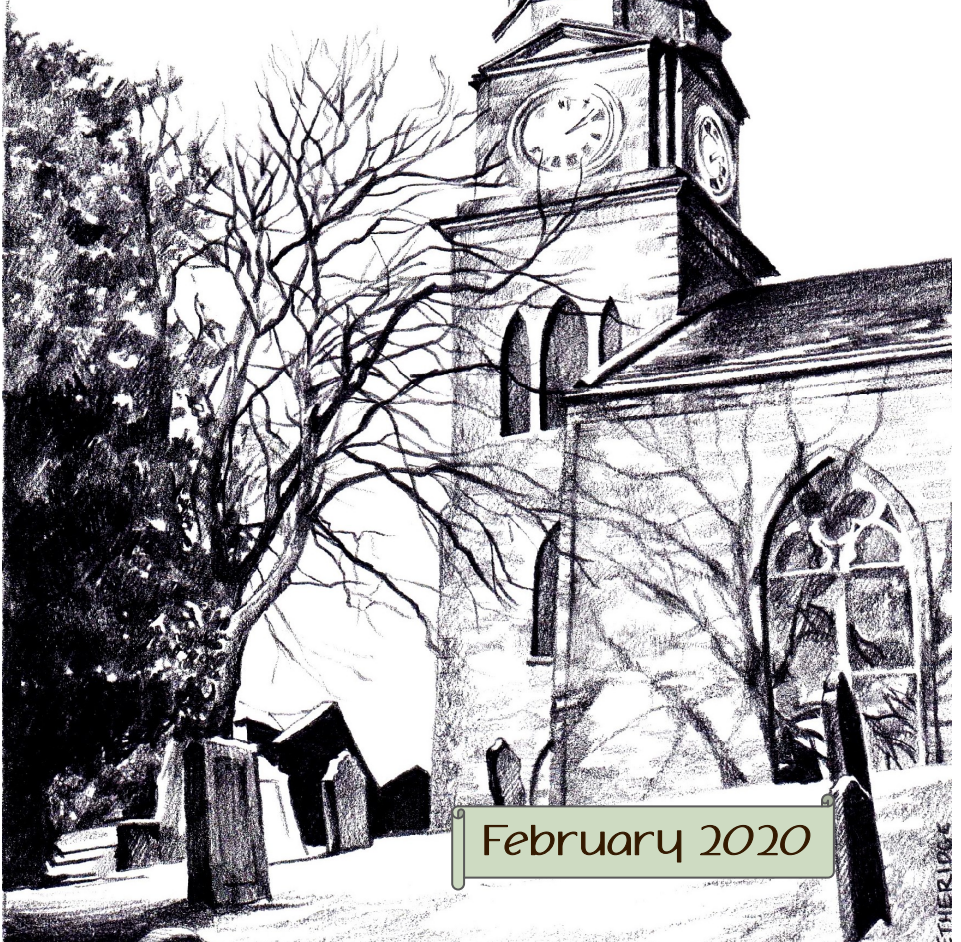


The Steeple Times



February 2020



Services of Public Worship:

† **Every Sunday at 11:00am**

† ***Additional services:***

⇒ First Sunday of the month: Informal Communion
at 9:30am

† **Midweek Service every Wednesday at 12:10pm**

Minister:

The Rev. Barbara Ann Sweetin B.D.

The Manse

Lour Road

Forfar DD8 2BB

Tel: 01307 248228

E-mail: **bsweetin@churchofscotland.org.uk**

Church website: www.thebigkirk.co.uk

Church E-mail: eando_office@yahoo.co.uk

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LETTER FROM THE MANSE

Happy New Year everyone!

I am writing this letter in the middle of January and the New Year seems so long ago already! However I pray that you have a happy, blessed and peaceful 2020.

*On Sunday 12th January my sermon was based on Matthew 3:13-17 which is the passage about Jesus baptism but my sermon was based on the last verse: 'And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."' The title I gave my sermon was 'When do you feel God's pleasure?' When I was planning and researching for the sermon this really hit home to me. When do I feel **GOD'S** pleasure? When I thought about it a little bit more – **WHEN** do I feel God's pleasure? And then I thought – when **DO I** feel God's pleasure? When you put the emphasis on different parts of the questions it really can change how you look at the question and how you would answer it.*

*Well my friends, I feel **GOD'S** pleasure when I think and act like Jesus and if I get it right because it is not always easy. Interacting and loving people who think and act differently from me; when I try to forgive a hurt that has come my way or to those I love and succeed in doing it; being there for other people and accepting help when it has been offered to me. **WHEN** do I feel God's pleasure – when I speak and preach the word of God and someone says – I understand that! I never thought of it like that! I get it! When I visited someone at home who was poorly and their wife was feeling pressured with all the running around and I just started doing the dishes – washing and drying them. Nothing big or*

major, just a helping hand! When **DO I** feel God's pleasure? That is easy to answer – when I am with the members and friends of East and Old in any aspect of God's ministry and when I see God's mission being put into practice each and every day by you! I feel blessed to be the minister of East and Old Parish Church and I thank God and also you.

