

## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



The start of a new academic year can be exciting. It can be daunting too. Somehow everyone gets swept up in the novelty of it all. New classes, new uniforms, the transition between schools or up to university or into the world of work...

Luke's Gospel is the only one to offer a glimpse of Jesus confronting such a 'Rite of Passage', when he accompanied his parents on their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem the year before his "coming of age" which, for a Jewish boy, happens on turning 13. You may know the story: how Mary and Joseph lose him on the way home and return to Jerusalem and then, after a three day search, they find Jesus amazing the learned crowds with his precocious wisdom. Having made his point and suffered his parents' wrath, he falls back into line and disappears again until the time comes to launch his public ministry. And then Luke adds (chapter 2, verse 51): "But his mother treasured all these things in her heart."

How much do we lose by rushing through life, always in a hurry to get away or to move ahead, instead of "treasuring these things in our hearts"? Momentous events have been happening and continue to happen and they all scream at us: Slow down, be more careful, tread more lightly, notice others... Come alive to God? This is not a plea for laziness but for awareness. Revelation, the concluding book of the Bible, begins with 7 letters written to churches around the ancient province of Asia (Turkey). The refrain which runs through all of them is: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

As a disciple of Christ, are you listening? As a church, are we listening? How can we help each other to become better listeners? Lord, would you guide us...?

Rory

### **Need prayer or someone to pray with you?**

Email Mary Fennell: [prayercoordinator1995@gmail.com](mailto:prayercoordinator1995@gmail.com)

### **Need to talk? Questions about the Christian faith**

Contact the minister, who will find the right person to speak to you. Details are on the last page.

Strath & Sleat Church:  
Isle of Skye is a Charity  
registered in Scotland  
No SC001285

**Website:** [www.sschurch.co.uk](http://www.sschurch.co.uk)

**Notices:** [lesleyinskye@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lesleyinskye@yahoo.co.uk)

# CALLING ALL NEW PARENTS! PÀRANTAN ÙRA!



## Starting Monday 20th September

Babies grow up so quickly! Did you know that there are, on average, only 1277 days between birth and nursery! **Make it Count** is a new baby group being set up by Strath & Sleat Church of Scotland and Sleat Free Church.

Drop in for a cuppa and a chat, with space for your baby and children to play and socialise with other children of a similar age. We will provide a healthy snack for you and your child(ren) too.

We have a small team of volunteers, who already have parenting experience, and are looking forward to welcoming you to the group. We may also be able to arrange for the Health Visitor and other services to pop in, such as baby massage.

**Gaelic and English – whatever suits you!**

**Let's make these days really count.**

**When?** Mondays 10.30 – 12.30, starting 20th September

**Where?** Sleat Free Church, Teangue, IV44 8RE

Join our facebook group – [Make it count - Sleat](#) or email Jackie, our Strath and Sleat Parish Development Assistant on [strathandsleatpda@gmail.com](mailto:strathandsleatpda@gmail.com) to find out more.

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## SKYE AND LOCHALSH GIVING THE WORLD A SHOT

In July, feeling grateful that, in this country, all adults were given the opportunity to receive double vaccines against Covid 19, the Session felt that the Church should take some action to improve access to the vaccines for our fellow human beings in other, less well-off countries. It was therefore decided to launch a local appeal for the Vaccinaid: Give the World a Shot campaign and to open this up to the Skye and Lochalsh community. Donnie Munro agreed to front the appeal through a video on the online page and it was also given some publicity in the Free Press. We set a target of £1500 and, as of 24<sup>th</sup> August, we had reached the magnificent sum of £1674!

*Continued on page 3*

It is still possible to make a donation until the end of August so, if you would like to show your gratitude for the protection you and your family have received from the vaccine please visit the appeal page at:

<https://www.vaccinaid.org/skye-and-lochalsh>



## HOPE & FAITH SCHOOL

The latest update from Hope and Faith School is that all classes were allowed to return to school on Monday 23rd August, to the delight of pupils and teachers, as can be seen in these pictures. Many community schools in Lusaka have closed down recently as mandatory school closures due to covid 19 meant they were not receiving fees and they did not have the resources to keep going without them. Hope and Faith has managed to keep going largely due to the financial help we and another group in the south of England have been able to send. Many families have suffered extreme financial hardship during lockdown and children were left without education of any kind as the schools do not have the technology to offer online teaching, so the return to school is especially meaningful to them.

