

Outlook

Gullane Parish Church

May/June 2020

(The Lockdown issue)



Blue-lit tree in front of Smiddy in support of NHS

Letter from the Minister

Dear Friends

As I write we are still in full lockdown but with the hope that it will not be long before some relaxation of the regulations becomes possible, at least for some of us. In the meantime, I continue to be humbled and deeply impressed by the way folk have responded to the crisis, in large measure accepting restrictions with grace and good humour while reaching out to neighbours and friends with generosity and compassion. The acts of kindness which Dorothy and I have experienced have been much appreciated; the ones with the most impact being simple gestures reminding us that we are in the thoughts of others. I hope your own experience is similar.

The other fact upon which I reflect with gratitude, daily, is that we are so blessed to be spending lockdown in the beautiful surroundings of East Lothian and as part of true communities. The contrast with those restricted to more sterile environments and to greater degrees of anonymity is huge and I cannot imagine how some people are coping. Thankfully, the Church is at work alongside many other agencies and individuals in every part of the land, bringing love and support and even those of us unable to be “out and about” in the front line can share in that work through our constant prayers and our financial donations.

Earlier this morning I read an article by the Reverend Dr Giles Fraser which was published in a national newspaper and kindly shared with me by one of our elders. Giles Fraser was the Canon Chancellor of St Paul’s Cathedral who resigned from office almost 10 years ago and took up post as a Parish Priest elsewhere in London. The reason for his resignation was the decision to remove peaceful “Occupy” protesters from the precincts of St Paul’s using court action. He could not accept that this was a legitimate action by the Church.

Writing today from his parish in The Elephant and Castle, Fraser emphasises the dilemma facing Church in the UK caused by the huge number of buildings which require maintenance and repair by an ever-diminishing number of worshippers. While doubtless fully appreciating the thinking behind plans to close buildings and divert resources

elsewhere, he emphasises that buildings are important; certainly because many bear witness to a continuous Christian presence over many centuries but also because buildings allow people to come together and give true substance and reality to community. Wonderful though the possibility of online worship and sharing is, Fraser emphasises that this possibility draws upon the “capital” that exists because of the relationships built up over many years by physical gathering and shared worshipping in the house of God. There is a great deal of truth and common sense in that observation.

When, in late January of this year, I announced my intention to demit office as your Minister at the end of October, the full impact of Covid 19 was not known. My enforced absence from work through March has been followed by this “surreal” period of lockdown and none of us knows how long it will be before worship services, meetings and home visits will be possible again. I wrestle with all this uncertainty and the changing obligations it places upon us all. Let us hope and pray that we might find clarity and guidance before too long.

I close by saying how delighted and grateful I am that this issue of the magazine can now be published and distributed. Thanks to all who have helped to make this possible. We are also much indebted to those who have contributed to the project to refresh and renew our presence on the website and Facebook. This makes daily news bulletins possible and allows us to make resources accessible at any time for everyone who has internet access. If you don't have internet access then do have a chat with your elder or with members of your family, who may be able to download printed copies or audio files of the Sunday reflections from the AGPC website. Finally, see the item in this issue about Daily Hope, which makes it possible to listen to hymns, reflections and prayers from the Church of England.

Grace and peace to you and yours.

Brian



An important resource for those without internet access.

Do you know someone who has no access to the internet but who might appreciate being able to access prayers, hymns and reflections through a free phone line? If so, pass them details of this 24 / 7 service by the Church of England in partnership with others.



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers



Enormous thanks are due to all the people who have contributed to 'Outlook' at very short notice. I knew we could produce a magazine but thought it would be rather slimmer than normal. I was proved quite wrong and so many of you have answered the call for copy. The response has been wonderful and you are every one much appreciated.

... and a particular mention for Elspeth who was able to provide the cover photograph.

