



Lockdown Mungo Messenger

May 2020

Monthly Newsheet from St. Mungo's Church Penicuik

You can read the extended version of this newsheet, with full length features, and more colour photos at St. Mungo's website www.stmungos.freeuk.com

Church mouse



From the mouse of Editor's PC

As lockdown starts to bite we are learning to live a new way of 'normal'.

Your church continues to promote our Christian faith, but the way it now does it has changed dramatically.

This issue of your monthly newsletter shows you how all the activities are adapting to the new 'normal'.

Using technology, everything is going 'online', using video, audio, teleconferencing, as well as the good old telephone, to keep in touch, and bring people together to worship, pray and study our bible.

The lead article describes how we now put the Sunday service online every Sunday,



You will hear how Zoom online teleconferencing system enables a group to get together without leaving their own home.

The foodbank are doing an amazing job of feeding those furloughed, out of work, and no cash. The numbers involved in your local community will make you weep.

Jim Paterson
Newsletter Editor
stmungos@freeuk.com

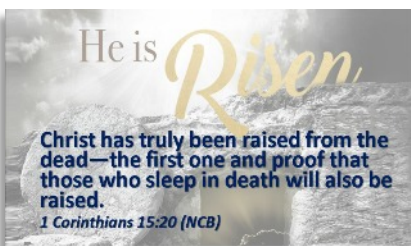
Locked Down, not Locked Out



Sunday morning. For those without access to the internet, we also provide a telephone 'dial in' version that covers all the main items of welcome, prayer, readings and sermon. Supporting this is the order of service which members can follow, or simply watch the video. How does this 'new church' work?

It starts the same way as all our services, with our minister Rev John Urquhart drafting the Order of Service during the week prior to the service, which Neil and Joan Cape make into the copy you finally see.

Now the technology part. John records the welcome and prayers as audio messages on his phone / tablet, and the sermon as a video, again on his tablet. You will recognise him in his study at the manse for the video. Readings are also audio messages created by members, again on their phones / tablets, reading them in their own homes. Fiona Hutcheson organises the readers, occasionally reading one herself. Others have included Margaret and Bill Webster, Neil and Joan Cape, Gordon Macdonald, and Ian Dickson. All have read to us in church so their voices will be familiar. Some prayers have also been led by our readers.



All these inputs wing their way across the internet to myself Jim Paterson, who you normally see on the balcony in church, running the sound and projection systems. I gather the praise videos and make the welcome, prayer and reading slides. Using video editor software these are then put in the right order, and the sound files attached in sync with the slides. Lyric subtitles are added to the praise videos where required. Lip syncing subtitles to the singer on a video is a new 'art' I have had to quickly learn! A title opening and closing slide complete all the sections.

The final video is then compiled into one file, which is then uploaded on to our new church YouTube channel and set to premier at 11.00am on the Sunday. The audio only dial up version on **01968 700121** is then made, which as said above, includes the welcome, prayers, sermon and readings. Finally the order of service is emailed out as a Mungo Messenger Extra to all our online newsletter readers, members, and Friends of St. Mungo's, plus announced on our Facebook page with the link to the Sunday video service.

From Order of Service to ready to view takes about 48 hours, with upload late on Saturday evening. A lot of work from a lot of people goes into your 'virtual' church. The video service is available permanently after the premier at 11am on the Sunday, and the dial in for the following week until the next Sunday, when it is replaced by the new Sunday service.

Your church has run seven virtual services since 22 March, including three during Easter Week. The Easter Sunday 'Resurrection' service attracted over 55 viewers for the live service at 11.00am, and over 100 in the following days. We will continue these on-line services, some joining with North Kirk and Penicuik South and Howgate church. To find the whole service click this link <http://www.stmungos.freeuk.com>.

The 15th March was the last full service held in St. Mungo's, when Fiona Devoy led our service. Since then we have been in lockdown, and a new form of bringing 'church' to you has been developed.

Like many other churches we quickly learned how to create 'virtual' on-line services that members, and visitors can join each Sunday morning at 11.00am.

The St. Mungo version consists of an on-line video service, following the format we all know and love when we step inside St. Mungo's on a



Join us Sunday morning or anytime on line or on the phone

Messy Church - keeping in touch : 26 April

Like everything else in the world, Messy Church has been far from normal this past few weeks!



We've been far from idle. By sending emails, and making phone calls, as well as using Facebook, we have been trying to keep in touch with our families.