The recent elections in Zambia took place peacefully for the main part and a new president, Hakainde Hichelema, was elected. This seems to be a popular result and we pray that he will lead the country wisely and fairly.

Rosemary, the staff and the children send greetings and want you to know how much they appreciate the support we give.



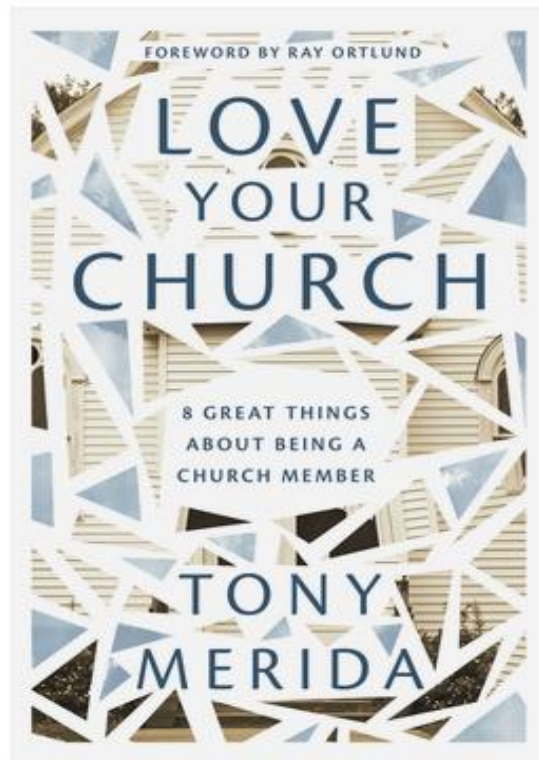


# '8 GREAT THINGS ABOUT BEING A CHURCH MEMBER'

A few of us have been reading this book, "Love your Church", by Tony Merida, over the summer. My Father in Law, Robert Ferguson, from Broxburn Baptist Church has been sharing the main points as he went through each chapter '8 great things about being a church member. Tony

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**1. 'BELONGING'** – belonging to a local church. Church is people, and a local church is a group of people who are brought together not by social standing or financial position or intellectual ability or that they've got it all together and never get it wrong but by the belief that there is a God who loves each person unconditionally, who made himself known through the person of his son Jesus Christ, and who sent Jesus into this world to die on the cross to deal with the problem of sin which destroys lives. Does that mean that all the folk who attend this church are perfect – no; does that mean that we are all likeable – no; does it mean that we always behave the way we would want to – no. We all get it wrong – yes even you and me! And it's when we get it wrong, or when situations seem to be more than we can bear that we need to belong to a local fellowship who will be there to support and not condemn, to welcome and not shun, to rally round and not abandon, to love as Jesus loves us. Want to be part of it? Belonging to a local church is vital for our growth as Christians and to allow an outlet for witness. Do you feel like you belong? What would make you feel more like you belong? What sorts of things sometimes make you feel like you don't belong?



**2. 'WELCOMING'** – thinking about this local expression of church in particular. We must be welcoming to those who come into contact with church in the same way that Christ welcomed us – not shunning or rejecting anyone and not showing favouritism. . Now you might think that's down to the minister or deacons or the folks on the door but that's not so ....it's down to you. Well, it's down to 'us' actually, all of us. Here's what the author gives as one of his action points on being a welcoming church. 'Don't attend corporate worship as a consumer watching the show but as a minister eager to welcome and to bless.' Just think about what we were like when God welcomed us into his family...got the picture? Think about the grace he showed to us, giving his son to die for us, welcoming us with all our hang ups and past failings... and future failings... and then realise that that's how we should be welcoming others into his church... those with a different lifestyle, colour of skin, hairstyle, gender identification, behavioural traits, dress sense... welcoming each and every one with the same grace that God welcomed us.

When we get back to meeting together let's make Church the most welcoming place imaginable. What can we do to be more welcoming as a church fellowship? As we move back into the building we have the opportunity to do things differently. Any ideas?

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**3. GATHERING** - The third 'great thing' about church is 'GATHERING'. Getting together to worship and enjoy fellowship as a family of believers. Traditionally we do this on a Sunday...but it happens at other times...and as we meet we: listen to God's word; sing together; pray together; and sometimes share in Communion – a Family Meal for the Christian family. We've missed it for the past 15 months. Are you longing to get back together with your Christian family? Not long now!

