

St. Columba's Congregational Magazine



Spring 2022

St Columba's Parish Church
Old Aisle Road
Kirkintilloch
G66 3HQ

Minister: Rev. Philip Wright

Telephone: 07427 623393
E-mail: PWright@churchofscotland.org.uk

Secretary: Miss Janet Brown

Telephone: 0141 578 0016
(Monday & Thursday 9am - 12am)
E-mail: stcolumbassecretary@outlook.com

Charity No. SC008735

From the Manse

Have you ever had the experience of meeting an old friend, someone you've not seen for months or even years, and to your delight finding them just the same as they always were? They may have aged a little on the outside. They may have a little less hair. There may be a touch more grey about it. They may even be a bit slower in moving around. But it is so reassuring to find that inside they haven't changed a bit.

We live in a world of such change: two years of a global pandemic have brought about changes we could scarcely have imagined beforehand; COP26 was a wake-up call to many of us about our changing climate and what we need to do about it; and right now, we are witnessing truly horrifying scenes from Ukraine of a brutal dictator seeking to change the political map of Europe with no regard for the terrible human cost. Besides all of this, some of us have experienced the most profound change at a very personal level in recent days as we have mourned the loss of those so dear to us.

In the face of such change, how reassuring it is to know that God has not changed a bit. What's more, unlike even the best of human friends, He does not age. He is eternal. As we read in Psalm 146:6,

***“He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
The sea, and everything in them –
He remains faithful for ever.”***

It is good to remind ourselves often, and especially in this world of change, that our God is unchanging. When once he has set his heart in love upon us, he will be forever faithful. No one can snatch us from His hand.

From the Manse (cont'd)

The coming weeks and months are significant ones in the life of our church. On Sunday 27 March 2022, members at St Columba's will be invited to vote on the proposed union between St Columba's and our near neighbour, Hillhead Church. I hope you will feel able to support that.

I hope too that the vision to employ a Children and Families Worker here might become a reality and as early as the autumn.

However, above all, I hope and pray that we all might learn more and more in these days of such change to trust in our faithful God in whom alone, through Jesus Christ His Son, is life eternal.

***Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions
they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou for ever wilt be.***

**Your minister and friend
Philip**

The Church Family



Deaths

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Christine Grant, David Blair and Pat McKinley. We extend our sympathy, love and prayers to their families.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants. Psalm 116.15.

New Members

We are delighted to welcome Isobel and Tom Davies into membership at St Columba's Church.

Thank You

Dougie Grant would like to say thank you for all the expressions of support he and the family have received from friends at St Columba's following the death of his wife, Christine. The excellent sum of £350 was raised for The Leprosy Mission from the retiral offering at Christine's funeral.

Church Secretary Janet Brown wishes to say thank you to all her friends at St. Columba's for the many phone calls, texts, cards and visits following her fall at Little Fishes.

"No more football for me", says Janet.

"I think I am making slow but steady progress and working through the pain."

Thank You (cont'd)

Dear Friends, Grateful thanks for all your care and support shown to us during David's last illness. Thanks, too, for all the calls, texts and lovely cards with all your personal messages.

The psalmist said :-

"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your staff and rod they comfort me."
Your support has been like a rod and staff to me.

The psalm ends :-

"I will dwell in the house of God for ever."

My prayer for you is that, at the end of our journey, we will all dwell in God's house for evermore.

God bless, Margaret Blair, Maureen and all our family.

Our Thanks

We wish to record our grateful thanks to Carol Ashcroft who has recently stepped down as an active elder. Carol has served as an elder for over thirty years here at St Columba's, including twelve years as Session Clerk. We greatly appreciate all that Carol has done for us over that time and we cherish the fellowship we share with Carol and Brian.

Church Membership

If you are considering membership here at St Columba's, please speak with the Minister.

Bank Direct Debit Problem

The Royal Bank decided to block all Members Direct Debits between the dates of 27th January and 1st February and returned the amounts to the members Accounts.

We apologize for any inconvenience this has resulted in. Subsequent Direct Debits are being paid.

Neil Bathie
Church Treasurer

Christine Grant

On Monday 27th December 2021, one of our long-standing members, Christine Grant, died. In recent years, Christine hadn't kept in good health, but her passing came as a shock to many of us.

Christine was an elder here at St Columba's. It was especially apparent during COVID lockdowns that she was very attentive to the church members in her 'district'. Her frequent phone calls were much appreciated, as was her practical support for those in her care.

Christine was a former Leprosy Mission Representative here at St Columba's. Christine's husband Dougie was touched that donations amounting to £350 given at Christine's funeral have furthered the work of Leprosy Mission in Christine's memory.

Remarkably, Christine managed to combine her support of Leprosy Mission with a life-long love of dancing, arranging line dancing events here at St Columba's in aid of Leprosy Mission. Christine's love of dancing was something first inspired by her mother Netta, a dancing teacher. It was at the dancing that Christine first met Dougie.

In years gone by, Christine helped lead Sunday School at St Columba's. She was also a committed Guide leader. She very much enjoyed being a member of the badminton club as well.

