

The Kirk News

February 2022

Open Every Sunday at 10 am



In this Issue

Message from the Manse
All Age Service
Church of Scotland Planning Update
Currie Kirk Response

C&B News article
The Boys' Brigade—New Captain
The Guild
Iona 2022

The Fish Wrapper
Fair Trade
Family News
Who's Who



A Message from the Manse

Dear friends,

May I encourage you to read Viola's article on the new Presbytery Plan. Having enjoyed working in Cluster Groups for 18 months, the Presbytery sent out a new plan. The document came as a source of dismay and shock to ministers and congregations across the city. However, we are optimistic that there is some hope to influence this consultation.

Meantime, let's not let that process distract us from our core mission as Christ's people! God is love and our call is to be a people who demonstrate and share that love and care for the people of Currie and neighbouring communities. There is so much to cherish; our community organisations, our churches, our schools and choirs and other groups which connect us and it is that sense of togetherness which lifts me. God's plans are greater than the confines of human institutions and we belong to a world-wide church.

When St Paul wrote to the young fledgling church in Colossi, he encouraged them saying:

"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."
(Colossians 3:12,16)

Personally, I am looking forward to being able to baptise many babies born in Lockdown. I'm looking forward to the upcoming weddings and to Heriot Watt University's Founders' Day Service now on **March 13th**. We are launching a monthly all age worship in the Gibson Craig Hall at 4pm on the last Sunday of each month.

Keep watching and please keep praying as we hope to share more Good News and togetherness as we emerge out of dreary January and this Omicron challenge.

Take care, keep in touch and God bless you,

Easter

Church Notices

6	February	Rev Easter Smart @ 10 am
13	February	Grant Gordon @ 10 am
20	February	Rev Easter Smart @ 10 am
21	February	Rev Easter Smart @ 10 am
28	February	Rev Easter Smart @ 10 am
28	February	All Age Service @ 4 pm, Gibson Craig Halls

The Heriot Watt Founders' Day Service will take place on 13 March.

All age service
Gibson Craig Hall
4-5pm last Sunday of every month from
27th February 2022

Join us for a more informal time of
worship. This service will include
opportunities to engage in a more
creative and interactive way. No matter
your age or stage, everyone is welcome!



Kirk News

Dear Distributors, The Session wishes to keep members informed of developments and hope that you are able to distribute this magazine monthly at present.

The March issue of Kirk News will be available on Sunday 27 February for distribution

Church of Scotland Planning 2022-2025—Update

Viola MacPhail

Edinburgh Presbytery asked for reports in October 2021 from the Cluster Groups which it had set up and charged with holding conversations on working more closely together. Currie Kirk was in the Water of Leith Cluster Group along with Balerno and Juniper Green Churches. Through 2021 the three churches held a number of discussions on collaborating together and concluded there were good signs for greater contact and co-ordination with our partners along the Water of Leith in the way ahead. The essential points made in the Water of Leith Cluster Group Report to Presbytery in October were shared with you in an article in last month's Kirk News.

After receiving all Cluster Group Reports, Edinburgh Presbytery issued a Consultation Document on the Presbytery Plan in December 2021. The Consultation Document is now on the Currie Kirk website—it is lengthy but information relating to Currie can be found at Pages 30, 64-65 and 103.

The Presbytery Plan is now based on Mission Districts, wherein some Cluster Groups were merged, some reshaped, all now to form Mission Districts. Edinburgh Presbytery is also merging with West Lothian Presbytery with effect from 1 January 2022.

Currie Kirk now finds itself in the Border Mission District with Balerno Church. They are now clustered with Kirkliston and Ratho, Dalmeny and Queensferry. References to Water of Leith have disappeared.

Juniper Green Church has been moved to the South West Mission District and is clustered with Colinton Church and Slateford Longstone Church. South West also contains the clusters of Holy Trinity and St Nicholas Sighthill; Carrick Knowe and St David's Broomhouse; Barclay Viewforth and Craiglockhart, Polwarth and St Michael's Churches.

