

# The Link

**Autumn 2026 Issue No. 38**



**The Magazine of Shawlands  
Trinity Church**

Dear friends,

The last time it happened I was still in my teens, so I was as excited as the children.

We spent much of the day talking about it, watching videos of the last one, speculating what it would look like. We calculated when it would start and finish, and the precise moment of totality. We even researched how to make pinhole cameras so we could view it safely.

And we waited for the appointed hour with bated breath, under cloudless skies, watching TV coverage of people in Spain and Iceland looking up as the moon passed in front of the sun.

Then, as the moment approached for us, we went into the garden, equipment in hand, ready to watch this once-in-a-generation event.

And as we went out, the clouds rolled over, and stayed there for the duration.

This amazing sight happening in the heavens, and we couldn't see it.

But that's life. The darkening clouds roll over for all of us, and sometimes it's easy to wonder what lies beyond them. But our inability to see something doesn't mean there's nothing there.

God is with us, even when we can't see or feel that presence. The clouds may hide the light, but they don't make it disappear.

As the old hymn puts it:

'Green pastures are before me  
which yet I have not seen.  
Bright skies will soon be o'er me,  
where darkest clouds have been.  
My hope I cannot measure;  
my path to life is free.  
My Saviour is my treasure,  
and He will walk with me.'  
With every blessing,

*Allan.*

## Boys' Brigade

The staff and boys have enjoyed their summer break and look forward to the new session ahead.

The company section enjoyed their annual summer camp up at Boat of Garten in July and were blessed with some dry weather and sunshine. This allowed lots of outdoor activities including, foot golf, gorge walking to name but a few and an action packed day at the Landmark Centre.

The Junior Section enjoyed a ten pin bowling night in June in place of a summer trip and are eagerly looking forward to their weekend along with the P7's to Glenbeg up near Grantown on Spey in September.



The Anchor boys enjoyed a day out to Summerlee Heritage Centre in June. Lots of space to run about and fun for all was had.

Our new year ahead will bring lots of challenges, competitions, defending our table tennis National Champions title of course 😊 and much more. Keep up to date with everything we do on our 45<sup>th</sup> Glasgow Boys Brigade Facebook page or look out for updates in the Link.

We were sad to hear of the passing of one of our former BB officers in May. David McLachlan continued to be a great supporter of the 45<sup>th</sup> over many years. He will be sadly missed.

As always a big thanks to all who have supported us through last session and we look forward to your support once again this coming year.

Debbie (OIC) Junior Section



## **Brownies**

By the time you read this both Brownie Packs will have started back for their new Session. Both Packs have spaces for new girls to join.

The girls really enjoyed the Sleepover at Flipout at the end of last Session.

You may have seen in the news, all sections of Girlguiding have a new uniform to wear. This will be phased in over the next couple of years.

We look forward to your support to both Packs this Session.

*Ann*

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## **LiFT – A Community for Young Adults**

Clair Macdonald, Communications Officer for the Church of Scotland Guild, has been in touch to tell us about **LiFT (Love in Fellowship and Trust)**, an ecumenical community for 18–40 year olds supported by the Guild. LiFT aims to give younger adults a space where they feel they belong and can have their voices heard within the wider Church, with a focus on mission, fellowship and discipleship.

The group meets **online on the last Friday of each month from 7–8pm**, with relaxed and informal meetings featuring different themes, speakers and discussion. There are also opportunities to meet in person, including an **upLiFT event at Carnwadric Parish Church on Saturday 24 October, from 11am–2pm**, where anyone curious about LiFT can meet others and find out more. Lunch is provided.

If you're aged 18–40 and would like to find out more, whether you're interested in the online meetings, in-person events or simply making contact with the group, email **YAG@churchofscotland.org.uk**, find **LiFT CofS** on Facebook or follow **@lift\_cofsg** on Instagram.

Elaine van den Akker

## WHO IS LIFT?

THE NAME LIFT STANDS FOR **LOVE IN FELLOWSHIP AND TRUST**. WE ARE AN **ECUMENICAL** GROUP OF **18-40 YEAR OLDS** WHO MEET WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE **CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD**.

## WHAT IS OUR AIM?

OUR AIM IS TO HAVE A SPACE WHERE YOUNG ADULTS **FEEL LIKE THEY BELONG** AND **CAN HAVE THEIR VOICES HEARD** WITHIN THE **WIDER CHURCH**, WITH A FOCUS ON:

★ **MISSION** ★ **FELLOWSHIP** ★ **AND DISCIPLESHIP**

## WHAT DO OUR MEETINGS LOOK LIKE?

WE MEET **ONLINE** ON THE **LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH** FROM **7PM-8PM**. WE HOLD **FRIENDLY, RELAXED AND INFORMATIVE** MEETINGS WITH A MONTHLY THEME AND WE OFTEN HAVE A **SPEAKER** AND A **DISCUSSION AFTER**.

