

EASTER

Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Christ has died for our sins. We are forgiven. Christ has risen! We are redeemed! We can look forward to an eternity in His joy! Hallelujah!

The Good News of Jesus Christ is a message so simple that you can explain it to someone in a few minutes. It is so profound that for the rest of their lives they will still be 'growing' in their Christian walk with God.

Why does the date move around so much? Because the date of Passover moves around, and according to the biblical account, Easter is tied to the Passover. Passover celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, and it lasts for seven days, from the middle of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which equates to late March or early April.

Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to use the Hebrew lunar calendar to come up with firm dates for the first Good Friday: Friday 7th April 30 AD or Friday 3rd April, 33 AD with Easter Day falling two days later. Modern scholars continue to think these two Fridays to be the most likely. Most people will tell you that Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is broadly true. But the precise calculations are complicated and involve something called an 'ecclesiastical full moon', which is not the same as the moon in the sky. The earliest possible date for Easter in the West is 22nd March, which last fell in 1818. The latest is 25th April, which last happened in 1943.

Why the name, 'Easter'? In almost every European language, the festival's name comes from 'Pesach', the Hebrew word for Passover. The Germanic word 'Easter', however, seems to come from *Eostre*, a Saxon fertility goddess mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He thought that the Saxons worshipped her in 'Eostur month,' but may have confused her with the classical dawn goddesses like *Eos* and *Aurora*, whose names mean 'shining in the east'. So, Easter might have meant simply 'beginning month' - a good time for starting up again after a long winter. Finally, why Easter eggs? On one hand, they are an ancient symbol of birth in most European cultures. On the other hand, hens start laying regularly again each Spring. Since eggs were forbidden during Lent, it's easy to see how decorating and eating them became a practical way to celebrate Easter.

Jesus' appearances after His Resurrection

The following list of witnesses may help you put all those references in order....

Mary Magdalene
Other women at the tomb
Peter in Jerusalem
The two travellers on the road
10 disciples behind closed doors
11 disciples WITH Thomas
7 disciples while fishing
11 disciples on the mountain
A crowd of 500
Jesus' brother – James
Those who saw the Ascension

Mark 16:9-11; John 20:10-18
Matthew 28:8-10
Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5
Mark 16:12,13
Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19
John 20:26-31; 1 Corinthians 15:5
John 21:1-14
Matthew 28:16-20
1 Corinthians 15:6
1 Corinthians 15:7
Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:3-8

happy
Easter

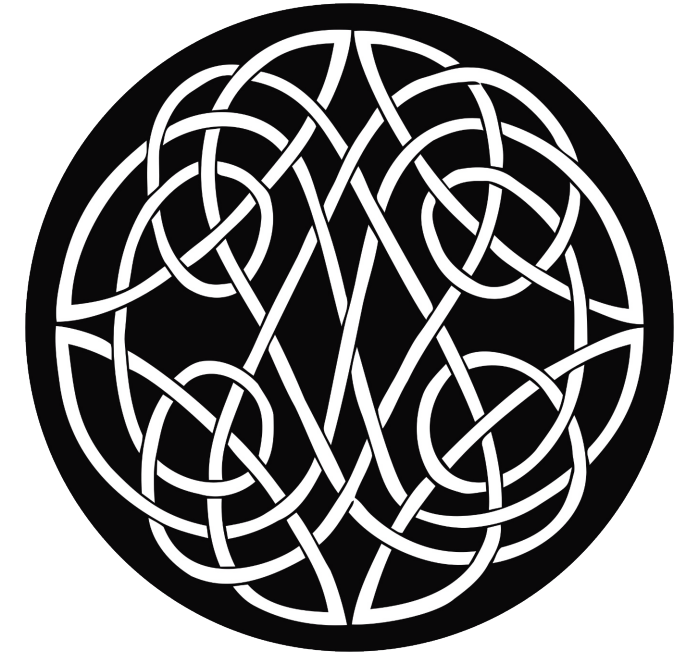
PRAYERS TO INSPIRE

JOHN 12:24

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds".