**4. 'CARING'** - This is quite a long chapter in the book but I want to focus on one of the points made - It's about the extensive use, in the story of the New Testament church, of the phrase 'one another'. The author of the book lists 23 appearances of this phrase and he reckons that's not them all. The phrase is about being together, being family, looking after each other, helping each other, caring for each other, instructing each other, loving each other, serving each other, encouraging each other, doing good to each other, supporting each other....but there are negatives as well.....NOT lying to each other, NOT speaking evil of each other, NOT grumbling about each other.

Now, if we're honest, sometimes we don't get this quite right. We can manage it with the folk we like (at least most of the time) but what about the folk we have difficulty with? Sorry – one another – no exceptions!

**5. 'SERVING'** - Now I'm sure we all like being served – there's nothing nicer than going into a posh restaurant (can't remember the last time!!) and being attended to by a well-trained waiter. But let's be honest it's not quite so much fun being on the other side, and yet that's what the Christian life is all about – it's about getting the towel wrapped round our waist and washing feet as Jesus did. But it's more than that, it's about using all the gifts given by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church. 'Followers of Christ are not spectators in the church, but servants in the church.' Who Me? Yes You! But serving can be tiring. Even serving your fellow brothers and sisters in the church and the author gives 3 things which should motivate us, to fire us up and refuel us: • God's mercy – remember what Jesus did on the cross for you. • The Spirit's gifts – remember the gifts The Holy Spirit has given you...for the benefit of the church. • The Son's return – remember that Christ is coming back. Imagine the embarrassment you would feel if he found you sleeping. Have a good week – maybe keep a diary of your service this week?



**6. HONOURING** - "Honouring" sounds to me like the sort of word they use in the USA for respecting and in particular respecting our spiritual leaders or pastors in the church. Peter tells the pastors and shepherds of the New Testament church that their role is to 'shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight.' So how does the Bible say we should treat those who lead the church – we should honour them. What does it mean for us to 'honour' our spiritual leaders in the church – here's what the book suggests we should do:

1. Respect faithful pastors. 2. Love our pastors. 3. Follow the example of our pastors. 4. Be a joy to our pastors. 5. Pray for our pastors.

How well do we honour our pastors?

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**7. 'WITNESSING'** - The author uses the quote 'If you build it, they will come.' from the film 'Field of Dreams' to make a point here. The idea is that the quote might be true for a baseball stadium but it's certainly not true about church today. Gone are the days when people would flock to a new building or to hear great worship music or a riveting preacher. Today, most people who turn up on a Sunday are there because someone brought them. They came because a friend or neighbour or workmate invited them and they saw something in that person that made them want to come. That's evangelism. But do we want to? Tony, the author, suggests that evangelism is not really about the 'how to' but about the 'want to'. Let's be honest about this, do we really want to reach out? Are our hearts so over-flowing with what God has done for us in Jesus that we want others to meet him? 'The heart is the heart of evangelism.' So, as we prepare to meet again in person, as church, in the building, how is our heart for evangelism? That's how the gospel spreads and the church grows. Are we up for it?

**8. 'SENDING'** – The last of the 8 great things is 'Sending – continuing the mission and planting healthy churches. 'Sending' is about obeying Jesus when he told his disciples and us to 'go out' and 'preach' and 'make disciples'. Tony Merida suggests 4 action steps and which are relevant to us as (some my words):

1. Not having a 'bomb shelter' mentality but a cultural engagement mentality – getting out there!
2. Encouraging those engaged in mission or outreach or witness.
3. Thinking about what God had done for us and allowing that to motivate us to mercy ministry – helping people practically in the name of Jesus. (eg Food Bank, Christians Against Poverty, Christmas Boxes, etc)
4. Getting involved by praying, giving, supporting, or doing (going).

Is mission a 'great thing' about this church – or your church?



You can purchase the book at "eden" or "the good book company"

<https://www.eden.co.uk/christian-books/the-church/church-life/love-your-church/>

<https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/love-your-church>



# SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB – ‘A JUNGLE ADVENTURE!’

*(from a helper's view!)*



I was just a helper this year so having not been involved with any of the planning, I didn't know what to expect. I knew it was going to be different because of having to be held outside due to the pandemic. But I was blown away by how great it was. Each group had their base camp (above) but we all came together to hear the Bible stories about Jesus calling the disciples and how he guides, cares and provides for them (and us!). Two characters 'Random Finds' (Jackie) and 'Water Falls' (Janette) were a real hit with the kids! There were trails through the woods, bush crafts, songs, making bread, games (thanks to Willie!) and toasting marshmallows round camp fires. The kids were obviously just loving it all! (And so did I!)



