

# the Saint Andrew



SASK resumed Sunday services in June 2020 once health authorities issued guidelines for religious places of worship. Only 50 people are allowed to gather at any religious place of worship currently. These are the health and safety measures SASK has in place.

## Church of Scotland – Presbyterian

For private circulation only

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# Letter from the Minister



Dear Friends,

## Is St Andrew's Scots Kirk (SASK) a healthy church?

During my year with you as locum I developed my own view on the question above, but what about your considered opinion? I'm interested in your view and have written an article which appears in this edition, which calls for your response.

## Here is the update from SASK:

As the whole world journeys through the terrible coronavirus pandemic many are worried. Clearly, for a variety of reasons, some members may be cautious until the virus begins to reduce its global impact. On a positive front, we have started to worship again with wonderful music from Neranjan de Silva and strong preaching and communion by Rev Roshan Mendis; so we are being well served. We are back to singing our faith which helps our confidence as a community who represents Christ in Colombo, **"He came down that we may have love."**



## An Attitude of Gratitude

Worship has restarted and we should thank Kumar and the staff team for their extra labour as the church has now to be cleaned and disinfected more regularly. We thank Graham de Kretser who has taken over the considerable responsibilities of the Session Clerk's role. He replaces Chandan de Silva, who served generously and well for a year longer than he had initially agreed. We are thankful that Chandan is still an active member of our eldership team.

The Kirk Session has added two new elders during this 'unusual' period and were delighted to welcome Sarah Potts and Norma Swyngedauw to the Session. We will celebrate their ordination later in the year. SASK is not static and with your support we can emerge from this pandemic stronger than before.

I have now stepped down as locum, but will continue as your interim moderator into next year. Dr James Patrick will take over as locum from September. He is keen to be with you. However owing to the ravaging effect of Coronavirus in South Africa, the timescale might vary as currently travel remains restricted. He is an experienced Scottish minister, who has ministered in Africa and has visited SASK in the past. I believe he will be good for our congregation and in the interim the Rev Roshan Mendis is willing to support us as his busy chaplaincy post allows.

We are hopeful the vacancy process might restart in October. It is dependant on the Church of Scotland passing new legislation which would shorten the process for clergy from other denominations to join the Church of Scotland. Let us maintain an attitude of gratitude by counting our many blessings.

## Salty Christians?

We are studying Matthew's gospel this year and I want to leave you with an image from the Sermon on the Mount Chapter 5, **"You are like salt for the whole human race."**

What a great calling! Jesus invites us to work to 'season' the global community and do so by acting like grains of salt. Christians need to be salty and effective in calling people to follow Jesus to bring healing and peace. Please pray that we can all be salty Christians as we return to worship and re-establish our full mission projects programme at St Andrew's Scots Kirk in the near future.

Every blessing,  
**Revd. Ian**





## Reflections of my time as Session Clerk at SASK

by Chandan de Silva

It was under tense conditions that I was appointed in June 2016. Rev. Stewart Lamont was SASK's locum minister, and the Kirk Session (KS) was continuing to go through convulsions arising from the disunity which had led to the departure of the last full-time minister.

I found Rev. Stewart to be a courageous man, who had a clear sense of right and wrong and was willing to stand by his convictions. Even though his period in Colombo was short, Stewart and his wife Lara played a significant role in righting the ship.

Rev. Jim Sharp, who was (and is) the Clerk of the International Presbytery (IP), was willing to add to his already considerable workload by taking over the reins as Interim Moderator. SASK was very fortunate to have Jim's calm but firm approach to managing some of the continuing challenges in the KS. His decisions were replete with wisdom, and the KS healed considerably during this period. New Elders joined the Session and played an

important role in enhancing the work of SASK. New initiatives like the "Thursday Lunch", providing provisions for the needy in the vicinity of the Church during the COVID-19 lockdown, a Prayer Group, a congregational choir and a successful fund raising for the bombed Zion Church were launched. An MOU was inked with the Church of Ceylon for their use of St. Andrew's Haputale. SASK is indebted to a former Elder with close links to the Anglican Church for this important initiative in safeguarding a Church of Scotland asset.

SASK's newsletter went from strength to strength in publicizing the work of the congregation and was read with great interest and delight by many in and outside Sri Lanka. The Church's website was given a facelift and together with the Church's FB page provided up-to-date information about the Church. Church services continued with minimal disruption despite having to rely on Pulpit Supply. Even the voluntary departure of SASK's talented Director of Music was managed without disruption, and the



With Stewart and Lara Lamont, SASK newsletter editors Gillian Mailler and Savithri Rodrigo, their spouses Eric and Shewa and my wife Nadhini



## Reflections of my time as Session Clerk at SASK (cont...)

emergence of musical talent from within the congregation has helped raise the bar on the congregational choir.

Organizing pulpit and organ supply were not easy tasks and I am grateful to the local ministers and organists who supported SASK during this time. Positive things were emerging during a period of adversity and many contributed to this well-spring of goodness. One of the critical positives was that the KS began to coalesce as a group and was finding alignment of purpose and clarity of SASK's identity. This helped the Church move forward and develop a vision for the future.

During this period, the Rev. Bill Davnie (from the PCUSA) shepherded us for several months. His soothing style and thoughtful Sunday sermons were a balm to our collective soul. It was during his locum that the Easter bombings took place. From this disaster, came much approbation for SASK's response as well as a connection with the Bohra community, which continues to this day. Bill's reports of the bombing and SASK's response which were carried on Scottish radio and television, led to an outpouring of support from congregations in Scotland. In addition, and with the support of the IP, SASK was able to attract Rev. Eric Foggitt and Rev. Ian Gilmour, to provide much needed continuity of ministry following Bill's departure.

There were seamless handovers, like that of the Treasurer's role and now the Session Clerk's role.

Rev. Ian, who has been SASK's locum and interim moderator for nearly a year, held a workshop for the KS to develop a plan for the future. He also organized a training session with expert facilitation, to advise KS members on how to prevent conflict and if unsuccessful, how to manage conflict to avoid damaging impacts like those of the past. He also helped the Nominating Committee manage a period of transition of leadership.

Despite having to leave Colombo earlier than planned due to COVID-19, Ian has produced a wonderful series of Sunday services which have been watched by many online. And whilst Church services have begun, some – possibly many – enjoy and continue to watch Ian's online services.

The past four years has been a period of development and growth for the KS. The Session is stronger and more united: there are new Elders - and each set of new Elders has helped raise the capabilities of the KS. When I look back on my journey as SC, it is with a sense of fulfillment as well as relief (of handing over responsibility) that I passed the baton over to Graham de Kretser (Session Clerk) and Shewantha Rodrigo (Assistant Session Clerk).

I would like to conclude by expressing my gratitude to all those who played a role in the Church in the past four years, for their support and dedication.

