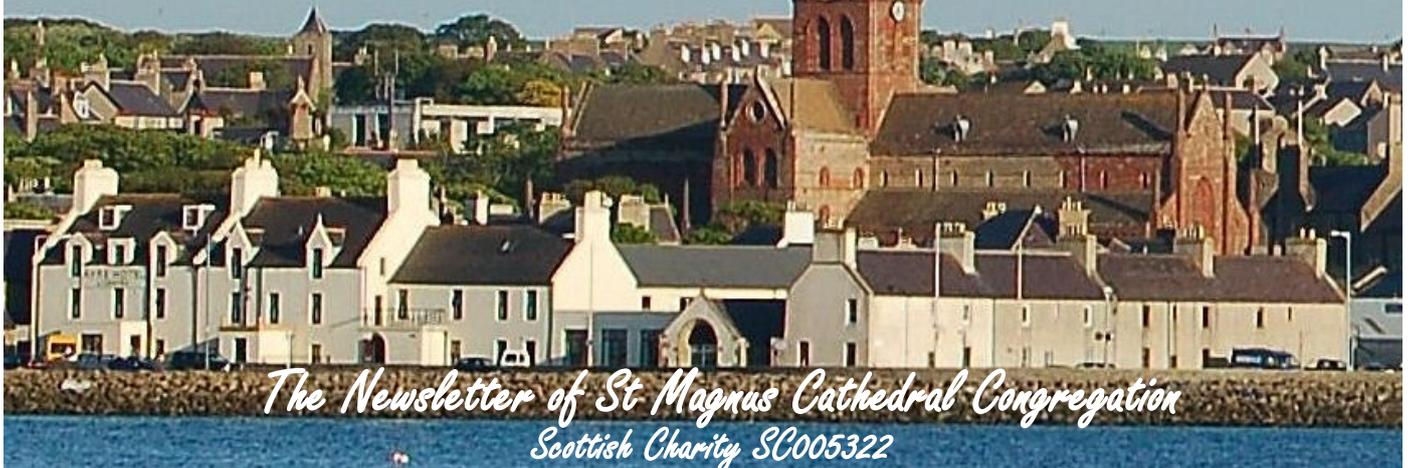


SUMMER 2022

The Grapevine



The Newsletter of St Magnus Cathedral Congregation
Scottish Charity SC005322

Contacts

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Scottish Charity SC005322/CCL No 119086

Each Sunday in July and August	9.30 am 11.15 am	Communion in the St Rognvald Chapel Morning Service of Celebration
31 st July	9.30am	Communion in the St Rognvald Chapel
	11.15 am	Communion Service
28 th August	9.30 am	Communion in the St Rognvald Chapel
	11.15 am	Communion Service
4 th September	11.15 am	Science Festival Service

From the Manse



Humans are gregarious animals: we live in groups that are protective of their members. We need to gather together regularly otherwise we become lonely, and we are all aware of the dangers of loneliness.

We engage in many types of assembly, from sports matches through theatre to church. We can take our pick of the many variants that suit our mood (and ability to pay). I think these massed gatherings of more than a roomful are essential to our well-being. Don't ask me to explain why I think that, I can't, but I can muse. They are spectator events: I can't contribute other than in joining in the reading or singing out loud of a prepared text. Everyone is joining in and there is safety in numbers. All this covers our embarrassment. In sporting events, I can shout in reaction to the game, or join in songs or chants; I get a rush of excitement from that. At the theatre, cinema, concert hall or lecture, I'm expected to remain silent in order to allow my

fellows to pick up on fine nuances otherwise lost in unwanted hubbub, but I am allowed to applaud at the end, and that's exciting.

If I want to discuss my thoughts with others then I need a roomful of people, not a crowd. I think there is an essential place for small discussion groups where everyone knows everyone else and is prepared to argue constructively. I have heard it said that I am not entitled to hold a view of my own unless I have defended it in open argument or discussion, call it what you like, with someone else; unless I have submitted it for peer review. It works in the scientific community.