Ed



A Message from the Treasurer

Many of you make your donation to the church by periodic donation or bank transfer and we are grateful for your continued support. There are also a number of members who make their contributions on a weekly basis using envelopes or simple cash in the open plate. As you are aware the enforced closure means the church no longer has any open plate collections to support it.

Over the past year almost 50% of our annual donations are received through the open plate. This averages £2000 per month of lost income. We have continued responsibility to maintain our properties (the church building and the manse) and to contribute to the Church of Scotland centrally, from which it pays all ministers and administers the entire organisation. As things currently stand we are running at a monthly deficit of £2500

As per the last accounts the church had cash reserves of £36,000 and investments valued (at that time) of £85,000. If the current position continues we will run out of cash in little over a year and be forced to sell investments. Current conditions have severely depressed the value of those investments and any sale would seriously damage our financial position.

It is clear that some members of the congregation have already changed their method of support by using direct banking or by standing order and I encourage as many of you as are able to consider supporting us this way.

The Church's bank details should you wish to make a direct transfer or set up a standing order are:

Gullane Parish Church
80-08-22 - 00461473

If do make a donation it would be good to let Morag Black know to enable her to maintain your records and ensure that we claim any Gift aid tax rebate

Thank you all for your continued support.

Joe McGrane (Treasurer)



The Guild

A message from the Church Guild

Sadly, all our Guild activities came to a full stop on March 16 when we had to cancel our Guild meeting. Since I was going to be the speaker, no one was too dismayed and a repeat booking was quite a possibility.

Luckily we had a very good coffee morning the week before. It was well attended and the baking as usual was superb! We raised over £600 which was a great result. Well before lockdown the committee had already decided which charities we would donate money to and Marian Chambers our treasurer, made sure the following projects received their donations as soon as possible: these were as follows:

£300 to Crossreach , Social Care Council of the Church of Scotland,

£300 to Seema project India

£100 to Disaster and emergency committee /Mozambique

£100 to Teen Ranch, a Christian Charity for young people.

The Guild people had been looking forward to a rare treat, which was to be a Strawberry Tea in Elspeth Walker's garden on May 10 at 3 pm. We all thought this was going to be cancelled under the new restrictions. However, Elspeth and her team were not put off by a little difficulty. On May 10 at 3pm all members of the Guild sat down to a cup of tea, a chocolate covered cake, a beautiful card with kind message, a quiz and a lovely posy, each person in their own home. We were delighted and want to thank Elspeth and her team for this lovely surprise.

So our next meeting is not fixed and we may have to be masked to attend, who knows. We shall certainly enjoy meeting up with each other.

Until then, all good wishes and keep well.

Angeniet

And a note from the team:

Sadly the Strawberry tea had to be cancelled so instead Dorothy had the great idea for us to arrange a 'virtual' tea party.

Each Guild Member was given a 'goodie bag' with two smart tea-bags, a chocolate roll, a quiz, a posy of flowers from the Elders' gardens, a card with a lovely picture on it and a message saying we were thinking of them in our prayers and wishing everyone well in these difficult times.

I hope everyone enjoyed their own tea party and we all look forward to when we can get back together again.



Elsbeth Walker, Dorothy Hilsley , Fran Goodman



Count Your Blessings

For a number of years I have followed the Christian Aid Count Your Blessings Lenten calendar. For those not familiar with the scheme, for each day during Lent the calendar gives a reflection, along with suggested prayer and action. This is usually on a theme; this year it was the climate crisis. In addition, several times a week you are prompted to count a blessing and make an appropriate donation; for example Give 20p for every year of education you have had or £1 if you have had breakfast that day. One of the points is to highlight the things we take for granted.