August 2020



With a representative of Johannus Organs in Ede Netherlands having just purchased a MiDi recorder for the SASK organ



With Ian and Donna Gilmour, Eric Foggitt and Jim Sharp in Edinburgh, before Eric and Ian came to minister to us



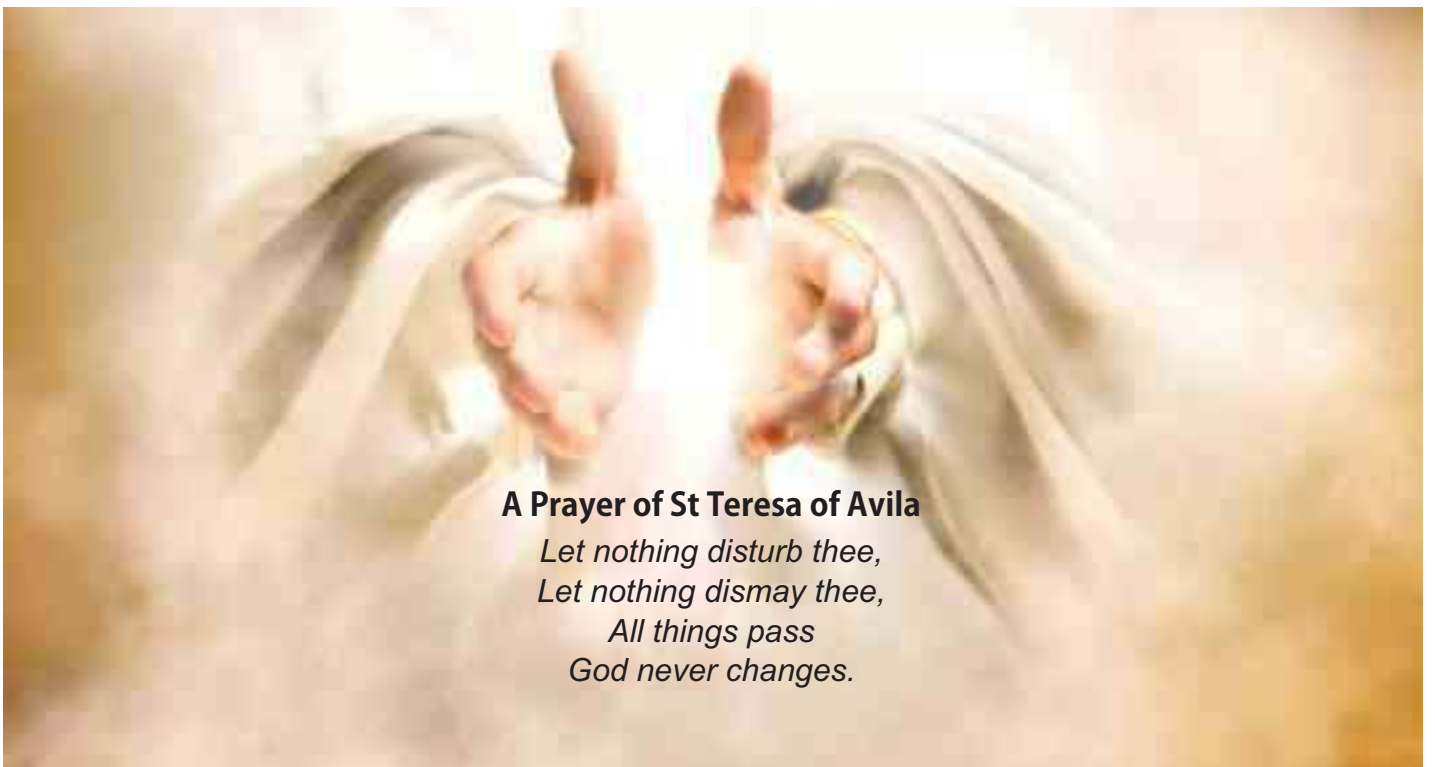
## New thoughts to ponder...



Dr S. Wesley Ariarajah is one of the most able of the current crop of Sri Lankan ministers. A Methodist minister, he served in the pastoral ministry of the church and as lecturer in the history of religions in Sri Lanka. In the 1980s he was invited to join the staff of the World Council of Churches (WCC), where he led the Councils Interfaith Dialogue for a decade. He then served as the Deputy General Secretary of the WCC. He has given lectures, conducted seminars, led conferences in many parts of the world and currently is a Professor at Drew University, USA.

Here is a thought from one of his lectures. It concerns the 'four shifts' needed when conceiving the new mission of the church in the 21st century. They are worth pondering:

1. **From exclusive to inclusive**
2. **From conversion to healing**
3. **From majority to minority**
4. **From doctrinal to spiritual**



### **A Prayer of St Teresa of Avila**

*Let nothing disturb thee,  
Let nothing dismay thee,  
All things pass  
God never changes.*





# THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN - What a friend we have in Jesus

by Joseph Scriven

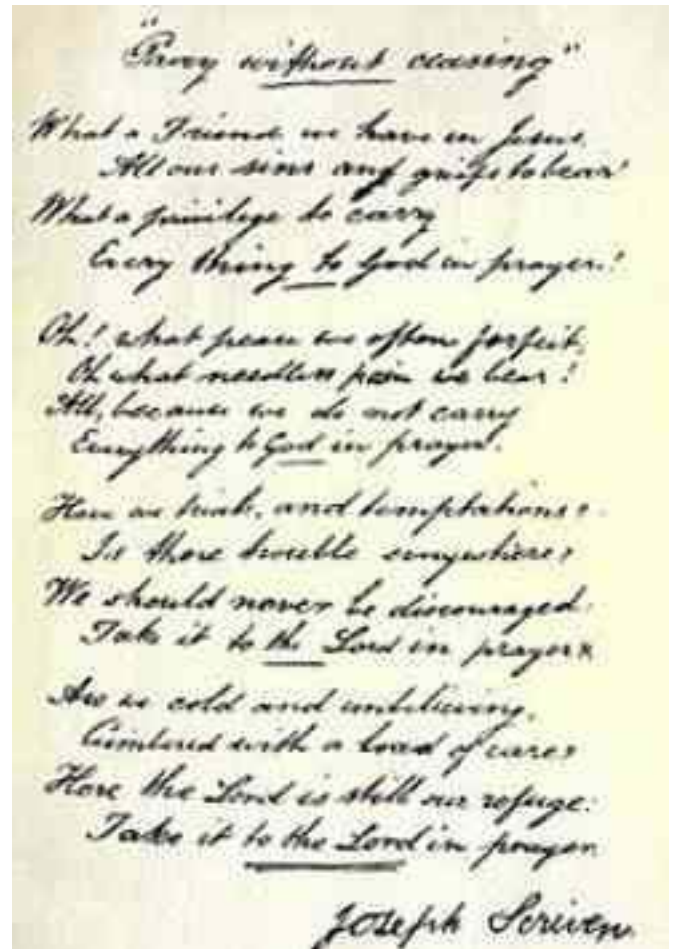


It was in 1844 that a young Irishman Joseph Scriven had completed his college education and returned home to marry his sweetheart. He was the son of wealthy parents who lived in Brandbridge and a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin. Happy and joyous he came into town filled with anticipation the day before the planned wedding, when he was due to meet her. He did see his beautiful fiancée –but not as he expected. She was lying under the water in a creek bed having fallen off her horse. Scriven understandably was inconsolable.

