting in September, a small item per week and the box is soon filled.

When your box is covered, filled and secured with strong elastic bands, you can bring them to the church hall, during the last week in October (Covid precautions allowing), or drop them off at the following addresses just as you did last year

Moira Graham 4 Braehead Court—Tuesday, 26 October

Janette Steven 12 De Walden Terrace—Wednesday 27 October

Eleanor Hamilton 58 Glasgow Road—Thursday 28 October

The boxes are then uplifted by Blythwood volunteers, taken to Fullarton ConneXions in Irvine, where they are checked by another group of volunteers to see that they contain nothing unsafe or improper. If you would like to help with the checking, which is very time-consuming, please give your name to Janette Steven on 401209 who will forward the names to Irvine and get you booked in.



Vanessa Twomey Church Administrator

The post of church administrator over the last 18 months during the pandemic has been challenging. I was furloughed for the first 4 months and then went on to flexible

furlough, terms that I was not familiar with. I was then working from home as the building was closed, so took up residence in the living room and with Max working from home and Kayden learning from home we all tended to get under each other's feet. Some how you learn to adapt to these changes and challenges.

With the church opening for morning worship in the Autumn I returned to working from the church office on a Friday, it was so nice to have access to a computer, a printer, paper and envelopes and to be able to spread out and not worry about the mess.

As restrictions continue to lessen, I find myself coming into the church office more and my hours are nearly back to what they were. So, just to remind you of when I can be contacted, I now work Monday afternoon 1pm – 4pm, Thursday afternoon 1pm – 4pm and Friday morning 9am – 12 noon. There is some flexibility to these hours and I will try to respond to emails and messages asap.

I can be contacted by phone 07394 173977 or email chrchdmnstr@outlook.com.



KAY PARK Strollers & Striders

The Strollers resumed on Monday 16th August 2021 after an “enforced break”.

Twelve enthusiastic, excited individuals met at Troon for our first walk since the lock down. With pleasant weather and plenty to chat about, the hour passed quickly and we then made our way to enjoy our well earned, tasty treat.

We're up and running – well, strolling, again. Why not come and join us, and bring a friend. If you would like further information, please contact Bill Caldwell on 524006

After a Covid imposed gap of almost 18 months, **the Striders** returned in early August. An as expected, modest turnout of 10 plus Buster the spaniel assembled in Mauchline in the car park to the rear of Abbot Hunter's Tower (also known as Mauchline Castle). From here we walked along Barskimming Road to exit the village, passing Mauchline Cemetery. Just beyond this a left turn allowed us to continue and take another left onto Haugh Road. Passing under the Kilmarnock – Dumfries railway line we joined Station Road, now bereft of a station, and met the A76 as it exits Mauchline. Another left took us through the village to the Cross, with a brief stop at Jean Armour's statue to allow a regrouping. Next came the most challenging aspect of our route as we took the climb up the Sorn Road. This required each to take it at a pace they could sustain with a further regrouping at the newly created car park at the left turn at the top of the climb. From here you get a surprisingly good view to the

north, south and west. Following the minor road, you only cover a couple of hundred yards before the view to the east opens up to complete your all-round view across the countryside. At the next junction we took left, which leads back to the main A76 as it enters Mauchline, where we took left and back into the village. This time, at the Cross, we took right down a vennel (a good Scots word) past various properties bearing blue plaques associated with Burns and the Abbot's Tower to emerge back at our starting point. Unfortunately, the adjacent hotel had not re-opened so it was largely a case of heading home rather than tea and coffee. However, the weather was very favourable and the pace accommodated all (with a few stops). The chat flowed freely as we made our way round and our route took just on the two-hour mark with all looking forward to our next outing.

David Miller

Next Strollers' Dates

Tuesday 14 September

Wednesday 13 October

Thursday 11 November

Friday 10 December

Next Striders' Dates

Tuesday 28 September

Wednesday 27 October

Thursday 25 November

Assembly points and times will be advised prior to each walk while Covid restrictions apply

Many thanks to David Miller, whose comprehensive descriptions of “Walks around Kilmarnock”, in the October 2020 *Reflections*, a year ago, inspired many of us to discover more about the countryside around us.