However what was brought home to me particularly this year in our present restrictions were those situations, albeit in a very minor way, which were currently applying to me. I could no longer give 50p for every journey I took, nor 30p for every time I went into a shop, nor even 5p for every minute I was late. Never before had it applied so directly. On the other hand I was able to donate 70p for everyone who had helped me that day: count my blessings indeed

Anne M

JAM Club in Lockdown

The families in JAM Club have had to make all the adjustments expected of us all during this pandemic. With no school or clubs functioning they seem to be delighted to see that JAM Club is still on! After a couple of uncertain weeks, we have now got well into the routine of meeting every Sunday morning at 9.45am on Zoom. JAM leaders have found it rather a steep learning curve but zooming seems to be the way forward. The children do not seem to mind when we forget to mute them during a bible story, or the video does not load, or our singing is interestingly mis-timed. They just seem delighted to see each other and have some familiarity in their week. They join us from their houses, often not in their Sunday best, one time straight from the hot tub! We are simply happy to see them, attending regularly, up to 20 children in number. For the past few weeks Brian has joined us, adding to the fun of it all and we so appreciate him giving us his time. He has joined the children as they, for example, do scavenger hunts, yoga, origami, and puzzles.

In return Brian has started asking the families to record reading aloud the Gospel, to post alongside his prayers and reflections on the Church website each Sunday.

Usually in March we have an Easter Craft afternoon. Instead, some of the crafts that had been planned were delivered to the children at home, they made some lovely Easter bunnies from socks.

The children also made Easter cards which they in turn delivered to some of the isolated members of our Church. The families have also been keenly planting seeds, they have



grown sunflowers to give to folk in the village to grow in their gardens. Each Sunday morning, we have encouraged the children to appreciate the wonderful world in which we live, our lovely beaches, gardens, and countryside.

We have posted lots of photos of all our activities on our Facebook page, please take a look
www.facebook.com/AberladyandGullaneChurchforChildren

Rachel Wallace

...and a message of appreciation

A big thank you to the Sunday Club, who delivered beautiful Easter cards to people who live on their own.

They were designed and written by the young people and I know that they delighted many recipients.

A few weeks ago people found another gift from the Sunday Club, this time on their doorstep in the shape of a well grown sunflower. Let's hope, many of these will grow and provide our garden birds with food in the winter.

Well done everyone.

Angeniet Black



Gullane Resilience Team

The village resilience team was set up after the scare of the “Beast from the East” last year. It is a means of getting help to the community where it is needed. Gordon McLelland and Lorna Scott run it. Each town and village round east Lothian has a similar organisation. They all run slightly differently according to their local need.

Following a Facebook and church announcement at the start of the Covid-19 lockdown in March people signed up as volunteers. The village was divided geographically into 7 zones and each zone has a co-ordinator, I am the co-ordinator for zone 6 which is the central part of the village and stretches up to the Cherish Café. Each co-ordinator has set up a WhatsApp group as a means of easy messaging with the other volunteers in their zone. Once a week the co-ordinators have a virtual online Zoom meeting with Gordon and Lorna. We also get referrals through the district council.

We did two mail drops near the start of Lockdown informing people of the Resilience Team's existence and gave all village

households a name and telephone number to contact if anyone needed help: this could be moral support, or collecting prescriptions or shopping. This work has continued and is especially a support to households which are 'shielding'. It also received funds to provide essential supplies to households which are going through hard times financially.

As well as this we have set up the village hall as a centre for an exchange system of books, toys, DCDs and to give out craft materials.** It is open on **Tuesdays 12-2pm and Fridays 10.30-11.30am**. The donations are all wiped with disinfectant and left for three days before they are put on the tables. Recently we have been able to get a supply of flour from Mungoswells milling farm. This has proved very popular. The first day we had it there was a queue right to the end of the hall car park! It is sold at a reasonable cost and any profit is given to the food bank in Tranent.**

Aldi and co-op donate weekly foodstuffs which are going over their 'best before' dates. These are offered free. We have also been receiving unwanted items from shielding packs. The local day centre** takes quite a lot for making the meals they are providing.

