



# Easter Greetings from Kirkcaldy Old Kirk

## The Hope of Easter

What strange times we are living through!

Who would have thought that Kirkcaldy Old Kirk would be silent and empty in Holy Week and at Easter, and shut on the orders of the Government!

Yet all around us Spring is stirring, pushing shoots through the ground, unfurling leaves and bursting into flowers when the sunshine finally entices them out. I've watched the snowdrops followed by daffodils and primroses, appear in the Old Kirk border. Dark, bleak, cold days they have endured and waited for them to pass till the right moment came to emerge.

For many people these past days of being shut indoors have been dark and bleak and cold without the warmth of meeting friends or sharing companionship or laughter over a meal or concert together.

Others have struggled with tiredness, fear, the heavy load of caring for the sick or the great sorrow of loss.

During Holy Week in the Old Kirk and all Christian churches we remember that Jesus knew how fragile and vulnerable we human beings are, part of the physical world. He knew fear, loneliness and the darkness of depression in the garden of Gethsemane as he faced the knowledge of His own coming death.

Yet he embraced life as a human being and gave His followers the great hope that Love is stronger than death and the shout of Life cannot be silenced!

Easter celebrates that God is with us through the darkest of days and beyond, - when the moment is right, bringing new life, light and unending love to our spirits.

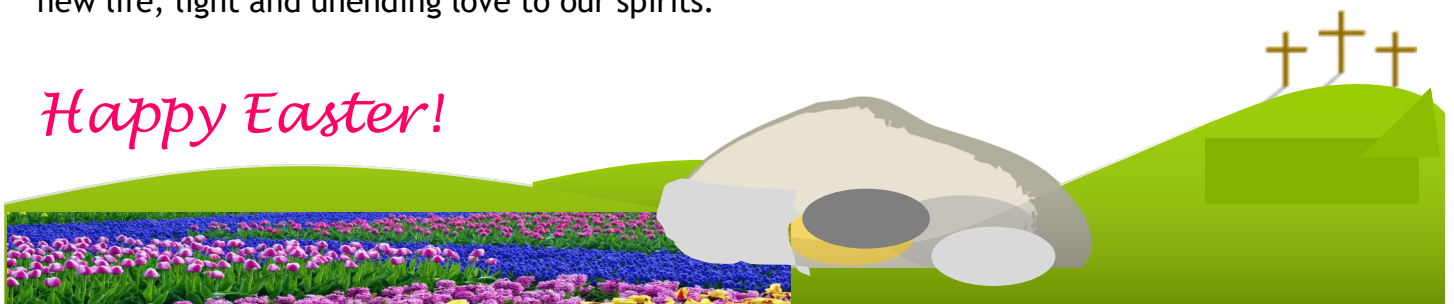


For now the Old Kirk is closed but we hope to see you back in our beautiful building before too long.

Thank you to all who have sent messages of support and indeed donations. We are very grateful and touched at your support.

I did tell another Trust recently that it is the involvement of the community which keeps the Old Kirk going and you have just proved me right!

*Happy Easter!*



## Organ News

We are very grateful to our volunteer organists, principally Norman Milne, who keep our fine Gern organ in good working order, by regularly putting it through its paces.

We are grateful too to our Organ Scholar Rob Fleming, who has been in post for almost 2 years now and is getting ready to take his organ exam.

The 775th Organ Recital Series was such a success, with a wonderful range of styles and programmes, and numerous great names in the organ world coming to play for us, that we had to extend it beyond the finale date of 21st March this year.

This was to have been a celebratory weekend at the end of our 775th year. 21st March 1244 was the date of the Old Kirk consecration by the Catholic Bishop de Bernham and Hannah Gibson from Newport-on-Tay Parish Church was to give a recital on that Saturday.

Unfortunately, of course that recital had to be cancelled, or rather, postponed. We are hoping to resume where we left off in due course and Hannah has promised to come back later in the year.

We hope that the same will apply to any other of the organists whose recital may have to be postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic in the next few months.

Christopher Bragg is due to play in May, Kamil Mika in June, Andrew Forbes in July and Alan Ireland in August, while Morley Whitehead and Nancy Crook are near the end of the year.

Nancy, a former organist at the Old Kirk and teacher to our Organ Scholar, was also due to give a piano recital last Saturday but hopes to do that in future days.

Our 775th Finale weekend was to have seen our resident orchestra, Kirkcaldy Orchestral Society, perform their Spring Concert on Sunday 22nd March. However it was not to be!

