



# Cumbernauld Old Parish Church Newsletter – February 2022



## Glance from the Manse

I'm writing this from the Manse in Milton of Campsie but, as has happened so often over the last five months since I was appointed Interim Moderator, my mind is very much focussed on Cumbernauld Old Parish Church. It has been a real privilege to work alongside you in some small way, to get to know a few of you and to discover what God is doing in your midst. It's always encouraging to discover other followers of Jesus and to rejoice in the connection we have as we work together to build the Kingdom of Christ.

I have learned so much about the way you work in Cumbernauld Old and your heart for reaching out to the community – the one on the doorstep of the ancient village church, and the community of the enormous parish that has grown with each new housing development. The challenges and opportunities are huge – and can be overwhelming.

It may comfort you to know that every church is feeling somewhat overwhelmed just now. We can see the needs around us – they're evident in so many different ways. We understand the call of Jesus on our lives and we want to serve Him. But where does one begin? Can we really make any difference? Should we even bother trying?

## 5 Marks of Mission



There is a tool that is used in churches around the world called The Five Marks of Mission. It outlines some benchmarks, things that every congregation should be doing. The Church of Scotland has adopted this tool as it seeks to bring some rather radical changes over the next four years. Rather than view the current process of change as something very negative ("They're just wanting to get rid of buildings and cut costs of ministries"), the 5 Marks of Mission invite us to look at what each church community is doing. Where are the stories of growth and engagement? What can we learn from one another? How can we work together to best meet the needs of our neighbourhood?

I've spent a lot of time thinking about this – and praying about this. I still have lots of questions, and some very real fears about the future of the congregation in Milton of Campsie AND in Cumbernauld Old. However, I'm also encouraged because I know there is faith and vision, there **are** good news stories, there is a willingness to adapt so as to thrive.

Will you journey with me on this? Take time to look at the 5 Marks and to ask: what does it mean for us to build the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, here in Cumbernauld, in the 21st century?

I find it helpful to think of the 5 Marks as

TELL    TEACH    TEND    TRANSFORM    TREASURE

Perhaps you could write these words out and stick them on your fridge.

Every time you see them, ask the Lord to show you where He wants you to be working? Encourage one another by chatting about the 5 Ts, perhaps over a cup of tea!! And, if you feel there is an area of church life where there is scope for growth or development, speak to your elder, or drop me an email (JMoody@churchofscotland.org.uk), I'd love to hear from you.

This comes with my love and prayers that you would each know the smile of Jesus as you live for Him day by day.



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## Mission in Action

As we begin a new year, the Mission in Action group is looking forward to getting together and coming up with new plans. Our main motivation is to generate an energy within our Church family that will drive forward our mission goals to Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform and Treasure.

In December we organised a very enjoyable 'Christmas Coffee and Cake @ Caulders' to bring our Elders together to enjoy fellowship and feel re-energised as a Kirk Session. All Elders received an invitation and many came along to reconnect with friends they may not have seen for quite a while due to Covid restrictions.

We have also been trying for the last 3 months to make the welcome people receive, as they arrive at Church, even warmer, as well as safe, in these difficult times. We want everyone who comes into our Church sanctuary to experience real fellowship as they worship at Cumbernauld Old.

As a Church family, we already make a difference in the wider world by supporting poor communities through Fairtrade and by making donations to the Mission Circle and to Christian Aid. We reach out also to help people through contributions to local food banks. We hope and pray that we can continue to make an impact, especially within our local community. Please share any ideas you might have for possible mission projects with any member of the Mission in Action group. We look forward to hearing from you.

The MIA team – Caroline Edwardson, Alex Edwardson, Brian Smillie, Ivar Struthers, Liz Dalling, Anne Morrison, Annette Campbell

## Christian Aid



As you probably know, Cumbernauld Old Parish Church is a long-standing supporter of the charity Christian Aid and the amount we collect annually during Christian Aid Week has traditionally been the largest single charity fundraiser of the year for us.

This year, Christian Aid Week runs from 15 to 21 May. The focus will be Christian Aid's work in Zimbabwe where the vision for resilient communities is being achieved by helping poor people to gain access to new markets and obtain better prices for their products.

Christian Aid Week donation envelopes will be available on the pews at Church on Sunday 15 May and we ask those who are able to take an extra envelope (or maybe two or three) for their family or friends. The filled envelopes will be collected at Church on Sunday 22 May and the funds paid directly to Christian Aid. If you pay income tax, then please remember to complete the Gift-Aid declaration on the envelope and your donation will become even more valuable.

