

# Eastwood Parish Church of Scotland

## Crossbeam—May/June 2020

### A Thought from the Manse...

Dear Friends,

As I sat down to write this letter, it occurred to me that I should be sitting in the General Assembly Hall in Edinburgh. However, COVID-19 put a stop to that. Our buildings are closed, we do not know when we will be able to meet up again. Yet, that should not stop us from being the Church. I cannot stress enough: ‘the church is not a building .. the church is people!’

To that end, we have been striving to provide services on-line. Now, we know that there have been a few ‘glitches’ along the way. Not everyone has access to the internet. Yet, through podcasts, YouTube videos and meeting up on Zoom, which you can access by telephone, we have been able to share together, to be virtually present with one another.

This edition of Crossbeam magazine, has been designed so that we can share our experiences of lockdown together. The good or the bad, the positive or the negative. Here in the Manse, Felicity, Jamie and I are making the best of this time. Home-schooling, home-working, gardening, jigsaws, baking and ‘Friday cinema nights’ are helping to keep us all occupied. Yes, we long for restrictions to be lifted but we also realise that lockdown is for the good of us all.

However, lockdown should not prohibit us from sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. We have a Saviour who is not confined to church buildings but wants and desires to be in amongst our communities. Before this turns into a sermon, let me sign off with a reflection from the Rev. Liz Crumlish, Path of Renewal Coordinator, for the Church of Scotland. It is entitled: ‘Freed for Life’.

#### **1 Peter 2:4-5**

*Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

*What does it mean  
to be living stones  
when all around  
is loss and death?  
What does it mean*



*Where you belong*

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*to be chosen  
and precious  
when inequity  
renders some  
as seemingly dispensable?  
What does it mean  
to be built together  
in the midst of a plague  
when we must stay apart  
when our buildings are closed  
and our liturgies scattered?  
Maybe, just maybe  
the freedom brought  
by being locked out  
is the very thing  
that enables  
us to recognise  
the Spirit at work  
all around  
Freed from our attempts  
to fetter her  
Freed from our narrow vision  
of where she might be  
Freed to catch the Spirit  
in our peripheral vision  
as she alights  
where we are  
in hospitals  
and homes  
in funeral parlours  
and makeshift chapels  
In recording studios  
and gardens  
in front rooms  
and kitchens  
The Spirit shows up  
without fanfare  
without invocation  
or epiclesis  
She shows up  
Bidden or unbidden  
welcomed or not  
She shows up*

*sometimes quietly  
sometimes raging  
always reshaping  
And all we can do  
is try to keep up  
or at least remain vigilant  
to the opportunity  
that she leaves  
in her wake.*

Your friend and minister,  
Jim Teasdale

## Lockdown Life

Lockdown, day ??? (Who's counting?!) - The Morrisons have been trying to keep busy during lockdown and now have a lovely back garden and have got round to doing all of the tasks that we had been putting off for ages! Hayley had a lockdown birthday but still managed to get lots of presents and messages from friends/family so she was delighted.

Taking care of the girls and homeschooling is proving challenging whilst working but, as Thomas is not working at all now, the bulk of that has fallen to him. I'm thankful we have a garden and the weather has been good. The girls don't understand why I can't be involved as much and that is difficult to explain. I have been trying to get up early to do work before 9 and work later to help but that isn't sustainable. I've also changed jobs recently which was really odd having been with the firm I left for over 18 years and a virtual leaving drinks was not what had originally been planned. I'm just trying to take each day as it comes.

I've started having a walk each night to get my exercise and using this to get some "me time". I've been listening to Lectio365 and also the podcasts when posted by Jim and Nigel during my walks. I also look forward to our Zoom services!

I feel that this period of time has allowed people to refocus a bit and I certainly feel a bit more connected both with myself and those around me, even although we can't physically be in the same place as those we love. That has been difficult, but technology has helped and I'm looking forward to being able to give everyone a big hug once we are allowed!