Many Spring Concerts in Kirkcaldy Old Kirk had to be cancelled, or postponed, including

Kirkcaldy Orchestral Society Spring Concerts

Music in May : The Langtoun Singers

East Fife Ladies' Choir

East Fife Male Voice Choir

Fife Strathspey & Reel Society Fiddlers' Rally

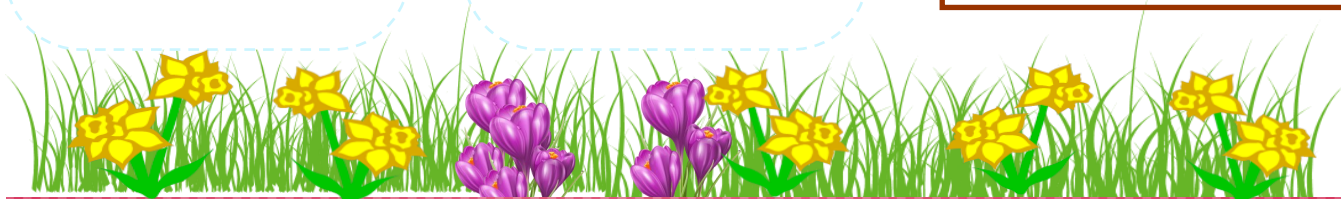
Kirkcaldy Gilbert & Sullivan Society June Concert

Langtoun Jazz Festival

and more...

However, on a brighter note, Fraser Morrison has booked in a fundraising Christmas concert for the end of the year. Now that shows faith and hope!

Apologies : Kirkcaldy Old Kirk Trust cannot hold its AGM just now because of the coronavirus restrictions. Copies of the Accounts for 2018-2019 are available on request.



## Old Kirk Tower Restoration Project: Progress Report



LOOK  
OUT!



*Although the Old Kirk is closed for the time being, the Project to restore the tower is proceeding as best it can. Like many others, we are keeping in touch by phone and email and Zoom meeting with others in the Design Team - Paul Higginson from Arc Architects and Sean Miller, the Quantity Surveyor, with Sandra Macrae helping with the Business Plan.*

*Site tests are delayed at the moment but design drawings were displayed at the recent Community Consultation in the Mercat. The aim is to restore the 15th century tower to a status and condition that will inspire Kirkcaldy folk and encourage visitors.*

*To do this we will*

- ◆ *Make the structure wind and water-tight - mend the leaking roof and broken windows*
- ◆ *Repoint the stonework with lime mortar—as great an area as we have funding for.*
- ◆ *Repair the clock face so it keeps accurate time*

*New activities will also be available to those visiting the church: web cameras giving access to the view to those unable to climb; a digital representation of the mediaeval church; workshops in digital/ camera skills ;and opportunities to volunteer as a guide, researcher or steward.*

*Did you see the Community Consultation in the Mercat on March 14th? It was the last Saturday before it closed. The tower model is still there! If you missed it, you can still make your views known or ask questions about it in more detail. Just email : [okheritage@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:okheritage@blueyonder.co.uk) or write to the address on the back page.*

*Now the Team are working hard to secure the money needed to make this a reality, with applications to major grant- funders like the National Lottery.*

Thanks to all contributors!  
You have raised £13,800 so far.

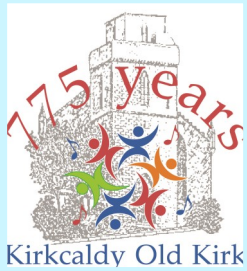
Building works will cost  
£216,776

Total project cost is  
£359,781

Lottery decision date is  
November 2020

Hoped-for start date is  
January 2021





## KIRKCALDY OLD KIRK TRUST

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### May Morning 2020

It looks as though this will be the first May morning for a number of years that we will not be able to climb the Old Kirk tower to greet the Spring with Easter hymns on the 1st of May at 6am.

This special Old Kirk tradition was brought to Kirkcaldy by the organist James Gray some 125 years ago and initially it was the choir who undertook it. Miss Little used to give the choir ladies each a posy of Spring flowers at the event and the tradition evolved to sharing an early breakfast together after the singing. For many years this was provided by Jack Pillans from the well-known Pillans bakery at the Port Brae.

Perhaps this year the dawn chorus will have to be left to the birds - but there is always next year!



Can you spot some well-kent faces, including Jack Pillans?

### A New Arrival!

Last year our speakers' lectern began to show signs of wear and tear, and Fife College staff discussed with us the possibility of making a new one to mark the 775th Anniversary of the Kirk.

As time went on, the conversation was put to the back of our minds with other events and celebrations taking place.

Was all forgotten? Well, you can imagine my surprise and delight when an urgent phone message on a Friday morning in March asked if the tutors could bring a new lectern round to the Kirk in an hour's time!

Fife College were closing their buildings down in line with the Scottish Government's announcement of school closures that day. Staff, who had designed and made the lectern were fearful that it would be locked inside indefinitely and might be damaged by temperature changes or vandalism.

The lectern was still newly varnished but now awaits its new role on our stage. Thank you to the Fife College guys for their time, workmanship and effort to deliver it!



Our new lectern with the old one just visible behind on the right.

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