In the run up to Lent, we will also have some Christian Aid recipe books for sale (suggested donation of £5) and the proceeds will be sent to Christian Aid's Afghanistan Emergency appeal.

## Village Food Bank

Whilst the Village food bank remains closed, the congregation and wider community continue to support Bethlehem House of Bread at Cornerstone. The response to our Easter, Harvest and Christmas Appeals was overwhelming and greatly appreciated both by us and also by those at Cornerstone. Thank you for all your kind donations.

Just to let you know that the Cornerstone food bank has confirmed that they would be delighted to receive donations of chocolate Easter Eggs as we have done in previous years, and we invite those attending our worship service on Sunday 3rd April to bring along a chocolate egg which we will then pass on to them.



Cumbernauld Old's Easter Egg Appeal 2021

## Fairtrade



The Fairtrade group met recently to consider how we might share the Fairtrade message at our annual Fairtrade Fortnight service which took place on Sunday 27th February.

We hope you enjoyed our ideas and your bar of Fairtrade chocolate! How many answers did you get correct in our Cocoa Quiz? Did it help you to understand a bit better the huge difference your Fairtrade purchases can make to farmers in the world's poorest communities?

We hope you feel inspired to keep making a difference by choosing Fairtrade products when you shop. Now more than ever, as they face the global problem of climate change, farmers need fair pay, fair prices and fairer trading practices.

To help you in this endeavour the Fairtrade group at Cumbernauld Old intends to offer you the chance to order from our monthly 'Fairtrade Shopping List'. You will have received a copy at the Fairtrade Fortnight service. If you didn't manage to attend, then don't worry. There is a copy on the Church website. Simply choose the items you wish to order, and hand in your completed list at the end of the service when you come to Church or email Caroline Edwardson at [caro\\_ed@live.co.uk](mailto:caro_ed@live.co.uk).

Orders can be placed during the first three services / weeks of every month, and your goods will be available to uplift with payment at the last service in each month. We hope that this will allow you to continue to support Fairtrade as a member of the congregation at Cumbernauld Old until we are able to reinstate our monthly Fairtrade stall. As before, we will collect our Fairtrade goods from Gavin's Mill in Milngavie.

As well as purchasing Fairtrade goods, please remember that information is readily available online about Fairtrade campaigns at [www.action.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.action.fairtrade.org.uk) - "We're for a Fairer Future".

As a Fairtrade Church we recognise the need to support the work of the Fairtrade Foundation and to choose to fight for climate justice, for farmers on the frontline of climate change, for our planet and for future generations.

"Choose the world you want"

Thank you for your ongoing support.  
The Fairtrade group – Liz and Lesley

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## Bags for the Homeless

For the last five years, our Boys' Brigade company, the 1<sup>st</sup> Cumbernauld, has made up Christmas Bags for homeless people in Glasgow. These have then been distributed in the run up to Christmas. They did the same in December 2021 and once again it was an amazing success.

They managed to raise a fantastic £650 to make a total of 70 bags which were distributed through Help the Homeless, Glasgow. It's the most they've ever managed, so huge thanks to them and to everyone who gave them their support.

## Fundraising



The fundraising team would like to thank everyone who helped us to raise a grand total of £817.50 from sales of Christmas cards and all those knitted items filled with chocolate treats. We are indebted to the ladies of the Craft Group and all the other volunteers who knitted for us.

Now that we are into 2022 the ladies of the Craft Group have turned their thoughts towards Easter and have started knitting to support fundraising again, and there will be quite a variety of Easter items available this year, including various styles of Easter bunnies, chickens and sheep containing a Terry's chocolate orange. Beautiful little crochet baskets and intricate cut-work little card houses both with foil wrapped chocolate mini eggs. There will also be some other items with Crème eggs hiding in them. Also, handmade Easter cards and gift tags. Keep an eye on our Cumbernauld Old Facebook page for details and photographs of our Easter Fundraising goodies.

Just a quick reminder, too, that Cumbernauld Old Parish Church is registered with both Amazon Smile and Give As you Live. So if you are shopping on Amazon be sure to go in through [www.smile.amazon.co.uk](http://www.smile.amazon.co.uk) the website is just the same [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) but the church gets a percentage of any purchases you make which adds up and is sent to us quarterly. Away from Amazon, by using [www.giveasyoulive.com](http://www.giveasyoulive.com) you can then shop from many other well-known online retailers and again Cumbernauld Old will get a percentage from each purchase made. Thank you to everyone who has helped us support the church through fundraising.

