

THE GRAPEVINE

CRAMOND KIRK MAGAZINE

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www.cramondkirk.org.uk



How COVID 19 has affected the Ministry An interview with Very Rev Dr Russell Barr

“My Ministry has been very different. I have missed enormously being able to visit people in person, especially people challenged by the coronavirus. But I have taken to the phone, like a lot of us, to keep up with those and offer whatever help and support has been possible.

On one occasion I spoke and prayed through a window to one of our members trying to give a little spiritual comfort and support to someone in their last hours, not something I learned at New College all those years ago.

Things changed drastically for our community when the buildings were forced to close. Not just the church itself but the church hall. The church hall plays a vital role for people able to gather together and socialise. Groups from Mothers and Toddlers, the Brownies, Guides and Scouts, the community choir, fitness classes, coffee mornings and jumble sales – these groups are not just about their activities but the positive impact getting together means for us all. Socialising is lost at present, and the positive effect that has on our mental health. These groups have a sense of fun and chat and buzz and connection and it was part of a routine. We are creatures of habit, missing our framework of dealing with things in life, which has been removed. Being a young mum can be very isolating and being able to join other mums and have a cup of coffee with a bit of support means an awful lot.



One of the “unexpected benefits” of the COVID-19 pandemic is a reduction in rough sleeping, says Dr Barr as he took up his place on the Scottish Government’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) which reconvened last week. It was reactivated two years after members last met at the request of Scotland’s Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart MSP, who believes that housing must be at the core of the country’s recovery from the pandemic.

Our Assistant Minister, Iain Majcher, took the lead to build up our social media channels for our Virtual Services, Daily Devotions and Bible Study, as that’s something he is really good at. The numbers attending services online have been remarkable. We are reaching people we wouldn’t have been able to reach before who might not be able to come to physical church, something which is also the case with churches across the country.

One of our parishioners is a lady in a care home who has been able to watch Daily Devotions on her iPad and taken great comfort from that.

We have reached families in Australia, the US and in the Middle East, those who have connections with Cramond.

Even a lady from Nairobi has joined in our Bible study group on a Tuesday evening on Zoom.

Great acts of kindness

We have experienced marvellous acts of kindness. Cramond Volunteers COVID group got into action right at the start to provide a response as a Facebook Group and managed through the Kirk Office. It put minds at rest of those shielding and self-isolating worried about how they were going to get access to essential supplies of food and medicines during lockdown as people came forward offering transport and to shop and deliver. We had a huge response when this was set up and a big army of volunteers came forward in our community.

Continued over...

VIRTUAL CHURCH

www.facebook.com/cramondkirk2

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Daily Devotions

Monday – Saturday on Facebook
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Pause for thought

Thursdays with Iain Majcher
Live on Facebook 7.15pm Thursdays

USEFUL INFORMATION

**On symptoms of Coronavirus, and current procedures to protect us all – BBC radio and television have regular advisory updates on news channels and very good information online at www.bbc.co.uk/news
The Government website and NHS websites – at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
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Some of the remarkable acts of kindness I have witnessed include one couple required to shield and entitled to receive free food packs who donated them to us to give to others who might be more in need than they felt they were. Another lady at home vulnerable and therefore self-isolating has been making soup for her neighbours which her church elder has been distributing for her. These people who despite being in a difficult place themselves, yet have thought of others.

Encouraged by weekly updates from our Session Clerk, Edith Butler, our elders have been keeping in touch with the congregation too – through phone calls and emails and sharing copies of Grapevine too.

The Sunday club youngsters and lots of Brownies made almost one hundred Easter cards to bring cheer to the older people, many living alone and therefore much more alone than ever before – they were so happily received by members of our community. And now at the local Cargilfield School, where I am the school chaplain one member of staff is encouraging some of the older children to do something similar.

The loss of a loved one

This period of lockdown has created an extra layer of distress to those who have lost a loved one. In this period I have conducted a good number of funeral services including people lost to Covid 19. Very limited numbers are allowed to a funeral service at the crematorium or the graveside, and of course we are not allowed to gather in the Kirk itself. And I have found it hard to support families in the way I normally would. I cannot visit to give my support in person. And families

are missing the significance of the reception after the funeral service, where friends and family support each other in a less formal setting. It is part of the ritual that surrounds losing a loved one. And without it, we can now see it has much more significance than people might have thought.