Much later, he moved to Canada. The reason for him to leave his country of birth was two fold. The religious influence of the Plymouth Brethren upon his life which estranged him from his family and his fiancée's accidental death the night before he married.

In Canada, he fell in love again. Once more, happiness was not to be his when the love of his life became ill with pneumonia and died, just weeks before their marriage. For the second time, Scriven, who was a devout Christian, felt a resounding blow! But his faith did not waiver.

When he received news from Ireland that his mother was terribly ill, he wrote a poem to her, "Pray without ceasing." The poem described the deep friendship he had with Jesus which he had cultivated in prayer through these innumerable horrible chapters in his life.



That poem appeared anonymously at first under the title, "Pray Without Ceasing." Ten years later, he finally acknowledged this well-loved text had been written by him and his friend, Jesus. In 1868, attorney Charles Converse set the text to a tune and renamed it "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

Scriven continued living in Canada, devoting his life to tutoring, preaching and helping others.





## Padmini (Paddy) Gridley - An appreciation

by Shalini Wickramasuriya

**Padmini Gridley was an active member of our congregation and passed away in July 2020. This appreciation was made by Shalini Wickramasuriya at a Sunday Service.**



Aunty Paddy was a pillar of this church, so much so that I think she propped up the last pillar at the far back on the left where she diligently sat every Sunday to welcome and greet many of us. She worshipped here for nearly 20 years and threw herself into mission work from the onset. Aunty Paddy served alongside Gloriana on our 2 oldest mission projects, the Thrift shop and Mulleriyawa Ward. It is no mean feat to manage the Thrift Shop and attend every week on a Tuesday – its success is apparent in the funds it generates to support Mulleriyawa Ward and other mission projects. Aunty Paddy was well known by the patients and carers of Mulleriyawa and she in turn knew their challenges. She made every effort to make the lives of the residents comfortable during their monthly visits.

Aunty Paddy had exacting standards – from her well presented apartment to her stylish sense of dress and those exacting standards made her dependable. She also agreed to volunteer at the Thursday Lunch programme and her dependability led her to be keeper of the aprons as she was the person who could be relied on to be present every Thursday. Her old school frugality when she served would cause much amusement as we threatened to pack the leftovers to send with her home if she wasn't generous with her servings – in her school ma'am way she would wag her finger at you while her eyes twinkled with amusement.

Apparently Aunty Paddy led a diverse and fruitful life and those school ma'am qualities were endorsed by a senior member of the Bohra





## Padmini (Paddy) Gridley - An appreciation (cont...)



community with whom we have built relationships after the Easter tragedy, who confirmed he recognized Aunty Paddy as one of his first and most inspiring teachers at Gampola where she taught for a few years before moving on to a school in Nuwara Eliya.

She was proud of her Gampola heritage and often reminded us, "I am a Pelpola from Gampola you know." She had a vast and extensive family but the time Aunty Paddy spent at church related activities is a measure of how much her church family meant to her.

Her network was far and wide from her time leading the Ceylon Tea Board in London and to her work with the British Welfare Group – so she touched the lives of many and was so well known.

You shall be surely and sorely missed Aunty Paddy. We know you have been reunited with your husband who you affectionately referred to as 'My Peter'. Taking from Mathew Chapter 25 His Lord said unto him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"





## Through the Lens

### Events and Mission Work at SASK

#### Sundays at St. Andrews (post- COVID)

Our congregation continues to grow gradually with only 50 people allowed to attend church on a Sunday due to COVID-19 guidelines. Here are some scenes from our Sunday services post COVID.



Our Church organist Neranjan De Silva brought his daughter Anila and her beautiful voice as a gift for a Sunday service. We look forward to hearing more from Anila.



Sashi Schaffter accompanied by Neranjan gave a beautiful rendition of Oceans at the service her mother Abby Schaffter was preaching at.



Social distancing at SASK service



Fellowship continues after service on a Sunday!





## Through the Lens (cont...)

### Events and Mission Work at SASK



Communion service post COVID-19 conducted by Revd. Roshan Mendis who we love having back at SASK on a regular basis. His services are well thought out and now being familiar with SASK, he truly has become a part of the SASK family.



Dr Dhanan Senathirajah who was a guest preacher gave an enthralling and informative sermon on running the race - which called for us to drop our excess luggage and win the race of life with discipline, direction and determination.



Abby Schaffter has begun preaching at SASK. Her first service in which she spoke of the 4Gs was most inspirational and very appropriate for difficult times. His Word: Guides us, Girds us, Guards us and Gladdens us



In her second sermon, she asked if we could walk on water, stepping out in faith like Peter did? Her four point message spoke about Fear and Faith – Fear distorts you, Faith helps you to face fear, Fear leads to failure and Faith will save you.





## Through the Lens (cont...)

### Events and Mission Work at SASK

#### Thursday Lunch Project

– Shalini Wickramasuriya

In the light of curfews that were prevalent from April and through parts of May, SASK decided to help out the families in Muhandiram Watte, in close proximity to the church, as we did in March. Most of these families have daily wage earners and some are members of the Lunch Project. Hence just prior to the Sri Lankan New year, on the 11th of April, the police agreed to the distribution of dry rations. The Watte houses about 400 dwellings within four lanes of housing sitting right next door to the Colpetty Police Station. The Police confirmed that as in March, no donations had come through.

Given our budget, the Police advised us to purchase thirty packs as per the recommended list of goods given by them. The packs included rice, flour, lentils, canned fish, sugar and chick peas.



A Police Officer accompanied me to purchase the goods at Sathosa, Welisara. The transport and distribution of the goods was done by the Police and Air Force. Managing crowds became quite an art in this instance. Our contributions are

collated together with others for this exercise. The Kirk Session kindly agreed to this donation as we receive funds monthly to run the Thursday Lunch Programme and this initiative is in line with feeding the needy in the vicinity of SASK.





## Through the Lens (cont...)

### Events and Mission Work at SASK

#### The Easter Bombing Remembrance

In remembering Easter 2019, the day Sri Lanka suffered one of the worst attacks against humanity, St. Andrew's brought out the church cross into the car park and rang the church bell commemorating those who died and were impacted. This gesture was most significant because right next door was the Cinnamon Grand Hotel which had just had an explosion in which there were deaths, injuries and not to mention mayhem, when we drove in for Easter service that morning. That was the indication to us, that all was not right. Immediately thereafter, the ambulance sirens began wailing continuously and even though St. Andrew's continued with the Easter service, it was a day that we were all shaken up beyond any depth of imagination.



