



# Link magazine

October 2020

Making God's love known through Jesus Christ

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## Pastoral Letter

I hope you've all been managing to enjoy the 'freedom' that the easing of lockdown restrictions has brought. Sadly, it looks as though we may be heading for another lockdown and that will bring fear or a few anxieties for some. I've been reminded on a few occasions recently that perfect love drives out fear. (1 John 4:19). Let me give you a couple of examples....

I sometimes like to go out for a walk either just before or just after breakfast before the working day begins. It's a time to clear the head and focus on God's wonderful creation and give thanks. I will sometimes take a photo or two (which may often appear in services). One morning recently the day started with sunshine (there's nothing like a walk in the sunshine to raise the spirits!) As I was heading across

Bruntsfield Links I took my phone out to take a couple of photos. Inadvertently I ended up with this photo (I'd only meant to capture the beauty of the sunshine and Arthur's Seat). The camera captured the sun as if it was a globe on the lamppost. I didn't see this as I took the photo, only after. I know that some people would spend some time lining up such a shot. I looked at the photo on the screen and was amazed at the message. Jesus is the light of the world and that





light will shine for us on good days and in the dark places of our lives. It was a real ‘Wow!’ moment.

Another walk early on Sunday morning on a darker, drizzly day (reflecting a little of the way I was feeling) brought another reminder of God’s goodness. The leaves are turning, with a few falling to the ground. Sometimes fallen leaves can create a wonderful photo, especially with the amazing array of colours. My eye was attracted to this leaf, but it wasn’t just the colour.

Look closely at all the ‘veins’ on the leaf. It’s a perfect creation. Having captured the photograph I walked home, marvelling at God’s creation, even down to the perfect detail on that one leaf. God created this minor miracle... and He created each of us...in His likeness. Every single fibre of our being, He created... “and it was good!”

For me, these photos are a reminder of God’s perfect love.

Can I encourage you in the days and weeks ahead to intentionally look for God in the small things (as well as the large). You might be surprised where you will meet Him. I hope that these reminders give you hope so that you might draw on God’s strength to face the days ahead.

Jesus said in John 16:33

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

*Elaine Hogan*

PS why not send us your photographs of where you’ve seen God's goodness

## Congregational roll

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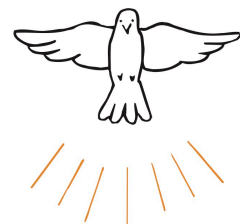
### Death

Andrew Robertson

21 September

May Philip (St Andrew’s)

21 September



## Thank Offering 2020

11 October - 22 November

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Each year we set aside a time where we encourage everyone in our congregation to participate in a period of reflection and thanksgiving. This year, more than ever, it is important for us to take the time to remember that God is good.



During this period (11 Oct - 22 Nov), we would invite everyone to do two things:

Share with us something that you are particularly thankful for this year.

- Send us a short video, a picture or a written message and we will combine these and share them with the congregation and on our social media feeds. These can be sent to [thanks@barclayviewforth.org.uk](mailto:thanks@barclayviewforth.org.uk) or to the postal address below.

Consider your regular giving or whether you can make a one off offering towards the work of our Congregation.

- If you require a form to set up or amend your standing order please email [treasurer@barclayviewforth.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@barclayviewforth.org.uk) or phone the Office on (0131) 229 6810
- To make a one off Thank Offering visit: <https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/?cong=010010>, use the Give button at the foot of the website homepage or send a cheque, payable to “Barclay Viewforth Church”, to the following address:

Treasurer  
Barclay Viewforth Church  
1 Wright's Houses  
Edinburgh  
EH10 4HR

*The Finance Group*

## Obituary: Andrew Robertson

Members and friends of Barclay Viewforth will be saddened to learn of the death of Andrew Robertson on 21 September 2020.

He had suffered a major heart attack, and after treatment in Edinburgh had been transferred to the Jubilee Hospital in Glasgow. However, he subsequently suffered a cardiac arrest and other complications from which he sadly died some days later. He was 48.

Andrew had been one of our organists since the union with Viewforth 11 years ago, in addition to being our choirmaster. Prior to this, he had been organist and Music Group leader at Viewforth for 15 years.

He was born into the Viewforth Church family and his musical journey started early in life, with him taking part in many musical productions as a member of the Junior Choir there. He learned to play the piano whilst still at primary school, although he was mainly self-taught and initially played by ear.

As an adult, he played the piano for the younger section of the Sunday Club and also taught himself to play the organ. He was then organist at Viewforth from September 1994 until the union and led the Music Group in both weekly services and various events. During the final ministry there he enjoyed selecting the music and songs for the main morning service. Although he enjoyed traditional hymns, he was always keen to support the introduction of new songs, preferably those with easy to sing tunes!