Another treasure trove of walks in Ayrshire is gillianswalks.com, which is interesting and inspiring, even if you just start off reading about them!

EH

The Church of Scotland in Ayrshire has launched a new Mission Pioneer programme to connect with people in refreshing and dynamic ways.

Our Presbytery of Irvine and Kilmarnock has formed six Pioneer Initiative Teams, four of which are connected to parish churches and two which will operate across the presbytery area, in a variety of contexts. Kay Park Church is supporting one of the presbytery wide initiatives, called "DigitalParish"



Top Left to right: Stuart Forsyth, Robert Thomson, Jill Hendry. Bottom : Alison Muir, Pete Anderson, Katrona Templeton.

The teams are led by Mission Pioneers who will work alongside and in partnership with parishes – urban and rural – to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and to build new worshipping communities.

Team leader, Rev Maggie McTernan, described the programme, as "bold and exciting". She said: "The new pioneer initiatives are working to establish worshipping communities that will come together in new ways, to share God's love with those who have no church connection. It's a bold ambition but an exciting one, seeking to be faithful to what has gone before and hopeful for what God will do in the future."

The Pioneer Initiatives are:

Crossing Together

Alison Muir has been appointed to lead the "Crossing Together" programme, a partnership between Dreghorn and Spring-side Parish Church and the new united congregation of Irvine Mure Relief, which intends to plant a new church in the south area of Irvine.

The vision is for an intergenerational church where people of all ages will be brought together to share activities, experiences and worship in a new dynamic way.

Growing with God

Jill Hendry is leading the "Growing with God" project in the south area of Kilmarnock.

It is an outreach ministry and she will work with the pioneer team to create connections in the community, establish and nurture relationships with individuals, community groups and organisations.

Thrive

Pete Anderson is leading "Thrive", a missional project to connect, support and disciple people in their 20s, 30s and 40s from Stewarton who have either stopped going to church or have never stepped into a church building in their lives.

The project seeks to "go to" the Church's missing generation and share the love of Christ by building new networks, including online, that counter false perceptions of church and faith.

Reach Out

Katrona Templeton, 41, is leading a presbytery-wide project to ensure that all congregations are more welcoming and accessible to people with disabilities.

The vision is to enable everyone to engage fully in church life, including worship, service and fellowship.

Irvine Sports Mission

Robert Thomson has been appointed to lead the Irvine Sports Mission which will build on existing work in sports clubs and establish appropriate "gathering points" for discipleship, worship and mission.

It is recognised that sport provides opportunities for building relationships and creating friendships which can lead to disciples being made.

DigitalParish

Stuart Forsyth, 34, has been appointed to develop a locally focused online “digital Parish” across the presbytery area. The aim is to provide an online platform that will launch in November 2021 and create a community which has a long-term desire to worship God- or explore what being faithful to Christ means in today’s world.

Kay Park has been supporting this initiative through the involvement of two of our Elders, Silvija Wilde and Doreen Walkinshaw. They have been working as part of team to develop the concept and bring it to life and both have shared a passion and excitement for this expression of their faith.

All team members have undertaken training through the Cairn training organisation; either Learning Communities or the Forge Pioneer training. Doreen and Silvija participated in the ‘Learning Communities’, which was delivered in two tranches of evening sessions, comprising input from faith leaders, discussions, reflection sessions and often 'homework'.

Silvija said: "This has been a great opportunity for me, both reinforcing and challenging my own faith. It is the first time I have been involved in such an intense period of religious study and one which I have relished, particularly in the context of being involved in this exciting project which has the potential to introduce many new people to God"

Doreen said: “For many years we have talked about “Church Without Walls” and this initiative is just that. I know many people – friends and family - for whom ‘Church’ is no longer relevant but faith in Jesus is of deep interest to them. My vision is to create a place where people can come and be curious, where they can take themselves on an explorative journey that leads to God and all His love and richness. That journey may lead to Church membership and that would be great, it may lead to being part of on line chat groups and a wider on line community, or it may simply lead to a deeper understanding and personal relationship with our Maker. How wonderful is that?”