So what do we go to these large gatherings for? I think it's excitement and inspiration. Some don't involve words - sporting events and music, for example - and also the excitement of simply being in a crowd. However, at others I go to hear someone say something, and in those I am interested in the quality of the words and the ideas behind them. I can still be bowled along by the excitement of the moment and, if I'm lucky, there will be the inspiration of thoughts of my own as I listen, or in later reflection and group discussion.

I can sit in solitude and read, and that can be exciting, but it doesn't meet my human need for the excitement of the crowd. The need for gathering is not an end in itself - there has to be an attraction in order to attend otherwise I just get bored and leave, or don't go again. If it's a church service, the attraction is probably in the words I hear or take part in reciting or singing, or possibly being carried along with my own thoughts and contemplation. For some, it will be the reaffirmation of their faith. Familiarity with the words, remembering them, saying them from memory, taking them away with me, repeating them to myself in later contemplation: this is poetry.

Summer, a time to reflect more deeply.

Yours

Fraser

WELCOME TO THORSTEN



Our Summer Student who has come on placement as part of his training.

Hello and Greetings from the south of Scotland.

My name is Thorsten König, and I am delighted to come to Orkney and spend time with you as part of my training to become a minister for Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland.

As you may already have guessed from the “ö” in my surname, I am not Scottish; I was born 52 years ago in Germany. My wife Astrid and I, and my mother-in-law, moved to Scotland, to the little village Howwood in the south-east of Glasgow, just two and a half years ago. Before, we lived for 16 years in The Netherlands, in Amsterdam. I was a member, elder, and treasurer of the English Reformed Church, founded in 1607 as a congregation of the Church of Scotland, which is part of the International Presbytery.

We did not plan to move to Scotland. In my “previous life”, I did a PhD in food chemistry in Germany, and was leading innovation and research for the biggest flavour and fragrance company all over the world – so I was travelling a lot.

My wife is a paediatric ENT consultant, and in 2019 she got an offer to work at the Royal Hospital for Children in Glasgow. We always thought that once we moved away from The Netherlands, we could imagine living in the North of Italy or the South of France, but Scotland was not really on our radar – and then Astrid got this offer. I had already contemplated for years whether it would be time to change jobs – God’s call into ministry was a permanent itching – but being German, living in The Netherlands, and being part of the Church of Scotland there, I was not sure which was the right place to dare to follow this call. And then Astrid got the offer to work in Scotland... This seemed to me like God’s writing on the wall.

So here we are now in Scotland. I have just finished my second academic year of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Glasgow. As part of my training, I have already done two placements, the first at Houston & Killellan Kirk and the second at St George’s Tron Church in the city centre of Glasgow – two different experiences which enriched me.

Contemplating my summer placement, I thought 'Why not go somewhere entirely different? Why not go to Orkney, where Astrid and I spent a week's vacation before moving to Scotland?'

So, I am looking forward to spending time with you, meeting some of you, getting to know each other, and experiencing what it means to be Church in the unique situation of Orkney.

All the best,

Thorsten

Malawi News

The Church of Scotland Presbytery of Orkney Malawi Partnership

Update for congregations - June 2022 from the World Mission Committee



The Federal Reserve Bank of Malawi (effectively acting for the Government) took many by surprise at the end of May by announcing an immediate 25% devaluation of the Kwacha

currency. This means a return to market-determined foreign exchange rates to shore up dwindling foreign currency reserves. The move came in reaction to rising commodity prices which have hit Malawi hard, amid declining revenue from major exports. Obviously, any major shift in the value of the Kwacha like this will have significant human impact in Malawi, most especially in those areas of the economy which rely mostly on imports.



The last significant devaluation took place in 2012, and underlying factors this time include a large drop in export revenues due to the Covid pandemic, the effects of two recent devastating cyclones and a rise in the cost of imports, particularly raw materials due to the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The Scotland - Malawi Partnership have warned all member groups (of whom we are one) that whilst the devaluation will mean more Kwacha to the pound, it's going to have a significantly negative effect on funding the kind of projects we've been supporting.

