

THE

St Andrew's Parish Church

(Church of Scotland), **Inverurie**

MARCH 2021



Email:inveruriestandrews@outlook.com(To hear our services or to download them—go to
"Listen Again" on our website)Website:http://standrewsinverurie.co.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SC008791 St Andrew's is an open and inclusive Church

The Rev. Carl Irvine, may be contacted for pastoral care by contacting him on 01467 629163

Our Minister's Letter



Dear Friends

As I am sure you are aware, we are now in the 40 day period of the Christian year known as Lent. In the Bible, the number 40 is particularly significant, appearing 146 times. For example, each of the first three kings of Israel, Saul, David and Solomon, reigned for 40 years, the flood in Noah's time was caused by 40 days and nights of rain, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years with Moses and Jonah warned the Ninevites that God's would destroy them in 40 days. In each case, there was an ele-

ment of completion and/or testing to the period in question.

During Lent, we particularly remember the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness, without food, water or shelter while resisting the temptations of the devil. Now, those who like their numbers will notice that from the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, to Easter Sunday, there are 46 days, not 40! But Lent does not include Sundays as these are 'feast days' commemorating Christ's sacrifice, by subtracting the 6 Sundays from the total, we are left with the 40 days of Lent.

For Christians in the Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox traditions, Lent tends to be observed more strictly than those in the Presbyterian, or other, traditions, It would not be uncommon for members of those traditions to abstain from meat, fish, eggs and fat during this period. But many Christians, regardless of tradition, still feel the call to mark this period in some way. Some choose to give up something they enjoy, (e.g. chocolate, biscuits or alcohol) to remind themselves just how lucky they are to be able to enjoy that thing. The self-denial of a luxury also helps foster a certain feeling of empathy for those whose life circumstances are much harsher than ours, acts as a reminder that all we have comes, ultimately, from God and promotes an attitude of thanks to God for all His grace and mercy. Some Christians do not choose to give something up during Lent, instead they make an extra effort to do things to help others: perhaps raising money for charity, performing a daily 'random act of kindness', or doing something to help the environment. The focus here is not on self-denial but on service. Other Christians use Lent to develop their faith, perhaps through daily Bible study, reading some other Christian text or spending more time with God in prayer. If you decide to do something different during Lent, the real measure, as always, is not what you choose to do, it is not even how well you do it, what really matters is the attitude with which you act. Jesus said,

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." (Matthew 6:16-18)

How will your Lenten journey deepen your relationship with God and fulfil what Jesus said? Blessings, Carl

Prayer

Almighty God,

In our Lenten journey, we remember Your Son, Jesus, in the wilderness; without water, without food, without shelter, coming alongside those who



have nothing, then and now, in love. We remember His refusal to give in to temptation. We remember His obedience to Scripture, and we celebrate His defeat of the devil.

Lord, as we journey with You through this period of Lent, to the despair of Good Friday and on into the joy of Easter Day, we seek Your presence and ask You to draw us into a closer relationship with You. We ask this in humility, earnestly seeking to let Your will be done in our lives.

Amen

Why not share some thoughts with our other readers ...

Kit and I were wondering if any of our readers wish to share 'A day in my life under lockdown'? - say around about 100 words on how you are spending your time at home, and what you actually like about it?

Or either 100 words on 'The three things you most want to do when coronavirus is over.' We look forward to hearing from you as we know your contributions will be appreciated by our readers. Either email the Church Office -

(inveruriestandrews@outlook.com)

or drop off a handwritten sheet into the church letterbox at the Old Hall door. Thanking you in anticipation.



Kit & Diane

News from the combined Congregational Board/ Kirk Session Meeting held on Wednesday, 10 February 2021 at 7.00 pm, via a Zoom Video Conference

Key Points

- 1. Treasurer Strategy Group was agreed with the following members:-
 - Tom Craggs,
 - Ralph Green,
 - Alastair Smith,
 - Norman Peters,
 - Rev. Carl Irvine.
- 2. 2020 Annual Report and Accounts were approved by the Board and will be signed off by Ralph Green on behalf of the Trustees.
- 3. 2021 Budget was approved by the Board and will be signed off by Ralph Green on behalf of the Trustees.
- 4. Presbytery Plan was discussed and Strengths, Challenges identified for St. Andrew's. Support for the Plan was unanimous.
- 5. Mrs. Isobel Greig resigned from the Board after many years of service to St. Andrew's. Thanks for all her hard work over the years was conveyed to Isobel by Rev. Carl Irvine.