Some are coping very well, and need little support. Others are finding things more difficult, as you can imagine. It's a case of helping where we can.

In most instances parents are just glad to have someone from outside the family to talk to, especially if there are things they need to get off their chests. But there have been more practical things too: everything from delivering bags of craft materials (it's hard work keeping the children occupied when you can't easily get out to the shops, or when the money isn't coming in so there's no cash for extras) to taking an unwanted bed to a mum whose son's bed had collapsed.

On our usual meeting days – the last Sundays of March and April – we have done two things. Everyone has received a newsletter, containing a bit of Bible teaching (something for the adults, and something for the youngsters), and a small number of related activities to be done as and when there is time and inclination.



It's hard for us finding activities which meet my three requirements: they should use materials normally and easily found in the house, they should require minimum input from parents (who are already struggling to keep on top of homework), and they

should help families to better understand either the point of the story or

something about God and what he desires for and of us. So, we have built the Easter story in Lego (or playdough), made Easter crosses to display along with the rainbows – just have a look at the activity sheets on the web site.

This week we looked at the "next instalment" of the Easter story, "Breakfast on the Beach", with its message of hope in the midst of despair – much needed at this time.



Joan presents video Messy

There has been a wee homemade video on Facebook each month, with our story and a game or other activity to join in with. And Sheila has started a puppet group on Zoom – chaotic, but greatly enjoyed by the little group who have participated.

Please remember our families in your prayers: the family where dad is a doctor working in Dundee, so not home very often at the best of times, and mum has just qualified as a nurse; the youngster who is very anxious about Mum who has just completed a long course of chemo and whose immune system is in poor shape; the single parents struggling to occupy their children all day long, without their usual supports; the families who are anxious about elderly grandparents; the homes where money is very short, and the prospect of having no work to return to is very real.



Thank you for all your support for our Messy Church families – it means a lot to us, and to them.

Prayer time, Housegroup / Bible Study, Monday Bible Group the Zoom Experience

The Sunday Prayer Time and the Wednesday Housegroup / Bible Study online meetings hosted by Bill and Margaret Webster, and the Monday Bible Study, with Neil and Joan Cape, all using Zoom is not exactly the same as meeting in the one place, but everyone can easily hear, and see everyone else and be heard and seen by them.



It works particularly well in the Prayer Time, as you normally have your eyes shut for a fair bit of the time then anyway (so in the Zoom version you're not constantly reminded of the physical separation by looking at the screens all the time) and the sound quality is really authentic. A couple of weeks ago Margaret did a Zoom session with John, and while Bill was in the kitchen it sounded exactly as if the two of them were talking together in the living room.

40 minutes is free of charge, and that is ideal for the Prayer Time (which is normally from 10-10.40 on a Sunday morning). It's not really enough for a Housegroup session, or Monday Bible Study, so Bill and Margaret are going to finish the Housegroup meeting after almost 40 minutes and then immediately re-join a new session. Hopefully that won't be too clunky.

About 8 people have so far taken part in each of the prayer time and Housegroups, 7 on the Monday group, and there isn't a problem with people not being able to contribute when they want, or people talking over each other. The host might have to structure the sequence of the discussion by, for example, saying people have to put up their hand if they want to contribute,

All in all it's a big blessing, enabling us to do get together when there is no other way of doing so.

Christian Aid Week 10 - 16 May



Christian Aid week runs from the 10th to the 16th of May this year. Of course it can't work as it usually does under the present circumstances - no door to door or church collections, no coffee mornings or lunches - but the people at Christian Aid never give up hope!



Their work goes on and they continue to help poorer communities around the world as they always do - and especially now that these communities are dealing with coronavirus too.

We can still help by visiting their online site and donating online and we can still donate by post and we can still pray for their work.

So please - if you normally would donate - or even if you haven't before - please go online to the Christian Aid site, link below, and give what you can for this important work!
www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week

Thank you - Janis Hogg St. Mungo's Christian Aid Coordinator

The Impact of Lockdown on our community

The impact of lockdown, with people finding themselves furloughed, self employed out of work, and those self isolating or shielding, is putting a great strain on family finances. When the household income is low, or zero, savings start to disappear rapidly. When bills need paid food is usually the first item on the 'hit list'.