One of the common threads through all Christine's varied interests and activities was that she was always thinking of others. Another thread, linked to that, was her faith. It was very apparent to those looking on that Christine put her faith into practice in the ordinary things of life.

We thank God for Christine and every memory of her. We continue to pray that Christine's husband Dougie and her children, Tony & Jackie, might know God's comfort in these days.

Philip

David Blair

It was with sadness that we learned of the death of David Blair on Wednesday 5th January. David was one of our older members and an elder here at St Columba's, although latterly retired from active duty as an elder.

David was a humble man. He was able and talented, with a responsible job as the Clerk of Works for Glasgow Council. He always had a DIY project on the go. He was no mean crossword-solver! Yet, he enjoyed these things for what they were and not for how they made him look. That humility of David's probably led in large part to his contentment in life

He was also a kind man. He was always doing things for other people. When David served as an elder here at St Columba's – he took the time to visit the members in his district regularly. David was also glad to help in time past with many of the practical jobs that needed done around the church. He was the 'Heating and Plumbing Section' of the maintenance team. He very much enjoyed helping at the Oasis Lunchtime Café.

David was a man of faith. When it was no longer possible for him to come to church on a Sunday, he was glad to come to the Midweek service. He was so comfortable in that setting and glad to be there worshipping God, reading the Bible, praying, and singing God's praise. It was very clear David's faith wasn't just a Sunday thing, or even a Tuesday or Wednesday thing. It was something that ran right through his life. It made him the person he was.

We thank God for David. We continue to remember David's wife Margaret, daughter Maureen, and the rest of the family in our thoughts and prayers.

Philip

Midweek Service

We continue to appreciate meeting together in the Large Hall for the Midweek Service at 10am on Wednesday mornings. The service lasts for about 40 minutes and we sing, pray and learn from the Bible together. We are currently studying the book of Acts. After the service, there is the opportunity for fellowship over tea and coffee for those who can stay.

Some folks who are unable to come on a Sunday morning very much appreciate the opportunity to come to the Midweek Service. If you are reading this as someone who finds it difficult to get out on a Sunday morning, please do consider whether coming to the Midweek Service would be possible for you. You would be made most welcome!

We are hoping to celebrate communion together at the Midweek Service on Wed 30 March. We then expect to take a break on Wed 6 and 13 April before resuming on Wed 20 April.

Sunday Club and Bible Class

We continue to appreciate joining together with the Sunday Club and Bible Class for the early part of the regular Sunday morning service. Sunday Club has then been looking together at a number of Bible Stories about Jesus most recently with the overall theme of 'Who Jesus Is'. Bible Class has been considering various topics including the important topic of prayer: why we pray; and the power of prayer.

We're very grateful to those who lead and help at Sunday Club and Bible Class week by week. Sunday Club and Bible Class will be taking a break on Easter Sunday, 17th April, when we will have an All Age Service.

Sunday Evening Services

We are planning to have a series of eight evening services running from Sunday 24 April until Sunday 12 June. These will be held at 7pm each week. We are expecting to go through the book of Job together with the overall theme for the sermon series being *Trusting God in the Storm*. The book of Job is for many an undiscovered gem in the Old Testament.

At 42 chapters long, it will not be possible to cover every verse in this short series. However, we hope with God's help to explore the main themes of the book and to consider how we can lay hold of its truth in our lives today.

All are most welcome to attend these evening services

Church Prayer Diary

Did you know we have a Church Prayer Diary here at St Columba's? It can be downloaded from the church website, www.kirkintillochstcolumbas.org.uk and will now also be available in paper form after the services on a Sunday and also on a Wednesday. There is a new edition available at the beginning of each month.

The prayer diary is set out with a prayer topic for each day. This may be a prayer request for our local church, for our community, for the church across our land, for our government and those in authority over us, for the worldwide church, or for one of our mission partners at home or abroad. It is a great way for us to join in prayer together.

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayers. (1 Peter 3:12)

Holy Week and Easter Services



After a two-year gap due to the pandemic, we are glad to once again be planning to hold Holy Week Services this year in the four Church of Scotland churches in Kirkintilloch.

Services will be held at 7:30pm each evening in the following locations:

Mon 11 April	Service at St Columba's led by Rev Mark McKeown
Tue 12 April	Service at St David's led by Rev Bill Finnie
Wed 13 April	Service at Hillhead led by Mr John Nicolson
Thu 14 April	Service at St Mary's led by Rev Philip Wright
Fri 15 April	Service at St David's led by Rev Ruth Morrison

Please note, these Holy Week Services will not be available online.

Also on Good Friday, Fri 15 April, ACTS (Churches Together) Lenzie & Kirkintilloch is arranging a 'Walk for Witness' from Lenzie to Kirkintilloch, culminating in a short service at St Ninian's.

Final arrangements have not been confirmed at the time of printing, but the walk is likely to start around 10am and finish around noon.