An aerial view of the cross in the carpark  
(Photograph: Meneka Galgamuwa)



The cross festooned with flowers and candles



St Andrew's security detail Kadi and general helper Crusz light candles commemorating those who lost their lives



Church Officer K S Kumar lights a candle and rings the church bell on the 21st of April, one year after the Easter attacks

(Photographs: K S Kumar)





## Through the Lens (cont...)

### Events and Mission Work at SASK

#### Helping Hands

-Helping Hands Team

The situation in Colombo continues to be a challenge due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the curfew in Colombo lasted over 3 months and the Helping Hands beneficiaries relied heavily on our monthly support. The HH team go out of their way to coordinate help for these families, and it is always good news when we feel that we have done as much as we can and not left any one out.

Good news, the project received an unexpected Rs 30,000 from a generous benefactor who is sharing his inheritance with the Helping Hands project. We truly thank him and also a huge thank you to the Livingston Church in Scotland for a donation of £300 pounds towards the funds. We again are very

grateful to the congregation of Livingston Church. Among our beneficiaries there are seven members who have medical issues and it is difficult for them to come to church and collect their financial support. Hence, Joubert visits each of the families to distribute support and check on their health.

All other families come to Saint Andrew's during the two days of the month when we distribute funds.

Do take a look at the Church website ([www.scotskirk.lk](http://www.scotskirk.lk) Mission) as we have added photographs taken over the 14 years of this project and also updated the story of Helping hands at St Andrew's Scots Kirk.



Stone by stone a wall is built,  
and each stone must be square.  
Little by little a rose unfolds,  
and each petal must be fair.  
Little by little faith is built,  
and day by day it grows.  
Stronger at last than a wall of stone  
and lovelier than a rose.





## Through the Lens (cont...)

### Events and Mission Work at SASK

#### The International Presbytery Mission Project 2019 for Colombo

-Ian Y Gilmour, Interim Moderator, SASK

**The need:** To reinstate proper washing and toilet facilities, which had fallen into disrepair at a female ward in a Colombo Mental Hospital

**The situation:** Ward 8 at Mulleriyawa Hospital had been supported by St Andrew's church for two decades, but last year they needed extra funding to allow the women in the ward to have proper baths, showers and toilet facilities after the existing plumbing had passed its prime and was no longer functioning properly

**What was requested?** To reinstate the ceilings, tiles, bath and toilets to be used on a daily basis for the patients.

**The Budget:** The cost was 660 Euros. The amount actually collected was in excess of that amount. The presbytery treasurer reports that the total was achieved plus a considerable surplus, which can be used for future presbytery projects.



Before



After



Before



After

**The Result:** The work was completed to the staff and patients' satisfaction. Both groups are delighted. The work with the Ward 8 community will continue for St Andrew's Scots Kirk. Thanks to all individuals and congregations who contributed towards this project.



The monthly visiting team from St Andrew's Scots Kirk are thanked by the Nurse in Charge.



## Through the Lens (cont...)

### Events and Mission Work at SASK

#### Netherlee Cottage

Netherlee Cottage Team



Chitra, one of our housemothers was finally able to take some leave and get to her home north of Kurunegala. She was not allowed to travel from one district to another during the COVID-19 curfew. She enjoyed twelve days with her family which will go towards the many weeks of leave owed to her but unable to take during these months. Modini, our longest serving housemother has also taken 10 days leave and will also catch-up with her planned leave over the next few months.

The ladies are all extremely well and two of the other ladies have returned from the hospital to train at Netherlee. Ganga has decided that she does not wish to go to the community house to live and therefore is not returning to Netherlee. The hospital is looking for another lady to take her place at Netherlee.

The Netherlee residents all came to Church at the end of June. This was their first trip after the Church opened again for services.

Gardening and caring are important disciplines at the Cottage and this is one such result, a Kadupul flower which only opens at night.

Modini's two sisters and her nephews brought lunch to the Cottage on her mother's birthday to celebrate their mother's life.

The ABR gave a Pizza lunch to the ladies during the curfew.

We try hard to give them variety and teach the residents about life in the community at the least cost.

A new bench for the garden was donated by the neighbours, with just enough room for all the current residents.

Do take a look at the Church website ([www.scotskirk.lk](http://www.scotskirk.lk) Mission) as we have added photographs taken over the 14 years of this project and also updated the history of Netherlee Cottage at St Andrews Scots Kirk.







## Meet our congregation

### 9 Qs with Norma Swyngedaauw

Norma has been a member of our congregation since about 18 years ago when she was introduced to the church by Ayesha Smith. The sermons, fellowship, intimate size of congregation and the Sunday School appealed to her as did the fact that she was walking distance from the Church at that time.

Norma is from Manila but Colombo has been home to her for two decades, since her husband Jean Pierre was posted on assignment. He has since retired but Sri Lanka held an allure which made them decide to continue staying on, being active in some church projects and in the choir as well. Jean Pierre is currently in France. Their son Laurent who is now in the UK was a member of the Youth Group and would play violin with Patricia during services.

An English teacher for several years, Norma moved to teacher training and project management, although while in Manila, her experience was in banking and arts marketing.



#### **How would you describe yourself?**

People describe me as motherly but my son might find that debatable. I like dipping into new things and learning more. I'm also a bit of a workaholic, am forgetful, work best under pressure as I tend to procrastinate although I spend time planning.

#### **What are your hobbies?**

Classical music, reading, am a loyal Arsenal fan, like visiting markets for unusual handicraft and delicacies

#### **Most memorable moment in Sri Lanka?**

Many but Laurent's violin recitals, my first drive to Elephant Pass and the lovely classroom where I taught in Mullaitivu.

#### **What can't you do without?**

Coffee, a sea view, my phone

#### **What has been most challenging?**

The years of the war were tough. It felt easy to be at the wrong place at the wrong time

#### **What do you like most about Sri Lanka?**

Living in Colombo because it is easy, green, safe and friendly and being close to the sea.

#### **Favourite food?**

Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, Indian Persian!

#### **Any role models?**

My role model is a clone I haven't met as I admire different things about different people?







## **Amen – the unchanged four letter word since early history**

There's a four letter word we use often rarely realising its actual significance. The word "Amen" habitually said at the end of a prayer, is a word that has survived as far as written history when it appeared in early Jewish texts. It has retained its original state in different languages without modification.

Technically, Amen was adopted as a word of truthfulness, confirmation or assertion – "So be it" or "Let it be so" and is a word not just used by Christians or Jews, but also by Muslims around the world. Thus, when we say Amen at the end of our prayers, our plea to God is, "Please let it be as we have prayed!"

There is a hypothesis that the word originated from the Egyptian god Amun whose name was spelled sometimes as Amen. However, the Hebrew word Amen is derived from another Hebrew word *āmán* or AMN and eventually placed into the Greek language and then Latin by Greek theologians who were translating the Bible. From this point, Amen was inked into Arabic and English.

In the Old Testament, Amen is most often linked with praise, (Chronicles 16:36). Double Amens (Amen and Amen) is found in Psalms 41:13, 72:19 and 89:52. The New Testament writers often concluded their epistles with Amen. Of the many names attributed to Jesus is also 'The Amen' – meaning faithful and true witness seen in Revelations 3:14 and fittingly, the last word in the Bible is - Amen!