The office remains closed. The Church Administrator (Linsey) is working from home and can be contacted by telephone (01467 628740) during the normal office hours - Monday to Friday from 09:30 to 11:30 am.

Tom Craggs, Treasurer/Joyce Lawson, Clerk to the Board



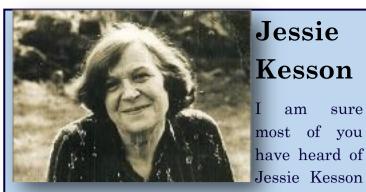
For Easter we'd love to create a larger ensemble of singers from around Gordon presbytery. The recording could then be used by any or all congregations who wish to use it in their Easter services. To participate all you need is the ability to record yourself on video (laptop, tablet and phones all work fine for this) while listening to the accompaniment on headphones. Being able to read music is helpful, but if you are singing melody, or have a good ear for harmonies you might manage without. We haven't decided what we are going to record yet - it may depend on how many voices we get! We'll need to get started as soon as possible.

If interested please contact Marc Falconer -

<u>marc.falconer.15@abdn.ac.uk</u> who can give you more details or talk you through how to do a recording, or contact Rhona Cathcart -

<u>RCathcart@churchofscotland.org.uk</u> Thanks, Rhona

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and have either read her books or seen the film based on one of them, "Another Time, Another Place", starring Phyllis Logan.

Jessie Kesson is forever associated with her first novel, the fictionalised autobiography of her early years, "The White Bird Passes". Born illegitimate in an Inverness Workhouse in 1916 and raised in an Elgin slum, she was removed at age 8 from her beloved but neglectful mother and sent to an orphanage at Lyne of Skene. There she thrived and shone, but was refused any chance of higher education, and ended up spending a year in a mental hospital. After marriage, she became a cottar wife around the NE of Scotland before moving to London, where she combined writing novels and radio plays with jobs ranging from cleaning a cinema to producing Woman's Hour. She died in London in 1994.

I came across her name the other day and was reminded of an extraordinary evening in the early 1980s. At that time I regularly toured the Highlands and Islands giving talks about Barnardo's to schools, church groups, Rotary Clubs, WRIs etc. This particular week I had given several talks in Inverness and was heading in the late afternoon for the Black Isle as I was due to give two school talks there the following morning. On my travels I always stayed in inexpensive B&Bs and I never had any problem in finding pleasant "digs". However, this time things were very different. Every B&B was full and in the end I had to go to the vastly more expensive Cromarty Hotel. On inquiring why all the accommodation had been taken, I was told that the film, "Another Time, Another Place" was being shot in the Black Isle and the "extras" and film crew had taken all the cheaper rooms.

That evening when I came down for dinner, Jessie Kesson, the actors and the Director were seated at the central table in the dining room enjoying a "break up" party to celebrate the end of filming. I sat at my wee table for one, studiously reading my book and trying not to look "lonesome"! By the time they got to their coffees and liqueurs, everyone was in very high spirits, and they kindly asked me to join them. Dear Reader, you are right in knowing what I did next - I accepted with alacrity! I was seated next to Jessie Kesson who seemed pleased to have another NE quine as her table companion. When I told her that I originally came from Inverurie - well, that was it. She regaled me with tales of her life at Mike Mackie's farm at Westertown where her husband had been a dairyman. We knew several people in common and the two of us got down to a great blether - much to the surprise of the others at the table who came from the far flung corners of the UK.

She was a wonderful raconteur but what really impressed me was her complete lack of "side". Here she was, a famous author and playwright, with one of her books being filmed using well known actors, and yet she was tickled to bits recalling her days as a cottar wifie on the Mackie farm. (So called "celebs" of today please take note!!) It is an evening I look back on with enormous pleasure, and although I enjoyed meeting the Director and the actors, it is Jessie Kesson who remains foremost in my mind.

Kit

PS I know you must all be heartily tired of reading my features in the magazine, **so**, to avoid any more, PLEASE may Diane and I get YOUR contributions. See page 3 for more details.