There is also a short service at 8am on Easter Sunday morning at Hillhead Church followed by a walk to St Mary's Church where there will be a further act of worship.

Our Easter Sunday Service at St Columba's on Sun 17 April will be an All Age Service at 10.30am.

Lent Meditations

Stepping Stones from Creation to the Cross

During Lent 2022, a group of a dozen or more Church of Scotland ministers from across the country are teaming up to produce a series of short Lent Meditations. We aim to have these available online every day except Sunday from Monday 28 February until Saturday 16 April. There will be a link to the whole series from the St Columba's website, www.kirkintillochstcolumbas.org.uk. They may also be accessed directly via YouTube by searching for "Lent preparation for Easter blessings".

The series begins at creation and takes a brief look at some important chapters and events in the Old Testament as God prepares for the incarnation, death and resurrection of our Lord, and also reflects on the gospel portrait of Christ.

Please do consider taking time to access these videos during Lent and sharing the link with others as together we give thanks to God for the indescribable gift of his Son.

Good Friday Café

We are planning to hold a Good Friday Café in the Large and Small Halls between 10am and 12 noon on the morning of Good Friday, 15 April. People from the church and community will be very welcome to come and enjoy a tea or coffee or juice and a sweet treat. Please do invite friends and neighbours. Alongside the Café, there will be Easter crafts for children, a bookstall, and a Fairtrade stall. We are also planning to have an Easter Reflection and an Easter Trail for children.

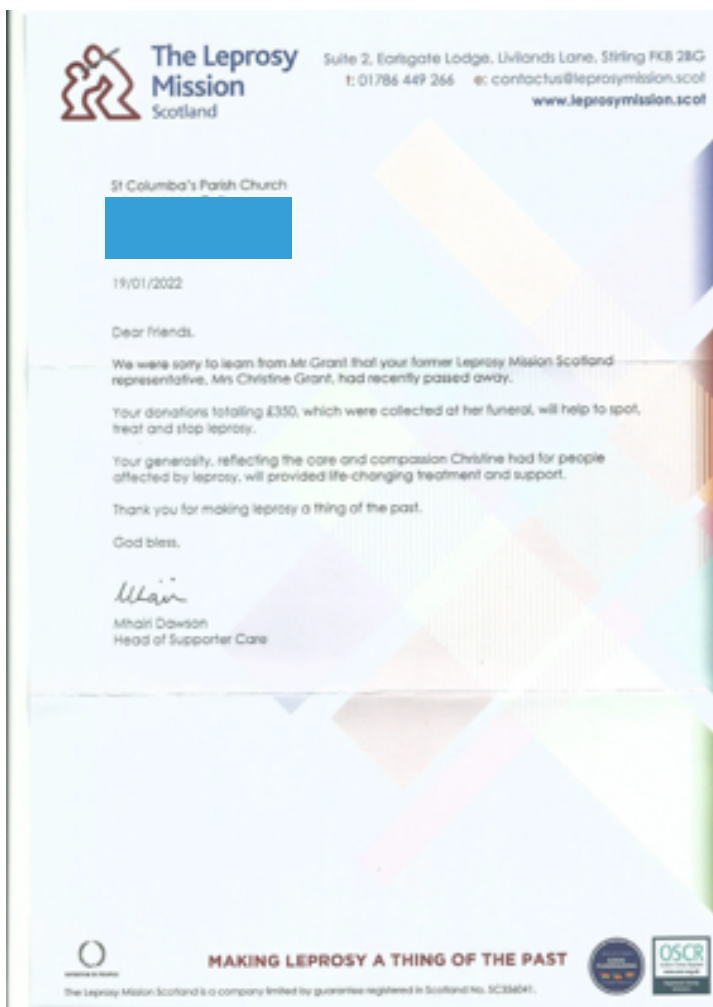
The Fairtrade Stall will have rice, chocolate and other items available for purchase on the day. If you are able to email an advance order to Rhondda Geekie on rhonddageekie@hotmail.com that would be especially helpful.

The Leprosy Mission

We were saddened by the death of Christine who had been our Leprosy Mission rep for many years. A collection was made at her funeral in favour of the leprosy mission, which realised the sum of £350.00 A copy of a letter of thanks from the leprosy mission is attached.

As more people are returning to church I am now receiving more donations and, since December, the sum of £60.00 has been received. Thank you to everyone who has been collecting for this worthwhile cause which is very much appreciated.

Margaret McCallum



Christian Aid

Once again there is little to report since the winter of 2021, as no local fund raising is planned in the near future due to the high incidence of Covid 19 that is still being experienced in Scotland.

Christian Aid Week will take place from 15th to 21st May 2022 and it is hoped that we will be able to take an envelope collection at St. Columba's. This year Christian Aid Scotland is looking at the effect that climate change is having on Zimbabwe.

The Treasurer for the local churches Christian Aid Group was able to send £1,800.00 to the Christmas 2021 Appeal, which included the amount that was raised in St. Columba's from the November 2021 envelope collection.

More information about the various campaigns and activities that Christian Aid is undertaking is available on their website.