*Here are the youngest group flying the weather vanes that they'd made.*

*As only restricted numbers were permitted due to Covid, Timmy ran 2 clubs one after the other. Over the week, 41 children came (a few of them choosing to come to both clubs!!)*

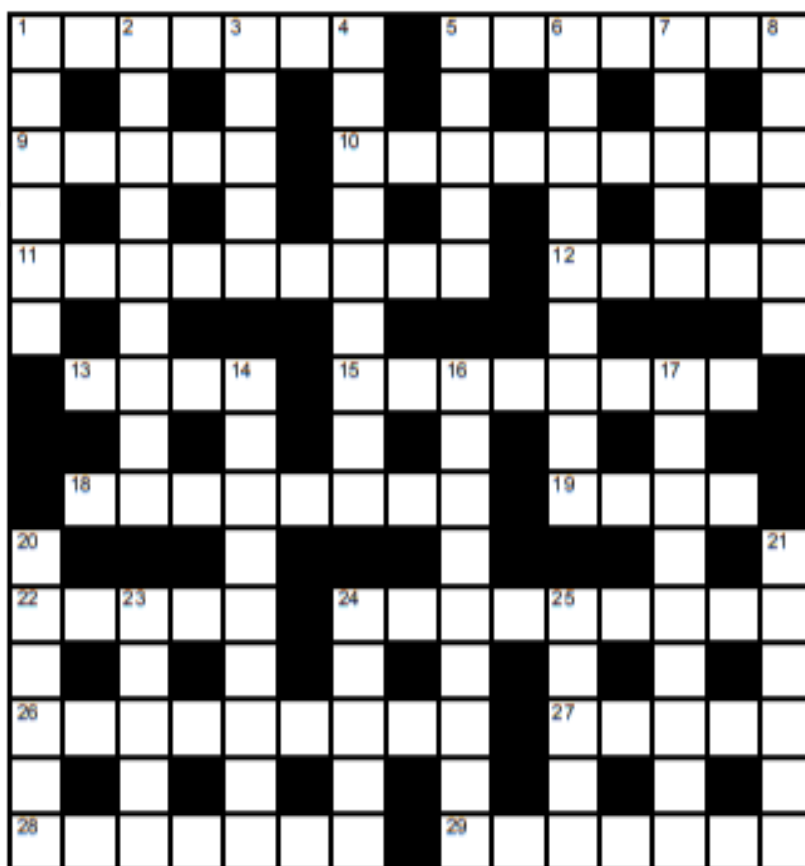
So... a huge 'THANK YOU' to all those who were involved in the planning and preparation, but especially to Timmy and Janette.

## A Cross word.

*A puzzle to make you think this week...all the best....must see if I can do it myself!!*

### Across

- 1 Desperation; Praised  
(anag) (7)
- 5 God, doing this on day  
7 (7)
- 9 More refined (5)
- 10 One of Paul's  
letters (9)
- 11 Uncared for (9)
- 12 Encamp against  
city (5)
- 13 Charitable giving (4)
- 15 Consecrated (8)
- 18 Abraham received  
these (8)
- 19 Jesus raised in 3 (4)
- 22 Colour found only in  
Ezekiel (5)
- 24 Someone who  
shields (9)
- 26 Continuance of life (9)
- 27 Grind together (5)
- 28 Unusual (7)
- 29 Athalia's cry (7)



by Philologus

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### Down

- 1 Rely on (6)
- 2 Tail-ender (9)
- 3 Be in harmony (5)
- 4 Not wicked (9)
- 5 Reigned (5)
- 6 Contented (9)
- 7 Picture (5)
- 8 Good news (6)
- 14 The first, first-aider? (9)
- 16 Fradulent (9)
- 17 Slain by Moses (9)
- 20 They get the hump (6)
- 21 Parentless (6)
- 23 Prickly shrub (5)
- 24 300 bought ointment  
to anoint Jesus (5)
- 25 Keen-sighted bird of  
prey (5)

