

# *Tidings*



*March 2021*  
*Easter*

### **MINISTER**

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### **SESSION CLERK**

Mrs Andrea Davidson

### **DEPUTE SESSION CLERKS**

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Mr William Craig  
Mrs Linda Smith

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### **TREASURER**

Mr Alan Blue

### **PROPERTY CONVENER**

Mr Alastair Simpson

Vice Conveners

HALLS - Mr George Robertson

CHURCH - vacant

MANSE - Mr Robert Smith

### **SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS**

Mr David Young  
Mrs Wendy Hay

### **CHURCH SECRETARY**

Mrs Andrea Davidson  
Parish Halls, Strathmore Road, Hamilton ML3 6AQ ☎ 01698 281905  
Tuesday - Friday 9am - 1pm



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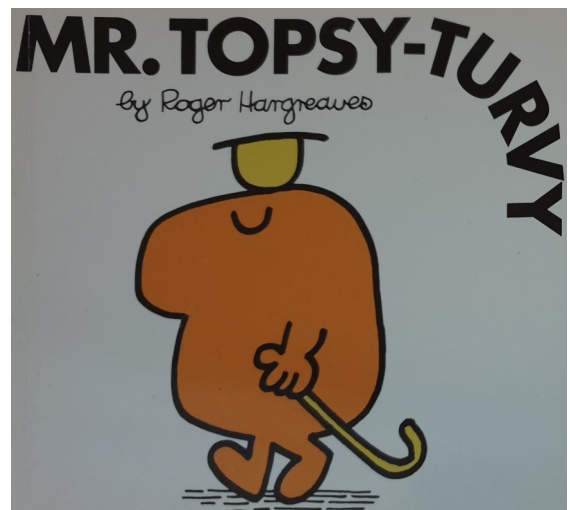
Dear friends,

### “In a Topsy-Turvy World”

Having young children, I was recently reading them some of the Mr. Men books. It reminded me that my mother purchased the originals as each was published, to read to me and my siblings. My eye lit upon the ninth in the series, “Mr. Topsy-Turvy”, which is the story of a character who did everything backwards and upside down. For example, he read books upside down, from the back to the front. Now, I know some people like to read a restaurant menu from right to left, starting with the price, or read the dessert menu before the main course, but this was different again. While it often feels like we live in a topsy turvy-world, it also got me to thinking about our spiritual lives, and the way we often go about things as Christ’s church.

The normal procedure in life is that you work hard to acquire money to pay for goods, which are often discarded after a period of wear and tear. Yet the Christian message is that something eternal has been purchased for us, which we only need to receive as a free gift. We then set about working, as a response to the love shown to us in the first place. Likewise, the Gospels tell us that the Jesus who is our judge did not come to condemn but to save (John 3:17), and that the King of Glory came, not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45). That is somewhat topsy-turvy.

Similarly, with the church: we put prayer before action, devotion to God before devotion to our works, and service out of love rather than compulsion or personal gain (2Cor.9:7). Or at least, that is how it is supposed to work. Perhaps, like me, you are not convinced that we always get things the right way around. When our church structures are an end to themselves; or our pride or privilege or sense of embarrassment are more important than our opportunities to talk about Christ and his church; or our fixation with the immediate concerns causes us to forget that we are part of an unbroken chain of Christianity with eternity in view - perhaps it is us that have sometimes got it back to front from the way it ought to be. Yet, Jesus does not leave his church without a challenge or two.



As the early Christians visited towns, it was claimed that they “turned the world upside down” with their teaching (Acts 17:6). In the story of Mr. Topsy-Turvy, he visits our town, and then disappears... but not without leaving behind a legacy. Everybody starts talking topsy-turvy. On the final page, we’re left with the challenge: “Can you think of something to say that’s topsy turvy? Go on, try!”.

Your *Ross*

and friend Minister.



## ?? QUIZ NIGHT ??

**How many varieties of Kit Kat were available in Japan in 2000?  
What do you call a Milky Way in America?**



**Would you like to join us for some fun and hopefully easier questions than these ones?**

**Then on FRIDAY 19TH MARCH at 7:00pm we will be holding a Zoom Quiz Night.**

If you would like to join us and get a chance to see some folks you have been missing for the past year (well almost), please email me so I can send you the joining info:

[deputysc1@hamiltonold.co.uk](mailto:deputysc1@hamiltonold.co.uk)

There will be a selection of questions from film to food and other random subjects, all at no cost to join – although we might think about a donation to a charity on the night. More info on that on the 19th!