Christine Fox

Friendship Club and Following Jesus Group

We had a combined visit to Pro Bowl in January, which was a real blessing, with everybody helping one another – showing the love and kindness our Lord has taught us.

Since then we have enjoyed our usual meetings with bible passages explained in different ways e.g. dramas in costume and with our puppets Ben and Sally. Our theme at present is the parables.

In May some of our Group hope to go to the annual 'Prospects Across Scotland' weekend at Tulliallan, where it is lovely to gather and praise with members of other groups.

We also look forward to our trip on the canal with the Seagull Trust and hope to have an open evening in June.

Please remember our groups in prayer and urge anyone who may be interested to visit us at any of our meetings.

Pat Muir.

Mens Group

We have confined ourselves to having Games evenings during this past session, due to the ongoing Covid restrictions. Our current attendences have been reasonably stable, plus we have welcomed three new members, which is encouraging. Going forward we hope some further missing members will return when restrictions ease and they feel more comfortable. We would also encourage and welcome any new members who wish to join us at anytime.

Looking forward, we hope to arrange a Members Lunch. to complete this session.

This very unusual session will come to a close on Monday 28th March 2022 with a 'Live' AGM.

John Clayton
Chairman

Used Stamps

Many thanks to the many congregational members who have donated used stamps to the work of the World Mission of the Church of Scotland. Last year over £3,000 was raised by congregations collecting used stamps.

It would be appreciated if only 1cm of envelope was left round each stamp.

Please bring your stamps anytime to the collection point in the church vestibule.

Marilyn Gibb



1st Kirkintilloch Company

Anchor Section

Now that we are nearly into March our session is rapidly coming to an end with us aiming to finish around Easter time. Our numbers remain very low however the boys who have been attending have been very faithful in their attendance.

We have had boys missing meetings due to COVID, either having it themselves or due to isolating when other family members had it. None the less, all the boys are well on their way to achieving their badges for this year and hopefully we will be able to award these at the end of the session along with the best boy shields.

In the lead up to Christmas we attended the 'Out of the Box' presentation and the boys and staff thoroughly enjoyed the night. Since the beginning of the year we have covered the story of Daniel in the lions den and learned about Chinese New Year along with several games times and some crafts. We have planted sunflower seeds, in response to the parable of the sower. Hopefully with careful tending these seeds should grow into magnificent specimens, just as our Lord would hope we do, by following the advice given in the parable.

There is the possibility of a trip to Innoflate in Cumbernauld as part of a battalion event although final details have not been finalised yet.

Please look after yourselves and continue to remember us in your prayers

**Fraser McCallum
OIC Anchor Section.**

1st Kirkintilloch Company (cont'd)

Company Section and Seniors

Due to the heightened Covid Restrictions we were unable to have a Christmas outing this year, which was very disappointing but hopefully we will be able to organise something before the end of the session.

All members over the age of 12 are still required to wear masks unless taking part in physical activities or eating and drinking. It is good to be able to report that compliance has been extremely high.

Attendance continues to be a bit mixed, but we knew before the session started that the change from Zoom to Face to Face could be difficult and the staff are happy with the progress we have made so far.

Squad 1 won the Squad competition in October and November, but Squad 2 has made a remarkable comeback by winning in December and January. With three months still to go there is still all to play for.

Callum is making good progress as he works towards his Queen's Badge. His Leadership Course was transferred on-line instead of the planned meeting and he has started to assist at the Junior Section as part of his service in the Company. We hope he enjoys the experience.

The Battalion have organised a couple of events in March and we hope that the Company will be represented at the quiz and the 10 pin-bowling event. Participation and mixing with members of other Companies, after two years without being able to do so, will be wonderful.

Allan Geekie



HELP REQUIRED!

(Request for Volunteer Gardeners)

With spring just round the corner, the flowers, shrubs and weeds are waking from the wintertime. You will be aware of this from your own garden, and this also happens in the church gardens.

We employ a Contractor to deal with grass cutting and weed control on areas of paving and car park surfaces, so in the main, it is the planters, flower, shrub and rose beds which demand attention. The tubs and beds need to be trimmed, edged and kept weed free and rose bushes and other flowers and shrubs need dead heading and pruning at appropriate intervals.

Can you help with this work? Two men from the church currently undertake this work meeting every Tuesday morning during the spring, summer and autumn seasons. The work is not hard but we could do with a little help. Are **YOU** someone who might be willing to assist with the upkeep of the Church gardens?

Some fresh volunteers from amongst the members of the congregation or local area, would be very welcome.

If you could spare an hour or so each week, please contact:

Tom Sinclair, Tel.No. 776 6377 or
Alan Finnie, Tel. No. 776 6058.