You will find the solution on page 12



# PRÒISEACT 'BATA NAN SALM'

Bidh fios aig cuid dhuibh gun do ghluais bean a' mhinisteir, Annice, a Leòdhas far an robh i air a breith, gus dreuchd ùr a thogail suas. Rè mo thadhal as aithgheàrr, thachair mi ri boireannach a tha an sàs anns a' phròiseact 'Bata nan Salm'. 'S e Magaidh Smith a th' oirre. Mhinich i gum b' abhaist do dhaoine às na trì bailtean beaga timcheall Loch Eiriosort, ann an sgìre nan Loch, a bhith a' siubhal thairis an uisge chun na h-eaglaise ann an Ceòs airson raithean Comanachaidh. Bha laoidhean aig gach coithional, a rinn iad fhèin, agus bhiodh iad gan roinn sna taighean anns an robh iad a' fuireach.

Abair oighreachd phrìseil, ach chan eil an traidisean a' tachairt an-diugh. A bharrachd air seo tha feadhainn a bha an sàs ann a' bàsachadh gu luath. Fhuair mi clàradh de dh'fhear dhiubh a' seinn – le guth làidir, ceòlmhor, ged a tha e naochad bliadhna a dh'aòis! Tha agam ri tilleadh gus cach a chlàradh, fhàd 's a tha iad beò. San eadar-àma, a bheil fios aig duine sam bith mu thraidisean coltach ri seo air eilean eadar-dhealaichte, no air an tìr-mòr? Innis dhomh, mas e ur toil e. Bhithinn fada nur comain!

*Some of you will know that the minister's wife, Annice, has moved to Lewis where she was born, to take up a new job. During my most recent visit, I met a woman who is involved in the 'Psalm Boat' project. Magaidh Smith is her name. She explained that people from the three villages around Loch Erisort, in the district of Lochs, used to sail over the water to the church at Ceos for Communion seasons. Each congregation had its own hymns, which they composed themselves, and they would share them in the houses where they were staying.*

*What a precious inheritance, yet the tradition no longer happens. On top of that, those who were involved are rapidly dying off. I received a recording of one of them singing – with powerful, tuneful voice, although he is in his nineties! I must return to record others, while they are alive. In the meantime, does anyone know of similar traditions on different islands, or on the mainland? Please let me know. I would be most grateful.*

Rory

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## COMMISSIONING SERVICE

On Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> August, we held our annual 'Back to School with God' service in Kyleakin village hall. This took the form of a family service and focussed on asking God's blessing on pupils, parents and staff as the new school year starts; this was especially relevant this year after the challenges our schools have experienced in the last 18 months due to the pandemic. Books and Bibles were presented to Kyleakin's young church members and to those who have now left school to make their way in the world. Presentations to the other children/young people in the Parish will be made in their own churches.

The service was made even more special as it included the commissioning of Jackie MacLennan, our new Parish Development Assistant. This post has been made possible through a legacy given to the Parish by Mairi Renwick, whose family hail from the area. We were delighted that Mairi's sister, Una MacLeod, was able to be with us on the day and that we were able to play a recording by Mairi's nephew, the Reverend Dr David Renwick, who ministers in Washington, USA. His words (printed below) resonated powerfully with the vision we have for this post:

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*"Dear Friends in Skye and Kyle*

*How wonderful to learn last year of the gift that my Aunt -- Mairi (Macleod) Renwick -- left in her estate to the Strath and Sleat churches. I understand that her gift is to be used, quite appropriately for the church as a family, and for the wider community to help engage others in thinking about their faith.*

*While Mairi's faith was not one we talked about much until her later years, her extraordinary gift throughout the 60 years I knew her (quite literally, from the day of "Mairi's wedding"! ) was her ability to engage others in conversation. This she did through genuine love, interest and service. Family and true community were integral to her life. Her house and her heart were always open to all who came by. And when she was the one who needed to be on the move toward others (for example, to weddings of my children across the Atlantic), she did so joyfully until mobility became an issue – at which point she quickly picked up an I-Pad and learned to Facetime – and then Facebook! In fact, often she knew more about my family than I did myself! . . . We in the family wanted to be where she was and for her to be where we were; and when we came together online or in-person, the conversation flowed easily.*

*It is always a good thing for a congregation to dedicate resources in order to consider how best to be effective and relevant in opening doors for people to explore issues of faith. In the New Testament, different approaches worked with different people at different times.*