The Church of Scotland Howe Trinity Parish Church

Rev Dr John A. Cook, The Manse, 110 Main St., Alford, Aberdeenshire, AB33 8AD Tel: Alford (019755) 62282 email John.Cook@churchofscotland.org.uk

Gordon Presbytery Lent Appeal for Nkhoma Hospital – Lent 2021

Dear friends,

Members of presbytery will recently have received a letter from David and Rebecca Morton, describing the desperate situation facing Nkhoma Hospital in Malawi, where they served as our Presbytery Mission Partners for many years until the end of 2019, in the face of the encroaching Covid Pandemic:

Prior to Christmas the country was seeing an average of 0-3 cases per day. On 20 January there were 1,000 cases just on that day. Two cabinet ministers have died of Covid over the past 2 weeks. The country is overwhelmed, without adequate equipment, medications, or oxygen. The anti-viral treatments and the vaccines available here in the USA or UK, are not available at all in Malawi. Nkhoma is facing great difficulty in affording and obtaining what is available.

The staff are stressed and overwhelmed. Even when funds are available, sourcing the supplies and oxygen is difficult as the demand is outstripping the supply, especially with oxygen (ventilators are not an option as there are probably less than 20, if that, country wide, and none at Nkhoma).

While David's letter provided information about ways of providing financial support, I thought it was important that rather than relying on initiatives of individual congregations, an appeal should be organised on a Presbytery-wide basis. I was delighted therefore, that the Business Committee, acting with powers, has approved this appeal.

I would like to urge you to adopt this appeal in your congregation during Lent (but starting as soon as you like) and finishing on Easter Monday (5 April). Donations can be made in any of three ways:

Cheques payable to "Presbytery of Gordon", with "**Nkhoma Appeal**" written on the back, and sent to Mr W Paterson, Presbytery Treasurer, Ceardach, White-ford Road, Pitcaple, Inverurie, AB51 5EB

Online donations to: Presbytery of Gordon Sort Code: 83-28-40 Acc. No: 00237527

Just Giving website – NB We are waiting approval of a Gordon Presbytery page on Just Giving. I will advise you when the page is live.

Please publicise this appeal in public worship whether online or in person; by email; in any printed materials which you distribute; and on social media. I have asked David for weekly updates, prayer points and, hopefully, photos, which can be posted onto the Presbytery Facebook page and then shared onto congregational pages.

Business Committee agreed a target of £5000. But I am confident that we can make more than that. I hope to be providing regular updates, but please get back to me if you would like further information.

Yours sincerely

John A. Cook

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Palm Sunday (28th March) & Holy Week (28th March—3rd April 2021)

The events of Easter took place over a week, traditionally called Passion Week.

It began on Palm Sunday. After all His teaching and healing, Jesus had built a following. On the Sunday before He was to die, Jesus and His followers arrived at Jerusalem. The city was crowded. Jewish people were arriving from to celebrate Passover. This commemorates how they had escaped from slavery in Egypt nearly 1,500 year earlier.

Jesus rode into the city on a young donkey. He was greeted like a conquering hero. Cheering crowds waved palm branches in tribute. He was hailed as the Messiah who had come to re-establish a Jewish kingdom. The next day they returned to Jerusalem. Jesus went to the temple, the epicentre of the Jewish faith, and confronted the money-changers and merchants who were ripping off the people. He overturned their tables and accused them of being thieves. The religious authorities were alarmed and feared how He was stirring up the crowds. On the Tuesday, they challenged Jesus, questioning His authority. He answered by challenging and condemning their hypocrisy. Later that day Jesus spoke to His disciples about future times. He warned them about fake religious leaders; the coming destruction of Jerusalem; wars, earthquakes and famines; and how His followers would face persecution.

By midweek the Jewish religious leaders and elders were so angry with Jesus that they began plotting to arrest and kill Him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the chief priests and agreed to betray Him to them.

Jesus and the 12 disciples gathered on the Thursday evening to celebrate the Passover meal. This is known as the Last Supper. During the evening, Jesus initiated a ritual still marked by Christians – Holy Communion – which commemorates His death. Jesus broke bread and shared it and a cup of wine with His disciples. Judas then left to meet the other plotters. Jesus continued to teach the others and then went outside into an olive grove to pray. He even prayed for all future believers. He agonised over what was to come but chose the way of obedience. The Bible book, Luke, records Him praying, '*Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done*'. Minutes later Judas arrived with soldiers and the chief priests and Jesus was arrested.

(Extracted from Parish Pump)

'Zoomed Out?'