Presbytery asked for comments and questions on the Consultation Document by 15 January 2022, emphasising that no final decisions about ministries or church buildings have been made. Presbytery noted that the response to the Consultation document has been varied; it received over 470 questions prior to holding a Webinar, an online meeting on 15 January to clarify the thinking behind the writing of the Consultation Document.

Presbytery have said there will be more communication on developing the Plan, including sending facilitators to moderate discussions with Mission District clusters in the coming months and assessing buildings.

It should be noted that the Gibson Craig Halls are owned 100% outright by Currie Kirk.

Edinburgh Presbytery issued the following statement on 12 January 2022:

"The Church is committed to operating more effectively and efficiently to ensure that it is properly equipped to deliver the Good News of Jesus Christ in a dynamic and sustainable way. At recent General Assemblies the whole church has been instructed to begin to draw up plans which will look at the future shape and number of ministries. As you may know, the church in Edinburgh and West Lothian, like churches across the country, is at the very start of a four-year process to ensure that the best structures are in place to meet 21st century mission and ministry needs.

One of the objectives of the current Presbytery consultation is to ensure that congregations work more closely together in efficient and imaginative ways to serve local communities, and to find ways to make this happen. A planning strategy team has produced a consultation document for discussion, but no final decisions have been made and the details contained within the plan are subject to change.

An agreed plan on the best way forward will evolve in due course and will be shaped by the feedback from congregations within the Presbytery, as well as national church bodies that have responsibility for overall planning, and for buildings.

No final decisions about ministries or church buildings have been made, but this will play a part in future discussion this year. In the meantime, the good work that Edinburgh churches are involved in to support the vulnerable and the marginalised and those with real pastoral need continues.

Across the country the whole Church of Scotland is facing similar challenges in planning, and the process is not an easy or straightforward one, but the ultimate goal, whatever Plan is finally agreed, is to ensure that the good work of the Church continues.

In this sensitive and unsettling time, please pray for your own congregation, your neighbouring congregations in the Presbytery and the whole Church of Scotland. It will be together that we will, with God, find a way forward. “ (Church of Scotland 12 Jan 2022)

Note: The Consultation Document can be found on the Currie Kirk website—it is lengthy but information relating to Currie can be found at Pages 64-65 and 103.



The following extract is from an article that will appear in the February C&B News by Cllr Sue Webber MSP and is printed by kind permission of Sue and the Editor.

It should be of concern to us all that the Church of Scotland is undergoing a review of the Ministries across Edinburgh. Reviews which could have a significant impact on the church's along the water of Leith villages.

This might be part of a wider national review taking place by the Church of Scotland to address a shortage of Ministers, but that does not make it palatable or understandable. Ministers and Ministries Development Staff, which includes youth workers, parish assistants, and community workers positions, are now all under threat.

In my opinion, the reasons behind the review are flawed. The changes could have a significant impact on Juniper Green and Currie. They do not acknowledge the invaluable role they have played during the pandemic and, prior to that, the critical role they have had within our communities. Sweeping statements dismiss Currie Kirk as “not on main road in the centre of Currie” and state they

want to merge with Balerno which is “well equipped and serves the community”. This statement is a slap in the face for all the outreach, pastoral work, and community service the team at Currie Kirk provide. One option is to merge Balerno and Currie with a parish in West Lothian.

It feels like a repeat of when the Council sought to close and merge our High Schools. This was something that galvanised the community to rally against the plans. We are bereft of community space already as things stand, without losing even more. These are our places of worship, our Zumba class halls, our parent and toddler classes, our chess and board games, our polling places, and halls for hustings.

I will be taking the opportunity to make my views known to the Church of Scotland. I hope you do too. You can do this by contacting your local church or by contacting me.

Currie Kirk's Response

The Presbytery Plan's detail was included in the December/January issue of The Kirk News (pages 5 & 6) setting out the structural change which is underway throughout the Church of Scotland.

The following document was the Rev Dr Easter Smart's response to the Presbytery Plan on behalf of Currie Kirk.

