

QX CONNECT

Queen's Cross Community News

Winter 2020 - Issue No 10

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We are all in this together!

Who would have believed as we celebrated Christmas last year and welcomed in 2020 that it would have been our last celebration in a "normal" world and that by Easter we would be locked down and wearing masks as we carefully avoided meeting friends and family?

2020 has been a year like no other, across all generations. Even during the Second World War families and neighbours could get together to offer company and support, and for most of us, not being able to be with people has been the biggest trial. It is easy to focus on the difficulties and the undoubted negative aspects of Covid-19 and, our sympathy has gone out to those in our community who have lost loved ones to this dreadful virus.

However, even in dark times we can find light and optimism. We have been heartened on so many occasions at the kindness and acts of neighbourliness which people in our community have benefitted from. One elderly lady had received a note through her door in the earliest days of lockdown saying that, although the lady might not know her, she lived a few doors down and was offering to do her shopping. Gestures of kindness like this were mirrored throughout the wider community and a feeling of "we're all in this together" has prevailed.

A year such as this has given us all time to think about what is really important and for many people it has given them the chance to really appreciate what matters – what makes life good – family, friends, walks in the fresh air with time to stop and marvel at the beautiful world we live in and a time to reflect on how we want the future to look for ourselves and our children.

Hope for the future is going to be so important and we have to work together as a community to support each other through what may well be a long winter. The news of a vaccine has been a real ray of hope, and our gratitude to all those involved in medical research and in the National Health and care sector is enormous.

On the back page of this edition of QXCONNECT you will find our "Star of Hope" to colour in. Perhaps you might like to put your coloured in picture in your window so that people passing by feel cheered that the future looks better for us all.

Wishing you all a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Rev Scott Rennie,
Queen's Cross Church



QUEEN'S CROSS
Think | Explore | Grow | Connect

Celebrate Christmas with us!
Check all the dates for your diary on the last page.



ABERDEEN CYRENIANS CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Continuing Queen's Cross' collaboration with *Aberdeen Cyrenians* for the last 30 years, QX is collecting warm outdoor clothes, including hats, scarfs, gloves and underwear. Donations can be left in the box at Queen's Cross Church reception. *Aberdeen Cyrenians* offers care and support for vulnerable people and anyone experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their home through poverty. For more information about *Aberdeen Cyrenians*, visit www.aberdeen-cyrenians.org

HELPING STREET FRIENDS

The QX Craft Group has chosen to give *Street Friends* bags of Christmas goodies including gloves, hats, underwear, toiletries and sweet treats. They hope to collect 100 bags. *Street Friends* are a group of volunteers who supply hot food and drinks, clothes, toiletries to the homeless, vulnerable and poverty-stricken people and their pets. For more details, visit www.streetfriendshelpingthehomeless.com

THE RETURN OF THE LIVELY MINDS MEETINGS

Talk and Q&A; third Tuesday of the month from 11 a.m.

Before the days of Covid-19, Lively Minds events were scheduled for the first and third Tuesday of every month when we met at 12.00 for lunch in the hall of Queen's Cross Church, followed by an invited speaker. Those attending were given the opportunity to comment on the content of the talk and to pose questions. Meetings usually ended around 2 p.m. and were always enjoyed by everyone present.

Speakers have given talks on local history, climate change, street art, and the wisdom of making a will.

Going digital

Our face to face meetings ended in March to comply with the regulations surrounding Covid-19. However, we have recently introduced online 'Zoom' meetings with our inaugural speaker Harry Fisher, a local author,

who gave a fascinating presentation on the process of writing a novel and the work involved in self-publishing.

Future talks

Our next talk is on the **15th December** by **Ken McHardy** on the '*Aberdeen Voices Project*' followed in the New Year by local archivist, **Fiona Musk**, on the **19th January 2021** speaking about the *History of the Lunatic Asylum in Aberdeen*.

Details of these and further online talks will appear in the Queen's Cross Church website:

www.queenscrosschurch.org.uk and on Facebook.

Look forward to welcoming you online.



KEEP ACTIVE! Looking for an activity for you or your family to join from home?

Joe Burn Yoga.

Zoom classes on:
Monday 5.30-7 pm. £7.50
Tuesday 10-11 am. £6.50
Wednesday 5.45-6.45 pm. £6.50
Thursday 10-11am. £6.50

If interested, please contact joe.burn47@gmail.com

Online Pilates Classes.