The foodbank, Food Facts Friends, which operates out of St. Mungo's church hall, as well as Woodburn in Dalkeith, is experiencing a huge increase in visitors seeking food and basic essentials, as the Coronavirus pandemic bites hard into their once normal daily routines. These are far from 'normal' times.

The foodbank and the team of volunteers are working extremely hard to meet the demand.



Mark Wells collects toilet rolls

Stocking the shelves with food supplies that go into the food parcels is a never ending task. No sooner are the shelves filled than they are emptied.

In the last two weeks the foodbank has provided some 3500 meals, that's 3 meals a day for each family member.

Where does the food and toiletries come from? The foodbank have secured grants from supporters including Midlothian Council, B&M Stores, Fareshare, JB Foods Loanhead, local Penicuik Butcher, Alan

Ramsey Hotel Carlops making ready meals for them, TK Maxx, M&S



Collecting food and toiletries from B&M Stores

food, Greggs, Asda, Tesco, Lidl and local donations from the people of Penicuik.

Not all of this food is free. The Foodbank are spending thousands of pounds a month to purchase enough food on top of the donated foods from the above organisations, such is the ever rising queue of clients. Clark Commercial at Bilston have provided a large van, with driver, who is also furloughed from his normal employment, FREE, to collect food donations and purchases, across Midlothian.



Backroom packers sort received food

Social distancing and personal protection equipment (PPE) are terms we are used to hearing. The foodbank volunteers are no exception.

They operate a one visitor at a time into the church hall to collect their food parcel. No more is the drop in centre coffee and snack facility. The queue of visitors on a Monday and Friday at Penicuik have been seen from the hall door all the way round to Lidl store. The volunteers operate a hands off delivery to each visitor. The backroom bag fillers are well out of reach of the front desk, who are equipped with face shields, made here in Penicuik, and gloves.



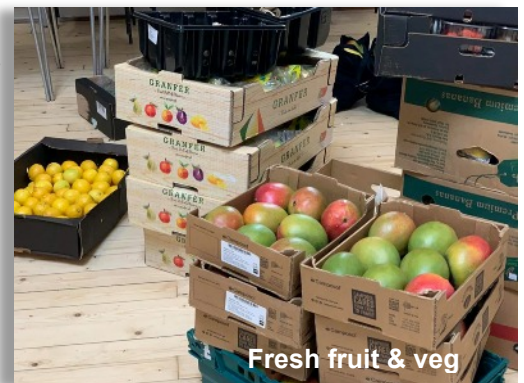
PPE Face shields

Thank you to all who have found time to donate money or food to the foodbank, for which they are always grateful.

There seems no short term end to this situation. People who have never had difficulty feeding their families in their lives before now find themselves queuing at our foodbank.

Please remember those that find themselves in desperate times during this pandemic, and if you can support your local foodbank, Food Facts Friends.

Find us on Facebook, call Mark 07507 697109, or email foodfactsfriends@gmail.com



Fresh fruit & veg

Catchup Services



As we retreat into self isolation to protect ourselves, our loved ones, and everyone around us from this insidious Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the practical things we should all do to minimise spreading the virus, we look to our faith in God and Jesus to help us in our time of need.

At St. Mungo's we have a wealth of video and audio recordings of past services and events recalling those times when we were together, celebrating our faith, with prayers, bible readings, hymns of praise and sermons, led by our minister Rev John Urquhart and visiting service leaders. A full list is available on the website www.stmungos.freeuk.com for a favourite you were at, or a service you missed earlier this year.



The Easter Holy Week services from the Penicuik Churches together PCT are also now on-line at www.penicuikchurchestogether.org.uk

From the Session Clerk

Normally I'd put in a short article 'from the Kirk Session', but as we haven't met recently, even by Zoom (a computer-based 'virtual' meeting), then this has to come from me.

Just because the Kirk Session hasn't met doesn't mean that nothing has been happening. Jim has done a great job in circulating a more frequent Newsletter (the Mungo Messenger Extra). However, that only reaches people who can receive email. I'm very aware that many of our members don't have access to such information, but normally depend on a printed copy being delivered to their house – something we can't do at present.

I have asked elders to phone round their districts every couple of weeks to find out if anyone needs help that we can supply – and it's good just to hear a different voice on the end of the phone, and be able to have a chat. You don't need to be an elder to do that! If you know someone who's stuck at home and has no way of keeping in touch via the internet, then maybe you could give them a ring.....and I'm sure that some of you are doing that anyway.