1. The Presbytery Plan does not explain the reasons for its decisions nor how it would work. There are practical problems with the creation of the Border Mission District that are untenable eg there are no direct public transport links between Currie and West Lothian.
2. Why was a Water of Leith Cluster Group created containing Juniper Green, Currie and Balerno asking us to work together if this was not Edinburgh Presbytery's intention as Juniper has now been removed and placed in South West. Why? A lot of creative energy was put into the sense of togetherness building upon our historic and social links in the joint Valley. The fabric of the three churches and communities has always been linked. Why divide us? The Water of Leith Walkway links us all, underlining our community interaction from grassroots to congregations working together. Indeed our Sunday Schools in Balerno and Currie use the Walkway in summer to join together.
3. Currie and Juniper Green share a high school, which is a joint hub of our two communities and the two ministers of the Juniper and Currie share the duties of school chaplaincy. Currie Kirk and Juniper Green Church share a family outreach worker who works very hard and creatively at many initiatives with families and young people on separate and joint projects, encouraging lively community activity. What will happen to this shared post? . Due to the proximity of Currie and Juniper Green, many people who live in Juniper come to Currie and many who live in Currie attend Juniper and Balerno - it can be interchangeable as people tend to move house between the three areas, not changing their church connection.
4. **Transport**
Currie has been told that the Kirk is away from the main road but it is only a short walk from the 44 Bus route. While Juniper is on the main road and bus route it is not accessible to Colinton by direct bus routes so it is unfathomable why Juniper has been lifted from WOL where transport is accessible.
5. Currie has a vibrant BB company and the largest Guild of all the local churches, with membership support from people living along the Water of Leith. What will happen to these organisations?
6. There has been a Christian Church on the site of Currie Kirk for over a thousand years. What will happen to the building—will it have a continued Christian purpose?
7. What is the timescale for these changes to happen? What are the next steps? When might we get direct communication to discuss options and ideas, of which there are many?



New Captain Appointed

On 10 November the Session appointed Bill Brown as Captain of the 65th Edinburgh (Currie) Company—The Boys' Brigade which, as you know is attached to Currie Kirk.

Bill was raised in the Southside of Edinburgh and joined the then 9th Edinburgh Life Boy Team and then the 9th Edinburgh (Tron) Company Boys' Brigade where he gained his Queen's Badge before joining the staff and serving as a Warrant Officer, Lieutenant and Captain. He has also served as an officer with the 1st Loanhead, 67th and 65th Edinburgh Companies. He has served on numerous Battalion committees, including the Executive and was the President of the South District of the old Edinburgh Battalion. He has also led annual camps to various locations including N. Wales, Mablethorpe and Austria.

Married with four grown up children and 5 grandchildren.

Bill's working life: he spent a full career in the Police Service, followed by the Ministry of Defence and a Military Charity. He also ran a military charity helping ex-military personnel.

As well as the BB, he was Chairman of both Lothian and Borders Police Squash and Colinton Castle Squash Club for many years and played for both in local and National competitions. He plays golf at Baberton and still plays racket sports for fun. He has a passion for history particularly of WW1 and has visited the battlefields of the Western Front many times, the last four visits leading groups of friends and family.

Bill says:

"I consider it an honour to be associated with the 65th and now to be Captain and I hope that I will be able to bring lots of fun and opportunities to our young people in Currie and surrounding area."

The Session and Congregation wish Bill, Officers and Boys of the 65th all good wishes for the future.

Bill's contact details are: billbrown1855@yahoo.co.uk; Tel: 449 4905; Mob: 078783 77897



Boys in P2-P3—Gibson Craig Hall—Thursday 6-7 pm

BOYS

Boys in P4, 5 & 6—Gibson Craig Hall—Thursday 7-8.30 pm



The Guild

Well we have made it to 2022 but not without more hiccups along the way. Having had to cancel our Christmas Party, I had thought we would be up and running again in the New Year. False hope as our first meeting had to be done via zoom. Eventually we will have Leona Thomas initiating us into the intricacies of lace making.