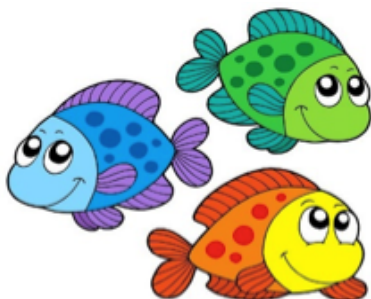
Thank you.
Tom Sinclair

Fairtrade

Over three years ago Kirkintilloch Fairtrade was started to establish Kirkintilloch as a Fairtrade Town by a group of people from various churches in the town. It was going well and a number of events had been held involving nurseries and other neighbouring groups. Two years ago unfortunately that work involving so many people had to stop as we all faced the difficulties that a pandemic brought. Over the next few weeks we are relaunching the Group in the local shop Locavore at the end of February and the work will start again to make Kirkintilloch a Fairtrade Town, following in the footsteps of Lenzie who did this a number of years ago. This will be more difficult than it was two years ago as businesses and people struggle to overcome financial pressures but as you can imagine it is also even more challenging for those supported by the work of Fairtrade.

Here in St. Columba's we will have a stall selling rice, coffee and chocolate etc. as part of the Good Friday café in April. I hope you will come along and support us as we do this and if you would like to be involved in the Group or if there is something you would like to see on the stall please contact me.

rhondageekie@hotmail.co.uk or 0141 776 7812.



'Little Fishes' Toddler Group

It has been lovely to come back after Christmas and sing songs and have tea and coffee again. The families have been so positive and pleased to come and we have been enjoying meeting new families and new babies too. Thank you to Elaine who has been helping on Fridays, filling in for Janet - we do miss Janet and wish her a speedy recovery.

The team are very grateful for the support and interest of the church in all we do. We do ask for your prayers for a welcoming and kind environment for the families who come, safety especially at coffee time and for the team each week.

We are looking forward to the Easter café on Good Friday and invite all families to come and enjoy Easter activities and a toddler play area.

We continue to run on a Friday morning between 10 and 1130 in the school term times. All are welcome - so if you know any mums or dads, grans or grandpas who are looking after wee ones then please do contact Gill Wright on 07934 460 752. There is no waiting list at present.

We are excited to be planning a new toddler group to meet at Hillhead Church, likely on Wednesday mornings. If you would like to come to that or know anyone who would, do speak to Gill or June Larwood. More details to follow.....watch this space!

<https://www.facebook.com/littlefishestoddlergroup/>

Gill Wright

Turning Point.

When my husband, John and I, moved to Kirkintilloch in 1971 we joined St Columba's and in time I was invited by Jim Horne to join the church magazine committee.

It was an excellent way to get to know what was happening in the church family. The magazine committee meetings, led by the Editor Jim, were always interesting.

He enjoys watching "Today's Turning Point" with Dr David Jeremiah who writes the following piece. **Margaret**

NOT WHERE I WANTED TO BE.

The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Acts 21:33 NIV.

Tennis pro Stan Wawrinka has won more than \$34 million in prize money. Last year a foot injury caused him to miss the biggest tournaments, including the U.S. Open. On social media, he said, "Not where I wanted to be, but still a smile on my face."

Recommended reading. Philippians 1:12-19.

One of the secrets of joy is learning to smile and trust God, even where we are not where we want to be. In Acts 21 Paul was finishing a visit to Jerusalem and packing for his planned missionary tour to Rome and Spain. Instead he was arrested, bound with two chains and tossed into a four year legal battle in Caesarea and Rome. Yet he told the Phillipians, "I want you to know, brethern, that the things that happened to me have actually turned out...and in this I rejoice." (Philippians 1: 12-18).

When we can't control our environment we feel distressed. But God has His plans. His grace can bring smiles to our faces and joy to our hearts.

The future is as bright as the promises of God.

Heaven's Grocery Store

I was walking down life's highway a long time ago, when I saw a sign that read "Heaven's Grocery Store." As I got a little closer the door came open wide and then I realised I was standing there inside.

I saw a host of angels, they were standing everywhere. One handed me a basket and said, "My child, please shop with care." Everything a Christian needed was right here in this store. And all you couldn't carry, you could come back for more.

First I got some PATIENCE, and LOVE was in the same row; further down was UNDERSTANDING, you need that everywhere you go. I got a box or two of WISDOM, a bag or two of FAITH, I just couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST for it was all over the place.

I stopped to get some STRENGTH and COURAGE to help me run the race; by then my basket was getting full, but I remembered to get some GRACE. I didn't forget SALVATION, for salvation was free, so I tried to get enough to save both you and me.

Then I started up to the counter to pay my grocery bill, for I thought I had everything to do my Master's will. As I went up the aisle, I saw PRAYER and just had to put that in, for I knew when I stepped outside, I would run right into sin.

PEACE and JOY were plentiful, they were on the last shelf. SONGS and PRAYERS were hanging near, so I just helped myself.

Then I saw the angel and asked, "Now, how much do I owe?", but he just smiled and said "Just take them everywhere you go."

Again I smiled and said, "No, how much do I really owe?" She smiled at me and said,

"My child, Jesus paid your bill a long, long time ago."