## Property Report – February 2022

Due to continued COVID-19 restrictions there have been no Property Committee Meetings held during 2020/2021. Rest assured I can report that the Church, Session House and the Manse maintenance has carried on regardless. The Church Fire / Smoke Detection system has been maintained by our appointed Contractor. Weekly Fire Alarm testing and monthly Emergency Lighting checks have been carried out as usual by the Property Convener.



The Manse had its Dormer Windows repainted in the Autumn of 2021 where scaffold had to be erected to provide safe access for our Painter Gary Maxwell to carry out the work.

Prior to our Minister departing in October 2021 there had been a water leak from the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor bathroom shower into the ceiling of the ground floor study, the shower was re-sealed and the study ceiling was recently repaired by a local plasterer and in due course the ceiling will be repainted.

The Manse is now due its 5-yearly fixed electrical wiring retest which I am in the process of organising with the Local Electrical Contractor who did the previous test.

The Manse had a new Gas Boiler fitted in December 2020 and is working well. The Gas Boilers in the Manse, Church and Session House have had their annual Safety Servicing carried out each October by Dents Plumbers.

Finally I would like to thank Duncan, Ian, Douglas, Elizabeth Snedden, her Daughter Lisa and the two ladies from the Village Gardening Group who with myself met at the Manse on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February to clear up all the fallen leaves from the front and rear gardens, just in time before the rain started. Thanks again to all who attended.

Matthew Sime, Property Convener

## Needles and Natter Craft Group



The ladies are delighted that at last the Craft Group is able to meet weekly again in the Session House from 1:00 to 3:00pm on our new day of Thursday, and we are enjoying sharing, skills, patterns and materials. As always there is lots of chat while the knitting needles, crochet hooks and darning needles fly creating lovely things, many of which are for Easter Fundraising. We are delighted to welcome new members to swell our numbers too.

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## Village Community Council

The Village Community Council is now back to face-to-face meetings and convenes on the second Thursday of every month at 7pm in the Wynd Hall.

We have recently been successful in obtaining a £4,000 grant from North Lanarkshire Council to continue our work in improving the environment of the Village. In the coming weeks our band of volunteers will be reinstating the hanging baskets, planting new trees and hedges and installing planters filled with floral displays. They will also be building raised beds for herbs, fruit and vegetables which will be available for residents to help themselves.

Work is still ongoing in the cemetery and the Langriggs and we hope you will take time to walk around both areas and appreciate the improvements.

Any Village resident will be made welcome at the monthly meetings and of course more volunteers will be even more welcome!

If you have any comments, suggestions or questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Elizabeth at (01236) 726451.

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### Contact Details

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Deacon:	Valerie Cuthbertson DCS	01698 429232
Session Clerk:	Brian Smillie	01236 733510
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## A Letter from the Glasgow Presbytery Plan Creation Group – 31 January 2022

Dear Friends,

*“To every thing there is a season,  
and a time to every purpose under the heaven”*

What is our purpose to be in these times? That is the question which the Presbytery Plan Creation Group (PPCG) is now dealing with.

I think this is a time to face facts, to pull up and to plant, to build on what has been done and to continue that work urgently.

- Time to face facts: The 2021 General Assembly instructed all presbyteries to review and update their mission plans by the end of 2022.
- Time to pull-up and plant: The Presbytery of Glasgow has been allocated a total of 84 ‘ministry’ posts. We currently have 123 charges, and many church buildings
- Time to complete work already begun: The Presbytery Mission Plan Review Group and last year’s local focus groups have given us 21 principles to abide by.

Now, we all have work to do: The PPCG has to bring a draft Mission Plan before Presbytery for approval by September and the Faith Nurture Forum and General Trustees by December.

It is important to us that we consult with local churches and take their comments and concerns into consideration. We are a diverse Presbytery; we are coming from different starting places and our congregations each have their own characters and histories. There will be change. Change both excites and threatens us and I can relate to both reactions.

We face hard choices. No parish or post is ‘immune’. As in bereavement, when we feel shock, numbness, anxiety or denial, we react with denial, defensively, even angrily. After all, we are experiencing loss shared, personal and cultural.

However, I do wonder where will defensiveness lead? Denial might deliver a short-term payoff; a committee given a bloody nose; a hard choice left for another day; the illusion of business as usual. We could split into parties ‘for and against’ or argue over the inheritance. All very understandable and very human, but is there another way?

