

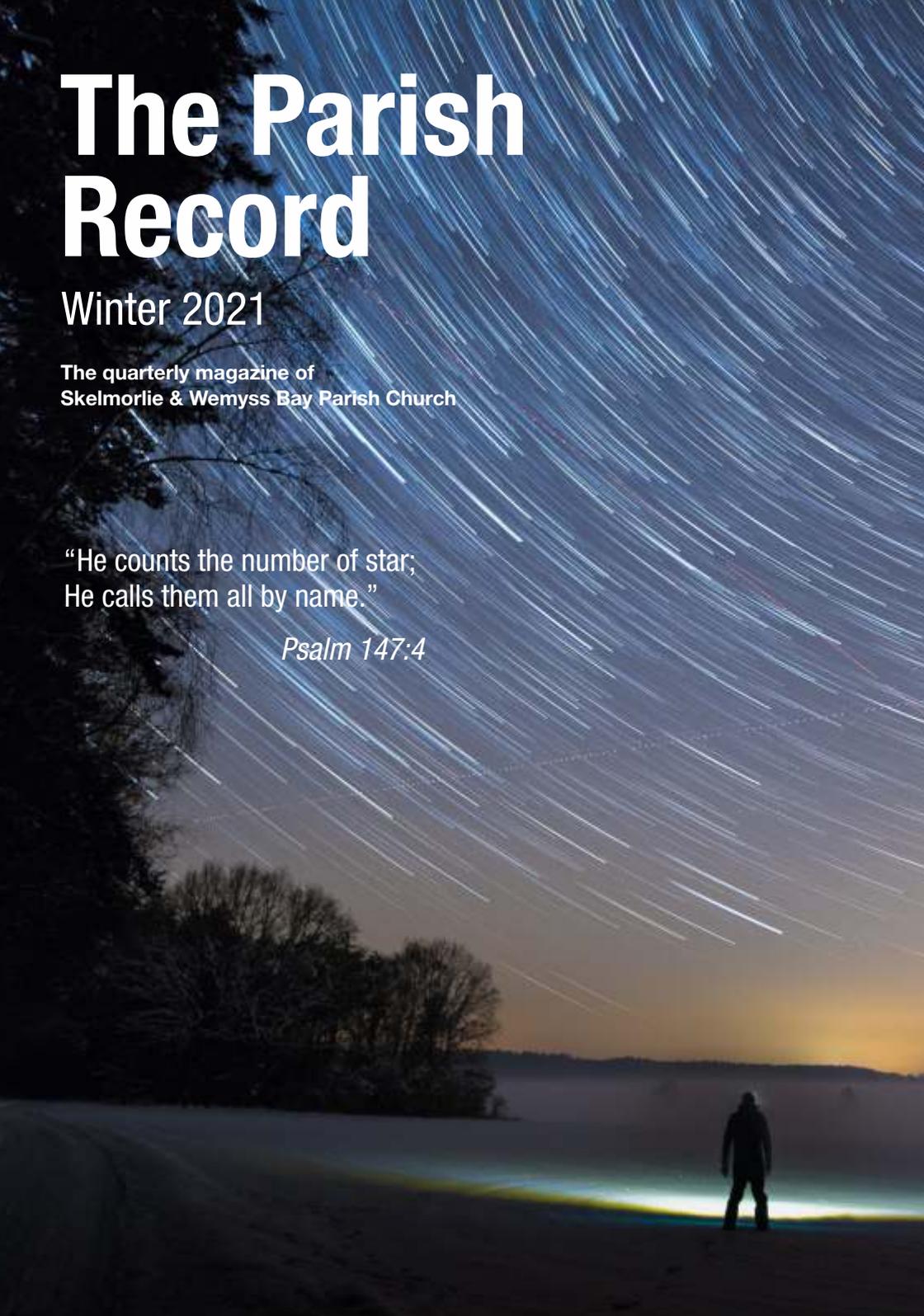
The Parish Record

Winter 2021

The quarterly magazine of
Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Parish Church

“He counts the number of star;
He calls them all by name.”

Psalm 147:4



MESSAGE FROM OUR INTERIM MODERATOR REV. ALAN SORENSEN



Got your Christmas cards done yet? Those who are on my Christmas card list know that I always like to slightly undermine the whole Christmas card thing – usually with some offbeat comment or greeting. A few years ago I sent mine in October. I just liked the idea that those receiving them would have to think what to do - put it on the mantelpiece for 3 months? Put it in a drawer and hope to remember to retrieve it? One friend was genuinely annoyed at me breaking the convention of sending them around Christmas!

