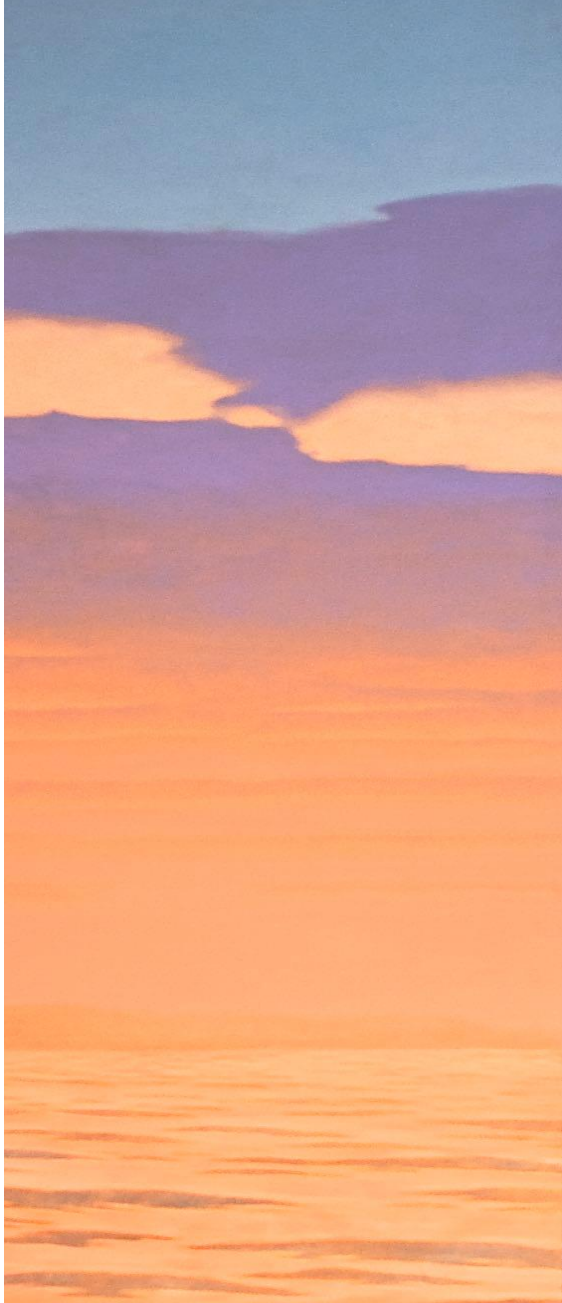


Stockbridge Church bridging the gap



The Bridge

Stockbridge
Parish Church
Newsletter

Saxe Coburg Street,
Edinburgh

www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

Easter 2022

MISSION STATEMENT

Being aware of the love of God in our lives, we, the congregation of Stockbridge Parish Church, as part of the world church seek to meet together in worship; to demonstrate faith in God in our everyday lives; to reach out to others, showing God's love and compassion; and to raise awareness of matters of justice locally and globally.

CONTACT US

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The church office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 1pm.

LETTER FROM OUR LOCUM MINISTER

March Newsletter 2022

As I write it is the war in Ukraine that is uppermost in our thoughts, and we must continue to pray for an end to the conflict and hope that a new and lasting peace will be a possible outcome. Thereafter the developed world needs to get back on track and resume 'saving the planet' not to mention ending the on-going pandemic which at the present time has seen a surge in the number of people who have caught the virus and a rise in the number of people who have been admitted to hospital. The signs are that the latest strain while being even more transmissible is nonetheless somewhat milder. This means that at present we will still have to be vigilant and observe the wearing of masks indoors even though the need to 'track and trace' has come to an end.

This has a knock-on effect for our church and for church services which are at the heart of our ministry and mission here in Stockbridge. While it is to be hoped that sooner rather than later members and visitors to our church will return in greater numbers, the work goes on and our services are more accessible than ever and can be enjoyed from home if you have access to a computer. However, we are a congregation of people *and* a family of friends, and it is good to see a congregation here in person on a Sunday morning. The serving of tea and coffee following the service of worship itself has resumed and meeting with and talking with members is a great joy for which we should be truly thankful.

While I have been trying to keep in touch by phone with those members and friends who have not been able to attend during the pandemic or for other reasons, I am very much looking forward to visiting every member of the congregation in person in the near future. There is much to share with you and during what is proving to be a difficult time for the church, not least because of the pandemic, it is vitally important that we stay in touch and plan a future together.