Because we will all be at home there is no need to dress up to go out in the cold, and you can have as many cups of tea/coffee etc....as you like ☺

*Dale, Graham and Linda*

## Monday Club

Best wishes to everyone for a happy and prosperous New Year. Some of us by now will have had their first dose of the vaccine and hopefully we will be able to revert to a more normal way of life in the next few months.



I have consulted with the committee of the club re our intended trip to the New Lanark Hotel for afternoon tea in April and we have decided that it will be on the "tight" side and in some instances members may still not be fully protected given that it takes approx. 4 weeks after the second injection to obtain full immunity. So the trip will be re-programmed to September, no date as yet as at time of writing the hotel is currently closed due to lockdown.

The financial balance sheet has been passed on to the Church Treasurer and we have also made a donation of £300 to the Church. The clubs funds are quite healthy.

We look forward to September to resume the club and guest speakers will be getting booked as soon as it is practical to do so.

The committee have been in contact, by telephone, to check members are well and my thanks go to everyone who has done this and in particular to Nesella and Carole. We will continue to do this until we get back to normal but please do not hesitate to phone any of us if we can help you in any way.

Keep safe and best wishes.

*Charlie Duguid*



Congratulations to Margaret Gilbert  
who celebrates her 90th birthday  
on 19th March!

Many Happy Returns!

## Paul – A Man Changed Forever

Drama Kirk's lockdown bible studies continue in 2021 with a closer look at the man who did so much to shape the Christian church – the Apostle Paul. A series of seven studies is planned, taking us from Saul's childhood, through his conversion and into the missionary trips and letters that comprised his ministry.

The studies on Paul were suggested in feedback on the 2020 studies. Other developments planned for the studies include an opportunity to hear the relevant passages of scripture read at the start of the study – or indeed to read them beforehand yourself.



The studies commenced with “Saul the Persecutor” on Tuesday 26th January and continue with “The Road to Damascus” on Tuesday 23rd February at 7pm on [www.youtube.com/HamiltonOld](http://www.youtube.com/HamiltonOld)

## With Arms Wide Open



This year's Passion Play will be presented on YouTube on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 2pm. Titled “With Arms Wide Open” it tells the story of the passion from Luke's perspective. We are currently working with writer Peggy Barnell to develop the script for use under the current restrictions, before filming commences with our wonderful community cast and a small team of professionals.

More details will follow. We are delighted to still have the opportunity to bring this story to life!

## Drama Kirk in 2021

Analysing activity for 2020, it was clear that the audiences were significantly higher for the online events than they would have been for in person events, that the audience was coming from further afield and that (in general) people preferred the less interactive format for the studies.

Reporting back to our funders, GoForIt, on our second year of activity was completed in December and we are delighted to say we have received our third year of funding. Taking receipt of this commits us to continuing to bring the Gospel to life through drama, despite the current restrictions.

Our governance committee and steering group continue to meet virtually and have planned a virtual programme of activity for the first six months of 2021. Planning for the remainder of the year will take place once there is further clarity on ongoing restrictions.

The Committee is grateful to those who – despite the challenges – are giving their time and talents to sharing the Gospel through Drama Kirk, and to everyone who is supporting them.



## FINANCE

At the time of writing, the 2020 accounts are being finalised and will be presented to the Trustees on 9<sup>th</sup> March for approval. The date of the Annual Stated Meeting is 21<sup>st</sup> March.

The Gift Aid claim for 2020 has been submitted and paid by HMRC. The total gift aided income was **£83,570.70** which gave us a refund of tax amounting to **£20,892.68**. This is a drop from last year due to the impact on offerings as the church was closed for most of the year.

The table below shows a breakdown of the different elements included in the return along with the previous years' figures for comparison. If you have any questions or would like any further information on the figures, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Method of Giving	Total donated 2020	Total donated 2019
WFO envelopes	£10,992.00	£21,900.00
Annual cheques	£ 3,100.00	£ 3,335.00
Standing Orders	£69,478.70	£65,229.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>£83,570.70</b>	<b>£90,464.08</b>

At present we have 172 declarations in place representing 234 members. In addition we have one non-member contributing to Drama Kirk on a monthly basis by standing order. If you pay tax and would like to contribute extra to the church at no cost to yourself, please speak to me. For every £1.00 you contribute HMRC will refund us 25p of the tax you have already paid. Also, if you stop paying tax or change your address it is important that you let me know.