I have also had the hard job of phoning up couples to tell them I can't marry them on the dates they had planned. And there are no alternatives. Bringing that kind of bad news was not easy.

Helping the homeless

The Kirk has a very special relationship with charity Fresh Start and the Hall was a drop off point for donated food supplies and furnishings to help those homeless getting their first tenancy, who have very little essential belongings of their own when they move in. It has been hard for Fresh Start, but we have been able to help them access funds from trusts and donations from other organisations which have enabled the staff to buy the contents of starter packs to continue giving them the best start in a new home of their own.

When will the Church and Kirk Hall doors open?

The Church buildings will open again in the coming days, initially for private prayer and then for services later in the year. The halls will probably open a little later when indoor groups and activities are allowed. With guidance from the Scottish Government and the Church of Scotland everything will be put in place to make the church and halls as safe as possible for people to gather.



Jem McGregor enjoys Daily Devotions

Looking forwards

Once the Church doors are open again for services and worship, we anticipate that we may continue some aspect of the services online that we have been doing during lockdown. We have built up quite a virtual congregation during the lockdown, something we will want to nurture.

LINK WORDS

Fit 11 words so each one connects up with the words on either side. Use the first letter of each answer to work out the name of a local historic building.

- | | | |
|------------|-------|--------|
| 1. Off | --- | LAND |
| 2. OPEN | --- | CRAFT |
| 3. TO | ----- | LIGHT |
| 4. WORK | --- | LOOK |
| 5. SUN | --- | DREAM |
| 6. BUS | ---- | FISHER |
| 7. DIGITAL | ----- | TOWER |
| 8. SPA | ---- | STONE |
| 9. SLIP | ---- | WORKS |
| 10. SUPER | --- | MADE |
| 11. GOAL | ---- | START |

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FROM THE MANSE



Although it is a rapidly changing situation, it appears likely that later this month churches will be given permission to open again for people to come and pray. It is also possible church wedding and funeral services will be permitted but with limited numbers attending.

As it stands at the moment, Sunday services will not be permitted until later in the summer or early autumn. Again numbers may be restricted and whether or not hymn singing and choirs will be allowed has still to be determined.

However I am glad to say preparations are well underway and our Session Clerk, Edith Butler, and I are drawing up plans to ensure everything will be as safe as possible when permission is given to open again.

As well as advice from the Scottish Government, we have been taking advice from the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church and we feel confident we will be able to welcome you back to a safe and clean environment.

Meanwhile we will continue with online daily devotions, Pause for Thought and Sunday services – and if you have any thoughts or comments on what you would like to see continued or changed with the online services once the church is open again, please let me know.

With best wishes

Russell Barr

PRAYER

Ever living God
as spring gives way to summer
we thank You for trees in leaf
gardens in flower
the growth of tomato plants and
fruit bushes
the limitless unfolding of Your gift
of life

Yet we are painfully aware
of the contradictions of death and
disease
as disease continues to spread
and black people suffer shocking
injustice and discrimination

And so we pray for healing
the healing of sick bodies
the healing of wounded spirits
the healing of divided communities
the healing of glaring injustices
the healing of land and sea and air
in the name of the one who brings
healing to all
our Saviour Christ
Amen

PARISH REGISTER

NEW MEMBERS JOINING BY CERTIFICATE

15 March John & Isobel Russell

DEATHS

29 January	Dot Barber
3 February	Elizabeth Fairweather
10 February	Alan Horne
15 February	Alice Livingstone
20 February	Jean Murray
2 March	Victoria Ramsay-Barr
4 March	Lorna Jackson
5 March	Nan Morrison
10 March	Jack MacMillan
16 March	Peter Millar
22 March	Alison Amour
29 March	Margaret Fotheringham

29 March	Alan Robertson
14 April	Robert Agnew
14 April	Kath Young
14 April	Ian Boettcher
22 April	Ishbel McDonald
30 April	Alexander Jaffray
30 April	Barbara McLeish
4 May	Simon Fraser
15 May	Norma Craik
21 May	Brian Bennett
22 May	Agnes Notman
30 May	Gordon Buchanan

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Meet Gill Massie

our **WORD PUZZLE** expert and an
Elder of Cramond Kirk

Gill is an Elder of Cramond Kirk. An Aberdonian, she was christened and married in Mannofield Church, in Aberdeen.