Elsewhere in this edition of the Bridge you will find the Kirk Session's response to the Revised Presbytery Plan by which instrument it is hoped to start a conversation with congregations as to a possible future that must include a reduction in the number of ministers of Word and Sacrament in Edinburgh from the current 70 down to 48.5 by 2025 at the latest. It requires careful reading but as you will see, it is our Kirk Session's intention to ensure that at the end of this process there will still be a Church of Scotland in Stockbridge, a home for our congregation and a place of worship that will continue a 200-year-old tradition in our area. It is possible, *as things stand*, that we will be asked to share a minister with a neighbouring congregation or congregations in a grouping of churches. Let me repeat what I have said before; at this stage nothing is written down

on tablets of stone! Far from it although to be realistic about matters *there can be no church without a congregation and there can be no congregation without office bearers to run it and do much of the heavy lifting*. We need not get ahead of ourselves in deciding how this might play out in the longer term. Our immediate concern must be to discuss with our near neighbours in the Church of Scotland as to how best this can be done in a manner that is sensible, equitable and doesn't cause too much or indeed any collateral damage.

We have also been asked by the Presbytery to follow through on what has been described as "The "Five Marks of Mission" which although it sounds like something akin to the Da Vinci Code is actually a well-thought-out way that will help us to discharge our obligation as Christians to 'proclaim the good news'. To do this effectively we will seek to collaborate with other congregations and where possible ecumenically through the Stockbridge and Comely Bank Council of Churches, remembering as someone once said, 'what churches can do together they ought not to do alone'.

In the meantime, while church attendance has been surprisingly good during this latest phase of the pandemic, as things begin to start up again and life returns to what is being called 'a new normal', it would be good as I say to see even more of our members returning to Sunday worship. A good start would be to take part in the Maundy Thursday service which will take the form of a proper meal, followed by our service for Good Friday, before celebrating Easter Day itself on the Sunday morning. Details of all our services over the Easter period can also be found in this edition of the 'The Bridge'- and, yes, they will be accessible online via the church's website – technology willing!

(Rev) John Munro

Congregational News

We remember in our prayers the family and friends of Mrs May Young, Mrs Wendy Taylor and Mr Lyell Cresswell who recently died.

We shared in the joy of the baptism on 20th February of Adam, the son of Elizabeth and Maurits.

From 5th January, our Interim Moderator is **Rev Peter Bluett**.

Our Manse has now been rented out, on a temporary basis.

Our new church administrator has now taken up her post.

She introduces herself here:

"Hello! My name is Sarah Teasdale.

I am from Lexington, Kentucky and am currently doing a graduate programme in law at the University of Edinburgh. When I'm not studying or working at the church I enjoy baking, reading, and playing in a Bluegrass band here in Edinburgh. I'm very excited to be working at the Stockbridge Parish Church, and hope to meet all of y'all during my time here!"



Janet Clark has passed on this appeal from Fresh Start:

Given the current crisis in Ukraine, we have been asked to produce more Starter Packs for Bethany who will be supplying people with these items to help them settle here, in Edinburgh. Therefore, we are asking for donations of the following items:

Crockery, cutlery, pots and pans, single and double bedding (no duvets or pillows please), blankets, throws, towels, curtains, cleaning, toiletries and food items, and small electrical items such as toasters, kettles, microwaves, hand blenders/mixers.

We have pantry memberships available for families to be able to sign up if they move into our local area, this means we will need food items to keep our pantry stocked up. I have attached a list of food items needed for our pantry and an updated starter pack item list for your information.

All donations are received at the warehouse on **Monday – Thursday between 9am-4pm**. Please mark on any food donations 'Fresh Start Pantry'.

Thank you so much for all your support!

Donations can be left in the boxes in the back of the church.

Presbytery Plan

A Meeting of Members and Friends of Stockbridge Church was held on March 6th.

The purpose of the meeting was to share with you the Kirk Session's thinking about the Revised Presbytery Plan for the churches in Edinburgh which includes our own church here in Stockbridge, and gather your views.



The Revised Presbytery Plan came about as the result of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland instructing all Presbyteries throughout Scotland to consider a reduction in the number of separate congregations to meet the growing shortage of ministers of Word and Sacrament. Edinburgh Presbytery has been asked to do this based on an allocation of 48.5 ministers in future rather than the 70 that are in posts at present. This means that a number of congregations will have to consider merging with other congregations in order to share a minister within a grouping of churches.

In the case of Stockbridge, it has been suggested that we consider a merger with **Inverleith St Serf's** on Ferry Road, but this is just one option among many. Some members may think that belonging to a grouping of churches in the **New Town** makes better sense, given that much of the New Town is in our parish at present. Looking in the other direction, we might consider a linkage with **St Stephen's, Comely bank**. This would provide some continuity given our involvement in Comely Bank Churches Together. Geographically this makes sense, but we need to hear if any of this makes sense to our members and friends before making a considered response to the Presbytery.