From the union which created Barclay Viewforth in 2009, he shared organist duties with Dennis Deas and then Michael Bonaventure. He also led the Choir who sing at morning services and special events.



Away from church, upon finishing school, Andrew studied at Moray House. He became a teacher at St Francis' Primary School in Niddrie and taught in the infant department there for his entire career, where his music skills would also be put to good use.

At home, he enjoyed entertaining, cooking and baking and his shortbread was said to be second to none. He married Brian three years ago and they enjoyed travelling together.

He especially loved the Christmas season, both at home and at church. Each year his garage was transformed into a magical wonderland with decorations and thousands of lights and Andrew often spent part of his autumn holiday each year in Blackpool buying new items for the display. The resulting spectacle was visited by adults and children, who were also



given an audience with Santa Claus as well as being treated to refreshments afterwards. Visitors would return every year to see what new magic Andrew had created, and over the years numerous charities benefitted from his efforts.

At Viewforth he enjoyed playing for children's parties. The Music Group Christmas Carol Parties were an important event in his musical calendar.

At both churches, there was a spirit of re-union as friends from earlier times would come along to add their Advent voices to the morning and Christmas Eve services. His Christmas ties and colourful waistcoats were legendary.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Brian, to Andrew's mother Betty, his sister Susan and her family, and his pupils and many friends. We will remember him for bringing joy to so many.

*Ed Bain*

Editor's note: Andrew's funeral was held on Friday 2 October. A memorial service for Andrew will be held at Barclay Viewforth in due course, as and when government restrictions allow us to do so. Details will be announced when arrangements have been made.

## The Meadows

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There is a golden light today

Golden, red and brown leaves are sprinkled  
on the grass,

The wind sweeps across the meadows

Blustery at times,

It is the beginning of autumn.

People huddle in small groups on the grass  
Schoolchildren shriek at a game of rounders,  
Sounds of others at their afternoon break,  
The peace of the meadows is broken for  
a short while.

The garden continues to look lovely in its  
fruitfulness,

Beans are growing

Marygolfs shine in the sun, bright orange,

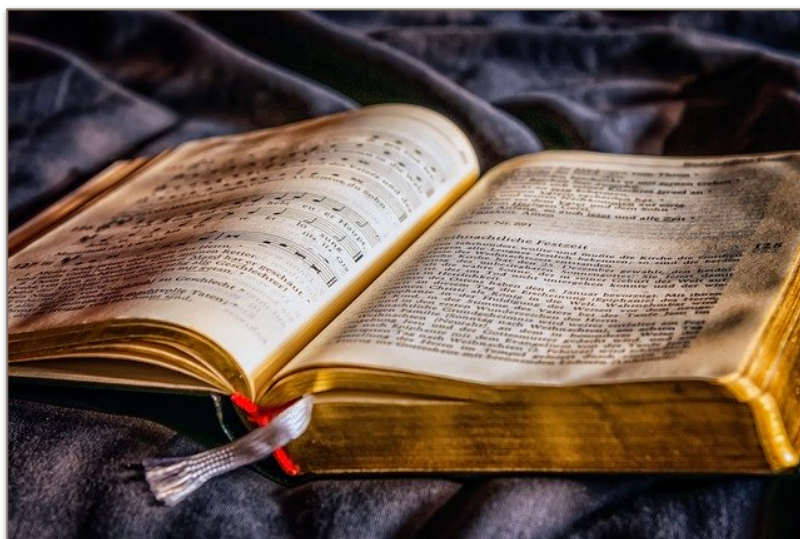
Herbs are burgeoning and flowering.

*Lee Gates*



## O for a thousand tongues

If you either saw (or listened to) the 11am service or attended the 3pm service on Sunday 13 September you will have heard this song. I did both. At the 11am, in the comfort of my own home, I sang along to the six verses of that famous Wesley hymn. When it started playing during the afternoon service, I was sitting in the Barclay Viewforth sanctuary, experiencing my first live 'in-person' service since lockdown.



As we aren't permitted to sing under current restrictions, I closed my eyes when the music started. Earlier, at the Church Online platform, Moray had commented that he could hear Bill singing from the choir. As I sat in church and heard our voices recorded only a few months ago, I visualised the congregation around me. Although it didn't sound as it would in real life with the voices all around, it still sounded like us. And I found the experience quite powerful and moving. That song, which was written in 1739 (and originally had 18 stanzas), is much older than Barclay Viewforth. But during the 156 years that our building has been standing, that hymn must have been sung by thousands and thousands of different voices. And so it felt very appropriate that it was played there. Despite it being like never before, those recorded voices were adding to the communal worship that has taken place year after year in that place, through good times and bad.