However I would like to ask you the same question that I asked myself. When do you feel **GOD'S** pleasure? **WHEN** do you feel God's pleasure? When **DO YOU** feel God's pleasure? Are you finding this an easy or a difficult task? When is it that you do something that makes God smile? What are those special moments in life that are so sacred and so powerful that you can feel the tingle of God's joyous presence and affirmation?

I pray that you feel this often and if not do what I preach about most Sunday's – become more Christ-like!

Every blessing to you and your family

Your friend and minister

Barbara Ann



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Christmas Outdoor Market - the last edition of the Steeple Times was just going out when this event took place. The Forfar Action Network held an open-air market in the town centre and we took one of the stalls. Doug Robertson sold some of his woodwork and Elma Sim gave us knitted Santa hats and Christmas puddings for covering chocolate oranges and we made up numerous chocolate hampers. We gave away free our knitted angels with the Good News of Christ birth and offered free tea, coffee and sweets to everyone passing by. The town was buzzing and it was great to interact with so many people. Thank you to everyone who helped out at this event.

Gift Service - once again our members responded amazingly with gift donations at this service. The Angus Toy Appeal were very grateful for the donations as this year they received over 1000 referrals for children who were going to go without gifts or have very little. Thank you everyone.



This event turned out to be very quiet – maybe because it was close to Christmas but we still raised £300. Thank you to all the helpers and those who came along and managed to get a wee rest from all the hustle and bustle at Christmas.

Community Christmas Party - what a wonderful and fantastic event this turned out to be. Over 200 people attended - mostly families from the community. There was a Circus Skills company, African drumming workshops, Hoop Dancing classes and Mickey and Minnie Mouse appeared to talk and interact with the children and adults. In the social area there was free food to enjoy from sandwiches, sausage rolls, crisps, fruit, cheese and lots of different drinks. The highlight for the children was the sweet trolley. Doug Robertson made the large trolley and we filled it with an array of sweets and treats. Thank you to all involved in this big and successful event.



Christmas Tree - the company who supply us with our tree each year could not give us a tree as high as we normally have – in excess of 25 feet! It will be another 5 years before they will have trees that tall



again! On looking around, web searching and phoning around different companies, we were really struggling to get a tall tree that looked really good. A big thank you to Dave Duncan one of our members who found us a lovely tree and picked it up and delivered it to us. On hearing about our struggles one of our members very kindly donated the money to cover the cost of the tree. Thank you to Dave and our anonymous donor. A big thanks then goes to the team who decorated the tree, which involved using our new scaffolding - the team

worked hard! The Flower Team did an amazing job of decorating various parts of the church and rooms as did the Busy Hands team in getting all the areas ready for the Christmas Party.

Church Pantomime Trip - thank you to Matthew Scott for arranging our trip to the Gardyne Theatre in Dundee to see Snow White. More details in the Groovy Gryphons article.



The Real Live Nativity Tour - this new venture took place on 17th and 18th December from 5:30pm to 7:30pm and a lot of preparation was needed. Over the two nights people came along and wandered round the grounds of the church to take in the Nativity Story. There were scenes and images of the inn, the stable, the census area, the angel, the shepherds and sheep in the field, the Good News book and the wise men. Thank you to our actors who took on various roles but the highlight of the evening was meeting our three live sheep and a big thank you to Dave Duncan for organising this and to George Findlay for the pen to put them in. The Building Team and Busy Hands and a number of other members did so much preparation before and on the night but it was a success. Thank you to the choir and members of the church who sang some lovely Christmas Carols outside in the freezing cold, Bill and Billy did an amazing job trying to light sparklers in a strong breeze

and to the ladies in the kitchen and social area who served home-made soup and breadies and lots of tea and coffee to everyone.

Once again another great success and look out for bigger and better next Christmas!