If you would like to read the presbytery plan in full, you can find it by logging on to the churchdesk website of Stockbridge church, or email bridge@stockbridgechurch.org.uk for the link.

The Kirk Session, locum minister, and interim moderator, have had several in-depth meetings to debate this, and we wanted to ask all our members and friends their views, before our written response was sent to the Presbytery Clerk by 15th March. More detailed conversations will then take place with congregations in the months between April and September, 2022.

At our meeting on March 6th:



(graphic courtesy of applemike.co.uk)

We shared information about the background, who we are, and what our views are for the future.

Who we are:

As of March 2022, we have **180** names on the Congregational Roll made up of:-

56 – living in the Parish

47 – living in adjoining Parishes (**20** in Comely Bank/Craigleith and **20** in Canonmills/Broughton)

77 – living further out

There are **46** names on the list of Adherents made up of

19 – living in the Parish

11 – living in adjoining Parishes (**6** in Comely Bank/Craigleith)

16 – living further out

So, we are a “gathered” congregation.

A range of views were expressed at our meeting.

Following this congregational meeting, the Kirk Session, (after several drafts, with special authorial thanks to Rev John Munro and Kerr McLaren) sent the following response to the Presbytery before March 15th.



Our letter to Presbytery is reproduced here in full, as we think it important all are aware of our response:

"We at Stockbridge Parish Church feel that the Presbytery Plan process has been very opaque through the last 18 months – we have as a Church completed information requests and then participated in lengthy Cluster conversations as a prelude to providing further information. This, with very little feedback until being confronted with a Plan which for our Church bears no resemblance to the Cluster focus in which we were asked to participate, and indeed intends to move us in a completely different direction, one which was not even remotely in our line of sight.

The time we have been given to consider this significant change of direction has been too short in the context of Christmas and Covid-19 and yet we are being asked to pursue an approach which has long term implications for our Church and Congregation.

However, more significant than the time-pressure is the additional stress introduced to Congregations by a further area of uncertainty in what is already an uncertain world.

We find it disingenuous to be asked to embark on a consultation with other Churches without the courtesy of an indication of what Churches you are suggesting should be closed which could have a major effect on our deliberations.

The rationale for the proposals you have made are scant to say the least and in the consultation we attended on January 15th the Presbytery team appeared to think we had been in 18 months of dialogue when our view was of a one-way stream of information.

Given the above we are disinclined to rush headlong in a direction we have little confidence will not change again.

That having been said we are wholly committed to engaging in a sensible approach to embracing the change that is seen to be necessary to ensure the sustained survival of the Kirk in Scotland. We acknowledge that changes are required to achieve the scale of reductions in MWS required of Edinburgh churches.

After much reflection by the Kirk Session, despite the limited opportunity to network and discuss the proposals, we have engaged our Congregation on their expectations going forward and the key imperatives that they identified are as follows:

The Congregation's expectation is that the Church in Stockbridge continues to exist as a centre for worship and with a focus on delivering on the 5

Marks of Mission in ways that reflect the character and nature of the Parish. We do not believe that any Union which requires the closure of Stockbridge Parish Church is in the best interests of Stockbridge Parish and Community, nor our Congregation.

We are confident that we can operate successfully while sharing Ministerial resources and collaborate where possible across a range of activities we undertake in service of delivering the 5 Marks of Mission.

We believe that no one else is better placed to provide for the spiritual needs of the Community than ourselves and that Stockbridge needs a Parish Church.

Why do we say this?

A recent survey of the parish carried out on behalf of the Kirk Session during the summer of 2021 showed that Stockbridge is a vibrant community with a distinct and separate identity. The parish itself is a mixture of elderly people, young singles, and young families who thrive for a while before moving on. To an extent the mix of people reflects the housing stock within the parish and has changed little in recent years.

Stockbridge hosts 5 separate sheltered housing developments together with the LifeCare Centre, formerly known as Stockbridge House, which is a purpose-built facility for the elderly. These, are visited regularly and services have been provided for those unable to access the church for worship. Among the elderly and housebound, much pastoral work has been carried out by a succession of ministers, assistants, and members of the congregation.

We acknowledge that more could be done to encourage all groups with whom we are developing relationships to participate more fully in the life of this Parish Church which celebrates its 200th anniversary next year.

At present the church building, and purpose-built rooms and halls are again in regular use by various community groups while musicians of all kinds perform and record in what is believed to be one of the best acoustic venues in Edinburgh. An investment in technology has resulted in a state-of-the-art system that allows us to broadcast sound and pictures to an audience or congregation beyond the walls of the church itself. To suggest, as the Presbytery document does, that the church building is merely 'a bright and airy space' is thought by some to damn with faint praise what is considered to be one of the finest and most atmospheric church buildings in Edinburgh.