That hymn of course has a story. Charles had been suffering from pleurisy, a lung disease caused by a virus which causes breathing problems. At the same time he was doubting his faith. His fellow Christians gathered around to help him, both physically and spiritually. The hymn was born out of his recovery. In this new time of virus which causes breathing problems, let us hold onto the the fact, that even in times of great trial, and even if we doubt God, we can come through and our fellow Christians can help support us. The challenges today are different, and the separation that we feel from each other may cause us a lot of sadness. But we are here for each other, and we can pray for each other, even if we don't know what else to do. And we can sing. Even if we are at home by ourselves. We can continue to praise God.

*Julie Nicholson*

## More than a rainbow

Noah. A story that has been at the forefront of my mind at various points over the last 6 months. The visual reminder of so many rainbows on display in windows, pavement chalk art, even on the railings outside of church seemed to act as a prompt for this well known story. We have even had the more recent church services using Noah's story, and I'm left wondering what else is God telling me at this point in time through this well known passage?

At the moment I feel I can relate best to the post storm pre-docking part of the story, the storm has calmed yet the ark is still floating around, the safety and comfort of dry land is nowhere to be seen, there is no timeframe for the "next stage" it's a sense of limbo. I certainly feel like that is the case currently in my day to day life. I'm able to see people and do more than I could back in April yet at the same time everyday life is still restricted; no hugs for friends, meeting up with limited numbers of people, keeping distance, no singing, no impromptu gatherings, all result in a reluctance to plan too much incase the regulations change.

Even once the ark had grounded there was still a long period of waiting to be endured. How did Noah and his family feel as they released the Raven and then the Dove the first time, did those feeling change when they came back to the ark? The next time they released the Dove was it with a sense of anticipation and excitement of maybe this time there will be a sign that the water levels are receding and they would be able to plan for leaving the ark or was it with a resigned sense of what's the point it's all just so wet underfoot still?

Maybe I'm left questioning what is my attitude at the moment, do I have an underlying sense of it will all get better, or am I feeling like the water level is never going to recede and we are stuck in this limbo state permanently.

Actually what is important is I have that reoccurring visual reminder of God's covenant with Noah which in turn prompts me to remember that when God promises us something, he means it. Whether I feel like I'm in the middle of a storm or stranded on a mountain top, or stood on dry land enjoying his wonderful creation I can hang onto this verse from Deuteronomy 31:8. 'The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never

leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged'. Many of us might be feeling isolated from friends and family still, yet we are not completely alone, God is still walking with us and he has everything under control.



*Linda Garside*

## #Christmasisnotcancelled

The nights are drawing in, the weather getting cooler, and as this year will be different from all others, the Ministry Team have already been planning the BV Christmas. Obviously we don't exactly know how things will look in two months time, but we are planning for various scenarios! What you do need to know is that this year we will bring you the Christmas story as never before, and share the real meaning of the season with as many people as we can. The Comms team will meet soon to help bring these plans to fruition.



This year we might not be able to celebrate in the ways that we have done previously, but we have God's love brought to us in the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. That is a gift that we must cherish not only at Christmas but every day. If the people around us don't share this joy, Christmas 2020 might seem bleak. It's up to us to let them know that #Christmasisnotcancelled, and that God's love endures through all the trials of life.

## Christmas Giving

The Christmas season at Barclay Viewforth is not just about parties and having fun! We do actually take time and effort trying to support the communities around us, near and far. This year we are going to do that differently, but hopefully enable people to participate.

### 1. Blythswood Shoebox appeal



The past two years, not only have we gathered shoeboxes, but also been a sorting centre for the area. If you have volunteered at this you will know how busy the church was, filled with willing hard working volunteers. After some consideration, we have decided not to be a sorting centre this year and we are not collecting shoeboxes. Apologies if you have been busy buying and making stuff already, but we don't want anyone to feel pressured into having to shop for these items in this difficult time.

### 2. Bethany Christian Trust

For a number of years we were a night shelter for the homeless in our city. More recently with the opening of Diadem, better facilities were available, but our members continued to provide help. With Covid-19 restrictions Bethany are having to find new ways to work and support our homeless community.





### 3. Food bank at Bruntsfield Evangelical Church

Winter might be a time where we encourage people to bring more donations to church to support the work of the local food bank. The food bank continues to operate, but members have to take donations directly there on a Friday morning.



Because of the restrictions in 2020 we have decided to offer these three organisations financial help through the giving of our members. To enable this we will set up a giving page, separate from the church, and monies raised will be split three ways and given to the above to enable them to keep blessing others this winter. What we ask is that the money you might have normally spent on filling a shoebox, or buying for the foodbank go into this fund. More details will follow, but if you want to give but are unable to do so online, please contact the office.

This Christmas season we want to bless others, but at the same time keep our congregation safe and well. And of course, all these ministries would appreciate ongoing prayer for the work that they carry out.

*The Ministry Team*

## TCP

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Despite the restrictions TCP continues to be active within the Tollcross community, using Zoom for our ministry meetings. Sadly a few businesses have closed permanently but we have managed to keep in contact with the owners offering what support and encouragement we can.