What if we own these feelings? What if we say, “Yes, I *do* feel threatened. We *are* angry and resentful” and go on to say, “Alright, we *won’t* pretend that this is what we’d choose normally, but we have to deal with it. This is the time.” This cannot be wished away. Much has already been done and *now* we have to see it through.

Your PPCG will work conscientiously to bring a draft plan before Presbytery. Then Presbytery will decide.

Over the coming weeks and months we will make every effort to maintain regular contact with you. It is important that you know how we are progressing and it is equally important to us that we know about your comments and concerns. What can you offer in this shared effort?

Yours in Christ

Roy Henderson  
Convener, Presbytery Plan Creation Group

## **Session Clerk's Report 2021**

When I was writing my report at this time last year, we were looking ahead with some optimism to the coming year with the expectation that life would soon return to as near normal as possible. So much had been put on hold for most of 2020 and we were hoping to put the year firmly behind us and pick up on the work that we had planned to do, both at a local level and at a national level, particularly the actions from our Local Church Review and the Church of Scotland Radical Plan.

While the year 2021 did not fully deliver on our expectation, and life did not return to anything near normal, we did manage to make some progress with our plans which I will touch on in this report. I will also be reporting on the changes at a local level which directly affected the congregation. However, the most disappointing aspect of 2021 for us was the impact of continuing Government restrictions on church life which significantly changed and limited the way we work, particularly on our ability to hold weekly services and special services in church. More on that too!

### **The Vacancy**

I would like to begin with the changes that directly affected the congregation last year. Late summer, after four years as Minister at Cumbernauld Old, Reverend Elspeth McKay announced that she would be leaving Cumbernauld Old to take up the vacant charge of Minister at Paisley Abbey. Elspeth led worship for the last time at Cumbernauld Old at the Communion Service on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October and demitted her post at Cumbernauld Old shortly afterwards.

With Elspeth's departure we also saw the departure of her husband, Professor David Smith, who was our organist. As well as being the organist, David was also our Magazine Editor and an Elder who was ordained during his time at Cumbernauld Old. At the service on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October, Elspeth, David and son William were presented with gifts from the congregation as a token of appreciation for their contribution to the life of the church during their time at Cumbernauld Old and left with the best wishes of the congregation. Elspeth's induction service at Paisley Abbey took place on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

While we were sad to see Elspeth and David leave, we were pleased to welcome The Reverend Julie Moody, Minister at Milton of Campsie Parish Church, as our Interim Moderator. Julie was appointed by Glasgow Presbytery to oversee and guide us through the vacancy and led worship at Cumbernauld Old on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October. It is the responsibility of the Interim Moderator and the Kirk Session to ensure that the life and witness of the congregation continues seamlessly as they lead, pastor and equip the congregation through the vacancy period and Julie will be working closely with the Kirk Session going forward.

A decision was taken not to appoint a Locum during the vacancy and worship services will be covered by pulpit supply during the vacancy period. Until the future shape of Presbyteries and parishes has been agreed, congregations that become vacant during the planning process are not permitted to call a Minister. The planning phase is anticipated to last until at least the end of 2022 therefore we expect to be in a vacancy situation for some time.

## **Presbytery Plan & Local Church Review**

I would like to now report on the progress that we made on our plans last year. Firstly, The Church of Scotland Radical Action Plan that, when complete, will eventually bring a complete restructure of the way we work and a significant reduction in the number of Presbyteries, parishes and staff.

We took a significant step forward in June with our move from Falkirk to Glasgow Presbytery. Given the uncertain future of Falkirk Presbytery, this had been under discussion for many months. Several options were explored before the Cumbernauld congregations finally made a decision to move, as one, to Glasgow Presbytery on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

A series of introductory meetings and calls followed the move and representatives from Glasgow Presbytery had arranged to meet Office Bearers and members of the respective congregations at a series of meetings in December which unfortunately had to be postponed due to Government restrictions on in-person meetings. Presbytery hope to reschedule these meetings early in 2022.

In the autumn, the Cumbernauld congregations were invited to participate in Presbytery Planning sessions both in-person and on Zoom. Volunteer members of the congregation represented us at all these meetings and on calls. As I write we are still in the early stages of planning which will run through to the end of 2022. Those who had volunteered to attend the sessions formed a small group, now known as the 'Mission in Action' group, and with Kirk Session approval, were tasked to plan a route forward in terms of the Presbytery Plan, to take forward actions from the LCR including a mission plan for the parish. If you are interested in being part of the group or wish to know more about the group's work please speak to Caroline Edwardson.