In the darkness we have known,
we give thanks for gifts of light.
In a season that held great loss,
we give thanks for relationships strengthened,
for love borne out in myriad ways that made a difference.
For all the signs of God in those we encountered,
those who held out faith when our own wavered,
and those for whom we were enabled to be companions on
the way,
we give thanks for the rediscovery of gifts we had laid aside,
forgotten in their familiarity that became precious once
more
as they became harder to reach and all the more longed
for.
And in our thanksgiving we embrace the wisdom
revealed,
that, hopefully we won't let go so easily
as we forge a new future diminished by loss,
yet strengthened by shared experience
that reminds us that love is stronger than death,
and light penetrates darkness and that there is no
place
that takes us beyond God's reach.
May our reflection continue to enable insight
changing the way we embrace the future in the
knowledge
that we are held always in the love and light of God
and that, in every darkness, God is at work. Amen.

From - Sanctuary First"



THE KNOT PRAYER

Please untie the knots that are in my mind,
my heart and my life.
Remove the have nots, the can nots and the
do nots that I have in my mind.

Erase the will nots, may nots, might nots
that may find a home in my heart.

Release me from the could nots, would nots
and should nots that obstruct my life

And most of all, I ask that You remove from
my mind,
my heart and my life all of the "am nots"
that I have allowed to hold me back
especially the thought
that I am not good enough to be loved by
You.

KIRKCALDY TOWN CENTRE CHURCHES

ABBOTSHALL, AUCHTERTOOL, BENNOCHY, LINKTOWN AND ST BRYCE

MARCH 2021

WELCOME BACK

It has been a while since we published any information about the conversations regarding the future of our Churches.

We have so much we want to share with you but first here is a recap: In 2019 the Kirkcaldy Presbytery paused vacancies and setup a group to see how the local churches could adapt to the changing landscape; a looming shortage of ministers, aging congregations, the need for churches to be more missional, and the need for church closures.

Kirkcaldy Town Centre Churches started conversations to find a solution and at our meeting in January 2020 the following was decided:

1. It was agreed *in principle* to move to one worship centre PLUS one or more “pockets of presence” to connect with the wider community.
2. It was agreed that the General Trustees be invited to revisit the churches, with a proper brief and with a process that involved representatives of the congregations and presbytery. To that end it was agreed that a small group of elders would draw up the brief.
3. It was agreed that this proposal be communicated to the Strategy and Resourcing Committee for action.
4. It was agreed to undertake a Mission Audit of the area comprising the current parishes, and invite Diane McWilliam, a Community Development Consultant, to meet with a group of representatives to advise on the process.
5. It was agreed to invite the ministers to devise a pattern of joint working, including patterns of shared worship and varied styles and times, and to report to this group of representatives at a date to be arranged. It was hoped that some form of collaborative, shared worship events might be effected as soon as possible.
6. It was agreed to welcome the offer that Justin Taylor would act as Locum/worship leader at St Bryce for a year, and to aim for a resolution of the future pattern of joint working by July 2021.

THEN CAME COVID...

The arrival of COVID meant that conversations ceased as we waited for the pandemic to pass. However, this took longer than we anticipated and the good work that we had started had to be deferred.

Things changed drastically in this period for the churches locally and nationally. In Kirkcaldy we went from five ministers to two, and ministry was stretched as we tried to respond to our community. Nationally, the Church of Scotland has taken a severe hit, with our CFO Dave Kendall suggesting that the Church would accrue a deficit of £11 million and therefore a reduction of ministerial staff (Ministers, Deacons...) by 40% was needed (this means a 40% reduction in churches).

It became apparent that we needed to start the local conversation once more. Because of restrictions, the Session Clerks met with the Ministers in October to restart talks, in order to progress on the six agreements agreed in 2020.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Conversations were fruitful and we created three groups to help us move forward.

A buildings group made up of a member from each congregation to assess our buildings and to ascertain which building, if any, would suit our new church.

A community audit made up of 20 members of our congregations to make sure our future church is tailored to work with our local community (More to follow).

A planning group made up of a member from each congregation, to help find ways of working together.



At the moment we are collecting data about our buildings and our community in order to help future discussions about what shape our new church will take.