However, as we move into February and March, there are lots of goodies awaiting you all.

On 1 February our speakers are from The Cyrenians; and on 15 February we are hosting the Syllabus Exchange for Edinburgh Guilds Together.

Advanced Notice of our Daffodil Tea on 15 March. Please bear in mind that all of these are subject to the latest covid guidance from Guild HQ.

You do not have to be a member to attend any of our meetings. If something takes your fancy, just turn up and you will be made very welcome.

Please keep yourselves safe and look after each other.

For further information contact me on 466-3472 or elf.lamont@blueyonder.co.uk

Louise Lamont Guild President

IONA 2022

I am sure many of you are aware that there is another trip organised for end of August for 3 nights. This has been postponed from 2019 because of Covid 19.

There are a few vacancies left and we would love to have you on board to join us. It's a wonderful experience. We stay in the Bishops House (Full occupancy), the food is amazing, plain fare! There is great companionship. Some of us like to walk around the island, others looking in the many little gift shops or sitting in the lovely lounge reading or looking out to amazing scenery. There's always a few who like to visit Staffa on the boat.

Come along you will not be disappointed!

Further information from myself or anyone you know who is going.

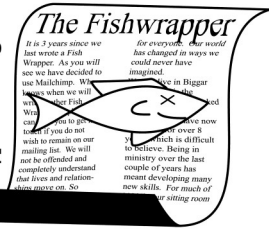
Moira McDonald
07853228751



The Abbey with Bishop's House

The Fish Wrapper

Jan 2022 no.74



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Scotland
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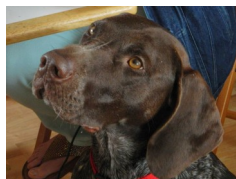
It is three years since we last wrote a Fish Wrapper.

So much has happened in 3 years, but that is true for everyone. We still live in Biggar where Mike is the minister of Biggar linked with Black Mount churches. Amazingly we have been here for over 8 years. Being in ministry over the last couple of years has meant developing many new skills. For much of 2020/21 our sitting room became a recording studio, as within the week that lockdown was announced Mike worked out what needed to be done in order to go online straight away. Services for every Sunday since, as well as various additional services are all available on our YouTube channel which you will find at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrt2IXdTqh5NoEd3bj1aSEA>

Whilst we were recording services from the manse and back in church, but not allowed to sing, Aylie, along with other church members did an amazing job recording our music for us. Some of you tuned in every week during lockdown and it was wonderful to be contacted by people from all over the world. One or two folk from far away have stuck with us and become regular attendees of zoom Bible studies—part of our church family from afar. We have also been encouraged by the large number of local people who have either moved into the area and connected with the church or have started coming to church having lived here for a while. A few weeks ago, Mike had the joy of ordaining a new elder too.

Mike shocked himself and everyone else by having a heart attack just after Christmas last year. He was back running with the dogs 5 days later and has had no further problems since then. Our big sadness came only a few days ago (New Year's Eve) when our beloved dog Momo, Mike's running buddy, left us. He had not been very ill, but just 'not right' for a few days before Christmas. A scan and surgery on the 30th showed advanced aggressive pancreatic cancer and after a last run up the hill with Mike our vet (and friend) came and put him to sleep. We are all devastated.



Mike is hoping to take advantage of the Church of Scotland study leave scheme in 2022 and is currently

working on his proposal. In the last week, between Christmas and New Year, he has put his DIY skills to the test, borrowing equipment from a local electrician and wiring in an internet network through the house to get better internet speed. He has discovered tunnels and passages in the roof spaces that we didn't know were there!

In September 2020 we finally got our much-anticipated electric car. We have a Nissan Leaf which we are really happy with. Having an electric car means a different mindset when it comes to long journeys as they become much longer! However, we had good walks and discovered castles and coffee shops as we waited for the car to charge on our trip north to Na Moine (cottage near Tongue) and south to Wantage.