The hall has also been a major centre for taking donations of old curtains and duvet covers which are then sewn into scrubs and scrub bags.** These are going to supply nursing homes, GP surgeries and hospitals around the county and even further afield. Several locals have also been busy making face masks and these are in the hall for sale for a donation to the Tranent foodbank.

It is not known how long this twice-weekly service will run, but probably until the end of July. You can follow what the Resilience Team are doing on their new website www.Gullanert.com or through the Gullane News Group on Facebook.

Claire Walker

*** appearing in the article point to more details elsewhere in the magazine and demonstrates how much people and groups are working together*

Craft Packs for the Community

Early in the lockdown, the Gullane Resilience Team were asked if they could help with craft resources for families struggling to meet the demands of home schooling and entertaining bored children. Home Start East Lothian and 'Wee Red Upcycles' (a local small business) had already started responding to this need elsewhere, but as a Church it was felt this was something we could help with here in Gullane.

Since that first request, the Church and Resilience Team (RT) have been working together to produce up to 20 craft packs a week for families in the village. We have used resources from the JAM Club craft cupboard, kind donations have come from the public (after a request on Facebook), and money from RT funds.

Whilst the church is currently shut, we've used the space in our halls to make up these packs, which are then delivered to the Village Hall to be distributed by volunteers or collected by families. The Primary School has assisted by spreading the word on the availability of the craft packs and highlighting areas of need.

The packs have followed various themes, from providing basic paper, card, pens, scissors etc in the first packs, now in addition we are adding themed resources and ideas sheets e.g. egg box crafts, outdoor craft suggestions or lollipop stick crafts. Into each pack we also add a lovely selection of buttons, googly eyes, pipe cleaners, shiny card etc to allow the children to use their imagination.

The packs are available from the Village Hall every Tuesday 12-2pm and Friday 10.30-11.30am along with the other items on offer thanks to the Resilience Team.

Many thanks to all who have contributed to this project.

Rachel Wallace

Gullane Scrubbers

As lockdown loomed, I became aware that GPs and Healthcare Workers were all requiring scrubs to help them in their work on the front line of the Covid 19 crisis. These were becoming almost impossible to source.

Our BMA Ladies Club curling season was curtailed, but I learnt from my Skip, that her enterprising daughter, Elle Steele, was setting up Nifty Home Stitchers, to sew scrubs. (www.facebook.com/groups/214583163147228/)

Naturally, I volunteered and I knew I had a few friends who also might like to help. 'Gullane Scrubbers' was born! We formed a WhatsApp Group on 14th April and sewing machines began to whirr around East Lothian. We have grown to a group of well over 30 sewers, aged from 18 to 92. Despite social distancing and shielding, the new friendships we have forged are very real, not virtual. In an incredibly short time, supported by Elle and her team, we have amazed ourselves by making and supplying:

264 washbags to East Lothian County Hospital

109 pairs of scrubs trousers to Muirfield Nursing Home

39 Scrubs sets and bags to the Edington Hospital Scrubs and bags to doctors at Gullane Medical Practice, North Berwick Health Centre and Wood Practice, Broxburn.

Scrubs and bags to Ballantine Goldie, Opticians.

Scrubs and bags to William Fraser Centre, Edinburgh.

68 bags to the Resilience Team

We are grateful for the generosity and encouragement of our local community who have looked out spare sheets, fabric and ribbons and donated to us at www.gofundme.com/f/sewing-scrubs-for-the-nhs. Local businesses, Lizzie Bell of Fenton Barns, Hazel Rebecca of Gullane and Ballantine Goldie Opticians of Gullane have also kindly donated fabric.

We are currently working on 250 metres of check fabric (which we have nicknamed Doddie) for a Dementia Unit in Glasgow.

The scrub making will be wrapping up on 10th June, but if any ladies want to continue there is still material and duvet covers available at the village hall. Elle Steele will be in charge after that date.

Judith Donaldson

GULLANE DAY CENTRE



We hope you are all well and coping with this strange situation that we all find ourselves in.