Chief Executive, David Hope-Jones wrote, *"This situation is complex, dynamic and the most important thing is to listen to partners in Malawi over the coming days and weeks; to understand their changing situation and what support and flexibility they require. It is likely that Kwacha costs in Malawi will significantly increase in the coming days."*

ANA WREAKS HAVOC

Amongst the cyclone damage mentioned above was Tropical Storm Ana, which passed through Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi, killing over 140 people and leaving a trail of destruction to buildings and crops. Amongst the buildings seriously damaged was the Prayer House at Chilopo, which comes under Milango Congregation in Matumbo Parish. A Damage Assessment Team from the Presbytery visited and found a seriously damaged church but resilient and determined people.

This new building was almost complete when the storm ripped through, with the local people having shown great initiative. Partnership Convener Kelvin Matola takes up the story: *"They built the Church from the first brick on the ground to the last iron sheet on the roof by local fundraising efforts ... usually these fundraisers didn't bring in much but, with whatever they realised, they would go out to purchase bricks, river sand and continue building their church, bit by bit. The church was not fully completed when Cyclone Ana came visiting and leaving their church walls with gaping holes. They still needed to plaster the inside and outside walls as well as plaster the floor. Devastated though they are, they have carried on collecting river sand and bricks with the aim of sealing the holes in the walls."* Like most rural communities in Malawi, the people of Chilopo are almost all subsistence farming on small plots of land they own. Kelvin added, *"It is very evident that their harvest in the coming two months will be but meagre!"*



Despite that, the Chilopo folk continue to give and work to build their church, and we were pleased to hear that the Partnership Committee have been able to allocate £400 of funds received from Orkney towards the total repair cost estimated at around £1,050.

DRILLING DOWN



Two more boreholes have been successfully completed since our last newsletter, and were recently commissioned at Namibango (left) and Mikombi (right). Both were funded by generous private donations from Orkney folk, and were handed over to the custodianship of local congregations and communities



BUILDING UP



Work is continuing on two significant projects being developed with our Malawian partners with Orcadian support. The current phase of the St. Magnus education development has been split into three



areas: repair of the school blocks, construction of students' and teachers' toilets, and construction, up to foundation level, of the administration block. The toilet block construction was delayed a little when someone planted maize on the site. Work was held up until the crop could be harvested - the Malawian equivalent of finding a corncrake in your field!

TRYING AGAIN

Attempts to drill a borehole at Molele came unstuck recently when the drilling rig failed to reach water at a depth of 60 metres. The rig then moved on to the next drilling site at Nansozi, where good water resources were found. It is hoped that another site for the Molele area can be found in the near future. Devaluation could make this tricky. Other work pending on the school block includes glazing, painting and drainage.

Also marching on is construction of the maizemill house at Nansato. Due for completion in the next few weeks, this building will house the latest milling equipment for maize.



Since our last newsletter in March, Treasurer Ian Cooper has made two separate transfers of funds to Malawi totalling over £6,600. As always, we are extremely grateful to those who contribute and fundraise towards these projects and who support our Malawian partners and the Partnership, as a whole, in their prayers. Thank you so much.

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF JIM WALLACE: THE OFFICIAL VERSION!

During the past year, one of our elders and choir members, Lord Wallace [Jim], has been an outstanding ambassador for the Church and for the eldership in particular. Online and on-site he has participated in many events, including the Guild Annual Gathering, the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum, the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, the Kirking of the Scottish Parliament, several anniversary services (including one marking the 20th



Anniversary of 9/11), COP26, a congregational *Songs of Praise* service at which he remotely introduced his favourite hymn, Edinburgh Rotary Club, CrossReach Fundraising and Awareness-raising events, and television appearances on *Reflections at the Quay*.

He has engaged with Church, national and other faith leaders, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chief Rabbi, Chair of the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society, the First Minister, the Prime Minister and many others, where matters discussed have included Criminal Justice, Social Care Reform, Poverty and Net Zero Carbon, to mention a few.

Visits during the year have included HMP Perth Visitors' Support and Advice Centre, HM Prisons in Edinburgh and Dumfries, many congregations (some with particular significance in his own faith journey), two days with the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, plus time with the Universities of Edinburgh, St Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh Napier.