DigitalParish will need people with expertise, enthusiasm and a range of talents. We need to grow teams of contributors to build a bank of stimulating online worship resources. If you or someone you know might be interested in contributing to the platform please get in touch with me or Silvija. But most important of all – please remember our project and the work of all the Mission Pioneer Teams in your prayers” Thank you!

Doreen Walkinshaw



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A Different Perspective – Fiona Kendall

Dear friends

This letter comes to you from Calabria, that ruggedly beautiful region in the toe of Italy which was once part of Magna Grecia and is today one of the country's most fertile - and yet poorest—territories. As many of you will know, Mediterranean Hope has a small team based in Calabria, where we are supporting agricultural workers who are exploited in the production and harvest of

the region's outstanding fruit. Whilst here, my guide has been Ibrahim, who hails from the Ivory Coast but has been living and working in Calabria for around a decade, ultimately as an intercultural mediator and social worker with Mediterranean Hope. It has been a privilege to get to know him.

Ibrahim, like our colleague Francesco Piobicchi, is an artist as well as an activist. Words rather than images are Ibrahim's preferred medium for communicating what he sees and feels. His poetry, currently published in Italian and French, movingly recounts his own experience of being a migrant, as well as attesting to the world's attitude to migration which is, so often, bewilderingly negative. Ibrahim's book, *Yen Fehi, Bako* (Over There on the Other Side of the River Bank) opens with the following words:

"These poems are dedicated to all my brothers who have left their families and loved ones in search of Happiness but today encounter difficulty in integrating into the society which receives them."

In the space of one sentence Ibrahim succeeds in shining a spotlight on the conundrum of migration, which, almost inevitably, necessitates sacrifice and risk, dreams of something better but relies on the goodwill of others in order to be truly successful. The personal motivation, tenacity and energy of the migrant will only take him or her so far. Unless he or she is truly welcomed, there can be no real integration. This causes me to reflect on the responsibility which each of us has to the other and the small but important steps which each of us can take, both personally and as communities, to be welcoming. How often do we actually consider the perspective of those outside our own circle or community? How often do we consider the effect which our action (or lack of action) has on the stranger in our midst? This is not simply a question of policy or law - although these things matter greatly - but also of personal engagement.

The reason for coming to Calabria now, rather than in the autumn or spring when the fruit is harvested, was an unexpected invitation to speak at "Last 20", a conference being held at different points in the year in different Italian towns, the first of which was this meeting in Reggio Calabria.

This year Italy has presidency of the G20 and will be hosting meetings of representatives from the world's twenty richest nations. The premise of L20 is that the perspective of the world's twenty most impoverished nations should also be heard, hence the series of meetings on different Themes, beginning with migration.



Quite apart from the rich experience of hearing these other perspectives, it has been unexpectedly moving to attend this four-day event in person after eighteen months of virtual participation in meetings. It seems that I had forgotten what a simple pleasure it is to share a coffee, a meal, a comment or a conversation with people not in my closest circle. Whilst virtual encounters have meant so much in this past eighteen months and, without doubt, have their own efficiency, they are, in general, intentional and the parameters often prescribed. This meeting has reminded me of the relational shorthand of the casual encounter, the speed with which connections can be made and points of view discerned and shared through direct interaction. It has been one of the most chaotic yet delightful experiences I have had to date.

It has also been a sharp reminder, at a geopolitical level, of the impact which we have on one another. The L20 countries are far from poor in terms of natural and human resources, yet the plunder continues. The action and inaction of the world's richest continues to generate conflict and poverty. Little wonder that people continue to flee and to seek better lives. As I write, 22,000 families are reported to have fled their homes in an effort to escape the fighting in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Should we be surprised if some eventually end up in small boats trying to cross the Channel? If so, is it right that they should be deprived of the inalienable right to seek asylum—anywhere - because they have no other means of reaching the UK? How can arrival by boat (or lorry) possibly be relevant to assessing the merits of a claim to asylum? Yet differentiation according to the means of arrival is currently being championed by the Home Office through the new Nationality and Borders Bill.

We are community. And community exists at every level of our existence, transcending personal and national boundaries. Whether we like it or not, our lives are interlinked. The opinions we voice - or support - and the action we take - or do not - matters. That means that every one of us has an opportunity to make a difference to individuals we do not even know.