Take care  
Katie, Thomas, Hayley and Megan xx

## Life in Lockdown

Lockdown life is similar to normal life when you live alone except it emphasises how much your routine of getting out & about is required for social interaction. The constant grim news reports are overwhelming, causing a range of emotional mood swings and difficulty in sleeping. At first I really couldn't settle to anything. I was anxious, scared, annoyed with people who refused to follow the guidelines, and feeling guilty.

To get through the nightmare I started a positive routine instead of dwelling on the heartache and horror going on in the world. We'd been given the valuable gift of time, lots of time to do things at a leisurely pace, take stock and tackle the "to do" list. So, I have been de cluttering, spring cleaning, decorating, fence & wall painting and gardening. I even spent a day cleaning my bike but I'm still lacking confidence, the NHS has enough to do.

I appreciate getting out for the daily walk, no need for the green man with the roads so quiet, no litter on the streets, amazing. It's been great to see the vibrant colours of spring, listen to birdsong, watch the swans' aeronautical displays, and the baby ducklings' synchronised swimming. I even saw a heron! All so uplifting. Solo walking is great for contemplation, praying for others, giving thanks and hymn singing. Not our usual Sunday but enjoying, church services on the radio & television.

I've been counting my blessings, hoping and praying an answer can be found soon to return to a "new better normal".

Isabel Freer

## Church Family News

**Thank you:** Linda Mitchell, Robert Cross and Helen Wade all say thank you for the kind flowers they received.

# Some Days are Diamonds

My three-year-old struggled to get to sleep last night. It's the second time this has happened in the last few days and I wonder if she is under-stimulated due to missing out on pre-school, not getting enough exercise to tire her out, or if her little mind is worrying about all the strange things that are happening at the moment.

Whatever the issue, I eventually allowed her to stay up late with me to watch a film – a rare treat in our house where screen time is strictly rationed. While it spoiled my own plans for the evening – watching re-runs of ER and being in bed for 9.30pm – there was something special about cuddling together under a blanket in the dark as we watched Alvin and the Chipmunks.

It's definitely not something I would want to do every night, but these are unprecedented times and we might on occasions have to move away from our own 'normal' in order to offer others the comfort they need to make the best of the situation.

'Finding a new normal' is a phrase we are hearing frequently at the moment from politicians, scientists, and medical professionals. Even once the lockdown is eased, social distancing measures will have to stay in place for the foreseeable future as the race to find a vaccine for COVID-19 continues.

As usual in a society intent on pushing us to be as perfect as possible, it comes as no surprise that the internet seems to be awash with suggestions as to what this 'new normal' might look like. There is a plethora of online articles advising us to use this time wisely: Learn a new language! Declutter your home! Bake! (Surely, you've already baked the obligatory lockdown banana bread?)

While it might help some people to be offered so many ideas as to how to fill their time, others might find this simply adds to the pressure of what is already a very stressful experience.

Those of us who are parents are also embroiled in a battle to work out how we can best continue with our children's education without adding to their anxiety about the changes happening in their lives.

My husband and I are currently being allowed to work from home but with no childcare or extended family to rely on, the reality of this is that we have to split the day in two so that one

of us can work while the other entertains our two children (aged three and one).

Despite both being teachers, neither he nor I teach early years, and although I know that everyone is in the same boat, I can't help feeling anxious that my naturally shy older daughter is missing out on a full term at nursery. I feel under pressure to try to engage in the kind of learning activities she would have taken part in had she been there. Even though I know she is learning through play, it is the social aspect of nursery that she is missing most of all.

Yet, despite all this, I have not found lockdown the distressing and frightening experience it might have been. Several older friends and relatives have remarked to us how it must be a very challenging time to have young children, but even as I've politely hummed and hawed in (half hearted) agreement, I have secretly felt that having young children is the one thing that has made this experience easier.

I have experienced two periods of maternity leave and recently moved to part-time working, so I have some experience of making the most of life outside the work environment.

The time I have spent at home with my girls has been, at times, sleep deprived, chaotic, and fraught but with all this effortlessly beautiful.