Decisions will be made by Kirk Sessions throughout this process, and we will be communicating (and getting feedback) with congregations regularly.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

This new church we are building together, will be our church, built on communal needs. Please start to invest in the process.

We also ask that people pray for the groups. We are all dealing with a tremendous task and we need all the help we can get (Psalm 127:1).

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY AUDIT?

If we are honest, the church has been absent from large swathes of community life in Kirkcaldy. Although we have done good work in our communities, could we do it better?

Our Community Audit is based on Asset Based Community Development. But what is it?

From Church of England Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham “*Asset-based community development is founded on the idea that change will only happen if we identify and mobilise the gifts and capacities of local people and the social, physical and economic resources of a local place. It is an approach that seeks to build strong, sustainable communities from the ‘inside out,’ through forging and nurturing relationships of care and creativity.*”

ABCD potentially transforms individuals and communities and can help churches to reconnect with those in the parish”.

From Nuturedevelopment.org “*Asset Based Community Development builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths. This makes it different to a Deficit Based approach that focuses on identifying and servicing needs. From the start an Asset Based approach spends time identifying the assets of individuals, associations and institutions that form the*

community. The identified assets from an individual are matched with people or groups who have an interest in or need for those strengths. The key is beginning to use what is already in the community. Then to work together to build on the identified assets of all involved”.

We hope that through our community audit the church would be able to build a mission to our community, that is relevant, and works with people, mobilising the community’s strengths and in so doing make Kirkcaldy a place where all people thrive.

This might not mean that church attendance on a Sunday goes up. It does however mean that church is no longer limited to a Sunday service in a building but is rooted in the action of our community. The church, and the therefore the gospel, will be embedded into the life of our community.

Some helpful links:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asset-based_community_development
- <https://www.weareonechurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Asset-Based-Strategies-for-Faith-Communities1.pdf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaFG8vbFQkc>
- https://churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/39876/Taking_an_Asset_Based_Approach.pdf
- https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/56300/2019_Priority_Areas_Learning_Programme.pdf
- <https://www.sclld.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Final-report-web-version.pdf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5xR4QB1ADw>



OUR

EASTER SERVICES

By the time magazine went to print, the First Minister had not yet given confirmation about the reopening of churches. We could therefore not give any in depth information about Easter. The local church ministers and representatives are meeting on the 24th March to discuss Easter Services and will issue information after that meeting.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Over the last year, members of the group have shared their frustration at the lack of opportunity to meet for our regular Wednesday morning Bible study. It is not that folk have stopped reading their Bibles at home, it is the lack of interaction with others and the benefits of hearing others' ideas and opinions.

So we have come together for what has been the norm for school children across the land, "home studying" daily material, prepared, in our case not by classroom teachers but by The Scottish Bible Society. **"Easter - The Resurrection and The Life"** We are finding the studies refreshingly "simple" and straight forward - plain-speaking - no fancy theological words - yet they are challenging in that simplicity.

We are all desperate to get back together face to face and I am sure the first real meeting will be a "buzz" and I will have more of a problem controlling the contributions than wondering if anyone wants say something.

I will be intimating our new theme as soon as I know when we will be able to re-start.

GEORGE LUKE

NEWS

DEATHS

December

- Maisie Ritchie, Anne Hughes, Tom Espie

January

- Francis Smith, Janet Saunders

February

- Scott Wallace

March

- Ken Grant

ROLL KEEPER

The new roll keeper for St Bryce Catherine Millar. 01592 264 267
catherine.millar57@gmail.com

PRAYER GROUP

Just because the church has temporarily shut its doors, doesn't mean we are closed. Many activities are still ongoing including the Prayer Group. We feel it is important to pray for those in the community whatever their struggles or faith background is. We continue to meet in the privacy of our own homes at 10am on the following Sundays:-

28th March, 11th April, 25th April, 9th May, 30th May, 13th June, 27th June.

If you would like to join us in prayer (no experience necessary) or there is someone you would like us to pray for, please contact Justin, Morna Scriven or myself Anne Gardner, Prayer Promoter, 01592 265876

NEXT NEWSLETTER - SUMMER EDITION

The deadline for the Summer newsletter will be Sunday 23rd May.