We fully intend providing on line communication where we cannot visit in person.

Businesses in our community are finding it a real trial and would much appreciate members of the congregation calling in for a chat or browse.

The TCP team feel encouraged that so many businesses are expressing their appreciation for the visits or emails we have sent and they still look forward to meeting together when the restrictions are lifted.

Meanwhile we are planning to put together another newsletter to keep spirits up within our community.

*Helen and Barbara, TCP*

## In person services: planning for the rest of the year

The numbers attending the **3pm Sunday services** have not come close to fully using the available capacity of the church, and have declined slightly over the initial 4 weeks. Feedback from those attending has been that they miss being able to share fellowship before and after the service (prohibited by the current guidance). Not being able to have any congregational singing also makes it feel quite different from pre-lockdown worship. Of those who have attended the 3pm service, nearly all also watch services online.

It was agreed by Kirk Session that we would continue the 3pm services as planned until Sunday 11 October, but after that a rethink was needed.



Kirk Session spent some time considering whether an **All-Age Morning Service** was the best option, to ensure the congregation kept contact with as many families and children as possible. There were mixed views from the parents at the meeting on how popular this would be, and this reflected the range of opinion from discussions people had had with other families. The online materials were well liked, and many felt this worked better than a service in the sanctuary would, at least the kind of service we can hold under the current restrictions.

On balance it was agreed that a **more traditional 11am Service** would work better. It could contain pre-recorded elements, including worship songs, but with a sermon given in the sanctuary by the minister. Prayers and bible readings could be pre-recorded also, but these might also be led live in the sanctuary on occasion. Live music, including organ music, can be included under the current guidance. This service would be live-streamed on the internet.

As with the afternoon service, attendance at the 11am service will need to be pre-booked, and there will be a limited number of seats available (currently 50, but this may change if government guidance is updated).

An earlier **10.15am Service online only**, aimed at children and families, will continue.

It will take some time to get the Sanctuary ready for live-streaming, and so we will return to services online only for a few weeks after 11 October. The plan is to then 'reopen' for an 11am service on Sunday 15 November.

*John Ritchie*

## Ruby Wedding Anniversary

We (Bob and Natalie) were married at Barclay on 10th May 1980 so it has now been forty years. I attach a picture taken outside the church with the minister Jim Hamilton. Hairstyles have changed a bit since then.

*Bob Elrick*

Editor's note: Many apologies to Bob and Natalie for not including their anniversary in the last issue. Thank you to Bob for sharing this marvellous photo!

## Hands together for Christmas

This year we are planning something different for Christmas and need everybody to help us create a cardboard Christmas Tree.

We would like you to trace both your hands separately onto green card, ensuring that your fingers are splayed out. These should then be carefully cut out and you may wish to draw decorations on to the hands.

The more hands we receive the bigger the tree which will be displayed behind the glass door at the top of the steps for everyone passing by to see.

Please put your name on the reverse of the cut outs. Then send the completed hands to the church office by 8th November so that the tree can be put together in time for Christmas.

The address is  
Christmas Project  
Barclay Viewforth Church  
1 Wrights Houses  
Edinburgh  
EH10 4HR

*Natalie Elrick*



## Accessing the Sunday Service

Missing us on a Sunday? You can join in with worship from home in a range of ways:

- Join us online live at 10:15 and 11:00 at **barclayviewforth.online.church** for real-time chat, and for after church coffee on Zoom
- Catch up with the service later by going to **barclayviewforth.org.uk** for the latest videos
- Previous services can also be found on **barclayviewforth.org.uk/sermons**
- You can also listen in to a specially curated audio service using Twillo by calling **0131 357 6007** after 11am for this week's service. Please note the time this service is available may change once services move to live streaming.
- CDs of previous services are also available - please contact the office.



If you would like to join the Sunday evening prayer meeting at 7pm on Zoom, please email Elaine [pastoral@barclayviewforth.org.uk](mailto:pastoral@barclayviewforth.org.uk) to receive the link via email each week.

## Key contacts

<b>Minister</b>	<b>Rev. David Clarkson</b>	<b>dclarkson@churchofscotland.org.uk</b>
Administrator	Julie Nicholson	admin@barclayviewforth.org.uk
Pastoral Associate	Elaine Hogan	pastoral@barclayviewforth.org.uk
Children & Families	Stefanie Conradt	children@barclayviewforth.org.uk
Development Worker		
Session Clerk	John Ritchie	sessionclerk@barclayviewforth.org.uk
Treasurer	Janet Darling	treasurer@barclayviewforth.org.uk

### Contacting the Church while the building is closed



If you need to contact the church staff during this time, you can telephone the office on 0131 229 6810 and leave a message. Messages are still being checked regularly.

You can contact all the church staff on their usual email addresses as listed above.