"I recently let it be known that I enjoy making up quizzes and word puzzles," she tells us. (And so we commandeered her help for Grapevine, especially during lockdown!)

"It all started about 10 years' ago as a way of keeping the family busy and out of the kitchen at Christmas time! Planning challenges and themes for any family event has become a past-time. My first effort at selling a cryptic quiz was for this year's jumble sale and during lockdown I have prepared a few more so get the £1 coins ready."

"As a teenager I took a nursery Sunday School group following in my mum's footsteps in Aberdeen. I visit my parents very regularly and often attend Sunday services and fundraising events at my old church.

When Russell was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2016, he rededicated Mannofield



Church after a major refurbishment. I witnessed this and I take great pride in knowing we see a plaque commemorating Russell's visit in my family's church.

Ian and I married in 1985 and by November that year we had moved to Edinburgh. Ian had a new job. We have two grown up children – Andrew and Katherine who both live and work in London.

In 1993, my husband was very seriously ill, which was a traumatic time. He was in hospitals for over four months. This is when we really got to know Russell, who was the Kirk's new minister at that time. His pastoral care brought us great strength and hope.

My first job after graduating was very rewarding at Grampian Housing Association which focused on helping both the homeless and those who were ready to enter a shared ownership scheme. When we moved to Edinburgh, I became a teaching assistant in the nursery at Mary Erskine School.

I was ordained as an Elder of Cramond Kirk in January 2020 and Ian is on the Kirk's Investment Committee.

People will know me as a baker who loves adapting recipes. Some will also know me as someone who goes into over-drive when a fundraising idea is taking shape! I have taken a turn at decorating the Kirk hall for Christmas and Easter Club. Interests include gardening and I am a member of the Blackhall Horticultural Society and lead our entry for the Festival of Christmas Trees in 2018. I enjoy reading, cryptic quizzes/brain games, swimming, catching up with neighbours and friends, delving into family history (Morayshire and New Zealand) and travelling, most recently to South Africa, USA and New Zealand."



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Suez 1945



Mary Rose Stocks and her sister during their time in India

“Following all the activities around the 75th anniversary of VE Day, and our articles in Grapevine, parishioner Mary Rose Stocks got in touch to share her story of 1945 with us here. A big thank you to Mary Rose.”

As memories of V E Day returned recently, I started to think, my memories could be very different.

My mother and two sisters were sailing through the Suez Canal on that exciting day and I will tell you why.

As the war in Europe approached its end, my parents decided it was time for the family to return home to Edinburgh, from India, where we children had spent the war years from 1940.

Our home was on a coffee estate in a province called Coorg, South India in the foothills of the Western Ghats, now known as Karnataka. A beautiful area with tropical forests and a lovely climate where my middle sister Elizabeth and I were born. After four years of boarding school, we needed more education and the youngest, Anne, being only 4, needed to start school.

We said heartbreaking farewells to our pets and lovely home, took a train to Bombay and there we stayed in a transit camp, in horrible conditions, to await a ship.

We duly boarded the Johan Van Barnaveld, a Dutch vessel turned troop ship. Women and children were packed into converted cabins with the rest of the ship full of soldiers and airmen returning home from South East Asia. Within a few days of sailing, little Anne developed measles and she and our mother had to go into the sick bay, leaving Elizabeth and myself at the mercy of other mothers and their children.

It was very cramped but we were allowed on the deck to play, separated from the men by wire netting. Nevertheless we had fun with them, listened to their records and enjoyed



gifts of chocolate, part of their rations. We had not seen chocolate for years! We sailed on across the Indian Ocean into the Red Sea before entering the newly reopened Suez Canal.

