



Trinity Transforming Lives

Falkirk Trinity Church News

August 2020



WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Keep up to date with what's happening in Falkirk Trinity by visiting our website at www.falkirktrinity.org.uk or our social media pages on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Message from our Minister

Hello everybody, August already! We have always followed Scottish Government and Church of Scotland guidelines through the pandemic and you will no doubt have noted that Churches have now been allowed to reopen. Sounds good! **BUT** if we were to return to worship then there are limitations – physical distancing, face masks, no singing, no socialising, maximum of 50 attending – and therefore the Kirk Session will make the final decision as to when it would be appropriate to reopen the Church for worship, taking all these issues into consideration. A great deal of work has been carried out to repair parts of our sanctuary and to prepare it for our eventual return and we are indebted to Iain MacSween who has been arranging all this. The Kirk Session is meeting again on 4th August (by Zoom) and we will keep you informed of any decisions we make – information will be sent by e-mail or by intimation in the Falkirk Herald local news section.

I will be on holiday from 17th to 31st August and funeral cover will be provided during that time by Very Rev Albert Bogle, Pioneer Minister of Sanctuary First online, through e-mail and telephone contact (07715 374557).

If you would like to speak with me, then please phone 01324 625124 or e-mail RAllan@churchofscotland.org.uk Follow me on Facebook or @RevRabRants on Twitter or my blog on website www.reformthechurchofscotland.org

My latest blog can be found at: <https://www.reformthechurchofscotland.org/post/the-grand-reopening>

Online Worship

Our online Worship can be found every week on Falkirk Trinity website: www.falkirktrinity.org.uk – links on our homepage will take you to the latest worship - click on “worship” then click on “watch live” and there you will find weekly worship plus you can view previous services.

You can get a daily reading, reflection and prayer online at Sanctuary First website www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk

If you are looking for a 60 second sermon each day on Twitter, then follow Neil Urquhart, minister at Irvine, @NU4Yoo

Another website which you may find useful for daily prayer is <https://pray-as-you-go.org>

Prayer

Prayer is central to our faith, it is our conversation with God who loves to hear from us. Some helpful links are included in this news under “online worship”. Contact Moira Simpson on e-mail: moirasimpson@blueyonder.co.uk if you have specific items for prayer and this can be sent to our team of prayers.



Finance and Offerings

The financial position of our Church is a growing concern, especially since we have no lets, events or weekday cafe, all of which normally contribute significantly to our income. The Kirk Session is aware of this and is seeking to address this concern with the national Church.



If you presently use freewill offering envelopes then please seriously consider transferring your offering to monthly standing order – the form is available on our website at the foot of the front page under resources or you can request a form from our treasurer at falkirktrinitytreasurer@outlook.com It is our aim to have all offerings gathered this way by the end of 2020. Alternatively, please send a cheque payable to “Falkirk Trinity Church” to Robert at the manse, 9 Majors Loan, Falkirk FK1 5QF

We are still looking for a new Church Treasurer! It is a major task, however if you are interested then please speak to Robert or Iain MacSween as soon as possible.

Trinity Transforming Lives

This has been our focus for a few years now and we have sought to transform lives in various ways, through worship, outreach, prayer, fundraising, and a host of activities through our Family Life Centre and events/groups at the Church. What have we been doing recently?



Trinity Transforming Lives

1. We continue to keep in contact with Falkirk Foodbank and have volunteers who help there. We are a partner Church with this much-needed project.
2. Kazunzu Village of Hope: Thanks to all who have helped us to reach our target of £7000 this year, further to the near £40,000 raised previously. The exciting news is that foster parents have moved into the two houses which the Tanzania Twelve built and the children will be moving in with them shortly. The money we have raised has kitted out the houses, including bunk beds for the children, and has paid for animals, crops and tools. They are already growing rice in the land by the lakeside. It was a good year for rice as the area has experienced a lot of rain and the lake is at the highest ever recorded level.