Strathmore Primary School Service - it is great when we see the children and staff of the school attending the church for the Christmas Service. The church was full and there were lots of exciting going's-on during the service and needless to say Barbara Ann had them singing, laughing and most importantly learning about the best gift at Christmas – Jesus! A number of children took part in the service from prayers to readings and the school chanter group and then P3 sang Silent Night whilst using sign language. P7 then sang the German version of this hymn. At the end of the service the school Christmas choir led us through some Christmas songs – a lovely time was had by all.



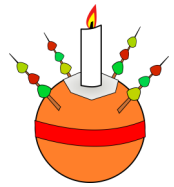
Carol Singing at the Cross - FACT added a new event to their calendar this year by singing Christmas carols at The Cross on the Saturday before Christmas. About 30 people were involved and by all accounts it was a good half hour slot.



Nativity Service - our Groovy Gryphons and Echo Teens did an amazing job with a modern Nativity this year. The story and clothes were all brought into the 21st Century and both children and adults were involved in the play. The highlight was when Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem in an Uber (taxi), which consisted of a motorised scooter made into a car and driven by a chauffeur. Our minister uploaded this clip onto the church face book page and it received over 6000 views! It was even liked by 'The Still Game Fan Club'. Thank you to Matthew Scott for organising this whole play.



Christingle Making - this turned out to be difficult for the first time for a number of reasons. Our minister orders the oranges from Asda every year by click and collect but this year it would not allow the quantities we buy – 350. So she went into the store three weeks before and ordered them directly with the supervisor of fresh produce. On the morning of the 23rd Barbara Ann and Billy went in at 9:00am to collect them only to be given satsumas which were far too small. They were told they did not have enough oranges in store and that they only get a set amount at Christmas. Barbara Ann was not happy! They emptied Asda of all the oranges they had on the shelves and then went to Tesco and managed to get the rest. On arriving at the church slightly later than desired they discovered only 7 people had turned out to help make the Christingles instead of the normal 15 to 20. Everyone worked really quickly but near the end had to move rooms due to a funeral in the church that morning. A big thanks to those who came along to help and to those who stayed longer to get the job done.





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Christingle Service - all singing, all dancing for over 300 people at this service. Our beloved Twelve Days of Christmas was once again sung with gusto and energy and the story of the Jesus birth was put across in numerous ways. The highlight of the Christingle Service had to be when young Niamh decided she wanted to hold baby Jesus and lifted him from the crib. Young Arwen took exception to this and stormed over to her and told her in no uncertain terms that baby Jesus should be in the crib and that baby Jesus belonged to Barbara Ann – who would have thought baby Jesus was going to cause such upset on Christmas Eve! All ended well when Barbara Ann told Arwen all was well and Niamh stood and rocked baby Jesus back to sleep. If you could have seen the face of Niamh’s mum – it was a picture!

Christmas Day Service - this quiet and reflective service is always special with approximately 30 people in attendance and just about every year we have visitors from the community who come along. A number of people brought along their gifts from Santa and we were delighted to have two children on the morning also. The message of the day was love, peace and hope.



Christmas Card Delivery

The annual Christmas Card delivery service had another successful year - almost £6000 was raised after expenses. The Boys Brigade and the Scouts are very grateful to everyone who uses this service as the money raised fairly boosts their company funds. Thanks also to the many volunteers who sort and deliver the cards!



Groovy Gryphons & Echo Teens

It has been a busy few months for us, all of which started back with our latest fundraiser at the start of December. We enlisted some help from members of the church and parents of the children to make soup and desserts for everyone to have after Sunday worship. We would like to thank everyone who came along to support us and we are happy to announce that we raised a fantastic total of £250.



The Groovy Gryphons & Echo Teens helped at the Christmas market by serving tea & coffee to the public and handing out sweets, angels and information leaflets. Everyone who helped on the day had a fantastic time and it was a great opportunity for our children to develop their social skills.



December is always a really busy month for everyone here at the East & Old and this year was no different. We started off with our annual Christmas Panto Trip. This year we decided to invite the congregation and members of the community along to join us on this trip. We thought it would be good to stay local and as such, went to the Gardyne Theatre in Dundee to see their production of Snow White. Everyone on the trip and all who saw the show would agree that we have some very talented people in our local area and that we will definitely be going back to see the future shows there.