Submitted by Ian Gibb

Proposal of Union between St Columba's and Hillhead Churches

Members at St Columba's will be aware that before Christmas we announced a proposal of union between St Columba's Church and our near neighbour, Hillhead Church. That proposal came with the backing of both Kirk Sessions, and of Rev Bill Finnie at Hillhead Church, and of Rev Philip Wright at St Columba's Church. We felt it gave the best opportunity for ministry and mission to thrive, both at St Columba's and at Hillhead, even as the denomination seeks to address significant challenges including financial ones.

We set out more of the reasoning behind that proposal, and how it might work out in practice, in a letter to members of both churches around the beginning of December last year. We also held two open meetings here at St Columba's in mid-December and more recently two 'drop-in' opportunities to discuss the proposal further.

Our sense from what we have heard is that there is indeed support for a union from both congregations. On Tuesday 8th February, the two Kirk Sessions approved unanimously, at two separate meetings, a short document known as a 'Basis of Union' between the two churches. On Sunday 27th March 2022, after the Sunday morning services both at St Columba's and Hillhead, there will be an opportunity for church members to vote on the proposal. Our expectation is that, should both congregations approve the union, it would be likely to come before the May meeting of Glasgow Presbytery.

I do hope you will feel able to support the proposed union. Should the union proceed, one of the most obvious changes people are likely to notice here at St Columba's will be the Sunday morning service start time moving forward by half an hour to 10:00am.

Proposal of Union between St Columba's and Hillhead Churches (cont 'd)

We hope you will understand the reason for this is to enable an 11:30am Sunday service to take place at Hillhead. Our hope at this point is for around half of the Sunday services at Hillhead to be led or attended by myself with the other half being led by a small team of visiting ministers and readers. We would review this arrangement after a period of 12 months.

Our vision in proposing this union is not simply to find a way of continuing Sunday morning services in both locations. Indeed, it may be that after review we change the time of the Sunday service at Hillhead or consider a different style of service altogether. Our wider vision is that together as one church we might grow in discipleship of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that we might harness the resources of both congregations to spread the Good News about Jesus and where God in His providence has placed us, here in East Kirkintilloch. With that in mind, it is encouraging to hear news in this edition of the magazine of plans to start a Carer and Toddler Group at Hillhead in the coming weeks.

I am glad that we are also able to include in this edition of the magazine an article from Stuart MacGill, Convener of the Strategic Planning Committee of Glasgow Presbytery. This article discusses amongst other things some of the practical arrangements for voting on Sunday 27th March. There is also a copy, in this magazine, of the 'Basis of Union' to which Stuart refers in that article and about which members will be asked to vote. Please do arrange to speak with me if you have any outstanding questions or comments about what we are proposing or indeed any questions about the voting process.

We continue to look to our faithful God to lead and guide us in these days.

Philip Wright

Proposed Union of St Columba's and Hillhead Churches

Guide to Voting Procedure

The following is an article from Stuart MacGill, Convener of the Strategic Planning Committee of Glasgow Presbytery. We are grateful to Stuart for setting out the congregational voting procedure for the proposed union between St Columba's and Hillhead churches. Please note that since Stuart wrote this article the date of the congregational votes, both at St Columba's and Hillhead, has been confirmed as being Sunday 27th March. Reference is also made below to a document called a 'Basis of Union' between St Columba's and Hillhead churches. A copy of the Basis of Union is also included in this magazine.

Background

To understand the reasoning behind the proposed voting process, it is necessary to appreciate the principles of a "Charge" as interpreted in Church of Scotland Law. Under the Church of Scotland system, a Minister is called to a Charge – normally comprising a single congregation. Therefore, at present there are two separate Charges involved in the current procedure – St Columba's and Hillhead. Whenever there are changes made to a Charge, it ceases to exist (as does its ministry) and a new call has to be put in place to appoint a Minister to the new Charge. In this case, the new Charge will be the United Congregation. This has been endorsed by both Kirk Sessions. Whilst St Columba's has a Minister with full tenure, Hillhead is currently under Guardianship (i.e., with no post allocated to it in the old Presbytery Plan); when the Union takes place, Hillhead's Guardianship will be ended and the new ministry to the United Charge will remain unrestricted.

Voting Procedure

Voting procedure is governed by General Assembly legislation which provides for voting by secret ballot. This can be done at a congregational meeting, typically held after worship on a nominated Sunday which will be announced from the pulpit for two weeks prior to the agreed date.

The Basis of Union will be circulated prior to the meeting to give members the opportunity to read the terms. At the meeting only full members are permitted to vote though others may attend. Members of Presbytery will attend and count the votes, announcing the result afterwards.

In order to comply with the legislation, members of Hillhead require to be separately asked to vote on two separate questions dealing with the following issues:

1. Whether the terms of the attached Basis of Union, (apart from clause 7 which specifically states that the Rev Philip Wright be the Minister of the proposed United Charge) should be approved.

2. Whether, in terms of the aforesaid clause 7 the Rev Philip Wright be the Minister of the United Charge.

The members of St Columba's only require to vote once on the entire Basis of Union as a separate decision on the minister is not necessary.