Then came that wonderful day - May 8th : VE Day. Such rejoicing, singing, cheering, clapping, then almost as one, the men threw their hats and topis into the water and they drifted away. The celebrations went on all night, we children loved it all, though perhaps not fully understanding the great significance of the occasion.

Eventually we docked at Southampton, women and children disembarking first. We waved goodbye and left for our train to London, then on to Edinburgh where we were greeted by grandparents and family. I can mostly remember how cold we were after years in the tropics.

However, when VJ Day arrived we joined the throngs in Princes Street, singing and dancing but remembering those we left behind in our much loved home in India.

Mary Rose Stocks

LINK WORDS - ANSWERS

1. ICE 2. AIR 3. NIGHT 4. OUT 5. DAY
6. KING 7. CLOCK 8. RING 9. ROAD
10. MAN 11. KICK

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YOUNG CRAMOND CORNER

Sunday Club Summer Service

This Sunday would normally have been our Sunday Club Summer Service when the children take the service in church and Russell awards the Sunday Club prizes to all our regular attenders. However, this year we had to come up with something a little different - so on Sunday, 14 June the Sunday Club children are taking the on-line service. Some of the children came down to the Kirk-yard last Saturday and were recorded either reading or chatting to Russell about their favourite flower, bird and animal and what they love about our planet and, with a bit of technical wizardry it's all been put together with musical interludes to create a service which will be available on the Kirk website and on Facebook from 10 am on Sunday morning.

And following the service the Sunday Club children will be zooming, at which point Russell will be joining us and we will be awarding the Sunday Club prizes remotely!

As our zoom sessions are proving so popular with the children, we will be continuing them at 10 am every Sunday morning throughout the summer and would be delighted to welcome any children who would like to join us. Please contact the Kirk Office at cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk and we can send you a zoom invite.

Over the summer Sunday Club will be taking a break and Kirk Club will be up and running.

Russell or Iain will start with Children's Church and this will be followed by a mixture of games, crafts, stories, Godly Play and a host of other activities for children of all ages. Until we are allowed to meet up again, Kirk Club will be held on Zoom and the weekly Zoom invitations will be available from the Kirk Office at cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk

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ALL MY LIFE'S A CIRCLE ...



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Rotating each of your joints helps them stay flexible. Each joint contains synovial fluid, which lubricates it, just like WD40! As the fluid warms up through exercise, the joint moves more easily.

Here are some Circles for you to try.

All exercises should be done slowly, gradually and gently increasing the size of the circle. Aim for 10 repetitions in each direction.

- Neck Circles: lying down, with head resting on a small firm cushion, draw small circles with your nose on the ceiling.
- Shoulder Rolls: stand tall, slowly circling shoulders forward, then back.
- Arm Circles: stand with arms outstretched in front at shoulder height and shoulder width apart, palms facing downwards. Raise both arms up to your ears, then open out into a circle as the arms reach behind the line of your spine, then skim the hips to return to the start position.
- Ankle Circles: sit on a firm chair, both hands supporting one thigh. Lift the foot a couple of inches, softly point the toe, and rotate the ankle, keeping the lower leg still.
- Wrist Circles: sit or stand, arms outstretched at shoulder height. Draw your fingers together, thumb connected to side of hand. As if you're scooping up handfuls of sand, circle the wrists, trying to keep the rest of the arm still.
- Waist Twist - sit or stand, arms crossed lightly over your chest. Breathing out, turn head, neck and ribcage to one side, ensuring your hips and pelvis stay pointing forwards. It's a small movement, don't force it. Breath in to hold, then on your next out-breath, return the ribcage, neck and head to the start. Keep nose aligned with the centre of your crossed arms. Repeat to the other side.
- Pelvic Circles - with hands on hips, circle the pelvis as if you are hula-hooping. Or borrow a hula-hoop and really go for it... Just imagine! One day you may become as skilled as Elizabeth in our photo!

Jane Robson, Pilates Teacher Jane@shangrilapilates.uk

A special thank you to all the local membership organisations who have helped us to get the digital editions of Grapevine out to everyone during "lockdown".

Your editor Carol Anderson • Contact us: cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk