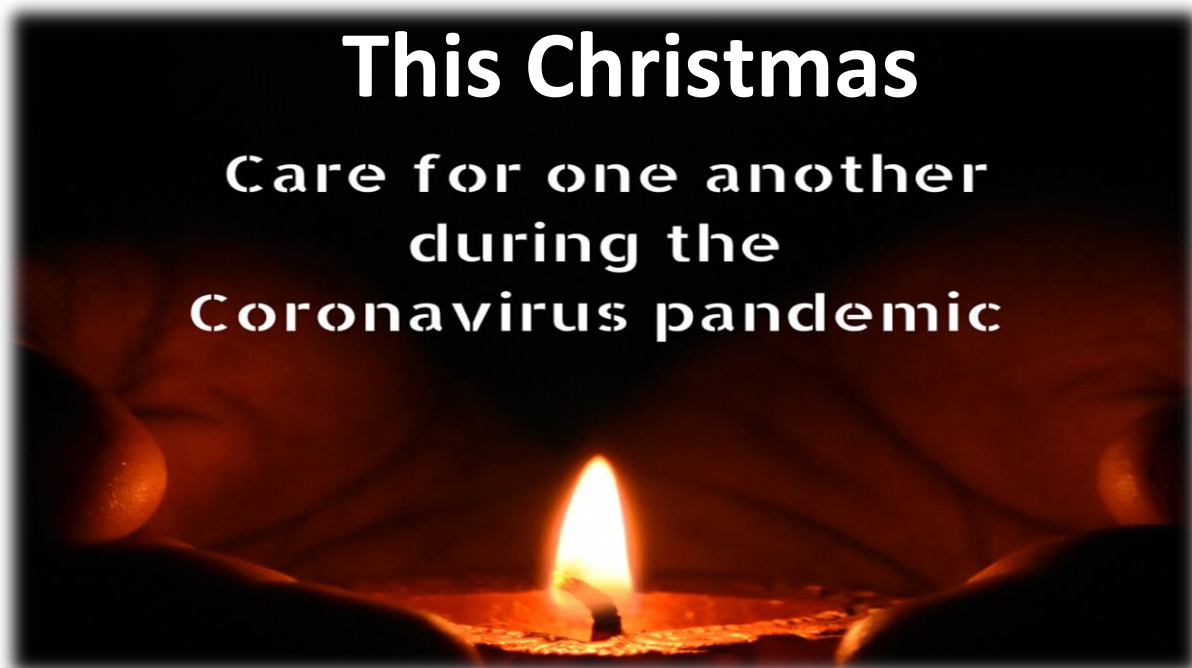


# Cornerstone



## This Christmas Care for one another during the Coronavirus pandemic

### Back to Normal by Easter?

At the time of writing this article we have been assured by Government Ministers that, with the discovery of no fewer than three Covid 19 vaccines, life should return to normal by Easter. I hope they are right. Last year has been a very trying period in which we have seen the best and the worst of human behaviour. On the one hand we have seen many wonderful acts of caring for others and on the other hand we have been deeply disappointed at some very regrettable flouting of the Covid Rules.

However, in my experience here in Cadzow, positive acts have greatly outweighed the negative and I am happy to report on this. On **p2**, the Minister's message should uplift tired spirits in the church and on **p7**, you can read of the perceptive effort which the Minister and his teams provided for a truly original and moving Remembrance service.

Greatly impressed by the some of the magnificent images coming from the Hubble telescope as it orbits our Earth, I have given, on **p8 and p9**, an airing of my appreciation of the conclusions emerging from recent studies in Science and Religion.

*Editor*

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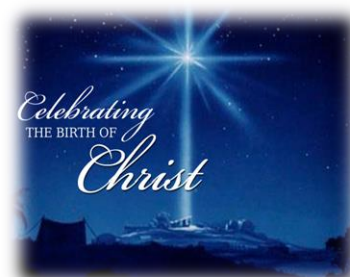
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## A Message from the Minister

*“When God seems farthest away he is nearer than ever”*



I was “meeting” with a few colleagues this week, a virtual, online meeting, as they all seem to be, and was surprised to find all my friends a bit subdued. There is usually a sparkle of energy and laughter when we get together, but this was a bit different. Some were having trouble sleeping, others were finding it hard to get moving on new projects, some were dealing with complaints in the congregation, still others had too many funerals to contend with, and all of us were trading notes on the challenges of doing their ministry online.

It’s not like ministers to “get real” with each other. All too often, there is a subtle undercurrent of competition between us and no one really wants to be the first to admit that they’re having any problems. What surprised me was that, for the first time, everyone was willing to be honest about their struggles. We weren’t moaning, whinging, or whining. Rather, it was being genuine with each other and strangely, in that, I found great comfort. It is good to know that others are having the same issues as yourself.

What was most reassuring to me was the reading of James 1:2-3, “Consider it pure joy my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking in anything.”

I’ve always found this verse challenging. How can a “trial” be “pure joy”? Well, of course, only a masochist would say they enjoyed suffering, but Paul was not talking about suffering *alone*. Notice, he was writing to the whole church, brothers and sisters. He was speaking to a group of people, many of whom would be sharing the same hardships of being a Christian when that wasn’t such an easy thing to do.

They would have faced the hardship of many rejections and even persecutions, but he was reminding them that they suffered together and that others were alongside them, dealing with the same things. A burden shared is a burden halved, but a burden divided three ways or four or more is truly broken down into manageable chunks.

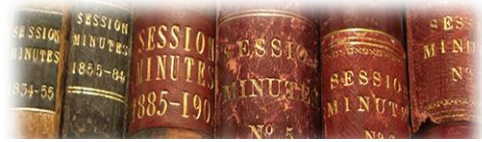
Friends, we’re all having a trial in the midst of this forced isolation and each of us is carrying burdens they don’t want and certainly never asked for. But, in the midst of this season of separation, there remains much to be thankful for and much with which we can encourage one another, even if that means just knowing that others are also finding this whole thing a bit trying.

Trust that God is at work and that, in every trial, there is fruit being nurtured for a coming harvest. It is when God seems farthest away that he is nearer than ever. One day we shall meet each other again and what a day of rejoicing that will be!

**John**

# From the Archives

*Harry Webster*



With Cadzow opening in September 1920 after the installation of electrical lighting and redecoration, the organisations were able to start as normal. Due to the lack of a hall, the Sunday School continued to meet in the pews of the sanctuary of Cadzow after morning worship. Each class separated by an empty pew.

At this time, in addition to Cadzow, there were 3 other Sunday Schools in the parish at Ferniegar, Low Waters, and Eddlewood. In 1924 it is recorded they had a combined membership of 657 children led by 15 male and 59 female teachers. However, even with that number of teachers there was a problem regarding discipline of the children.

Mr. Graham writing in his letter to the congregation in the November 1920 magazine touched on the matter.

“One organisation of the Church is making strenuous efforts to justify its existence during the coming winter and that is the Sabbath School Teachers’ Association. For some time past many of us have felt that much might be done to lighten the task of the teachers if we had some meetings for instruction and consultation during the week. The weakness of the Sunday School is just the difficulties which many of the teachers find in controlling their classes. In order to obviate that, a series of weekly meetings is to be inaugurated, consisting of round table-conferences on the Sunday’s lessons as well as one or two lectures on the method of teaching by Mr. Brown, headmaster in the Bent School, and one or two supplementary lectures by myself on the Bible. A syllabus is being prepared, and will be in the hands of the teachers by the time this is in print. My object in giving further publicity to this scheme is to enlist the sympathy of all in the work of the Sunday School. I have been long enough a Minister now to know that there is another grave weakness in the Sunday School, and that is the lack of interest the Congregation at large has in it. You send your children there, but you seldom or never pay us a visit to see how the work is being done. Speak a word of encouragement to the teachers and you will be surprised at the results.”

Then as now, the work of the Sunday School has an important place in the life and work of Cadzow, Although the number of children attending has dropped the problems highlighted by Mr Graham still exist to a greater or less extent.

Do the present teachers feel they would like the congregation to show more interest in the work that is being done with the children?



# Farmer's Grace Before Breakfast

Many thanks to Elizabeth Batty for sending in this article Ed



A while back I read a story of a visiting pastor who attended a men's breakfast in the middle of a rural farming area of the country'

The group had asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say grace for the morning breakfast:

"Lord I hate buttermilk", the farmer began. The visiting pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where he was going.

The farmer loudly proclaimed "Lord I hate lard". Now the pastor was growing concerned! Without missing a beat, the farmer continued "And Lord you know I don't care much for raw white flour"

Then the farmer added " But lord when you mix them all together and bake them. I do love warm fresh biscuits.

So, Lord when things come up we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits, Amen".

## Pastor's Comment

Within the above prayer there is a great wisdom for all when it comes to complicated situations such as those we are experiencing in the world today

Stay strong my friends because our life is being mixed with lots of things that we don't care for

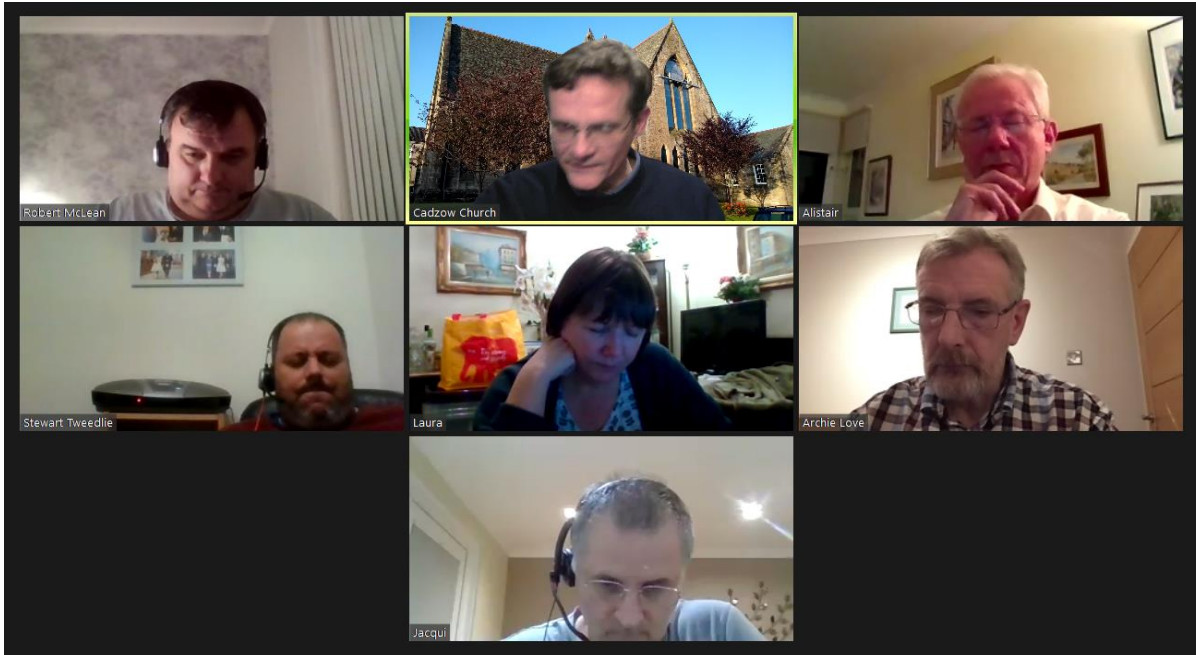
---- relax and wait until the mixing is done ----

I am not sure that I agree completely with the farmer and the pastor. What do you think?