As part of our focus on Outreach we have established, with grant funding support from two organisations, a recent initiative in setting up a Music Hub in 2021, fully funded for up to three years and led by a talented musician

who runs free concerts, activities, and events for all members of the community of Stockbridge and beyond. This Community Music Practitioner also engages with the local primary school junior classes, and also runs a programme designed to help autistic children in their development through music. We see this as a vehicle for both Outreach and Service to the Community.

The Presbytery Plan Consultation Documents contains inaccuracies in two key respects which should be addressed.

Firstly, the statement in the Presbytery Plan that our finances are "a cause for concern" is totally misleading. Stockbridge Church's finances are not a problem area – we have deep resources including the means of realising additional capital as and when the need arises. The 'deficit' that we run reflects a conscious decision made some five years ago to invest in an outreach post in order to further grow and develop the church's ability to reach people, particularly younger people, and it was clear that funding for this post would have to come out of Reserves.

Also as part of this mission objective a retail unit on Stockbridge's main thoroughfare, Raeburn Place, was purchased and hitherto has been used as a meeting place and a base for outreach to the wider community. Forward planning suggests that this venue will be used as a meeting place, separate from the Church, for fringe groups using 'Exploring Christianity' and 'Alpha' material. We imagine that this will become a shared resource with other churches who are part of the Stockbridge and Comely Bank Group of Churches, an ecumenical grouping of churches that consists of 2 Church of Scotland congregations, 2 Episcopalian congregations, a Baptist congregation and a Roman Catholic congregation.

The income from the letting of our premises is significant and although income from Church Hall and Festival letting has been adversely impacted during the pandemic there are positive signs that the use of the Church facilities is quickly becoming re-established.

The second inaccuracy relates to the suggestion that Stockbridge and Inverleith St. Serf's had already embarked upon a shared trajectory in building a future relationship. This is not the case - the only sharing has been to provide mutual cover by Ministers when required.

The suggestion that the Stockbridge manse should be sold lacks evidential support. We have no intention of selling our manse at the present time. The manse has been upgraded during the current vacancy and is now being let at an attractive rental income now that we are in Vacancy.

Our Response to the Presbytery Plan

The content of the Presbytery Plan in mid-December 2021, came out of the blue. Cluster groups had already been formed so that some were taken aback at what seemed to be a change of direction. There was also general dismay that this initiative was taking place, Covid 19 concerns apart, over the Christmas period which traditionally is a busy time for churches and for people in general.

Like many other city centre and inner-city parishes, a significant number of our church's membership live and work beyond the bounds of the parish itself. Many live in contiguous parishes and some travel back to Stockbridge where they once lived and grew up. The comfort of an existing Church family is seen by many to be of paramount importance during this period of national and international instability and uncertainty.

Our sense of what characterises our Parish does not naturally, in our view, lead to inclusion as part of a North Mission District as distinct from a Central Mission District. Our historic connections have been with the other New Town churches and the ecumenical grouping around Stockbridge and Comely Bank. A glance at the map of Edinburgh parish boundaries clearly suggests that Stockbridge has much more in common with the Central and West End churches.

We are willing to engage in consultation with others to establish what pairing(s) make most sense rather than be driven down a too narrow focus.

Both the original cluster and subsequent revised cluster in which we participated included St. Stephen's Comely Bank and we think it reasonable to also explore the possibility of how Union with them might work, and not necessarily to the exclusion of Inverleith St. Serf's, as a Union with both could create a basis for diversity as well as sharing across a range of activities. Between Stockbridge and St. Stephen's runs the main thoroughfare between Stockbridge and Comely Bank and we have many Community amenities in common. We have also collaborated in outreach and youth work with them in recent years.

There is a history of ecumenical co-operation through the Stockbridge and Comely Bank Group of Churches going back to the 1980s. In addition to the six churches who take part in this ecumenical grouping, there is also a link with the Chaplaincy Department in the Western General Hospital stretching back over many years.

We should also be allowed to consider other New Town churches. A previous Minister at St. Andrew's and St. George's West had postulated a vision of a group of churches comprising St Andrew's and St George's, Broughton St

Mary's and Stockbridge, working together as a group ministry that would cover the combined parish areas of the New Town, Bellevue and Stockbridge. Despite this not coming to fruition a relationship of sorts developed, and a shared youth group operated for a few years using the combined resources of Stockbridge and St Andrew's and St George's congregations. More recently both congregations have been part of the support focus for Malawi and Mulanje Mission Hospital.