Please send your contributions to Diane Murray on e/mail at

dianemurray953@btinternet.com or by post to

97 Mellerstain Road, Kirkcaldy, KY2 6UD or to

Isobel Greenaway on e/mail at isobelg300@gmail.com

or by post to 14 Glenbervie Road, Kirkcaldy, KY2 6HR.

THANK YOU - NEWSLETTER TEAM

YOUNG CHURCH

The Easter Story

p r i e s t s r e a d j
a y l s m e t a m n e c
l w i n e m a u o g v o
m e e r f p p e t e r a
l j b o p l e q h l p c
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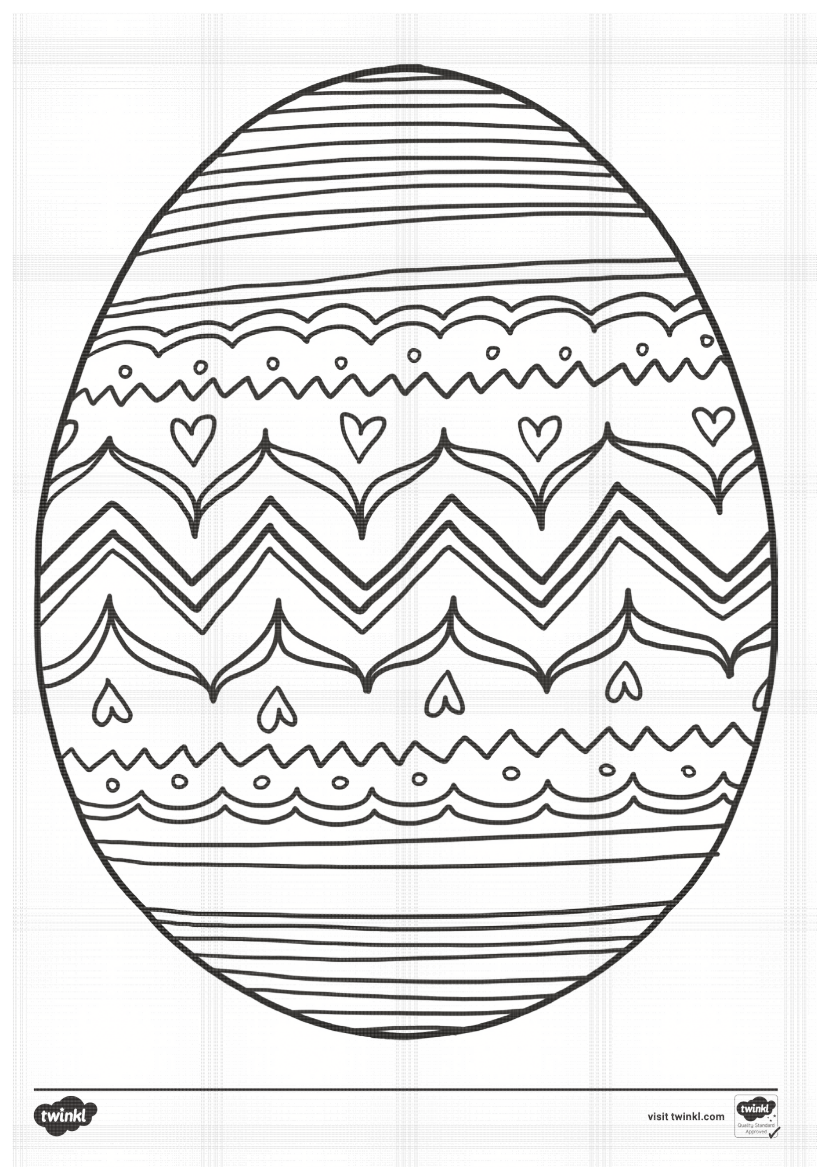
Jesus
temple
palm leaves
priests

Judas
wine
bread
angel

Peter
cross
tomb
Easter



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HELP

Our church is changing and we are really excited about the future.

BUT!!! We need your help!!