The precise of wording for each of the questions will be clearly set out in the ballot paper. Voting will be by placing an "X" in a YES/NO box. A simple majority vote is required for all questions by both congregations in order to proceed with the proposed Union. Should any single question not attract a majority vote, Presbytery's Strategic Planning Committee would normally require to review the situation and enter into fresh discussions with the Kirk Sessions of both congregations but given the timescale for preparing the new Presbytery Mission Plan, this process would have to be abandoned and the future of both congregations would be determined under the new Planning process.

Voting Procedure (cont'd)

If everything is approved at congregational level, these decisions are taken by the Strategic Planning Committee to Presbytery for its approval, at which point the date for the Union may be adjusted (to suit all parties involved in the formal service). There is normally a need for the Faith Nurture Committee of the Central Church to agree ('concur') with the proposal but since the existing Presbytery Plan has been suspended and a new Presbytery Mission Plan is in the process of formulation we are currently operating with no Plan against which this Union can be considered and so the decision of Presbytery can simply be "noted" centrally. It is Presbytery policy to consult with the appropriate sub-committee of Faith Nurture in advance and that has been done with no adverse comments having been received.

Thereafter, the service of Union and the official induction of Philip Wright as Minister of the United Charge can proceed. The Basis of Union states that the United Congregation will be administered under the Unitary Constitution.

St Columba's does not currently use this but a positive vote for the Basis also covers a change to the Unitary Constitution and this does not require a separate vote.

Both congregations should be aware that the implementation of the terms of this Basis of Union does not imply that there will be no further changes contained within the new Presbytery Mission Plan for the United Charge, in terms of both ministry and buildings.

Stuart W MacGill

Convener, Strategic Planning Committee, Glasgow Presbytery

17/2/22

Basis of Union

The congregation of St Columba Parish Church of Scotland, Kirkintilloch (SC008735) (“Kirkintilloch: St Columba’s”) and the congregation of Kirkintilloch Hillhead Church of Scotland (SC002424) (“Kirkintilloch: Hillhead”) shall be united on 1 June 2022, or from a date to be determined by Presbytery, and that on the following terms and conditions:

1. **Name:** The name of the united congregation shall be Kirkintilloch St Columba’s Hillhead Church of Scotland and SC008735 will be retained.

2. **Transference of Property and Funds:** The property and funds belonging to or held on behalf of each congregation shall belong to or be held on behalf of the united congregation and any transference necessary shall be duly effected.

3. **Places of Worship:** Both churches at present used and occupied by the congregations of Kirkintilloch: St Columba's and Kirkintilloch: Hillhead shall be the places of worship of the united congregation. Services shall be conducted in Kirkintilloch: St Columba's and in Kirkintilloch: Hillhead each Sunday and at such other times as may be determined, all to be decided by the Minister and Kirk Session subject to the approval of Presbytery.

4. **Territorial Responsibility:** The bounds to be served by the united charge shall be designated as the bounds of the parishes of Kirkintilloch: St Columba's and Kirkintilloch: Hillhead, or as the Presbytery shall determine.

5. **Kirk Session:** The elders of both Kirk Sessions shall form with the minister or ministers the Kirk Session of the united congregation.

Basis of Union (cont'd)

6. **Congregational Management:** The temporal affairs of the united congregation shall be administered by the Kirk Session in terms of the Unitary Constitution, the Delegation of Assembly being authorised to issue the appropriate Deed of Constitution to the said congregation.

7. **Minister:** The Rev Dr Philip Wright, currently minister at Kirkintilloch: St Columba's, shall be the minister of the united charge in terms of Section 8 of Act VIII 2021.

8. **Manse:** The manse of the congregation of Kirkintilloch: St Columba's shall be the manse of the united congregation. The manse of the congregation of Kirkintilloch: Hillhead shall be sold, let or otherwise disposed of, subject to the titles on which it is held, and subject to the approval of the Presbytery and, if necessary, of the General Trustees or the General Assembly. The free proceeds of any such sale or let shall: (a) if falling within the scope of Act VII 1995, be credited to the benefit of the congregation in the Consolidated Fabric Fund; or (b) if not falling within the scope of the said Act, be held and applied for fabric purposes in connection with the properties of the congregation.

9. **Ministerial Support:** The stipend of the charge shall be paid in accordance with the terms of the National Stipend Scheme.

10. **Power to Readjust:** While the articles and terms shall form the Basis of Union for the two congregations now uniting, the united congregation shall be free, like other congregations, to adjust arrangements under the authority of Presbytery as need may arise.

Vision for a Children and Families Worker

At the Sunday services on 30 January and 6 February and the Midweek Service on 26 January, we were glad to share an exciting vision to build for the future here at St Columba's by appointing a Children and Families Worker. We invited those present to take away an information sheet and to consider supporting this venture both in prayer and financially. It has been encouraging to see people responding to that invitation and expressing enthusiasm for this venture.

For the benefit of those who may not have been able to access the information sheet we thought it would be helpful to print a slightly abbreviated version of it as follows in this edition of the magazine for your prayerful consideration.