Ibrahim, who has himself suffered much, is a living example of someone making a difference. For a glimpse of his own story and the work he is doing with Mediterranean Hope in Calabria see ENG Sub Lights on Rosarno - Ibrahim's Story - YouTube.

Let me conclude this letter by asking, if you are willing, for your prayers. These, and all of the support and encouragement you offer, are very much appreciated.

- for those daring to start a new life in a country that is not their own, that they may find a welcome in every person and situation that they encounter;
- for those places in the world which are scarred by poverty and conflict, that they may be supported in finding and maintaining stability;
- for those fighting for justice and equality, that they may dream and be heard by those with the power to bring about change.

Wishing you all a good summer.

Every blessing

Fiona

@FionaKMedhope



Those who were in church on Sunday 15 August, when Fiona told the congregation about her work, were inspired by her. You can hear her talk about it on YouTube on <https://www.youtu.be/ZQAmiOC0yvA> if you missed it in church. You can see it on a computer, laptop, tablet or phone.

Fiona takes us straight to the heart of the migration crisis and the response from a few committed protestant churches in Italy, showing us how true it is that, when even a few are committed in faith, they can change the world around them.

COP26: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE PLIGHT OF REFUGEES

By Mike Higgins

It's almost 35 years since the congregation of Henderson Church made a generous contribution towards an assignment for myself and my photographer colleague, Gerry McCann, to report on the aftermath of the famine in Sudan and Ethiopia. The visit resulted in several newspaper articles, a radio documentary and the book *"Sudan: The Eternal Apocalypse"*.

All of this hopefully helped to raise awareness of a global crisis regarding refugees and displaced people. But the global situation is worse now than it was then. With the COP26 conference on Climate Change, in Glasgow, imminent there is a chance to reverse the trend permanently.

You might ask what Climate Change has to do with refugees.

War and drought which lead to famine are generally the main drivers in creating a refugee and displaced people crisis. These factors came together in Sudan in the mid-1980s. One of the buzz-words back then was "desertification". The term described how hitherto fertile land, particularly in North Africa, was being encroached upon by desert. Here was an early warning of how global warming would play a major part in creating havoc among already fragile economies and eco-systems and communities.

This desertification, along with civil war and drought, forced farmers to leave their traditional lands. And with subsequent poor harvests famine followed.

This was the scenario that led to Bob Geldof's Band Aid song, "Do They Know It's Christmas?" and the subsequent Live Aid concert which raised \$127 million for relief work across Africa.

The inspiration to write the Sudan book came from those news pictures of columns of terrified, starving, people walking for days across an endless, barren landscape to reach some sort of safety. Added to this was the powerful CBS TV film, with The Cars song "Drive" as the soundtrack, shown during Live Aid.

(Watch it here <https://youtu.be/9xlpHNd3hjU>)

The title of the book, *Sudan: The Eternal Apocalypse*, loosely means *the constant warning of impending disaster*. It takes Sudan as being like many parts of the globe in microcosm because what was happening there at the

time could be repeated anywhere, in places you never thought was possible.

Back then, one tenth of the world's refugees were living in Sudan, a country the size of India, with a population of just 24 million. That was coincidentally the number of refugees globally...but a mind-boggling 2.4 million of them...were in Sudan.

During our extended visit I remember standing on a piece of high ground in the middle of a refugee camp, near the town of Gedaref. Across the rocky terrain were rows and rows of khaki and grey tents, spread as far as

the eye could see. This camp alone would have been home to the equivalent of the entire population of Kilmarnock. It was a tiny fraction of the actual number living in similar conditions in that country and a miniscule amount compared to the world's total number of displaced people.

Gerry and I, on more than one occasion, commented about the "Biblical proportions" of this disaster and that \$127 million Live Aid

money, while appreciated, was like applying a Band Aid over a gaping wound.

The refugees at Gedaref had come from across the border a few miles away in Tigray where war was raging for self-determination from Ethiopia. A similar war was going on in neighbouring Eritrea. In Sudan itself there was a civil war. Factions wanted the south to become independent from the north. The Khartoum government was having none of it. And there was also inter-tribal warfare.

The fallout resulted in armed conflict on a massive scale with thousands of civilians and soldiers slaughtered on both sides...and with many more people being displaced, or becoming refugees, ending up living in makeshift camps and relying on international food hand-outs...