**Editor**



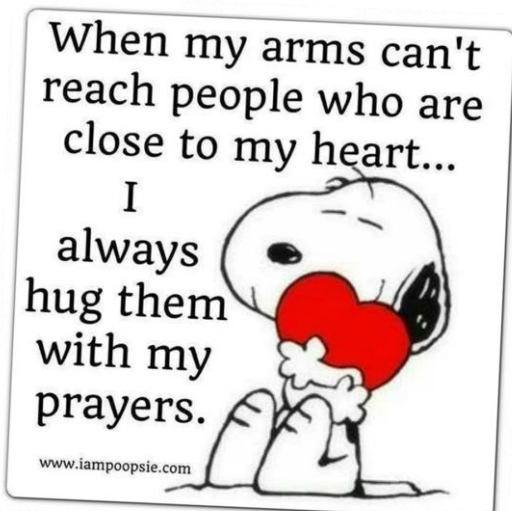
# Covid Team in Prayer



The Minister passed me this screenshot he took by accident during a Covid Team Zoom meeting . John’s system had failed while he was delivering a prayer. After some time he managed to fix the problem and found his team, as befits good Christians, still reverently in prayer. John wants to know if any other teams, can beat this display of reverence? *Editor*

## *Some Snippets From our Readers*

*This Snoopy cartoon is particularly meaningful during the current pandemic.*



“Good morning listeners ! 14 days till Christmas means 14 sleeps till Christmas, unless you are old and prone to randomly falling asleep in front of the TV at various points of the day in which case it will be much more.”

*Thanks are due to Eleanor Rae and her son Sandy for sending in this one.!*

# Grasping the Nettle

GTN Online Conference

## Through a Glass Darkly

**Professor Alister McGrath**



Three one hour lectures

Thursday 29 October - **Science, Faith and Me** – *The personal journey of a lapsed atheist*

Friday 30 October- **Science Faith and Doubt** – *Living with uncertainty*

Saturday 31 October- **Science, Faith and the Meaning of Life** – *A Discovery*

During the last three days of October, Joyce and I tuned into a Zoom Conference sponsored by GTN. The main speaker was Professor Alister Mc Grath\* who presented three one hour lectures on subjects which could be listed under the general heading “Science and Religion”. Speaking directly from Oxford University, Professor McGrath gave a truly inspired performance. Without notes, he dealt with some of the most complex problems with great perception and clarity and fully answered awkward questions with thoroughness and good natured humour.

I am familiar with Professor McGrath’s work and I share his views. Of the numerous books I have read I can particularly recommend “**Dawkin’s God -Genes, Memes, and the Meaning of Life**” and “**Surprised by Meaning**”. Our more mature readers from the congregation will be interested to know that I was led to the first reference by Audrey Wallace who was my predecessor as *Cornerstone* editor and a truly delightful lady.

I am glad I had made a study of Alister McGrath’s work since on more than one occasion during his lectures my wife, who was intent on his every word, whispered in great surprise “Gosh John he actually agrees with you!”

Joyce and I also agreed that Alister McGrath’s lecture had been something really special and we had been enriched by the experience, However, as indicated by the Conference chairman, the Very Rev Angus Morrison, we also concluded that specialist knowledge was needed to fully understand the significance of some of professor McGraths conclusions ,It would be helpful if steps could be taken to make things more accessible to the majority of people who are not specialists.

\* **Alister McGrath FRSA** is a Northern Irish theologian, priest, historian, scientist, Christian apologist and intellectual. He currently holds the Andreas Idreos Professorship in Science and Religion in the Faculty of Theology and Religion of the University of Oxford.



## Let's Hear it for John and His Teams!

*The Worship Team, Covid Safety Team and the Boys' Brigade contribute to an inventive Sunday morning service* **Editor**

The lockdown imposed by the coronavirus restrictions in March of this year meant that, for the foreseeable future we were no longer allowed to meet in the church on Sunday mornings so our Minister turned his attention to the production of a weekly video for our congregation's computer users and this is proving to be very worthwhile. I have certainly been impressed by the efforts that John and his Worship Team have put into this task. Since it was initiated, their video production has advanced considerably as John and his team have recognised many of the advantages of this type of communication and have introduced several ideas and improvements with obvious enthusiasm. It should also be noted that, with the help of the Covid Safety Team and an easing of the safety rules, a congregation of around 25 socially distanced people can now also attend services.