## A church on our travels - St Peters, Prestbury, England

-Gillian Mailer



The Parish of Prestbury dates back to Anglo-Saxon times, probably to the 7th century. It covered about 180 square miles in 1086 and it was home to only a few thousand people concentrated in several settlements.

This Church is the fourth Church to stand on this site and the third Church which is the Norman Chapel still stands in the churchyard.

The Norman Chapel was built in the 12th century and an evensong service with communion is still held there once a month.

From 1200 onwards, the Church developed from being a religious cell of St Werburgh's Abbey to a Minster Church. The present Church was built in 1220 and a Vicar was appointed with a stipend of 10 silver marks.

The font has English style pillars with Norman style stone heads which were probably taken from the Norman Chapel and represent monks of the period. The bowl is carved from one piece of stone and is lead lined.





## A church on our travels - St Peters, Prestbury, England (cont...)

In about 1840, stone fragments that are parts of a cross of Saxon design were found embedded in the masonry of the chancel. They are believed to date from 670 AD and were carefully put together and preserved in the churchyard.

The Belfry contains eight bells which were originally cast in 1820 and then recast in 1968. They are rung every Sunday and for weddings by an enthusiastic team of ringers.

Three services are held every Sunday following the Anglican tradition with Holy Communion every Wednesday in the Norman Chapel and a Pram service twice a month. This is a service when young mothers or even grandmothers bring their pre school children and they grow within the sounds and sights of the Church.







## From Scots Kirk to California

- Indrias Javaid, former member of SASK



*Indrias, his wife and children were members for four years at Scots Kirk having arrived in Sri Lanka from Pakistan as refugees. St Andrew's supported them on their journey to a new life in the USA. Gary Van Brocklin, a past Locum Minister at Scots Kirk and his wife Marlene who have returned to the USA have been a great support for the family.*



### **This is a letter sent to us by Indrias:**

My family and I are doing pretty well by the grace of God and are happy to be in USA. My children are studying at home and enjoying their online studies. My elder daughter, Raima, is in Grade 10 in High School, Anaya is in Grade 7 in Junior High and the youngest Aasa is in third grade. My wife works in a school. I worked last year on a six months contract in a thrift centre but am looking for a job right now. Please pray I get a job soon.

My wife and I are also working on improving our English language skills and are taking online classes. Another project we are on is trying to get a driving license and learning how to drive a car in the US.

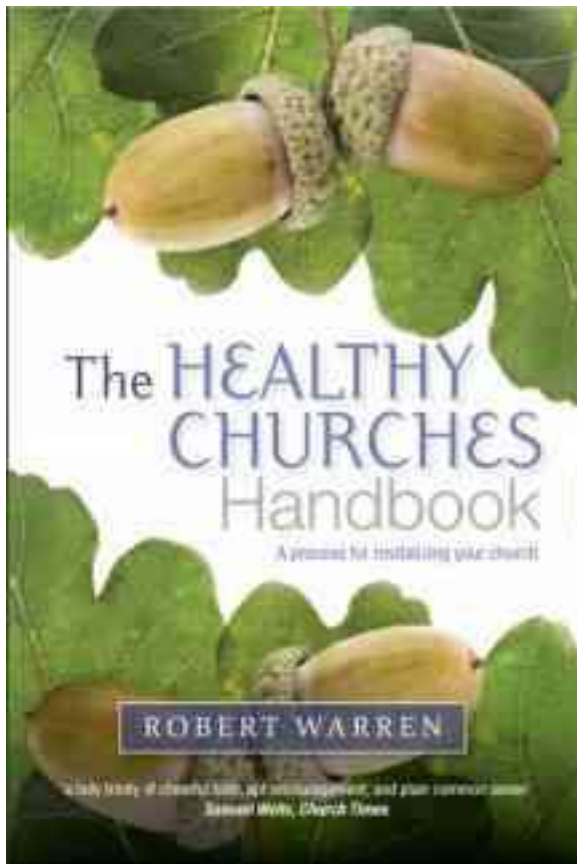
When we arrived in the USA last year, we found it very challenging as it was a totally new culture and very different from Asia. Even the English was different from the British English we knew and cars are driven on the left, as opposed to the way we drive in Asia, on the right.

The Central Presbyterian Church in Merced, California helped us to resettle in USA. We really do enjoy the services and my children love going to Sunday School where Raima helps with the younger members. My wife and I also attend adult Sunday School. We have not gone to Church since March due to the virus but we are missing the love we share with our church family.

Ours is a journey of learning new things every day. But we fondly remember our family at St. Andrew's Scots Kirk and pray for you. Thank you for remembering us.



# The Marks of a Healthy Church



The idea of the Marks of a Healthy Church come from a recommended book by Robert Warren, his list identifies seven common characteristics of healthy churches in his **'The Healthy Churches' Handbook'** Church House Publishing (2004).

How would you score St Andrew's Scots Kirk? I would be very pleased to have your scored out of 10 for each one of these signs which are outlined below and to receive your comments.

Here they are presented in a simple heading and note format:

**1. Energised by faith** rather than just trying to survive -

in worship and sacramental life: moves people to experience God's love  
motivation: energy comes from a desire to serve God and one another  
engaging with Scripture: in creative ways connect with life  
nurtures faith in Christ: helping people to grow in, and share their faith.

**2. Outward-looking focus** with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern -

is deeply rooted in the local community, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks  
passionate and prophetic about justice and peace, locally and globally  
makes connections between faith and daily living  
responds to human need by loving service

**3. Seeks to find out what God wants** rather than trying to please everyone -

A strong vocation: seeking to explore what God wants it to be and do  
vision: develops and communicates a shared sense of where it is going  
mission priorities: consciously sets both immediate and long-term goals  
able to call for, and make, sacrifices, personal and corporate, in bringing about the above and living out the faith.

**4. Faces the cost of change and growth** rather than resisting change -

- so, while embracing the past, it dares to take on new ways of doing things
- takes risks: and admits when things are not working, and learns from experience
- crises: responds creatively to challenges that face the church and community
- positive experiences of change: however small, are affirmed and built on.

**5. Operates as a community** rather than functioning as a club -

so, relationships: are nurtured, often in small groups, so people feel accepted and are helped to grow in faith and service  
leadership: lay and ordained work as a team to develop locally appropriate expressions of all seven marks of a healthy church  
lay ministry: the different gifts, experiences and faith journeys of all are valued and given expression in and beyond the life of the church.

**6. Makes room for all** being inclusive rather than exclusive -

A strong welcome and works to include newcomers into the life of the church  
children and young people: are helped to belong, contribute and be nurtured in their faith  
enquirers are encouraged to explore and experience faith in Christ  
diversities: different social and ethnic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities, and ages, are seen as a strength.