## **Worship & Special Services**

This brings me to the ongoing restrictions last year as a result the pandemic, and the impact these restrictions had on church life at Cumbernauld Old. It was, without doubt, another very challenging year.

In the spring of 2021, restrictions were sufficiently relaxed to allow churches to reopen, albeit to a limited number of worshippers due to social distancing restrictions that remained in place. The Trustees took the decision to continue with the well received, weekly recorded services that Elspeth and David had been providing previously and to reopen the church for in-person worship once a month. Although we decided to reopen the church, ongoing restrictions meant that we had to continue to wear masks, sanitise hands, maintain social distancing, provide details for Test & Protect and sanitise the church before and after every service. As numbers were limited to 24, we had to continue to book places to ensure that we were compliant with social distancing measures.

Monthly services continued throughout the spring and summer months. Easter services and events were recorded and available to view online.

With the further relaxation of restrictions in the autumn, the Trustees decided to open the church weekly from the beginning of September onwards and we were pleased to be able to hold our Harvest and autumn Communion services in Church. Although many of the restrictions remained in place, the relaxation of social distancing measures allowed us to remove the need to book which was a welcome change and we were delighted to see around 40 people attending weekly worship services for the latter part of the year. Despite the reintroduction of some restrictions in December 2021, guidance for places of worship was not as prohibitive as had been earlier in the year and allowed us the latitude to keep the church open.

Having assessed the risks, the Trustees took the decision to keep the church open for weekly worship services, however, it was not possible to hold a Watchnight or Christmas Day Service. We were also unable to hold the Rainbow Service in December although we view this as a postponement and hope to hold the Rainbow Service in the spring of 2022.

### **The Ministry Team**

Following Elspeth's departure in October, the remaining members of the Ministry Team picked up additional responsibilities. Although Julie was appointed as Interim Moderator at Cumbernauld Old, her role is not as Minister or Locum. Julie's responsibility is to provide the link between the congregation and Presbytery, to ensure that the congregation is fulfilling its obligations and that the people who live and serve at Cumbernauld Old are encouraged and enabled.

Our Deacon, Valerie Cuthbertson, DCS, provides almost all the pastoral support and conducts funeral services. Despite the continued restriction on home and hospital visiting, Valerie has continued to offer her full support through visits when these were permitted, or by telephone and other forms of communication during times of severest restriction on in-person visits. Anne Walker, an Elder at Cumbernauld Old, also conducts funeral services. Last year the Ministry Team conducted 34 Funerals.

In the absence of a Locum, Julie is responsible for arranging pulpit supply. Ivar Struthers, an Elder at Cumbernauld Old and a Reader with the Church of Scotland, conducts many of the weekly and special services. Julie conducts, or arranges for a Minister to conduct, Communion, Baptism and Wedding Services.

Last year we were pleased to be able to hold a Communion Service in church on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October, the first for eighteen months, and hope to return to quarterly services in 2022. Due to the restrictions, there were no Wedding or Baptism Services last year but we hope to see these resume in 2022. Thank you to Julie, Valerie, Ivar and Anne for all the work that they continue to do for this congregation and parish.

### **The Parish**

In terms of population, the parish of Cumbernauld Old remains one of the largest in Scotland but this may change when Presbyteries determine the future shape of parishes and ministries. The parish is physically and dynamically challenging as it spreads across the north area of Cumbernauld from Castlecary in the east to Croy in the west. The last census was carried out in 2011 and since then several large housing estates have appeared and continue to appear, and the population of the parish must be nearing 20,000.

The parish is currently split into 28 Districts with an Elder or Visitor assigned to each of the Districts. The size of the parish and the lack of a physical presence north of the M80 which splits the parish into a north/south divide, presents a real difficulty in terms of our ability to reach out to everyone in the community. We continue to look at opportunities to have a greater presence in the community, improve outreach and raise the profile of the church, however, the restrictions that are currently in place means that mission opportunities remain limited.

The Local Church Review carried out in 2019 identified several challenges and opportunities and, while we have been unable to make much headway over the last two years due to restrictions, the Mission in Action group hope to address some of the actions over the coming year.