After the fantastically busy start to December we then focused on the nativity for this year and decided to do something a little bit different and perform a “modern nativity”. The modern nativity that we performed was completely written from scratch and included a rewritten version of the song Fairy-tale of New York. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our friend Julia, a music student at Ayr University, for rewriting this song for us. Some people might say that the highlight of the show was the Uber that brought Mary and Joseph into the church. The Uber we feel was made complete by the number plate that was gifted to us by Dundee City Council. We are very thankful to the council for providing us with this prop. The Groovy Gryphons, Echo Teens, leaders and members of the congregation had an absolute ball performing the modern nativity and really hope that everyone enjoyed the show. Some of our children and leaders also had a great time taking part in the Outdoor Nativity Tour earlier in the month.



Finally, on behalf of the children and leaders we would like to wish everyone all the best for 2020 and we look forward to working with you all over the coming year.

Joyce, Frances, Matthew and Karen

Lift - many of you will know that our men in the church have been building the lift shaft and when it was inspected by the lift company they were given a very high pass mark. Well done everyone because we know that you were all exhausted and you have saved the church thousands of pounds! The main team were Doug Robertson, Bill Duthie, Jim Farquharson and Angus Spence but also the many others who helped with the lifting and laying, so a big thank you to you all. The lift is on order and it takes approximately 12 weeks so we are hoping it will be installed at the end of February.



Building Team – Work is underway on the new stairs between the upper floor and the session room and will then move onto the toilets in the Session Room very soon. However, the work in the new upper hall and rooms requires to be done by a contractor and we will be focussing on this later in the year hopefully when we have more money.



As you know we have a **Wish List** in the church and there are still some cards on the board. We know that there is nothing really glamorous on the board but we do need money for door handles and stops, wash hand basins, cubicles etc. because we want to get phase two completed this year if possible. E.g. – on the wish list board we have plasterboard – 400 sheets at £8 equates to £3200! Can you please buy a few sheets!

Church Hall - there has been some interest in buying the church hall and we have had a few viewers but the holiday period really does get in the way of many things. We will bring you more news when we have it.



WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR!

2020 Vision

Our Kirk Session and teams in the church over the next couple of months will be looking at the vision for our church over the next 5 to 7 years. As a church we need to constantly fundraise to cover our daily costs because what we bring in financially through standing orders, envelopes and open plate does not cover our expenses and we annually have a shortfall which runs into thousands of pounds and not just four or five thousand pounds. However we are aware that many people are getting tired of organising fundraising events and for some of those attending them also. To this end we will be looking to run three events this coming year which we hope everyone will support (not including Friends events). Our minister is slightly concerned about this because it means we will see less of some of our members and friends throughout the year as they will attend fundraising events but do not attend bible study, faith discussion or prayer events. Barbara Ann hopes and prays that the fellowship of the church will not falter.

1. Where do you see our church in 5 to 7 years?
2. How can we get more people involved in church life?
3. How can we attract children and youth? What do we have at present that would attract them – if anything?
4. What can we offer families and especially people in their 20-40's?
5. How can we improve people's knowledge of the bible and missional work?

Our minister would love to hear from you? But before you answer these questions please take them to God in prayer because we need God's vision.

Food Parcels - a number of people very kindly bring in food donations most Sundays placing them in the box at the front door – a big thank you for that. Our food donations now go straight to Strathmore Primary School who are delighted with these donations. Please keep bringing in some food no matter how small or large as it is badly needed especially in the first three to four months of the year when bills are high.

Zuglo Church: Hungary

The members of our twinned church in Zuglo were telling us that in March this year there is a festival in Hungary to celebrate *Johann Sebastian Bach* whose birthday is 20th March. Zuglo Church is holding a Bach concert on 17th March so to that end our minister has asked our choir to find a hymn which is sung to one of Bach's arrangements and sing it in church in mid-March - we look forward to hearing them. We are also hoping that our friends in Zuglo will be visiting us this year again and they will be working and liaising with the Green group regarding Eco-Congregations.



Family Day Trips - these “away days” are very popular and give families time to spend together without costing them a fortune. We have two trips arranged with the first one on **Thursday 13th February to Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh** - an indoor trip because of the time of year. Details of the second trip to be announced in the next issue.