On March the 18th the centre closed to visitors, volunteers and service users. The centre is running a reduced service, our aim is to keep in touch with as many of our service users and volunteers by phone or letter and help out as required. Please get in touch by phone/email if you feel you would like to talk to us: gullane.dc@btconnect.com 01620 843084

The staff are continuing to work, all be it on reduced hours to enable social distancing. We have been delivering meals, phoning and staying in touch with our service users and volunteers. Some of those service users are isolated without help, it has been good to be able to do weekly shopping for them. Many are still enjoying activities delivered, such as jigsaws, quizzes, music, books and puzzles.

Last week we had some special help delivering lunches. We were delighted to have a helping hand from Major Mack MBE (Scots) and his team from 243 Provost Company who had great doorstep chats with our members. Some even wanted a wee hurl in their Military Police car: unfortunately they couldn't oblige. The unit are willing to make regular visits and when we can get back to normal will visit the centre.



All our service users are asking when we will be opening again. Unfortunately we have had no guidance as of yet. Hopefully we can work on plans to open as soon as it is safe to do so as we know everyone is missing attending the centre.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported us

Margaret Mack, Manager





East Lothian Foodbank during lockdown

The Foodbank has remained open during lockdown, serving the community as an essential service, but with some changes to ensure the safety of all. The Foodbank is staffed mainly by volunteers, of whom many are over 60 years old. Those over 70yrs obviously have had to step back and stay at home but the younger volunteers have done extra shifts and new volunteers have been recruited. Social distancing measures and health and safety guidelines have also been enforced.

We were remarkably busy at the beginning of this worrying time as the public started panic buying, but as community food providers were set up and charities responded to need, the number of referrals to the foodbank has settled to a manageable number. We expect to get busier again as time goes on, we think these providers will disappear, individuals' circumstances will change, and money will become tighter. We are preparing for demand to rocket.

Thankfully, the public has been very generous during this pandemic. Although donation points in Churches and libraries have closed, we are getting donations through Tesco, resilience teams and new pick up points (like our Co-op), but also people are arriving at the Foodbank itself with donations. We have had a lot of monetary donations from generous individuals as well as government sources and charities. Small businesses have donated both food (that was going to waste as they closed or as generous acts of kindness) and money. Members of the public have given items from shielding boxes that they feel they do not need. Even plastic carriers from Tesco deliveries are being donated to facilitate our deliveries.

The Foodbank, I am sure, would like to thank everyone for their generosity. As a Church we continue to give in many ways, food, money, and volunteer time. Thank you again. If you would like more information, please contact me.

Rachel Wallace

With help from the Session Clerk a call went out to share your

Reflections on Lockdown

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

I feel very lucky to be locked down in a caring community, enclosed by a beautiful beach and well maintained green belt (aka golf courses), blessed with weeks of sunshine. While missing the physical presence of friends and family and, of course, the church community, what a bonus to have our twenty something daughter staying with us for an extended time (we think she feels the same!). We pray for the return of normality soon, maybe even retaining some of the positives experienced during the lockdown.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

I'm going down technological routes I never thought I'd (want to) explore

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

More time was spent indoors catching up on TV programmes, helping declutter drawers and shelves, revisiting favourite books and authors, and establishing video contact with family and friends in different parts of the world. Considerable thought was given on the most productive way to use my time for daily exercise. The roads, mostly quiet, encouraged me to take up cycling. Although I hadn't been on a bicycle for some 60 years, I felt qualified to take to the roads having passed my cycling proficiency test in Primary 7! On my travels I was struck by the number of teddy bears in windows, displayed to make children happy by lighting up their daily walks and helping to keep their minds active. Interestingly, they had the same effect on cyclists!!

But I am beginning to reflect on how we will have to do things differently when we reopen our Church. Unlike the Israelites, we were not carried off into exile by an invading army, but we have experienced significant dislocation and isolation and been cast adrift from our usual place of worship.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Never have we been able to hear birdsong so clearly and that definitely is a bonus. So nature may be benefitting and that is a good thing.