Unfortunately, this year we will not be able to claim tax under the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme where we can claim tax back on donations of £30 or less without declarations being in place. This was usually donations put into the open plate but again, with the closure of the church, this will not be possible.

Many thanks to everyone involved in the finances of the congregation, including yourselves, for your commitment in supporting God's work in the church locally and nationally especially during this difficult time.

*Marilyn Henderson*  
*Finance and Gift Aid Convener*  
01698 427892  
finance@hamiltonold.co.uk

## Guild

The ladies of the Guild are coping, keeping in touch with one another and complying with the rules of the latest lockdown.

The year 2020 was not what we expected it to be, but now we have to look ahead to 2021.

The Guild has a new three-year strategy for 2021/2024 - "Look forward in Faith" with its three themes of "Lights and Bushels", "Wee seeds, Big trees" and "New wine, New wine skins". As a Guild we will endeavour to explore and develop these themes over the next three years.

We look forward to happier times when we can meet together once again.

Take care, stay safe.

God Bless you all.

*Avril Boothroyd*



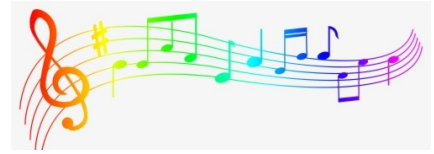


## Saffronhall Singers

Some of you will know that we were able to host a virtual Carols by Candlelight on 11<sup>th</sup> December. This event was created using recordings from previous years, both choir pieces and carols sung by the audience and it even included a few cracker jokes! I think we achieved our aim of bringing the Christmas message into people's homes through the joy of singing together and we are grateful to those who put in a great deal of effort with the technology to make this happen. We know, from feedback received, that many of our regulars viewed the event as did friends and family from all over the country and we hope many in our congregation were able to join in also.

We continue to meet on a Monday evening via Zoom when we can enjoy some fellowship in addition to our usual rehearsal. This is a bit bizarre as they can only hear me singing (unless they are a couple sitting together) and so it is a bit like a duet! Our attendance is around thirty-five per evening which is quite amazing. One of our new members even joins us from her home in Canada. I am still working on providing parts on YouTube for all our repertoire so that folks practise at their leisure. We are all really missing being together and look forward to that day when we can meet once more.

*Campbell Barr*



## Hyzone Limited

Hyzone is a relational youth project committed to the needs of young people who choose to engage. They have concern for the development of the whole person and seek to encourage young people to reach their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual potential so that they may find life in all its fullness, whatever form that might take for them. This work is undertaken by a Project Manager and is supported by a sessional team and volunteers.

Funding is provided by a secured Grant from the National Lottery Community Fund Young Start Fund and financial contributions from Hamilton Old Parish Church, St John's Church and St Mary's Episcopal. This funding support continues with no penalties in view of the current restrictions although future core funding will be difficult to source but every effort is being made to explore every resource. Small donations also assist and are greatly appreciated.

Covid restrictions have impacted as the premises remain closed however Hyzone remains in regular contact with a small core of young people via Instagram and mobile calls. Several walks with young people on Sunday afternoons around the local parks have proved successful but again is dependent on current Covid guidelines. Hyzone will continue to assist and support young people to be positive both about themselves and their future.

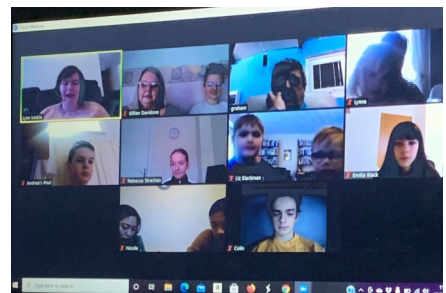
*Margaret McCartney*  
*Hyzone Trustee*

## Sunday Live!

Sunday Live! has returned on Zoom and it's been fantastic to see the children again albeit virtually. Our sessions have been well attended and we've enjoyed a variety of activities including bible stories, crafts, quizzes and games. One of the firm favourites so far being our game of "Bring Me". We may not have been together but it was still very competitive. And not just with the children!

Thank you to our parents and children for their continuing support.

*Sunday Live Leaders*



## Greetings from Grasping the Nettle!



Despite the limitations across the nation and across the globe, some activities and events continue apace - as evidenced by many of you who are regularly attending online Sunday services, daily Bible study opportunities and plenty else besides. Thank you to all who have tuned in to our GTN activities through the year. It's certainly been a busy time for many of us as we keep going as best we can to provide opportunities online to connect with us in various ways as we try to support and enhance the work of the church nationwide.

