

ST BLANE'S NEWS

APRIL 2020



A Letter from Rev Gary Caldwell

Dear sisters and brothers,

As we are all saying we are living in strange times, perhaps we wonder if life and church will ever be the same again, my guess would be no. Clearly we are unable to gather together in church to worship. I hope you have found the on line stuff we have been putting together. If not, search for the “Dunblane St Blane’s” channel on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0M9QVLGhXhCNVaMW0AiS-w>

We are also having a time of fellowship on Zoom after the Sunday service at 11am and also on a Wednesday night. Zoom is really easy to use. You can either

download the app to your tablet, Mac or PC or watch online, simply join the meeting at 11am on a Sunday or Wednesday night at 7pm.

Meeting Id: 991 297 6378

Password: 023032

If you have any difficulties getting onto these then do let us know, speak to your elder or me. Please don't sit at home thinking you are cut off or no one is doing anything.

During our online services prior to Easter we were focusing on a section of the book of Isaiah where God gave hope to his people that he was about to send into exile. Hope in the darkness and also comfort and over the next 4 of these more frequent newsletters I want to use the word HOPE to help us.

H – He has risen

We are also living in the days after the resurrection, an event which changed everything. Some of you might have watched Spring Harvest online this week where Amy Orr-Ewing was speaking reminding us that the resurrection was true and it fills us with hope.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead **1st Peter 1v3**

Peter writes “Praise be to God who has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead”. The resurrection changed the lives of those who saw Jesus after he rose and it changes our lives. Through this truth, we are filled with a living hope, not a fingers crossed hope for the best kind of hope, but a sure and certain hope that is based on Jesus, not on our weak efforts.

So, over these weeks, now that you maybe have a little more time than you would normally, reflect on that living hope. As I said on Easter Sunday, what difference does the resurrection make to your life? Do you know that rebirth into living hope? If you do, then praise God, if not, then ask God.

Praying that you may you be filled with hope

Gary

Finance Report for the 3 months to 31 March

The quarter was going well, with receipts in line with budget and plans in place to meet our major expense of the Ministries and Mission contribution to “head office”. We received a large donation to support our Children and Family worker, Zac, which was great news, especially as it is subject to Gift Aid. That donation effectively covers the first 4 months of this financial year. So all appeared to be going in line with our budget until it became clear that normal life was going to be suspended due to the Corona virus pandemic! The last service in the church was on 15th March.

So what does the current situation mean for the church’s finances? We are blessed with many who give regularly through standing orders to the church, and that is greatly appreciated. Hopefully all will be able to maintain their giving in this way through this lockdown period, but it is appreciated that all may not be able to do so due to changing financial circumstances. We have no other regular income as weekly offerings are not being received due to the closure of the church. If any who normally give weekly would like to set up a standing order, please contact me at the email address below, or phone me at the number at the end of this report.

We have lost some regular giving from folk who have moved away and we will miss them as members first, but also as valuable supporters of the church. At the time of writing, taking account of the lack of weekly offerings and the changes to our standing order income, I esteem our receipts from congregational giving will fall by some £11,000 this year. If you feel you can help by contributing to help reduce this sum, please get in touch.

In addition to declining income, our investments have also been badly affected by the pandemic and its impact on global stock markets. At the end of March our portfolio was down by 17% on the value at 1 January. It is likely that dividend income will also fall as many companies have

indicated that they will not be paying dividends this year but retaining cash to help them recover once the pandemic has passed.

Despite these financial facts and circumstances, I am confident that God is in control and we shall come through these difficult times. Our trust is in our Lord who endured death on a cross for us and rose again - I believe St Blane's will recover and be a vibrant, believing church for our Lord.

Thanks to all for your support, financial and spiritual.

Michael Yuille

Treasurer

t: 0784 112 3155

e: treasurer.StBlanes@outlook.com

St Blane's Prayer Chain

St Blane's has an active Prayer Chain the purpose of which is to give you immediate support in difficult circumstances through the prayers of members of the chain. The Bible says that we are to "....pray for one another" (James 5:16) and ".....bear one another's burdens" (Gal 6:2) and the prayer chain helps in making needs known to God who hears everyone's prayers. Requests for prayer are passed to the chain anonymously and your privacy is important, so if you are not comfortable leaving a name that's fine, perhaps use an initial and keep your request simple e.g. "Please pray for J who has just been diagnosed with cancer." The group is committed to helping you by praying.

You can send your prayer to prayerstblanes@yahoo.com