The point is, Christmas is not about Christmas. Christmas is about God coming into the world, the whole world, for the whole year, over our whole lives. The really weird thing is actually people keeping that Good News confined to a season.

In our lives, with all of our worries and all our hassles; in our church, with all of the uncertainty over the future; in our world, with Covid still cawing the feet from under everything we used to take for granted, the climate emergency seemingly never taken seriously enough and the perennial head-shaking over politicians who seem less than honourable – we need the good news of Christmas! God came into a dark and dangerous world, God 'took his chances' as a refugee, pursued by murderous soldiers. God showed who he was and brought hope to the poorest. It's all in this wonderful story we explore, celebrate and sing heartily about each year.

And yet, that is a story – a hope - for every day, is it not? As someone once put it, “At Christmas God just did in big print what he does in small print all the time.”

Happy Christmas and a Guid New Year!

MESSAGE FROM REV. ARCHIE SPEIRS

Shalom, peace and blessings this Christmas. Christine and I send our love and prayers this Christmas season. Leaving to retire has been a mixed blessing, firstly discovering that things don't have to be done yesterday, (that's been a difficult change for me lol), that Christine and I can say to each other in the morning 'What will we do today' and then on the other hand missing everyone at church. We were so blessed by the love and friendship that was so freely given to us over the eight years that we were with you, and that friendship still continues. With the restrictions brought by COVID-19 and then taking ill, (at that point I wasn't sure if retirement was such a good idea lol) I really didn't get the chance to express our thanks for all the retirement gifts that were so generous, thoughtful and kind.



We were so overwhelmed and still are, even as I express these thoughts for our Christmas letter. It was the right time for us to move to Paisley especially as Ellie and Riley are doing so well at school. What have we been up to since moving you might ask? With the monetary gift we purchased the outdoor furniture and had the decking area installed where it made such a wonderful addition to our home, where we can enjoy an outdoor setting with friends.





Christine and I hope that our church family will come visit and enjoy it with us. There has been a number of finishing jobs to be done around the house and garden and being a DIY enthusiast I have been enjoying getting them scored off the “to do” list. Christine has also been working hard helping and looking after us all, but we are blessed by turning a house into a home. As Chris and I would say ‘God is good all the time, all the time God is good’. I look forward to sharing the Christmas Eve service with Marion and a chance to have a chat over a coffee and a mince pie. I am not sure what the future will bring as we are living in such strange days, everything is changing so much and we can see how many of those changes are working out in Paisley. Living in Skelmorlie and working between Inverkip, Wemyss Bay and Skelmorlie, we have so many wonderful memories to look

back on, the friendship we shared with St. Joseph’s and St. Patrick’s church, the Cafe Church, Soul Searching, Friendship Circle, The Fellowship, Messy Church, the local primary Schools and their Christmas services, but most of all I could not have asked for two more amazing and caring congregations to finish my ministry. I hope that I will be able to from time to time to lead worship as I am only a phone call away.

May the Lord bless you this Christmas
Archie and Christine

*“If after Church, you wait awhile,
Someone may greet you with a smile.
But, if you quickly rise and flee,
We’ll all seem cold and stiff, Maybe.
The one beside you in the pew
Is, perhaps a stranger too.
All here, like you, have fears and cares,
All of us need each other’s prayers.
In fellowship we bid you meet,
With us around God’s Mercy Seat.”* Anon

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

28th November

11.30am

1st Sunday in Advent

Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay

The Christmas tree will be lit for the beginning of the Christmas Season

10.00am

Inverkip

5th December

11.30am

2nd Sunday in Advent

Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay

10.00am

Inverkip

12th December

11.30am

3rd Sunday in Advent

Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay - Communion

10.00am

Inverkip

19th December

11.30am

4th Sunday in Advent

Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Gift Service

Foodbank Collection

10.00am

Inverkip

24th December

11.00pm

Christmas Eve

Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Watch Night Service

There will be tea and coffee served before the watch night service at Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Church beginning at 11.30pm

7.00pm

Inverkip Evening Service - All welcome

11.00pm

Inverkip Watch Night Service

25th December

10.00am

No Christmas Day Service at

Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay

Inverkip Short Christmas Day Service

A little boy opened the big family Bible....

He was fascinated as he fingered through the old pages.

Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. He picked up the object and looked at it. What he saw was an old leaf that had been pressed in between the pages.