**7. Does a few things and does them well** focused rather than frenetic -

It does the basics well: especially public worship, pastoral care, stewardship and administration  
occasional offices: make sense of life and communicate faith  
being good news as a church in its attitudes and ways of working  
enjoys what it does and is relaxed about what is not being done.

One reviewer of this influential book stated, ***"The process of studying this material helps congregations to ask searching questions about their life, which in turn equips them to become livelier churches in the years to come."***

If enough people were stimulated by reflecting on these seven signs, we could run a course to talk about them. Rev Ian. My email address is: [IGilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:IGilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk). Please do respond!





## HOWZAT Cricket Tour

David Stewart - St Columba's Church, Knightsbridge, London



18 months ago, during the third test match against England at the SSC, I was able to take sufficient time away from looking after my group of English touring supporters to attend the Sunday morning service at Scots Kirk and bring the supporters with me. It was a pleasure.

4 months later, I awoke to the news that your Easter Sunday service had been interrupted – to put it mildly – by one of the series of terrorist bombings, at the nearby Cinnamon hotel.

Now, when England should just have completed another series (a test was scheduled this time at the Premadasa ground) much of the world is in lockdown and in quarantine due to COVID-19.

When one factors in the backdrop of a long running civil war, it would be fair to suggest that Sri Lanka has not been quite as lucky over the last generation or two.

Of course, these situations far from represent the whole story. Tourism is obviously important to Sri Lanka. One indication of the appreciation our group had following their visit was this paragraph on the cricket travel company website:

"Sri Lanka is different. It is beautiful, and inexpensive to a British pocket. The people are kind, interested and interesting. They know, and love, their cricket. Once the hotel staff got to know us, some were sufficiently confident to give their views – usually unfavourable – on the Sri Lankan team selection."

Other reflections:

"The name Galle Fort conjures an impression of a ruined English castle. I had no idea there was the equivalent of a medium-size town behind there, complete with a Magistrate's Court straight out of the film "Passage to India".

"I came to Sri Lanka hoping to watch my weight thereby steering clear of carbohydrates. But when the hotel was generous with its roast carvery each evening, superb Italian cuisine, local spicy foods, and a cold meats/salad offering – it seemed impolite not to partake in it (almost every time). Then there were the gorgeous desserts..."

"The elephant orphanage was educational in ensuring tourism supports rescue and conservation".



## HOWZAT Cricket Tour (cont...)



"When I reached halfway up the Sigiriya climb, I felt exhausted. It was great that someone escorted me to the top, to observe the ruins there, and learn about the history of the surrounding area".

"It is a shame for romantics that Trinity College no longer hosts test matches at its quaint ground, but what a tribute to Murali is the Pallekele International Stadium in that wonderful rural setting, with such a variety of vegetation on the surrounding hills."

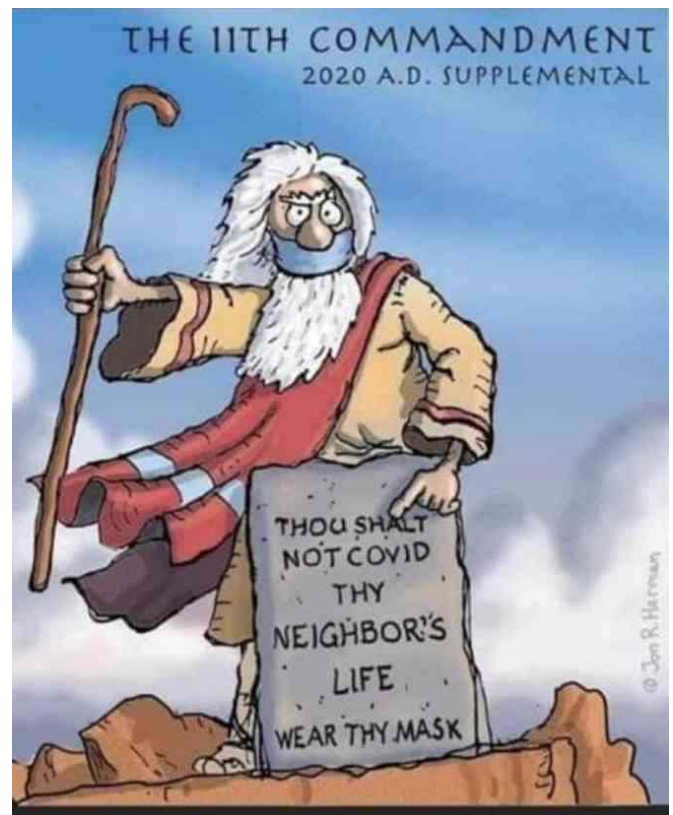
"I liked the way local supporters would chat openly at the games, and share their thoughts with us e.g. on corruption in public life and the Chinese influence."

"I had never been to Asia before. My preconceptions were shaped by cricketing friends coming back to Lancashire with tales of India, which sounded quite challenging. I loved my time in Sri Lanka, and have returned to Manchester Evangelical about the charms of the country."

"Dilmah Tea and Lion Beer. I loved both. Whilst bringing the latter back was impractical, I have a couple of boxes of the former which I will enjoy on cold winter mornings to come."

"One of my strongest memories will be the delightful Muttiah Muralitharan pointing out at our end of tour event, that while we came across 30% of the population in urban areas, the other 70% in the countryside struggled to eke out three meals a day."

My own impressions were coloured somewhat by the operational aspects of my tour management role: the charm, competence and willingness of hotel staff and others in and around the tourism industry; the warmth and experience of my local guide and translator - a retired German teacher. And, of course, in terms of worship - as someone who is a member at St Columba's Church in London's Knightsbridge - to find a home away from home at your lovely church!





## History will remember ...

-Donna Ashworth



History will remember when the world stopped  
And the cars parked in the street, and the trains didn't run.  
History will remember when the schools closed, and the children stayed home,  
And the medical staff walked towards the fire and they didn't run.  
History will remember when people sang on their balconies, in isolation,  
But so much together in courage and song.  
History will remember when people fought for their old and weak,  
And protected the vulnerable by doing nothing at all.  
History will remember when the virus left, and the houses opened  
And the people came out and hugged and kissed and started again.  
Kinder than before.

(These helpful thoughts have been circulated by Amnesty International)

## Food for thought from M.L.K (Martin Luther King)



"We as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values.... when machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

*Make a path for our God in the desert.  
The crooked shall be made straight.  
Rough places shall become plain.  
The glory of the Lord shall be revealed  
And all people shall see it together.*



## What they said – About St. Andrew's Easter Service, Holy Week and online services until July 2020

**It must be noted that the SASK Facebook page had a high number of hits during the lockdown in Sri Lanka with the services being shared widely. Below are some of the bouquets received by Revd. Ian Gilmour and on our FB page and website.**

I have just watched the Service from Sri Lanka. Thank you so much for your message. There was a little bird in the tree outside your window flying around. Chandan also had birds singing to his Reading of the Gospel. Were the first two hymns actually from our church as the last one was from Choral Ridge Choir? They were all so inspiring.