So good to go out in the quiet of the day
The folks that I meet, so friendly, and say...
Everything OK, and help come your way?
The ring of the doorbell, a delivery as well.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Our teenagers are each taking a weekly turn to provide the evening meal and we are all enjoying regularly eating together

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Missed: going to church, meeting friends, singing hymns and listening to Brian's services, going out without feeling guilty
Not missed: living with appointments (rather delightful without): knowing nothing much is expected of you gives a certain freedom

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

I have found myself re-engaging with seeking out and identifying wild flowers and been genuinely surprised at the variety to be found on our bents and foreshore

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

We've walked round the golf courses by many different routes, Which has allowed me to "run in" my brand new walking boots, We have loved the WhatsApp videos and Skyping almost every day,
The amazing family concerts with all the instruments they play, We hope it will soon be over and a vaccine will be found, And there will be enough manufactured for it to go around, Then the World can breathe again and possibly enter a new place
Where the most important values are love, compassion and grace.

(an extract)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Contributors: Angeniet Black, Douglas Donaldson, Jim Donaldson, Alice Jackson, Anne McCarthy, Katie Newell and Tom Walker



LOCKDOWN

We can do this! We have done it twice before so bring it on!
How hard can that be!

Lockdown No 1

In 1977 Ken, myself and Colin, who was 14 months old, went to live in Iran for supposedly a three year military contract. We were located an 8 hour train journey south to the village of Dorud, 6000 ft above sea level. It was like being on the moon - not a tree in sight! The only feature in the small town was a very ugly cement factory which belched fumes all day long. Our camp was just out of the village and slightly up a hill. As it was a hardship posting, the bungalows were shipped from UK and were very acceptable although all the same, either two bedroom or three bedroom. Contents were the same as well. The idea was that as a bungalow was finished on site a new family would arrive. There was also a bachelor accommodation block on site which housed from memory about 20.

Shortly after we arrived in Dorud, it was obvious that things politically in the country were not stable and a Revolution was pending. The company had a minibus which ran the wives into Dorud for food shopping. By August/September this all came to a stop as we were being pelted with potatoes. All foreigners were American! Everything escalated from then on and we were fully confined to barracks. One of the empty bungalows was turned into a shop. A driver was sent once a week to Tehran with a list to stock the shop. It all became very difficult. The choice of food in Dorud had not been great but in our own shop the choice was even more diminished. I did actually witness two women fighting over baked beans! All women and children were confined to camp while the men tried to carry on building the project. All the wives tried to keep up morale during the day and we urged everyone to try and come up with something to relieve the boredom. One of the girls who had been a dietician gave a demonstration on how to debone a chicken, there was a talk on jewellery and one on hairdressing. I offered to give a floral art demonstration then wondered where on earth I was going to get flowers! Ken sent his driver off to Khoramabad and he fortunately came back with a reasonable amount of flowers. I borrowed cheese graters and arranged the flowers with the graters squashed

into casseroles. It is amazing what you can come up with when you have to! A lot of wives were really struggling with isolation and to make matters worse a barbed wire fence was installed round the whole site. It very quickly became known as Stalag Costain! Armed Iranian soldiers circulated the site every day. It was all very frightening and everybody wondered when we were going to be leaving and how we would be leaving. Christmas was approaching and the thoughts went to were we going to get a Christmas dinner? Turkeys were sent from Tehran but not enough for each family so the decision was made to pool all the turkeys and have one big Christmas dinner in the Club House. A few women went to the town to the Beef shop to try to negotiate to buy the whole suet out of the beast that was hanging up. Dried fruit in Iran is plentiful so at least we had Christmas pudding.