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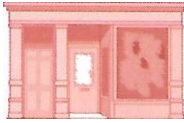
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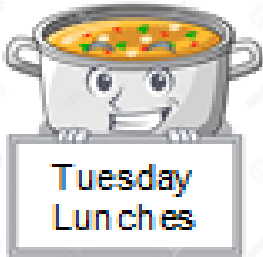
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Advance notice of Lent dates

| Lent Bible Study | | | Lent Lunches ALL in East and Old | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| ▪ Thurs 27th | February | East and Old | ▪ Friday 28th | February |
| ▪ Thurs 5th | March | St Fergus | ▪ Friday 6th | March |
| ▪ Thurs 12th | March | Lowson Memorial | ▪ Friday 13th | March |
| ▪ Thurs 19th | March | Forfar Community Church | ▪ Friday 20th | March |
| ▪ Thurs 26th | March | St John's | ▪ Friday 27th | March |
| ▪ Thurs 2nd | April | St Margaret's | ▪ Friday 3rd | April |



Every Tuesday we serve lunches in the Social Area at church between 12 noon and 1:00pm, we offer a choice of two home-made soups (one vegetarian) with crusty bread, followed by tasty sandwiches, tea/ coffee and biscuits.

The food is prepared and served by volunteers.

No fixed price – all we ask is a donation, e.g. £3.00 per person or more if you wish to give extra.

- . Why not come along – on your own or with a friend, you will be made most welcome

The lunches are open to all – not just members of East & Old.

We are looking for more volunteers to join us - anyone willing to help on a monthly basis would be most welcome.

Four volunteers help each Tuesday, two provide a pot of soup each for say 10-12 persons and the other two provide sandwiches.

For more information please contact Barbara Ann or Jean Alexander (463860). Everyone is very friendly; it's a great way of meeting people and making friends. **GO ON – give it a try!**



St Andrew's Night

This was held on 30th November in the church and what a great success it was. A three-course traditional Scottish meal was served with Irn Bru and Strathmore water to drink. Scottish general knowledge quiz, Scottish music quiz, community singing and Accord entertained us also. The next "country night" will be held in May and will be a French Night.



Flick and Chip Night

Fifty-two people turned out for this event and everyone enjoyed themselves. The fish suppers from Munro's were excellent and there was lots of bread and butter and tea and coffee on hand. The film 'Yesterday' was a great hit with many of those attending quietly singing the Beatles music to



themselves!

Wednesday 4th March - Family Beetle Drive Night

Our next event is similar to a Beetle Drive but called a Church drive where the aim is to build a church. Tickets will cost £5.00 and will be on sale in the church and in the shop soon.



the

REGULAR DATES

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Mon | Knit 'n Natter * | 1:30pm |
| | Music Café * | 2:00pm – 3:15pm |
| Tue | Wee Blether * | 10:30am – 11:45am |
| | Cosy Corner: Soup/ Sandwich Lunch * | 12:00noon – 1:00pm |
| Wed | Prayer Group in the Church | 11:00am |
| | Midweek Service | 12:10pm – 12:30pm |
| Thu | Art Group * | 1:30pm – 4:00pm |
| Fri | Baby Blether * | 9:30am – 11:30am |
| <i>* held in the Social Area</i> | | |



CHURCH BUS - On the first Sunday of each month we offer a service to members who have difficulty getting to church - they are picked up at their homes from 10:00am onwards and transported to the 11:00am Service, then taken home afterwards. We have an escort on the bus to assist passengers on & off. Anyone wishing to use this service should contact Jean Alexander on Forfar 463860, or Barbara Ann.



THE GUILD

On the 11th December we had a lovely Christmas meal at Chapelbank Hotel getting us into the festive spirit.

After our Christmas break we welcomed the Guild members back to our meetings with an afternoon quiz that was open to the congregation and the two other Guilds in Forfar, a big thanks to Bob Kidd for being the quizmaster and Sheena Ewart for taking the meeting.

As we go to press we look forward to a talk from 'Police Scotland' on the 22nd January.

Advanced notice of our Coffee Morning, which will be held on 14th March in the social area.

"GOING GREEN" HINTS & TIPS



Plastic of all types is very much in the news just now. Try to minimise the amount you use as much as possible and remember to recycle as much as you can into your grey wheelie bin.

Plastic takes a long time to decompose and can leach toxic chemicals in our soil and water, which can have an impact on human health. Wildlife can also get entangled in the plastic or if they mistake it for food they can choke or starve to death.