Blessings.

**Nina O'Donnell**

Session Clerk

St. Andrew's Church Lisbon

Have just watched the service and found it very inspiring.  
Happy Easter to you

**May**

Glasgow, Scotland

Many thanks for the Easter services which I enjoyed and have forwarded to my Pastoral Support Group. I have had a number of very favourable comments. The services are very well produced and very meaningful. The UK seems to be quite badly hit with regards to the number of deaths. I hope you are both well isolated. I have painted my apartment during my isolation which is very satisfying. All are well here. It has been a bad year with bushfires followed by the horrendous hailstorm and now the Coronavirus. As always we look forward with hope to good days ahead.

Stay well.

**Charles Mailler**

Australia

After our own online service this morning I watched your service which was very moving indeed with the memories of last Easter day. Your Bible reading in your garden transported me right back to Sri Lanka with the wonderful colours and bird sounds. Thank you!

Stay safe and have a blessed Easter,

**Alice Tulloch**

Geneva, Switzerland

I am glad that in the absence of two of three getting together in the name of Jesus that Scots Kirk has organized services via technology.

**Revd. Roshan Mendis**

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Wow. A double wow - especially for the animal hymn.

**Hans**

Negombo, Sri Lanka

Wishing your day will be blessed! I wish this Easter will bring your home peace, love and happiness. May you always find peace and forgiveness in your heart and wishing you Christ's many blessings throughout this joyful season. Shine brightly and shed light to others.

Happy Easter!

Love and Peace,

**Indrias Javaid and Family**

California, USA

A fine service and enjoyed your reading from the lush tropical garden. I am spending much time in my garden in these days. We have been blessed with fine weather for almost the whole lockdown. Also congratulations to all who produced a very full parish magazine. Read from cover to cover! One correction, I was escorted from the Rock Hotel in a white car. A symbolic colour of hope.

All the best

**John**

Rome, Italy

After our own online service this morning I watched your service which was very moving indeed with the memories of last Easter day. The Bible reading in the garden transported me right back to Sri Lanka with the wonderful colours and bird sounds. Thank you!

Stay safe and have a blessed Easter,

**Alice**

Geneva, Switzerland

I have just been enjoying the service from Sri Lanka and it has been wonderful to have joined with all those who made it possible., yourself included. I thought the final hymn was very cleverly presented and very moving.

Happy Easter from Netherlee.

**Jim**

Netherlee Church, Glasgow, Scotland

Thank you for the YouTube link of the service I received of SASK's Rev. Ian preaching and Sarah Potts singing. God bless all those singing in the Good Friday service. God bless you all and Graham joins me in thanking you.

Love,

**Loretta**

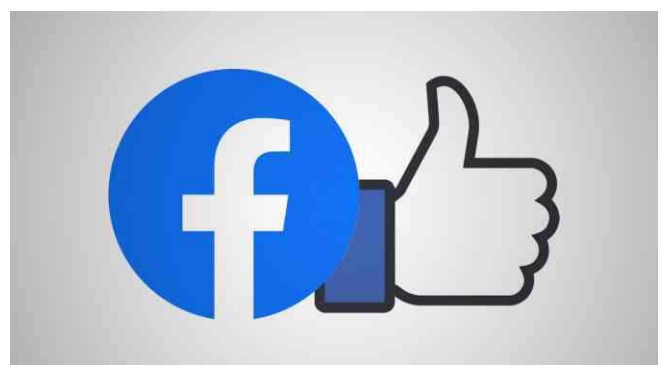
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Many thanks for sharing this link once again. And Ian - wonderful service, as usual!

Blessings,

**Jim**

Geneva Switzerland







## What they said (cont...)

I have just watched the service and found it very comforting at this horrible time. Please convey my thanks to the Rev Ian.

**May McFadyean**  
Glasgow, Scotland

Thank you so much for forwarding the link. Barry and I feel so blessed by Rev Ian Gilmour's services (the whole format) and also the messages. So appropriate for the times. We pray for God's protection and blessings upon him and the Kirk Session as they lead St Andrews Church at this time.

Love and abundant blessings,

**Rathini & Barry**

Phnom Penn, Cambodia

P.S: We enjoyed Chandan's Bible reading the other Sunday from his garden with all birds singing. It was so lovely.

Another brilliant Mother's Day service today.

Also Rev. Ian's prayer before the Lord's Prayer on the May 3rd service was so meaningful, powerful and had a profound effect on both of us. We wondered whether we could get a copy from him.

Last week the Bible reading was also so creatively done.

Love the sound of nature in the background too.

Love & blessings to all at SASK,

**Rathini & Barry**

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Thinking of all of you and all of SASK and all of Sri Lanka on this day of remembrance. Here in Minneapolis it can sometimes seem as if that was all a dream, but of course it wasn't. The consequences continue to ripple through the life of Sri Lanka and the lives of all of us who care for it. Stay safe and well.

Peace,

**Bill**

Minneapolis, USA

I enjoyed Rev. Ian's services on YouTube very much! It is different experience for me. The multicultural environment in the churches is wonderful to see, in addition to the brilliant music inside the churches and beautiful architecture as well. I've been listening to the hymns with great interest. My favourite hymn is "Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son". Wonderful services through the virus time!

**Buddhika**

Sri Lanka, Colombo

A sermon that needs to be reflected upon many times. Definitely would recommend that it be archived and heard again and again and again. A sermon which is doctrinally and theologically sound. A great exposition on the book of John 4:13-14. My prayer is that my dear sisters and brothers in Christ will continue to be refreshed by the living

water that Jesus has offered all of us by his Grace. I am so thankful that I was able to hear this sermon. My gratitude to all the elders and technicians who work in the background for making this possible.

Love and blessings

**Ayesha**

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Love the multicultural element. Great blessing at the end and I particularly liked hearing the sounds of wildlife during the boy's reading and the sermon. Beautiful all round. Happy Mother's Day to all Sri Lankans.

**Helen**

Isle of Wight, UK

Thanks for sharing this service with us. So nice to hear the Scottish accent with such an important message. (We sincerely love Scotland since our boating trip last year). Very professional as well, but more important, it binds us all as His children.

Kind regards,

Vriendelijke groet,

**Hermien and Dik**

Holland, Netherlands

### The following emails were sent regularly by Tom and Catherine from Glasgow, Scotland.

Thank you so much for sharing this. Ian's content and production are outstanding. A real blessing for us all! I listened to it while waiting in Tesco's car park for Catherine to finish the shopping. What wonders of modern technology! May the Lord Bless you.

**Tom**

Another excellent service from Sri Lanka and especially poignant with the remembrance of the events of last Easter. Many thanks,

Love to all, this Easter

**Tom and Catherine**

Thanks, another great service, and quite spectacular with the hallelujah chorus at the end.

**Tom and Catherine**

Good morning Ian,

Just wanted to say how much I've appreciated your services for St Andrews Scots Kirk in Sri Lanka.