At a New Year 1978 gathering in the Club House it was announced on the BBC World Service that women and children should leave. The World Service was broadcast just once a day. Post and telephone communication had ceased many weeks previously. The Foreign Office had issued our exit papers and full instructions before Christmas. That was in case we had to flee the camp. But this was different. The trains were not running so arrangements were made for the remaining families to be transported in cars and vans for the long 8 hour drive to Tehran. The three of us with as much luggage as we could manage were driven to Tehran in a car by one of the best Iranian drivers. He had a gun and a rifle between the seats! Let's hope he doesn't have to use them is all I could think. We moved into the company apartment in Tehran and went every day to the airport but planes flew towards the airport, circled and flew off again. On the morning of 6th January, a Swiss Air plane was seen circling overhead. It landed and a huge deluge of people crowded towards the Swiss Air desk. They were taking British Airways tickets so Ken was able to transfer the tickets and get us booked on the plane. Unfortunately, Ken had to return to site as he was the only one in charge there. After very weepy farewells Colin and I, the Project Director and his family and a young 14 year old boy who had been out for Christmas were bundled on to the plane. We sat on the tarmac for hours. We hadn't eaten much for days and Colin was getting very hungry. There was a commotion on the runway and we all stood up to see what was going on. Turns out a South African traffic controller ran

from the tower up to the pilot's window and said 'in times of war you have to take me on board. I have no ticket but I need to get out of this place'. So the doors opened and he was bundled on board. There was no seat available so an air hostess who was going to sit next to me and Colin gave up her seat and she was strapped to the floor for take-off and landing. After many hours we took off and landed in Damascus where we took on fuel and food. Colin had never had a lamb chop before but devoured the lot! The next stop was Zurich but as there were more connections from Geneva they put us all on the next flight to Geneva. From then on we were on a British Airways flight to Heathrow. It was late at night, snowing, very cold and a very kind assistant put us into the Excelsior Hotel. I had no UK money, no cheque book and credit cards were out of date. I just burst into tears. What was I to do! No mobile phones in those days! After a fitful night's sleep I had the brainwave to phone Ken's uncle Ken who lived in Clapham. He came the next morning, paid the hotel. We saw the young boy off on a train to Newcastle and then Colin and I on a train to Glasgow. Never in my life have I been so glad to be on UK soil. Swiss Air were just so amazing to have taken the risk in such wartime to have actually landed in Tehran. Ken was able to get out of Iran 10 days later, the same day as Khomeini arrived from Paris but he too had a horrendous journey.

Lockdown No 2

In 1983 Ken, Colin and I flew to Sri Lanka for another 3 year contract. Ken was Project Director on the building of a Ramada hotel in Colombo. It was all a bit of a culture shock but we all soon got used to the heat, the humidity and the filth. I soon made friends with the help of the British Council coffee mornings. In the 80s there were many building projects in Sri Lanka being built mainly by British companies. For the first few months we enjoyed the beaches, the tropical fruits, joined the Colombo Swimming Club, got Colin into the International School and once I was mobile with a 1956 open top Beetle the world was my oyster or so I thought!

By July of that year the Tamil riots started. I remember being at the Market one day and wondering what all the commotion was about in the streets. It was soon then announced that we were under curfew. We were allowed out for two hours a day to do essential food shopping. Colin had made very good

friends with Robin Anthony who lived with his Mum and Dad and two older brothers at the end of our garden wall. They were Seventh Day Adventists and their house on the Galle Road was attached to the church. They were particularly vulnerable as the Seventh Day Adventist church is used by Tamils. The parents could not sleep at night, listening for every noise. They used to climb over the wall and take refuge in our house. The curfew went on for many months. We heard the bombs going off and saw the smoke from burning buildings quite near to us. By November the curfew hours had changed to night-time hours only but it was still quite dangerous to go out, the airport road being particularly bad. November was the month of the St Andrews Ball, normally an extremely well attended occasion. You either left the hotel to go home before 10 pm or you stayed until 6am. We made sure we were home before 10pm! We did hear about four men in kilts rather the worse for wear who were stopped by Police and told to lie down on the road and explain themselves! The Tamil Riots went on for 6 long years but by 1984 life became a bit more normal for us and we were able to go down the coast to a hotel for the weekend. Ken's hotel project was on hold for 5 months. We went regularly to St Andrews Church in the Galle Road, and even joined the choir! Andrew Baillie the minister and his spinster sister Martha, both from Edinburgh were amazing. They helped so many people and were always there in a crisis.