Um Rakuba refugee camp, Gedaref, Eastern Sudan, June 23 this year.

Copyright: UNHCR/Assadullah Nasrullah

because of a failed harvest.

Displaced people are not technically classified as refugees and are not as protected in law as refugees who have crossed an international border. To be recognised as a refugee you have to leave your own country. Internally displaced people remain the responsibility of their country's government...which may well have created the reason for their displacement in the first place.

The camp at Gedaref that we visited back in 1987 is still fully operational as a safe-haven for refugees - from a new war involving Ethiopia and Tigray.

A new generation, a new war, the same result.

Shockingly, many people alive today will know nothing of the Ethiopia/Sudan famine of the mid-1980s. They may be more aware of the tragedy of the Rohingya people being forced out of Burma on fear of death.

Many more will have completely forgotten about the Vietnamese Boat People...though there are huge parallels with what transpired during the 1970s in Southeast Asia and what is going on in the Mediterranean Sea and the English Channel right now.

Back in the late '70s there was a massive surge in the hundreds of thousands of people trying to escape Vietnam. It began after America withdrew its troops in 1975 but reached a climax in 1979. Some 1.6 million people fled the regime and made it to safety. Half of them had paid large sums of money to be taken on rickety boats across treacherous seas to numerous countries in Southeast Asia. Another 400,000 attempted to escape ...but drowned.

So big was the problem that the United Nations High Commission for Refugees intervened. This resulted in many finding a safe haven in the west...including here in Scotland.

Turn the clock back to the end of the second world war.

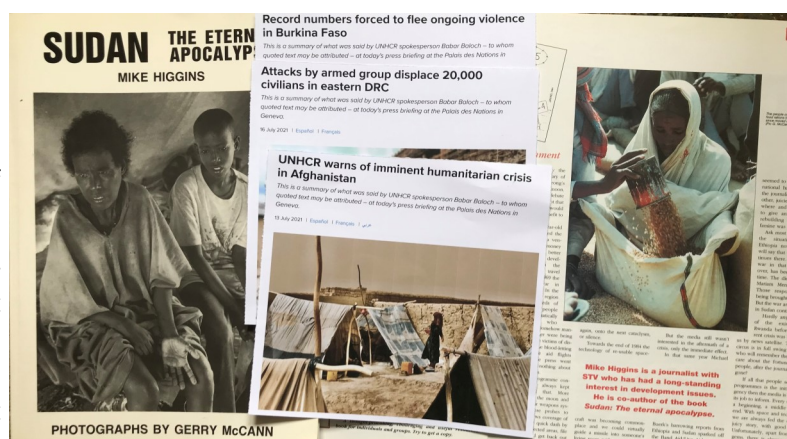
It is estimated that forty million people had been displaced or were refugees by the end of the conflict. The United Nations High Commission for refugees was established to sort out this mess...and by the time the Sudan book was published the UNHCR estimated that that figure had almost halved.

The hope then was that this new global awareness would mean this trend would continue. But alas, the latest figures published by the UNHCR, at the end of last year, show not only a complete reversal...but an exponential growth in refugees and displaced people.

By the end of 2020, according to the UNHCR, 82.4 million people had been forcibly displaced from their homes...by a combination of any one of these...climate change, war, famine, drought or political unrest

Of this figure 48 million were internally displaced. Seventy-five per cent of them were women and children.

There were almost 27 million refugees and more than four million asylum seekers.



COP26 is a fantastic opportunity for world leaders to grasp the thistle and address not only climate change and its causes but also the links that there are with those human activities that tie in and lead us down the path that results in yet more misery for millions.

In the final paragraph of the Sudan book, 35-years-ago, I indulged myself with a bit of editorial comment. It holds true today:

"... if all the Governments of the world remain intransigent to the plight of the people, if the unaffected fail to shout loud enough and long enough, all we can expect is the continuation of human suffering, the loss of dignity, the degradation of the human race – that is THE ETERNAL APOCALYPSE."

Cop26 **must** be the turning point.