## **Congregational Statistics**

As we are very much a 'hands on' congregation thriving on personal interaction, the restrictions on social contact have had a far-reaching impact. As a welcoming church we often greeted new and returning people to church through our wide interaction with families celebrating a life event, engagement with local and national organisations and the local and wider community. For that reason, our Communion Roll had remained constant around 300 for several years pre pandemic. Due to the restriction on all aspects of life over the past two years, we have not had the same opportunity to connect with people and our rolls have fallen as a result. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021, the Communion Roll stood at 261. This represented a further fall of 20 last year. The Supplementary Roll stood at 120.

George and Sandra Moffat are our Congregational Roll Keepers and are responsible for keeping the Communion and Supplementary Rolls updated and in order. In addition to reporting on the Rolls, Glasgow Presbytery also requested a report on the age profile of regular worshippers last year. While this is a best guestimate you will not be surprised to learn that around 25% are between the age of 45 - 64 and around 65% are between the ages of 65 – 84.

## **The Kirk Session**

Cumbernauld Old operates the Model Deed of Constitution which basically means that we have a Kirk Session who has oversight of the life and service of the church and responsibility for temporal and spiritual affairs and a Congregational Board who has responsibility for all matters relating to property and finance. On 31<sup>st</sup> December the number of Ruling Elders stood at 39. Elspeth was Moderator of the Kirk Session before her departure. Julie now fulfils that role. Over the year most Kirk Session meetings were conducted virtually due to restrictions on gatherings.

Sadly, the Kirk Session lost one of its number, David Boyle, in August of last year. David was well known and highly respected both in the church and the community. He had been an Elder for 15 years, ordained at Cumbernauld Old in December 2006, and an active member of the congregation for many years prior to his ordination. David was also a popular member of the local Burns Club and prominent in the community. David is sorely missed by everyone who knew him.

Several of the Elders on the Kirk Session represent the congregation, locally, nationally and worldwide, maintaining our links with internal and external groups and organisations.

## **Presbytery Elder**

Last year Liz Dalling continued to represent us as Presbytery Elder. Although in the role for the full twelve months, Liz served in two different Presbyteries, Falkirk for the first six months of the year then Glasgow from 30<sup>th</sup> June onwards. Liz represents the congregation at Presbytery and reports to the Kirk Session on all relevant business.

## **Safeguarding**

John Telford, Alex Edwardson and Annette Campbell continued to manage our Safeguarding responsibilities. They have devolved responsibility to co-ordinate and manage all aspects of the safeguarding of children and vulnerable people on behalf of the Kirk Session. The team liaise with Presbytery and The Church of Scotland Co-ordinators and own the local registration process, maintain the register, identify and coordinate all training requirements, and ensure that all documentation is relevant and updated. Despite reduced physical interaction during the pandemic, vigilance and compliance are as important as ever, and the team is required to react to any changes of legislation or process, maintain the register and complete an annual audit.

### World Church

Ivar Struthers continued as our World Church representative last year. Ivar keeps the Kirk Session and the congregation informed of the key issues and events affecting churches and people around the world and shares information distributed by the Church of Scotland World Mission Council including initiatives and appeals and, where appropriate, co-ordinates campaigns locally.

### Data Protection

Ivar Struthers continued as Data Protection Co-ordinator. Ivar is responsible for producing local plans and reports and raising awareness of Data Protection requirements and keeping the Admin Team and Office Bearers up to date and compliant with evolving Data Protection regulation. However, it is worth noting that it is the responsibility of everyone who holds data for whatever reason to ensure that they comply with current legislation.

### Stewardship

Last year Ivar Struthers continued as Stewardship Convenor until the autumn of 2021 when he stood down to focus on other responsibilities. The past two years have been difficult, however, despite not being able to hold weekly church services for an extended period, the congregational did a remarkable job in getting information out and generating income. People had willingly offered their time and talents in many different ways. Thank you to everyone and thank you to Ivar for his contribution. As I write the role of Stewardship Convenor remains vacant.

### Cumbernauld Churches Together

Sandra Moffat became our representative at the Cumbernauld Churches Together forum, taking over this role from Lesley Littlejohn in the autumn. Cumbernauld Churches Together is a collective of local church groups from different denominations who meet regularly to jointly plan special services and events in the Cumbernauld area. Thank you to Lesley for her contribution and to Sandra for taking on this role.

### Partner Plan & Mission Circle

Last year, Elizabeth Snedden continued as Partner Plan Correspondent. In 2021 we maintained our link with our Missionary Partners, Graham and Sandra Duncan in South Africa. This partnership continues as a locally supported partnership and the Duncan's work is partially funded through the monthly Mission Circle donations. If you would like to be part of this initiative or know more about the Mission Circle or the work that your donations support please speak to Elizabeth Snedden.