In summary, while it is undoubtedly the case that the Kirk Session and congregation in Stockbridge are not averse to holding discussions with other congregations and would welcome further collaboration in working through the Five Marks of Mission, we should proceed with caution and from 'the bottom up' rather than from 'the top down'. It would seem sensible in any case and preferable for linkages to be established between congregations and a representative Kirk Session be formed in order to bring about a closer relationship which may or may not result in a union of congregations in the fullness of time. In the past, a successful union of the churches in Stockbridge was brought about using this method over a period of several years. Any attempts to force a union upon a congregation 'from above' is likely to fail and this approach, we imagine, would be strongly resisted by the congregations themselves.

We now await a response from the Presbytery, and in the meantime encourage all to explore relationships with our church neighbours, and share your views with your elders and our locum minister.

Outreach News, from Alex

The 5 Marks of Mission

I was massively behind on my Life & Work reading, multiple copies sat on my desk yet to be read as I began a conversation with John Munro about the subject of our Lent Study this year. Perhaps he was much more up to date with his reading as he suggested we take a look at the '5 Marks of Mission', a topic Life & Work has been exploring through 2022. Although this guideline for understanding mission has been around since the 80s, I must confess I had never really heard of them until I took a course in pioneering at New College in 2021. Since then, much like when you buy a car and start to see just how many of them are on the road already, I have come across them everywhere! Particularly with reference to the Presbytery Plan.

For those unfamiliar with them, the '5 Marks of Mission' are not meant to be an exhaustive or comprehensive list of all the ways the church follows

in the footsteps of our missional God in reaching out to the world, but instead aim to help us understand the kind of things that might be called missional activities. They are:

- *To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.*
- *To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.*
- *To respond to human need by loving service.*
- *To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation.*
- *To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.*

Otherwise summarised as TELL - TEACH - TEND - TRANSFORM - TREASURE.

I've deliberately left them as bullet point as they are not meant to have a priority, but each naturally feeds into the other. Although I know that some see the first as the foundation of the rest and the first two as the only truly *Christian* expressions of mission, the other three being moral values held in common with a variety of different groups. Yet as we discussed in our Lent Study group, it is difficult to be a Christian without having a caring heart for others, a passion for justice, or a deep appreciation of God's creation.

Indeed, I think as a church we have a strong affinity for the latter three. We aim to support parents through our baby & toddler group, we sit as associate members on the community council in order to practically serve our local community, and I know many stories of people within the congregation supporting neighbours, as well as people across the world, through various charities. Similarly, we seek to speak out in our services against injustice and violence. Bill changes the filters on our floodlights to colour our church in support of many different causes. Again, on the individual level, I recall receiving an email from a member of the congregation stating that they wouldn't be able to stay long at a meeting as they were joining the protest against the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We have rung our bells for the climate emergency and used our platform to promote greener living, each year celebrating God's goodness through our harvest services. We are a congregation that cares deeply about living out our faith, speaking out in harmony with the voice of God. Proclaiming the values and ethos of the Kingdom of God.

The question I would like to ask in this piece is how well do we engage with the first two marks of mission? Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom is undoubtedly achieved in many ways, not least through the other marks of mission. Furthermore, there is a definite skill to talking about our faith in a way that connects with people and doesn't come across in the wrong way. My question is, are we seeking the opportunity to do so as a church? Do we believe we have something to share? I'd love to know your thoughts.

Though our Lent series is coming to end, the 5 Marks of Mission will continue to be a useful tool with which to try and imagine our future as a

congregation. So we will continue to emphasise them going forward. If you would like to engage more deeply with them, then we would be delighted to set up further small group sessions around this topic.

Every blessing,

Alex Johnson

Number 7

At the last Kirk Session meeting, it was agreed that we would continue our investment in Number 7, our shopfront on Raeburn place. Truth be told, it has been a hard couple of years for the venue with social distancing reducing the capacity to inoperable levels. Thankfully we were able to reduce many of the costs of the premises over the various lockdowns and therefore we have been able to keep it with minimal cost.

However, as the Kirk Session recognised in its deliberations, to continue to leave the space vacant gives a worse impression than not having it at all! While we have been able to display upcoming events and community information through our electronic display board, nothing can beat seeing #7 vibrant and busy to signal our commitment and involvement in our community.

So as the restrictions ease, we need help in restarting #7. If there is something you could use the space for, we would ask you to come forward and use it! If you are able to give some time to opening up Number 7 and inviting your friends for coffee, then please do!