As soon as lockdown was announced in March 2020 Jane got involved in the community response. She, along with four others established the Biggar Community Action Group (BCAG), which is now a registered charity. Jane 'represented the church' and her presence has meant the building of real bridges between the church and parts of the community with no Christian background or interest. The services they set up, and in many instances still run, included a hotline for people to call if they needed food or prescriptions delivered (along with a volunteer team to do the deliveries); a queue monitoring service for the 2 main shops in town that were open. Aylie organised this rota; hot meal delivery twice a week for vulnerable people; a dog walking service; a listening ear service for the lonely, with over 60 beneficiaries; a gritting and snow clearing service in the winter; socially distanced afternoon teas in the Gillespie Centre (church run community centre and café) once lockdown was over to enable those who had been self-isolating or shielding to meet others in a safe way; hospital transport services and various other one off events and ways to care for people. They have also been working closely with the foodbank which has had unprecedented demands made on it, as is the case across the country.

As well as running BCAG Jane has remained very involved with Interserve International. Her four years as chair of the International Council ended at the council meetings in November 2021. It was very sad to

end 8 years with this amazing community via a zoom call. Jane is looking at new ways to remain connected with Interserve and cross-cultural mission.

Rachel left her job at St Thomas's A&E at the end of March and moved out of London. She had been in A&E for 4 years and like many in front line NHS roles was really burnt out by her experience of COVID. She had been living and ministering as part of an Eden community linked with Latymer Community Church next to Grenfell Tower, since just after the fire. An amazing experience, but very intense. On leaving London Rae had a wonderful 10 weeks at All Nations Christian College on their Enroute course, making lifelong friends as well as enjoying the academics.

She then came home and was based with us as she waited for a job on the NHS bank here in Scotland and deployment with MSF (Medicins Sans Frontiers). Neither came for months, despite the desperate need for A&E staff and she had a very frustrating time. Eventually in November she joined 2 private agencies – one giving her A&E shifts and the other giving her shifts as the onsite medic for the Christmas market in Edinburgh – her main 'take-away' being that people should be breathalysed before being allowed on the ice rink! Last week she did her first A&E bank shift in Edinburgh (the 'desperate' health authority took over 4 months to process her application) and at the same time got the news she has been waiting so long for. MSF have found a placement for her in South Sudan to work mainly in A&E in a tent hospital. She has a provisional deployment date of 11 Feb !! Her placement term is 9 months.

Aylie is in her final year at Stirling University, where she lives in a lovely house right beneath the Wallace Monument with two good friends. They did well with a year of online courses and staying at home. This year has been a mixture of online and in person classes. She is working hard on her dissertation looking at the music and politics of the singer Paul Robeson. Aylie has done some amazing stuff outside of her studies. She was instrumental in setting up a society called SSHES (Stirling Sexual Health and Education Society) which has done work in all areas of sexual health, consent issues, breast and testicular cancer awareness as well as working with the police and night club owners to reduce the incidents of sexual violence. She has also been involved in the Stirling Student's Tenancy Union. She continues to sing and was part of the Musical Theatre end of term production in November, which the rest of the family went to watch.

Having had her driving test postponed twice because of COVID she passed it in June and took our old Ford Fusion back to Stirling with her. One great

advantage of her having a car is she can get home so much more easily, which has been lovely for all of us.

Jane remains in close contact with Dodo and the AIDS ministry on the Thai Burma border. For most of 2020 the area was protected from COVID, in part because the authorities closed the border. This had ramifications for the patients on the Burmese side of the border. Dodo managed to get medication to them but one by one their 'health cards' expired, and the government hospital would not allow them to be renewed remotely. This has meant having to pay much more for medication, whilst at the same time many of them lost jobs because they could no longer cross the border and factories closed. Thank you to those who continue to support this project financially – it really has made a huge difference this year with all the additional costs of medication. Only last week she has at last managed to renew 4 health cards and hopes to try for another 4 tomorrow – please pray! COVID has now arrived in Sangklaburi so life is even more locked down. Dodo still has 3 young people living with her and now has 2 beautiful granddaughters.