Vision

Belonging to the church here at St Columba's means a great deal to many of us and we are grateful to God for the fellowship we share with one another. However, we may also be concerned that the number of children and families in our church is low. We long to see this increase. Children are the seed corn of the church of the future, and we recognise the real and urgent need to attract more children and families into the fellowship.

With this in mind, the Kirk Session asked a small team of elders (Anne Inglis, Jackie Ringan and Ramsay Vallance), along with the minister, to explore the possibility of employing a Children and Families Worker here at St Columba's. After prayerful consideration and seeking expert advice, this small team recommended to Session that appointing a full-time Children and Families Worker, over a period of three years in the first instance and with a view to starting in Autumn 2022, could greatly benefit our church fellowship and indeed our wider community including local schools. Session was pleased to accept this recommendation.

Vision for a Children and Families Worker (cont'd)

Remit

The broad remit of a Children and Families Worker would be to assist with ministry and mission to children and families. Specific areas of work would depend on the experience and skills of the successful candidate – as well as the opportunities to use these. However, we would expect the areas of work to include some of the following: Leadership of children's ministry on a Sunday morning; Developing relationships with children and families made through some of the existing midweek activities of the church; Identifying and grasping opportunities within the local community for mission to children and families; Making use of holiday periods to organise activities for children and families; Assisting with school chaplaincy work.

Funding

Financing a three-year appointment of a full-time Children and Families Worker is challenging but not impossible. It is likely to cost around £90,000 allowing for salary and necessary expenses including Income Tax and National Insurance. A salary of £22,000-£24000 per annum is under consideration.

We believe that funding this project could be achieved from three sources:

- 1) 30% of the total (£27,000) from existing church funds. The Kirk Session has recommended this to the Congregational Board and the Congregational Board has accepted this recommendation.
- 2) 35% of the total (£31,500) from specific giving for this project from individual church members/regular attenders.

Vision for a Children and Families Worker (cont'd)

- 3) 35% of the total (£31,500) from one or more successful grant applications. We believe that grant applications are more likely to be successful if a significant part of the funding has already been raised.

Support

In the first place, please do pray for the outworking of this vision for a Children and Families worker here at St Columba's, that God would be pleased to bless this appointment for the good of his church and indeed the wider community.

Secondly, we would be most grateful if you would give prayerful consideration to supporting the project financially. We firmly believe that this project could represent a huge investment in the future of the church. Donations may be made as a monthly standing order or as one or more lump sums given specifically to this project. If you wish to give by standing order, please contact Neil Bathie, the church treasurer, who will be pleased to give you a form to complete and either return to him or put it in a marked envelope in the offering plate on a Sunday morning. We would then forward the completed standing order form to the appropriate bank. Alternatively, if you wish to give a lump sum donation, please hand this to the church office (between 10 and 12, Mon and Thurs) or put it in the offering plate on a Sunday morning.

Whilst we would be hugely grateful for financial support for the project at any time, any gifts given or pledged before we submit grant applications (from the end of March 2022) would be especially helpful as the more we can say we have raised locally by that point, the greater the likelihood of these grant applications being successful.

Vision for a Children and Families Worker (cont'd)

Questions

If you have questions about this vision for a Children and Families Worker, please do get in touch with any member of the team. We would be very glad to arrange to meet up or to schedule a phone call.

Anne Inglis. Jackie Ringan. Ramsay Valance.

On behalf of the Kirk Session of St Columba's Parish Church.

Flower Rota 2022.

Donation

Delivery

March

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------|------------------|
| 6. | Mr & Mrs T. Sinclair | Irene Armstrong |
| 13. | Mrs P. McKinlay | Janet Brown |
| 20. | Mrs M. Boyle | |
| 27 | Mr. A. Inglis | Mr & Mrs I. Muir |

April

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------|--------------|
| 3. | Wed. Morning Service | Joan Beattie |
| 10. | Mrs Dawn Hall | Moira French |
| 17. | Mr & Mrs B. Ashcroft | Julie Reid |
| 24. | Mrs J. McCallum | Glenys Swann |

May

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Mr & Mrs G. French | Ishbel Thomson |
| 8. | Mr & Mrs I. Muir | Lydia Ramsay |
| 15. | Mr & Mrs I. Gibb | Irene Armstrong |
| 22. | Mrs J. Doyle | Janet Brown |
| 29. | Coffee Time | |

June

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|------------------|
| 5. | Janet Brown, G & M Kidd | Mr & Mrs I. Muir |
| 12. | Mrs R. Powell | Joan Beattie |
| 19. | Mr J. Stewart | Moira French |
| 26 | Mrs D. Finnie | Julie Reid |

SERVICES

Sunday Morning Service: 10.30am

**Now livestreamed on (www.kirkintilloch.org.uk)
OR on YouTube (St Columba's Church Kirkitilloch).**

Midweek Service

Wednesdays at 10am in the Large Hall

**Kirkintilloch: St Columba's Parish Church
"To know Him and make Him known"**