

CHURCH of SCOTLAND INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERY
REPORT: SCOTS KIRK, LAUSANNE

March - October, 2020

Due to the virus 'lockdown', and as soon as possible, 'virtual' services from the Scots Kirk were available on line. Later, when churches were opened to limited numbers and arrangements made for social distancing,' virtual 'services have continued, also with Facebook accessibility. Rev. Gillean MacLean arranged that daily prayers be e-mailed to all members, to which the congregation could add prayer requests. Several members contracted the virus, including our Manse family, but all, thankfully, recovered.

The Pastoral Care group arranged contacts for older members needing care, and for those unable to access church services in person. Gillean offered copies of her sermons, available by post to people without computers and many members have expressed their appreciation of all efforts to 'keep in touch.' Thanks to Gillean's husband, James, and other technical 'wizards,' Zoom Session meetings, after church coffee etc. have been made possible and so the fellowship has been maintained, as far as possible and all within the constraints of health regulations in force to avoid infection.

Easter Week saw a group erect our traditional Cross, decorated with flowers outside the church doors, for passers-by, and others, to signify the season and emphasize its importance in the Christian year. During the week leading up to Whitsuntide, Gillean prepared a series of studies online for members to access. In September, instead of our usual Away Day, with an outside speaker, an alternative Stay Day of shortened duration was conducted by Gillean in the church, dealing with the subject of Spirituality. This was followed by an apéritif when attendees could socialize - always within distancing rules. An ad hoc Gardening Group met during September to discuss future plans for the church gardens and surrounding areas and at the end of September the Harvest Picnic was held, - this time the Lausanne English Catholic Church was invited to join us.

Earlier in the year, several members became infected with the virus, including our Manse family, but all have thankfully recovered. We know not what the future holds as the infection has made a 'comeback' in Switzerland and many other places, with the Canton de Vaud, and its capital, Lausanne, hardest hit. What we can rely on absolutely is God's guidance in all things - He is 'our Eternal Refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.' We can go forward in confidence and in the knowledge, as the poet Shelley said, that ' this, too, shall pass. 'Eternal Refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.' We can go forward in confidence and in the knowledge, as the poet Shelley said, that ' this, too, shall pass.'

Cynthia Gunn
Presbytery Elder.