Footnote:

In all this there is one slight sign of optimism. The total number of refugees in Sudan and South Sudan (it became independent in 2011) has almost halved. According to the UNHCR both countries now account for a total of 1.4 million refugees....that's down a million...but it's taken almost 35 years.. A small step in the right direction and an indication that things can change for the better.

This is your chance to help....please read on ... this could be for you!

The increasing number of members of the congregation returning to the building for "normal" worship means that the weekly recorded online service, available during the lockdown, is being discontinued in its current form.

Instead of pre-recorded services it will soon be possible to view a livestream of the Kay Park services as they happen. That is live from inside the church at the normal service times. But we are looking for help.

With members of the online team stepping back from their regular commitment it means there are opportunities for others – not necessarily church members – to become involved. You may have a granddaughter or grandson who would love to know how to work the switches.

Members of another group – the Media Team – have always operated the sound desk. They make sure the microphones are working and ensure that the words for hymns and other visual content appear on the big screens. The Media Team played out the pre-recorded hymns onto the screens during the restricted services.

But the introduction of the livestreaming element means

more work and so requires more people. Those involved would remotely switch and control cameras so that people who are unable to attend church can still see the proceedings over the internet. Once given training it's a simple exercise.

You may have a granddaughter or grandson or a husband or wife who doesn't come to church, but would just love to learn a new skill. The cameras are fixed, it's simply a matter of pressing a couple of switches. Tell them about it. It's another thing to add to a CV for anyone thinking about applying for college or work.

The role could be an introduction for anyone thinking about a job or volunteering in television or theatrical productions. It may also be an extension to a filming hobby, or it may just be that you fancy trying out something completely different. Anyone, regardless of age can do it. Is it something that might interest you, a family member or a friend?

Full training and back-up will be given for anyone wishing to take part. Interested? Simply contact the minister, Rev. Fiona Maxwell.



CHARLIE DEANS

I would like to thank everyone in our church family for the abundance of prayers, cards and flowers received by myself and family after Charlie's death.

We were overwhelmed by all the care and kindness shown to us. Charlie will be sorely missed but I was blessed to have him for almost 60 years.

Thank you everyone.

Jean

xx

To the Flower Committee

It was a lovely surprise to receive a beautiful bunch of flowers, delivered by a very kind "Flower Lady". Such an unexpected gift brightened up our day, not to mention our flat, enormously.

Thank you so much,
Charlotte McCrone

Thank you

Friendship Club

After a long eighteen months we are now feeling a bit more optimistic about the future. Our new normal will not quite replicate the old normal, but there is some light at the end of the tunnel. For many people the past year and a half has been very difficult, especially for those who live alone and are far away from loved ones. Companionship is so important at this time.

Over the past few weeks our committee has got together to discuss the way forward. We have tried to devise a plan which embraces all the new rules but, at the same time, we realise things can change at a moment's notice. Our aim at the moment is to have our first meeting on Thursday, 7 October. Things will be different, especially from a practical point of view, and we will have to abide by the rules. For the first half of our syllabus up until Christmas, we have devised a programme of entertainment which will be provided by "in-house" groups. For January onwards the programme will be decided at a later date. As you are all aware, things can suddenly change, but we certainly hope to resume in some form in October. During September we

intend to send all members a letter outlining the plan for the start of the session.

It will be lovely to meet up again after such a long absence, and we are all looking forward to seeing one another. Many of you have experienced illness and bereavement during the pandemic, which will have made life very difficult, and I realise that, for some of you, resuming normal activities may be challenging. However, I can assure you all that all precautions will be taken to keep everyone safe.

If you haven't been to our regular fortnightly meetings, which start at 2.00 pm in the church hall, please come and join us. We welcome all new folk warmly and if you would like to bring a friend along, we would be delighted. Please do not hesitate to give me, Shiona, a ring on 533574 if you would like any more information.

Thinking of you all and looking forward to seeing everyone again.

Shiona Thomson and all members of the FC committee.

The Guild

As far as Kay Park Guild in concerned we have had a 'BLANK' year as far as meetings etc. were concerned but we have kept in touch re posted letters and e-mails.