## SOUNDS GOOD! HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

YOU CAN JOIN BY **FILLING OUT THE FORM THAT'S PINNED TO OUR FACEBOOK PAGE** AND TO FIND OUT MORE **EMAIL US OR FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM**

## NEXT MEETINGS...

**SEPTEMBER** **BEAR NECESSITIES (GUILD PROJECT PARTNER)**

**OCTOBER** **CHRISTIAN AID**

**NOVEMBER** **CAP (CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY)**

✉ [YAG@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:YAG@churchofscotland.org.uk)



👍 Lift CofS

📷 @lift\_cofsg

SIGN UP FOR LIFT  
UPDATES AND  
LINKS HERE!



## No Hope without Joy!



### **Romans 15:1-13** (The Message, Eugene Peterson, 2002)

<sup>1-2</sup> Those of us who are strong and able in the faith need to step in and lend a hand to those who falter, and not just do what is most convenient for us. Strength is for service, not status. Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, “How can I help?”

<sup>3-6</sup> That’s exactly what Jesus did. He didn’t make it easy for himself by avoiding people’s troubles, but waded right in and helped out. “I took on the troubles of the troubled,” is the way Scripture puts it (see Ps 69:9). Even if it was written in Scripture long ago, you can be sure it’s written for *us*. God wants the combination of his steady, constant calling and warm, personal counsel in Scripture to come to characterize *us*, keeping us alert for whatever he will do next. May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we’ll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus!

<sup>7-13</sup> So reach out and welcome one another to God’s glory. Jesus did it; now *you* do it! Jesus, staying true to God’s purposes, reached out in a special way to the Jewish insiders so that the old ancestral promises would come true for them. As a result, the non-Jewish outsiders have been able to experience mercy and to show appreciation to God. Just think of all the Scriptures that will come true in what we do!

*For instance:*

Then I’ll join outsiders in a hymn-sing;  
I’ll sing to your name! (Ps 18:49)

*And this one:*

Outsiders and insiders, rejoice together! (Deut 32:43)

*And again:*

People of all nations, celebrate God!

All colors and races, give hearty praise! (Ps 117:1)

*And Isaiah's word:*

There's the root of our ancestor Jesse,

breaking through the earth and growing tree tall,

Tall enough for everyone everywhere to see and take hope! (Is 11:10)

Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

\* \* \*

Some Advice:

Peterson's version aims to use contemporary language to make it easier to see how it might apply in the modern world. It is often very helpful and illuminating but you are as well to check it out in a more conventional version.

Some Questions

- 1 Is Peterson's version faithful to Paul's intentions?
- 2 Can you think of a title that might be better than 'No Hope without Joy'?
- 3 Is it successful in bringing the passage to life for you?

And...above all...

What strikes you as the most important 'message' of the passage?

...Could it be the importance of hope and/or joy in our worship or in our own lives? The need for the strong to be helping the weak in the church, or elsewhere? The challenge for the church to be breaking down the barriers between the 'outsiders' and the 'insiders'?

...or could it be something else that God, through his Spirit, is trying to help you understand, something that might involve you here and now?

...maybe something to be praying about, anyhow.

## Notes



### Alloway/Doonfoot – 20<sup>th</sup> June

A little bit of a hitch right at the start with all cars heading for the same beach but some going to a car



park at one end but others heading for another car park at the other end! Having been re-united, we then walked along the beach round Greenan Castle and, via field of barley(!), on to a country road which took us to a disused railway line and

on to the heart of Burns Country. We then spent some time exploring the Auld Brig o' Doon and the Memorial Gardens ending up at the Heritage Centre where we enjoyed a visit to the café. The return route took us along a very pleasant stretch of the R Doon and, so, back to the beach.



### Dean Castle, Kilmarnock – 15<sup>th</sup> August

Most of the walkers travelled by 'Stagecoach'(!) but all arrived in good shape. After a brief visit to the Visitor Centre we headed for the Castle which was well-worth the visit. In the Keep there is a splendid Great Hall with a wonderful collection of



ancient arms, armoury and tapestries and in the 'Palace' a fascinating collection of ancient musical instruments. After that, people went on different marked walking routes of their own choosing. Then, with a glimpse of the lovely fallow deer, back to the Visitor Centre and home.