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

*I almost went to Church last Sunday,
but I could not find the time,
So much to do about the house, to leave it would be a crime.
So I cleaned throughout, and polished,
and went wearily to bed,
But, I made a resolution, to go next week instead.*

*I almost went to Church last Sunday,
but the air was damp and cold
To venture out on such a day would be foolish I was told.
So I sat before the fire, took up a book and read
But, I made a resolution I'd go next week instead.*

*I almost went the Church last Sunday,
but someone made me late
And unpunctuality is a sin I really, really hate,
So I sat and wrote a letter, and then my conscience said
I'll make a resolution I'll go next week instead.*

*I actually went to Church last Sunday, but alas I was too late,
For the Church was locked and silent,
"For Sale" was on the gate.
Oh! The awful remorse that then I felt,
this little Church was dead
And I, 'twas I, had killed it by going next week instead.*

Introducing a new feature you will see in the Steeple Times from time-to-time where we will tell you about a particular individual – often those that are less well-known faces. We'll give you a bit of background, perhaps a few fun facts but also explain their role at East & Old. So to get the ball rolling

SPOTLIGHT ON *Catriona Milne*



Catriona is married to Ron and they have two sons and have recently become the proud grandparents of beautiful Rosie. She retired from General Practice Management in 2017 and since then has taken on two roles at East & Old: Firstly as Editor/publisher of the Steeple Times whilst also assisting the printing team in getting the magazine ready for our

readers. Her second role is the Administrator of the Flower Team—this involves her organising the Flower Rota and being responsible for receiving and allocating the flower monies.

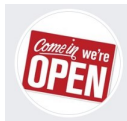
- Favourite colour(s): *BLUE & PURPLE*
- Favourite flower: *Lisianthus*
- Terrified of: *SPIDERS (actually pretty much any bug)*
- Hobbies/Interests: *Computing, reading, running and walking*

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East High Street - FORFAR

FANTASTIC BARGAINS ON SALE

Why not pay us a visit and feel free to bring in your donations—they are much appreciated.



TUESDAY to SATURDAY
10:00am to 4:00pm



MINISTRY OF FLOWERS



| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|----------------|
| 2 FEB | Marjory Maclean | 8 MAR | Margaret Myles |
| 9 " | Joan Petrie | 15 " | Bruce Simpson |
| 16 " | Isobel Farquharson | 22 " | Pat Milne |
| 23 " | Karen Murray | 29 " | Marion Duncan |
| 1 MAR | George Richardson | 5 APR | Helena Todd |

*Please pass your donations to Catriona Milne,
Irene Duthie or pop your money in an envelope and
hand it in to Jennifer at PRIMA – Thank you*

CHURCH FLOWERS

**There are still a couple of Sundays available on the
2020 Flower Calendar.**

If you have a special date in mind for the flower group to do an arrangement in the church, please check the calendar to choose your Sunday slot.

We ask for a minimum donation of £20 which pays for the weekly church flowers and some of this money is also allocated to the flower delivery fund – giving flowers to those who need to know that our church community is thinking of them during difficult times.

Please pass your donations prior to your chosen Sunday to Catriona Milne, Irene Duthie or pop your money into an envelope and hand it in to PRIMA Gift Shop located next to the church gates.

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

DEATHS

| | | |
|----------|----|-----------------|
| November | 3 | Lorraine Brown |
| December | 10 | Alexander Smith |
| | 10 | Richard Ewen |



NEXT ISSUE OF STEEPLE TIMES

The deadline for submission of articles for
the **APRIL 2020** issue is

15th MARCH 2020

Material can be given / sent to the Editor
or e-mail **ed@thebigkirk.co.uk**

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------|
| Session Clerk | Lexi Smart | 01307 464330 |
| Depute Session Clerk | | |
| Church Secretary | Karen Kelly | 01307 465043 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Treasurer ■ Gift Aid Convener | Paula Stewart | 07715596465 |
| FWO Treasurer | Jean Alexander | 01307 463860 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Editor of Steeple Times ■ Flower Group Admin | Catriona Milne | 07962065936 |
| Organist & Choirmaster | Bruce Simpson | 01307 468179 |
| Church Officer | Vanessa Ferrie | 01307 461111 |
| Groovy Gryphons & Echo Teens | Joyce Archibald | 01307 469519 |
| Guild Contact | Lauraine Grant | 01307 468724 |
| Life and Work | Esther Kidd | 01307 462701 |
| Big Kirk Shop Organiser | Muriel Fairley | 01307 463936 |
| Prayer Group | Mary Pickstone | 01307 466569 |
| 2nd Forfar Company of The Boy's Brigade | Irene Duthie | 01307 465895 |
| Friends of Forfar East & Old | Barbara Ann Sweetin | 01307 464935 |
| Safeguarding Coordinator | Isabel Farquharson | 01307 462053 |
| Minibus Hire | William Sweetin | 01307 248228 |