The video produced for Remembrance Sunday deserves special mention. At the beginning and end of the ceremony the flags were carried by Captain Mark Richardson and Stewart Tweedlie who also undertook the placing of wreaths. During the proceedings separate recitations were given by several members of the Boys' Brigade. The trumpet was expertly played by Gregor Beattie and John added to his sermon an absorbing presentation on our Second World War Window. The video ended with David Stark's poignant playing of the pipes at the War Memorial in Hamilton Park.

It proved to be a really memorable ceremony. I was particularly moved by the contributions from the young lads from the Boys' Brigade. John and his teams are due much praise for the success of this original and fitting Remembrance Service.





1 Orion Nebula



2 Orion Constellation



3 Horsehead Nebula

## God's Presence in the Stars

### 1) The Birth of Star

On an evening in early November my Golden Retriever dog, Tommy, and I set off for one of our really interesting walks. By evening it was already dark and we love to gaze at the night sky as we meander along. If the sky is clear and if you look towards the South East you get a good view of the readily recognisable constellation of Orion rising through the stars (see fig2 above) Every year in late autumn I look out for Orion since its arrival assures me that Christmas is near.

As we gazed skywards I remarked to my fellow walker, "You know Tommy the facts about the Orion constellation are really breath-taking." He showed little interest but I continued looking. The three stars lined up at the centre of the grouping, shown in fig. (2) above, mark the position of *Orion's Belt* and when you look just below this "belt" you are observing a position of particular importance to astronomers. Here scientists have found an excellent viewpoint to observe the birth of new stars.

As you might expect the stellar birth process is highly complex and spectacular. At first hydrogen and helium atoms and perhaps other dust formed from the creation process begin to clump together into spectacular gas clouds called nebulae. Examples of two nebulae to be found around Orion are , the Orion Nebula and the Horsehead Nebula. Both are shown above. Most nebulae are of enormous size measuring up to hundreds of light years in diameter.

### Units

Astronomical Unit (**AU**) - 93 million miles

{the distance between the Earth and Sun}

Light Year (**LY**) – the distance light travels in a vacuum in one year

( 1 LY) = 63,241 (AU)



## **God's Presence in the Stars (*Continued*)**

As the nebula continues to attract more dust, atoms of the light elements are squeezed under enough pressure for their nuclei to undergo fusion. As time goes by the nebula continues to attract more and more atoms and becomes increasingly dense and hot. As further time continues to pass it becomes so hot and dense that explosions in huge nuclear reactions occur. Hydrogen atoms start to fuse together and the nebula is transformed into a blazing ball of fire. A star is born!

As I gaze with wonder at the stars, and am able to comprehend this awesome process of starbirth I cannot believe that this creation came about by chance. I believe it is the work of God. Also in my book, *Reality Science and the supernatural*, I have argued that the reasoned intelligibility of the universe points to the existence of a Mind that is responsible for the universe and for our minds. Even Albert Einstein has stated:-

**The eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility. The fact that it is comprehensible is a miracle**

I believe that this miracle is provided by God.

On a clear night before Christmas, as we await Christ's birth, why don't you wrap up well and go outside to gaze at the awesome wonder at the stars? As you wait patiently in the silent stillness I believe you can sense God's presence.

### **2) The Production of Carbon in the Stars**

All of the elements here on earth were created in the stars. At the start of a star's life its hydrogen atoms fuse to form helium atoms. As the star grows older and the hydrogen supply is depleted, the helium atoms fuse to form carbon. The carbon atoms then fuse to form oxygen. This manufacturing process continues with all the elements getting progressively heavier until the star dies. Elements as heavy as iron can be manufactured using this process. Heavier elements are created in the explosions of much more massive stars.