Thank you to all who have kept in touch with us despite our silence. We love hearing from you.

This comes with our love and prayers for God's blessing on your lives.

Mike, Jane, Rachel & Aylie



Balerno Church has decided not to hold attended events during Fairtrade Fortnight 21 February—6 March due to ongoing uncertainties around COVID.

Currie Kirk's usual Fairtrade Fortnight Lunch has also been postponed.

Viola MacPhail
449 4664

Family News

Obituaries: *Jesus said "I am the Resurrection and the Life"
(John 11:25)*

Mrs Lucy Airs, Currie
Mr John Archibald Gibson, Ingliston
Mr John Wilson Glass, Edinburgh
Mr John Norman Reid, Edinburgh
Mr Peter Sandilands, Balerno
Mrs Barbara Somerville, Balerno



Please pray for the families



Confirmation into Membership of the Church

Mr Alan Forsyth was confirmed into Membership on 2 January 2022 at a service in Currie Kirk.

February Flower List



February 2022

- 6 Mr Alan Forsyth
- 13 Mr & Mrs I Matheson
- 20 Mrs B Chambers
- 27 Flower Fund Donation



Thank you to everyone who has donated to the Kirk Flower Fund in 2021.

The flowers are enjoyed and appreciated by so many. If you are attending Church on any given Sunday can you let me know if you are able to deliver flowers after the service. Thank you.

Should anyone wish information regarding donations to the Flower Fund please contact Margaret Matheson:
m.matheson@blueyonder.co.uk; or telephone 075190 45866

WHO'S WHO

NAME	CONTACT	EMAIL CONTACT/TIMES	TELEPHONE NO
Minister	Rev Dr Easter Smart		449 4719
Currie Kirk Church Office (Scottish Charity No. SC001554)	Gibson Craig Halls, Lanark Road West, Currie, EH14 5NY Administrator: Nina Valvona Email currie_kirk@btconnect.com	Tuesday to Friday 9.30 am—12.30 pm	451 5141
Session Clerk	Vacant		
Treasurer	Eddie Pigott Email: pigottsef@icloud.com	pigottsef@icloud.com	466 1459
Offerings & Gift Aid Treasurer	Eunice Stewart	eunicestewart48@gmail.com	
Data Protection Officer	Vanessa Martins	vanessa.martins93@yahoo.com	
Weddings/Funeral Officer	Sandy Harper		451 5141
Organist	Contact Church Office		451 5141
Gibson Craig Halls bookings	Contact Office		451 5141
Gibson Craig Halls Caretaker	Vacant		
Hospital Transport Coordinator	Vacant		
Kirk Flowers	Margaret Matheson	m.matheson@blueyonder.co.uk	
Life and Work	Shona Moyes	shona.moyes@btpopenworld.com	
Magazine Distributor	Jean Dick		451 5141
Boys' Brigade Captain	Bill Brown Anchors Juniors Company/Seniors	Thursday 6.00-7.00 pm Thursday 7.00-8.30 pm Sunday 6.30-8.30	449 4905 07878377897
Banner Group	Janet Robertson	Tuesday	
Care Van	Fiona Pigott	Once a month	
Pastoral Visitors	Gordon Clephane	Gordon.clephane@blueyonder.co.uk	449 2313
Currie Kirk Singers	Gordon Cranford	Various	
Guild	Louise Lamont	Tuesday/elf.lamont@blueyonder.co.uk	
Family Worker	Heather Merriman—Email: familyworker_jvp@outlook.com		
Walking Group	Moira McDonald	Third Sunday of each month	



The Kirk News

Can now be found on the Currie Kirk Website with one click to <http://www.curriekirk.org/>
Kirknews—why not mark it as a favourite. **Articles for the March issue should be sent—using a
Word attachment—by email to isobelwebber@btinternet.com before or by Friday 18 February.
Please insert the words “Kirk News” into the subject.**