

Bonkle Church of Scotland Magazine

June 2022

Next issue – September 2020

Closing date for material – 2 pm Sun September 4th 2022

Ring of Brodgar, Orkney



From the manse...

“Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.”

The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. (Ps 46:10-11 NIV)

It's fair to say that for most of us, that the world has and continues to experience seismic shifts that we have never before experienced. The Corona Virus, brought untold misery and restrictions for most of us (though perhaps less so for some of our politicians sadly). Just when we thought that there was light at the end of the tunnel due to the success of the vaccination programme, and the majority of people sticking to the rules handed down to us by some of those same politicians, we were plunged into further uncertainty caused by the war in Ukraine. Although this perhaps has not impacted us directly, at the same time, we have been moved, often to tears, by the suffering being inflicted upon innocent lives in that country. We pray it will end soon. Another unexpected by product of all that is happening across the globe is the cost of living crisis that we are experiencing – foodstuffs are in short supply or have risen in price, whilst fuel prices have rocketed for most of us (oh to have had the foresight to enter into fixed price agreements when prices were much lower!). The removal of the fuel price cap has only exacerbated an already difficult situation. Unless something significant changes before the end of the year, many families and individuals will be faced with the very real choice between eating and heating.

Even within the church there has been and continues to be shaking. The Church has just met in General Assembly and produced a new set of aims and goals for the coming years. The big headline grabbing news was that Church of Scotland ministers (**if they choose to do so**) may apply for permission to officiate at same sex marriage ceremonies in church buildings. This news, although somewhat inevitable given the trajectory that church has been on for a few years, will cause great sorrow to some ministers and members, and great joy for others. Time

will tell what impact the decision will have on the Kirk. Despite our own personal thoughts on the issue, it's worth noting that the church has always had its divisions along theological and doctrinal lines; this is another example in a long list. People have said to ministers such as myself, "why do you stay in a church which has lost its way, and accepts things that the bible does not support?" That is not an easy question to answer, however, I would say that it was in the Church of Scotland that I came to know Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, and it was in the same church that God called me to minister. None of that has changed by these recent decisions. If God should call me (or any of my like-minded colleagues) out of the Kirk then that would be the time to move. Until then, we stay because we were called to be here – however difficult that might be at times – to witness to the truth of the gospel. Despite all that is going on, God is still on His throne, God is still in charge, God still has a plan and a purpose to redeem and to bless all people. Since the time of Jesus the church has ebbed and flowed; she has gone through times of growth and times of contraction, but one thing has remained constant – the grace and mercy of God.

There is a song that I find so helpful during these times – it's a song by Godfrey Birtill called Where's Your Presence O God? The first verse goes like this

Where O where's Your presence O God?

In this dry and weary land

So many people drifting away

How we need to understand...

You're still God

Even when we're unbelieving

Still God

When we're desperate for our healing

Still God, still God, still God.

You're still God

Even when our friends desert us

Still God

Even through the things that hurt us

Still God, still God

So I will be still, and know You are God.

In all that we are experiencing today, let us hold firm to the fact that He is still God, and because of that we can trust in Him and be still, because he holds us in the palm, of His hand.

Please continue to pray for the Church and for all who are called to make difficult decisions for the future shape of the church, nationally and locally. God has not finished with us yet!

Yours. In His Love

Graham

Filling station @ home

This has now been running over the past nine months and there is currently twenty two filling station @ home group across the country as far as Thurso in the north and Somerset in the south. We have currently have eight members who come along once a fortnight on a Wednesday night and met in the small hall in Coltness Memeriol Church at 7.00pm.

We gather together at the start with a cup of tea or coffee and

a biscuit before we spend a time of worship. I am currently asking members for their favourite hymns and worship songs using YouTube videos this has been hard to squeeze into a twenty minutes time slot. Then we log on and join other small groups across the country. We have live guest speakers through Zoom, then we break up to continue off-line with some discussion questions and then a time of prayer and then go home.