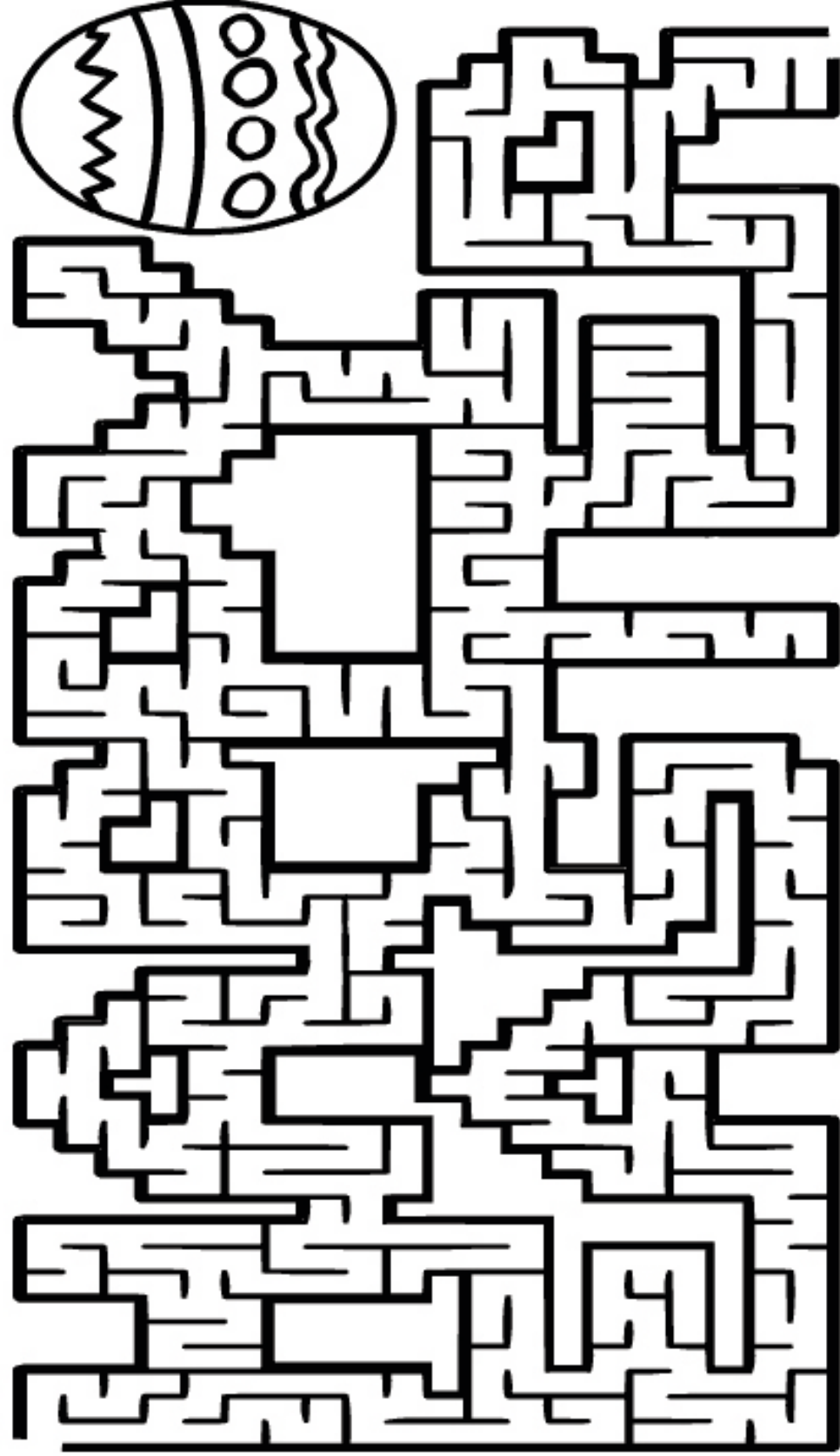
We would love it if you would tell us what you like about church, what you wish you could change about church, and what do you think a church should be.

I would love to hear from you. So if you could write me a letter and let me know all your thoughts.

I am excited to hear from you (PAPER ON NEXT PAGE).



START



END



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We are also on Facebook and
Youtube