'You're still on mute!' If you've used Zoom over the past year, you'll be familiar with this cry! After a day on Zoom, the last thing we often want to do is using it for a chat with friends or a church service on Sunday! Now this reveals a wider problem that we face. We know that staying connected in the pandemic is hard. When we're tired and busy, it's easy to stop connecting with others, which would encourage our faith or wellbeing. This might also include not sending a text, Facebook comment or phoning somebody up.

Remember what Paul says: For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.' (Romans 7:15). It's often easier to avoid connecting with God and others, when this would be good for our sense of value, purpose and identity. Certain patterns of behaviour can make us feel safer, but in reality they prevent us from living our lives fully as God in-Paul adds: What a wretched tends man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!' (Romans 7:24,25). Through the death and resurrection of Jesus we have the freedom to act differently. Lent is an ideal time to develop new habits, especially when we are tired or anxious. It may involve spending less time on Facebook, turning the TV off to call a friend who we need to catch up with, or getting up a bit earlier to spend time in Bible reading and prayer. Let's keep reminding ourselves that 'God is bigger than Zoom' and make sure that we don't get disconnected! Let's be committed to doing the right thing, rather than simply the easier thing. (All extracted from Parish Pump)

Your daily walk should be a sacred ritual ... Under lockdown, millions of us who rarely walked around our immediate locality are now well acquainted with every nearby driveway, every crack in the pavement, and every pothole in the road. We have developed views on our neighbours' gardens, on their oddly coloured garage doors, and on their dogs, children and cars. If we go out at the same time every day, we may even be saying hello to the same people we don't know every day.

For many of us, that daily walk has become the high point of our day. After all, it is one of the few liberties we have left. Some of us go early, to enjoy the relative peace and quiet. Some of us go midday, to at least see other people, even if we can't talk to them. Others of us opt for dusk, the dark comfort of a street with lit houses and stars in the sky.

How Sunday became a Christian day of rest ... It



was 1700 years ago, on 7th March 321, that the Roman Emperor Constantine 1 (Constantine the Great), (*Metropolitan Museum of Art*, *CCO*, via Wikimedia Commons) who had converted to Christianity, decreed that Sunday should be a day of rest throughout the Empire. This

was a change from normal Roman Empire practice, which was to regard Sunday as just another work-day - something the UK seems to be reverting to. But Constantine's civil decree made Sunday a day of rest from labour. It said: "All judges and city people and craftsmen shall rest upon the venerable day of the sun." This was not intended to replace the Jewish Sabbath, which starts at sunset on Friday and continues to sunset on Saturday. Such Jewish observance was regarded by most Christians as being bound to the old law instead of the Spirit, and so was resisted. Christians backed the Sunday rest because it was the day on which Jesus had risen from the dead and the Holy Spirit had come - despite possible doubts about the phrase "day of the sun". Christians meeting for worship on Sunday in fact dates back to the Acts of the Apostles, and it is mentioned historically about 115AD. Actual practice varies across the world and through the years.



Kiltwalk 2021 - 23-25 April

If your boots are made for walking, why not take part in the Kiltwalk?

You can take on any Kiltwalk-inspired challenge you wish. Go for a walk (of any length), cycle, jump on a trampoline or take the family on a scavenger hunt!

The Kiltwalk is happening virtually all across Scotland from 23-25 April. *Get moving for Christian Aid and The Hunter Foundation will increase your sponsorship by 50%!*

Sign up today and don't forget to name Christian Aid as your chosen charity.

Find out more and sign up today

https://www.christianaid.org.uk/events/virtual-kiltwalk-weekend

Charlie Meiklejohn Church Engagement Officer

Smile lines

Little old lady seeks handsome young man

An advert appeared in a student newspaper of a university: "Sweet little old lady wishes to correspond with good-looking university student - especially a six-footer with brown eyes, answering to initials J.A.D." It was signed: "his mother."

Cats & dogs

Behind every cat that crosses the street, there is a dog saying, "Go ahead, you can make it."

Knock knock

A conscientious minister decided to get acquainted with a new family in his church and so he visited them one Spring evening. After his knock on the door, a lilting voice from within called out, "Is that you, Angel?"

"No," replied the minister. "But I'm from the same department."

Switched on

A housewife was helping her aged mother get up the stairs on their brand-new stair lift when the minister telephoned her. He was horrified to hear her say: "I'm so sorry, but I'll have to ring you back. I can't talk right now because I've finally got Mother in the electric chair and I'm eager to press the switch and see if it works!