### Christian Aid

Liz Dalling and Leslie Littlejohn continued as our Christian Aid representatives last year. In addition to other Christian Aid responsibilities, Liz and Lesley organise the annual collections during Christian Aid Week which takes place in May. If you would like to help or learn more about Christian Aid please speak to Liz or Lesley.

As you can see we are well represented across a whole range of activities and we owe our thanks to all who continue to represent us and carry out work on our behalf.

### **The Congregational Board**

While the Kirk Session has responsibility for temporal and spiritual affairs, the Congregational Board has responsibility for all matters relating to property and finance. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 a total of 48 Members of the congregation were serving on the Congregational Board and listed as Trustees. This includes 34 Elders.

Gillian MacDonald continued as Clerk to the Board last year. Elspeth was Moderator of the Congregational Board before her departure. Julie now fulfils that role. Over the year all Board and Trustee meetings were conducted virtually due to restrictions on gatherings.

### Finance

Although the Congregational Board is responsible for finance and property, last year the Board gave the Finance Committee delegated powers to make decisions on behalf of the Board. The Finance Committee meet monthly online which has enabled the group to continue to manage the church finances. As most of our income comes from weekly donations, special collections, other donations and fund-raising activities, restrictions on weekly worship and gatherings is a concern as opportunities for people to make donations are limited. Buildings need to be maintained, and we still need to meet our regular commitments including heating, lighting, insurance etc, and we are expected to meet our annual Ministry and Mission contribution.

An appeal to members who donated by FWO envelope to switch to Standing Order was very successful and now around 30 members have converted to Standing Order. Members who use the FWO scheme were also encouraged to hand in their envelopes, and many have continued to do so, and we have also received several one-off donations. All tax due on Gift Aid donations has now been recovered and is up to date.

The Fundraising Team also continued to raise substantial funds albeit in a different way with two new methods of raising funds linked to online shopping. Thanks to the efforts of everyone, I am happy to report that we met all of our financial obligations for 2021.

In the autumn, Robin Cantlie resigned as Treasurer. Robin and Yvonne were presented with gifts as a token of appreciation from the congregation at the service on 10<sup>th</sup> October. Barrie Sheppard took on the role of Treasurer with Finance Committee support on the day-to-day management of church finances. Thank you to Robin for his contribution as treasurer and to Barrie for taking on the role.

Ivar Struthers stood down from the team in the autumn to focus on other responsibilities. The Finance Committee was pleased to welcome Alex Edwardson in December. Thanks to Ivar for his contribution and to Alex for joining the team.

Finance Committee Convenor, Janice Smillie, now produces the monthly statement on general fund income and expenditure and the annual accounts. Thanks to Janice Smillie for producing the financial reports and to the other members of the Finance Team for their ongoing support. However, we could never have achieved another positive year-end financial position without the magnificent support and generosity of everyone in the congregation. Thank you!

### Property

The Property Committee has delegated powers to attend to all matters relating to Church buildings, Manse and grounds. Due to restrictions, access to the Church and Session House may have been severely restricted over the past year and the buildings used much less than usual, however, the buildings still need to be maintained whether occupied or not, therefore the work of the Property Committee continued.

Urgent repairs, necessary maintenance work and annual safety checks and servicing in the Church, Session House and Manse had to go ahead but most non-essential work continued to be deferred to a later date.

The biggest issue for the Property Convenor, Matt Sime, over the past year was the huge responsibility that came with managing the risks and logistics in complying with legal and advisory guidance to keep the church open and safe for worshippers during the ongoing pandemic. A huge amount of work was undertaken, particularly the updating of risk assessments every time the guidance changed, carrying out building checks and the installation of physical barriers and signage, the organisation of stewarding and cleaning, and much more.

Thanks to the Property Committee led by Matt Sime, for their time and effort in looking after the buildings and grounds and particularly for bearing most of the responsibility in the keeping the church open over the past year.

At the end of last year, Jean Stevenson retired from the post of Church Officer. Jean had faithfully carried out her duties for many years and decided that it was now time to take a well-deserved and hard-earned rest. Thanks to Jean for her service over the years. We are pleased to welcome Jane Steedman who takes up the post of Church Officer from January 2022.