#7 holds the same potential that it did when we first opened its doors in 2017. The pandemic has meant that we are here in 2022 with the challenge of starting all over again. We already have the awareness and connections formed through those first years that should stand us in good stead as we try to restart but ultimately we need the congregation and community of Stockbridge church to lift this project back off the ground.

If you would like to get involved, please get in touch.

Every blessing,

Alex



outreach@stockbridgechurch.org.uk



@Number7Church



07748157441



@Number7Church

Christian Aid Week 15-21 May 2022



Jessica's Story



(photo David Brazier for Christian Aid)

Jessica Mwedzi smiles with love for her children as she stirs a single bowl of porridge for them...

...But she knows they're hungry for more. This one bowl of porridge is all she and her family can eat today: 'My children crave a decent meal, but I can't provide. We often go to bed on an empty stomach. It pains me to send them to bed hungry.'

Women are at the mercy of climate change and hunger. For Jessica, drought means every day is a struggle for survival.

Like many women in rural Zimbabwe - 7 out of 10 rely on farming for income and food - she toils on her farm, but nothing can grow on her ashen, dry land.

Drought starves, and intensified by the climate crisis, drives families into hunger. Jessica recalls that "One year, we had no rain. The scorching sun burnt my crops just as they were about to bloom. It was so painful and disheartening."

You can help this loving mum turn hunger into hope.

It's unjust that drought robs Jessica of the power to provide for her family. Her husband is unwell, so she's the only breadwinner. Her children look up to her, but she has nothing left to give. Once before, when things were desperate, Jessica asked her neighbours for food, but she came home with nothing. But Jessica is anything but helpless. In the face of drought, her love for her family gives her courage to stand strong - and we stand with Jessica.

Together, we can restore justice to our world.

Jessica says "My children give me the power to go ahead... I pray they have a better future."

As the golden sun fades across the sky, Jessica watches her much-loved sons and daughters sing, dance and play outside. Can you imagine how it feels for her to know her children are hungry, but have nothing left to give?

She finds a ray of hope that she will overcome this tough time - and be able to provide her children with good food, and a full life, free from hunger.

Could you give today, and help this loving mum provide food and hope for her family?



For the first time in a generation, global hunger and poverty are rising. Covid-19, conflict, and the climate crisis are pushing vulnerable communities like Jessica's into a struggle for survival. Your gifts could help buy water taps for a community garden, even help build storerooms to store and preserve precious food. Your voice will join

ours, and our global neighbours', to call for climate justice. Your prayers will provide strength and hope.

Every gift. Every action. Every prayer. Every one of us can change lives.



You will find **a red envelope** inside this Bridge.

You can fill it and return it to the collection plate in church or can send your donation to Stockbridge Church, 7b Saxe Coburg Street, Edinburgh EH3 5BN. We will gather the envelopes together at the end of May, add them together, and send off all our combined donations to Christian Aid.

Or, you can give direct by going to www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals.

We shall be holding a fund-raising **soup and bread and cheese lunch** after the service on **Sunday 15th May**, so do join us for soup and company!

We shall also be collecting for the annual Christian Aid booksale held by St Andrews and St George's West, for the sale running from **Sat 14th to Friday 20th May**. You can bring any donations of books, ephemera, toys etc to the church on or before **Sunday 8th May**, and Judith or Shona can take them to George St for you.

Fiona McNeilage reports from the **Christian Aid Gathering**:

This year's gathering was held via zoom on the 22nd February, 2022. Over 200 people took part. Sally Foster Fulton gave the sad news that two of the speakers from last year's Gathering had died as a result of covid.

This year's speaker was James Wani, Christian Aid's Country Director in South Sudan.

Christian Aid has been working in Sudan and South Sudan since the 1970s. South Sudan has been badly affected by political instability, conflict, climate change and covid !9. A number of projects are in progress. Cash has been given to help over 1637 households. Seeds, tools and basic fishing kits have been provided. More sustainable crops are being introduced that are more resistant to climate changes. Local partners have operated hygiene stations, supplied covid prevention information and encouraged vaccination uptake.

Those Aid Workers in South Sudan were also putting their own lives at risk due to ongoing conflicts.

A recording of the Gathering can be accessed via the Christian Aid website.

Report from the Music Hub, by Clea Friend

Since we launched in September 2021, there have been five TMI Friday (Thank Music It's Friday) lunchtime concerts, three Culture Club events, weekly Cello Choir rehearsals, and weekly Spectrum Music sessions as activities in the local primary school and care home. All of this has been made possible thanks to Amati Global Investors, who have funded the Community Music Practitioner Post, with the partnership and support of Stockbridge Church and its Kirk Session members as well as the charity Hear My Music (www.hearmymusic.org.uk) who are supporting Spectrum Music.