“Mama, look what I found,” the boy called out.

“What have you got there dear?”

With astonishment in the young boy’s voice, he answered,

“I think it’s Adam’s underwear!”

AUDIO-VISUAL REPORT

Now that David has taken over Property (thank you!), here's an update on AV matters.

We operate sound, and prepare and operate the screen – announcements, hymn words, readings, etc. – and since services resumed on 9th May, we broadcast (“stream”) every service live on YouTube, for watching live or later on a smart TV or computer. We installed new cameras and equipment for this in April. We were “finding our feet” for a few weeks, but learned fast.

We still make DVDs of the service for anyone who's housebound and can't watch on YouTube. Past services, including previous recorded ones, remain on YouTube (search “Inverkip and Skelmorlie”).

In lockdown, often over 200 people watched each service. Now that people can come to church, it's down a bit but still regularly over 50 “views” (each can be more than 1 person watching) plus the DVDs.

We are again blessed with a lovely team, with Dave and Rebecca back, and Shona, Inheanyi and Fraser joining. We also have the opening announcements prepared every week by Rita – she's done this single-handedly for well over 18 months! 3 people are now needed each week for sound, screen and streaming, so we could certainly do with more help in any of these areas. If anyone is a teeny bit interested, or knows someone who could be, please tell me or any of the team. It's enjoyable and rewarding to do this to support our church's mission.

Bill Wright (01475 520095)

FORGIVE ME WHEN I WHINE

Today, upon a bus I saw a girl with golden hair,
And in my heart I wished that I was just as fair
When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle.
She had one leg and wore a crutch, but as she passed, a Smile.

Dear Lord, forgive me when I whine.
I have 2 legs to walk upon and the world is mine.

I stopped to buy some candy; met a boy who had such charm.
We talked, he seemed so happy, if I were late, it do no harm.
And as I left, he said to me, 'Thank you, you've been So kind.
It's nice to talk with folks like you. You see, he said, 'I'm blind.'

Dear Lord, forgive me when I whine.
I have 2 eyes to see the world and the world is mine.

Later that day on my way, I saw a boy with eyes of blue.
He watched the other children play; he did not know what to do.
I stopped a moment, then I said, 'Why don't you join the others, dear?'
He kept on looking straight ahead and then I knew he could not hear.

Dear Lord, forgive me when I whine.
I have 2 ears to hear the world and the world is mine.

With legs to take me where I'd go.
With eyes to see the sunset glow.
With ears to hear what I'd know. Oh the world is mine.
I stopped for a moment, just look how much I have
Everywhere, in all our lives, these are His signs
Dear Lord, forgive me when I whine.
I have been blessed indeed, and the world is mine.

Zain Bhakha

KNOW YOUR SESSION CLERK



Q	What was your first Church?
A	Renfrew Trinity Professor William Barclay and latterly Renfrew Old
Q	What is your first memory of church?
A	Sitting with arms folded and my Grandmother feeding me "Imps" before the sermon.
Q	How long have you been an Elder at SWB?
A	38 years SWB and 13 years Renfrew
Q	What do you see your Role as an elder?
A	Providing support to the minister and care of members
Q	What is your favourite part of being an elder
A	Taking part and sharing Communion
Q	How do you see the future of the church?
A	I am cautiously optimistic. The national shortage of ministers is going to present real problems and the challenge will be how to adapt in the future.
Q	How important is the building to you?
A	Our church is beautiful but more important is what goes on inside.
Q	What organisations did you belong to?
A	The Boys' Brigade
Q	What organisation do you most miss?
A	The BB
Q	What's your favourite hymn?
A	Will your anchor hold

Q	What's your favourite reading from the bible?
A	Psalm 34 v 1 - 8
Q	What is your favourite part of the Sunday service?
A	The praise, music and the sermon
Q	How did your family life interact with the church?
A	Both children attended Sunday School (when we had one)
Q	Do you think we do enough to welcome visitors to the church?
A	I think the warmth of our welcome to visitors is evident and sincere.
Q	What is your favourite stained-glass window?
A	Christ stilling the storm
Q	Who – or what – has been your biggest inspiration in your life so far?
A	Without doubt, The Boys' Brigade and various leaders without whom my life might have taken a somewhat different course,
Q	Which four guests, from history or still living would make up your dream dinner party and why.
A	Winston Churchill, David Attenborough, Nelson Mandela and Kiri Te Kanawa
Q	What is the temptation you wish you could resist?
A	Tunnocks Caramel Wafers and Jaffa Cakes
Q	What is the pet hate which makes your hackles rise?
A	Rudeness and lack of respect for others, also poor table manners
Q	Can you describe the happiest moment or memory you will cherish for ever?
A	Birth of my children and St Mirren winning the Scottish Cup

NEW WEBSITE

Check out our new website and let us know what you think. Most of all please like us by clicking on the like button. You may also wish to “bookmark” the site and you will receive notifications of anything new. The link is <https://www.skelmorliewemyssbaychurch.co.uk/>
Or for those of you who have smart phones scan the QR code.