If you want to join us please come along as you will be most welcome. There is likely to be a wee break over the summer months but look to the church order of service for more details.

Thanks

Matthew Gray

Computer Club

After a few false starts, we settled for a supplier that did not require a 2 year contract.

Our main aim is to help people starting on the journey into the *World Wide Web*, help solve their problems, introduce them to further uses of the computer, supply access to the internet or just simply supply a talk shop.

Welcome back to our old members but there is plenty room for new members as we now use the large hall.

Further details can be obtained from Marion Allison or Ian Glen 01698386028

Wishaw CAP Debt Centre

I hope you are all keeping safe and well. Home visits to clients have resumed. However, the system of phone/video call consultations is still in place at all stages for those clients who prefer it. This is particularly useful for clients who live in remote locations, as it enables us to support them more easily. The recent easing of Covid 19 restrictions has given us more flexibility in meeting with clients and the resumption of the face to face visits has made it much easier to communicate with clients, and to offer them support when needed. At present we are supporting 20 clients and their families, with 3 more booking in the last week. Most of the people who booked in recently are progressing well, with 2 fairly close to becoming debt-free.

The callback diary with Motherwell Jobcentre continues each Monday morning; this began at the start of March 2021. This allows me to contact people who have been identified by the work coaches as possibly requiring our service. I have continued to engage with local referral agencies and networks, to ensure that as many people as possible know where to access debt help. I recently attended the Poverty Action Network hosted by Motherwell & Wishaw MP, Marion Fellows. These meetings are currently held via Zoom, and will probably continue in that format for some time. As usual, it was an interesting and useful meeting; it allows local organisations like ourselves to update elected representatives and organisations working in the area with how the service is doing, and how people can access it. A range of organisations regularly attend, such as Routes to Work, Sacro, DWP, Lanarkshire Community Food

Partnership, Street Connect, CAB, LAMH and many others. This kind of networking is very useful in promoting our debt centre, and also allows us to find out what other services are available for clients in the area.

Our centre is now 10 years old! During that time we have assisted around 219 clients and their families, and so have made a massive difference to so many lives in our community. Many thanks to all who have contributed over the past decade, in whatever capacity; your help and support is truly appreciated!

Listening Lounge

Now that the majority of the Covid 19 restrictions on meeting up have been removed, we have restarted our weekly drop-in, the Listening Lounge. **This is held on Wednesday afternoons from 2-4 pm, at Coltness Memorial Church**, and is intended to give people a place to chat, get some company or a word of prayer, or just vent their worries and concerns in a safe space. On the first Wednesday of each month, we provide soup & pudding so that people can get a free lunch. If you would like to help out, please let me know.

Live Well Foodbank

The foodbank is still open, and people have been incredibly generous in donating food, money and vouchers to ensure it operates effectively. Many thanks to all who have contributed; it's really appreciated! Again many thanks to all at Coltness Memorial & Bonkle Churches who have contributed goods and money to make this possible. We continue to require some items such as tinned meat, tinned veg, rice, noodles, beans, tea and coffee. If you want to

donate, please bring them along to the foodbank during opening hours, or the church any Sunday. The demand for the foodbank has remained steady and we have been able to help those in need in the local community.

It is open every Wednesday between 1pm and 2.30pm at Coltness Memorial Church in Newmains. Referrals can be obtained via the Scottish Welfare Fund (0300 555 0405 crisis grant option). You can also apply online at <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-money/scottish-welfare-fund/crisis-grants> Simply complete the online form once you click ‘apply now’.
Nicky McLaughlin 07400 189398

Cover photo, The Ring of Brodgar, Orkney

Probably not so well known but this stone circle is older than Stonehenge. Why was it built? A burial ground? A tribal meeting point? as a place of worship but who did they worship? Obviously they believed in a superior power but what or who? Why is there a surrounding ditch or bank? The centre has never been excavated
We will never know.

Comment on “From the Manse”

In the past, people within our church have had different opinions. Look on our website www.bonkle.org.uk, History and part 1 of the book. By faith, we overcame the problems.