Next Walk: **Moffat or Castle Semple Loch, Sat 12<sup>th</sup> Sept**

Bill Craig at [billcraig38@gmail.com](mailto:billcraig38@gmail.com) or 649 2237

## **The country where Christianity is a death sentence**

North Korea fascinates us: the last Hermit Kingdom. A sealed off personal fiefdom of the Kim family with no access to the internet, television, or newspapers – other than those provided by the State. No passports as no-one can leave. No access to certain professions, housing, or even cities, unless a trusted party member. It is a society governed by surveillance. So, how can someone even contemplate retaining their faith in God?

Persecution started early – way before the Kims – when an early Protestant refusal to venerate ancestors and make appropriate sacrifices led to 8,000 deaths in 1866. Christianity did take hold though and flourished...a 1907 Revival led to Pyongyang being labelled ‘The Jerusalem of Asia’. After the Korean war Christians fled to the South. The late 50s saw the few remaining Christians in the North hunted down and shot: often reported to the authorities by friends, children, colleagues.

### **Why are Christians persecuted in North Korea?**

- North Korea is ruled by the Kim family who expect to be worshipped and obeyed like gods. A North Korean choosing to believe in any other god is seen as a threat to them.
- The ruling ideology is Juche which combines nationalism, self-reliance, Marxism and the cult like belief in the Kim dynasty.

### **What are the consequences?**

- North Korean Christians must keep their faith an absolute secret – Christians often won’t even tell their partners or children about their faith for fear of discovery.
- Meeting with other Christians is almost impossible, as there is always someone watching. North Korea has a network of secret police, but even your neighbours could report you for suspicious behaviour.
- Owning a Bible is also considered a serious crime, and those who have one keep it hidden. Hee Young\*, a secret believer, explains, “Because of the many sudden and random house searches, we had to hide the Bibles in our home. Each Bible had a paper cover, with images of Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il, to keep them from raising suspicion.”

- If a North Korean Christian is discovered, they could be killed instantly.
- If they are not killed, a Christian will be arrested and imprisoned.
- A Christian's entire family are likely to be arrested along with them, even if they are not Christians.
- Many North Koreans make the dangerous and illegal journey over the border into China in search of food, medicines and other supplies to take back to their families. If they are caught on their return, they may be asked if they have had any contact with Christians. If they have, they will face particularly severe punishment.
- A South Korean missionary – operating in secrecy – was betrayed and imprisoned in 2015 and the regime refuse to release Choi Ghun-gil to South Korea.

**Is it easing?** Sadly no:

- In December 2020, 'anti-reactionary thought laws' were introduced which made it clear that being a Christian or owning a Bible are seen as criminal acts and will have severe consequences.
- Every Christian here faces extreme persecution. The border area with China has previously been seen as a particularly dangerous area due to Christians crossing back and forth, but it is harder to escape than it used to be due to security around the border being strengthened.
- Christians have been categorised as 'hostile' – the lowest rung on the ladder in North Korean society. This also pertains to their entire family for 3 generations...all labelled 'hostile' due to one person's Faith.
- NGOs estimate somewhere between 30,000 and 60,000 Christians are currently being held in forced labour camps – 15% of the estimated number of Christians in North Korea.

As well as praying hard you can check out these websites:

<https://globalchristianrelief.org/resources/countries/north-korea/>

<https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/north-korea/>

Scot van den Akker

## **Congregational Register**

### **Deaths**

‘I am the Resurrection and the Life’

### **18<sup>th</sup> June**

Mrs M Wallace      District 6

### **31<sup>st</sup> July**

Miss J Williamson   District 2

### **Disjunction**

### **23<sup>rd</sup> June**

Mrs D Lawson      District 6

|                    |                                   |              |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Interim Moderator  | Stuart Crawford                   | 239 2140     |
| Email              | scrawford@churchofscotland.org.uk |              |
| Session Clerk Team | Brian McAlinden                   | 6321885      |
|                    | Eleanor McLintock                 | 07802 265072 |
|                    | Scot van den Akker                | 571 6399     |
| Roll Keeper        | Ian Cuthbertson                   | 632 8101     |
| Treasurer          | Lilian Craig                      | 649 2237     |
| Halls Convener     | Christine Cuthbertson             | 632 8101     |

Material for the Winter issue  
of The Link should be in by  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November at the  
latest.

**When you pray,  
God listens.  
When you listen,  
God talks.  
When you Believe,  
God Works.**