How to scan a QR code



OPEN THE CAMERA APP

1. from the Home screen, Control Centre or Lock screen.
2. Select the rear-facing camera. Hold the camera so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera app. Your device recognises the QR code and displays a notification.
3. Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code.

CHURCH BLOOPERS

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning : 'Jesus Walks on the Water'
The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus'

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the Choir.
They need all the help they can get.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?".
Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Potluck supper on Sunday prayer and medication to follow.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7PM at the First Presbyterian Church.
Please use the large double door at the side entrance.

The eighth graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement on Friday. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

CROSSREACH CHRISTMAS CARDS WITH A DIFFERENCE

You will be invited to give a donation for one CrossReach Christmas Card, available on Sundays during Advent. This essentially replaces all the individual Christmas greetings cards you would send to friends in the congregation.

In past years these individual cards had to be hand delivered. This became increasingly problematic, especially in the dark, with our ageing church 'posties'.

The new initiative works as follows:

Select a card from the CrossReach range of cards offered by a member of our Church Outreach Committee.

Add your name to the card participants list and make your anonymous donation to the charity.

Write your card greeting and peg your card to one of the strings hung around the back of the Church, for everyone to see.

The charity CrossReach will receive our congregational donation after Christmas. CrossReach is the Church of Scotland's social care arm and offers loving care to people of all ages, who are in need of a helping hand, supporting them to live their life to the full whatever their circumstances.

Please support this new initiative.

REFLECTING ON A VISIT FROM VISION MINISTRIES

On Sunday 14th of October, Barbara Edmondson of Vision Ministries visited our church and spoke of the charity's work in Kenya. Barbara's charity is one of the twelve that our congregation supports through its Outreach programme.

Vision Ministries is a non-denominational Christian charity that seeks to improve the quality of life of the poorest in Kenya, by facilitating and maintaining local, pastor-led initiatives;

These also include a school classroom, a clinic, a rural well, school fees, educational books and resources, pharmaceuticals or opportunities to inform the careers, hopes and well-being of young people in the slums of Mombasa.

Vision Ministries are also seeing the long-term success of their educational sponsorship schemes with young adults now returning to their communities where they deploy their newly acquired skills and talents and in so doing, permanently break the cycle of poverty.

Over lunch with members of the Outreach group and later whilst staying with me, Barbara recounted many instances when a dire need was filled in a timely and serendipitous fashion following prayer. She went on to state that such miracles by an unseen hand, serve to maintain her faith in Christ.

Vision Ministries relies on making personal contacts and networking with Christian congregations here in the U.K. By working together, we can further Christ's mission.

You may have received a tube of Smarties whilst in Church recently. The Outreach Committee hope you will enjoy the contents, before filling the empty tube with twenty pence or one pound coins. Your Smartie tube donation will continue to support Vision Ministries Water Guard programme, which distributes sterilising tablets in the slums, making polluted water safe to drink.

Your full Smartie tubes can be deposited in the purple box adjacent to the kitchen hatch in the Church hall.

With grateful thanks from your Outreach Committee

Jean McAnna, Margaret Spence, Sylvia Douglas and Caroline Scott

PROPERTY REPORT

Quinquennial survey of Church and Manse.

Church: Brown and Wallace, Chartered Surveyors, carried out a detailed survey which was dated 20th November 2020. We will shortly begin to address some of the defects which were marked up as being “essential” work such as, repointing some areas using lime mortar, cleaning off algal growth, weatherproofing stonework.

In the immediate future, some defective lead-work (above the store room which adjoins the flower room) is being addressed by Justin Lewis. This was deemed to be the cause of the collapse of a plaster lintel internally. In the next few weeks inaccessible gutters will be cleared and we intend to organise a work party to clear leaves from gutters and the passageway that runs along the rear of the Church.

Manse: The let appears to have gone smoothly but 121 have been slow to provide invoices. We will need to consider what should be done since the current let finishes at the end of January.