Beginners & Improvers Level
Contact Caroline on: Mobile 07455577543 or
Email: caroline@pilatestogether.co.uk
<https://www.facebook.com/pilatestogetheruk>

Moira Donald Yoga. Zoom live yoga classes on
Wednesdays 10.15 - 11.45. Recording of the class available

for the following 12 days. For insurance purposes, if she has not seen you practice in a physical class, she will need to observe you in a small online class setting. Please contact her by email moira.chicometrics@gmail.com or phone 01224 648475

The McGill School of Speech and Drama

Classes (currently online) for all ages include: Games, Improvisation, Role Play, Storytelling, Poetry, Public Speaking, Confidence Building, Self Presentation Skills. Pupils can be prepared for festivals and fully accredited speech and drama examinations. Contact: 07545 585452 or themcgillschool@gmail.com



QUEEN'S CROSS NURSERY, welcoming children safely to the new 'normal'

Queen's Cross Nursery re-opened to children in August and thanks to the nursery staff and parents, the children are thoroughly enjoying being back to 'normal'.

Queen's Cross Nursery has successfully implemented COVID-related people management and facilities cleaning procedures, and for the time being all nursery areas including the Carden Place entrance, are considered as 'off-limits' to ensure the safe segregation of nursery staff and children.

Expanded funded hours

Queen's Cross Nursery was delighted to be one of the first nurseries in the City to be able to offer families the expanded 1140 funded hours per year, for all pre-school children.

And although everyone is facing uncertainty at home and at work, the nursery is now busier than ever. Indeed they hope to expand capacity up to 22 places, as well as extend their afternoon hours in January. All in all, Queen's Cross Nursery continues to build a thriving and sustainable early years education environment.

'The Nursery is open and thriving, with lots of happy children who are enthusiastic about learning and playing. A few extra places and hours will be available in January'

Quality Education: Curriculum for Excellence

Feedback from Care Inspectorate and from Aberdeen City's Early Years Team remains very positive as does parent feedback. One of the big curriculum pushes you'll notice is toward more outside activities to help children identify and manage the 'risks and challenges' of everyday life and the outdoors. The aim of Queen's Cross Nursery is to provide opportunities for each child to develop skills and enjoy learning through playing together in a caring, stimulating environment.

The staff have been fantastic throughout all the changes and challenges! Michelle, Sarah, June, Sara and Kirsty assisted by their placement student, Jasmine, are all continuing their professional development.

With the festive season fast approaching, the kids are now busy getting ready a new fun challenge: a 'Zoom' Christmas Show for the families. And it is looking fabulous!

Queen's Cross Nursery is open and thriving, with lots of happy children who are enthusiastic about learning and playing...and they will have a few extra places and hours available in January!





COGNITO AT THE CROSS

OPEN for sit-in (indoors and outdoors) or takeaway:

Monday to Friday: 8.00am – 4.00pm (last sit-in orders 3.00pm)

Saturday & Sunday: 9.00am – 3.00pm

Due to the festivities, Cognito at the Cross will be closed on Friday 25th, Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th December 2020 as well as on Friday 1st, Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd January 2021.

We want our staff & customers to feel confident that the measures we have in place can give them the same great experience with a feeling of total safety. We would ask you all to please follow these guidelines:

- adhere to the one-way systems we have in place at all our units. (Note: at Cognito at the Cross, you will need to exit the building to gain access to the toilets);
- wear masks when not seated at your table;
- keep your distance from other customers;
- use the hand sanitisers provided.

Thank you for your continued support during these difficult times.

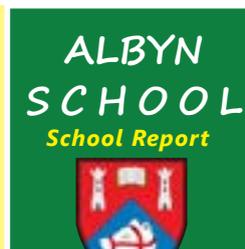
Nicky & Team Cognito

FUND-RAISING MASKS

On sale for £7.50, all proceeds to Queen's Cross Redevelopment Fund. Christmas themed masks are now available.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the fabrication of local hand-made face coverings has activated the resources and efforts of lots of crafty people. One of our community members, Susan Hamilton, has been providing face coverings made from a variety of fabrics, all 100% cotton. All the masks have three pleats, double fabric with pocket opening for a filter and are secured with elastic loops. Tartan material has just arrived so next batch will include these. If interested, please contact Susan Hamilton at susanhamilton9@hotmail.com.

Many thanks to all who have purchased face masks over the last few months – your support has been marvellous.



FEEL GOOD FRIDAYS

Albyn School hosted their very first Feel Good Friday in September and the theme was *Feeling Active*.