Over the past few weeks, we have read hundreds of books, painted pictures, baked cakes, prayed together, and played the same games over and over again. We have planted and watered seeds and watched them begin to grow. We have spotted slugs, snails, beetles, and butterflies, all of which have brought us a level of excitement and delight that I could never previously have imagined. We have seen bullfinches and blue tits flutter and land in our garden and called grandparents to pass on this good news.

We have even watched as the cherry blossom tree in our front garden, so barren and ugly in the wintertime, has begun to sprout tiny green buds which have, little by little, bloomed into scores of candy pink flowers.

Our world has got smaller, the pace of life has got slower, and my children have reminded me of all the things I had stopped noticing long ago. I hope I never forget again.

Yet this is a scary and uncertain time. We have all had our fair share of tears and tantrums and deeply miss friends and family, especially those who live close by and whom we are used to seeing on a regular basis. As teachers, my husband and I know only too well that there will be thousands of families who are struggling to feed their children and many young people for whom home is not a safe place. We are forever grateful for the immense sacrifices being made every day by key workers and we feel deep sorrow over the many lives which have

already gone and are continuing to be lost.

Yet, one of the ways we can best pay tribute to all those who are suffering as a result of the corona virus is to live our lives as we have been asked to do – quietly and on our own for now, making the best, day by day, of what we have.

The words of Elsa in *Frozen 2* have rung loudly in my ear over these past few weeks – and not just because we have watched the film too many times: “These days are precious; don’t let them slip away.”

Yes, these days may not be the ones we had planned, but they *are* precious, nonetheless. I hope that considerations like these will help my daughter – and all of us – sleep a little better tonight.

Marie McCoy

(Originally published by Adamah Media)

## The Eggs are Back!

Toilet paper is old news. Eggs, however, are back and I can’t contain my excitement every time I get my hands on some. I even know the price which earned us a point in our quiz last Friday!

A few weeks ago, I was still struggling to find my groove with regards to this new reality we find ourselves in. Now, in my 8th week of working from home, this new reality is starting to feel normal. “Resilient” is a word I have heard a lot in the last few months and it is because of this resilience that I believe we all deserve a pat on the backs. Now go on, treat yourself to a proper pat!

You’re doing great. We are all doing great.

Personally, I am enjoying the slowness and simplicity of life right now. I am loving the regular catch ups with family and friends and weekly quiz nights. I am loving the reset to my gratitude meter as I am grateful for the smallest of things – like finding eggs on a shop shelf! I sincerely hope that when life returns to our new normal that we do not forget all the good that came out of this time.

Look at me, already speaking in past tense! We got this. We are all doing great. Pat, pat, pat on the back.

Pottering Polly

Read more at [potteringpolly.com](http://potteringpolly.com)

## What's On At Eastwood

			<b>Contact</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>			
10.00 am	<b>Faithbook (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays)</b>	Erika Watt	07399 894484
11.15 am	<b>Worship</b>	Rev Jim Teasdale	0141 571 7648
11.00 am	<b>Sunday School</b> (age 2 to 16)	Katie Morrison	0141 621 1581
<b>MONDAY</b>			
10.00 am	<b>English Literacy Classes</b>	Christine Nanguy E:info@pollokshawsln.org	0141 649 8238
12 noon	<b>The Lunch Club</b>  Open on the <b>1st</b> and <b>3rd</b> Mondays of the month from 12noon (except July and August)	Liz Dobbie	0141 585 3220

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all activities are suspended until further notice.**

6.30 pm	<b>GIRLS' BRIGADE</b>	Erika Watt	07399 894484
6.30 pm	<b>Wee Worship</b>  (last Wednesday of the month excl. December)	Rev Jim Teasdale	0141 571 7648

<b>FRIDAY</b>			
9.30 am	<b>Slimming World</b>	Lesley Clark	07928 023238
7.00 pm	<b>Badminton</b> (from October to May)	Liz Dobbie	0141 585 3220

<b>SATURDAY</b>			
10.30 am	<b>Coyle Irish Dancers</b>	Suzanne Coyle	07896 155992
7.00 pm	<b>EPYC</b>	Erika Watt	07399 894484

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