Wear your daffodil and unite in memory

Marie Curie, the UK's leading end-of-life care charity will this year celebrate their 35th annual Great Daffodil Appeal, which is held every March across the UK. The money raised from this appeal enables the charity to continue their vital work providing

continue their vital work providing care and support to people living with a terminal illness and their families. The coronavirus continues to have a devastating effect on Marie Curie's fundraising, as activities up and down the country have had to be cancelled. However, there's still lots of ways people can get involved, with things like the Step into Spring Challenge in March where people walk 10,000 steps a day, they can host a virtual



collection or buy and wear one of the charity's iconic daffodils in memory of a loved one.

This year will be even more special as the charity encourages the nation to <u>come together to reflect</u>, <u>grieve</u> <u>and remember</u> for a National Day of Reflection. Tuesday 23rd March 2021 will mark one year since the UK first went into a nationwide lockdown and Marie Curie is inviting the nation to unite and remember those who died and show support and solidarity for those who have been bereaved. The charity knows how important it is for people to grieve and the emotional and psychological impact of not being able to say goodbye properly and grieving in isolation can have. Due to the pandemic, Marie Curie won't have their normal collections on the street, so donations are more important than ever. To support the Great Daffodil Appeal, you can donate at <u>www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil</u> or you can buy your daffodil pin in store at a number of high street stores including Superdrug or Savers.

Extracted from Parish Pump

Congregational Roll

ST ANDREW'S PARISH CHURCH CHANGES IN ROLL 28th January—23rd February

Recently Deceased

Service conducted by

Mrs H J (Jean) Thomson, 38 Selbie Drive	28/1/2021	Rev C Irvine
Mrs Violet Whyte, 8 Wyness Court	5/2/2021	Rev C Irvine
Mr Thomas L Moffat, 8 Ritchie Row, PE	6/2/2021	Rev C Irvine

Here in the UK we may struggle to hold services because of coronavirus, but at least no one in the government is threatening to arrest and imprison us for just being Christians! And yet that is the harsh reality for hundreds of millions of Christians around the world today.

2021 World Watch List of Persecution of Christians

A Christian persecution watchdog has warned that more Christians around the world are suffering because of their faith, and the kind of persecution they're experiencing has intensified. Open Doors has found that more than 340 million Christians suffer high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith, amounting to one in eight worldwide. Now the charity has released its 2021 World Watch List (WWL) which highlights the top 50 countries that are most hostile toward Christians.

Here are the top ten.

1. North Korea

Being discovered as a Christian is a death sentence in North Korea. If you aren't killed instantly, you will be taken to a labour camp as a political criminal.

2. Afghanistan

ISIS and the Taliban continue to have a strong, violent presence in Afghanistan, with the Taliban controlling large regions.

3. Somalia

Islam is considered a crucial part of Somali identity, and if any Somali is suspected of having converted to Christianity, they are in great danger. Members of their family, clan or community will harass, intimidate or even kill them. Women may be raped and forcibly married.

4. Libya

There is no freedom of speech, no freedom of religion and very limited possibility of public church life in Libya. Although there are around 34,500 Christians in the country, only a tiny number (approximately 150) are Libyan – the majority are expatriates and migrant workers.

5. Pakistan

Pakistan's notorious blasphemy laws are used to target Christians, and Islamic extremist groups vehemently "defend" these laws, including attacking or killing those believed to have contravened them.

6. Eritrea

Government security forces monitor phone calls, scrutinise activity and conduct countless raids which target Christians, seize Christian materials and damage house churches. Christians can be arrested and imprisoned without trial.

7. Yemen

Christians in Yemen usually keep their faith secret, because if they are discovered then they could face the death penalty. Leaving Islam is forbidden, and all Yemenis are considered Muslims by the state.

8. Iran

The Iranian government sees the conversion of Muslims to Christianity as an attempt by Western countries to undermine the Islamic rule of Iran. Christians from a Muslim background are persecuted the most, primarily by the government, but also by their families and communities.

9. Nigeria

More Christians are murdered for their faith in Nigeria than in any other country. Violent attacks by Boko Haram, Hausa-Fulani Muslim militant herdsmen, ISWAP (an affiliate of ISIS) and other Islamic extremist groups are common in the north and middle belt of the country, and they are becoming more common further south.

10. India

Hindu extremists believe that all Indians should be Hindus, and that the country should be rid of Christianity and Islam. They use extensive violence to achieve this goal, particularly targeting Christians from a Hindu background.