*We find Jesus, for example, engaging in conversation with un-churched folk while he was "winning and dining" (for which he was sometimes blamed).*

*And we find the Apostle Paul engaging others in the "agora" of Greek cities (the equivalent of the supermarket parking lot!).*

*What worked in days gone by may or may not work today. Innovation is essential. But one thing is still certain – every effective and truly relevant strategy begins with the strategy taught by Jesus: "By this," said Jesus, "all will know you are my disciples – that you have love for one another" (John 13:35): in other words, the "Mairi strategy" of genuine love for others and interest in their lives and well-being.*

*May God use this gift so that those within the Strath and Sleat Churches would experience a deeper measure of family, a fresh engagement with the community and a growing faith in Christ our Lord – which would, in turn, overflow to many others. With joy in Christ,"*

David Renwick (Nephew of Mairi Renwick and great-grandson of Finlay Graham, Free Church minister, Sleat, 1874-1885)

Jackie followed this up by giving a brief update on her plans and left us feeling thankful for this God given opportunity and excited about what lies ahead.



Jackie and Una just after the service.

## A WORLD IN CRISIS PART 1: CONSIDERING OUR NEIGHBOURS.

God created the universe, mankind, plants, animals, clean water, healthy food, and clean air so that all could live well and abundantly. God in Christ came to earth demonstrating love, compassion, and servanthood – teaching us how to live. He reinforced our basic instructions to love God and to love our neighbours.

Climate change, biodiversity loss, and the Covid pandemic are examples of not obeying God's instructions. They are man-made problems, largely due to greed, carelessness, and injustice whether realised or not. We are not honouring God, and our neighbours are suffering. Our neighbours include those living next door, but much more than that.

To consider just climate change: In recent months, floods, wildfires and storms have caused huge damage, loss of homes, businesses, crops and livestock in Bangladesh, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Siberia, South America, India, Darfur, as well as Europe, America and New Zealand. Millions have been evacuated and people have died. Are these people our neighbours?

Strath and Sleat is twinned with St Paul's Church in Amman. Jordan is one of the driest countries in the world. At present, each Jordanian can access less than 130 cubic metres of renewable water for the year and this is likely to drop to 90m<sup>3</sup> by 2025. In the Middle East, oil is the usual energy source, exacerbating climate changing emissions. Jordan is now trying to harness solar power, but this will require resourcing.

We have a special relationship with Hope and Faith School in Zambia. Two thirds of the Zambian population lives below the poverty line, with 46% living in extreme poverty. Poor and marginalised people (anywhere) just don't have the resources to adapt their lifestyles, making them particularly vulnerable to climate change. Over the last few decades Zambia has had droughts, seasonal floods and flash floods, extreme temperatures and dry spells, with increased frequency, intensity and magnitude. This impacts on agriculture, and therefore food and water security, water quality, energy and the sustainable livelihoods of rural communities - in turn aggravating poverty and limiting economic development. What does the future hold for school graduates?

Remember, God is not causing these disasters. He gave us all we needed to live well and maintain a stable climate, but free choice has allowed us to make quite a lot of bad choices.

Vaccine injustice has arisen from rich countries hoarding vaccines to protect themselves. Climate injustice refers to the fact that those least responsible for causing climate change are the ones suffering most from its effects, although no-one is immune.

Over the last 300 years, rich countries like the UK have accumulated wealth through the exploitation of people and natural resources, leading to climate breakdown across the globe and to huge inequalities of power and wealth between the richest and the poorest. The early users of coal and other fossil fuels owe an enormous debt.

Jesus uses the parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate neighbourly care. I think that the illustration assumes we are not in cahoots with the robbers. We should certainly care for our neighbours, but we must also stop beating them up and robbing them of the resources they need to live well.

What then, is the Christian response? What would Jesus do? We have the great privilege of being able to take it to the Lord in prayer, and that's where it starts.

We regularly pray that God's will be done on earth. Taking action against climate change, reducing injustice and moving to a fairer, more compassionate world in keeping with God's will may cost us material resources, but also promises great rewards in this life as well as the next.

(Next newsletter - A world in crisis part 2: responding as individuals and as Church.)