Here are the activities since January 2022

January

Traditionally Artisan perform Messiaen's Quartet for the End of Time on January 27th to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. However, given the increase in Covid cases we decided against it for the second year running. I did discuss with Marion, the church organist, the possibility of doing a smaller cello and organ recital for the occasion and we put together a programme but even this seemed not a good idea. However, I did join her at a Sunday service to play Bloch's Jewish Prayer.

February

I was thrilled to book Fraser Fifield and Graeme Stephen to play for this month's TMI Friday concert, not least because they are top of the field but also because they represent another style of music – traditional and jazz. This concert was the best attended by far – telling me something about what appeals to the neighbourhood! The Cello Choir and Stockbridge Primary music sessions are yet to restart for logistical reasons but Spectrum Music is going strong and we are thinking of ways to get children off the waiting list.



March This month got off to a great start with the superstar Hannah Rarity singing in this month's TMI Friday concert. The following day saw the third Culture Club event – a screening of Walt Disney's original "Fantasia" – at the family friendly time of 4pm.

Looking forward I am trying to secure funding in order to be able to offer the free lunch time concerts and have plans for a production of Benjamin Britten's community opera 'Noye's Fludde'. This will be a big undertaking and I hope will include children from Stockbridge Primary, Flora Stevenson

Primary, Broughton Community High School, Spectrum Music and Dance for All. There will also be roles for adults both musically and artistically! Watch this space...



There is a steady increase in take-up and attendance to the various events happening at the Music Hub. The community is gradually becoming more aware of its presence and I expect this to continue to grow as a Covid restrictions ease further and word of this provision spreads.

The support of the Kirk Session and the Music Hub board are critical to the continuation of this initiative. I value their support immensely. This unique model of working in the community, through music and in collaboration with the local church and in partnership with its management, is something I hope may inspire others to follow.

Clea Friend



Malawi Coffee Morning is now meeting in person, at 10.30 – 12 midday on the first Friday of the month. At their first meeting since their return, £35.50 was raised for Malawi, a great effort!



People of faith from across the UK and Ireland came together on Sunday 3 April to pray for the people of Ukraine and for an end to the conflict.



The act of witness and prayer was supported by Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and also faith leaders across the UK including Archbishop Justin Welby, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitasare, Rev Dr Hugh Osgood, Bishop Tedroy Powell, and The Most Reverend Andrew John the Archbishop of Wales.

Speaking before the event, Lord Wallace said: "Watching regular news reports of the tragic and violent events in Ukraine, it would be all too easy to feel helpless. But, as followers of Jesus, we cannot ignore the plight of the Ukrainian people.

"Our response must be rooted in prayer, not least so that those who suffer and are in fear might know they are not forgotten and most certainly not forgotten by God.

"That is why Christians across the land will unite in prayer on 3rd April and pray that in the darkness of unprovoked aggression those suffering will know the light of hope, and that above the deafening clamour of bombardment, they will hear words of love and peace.

"And it will be an opportunity to renew calls for a ceasefire and to express support for those delivering humanitarian aid and assistance. I hope that Christians in every corner of the land will take this opportunity to display solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Ukraine."

On March 23rd, the second anniversary of the announcement of the first lockdown, Lord Wallace, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland released this prayer.

Through your Son who, even now, prays for us.
Hear us, as we cast our memory back
And remember the first announcement of Lockdown.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, we call to you
Through your Son who, even now, prays for us.
Hear us, as we recall all we have endured as a Nation
In the years that have passed since then.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, we call to you
Through your Son who, even now, prays for us.
Hear us, as we stand in the dark shadows
With all who have suffered the deepest loss.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, we call to you
Through your Son who, even now, prays for us.
Hear us, as we give thanks for all who have sustained us by their service:
Nurses and carers; doctors and researchers; delivery drivers and vaccinators.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, we call to you
Through your Son who, even now, prays for us.
Hear us and grant to us light, that we may journey into the days that lie ahead
In the sure knowledge that, come what may, you are always with us.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.



Easter Plans at Stockbridge

The following leaflet is being distributed around the parish, to warmly invite all to join us at Easter.

WELCOME TO EASTER AT STOCKBRIDGE PARISH CHURCH

We happily welcome all to our Easter Events and services, so come and join us for the fun, community, and peace that Stockbridge Parish Church offers this upcoming holy week. All our services will be livestreamed.