Lockdown No 3

So lockdown in Gullane has been a bit of a breeze compared to our first two lockdowns. We are blessed with being in a beautiful part of the country with lovely walks and scenery and the weather has just been amazing. This lockdown is a completely different scenario and many people have lost their lives.

All of the above have had tragic losses of life and we really have to find a way of healing the sadness that so many nationalities have suffered. This last one has been worldwide but still a frightening time for so many people.

Win Wright

‘ And God said “ Let there be light”but not too much! ‘

Over the last two years Nigel and I have shared two of our interests with you, astronomy and moth recording. We were fascinated then to attend a talk in January which combined both.

A major concern for all astronomers is the growing problem of light pollution as our society seems to become increasingly keen on brightly lit spaces at night. There are lots of reasons for this, many of them to do with safety and security which is understandable but it makes it increasingly difficult to view the night sky properly unless one visits a Dark Skies park....frustrating to astronomers the world over.

What we hadn't realised was the effect this over use of bright light was having on the animal, bird and insect life we share our world with. During the talk we heard about the huge loss of glow worms in the South Downs. Glow worms use light to communicate and attract mates.....they can't see each other due to light pollution therefore aren't mating and reproducing.

This is just part of a larger picture of nocturnal animals and insects having their habitat and behaviours changed by abnormal amounts of light. Migratory birds can become confused as they use moon and starlight to navigate and for night hunters it can be much easier to find prey. If interested this website is good:

<https://www.darksky.org/light-pollution/wildlife/>

It's not all doom and gloom....scientists, councils, local planners are recognising this and steps are being taken to reduce upward glow of street lights, change the nature of light generated and other measures are being put in place. East Lothian has certainly reduced the light glow in many areas. However we can all play our part....if installing security lights - the best are those which point down without too much lateral spread or better still ...consider if you really do need them. Don't leave outside lights on if not neededbetter for the planet from an energy perspective too. Go outside in the complete darkhow wonderful is the sky!

Fran Goodman

..and it's something to look forward to

Deaths of Members

We mourn the passing of the members listed below who have died in recent weeks and months, giving thanks for the fellowship and friendship which we have enjoyed with them and asking God's blessing upon all those most deeply affected.

17 February 2020	Susan Struthers	Aberlady
17 March 2020	Harry Wilson	Gullane
19 March 2020	Sheila Purves	Gullane
14 April 2020	Ian T. Black	Gullane
16 April 2020	Mary Blyth	Gullane
22 April 2020	Janet Reid	Gullane
2 May 2020	Doris Duncan	Aberlady
14 May 2020	Evelyn Ramsay	Aberlady



~~ Directory ~~

Minister	Rev Brian Hilsley	
Session Clerk	Tom Walker	
Treasurer	Joe McGrane	
Gift Aid	Morag Black	
Free Will Offering	Carol Murray	
Beadle	Bill Scott	
Roll Keeper	Ken Wright	
Sunday Club	Rachel Wallace	
MAC group	Church Office	currently closed
Cradle Roll	Elsbeth Walker	
Safeguarding	Win Wright	
The Guild	Church Office	currently closed
Presbytery Elder	currently vacant	
Christian Aid	Rachel Wallace	
Flower Convener	Anne Dobie	
Life and Work	Tom Walker	
Church Centre Bookings	Bill Scott	
Secretary	Zena Shand	office currently closed
Newsletter	Anne McCarthy	

www.aberlady-gullaneparishchurches.org.uk

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