Jesus in Merket Street

Gin Jesus sallied oot the day An' walked doon Merket Street Wad ye wave banners on His way, Cast flooers at His feet; An' wad ye kill the fatted calf An' bring Him wine an' meat, Or wad ye crucify Him At the fit o' Merket Street?

Gin Jesus sallied out the day Whit changes wad He see? Ah trow nae muckle differ I'the likes o' you an' me. For noo, as then, He's surely fin' As ill divided warld Whar brither faces brither Wi bluidy flags unfurled.

Gin Jesus sallied oot the day An' walked doon Merket Street Wad ye wave banners on His way, Cast flooers at His feet; Or wad ye cruicify Him At the fit o' Merket Street?

Wad they wha crucified Him then Crucify Him yet again?

James D Johnstone, Portsoy



February 2021 ... We are continuing to work hard to get food to those people in greatest need at this difficult and challenging time. We know your shopping habits have had to change but we would be very grateful if you would help us, if you can, by donating the following items:

Tinned fish (any varieties) Sponge puddings Packets of cereal bars Tinned Spaghetti Shampoo

Tinned rice pudding Loo Rolls

Currently we have good supplies of pasta, soup and tea bags, thanks to your generosity. Thank you for your continuing support and stay safe! We are very pleased to receive monetary donations as well as donations of foodstuffs. Anyone wishing to make a financial donation to further the work of the Food Bank in Inverurie should go to our website (www.aberdeenshirenorth.foodbank.org.uk) where there is a 'Donate' button which will enable them so to do. It is very straightforward and safe. The number of drop off points for food donations within the town keeps growing so I am not promising this is a comprehensive list but we have collection points in: **Tesco, Morrison's, Poundland, McLeish's, Marks & Spencer, Co-op North Street, Co-op Burghmuir Road.**

PS: Contributions from St Andrew's Church during December 2020 were -

2/12/20 = 24.80 kg

28/12/20 = 25.55 kg

Jennifer Ingram, Foodbank Coordinator for St Andrew's

Who's Who at 'St Andrew's'

Church Office St Andrew's Parish Church High Street, Inverurie AB51 3QJ **MINISTER :**

Phone:01467-628740 Email: inveruriestandrews@ outlook.com http://.standrews inverurie.co.uk



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The REV CARL IRVINE	(01467 629163)
SESSION CLERK KEN TUACH	(01467 620896)
CLERK TO THE BOARD JOYCE LAWSON	(01467 620903)
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR LINSEY STEWART	(01467 628740)
CHURCH TREASURER - TOM CRAGGS	(01358 723055)
WFO TREASURER ALASTAIR SMITH	(01467 623148)
GIFT AID CONVENER ALLAN DUFF	(01467 621040)
MONTHLY COLLECTION CONVENERS	(01467 622275 &
VERA BINNIE & DIANE STUART	(01467 620931)
FABRIC CONVENER (INTERIM) TOM CRAGGS	(01358 723055)
ROLL KEEPER TOM CRAGGS	(01358 723055)
ORGANIST IAN MILNE	(01467 620606)
"TIME OUT" LEADER MO VERNAL	(01467 628778)
PRESBYTERY ELDER VERA BINNIE	(01467 622275)
SOCIAL COMMITTEE CONVENER MOLLY CONN	(01467 620612)
FLOWER CONVENER EILEEN ROBERTSON	(01467 625895)
TRANSPORT TO CHURCH CONTACT DIANE STUART	(01467 620931)
HALL CLEANER AGNIESZKA MYSZKOWSKA -	
SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR ALISON YOUNG	(01467 625646)
LETTINGS COMMITTEE - KIT PAWSON	(01467 628740)
SALTIRE EDITORS DIANE STUART	(01467 620931)
KIT PAWSON	(01467 372389)

APRIL 2021 SALTIRE ... Will be available for distribution from Sunday, 4th April 2021. Please email material for the March Saltire to The Church Office by 20th March 2021.

St Andrew's Safeguardimg Statement

(Relating to the Protection of Children and Young People in the Church. Adopted by the General Assembly, May 1997.)

The Church of Scotland has a deep concern for the wholeness and well-being of each individual. I seeks to safeguard the welfare of all people, regardless of age, who come into contact with the church and its organisations. It is the responsibility of each individual within the fellowship of the church to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people and the vulnerable. St Andrew's Parish Church has a Zero Tolerance Policy to any form of abuse.