Sunday 10th April – 11am-
Palm Sunday

Thursday 14th April – 7pm-
Maundy Thursday Meal &
Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Friday 15th April - 11am-
Walk of Witness (starting at Bristo Baptist)

Friday 15th April - 7pm-
Good Friday Service

Sunday 17th April – 9am-
Early Service

Sunday 17th April – 11am-
Easter Sunday

Stockbridge Church is located at 7b Saxe
Coburg Street, Edinburgh EH3 5BN

**Stockbridge
Church**

*With Easter Greetings from everyone at
Stockbridge Parish Church*

Rev John Munro
Locum Minister

<https://www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk/>

How to attend livestreamed events:

Watch live, or later on demand, by visiting our Website, Facebook, or YouTube channel

<https://www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk/>



Stockbridge Church



Stockbridge Parish Church



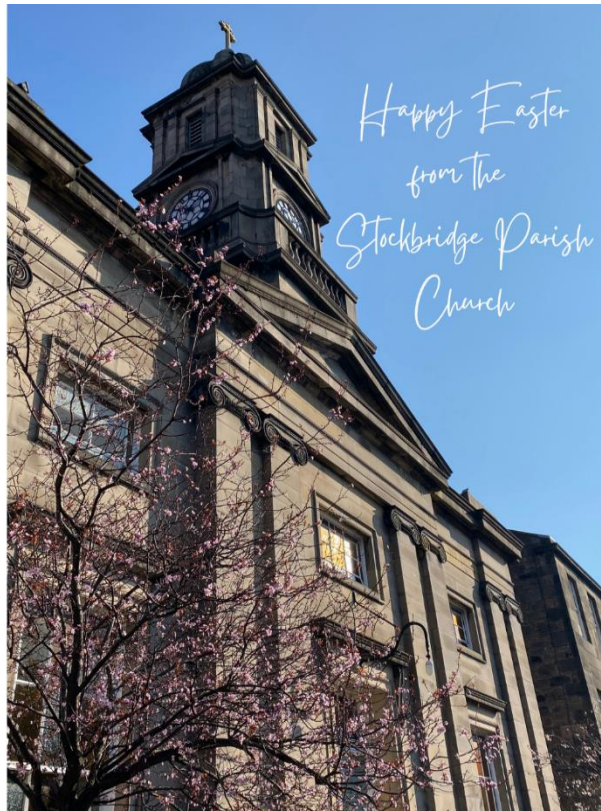
How to help those less fortunate this Easter?

Mulanje Mission Hospital provides public health and primary care services to about 88,000 people living in 72 villages in our local catchment area of Mulanje. Patients from across Mulanje district and much further afield visit MMH for outpatient, inpatient and HIV/AIDS services.

www.mmh.mw

Christian Aid Appeal We invite financial donations to support the work of Christian Aid throughout the world. You can give directly to the Christian Aid website.

www.christianaid.org.uk



Worship at Stockbridge Church.

We meet again in person at the church at 11am on Sundays.

The First Minister has announced that from Monday the 4th of April, it will no longer be a legal requirement to wear a face covering in places of worship. However, the Scottish Government continues to strongly encourage the use of protective measures to reduce risk, including wearing face coverings where appropriate to help keep each other safe.

We shall be reviewing our guidance, but it is likely we shall continue to encourage the use of facemasks to encourage participation for all in our services.

The **Sunday service** is also live-streamed at 11am on Facebook and YouTube (link from the church website).

Sunday Fellowship follows on from the service with the following details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81201904961?pwd=OFFtRXdrTmRmeDVEZWlyMTB0RnZ0dz09>

Meeting ID: 812 0190 4961

Passcode: 439799

Dial in: +44 131 460 1196

A pre-recorded **Wednesday Reflection** goes out on Facebook and YouTube at 1pm.

Wednesday Small Group runs from 7-8:15pm every Wednesday.

During lent, the group are studying the five marks of mission, as a framework for thinking through our mission activities. The details are:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82944169123?pwd=N0FMQnNzaEZRUFZlWjRrMjJBUIRLdz09>

Meeting ID: 829 4416 9123

Passcode: 573862

Dial in: +44 131 460 1196

Your contributions for The Bridge are very welcome, the editor would be delighted to hear from you, just email bridge@stockbridgechurch.org.uk or contact Shona Cameron.

All contributions for the next issue, the last before the summer, should be left in the Bridge pigeonhole or e-mailed to above email address.

The deadline for the next edition is **Sunday 12th June 2022.**

Stockbridge Church

Sunday service, 11am

Visitors and new members to the church are always welcome, whether in person or online.

Inquiries about use of the church and halls are welcome.

7b Saxe Coburg Street Edinburgh EH3 5BN

0131 332 0122



www.stockbridgechurch.org.uk

Stockbridge Parish Church of Scotland, Edinburgh

Registered Scottish Charity, Charity No – SC002499