Anne

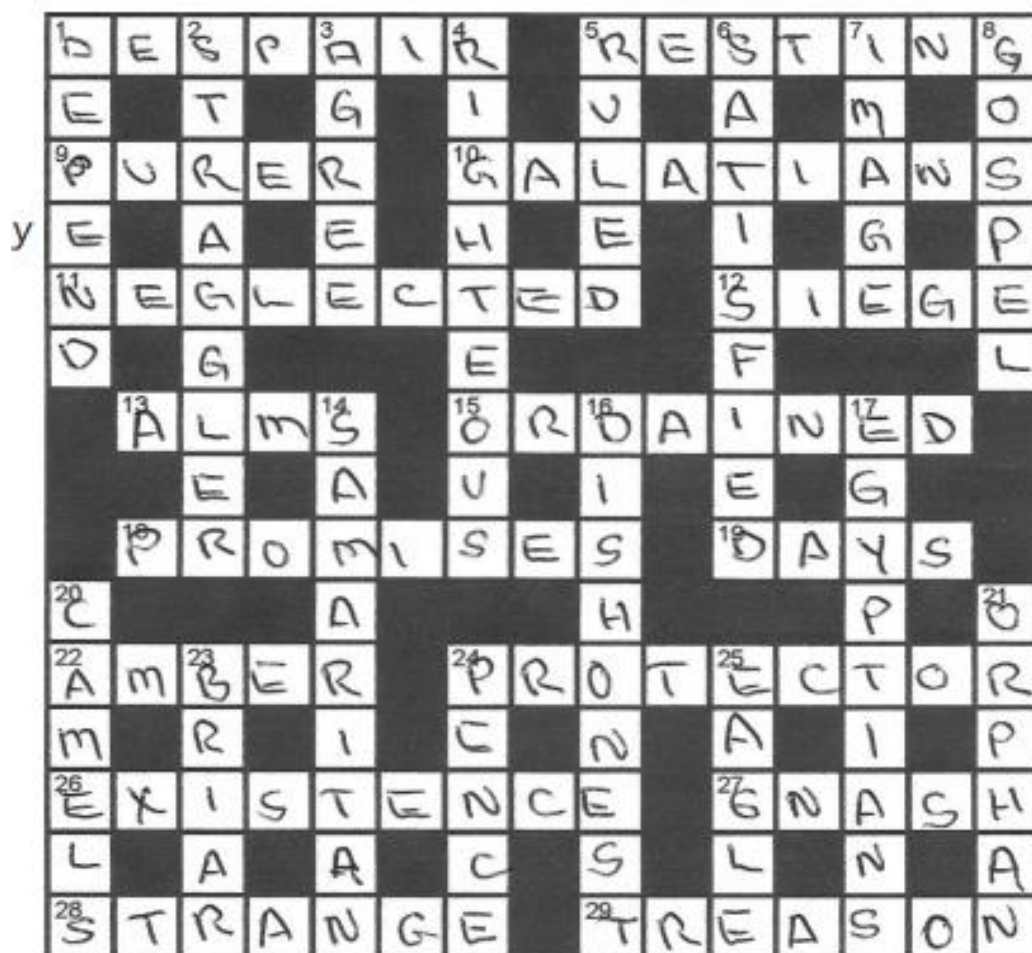


# LETTERS PAGE

**We want to hear from you!**

Your comments and suggestions are really appreciated.  
Please send letters for the next newsletter (however short or long!) to Lesley [lesleyinskye@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lesleyinskye@yahoo.co.uk)

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION:



by Philologus

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## OUR CHURCHES

**Broadford**

High Street  
Broadford  
Isle of Skye  
IV49 9AB

**Elgol**

Elgol  
Isle of Skye  
IV49 9BL

**Kilmore**

Kilmore  
Sleat  
Isle of Skye  
IV44 8RG

**Kyleakin**

Kyleakin  
Isle of Skye  
IV41 8PH

From September we will be meeting in each of our church buildings once again. There will no longer be the need to book a place in church, but please wear a mask and space yourselves out as much as possible. We will continue to show one of the morning services on zoom.

On the **first Sunday of each month** we will be gathering together in just one church for a **'whole parish' service**. Please see website for location.

Other Sundays, services will be at the following times...

**Broadford, Kilmore and Kyleakin Churches: Morning service at 11am**

**Elgol: 3pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays**

**Gaelic: 5pm on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays (place to be confirmed)**

**Kyleakin Fellowship: 6pm**

**Please check notices for when mid-week meetings will be starting.**

## CHURCH SESSION

BROADFORD/ELGOL

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	Peter McDermott	01471 844362
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