See below for ways you can stay involved and be joined in good company from many across the world... Norway, Spain and USA – as well as church family, friends, colleagues nearby in ML3!

Do visit the **WEBSITE** [www.graspingthenettle.org](http://www.graspingthenettle.org) where you can find recordings of previous activities, presentations, Exploring sessions, interviews. For example:

- One Man And His Books – a series of interviews bringing to your screen a range of fascinating insights and content from Prof John Lennox, Prof Alister McGrath, Peter S Williams.
- Through a Glass Darkly: recordings of the 2020 online GTN Conference presentations provided by Prof Alister McGrath:
  - 1/Science, Faith and Me: the personal journey of a lapsed atheist
  - 2/Science, Faith and Doubt: living with uncertainty
  - 3/Science, Faith & the Meaning of Life: A discovery
- Almost a year ago – perhaps hard to believe! - we posted an insightful interview with Prof John Lennox related to his then recently published book: "Where is God in a Coronavirus World?"

Visit the **EVENTS** section of the Website to keep in touch with what's coming up, including:

- 18 & 25 Feb, 7.30pm : Understanding the Atheist Mind with author/philosopher Peter S Williams
- 15 & 22 April, 7.30pm: A Theology of Creation/Who Was Adam? With Professor David Fergusson
- Look out for a new brand of GTN activity – WOW events, as we explore "The Wonder of You!".
- Look out, too, for the release of the new GTN resource on Scripture and The God Question.
- We also continue with our new series of Exploring Further evenings led by Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair

Visit the **FACEBOOK** site [www.graspingthenettle.org/facebook](http://www.graspingthenettle.org/facebook) and look out for 'live' interviews on some Monday evenings at 8pm led by Josep Marti Bouis, in conversation with a range of interesting people. So far, this series has included interviews with:

- Prof David Fergusson
- Rev Dr Liam Fraser
- Rev Breda Ludik
- Dr Joanna Leidenhag
- Dr Marty Folsom

The interviews are available to view afterwards, if you are unable to tune in 'live' on the night.

You can also find some interesting content, too, under the banner **IT'S A FAIR QUESTION** – a series of interviews led by Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and Steering Board Member of GTN.

GTN is all of the above and so much more! Please do get in touch with us if you have not yet joined our mailing list. We have recently reached our 5<sup>th</sup> birthday! If you would like to receive a copy of our 5 year report, please get in touch with Karen - at [office@graspingthenettle.org](mailto:office@graspingthenettle.org)

We hope to see you at some of the 2021 activities and events. There's plenty to 'visit' – from the comfort of your own homes! Meantime, we hope you can stay encouraged and uplifted in these challenging times.

***Karen Rollins for Grasping the Nettle***





***Entered into Eternal Life.***

*"I am the Resurrection and the Life"*

*God of grace and peace, in your Son Jesus Christ  
You have given us new birth into a living hope.  
Strengthen us now to live in the power of the resurrection  
and keep us united with our loved one  
from whom in death we are not divided;  
for you live and reign forever and ever. Amen*

*4 November 2020*

*Marlene Davie*

*6 November 2020*

*Heather Kennedy*

*10 November 2020*

*Helen Sturrock*

*12 November 2020*

*Alexandra Norman*

*13 November 2020*

*Isabella Mitchell*

*6 December 2020*

*Robert Paton*

*26 December 2020*

*Brenda Lawson*

*28 December 2020*

*Alexander Orr*

*5 January 2021*

*Jane Tweedie*

*6 January 2021*

*Joyce Paterson*

*9 January 2021*

*Alexander McGregor*

*17 January 2021*

*John Neilson*

*24 January 2021*

*Joseph Egan*

*25 January 2021*

*Alistair Trench*

*30 January 2021*

*Janet Wallace*

## PRAYER

From the depths of winter  
we cry out to you, our God.  
For, winter carries many meanings:  
from the season of ice and snow,  
to the challenges of our experience and emotions.  
This winter season, swathed in so many shades of darkness,  
completes a year like none that we have ever experienced.  
As our own strength of body and mind leaves us  
all we can do is cry out to you  
for strength to face each day, each hour.

You are our eternal spring.  
We look to you in hope,  
as the light at the end of the tunnel.  
Help us to ever look to that hope,  
found in the light of Christ,  
who lights our footsteps on the road,  
which gets brighter every day.  
Bring us, once more, to your courts  
and we shall cry out with joy.  
Our strength is in the Lord our God.

Amen.