Interlinked smoke and heat alarms have been installed to comply with safety legislation amendments introduced for domestic dwellings.

Bruce McKechnie has been asked to quote for replacing the high level decking.

Car Park: Saltire Tree Surgeons have removed the alder tree overhanging the roof of the cottage at No 8 Shore Road and have severed the ivy on the adjacent tree. The alder tree was found to be rotten.

Other items: Opus energy have looked at providing smart meters but this is not straightforward. A solution may have been found. One of the Hall heaters has been replaced and the others remounted more securely.

CHANGES IN COMMITTEE CONVENERS

Bill Wright has relinquished his position as the church Property Convener. Over the years, Bill has given unstinting, able, and knowledgeable service in ensuring that the fabric of our church and halls are kept in good order. This frequently involved many long and sometimes lonely hours spent in and around the Sanctuary and grounds. He led a dedicated team of volunteers who, by their willing efforts, have saved our church sizeable amounts of expenditure which would otherwise have had to be carried out by paid contractors at considerable cost. While no longer Convener, Bill will have expressed a wish to continue lending his experience and support to the property team. **Thank you Bill!**

Thanks also to David Johnston who has succeeded Bill as Property Convener and to Caroline Scott who has agreed to fill the vacancy left by David as Convener of the Mission and Outreach Committee.

Alan Grant



Clyde Coast Strathspey & Reel Society

Will be performing on Friday 21st

January in the Church Hall from

7.30pm. Tickets available in the New

Year, costing £8, will include a glass of

wine or soft drink.

Story for Christmas –The Two Babies

(from 'A Treasury of Christmas Gems')

Since discovering this story several years ago, I still shed a tear when reading it. Little Misha truly entered into the wonder of it all and found comfort and joy.

It happened at an orphanage in Russia just after the fall of Communism. There were about 100 orphans, boys and girls who had been abandoned and abused. On Christmas Eve the American teacher gathered everyone together and told them the Christmas story. As the story was translated children and staff were sitting on the edges of their seats. After the story, it was time for a bit of 'Messy Church' when the children were invited to recreate the manger scene.

Misha aged six finished first. The teacher looked at the manger and saw that there were two babies. Through the translator the teacher asked Misha, 'Why two?' Crossing his arms and contemplating the manger scene, Misha retold the Christmas story. When he reached the point when Mary put Jesus in the manger, Misha began to ad lib: 'and when Mary put Jesus in the manger, he looked at me and asked, 'Have you any place to stay?' I told him I have no Mama or Papa, so I don't have any place to stay. Then Jesus said, 'Stay with me.' But I thought I couldn't because I had no gift for him. Then I said, 'If I keep you warm, would that be a good enough gift?' Jesus said, 'That would be the best gift of all.'

So I got into the manger with Jesus and he said, 'You can stay with me—for always.' 'When little Misha finished his story his eyes brimmed full of tears that splashed down his cheeks. His head dropped and his shoulder, shook as he sobbed and sobbed. The little orphan had found someone who would never abandon or abuse him, and would stay with him—for always.



*Glorious light has dawned for all,
shadows now have fled away;
Now to those who walk in darkness,
Christ our Saviour shines today
He is Light ! He is Joy ! Our glorious King;
Evermore, Yesu Lord, to you our praise we bring
Fear and doubt we leave behind us,
peace within our hearts shall stay;
For our Saviour goes beside us,
Yesu brightens all our way.
(from Living Songs: Malawi Edition)*

SUBMITTED BY MARION STEWART

SNIPPETS

The Manse has been satisfactorily let for an initial period of six months.

The financial position is satisfactory and operating within the set budget. While due to the current situation, offerings via the open plate had reduced, this loss has been offset by the receipt of rebates on our Ministries and Mission assessment.

Retiring offerings have continued but have been significantly affected by the lockdown measures.

During the last week of October, leaflets were delivered to the new Ogilvie Homes flats publicising services and events.

In view of the Covid situation, it has been decided not to organise the Christmas mail delivery this year.

The Session expressed its sincere appreciation to Ms Marion Stewart, member of our congregation and also a Deacon in the Church of Scotland, for her ready willingness to lead worship on some Sundays during the vacancy. In view of her considerable knowledge and experience, it was agreed to invite her to become a co-opted member of the Kirk Session.

Training in the operation of the Defibrillator located at the side of the hall door is being arranged.