We've had about a dozen people (more at Easter) phoning in to listen to the sermon (and prayers) every Sunday – just a simple local call to 01968 700121, and wait to be connected. Again, it's been difficult to publicise that number, so if you are speaking to someone who'd be interested, please pass on the number to them.

Communications are difficult when we're not seeing each other, either at church or in the street. A chance conversation this week let us know that one of our members had had to go into hospital – please let Margaret Webster, your elder, or me know if you hear of news that we should know about....people getting home, family news, and good things that have happened too!

The last time I wrote we had been talking about a possible change to our Constitution as a congregation, and about the Stated Annual Meeting. All such business is 'on hold', awaiting a return to more normal conditions.

We did manage to have our Annual Report (including the Accounts) audited, approved and sent off to Presbytery before we had to stop having meetings. Normally the accounts would be available at church for people to look at (and if you'd like a copy, please let me know). As far as our finances go, 2019 was quite a good year, with Income and Expenditure well matched, helped by the large grant from Asda to refurbish the church hall. However, this current year may be more difficult, in that much of our expenditure continues even though we are not meeting – the buildings still need to be maintained, and Ministers still need to be paid.

There's a brief summary from the Financial Report attached to this article, to give you an idea of the amounts involved. If you have questions, you can send them to me (stmungosessionclerk@gmail.com or 674276) and if I don't know the answer I'll pass it on to the Finance Committee, who are still meeting by Zoom to keep an eye on things.

Other 'business' is also continuing using Zoom – **the weekly prayer meeting still happens at 10am on a Sunday morning**, but with participants at home and connected by screen or phone. Call Bill on 672347 for the online connection details

The prayer boxes in the library and Tesco's have had to be removed; instead there is a new email address for people to contact if they would like prayer for anything – penicukprayers@gmail.com. Prayers sent to this address are brought to the weekly prayer meeting, but without any details of who has sent them, unless the person making the request wishes to be identified.



Both the Bible Study groups are also still 'meeting' using Zoom.

The Monday group has moved from a fortnightly to a weekly meeting (usually shorter than normal).

If you'd like to join us, you'd be very welcome - contact Joan or Neil and we'll explain how to join in. 01968674276 or capefamily@talktalk.net

The Wednesday House Group meets every two weeks. Call Bill on 672347 for the online connection details

Finally, I'd like to thank John, Jim and all the others who have contributed to making the services available via YouTube. It's a lot of work!



Please do let us know what you like, and what you don't like. Perhaps there are ways of doing things differently that might be continued when we eventually get back into the church. Is there anything that you miss (apart from meeting people – we can't do much about that) from the online services? Is there anything you've seen elsewhere that we could maybe incorporate into our online services? I know that many of you have been exploring online and finding all sorts of different church services.



This period of 'lockdown' is being very hard, particularly for those who live on their own and can't get out. However, it has also opened up new opportunities and reminded us that we are a community who need to look out for each other. Keep safe and well, keep in touch, and keep praying! Nothing can separate us from God's love.

Neil Cape

Extract from Financial Statement for 2019

Income	2019	2018
Donations (offerings, Gift Aid etc.)	£53,564	£53,769
Charitable activities (e.g. Fund raising, grants)	£24,728	£12,813
Hall lets	£4,182	£4,570
Investment interest	£4,750	£4,518
Total income	£87,224	£75,700
Expenditure		
Ministries & Mission (Church of Scotland)	£42,882	£40,552
Fabric repairs and maintenance	£16,442	£10,605
Gas, electricity, rates, insurance	£12,158	£12,738
Other charitable activities	£11,533	£8,759
Total expenditure	£83,015	£72,654
Net balance over year	£4,210	£3,046
Bank and cash balances carried forward	£87,078	£82,868
Investments at market value	£122,340	£109,418

Looking after our Church buildings during lockdown

Property convenor Gordon Macdonald keeps an eye on both church and hall buildings, having done a risk assessment on them both, due to the fact that they are both under lockdown. The hall has limited access to the public on Monday and Friday for Foodbank, with public access only to the vestibule to collect food parcels. Our cleaner has started back, on one morning a week, and she is only person in hall, so risk is minimal.

The Church building itself has little or no access, only Gordon doing periodic checks.

Security is good, with police keeping an eye on the hall due to increased public activity Monday and Friday, We also have cctv in operation.