When Sir Fred Hoyle was carrying out research on how carbon came into existence in the "blast furnaces" of the stars, his calculations showed that it is extremely difficult to explain how the stars generated enough carbon to sustain life on Earth. Hoyle found that there were numerous "fortunate" one-time occurrences which seemed to indicate purposeful "adjustments" in the natural laws in order to produce the necessary carbon. He is quoted as saying, "a common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintendent has monkeyed with the physics as well as the chemistry and biology and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. I do not believe that any physicist who examined the evidence could fail to draw the inference that the laws of nuclear physics have been designed with regard to the consequences they produce within the stars."

***(Continued on page 9)***

## *God's Presence in the Stars continued*

Here again it certainly looks as though some "designer" has been at work. Indeed commenting on the results of his research Hoyle asked "Surely simple common sense tells us that an external Intelligence is at work here?" *Editor*

## ***A prayer for Covid 19***



Loving Lord

We pray for your love and compassion to abound as we walk through this challenging season.

We ask for wisdom for those who bear the load of making decisions with widespread consequences.

We pray for those who are suffering with sickness and all who are caring for them.

We ask for protection for the elderly and vulnerable to not succumb to the risks of the virus.

We pray for misinformation to be curbed that fear may take no hold in hearts and minds.

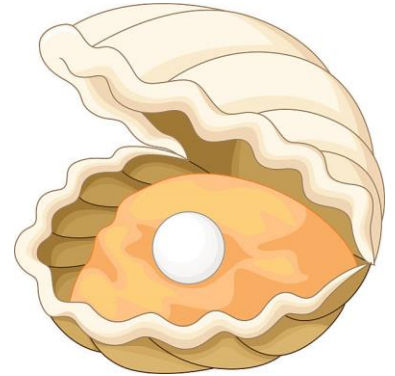
As we exercise the good sense that you in your mercy provide, may we also approach each day in faith and peace, trusting in the truth of your goodness towards us.

Amen



## Poet's Corner

Many thanks to Evelyn Henwood for sending in three excellent poems. For this issue I have chosen "The Oyster" since the clever.humorous style really cheered me up *Editor*



### The Oyster

There once was an oyster whose story I'll tell  
Who found that some sand had worked under his shell,  
Just one little grain but it gave him a pain,  
For Oysters have feelings that are very plain.  
Now did he berate this working of fate  
That left him in such a deplorable state ?  
Did he curse the Government and call for an election  
And say that the sea should have some protection?  
Well, years passed by, as years always do  
Till he came to his destiny, "Oyster Stew!"  
But the small grain of sand which bothered him so  
Was a beautiful Pearl, all richly aglow!  
Now this tale has a moral, for isn't it grand  
What an oyster can do with a small grain of sand  
And what couldn't WE do, if we'd only begin  
With all of the things that get under our skin?

Anonymous

# Church Diary

Magazine Editor

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**Tel: 426682**

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**Tel: 304946**

## WFO **Mrs Dorothy Craig**

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**Tel:281553**

## Deputy Session Clerk **Stewart Tweedlie**

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**Tel:249032**

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Garrion Linn, Horsley Head, Overton **Tel:376654**

## Roll Clerk **Mrs Patricia Steel**

6 Maple Bank

**Tel:427253**

## Property Convenor **Malcom Young**

105 Aitken Road

**Tel:284036**

## Treasurer **Mrs Heather Stewart**

6 Cypress Court

**Tel:324535**

## Hall letting Convenors **Archie and Aileen Love**

**Tel: 320161**

## Funerals

14 May—Jane Mackenzie

20 September—James Smith

3 June—David Gordon Shanks

1 October—Marion Gebbie

5 June—James Glass

2 October—Alex Graham

9 June—Robert Clark

21 October--Ella Laing

12 June—Catherine Crawford

21 October- Catherine Wilson

12 June--Iain Thomson

3 November—Florence Digby

3 July—Frank Wight

9 November—Rita McKie

31 July—William Donkin

16 November—Betty Kerr

11 August—Jean Pollock

17 November—Janie Thain

14 August--Alison Beaton

24 November—May Orr

19 August—Nancy Wilson

26 November—George Hosie

***Cadzow Parish Church of Scotland Hamilton (SCO006611)***