He has visited Edinburgh Presbytery and, at the time of this report being submitted, he is due to visit Irvine & Kilmarnock, Sutherland and Angus Presbyteries. Regrettably, planned trips to Lebanon and Malawi had to be cancelled, but he did deliver an online lecture to the Zomba Theological College and had a 'virtual visit' to the Mulanje Mission Hospital. Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Jim attended a service of the Divine Liturgy in the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edinburgh, and was invited to address the congregation after the service. He also participated in an Ecumenical Prayer meeting at New College and an Edinburgh Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Ukraine.

During his year, the time came for the St Andrew's Declaration to be signed, marking a commitment to greater shared working together between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Jim has the distinction of being the first sitting Moderator to make an address to the House of Lords, in a debate led by the Archbishop of Canterbury on contemporary challenges to freedom of speech.

Within the Kirk, Jim has taken time to engage with staff, and has shared in leading online staff devotions. He has met many ministers, those in training, elders and members around the Church. A very busy year, and he and Rosie certainly deserve many thanks and a good long rest in their new house in Tankerness.

Exploring discipleship

Jesus says to us all 'Come follow me'. What does being a Jesus follower actually mean? How does it affect your life?

At the end of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus commands: 'Go and make disciples'. Are we already disciples?

When we hear the word disciple, we might instantly imagine 12 bearded guys, but what does discipleship mean for us today?

We might think that being a disciple is all about hard work and discipline, but it's actually more about loving and truthful relationships, with Jesus and with each other.

Quote from C of S Resources on Discipleship

Kneeling

Moments of great calm,
Kneeling before an altar
Of wood in a stone church
In summer, waiting for the God
To speak; the air a staircase
For silence; the sun's light
Ringing me, as though I acted

A great role. And the audiences
Still; all that close thron
Of spirits waiting, as I,
For the message.
Prompt me, God;
But not yet. When I speak,
Though it be you who speak
The meaning is in the waiting.

R.S. Thomas

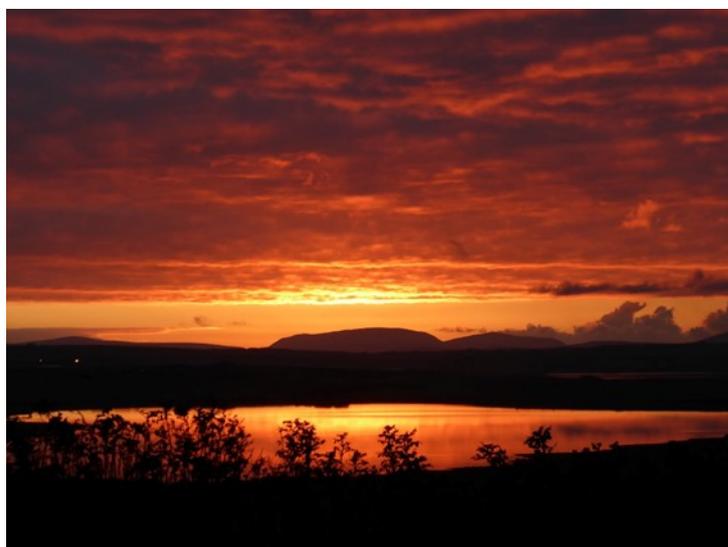
FINDING CALM MOMENTS,

'An invitation to look for the moments of silence woven into the fabric of everyday'

"This is not about any kind of despairing silence, being silent because there is nothing to say or know or because you're always going to be misunderstood. It is more of an expectant quiet, the quiet before dawn, when we don't want to say anything too quickly for fear of spoiling what's uncovered for us as the light comes."

"Silence somehow reaches to the root of our human problem, it seems. Our words help to strengthen the illusions with which we surround, protect and comfort ourselves; without silence, we shan't get any closer to knowing who we are before God."

From *Silence and Honey Cakes*, by Rowan Williams Lion,



Ian Cunningham

PARISH REGISTER CORRECTION.

In the last edition we published the following the parish register entry incorrectly.

Funeral.

26th September, 2021 Florence Stout, 13 King Haakon Street

We apologise for this error as it should have read.

16th September 2021 Florence Stout, 12 King Haakon Street



Chloe 2011