### **Youth Organisations**

Sadly, the J Team and Sunday School no longer operate. Prior to the pandemic, we had been looking to address this as part of the LCR Action Plan, however, this has still not been possible. We plan to look at this over the coming year. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cumbernauld Boys' Brigade Company, though, continue to thrive under the leadership of Jordan Watson and his team. On 31<sup>st</sup> December the Boys' Brigade had 38 boys on the roll. Thanks to Jordan and the team for their efforts.

### **Adult Organisations**

I am pleased to report that the Ladies' Circle and Men's Group did manage to restart towards the end of the year. The Ladies' Circle restarted in October and meet at The Forge, Balloch every Tuesday afternoon at 1pm. All ladies welcome. If you would like to go along or want to learn more about the Ladies' Circle please speak to Jean Stewart. The Men's Group also restarted in October and normally meet on alternate weeks. Due to the social distancing restrictions in place, the Men's Group could not meet in the Session House therefore any meetings were limited to external visits. The Men's Group hope to be able to organise a more regular programme early in the coming year. If you would like to learn more about the Men's Group please speak to Duncan Whyte.

### **Fundraising**

Sadly the impacts of the pandemic continue to limit the Fundraising team's ability to hold events. Due to the restrictions on gatherings, we were again unable to hold a Summer Fete or Christmas Fair last year. The planned Boys' Brigade Concert and Musical Evening planned for last December also had to be cancelled. All very disappointing, however, the Fund-Raising team, as always, found inventive ways of continuing their great work in raising much needed funds for the church.

Last year the knitted Easter animals with creme eggs and the knitted Christmas items with chocolate oranges proved popular and were big sellers. Fortunately, we had a large supply of both thanks to the time and effort of all the knitters and all those who donated wool and chocolate. The 'Fill a Smartie Tube with 20p's' initiative saw a steady flow of filled tubes coming in and the Christmas cards were again a sell-out.

Thank you and well done to the Fundraising team and everyone who helped, donated and purchased goods.

## **Admin Group**

The Admin Team continued to manage all admin related activities within the church. This includes maintaining Office Bearer Contact lists and Elder District lists, producing and printing the weekly Order of Service and Church News, printing, bundling and distribution of the quarterly magazines or newsletters, distributing minutes of meetings, maintaining the photocopier and ordering ink and stationery among many other tasks.

Over the year, the Admin Team also distributed information electronically, including links to the recorded weekly and special services, electronic links to meetings and congregational notices and general information. While the quarterly magazine was not published last year, regular newsletters were sent to members to keep everyone up to date on church life. We hope to restart publishing the quarterly magazine in 2022. The weekly Order of Service and Church News restarted in the autumn. As we are still unable to use hymn books the Admin Team have been providing the full text of hymns on the weekly Order of Service. Thanks to the Admin Team for keeping everyone informed and up to date during a continuing difficult period.

## **Communication**

### **Magazines and Newsletters**

Last year, instead of a quarterly magazine, we published a regular bulletin style newsletter to keep members of the congregation updated on the church life. In November we published a larger edition of the Newsletter and as we move into 2022 hope to be issuing a quarterly magazine again.

In the autumn of last year, Ivar Struthers took on the responsibility of Magazine Editor, a role vacated by the departure of David Smith in October. We thank David for his contribution as Magazine Editor and to Ivar for taking on this role.

If you have any good ideas, would like to advertise a group or organisation or simply have an item of interest that you would like to share with the congregation please email Ivar at [ivar.struthers@btinternet.com](mailto:ivar.struthers@btinternet.com) by the advised closing dates for news bulletins or quarterly magazines.

### **Website**

Last year, Ivar Struthers continued to manage the Cumbernauld Old Parish Church website. The website has information on weekly and special services and activities, organisation, groups and items of community and wider interest. There are also links to other local and national websites. In fact, you can access almost everything you need to know online, and it has never been more important to have all this information on one online site than it has during the past two years! Please take the opportunity to visit at <http://cumbernauldold.org.uk/> where you will be able to see just how much is on offer and hopefully find something that interests you. We also have a Facebook page which has links to the services, topical prayers and general information.

### **Live Streaming**

Given the increasing reliance on internet access to church services, a decision was taken to instal broadband and live streaming equipment in the church over the summer months and live streaming of church services commenced on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August. This was also the date of the last recorded service. The advent of live streaming means that those who are unable to come to church for whatever reason can now participate from their homes and the ability to view remotely has been well received from people both at home and abroad. We do hope though that those who are able and feel comfortable to come to church will continue to do so. The church is very much open and worship services take place in the church every Sunday at 11am and is open to all.