A letter from the General Secretary, Iain Whyte, relates how he and his wife enjoyed two sunny weeks on the Isle of Arran. He states how good it is to unwind and have the power of peace pervade the vast outdoor spaces. For Iain it is in places like Glen Rosa that God speaks loudest, as well as in music and words – places where we are alive in our thoughts, but also in all our senses. We should never underestimate the power of peace.

Now that things have relaxed and we can meet in person again – it is NOT straightforward and the Committee will have some work to do to make sure of the safety of everyone to satisfy the Guild Office in Edinburgh.

CREATION CARE BANNERS:

The Guild Office wants to hear if our Guild could create two banners which will be hung on the Mound in Edinburgh. Edinburgh New College are inviting community and faith groups to send a message for tackling the climate crisis to the COP26 Conference in Glasgow in November.

Designs should be bold and striking reflecting the theme of care for creation and should use green, natural, found and or recycled materials. The predominant colour should be GREEN. The words 'CREATION CARE and ENCODE' will form part of the design on the 22 metre banners.

Ellen MacLeod—Guild Convener



NOTICES

Church Flowers



Sincere thanks to the following people who have donated to the Flower Fund in from March 2021

March

Mrs Shiona Thomson
Mrs Ann Mair
Mrs Carol Raeburn
Mrs Isabel Aitken

April

Mrs Maureen Miller

May

Mrs Nan Head
Mrs Liz Dyet
Mr Alex Dempster

June

Mrs Janet Shedden
Mrs Ann Mair

July

Mrs Aileen Sansum

August

Mr Jack Leishman
Mrs Helen Houston

Donations can be placed, in an envelope marked 'Flower Fund', on the Offering Plate, or given to Aileen Sansum.

Cheques should be made payable to Kay Park Church Flower Fund.

We need more people to deliver the flowers on a Sunday. It doesn't take long, but it means such a lot to those who receive the flowers.

FUNERALS

"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you"

16 March

Mr James Wallace 46 McPhail Drive Dist.11

01 April

Mrs Jean Samson 7 Baird Road Dist. 31

21 April

Mrs Irene Neilson Springhill House Dist. 22

06 May

Mr John Moore 23 Rowallan Drive Dist. 7

04 July

Mr Charles Deans Argyle House Dist. 10

11 August

Mrs Emma Bell Springhill Nursing Home Dist. 32

Wedding

7th August 2021

Sharron Murray
and
Drew Scott



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Calling all knitters .. can you help?

Do you remember this picture from the Sunday Post last year? The Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUG) labour wards were looking for knitted hats for newborn babies. The response was immediate and hats came in from all over the world. However, as they send 500 babies home

every month and as each baby is given a hat, that supply has almost run out. So we are asking for our knitters to try to come up with 100 little hats to suit babies of 8—10 lbs.

“Ideally not too tight a brim, no ties, a close knit pattern in double wool, any colour but nothing fluffy or hairy for our newborns” are the instructions.

You can bring the hats to the church as you finish them and they will be delivered on your behalf.

The Neo-natal unit at Crosshouse Hospital would also welcome tiny little hats for the premature babies born there, although they do not appear to have a shortage at the moment, thanks to a Facebook response to a request last year.

HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

If you visit Crosshouse Hospital you will almost certainly have visited the Tea Bar or the Shop.

You see ladies and men serving in both and probably assume that they are employees at the hospital while in fact are volunteers. There are one or two in the office who are paid.

Over £250,000 is raised by these people every year for the hospital. The money is used to purchase equipment for which there just isn't any money in the bank of the Trust that runs the hospital. Some money is kept in reserve for really expensive projects, so, for example, the Hospital Volunteers were able to give over £1,000,000 towards the costs of the Day Surgery Unit.

The pandemic has meant that no money from the Volunteers has gone into the hospital coffers this past couple of years, but it is hoped that both shop and tea-bar will be open again in September.

More than half of our volunteers have retired since the pandemic and we would love one or two new volunteers even just to be reserves. If you would like to help in the tea-bar or shop on a team with many of our members for just a couple of hours a month, please ask Eleanor Hamilton 526817 for further information. It is just amazing what a lot of people can achieve by giving such a small amount of time..... and it's great fun as well, especially when you can operate the coffee machine and call yourself a Barista! If you want to ask a friend as well, so much the better!

You don't need any particular skills or experience, just a willing heart.

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