The Vine Trust and its local partners in Tanzania are very grateful for all the support you have given and continue to give to this project. This has been a difficult year for the charity with no volunteer or school trips and a greatly reduced income. So we have agreed to run one last fundraising venture. Lots of us have been spending time working in our gardens during lockdown and hopefully they are looking good as a result. We'd like to publish a calendar at the end of the year featuring photographs of "lockdown gardens". Robert Black has kindly agreed to take the photographs. So we'd encourage you, if a corner of your garden or a plant is looking really good this year, to allow Robert to come and take some photos. In the first instance please let Jean MacSween know by 7th August at the latest if you are interested (01324 628918 or Jean.macsween@btinternet.com)

3. A small group of our members, including Youth Station, made up scrub bags and gifts to hand in to St Margaret's Home in Polmont which was welcomed by residents and staff in this Church of Scotland home.
4. Members have been keeping in touch with one another, especially through our Pastoral Visitors, and some have been able to help buy and deliver messages and offer help to the elderly and those in particular need.
5. We have set up a School Uniform Bank to help supply school clothing for families who are struggling at this time. If you would like to make a donation than please use this safe link to do so: <https://falkirktrinity.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/1tjvchsa>
6. Our Seasons for Growth bereavement care groups have had to cease but will resume when it is safe to do so – in the meantime we have continued to send letters and cards to those we know who have been bereaved.
7. Through our flower ladies and band of volunteers, we have distributed flowers to every housebound member as a small but important reminder of our continuing care.
8. Our fundraising for Christian Aid was extremely curtailed this year but we still managed to receive donations online for the continuing vital work of Christian Aid and we will plan ahead for next year with our Booksale and other activities. Christian Aid and 13 other DEC (Disaster Emergency Committee) member charities are already responding in the world's most fragile places where millions of lives are at stake as Covid-19 hits war-torn countries like Yemen, Syria and South Sudan. Help families who have lost everything as they face a deadly new threat; if you would like to donate then visit: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/emergencies/coronavirus-emergency-appeal>

Lockdown days

These last four months have been the strangest. Initially many people had time on their hands as lockdown began, perhaps a time when tasks and jobs were getting done that had previously been on the "to do" list, bringing a sense of satisfaction. Then as the weeks unfolded, some days you just couldn't concentrate on anything, found it hard to focus, some days you were bored, other days suddenly the energy returned. Books were read, games were played, television box sets were watched, gardens were nurtured. Some had too much time on their hands, some never stopped working. Feelings came along...fear, thankfulness, anger, frustration, panic, sorrow, loneliness, peace...and probably so many more. Human contact and especially hugs have been greatly missed and we long for their full return. Lockdown days have brought a real mix to our lives, and exiting lockdown days has brought its many challenges too, what you can and cannot do, and how we all must continue to take the best of care as we seek to avoid a second spike and another lockdown. It has been an opportunity to reflect on our faith, talk with God, asking what our priorities might be and what God would have us do and be as we look forward as individuals and as a Church. It is time to finally lay that path of renewal for the Church...are we ready to lay down old ways and embrace the new?

**THINK
GOD**

Ministry in lockdown

Since the minister has not been working on his one day a week, what on earth has he been doing? Probably a lot of what I normally do. As you know we have online worship every week. I have been seeking to make this as varied as possible and it has allowed me to introduce new aspects of worship which I hope will continue when we return to the Church building. Thanks to Alastair Jeffrey who has been uploading the online worship ready for viewing each week. I have been on the phone to many folk and keeping in contact as much as possible. Zoom meetings on the computer have been a new way of meeting – Kirk Session, Kirk Session Groups, Presbytery, Presbytery Planning, even been invited to be the occasional guest speaker by other groups and Youth Station, and zoom meetings with individuals. I have continued my blog and reform website and attempted to raise a smile for you with some Rev I M Jolly (Junior) late calls! Church News, e-mails, planning ahead for worship and the life of our Church, sorting out computer files, and more on my “to do” list. Bereavement and funerals have obviously continued and these have been extremely hard for families, not being able to gather and grieve as they would under normal circumstances. I have conducted 15 funerals in the last four months. I have had garden and park visits to chat to folk. I am also glad to say that I have tried to pace myself too, allowing time to spend in reflection, and spending time with my family. I am looking forward to a couple of weeks holiday in the second half of August. Ministry has continued during lockdown and perhaps will continue in new ways as the weeks and months now unfold. I look forward to that day when we can all safely and meaningfully gather together again as the family of God’s people at Falkirk Trinity!



Youth Station

Youth Station continue to connect through their WhatsApp group and online meetings – our **S-Kidz** are also meeting online but are now taking a summer break and will restart on 16th August. For more information please contact Helen Smith on mobile 07757 041449.

The Walking Group

The group will be meeting during the months of August and September opposite the Cladhan Hotel in Kemper Avenue at 7pm (social distancing will be taking place). At the end of September, the group will finish for the year. We will re-start again in March 2021 commencing with our 2020 programme of walks. All are welcome. If anyone wishes more information in the meantime, please contact Elizabeth Brotchie (624273).