Alan Grant Session Clerk

SCRIPTURE READERS

Outlined below are the dates for the readers' diaries. Please make your way to the lectern during the final verse of the hymn before the lesson. If at any time you are unable to be present please change dates with another reader. If anyone would like to join the rota please let Alan Grant know.

2022					
<u>Jan</u> 2nd 9th 16th 23rd 30th	John Nugent Frances Nicol Gladys Black John Scott Graham Harron	<u>Mar</u> 6th 13th 20th 27th	Keith Loxam Rita Carmichael Lesley Gurton Erika Diffenthal	<u>May</u> 1st 8th 15th 22nd 29th	Gladys Black John Scott Graham Harron Morag Mackintosh Erika Diffenthal
<u>Feb</u> 6th 13th 20th 27th	Bill Wright Marion Stewart Morag Mackintosh Tom Ovens	<u>Apr</u> 3rd 10th 17th 24th	Caroline Scott Eddie Yde John Nugent Frances Nicol	<u>Jun</u> 5th 12th 19th 26th	Bill Wright Marion Stewart Alan Grant Keith Loxam

SHOULD YOU BE UNABLE TO READ ON
YOUR ALLOCATED DATE, IT IS
IMPORTANT THAT YOU ARRANGE A
SUBSTITUTE.

CHURCH FLOWERS

We are indebted to all who donate flowers for the beautification of the Sanctuary throughout the year. Do you like flowers, do you have some spare time, can you help? We are looking for people to join our team of flower arrangers for the church.

Also donations of flowers are required to fill a number of spaces during the latter half of the year. What better way to commemorate a special anniversary or event.

Contact Ann Grant if you are able to help or donate flowers Tel: 520987

2022					
<u>Jan</u> 2nd 9th 16th 23rd 30th	Elsie Scott Irene Dick Mrs Baillie Betty Bichard Morag Mackintosh	<u>Mar</u> 6th 13th 20th 27th	May McKinnon COMMUNION Ann Grant Anne Doull	<u>May</u> 1st 8th 15th 22nd 29th	Gwen Mackenzie Sheila Kerr Gloria Macdonald Mary Porteous Lynne Wilson
	ARRANGER Elsie Scott		ARRANGER Ann Grant		ARRANGER Gwen MacKenzie
<u>Feb</u> 6th 13th 20th 27th	Fiona Riddell Alice Smith Muriel O'May Ella Wright	<u>Apr</u> 3rd 10th 17th 24th	Rita Carmichael Nancy Jackson Alice Sloss Margaret Spence	<u>Jun</u> 5th 12th 19th 26th	Anne Organ COMMUNION Elizabeth Ovens Roz Barnes
	ARRANGER Ella Wright		ARRANGER Anne French		ARRANGER Ann Grant

“Flowers are like friends; they bring colour to your world.”

DOOR DUTY & OFFERTORY ROTA

2022					
<u>Jan</u> 2nd 9th 16th 23rd 30th	M McGinn M O'May E Wright D Johnston R Carmichael	A Smith I Jackson A Craig G Black B Spence	<u>Apr</u> 3rd 10th 17th 24th	B Dunn M Stewart S Mackintosh M McGinn	C Sangster A Macdonald M Dunlop A Smith
<u>Feb</u> 6th 13th 20th 27th	A Smith I Jackson A Craig G Black	M Mackintosh G Macdonald E Yde M Spence	<u>May</u> 1st 8th 15th 22nd 29th	E Wright M O'May T Ovens J Nugent R Carmichael	A Craig I Jackson G Black M Mackintosh B Spence
<u>Mar</u> 6th 13th 20th 27th	F Nicol Liz Grant G Mackenzie J McAnna	B Bichard Ann Grant M Maclean A Doull	<u>Jun</u> 5th 12th 19th 26th	W Craig C Scott F Nicol Liz Grant	G Macdonald E Yde B Bichard Ann Grant

Please be at the door no later than 11.00am

Circumstances have changed and it is necessary for those on door duty to record the names of the people attending the mornings service and to ensure that everyone sanitises their hands.

Please also note that at the end of the service it is the responsibility of those on door duty to once again ensure that the congregation sanitises their hands and also to tidy the church

If you are not available for door duty on the date specified, please make an alternative arrangement with someone else on the rota. Do not assume that someone will stand in for you!

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If you have any special celebrations please let us know.



www.swbchurch.co.uk

Facebook : Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Parish Church

Church Service : On YouTube, search for “Inverkipp and Skelmorlie” (make it a favourite or bookmark).

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