It's truly amazing how it can all be put together from different parts of the world to create a super worship experience. I'm conducting the services for Cambuslang Church which are not quite on the same professional footing as yours but like so many congregations we are discovering, through technology, that the love of God cannot be contained in the grave or behind locked doors.

Many, many thanks and Happy Easter.

**Tom**



## What they say about the Newsletter – Easter 2020

Fabulous ! (in my humble opinion.)  
God bless you both.  
Take care,  
Love,  
**Loretta**

Well done!  
**Robin**

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this  
wonderfully interesting newsletter!  
God bless!  
**Sam**

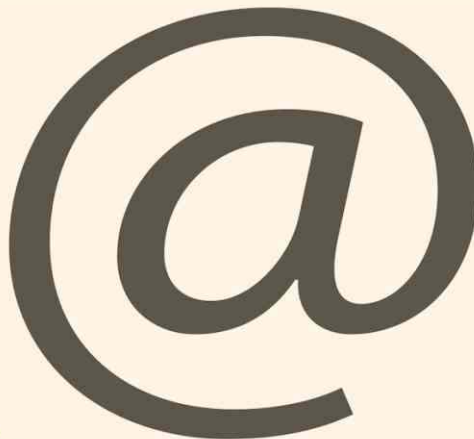
Dear Newsletter Team,  
Received with thanks, my big hug and  
thanks for the newsletter team as always.  
God bless you all.  
**Kumar.**

Gillian - Thank you - and the Newsletter  
Team for the usual very comprehensive  
update in the Easter Newsletter. We  
enjoy keeping up with all the goings on

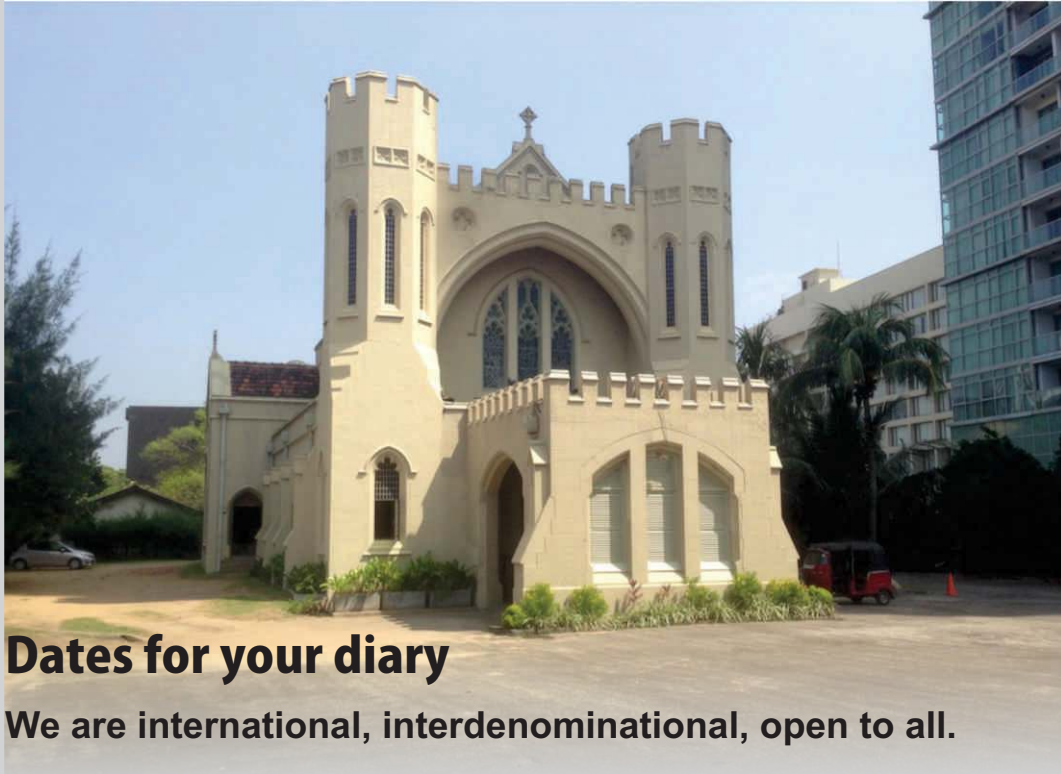
and seeing old friends in the pics -  
reminds us of the happy times at The  
Church. We go back to 1980 in the days  
of Andrew and Martha Baillie. When they  
retired it seemed like the end of an era  
from the " Old " Colombo to the new with  
so many developments and changes. We  
made many memories and made so many  
good friends.

Hope everyone is keeping well during  
these difficult times - we are in lockdown  
here in Scotland with only a weekly outing  
for shopping (or marketing as they say in  
Sri Lanka).  
We hope for better news in two or three  
months.  
Keep safe,  
Kind regards to all,  
**Bob and Sandra Logan.**

Very, very well done issue! Thank you  
very much.  
Peace,  
**Bill**







## Dates for your diary

**We are international, interdenominational, open to all.**

Sunday morning service will continue each week at 9.30 am. All are welcome.

We are currently restricted to a maximum of 50 congregation members in the Church and we regularly have between 30 and 40 members attending. Please do advise our Church officer Kumar on 0722125713 if you are planning to come so we ensure we can manage everyone.

### **The Church Hall is used by:**

The Thrift shop every Tuesday morning between 11 am and 1.30 pm. However the Thrift Shop remains closed until further notice.

The Association of British Residents English Library once per month on Tuesday morning between 11 am and 1 pm

Alcoholics Anonymous every Wednesday at 6.30 pm

17th Colombo Netherlee Scout Troupe every Saturday afternoon

### **Our Church is used by:**

The Korean Church every Sunday morning at 11.30 am

The Four Square Church every Sunday evening and Thursday lunch time

### **Mission work**

Helping Hands - Contact Joubert +94777722736

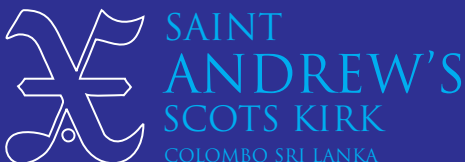
Netherlee Cottage - Contact Gillian Mailler, [email:g\\_mailler@yahoo.com](mailto:g_mailler@yahoo.com)

The Lunch project every Thursday between 12 noon and 12.30 pm. Volunteer servers are urgently needed each week. Contact Shewantha: email [shewa@srodrigo.com](mailto:shewa@srodrigo.com)

Mulleriyawa Hospital visit to Ward 8 every third Wednesday, leaving the Church at 9.30am. Contact Shanthini Ahangama: email [shani\\_ahangama@hotmail.com](mailto:shani_ahangama@hotmail.com)

St. Andrew's Scots Kirk Interim Moderator Revd Ian Gilmour – [igilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:igilmour@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Church Officer K S Kumar - [churchofficer@scotskirk.lk](mailto:churchofficer@scotskirk.lk)



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<http://www.scotskirk.lk/> <https://www.facebook.com/standrewsscotskirk/>

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editorial Committee.