Church Book Group



The group continues to meet by Zoom. The next book for review is called “Lies lies lies” by Adele Perks and the next Zoom Book Group night is Thursday 13th August at 7.30pm. If you would like to join in or get more information please send an email to Shona at sp011j4628@blueyonder.co.uk

Members who have died

Sadly we intimate that, during July, Bob Waters and Eunice Macdonald passed away. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

General Church Information

Our office remains closed and employees furloughed, however volunteers will monitor phone calls and emails redirected from the office. Phone 01324-611017 or email: office@falkirktrinity.org.uk

A Good Samaritan story from Gordon and Liz Daly... Red Mud Monday...

Gordon and Liz Daly had to drive from Tarcoles on the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica to Turrialba in the centre of the country, here’s their story: The GPS started us off on the main road and at first insisted that we go to San Jose, but after more map reading we pulled off the main highway and persuaded the Garmin lady that we could go another road. The road was tortuous and soon we came to a T-junction and were told to turn right. This was a mistake!

We had been told that many country roads in Costa Rica had gravel surfaces so we were not unduly worried when the surface of what the GPS said was the right road turned to gravel. We wended our slow way through forest, up and down dale and through fords without any problems. However, after about 15K, without warning, the surface turned to red mud. It was dry and firm so we went on but after another 2K it became obvious that even in 4 wheel

drive we could not go any further, the road had turned to not much more than a washed out river bed with ruts about 18” deep and a 30 degree slope upwards. I managed to turn round by reversing to the bottom of the hill and turning in the ford in the river there. We set off back up the hill we had just come down doing fine and then it started to rain. Within about a minute the road surface turned to red slime and we came to a stop with all four wheels spinning, just about 30 yards from the top. No matter what I did we went nowhere, and at one point we slid backwards about 20 yards down the hill with all the wheels locked – somewhat alarming one has to say. We had no phone signal and we were really beginning to wonder what to do next when a couple of men on a trail bike appeared coming up the hill behind us. They stopped and although they had no English and we had microscopic Spanish they realised the situation. The driver of the bike, a young guy with a beard, gave us to understand that we should wait there, (fat chance of doing anything else) and he went off leaving his buddy with us. He came back around 15 minutes later with another guy and with ropes to tie round the tyres to give added traction. This finally worked and with much roaring from the engine and mud flying in every direction, and with the young guy driving, the car finally reached the brow of the hill. We were then shepherded down the next hill and managed to climb the next again one by just racing at it and keeping up the momentum. At the top of that one we realised that we were at the entrance to a sizable agricultural enterprise and further realised that this was owned by the young guy with the beard and the other two were some of his employees.

He gave us to understand that at the bottom of the next downslope the road turned back to gravel and we would be OK from then on. He was absolutely astonished when I gave him a large currency note “por cerveca”. He was just being a good Samaritan and helping some poor deluded tourists. I just hope I didn’t insult him, and we are eternally grateful to him and his men, we might have been there still if they hadn’t come along when they did!

Some prayer suggestions and reflections for August...

- All involved in research to find a vaccine for the Coronavirus
- Our uniform bank project
- For those who are ill at home or in hospital or hospice, for the bereaved, for funeral directors, and for all who seek to offer comfort and support
- For peace in our world, especially where there are tensions between nations
- For Falkirk Trinity Church as we seek new patterns of Church worship and Church life in the months ahead
- For all following positive guidelines as Scotland seeks to be free from the Coronavirus and for our First Minister Nicola Sturgeon as she continues to lead the nation
- For all politicians in the UK as the country seeks to start rebuilding for the future
- For those who are unemployed and for those fearful for the future of their jobs
- For the elderly who feel lonely and isolated
- Safe travel for those who are going on holiday
- Refreshment and a time to relax for those who have been working throughout the time of pandemic
- As “normal” slowly returns, take time to talk to God through each day, seeking his priorities in your life for a “new normal” to unfold
- The Vine Trust, Christian Aid, Mary’s Meals, and the good work of other charities which you may support
- Teachers and pupils as they return to school
- Read a Psalm each day, reflect on the words, how the Psalmist was feeling, and talk to God about what the words mean to you
- For Assembly Trustees of the Church of Scotland as they contemplate how to action reform quickly in the Kirk
- Keep praying for action to combat climate change and prepare a better world for this and future generations
- What is your favourite parable? What does God’s Kingdom look like and mean to you? How can you help build it?
- God’s Spirit enables ordinary people to do extraordinary things for him, so what’s he got in store for you?
- Keep putting your family and friends in the loving and caring hands of God

“May God’s blessing surround you each day as you trust him and walk in his way.”