The whole school came together and took part in activities and exercises to focus on the

importance of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle. Everyone enjoyed the day and many pupils commented that they had a lot of fun while managing to gain a new and healthy perspective.

As part of their last *Feel Good Friday – Feeling Grateful*, Albyn School asked for donations of dried foods for the Instant Neighbour Foodbank Drop Off. Between the Nurseries, Lower School, Upper School and staff, Albyn School were able to donate a hefty 1,240kg of food!! That's enough to make up food parcels for an entire week. Well done everyone!

WE CAN WALK 500 MILES, DANCERSIZE AND CLAN HIGHLAND GAMES

Following on from the success of the fantastic Lower School "We Can't Walk 500 Miles" virtual music performance, Albyn School decided to challenge their pupils across the school to take part in a charity walk around the Harlaw playing fields followed their annual Clan Highland Games and Dancersize competition. The pupils and staff had a great day and were very tired by the end of it!

With a target of £2020 to raise, Albyn School students surpassed this and raised over £4000 which was split between the charities; Mental Health Aberdeen, Friends of Anchor and Calico.

Albyn School would like to say a huge thank you to everyone in our community and beyond who helped raise this amazing amount of money for the chosen charities.





INSTANT NEIGHBOUR, busy times

The last few months have presented us with many difficult challenges. Business, charities and individuals are having to quickly adapt to the changing situation. The charity Instant Neighbour is one of them. They have had to find their way dealing with the Covid-19 limitations and an increasing demand for assistance.

Instant Neighbour have gone from having a skeleton staff keeping the Foodbank running during the lockdown, to being able to gradually reopen their shops at St Machar Drive & Great Western Road, start collecting donations again and to being almost ready to open their brand-new shop at Union Square, happening very soon! Keep an eye on their social media and website for all the latest news - it's looking very smart indeed!

The Food bank has seen a huge increase in the number of clients coming to them for help, with almost 9000 parcels having been given out already. Compare that to 2019 when their total for the year was 5400 parcels and it's easy to see the massive impact the pandemic has had across both the City and Shire.

Community Support

The charity is able to keep going thanks to the astonishing support they continue to receive, not just from Queen's Cross and other churches, but from many different organisations and from members of the public across the city and shire.

The Instant Neighbour team members who have been working from home over the last few months have also been very busy securing the financial future of the charity. They have recently managed to secure funding enabling them to purchase a refrigerated unit and an upright freezer. This means their clients can now receive fresh and frozen items in addition to non-perishable food.

Christmas Gifts for Kids

Their 30th annual Giving Tree Appeal launched online on 11th November and the charity is anticipating more families than ever will be registering for help with Christmas gifts for their children. As you can imagine, Instant Neighbour are having to work very differently this year because of Covid19 - all the details are on their website and social media pages for

anyone wishing to donate or help in any way.
www.instantneighbour.co.uk

Instant Neighbour would like to pass on their heartfelt thanks to everyone in the community for their continuing support and kindness.

"Real help today, hope for tomorrow"

Wishing to help those in need? Here are some ideas of the items you can donate:

- non-perishable food, such as UHT or long life milk, tinned soup, tinned meat and fish, tinned vegetables, rice & pasta, jar sauces, cereals, tinned fruit, biscuits & snack bars, teabags and instant coffee, sugar, diluting juice, dog & cat food, basic toiletries.
- good-quality used furniture, electrical and household items;
- childcare and baby care items you no longer need but which remain in very good condition;
- second-hand clothing;
- or think about making a financial donation.

More details on www.instantneighbour.co.uk.

ABERDEEN MUSIC TUITION

Situated on Union Terrace, Aberdeen Music Tuition offers professional one-to-one music tuition from Disclosure Scotland PVG checked established teachers.

Tel: 01224 645163
email: aberdeenmusic tuition@gmail.com
www.aberdeenmusic tuition.com





REMOTE MUSIC @QX



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For options and pricing, contact us.
bookings@queenscrosschurch.org.uk

The past months have felt very strange with us not meeting up as a choir on a Thursday evening or performing in the sanctuary on a Sunday morning. However, Scott's early request for 'some music' in the zoom services has resulted in many people rising to the challenge to record their 'bits' remotely with the recordings then being incorporated in the finished product you see on a Sunday.

Having a kirk organ and a music studio set up at home has certainly helped to support what we are all doing, but I am extremely grateful for the time the choir members have given to learning new skills, not to mention the time it actually takes them to do these individual recordings 'successfully'. Few of us, if any, are 'one take wonders' and were we to show some of our failed attempts of 'take' 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 etc, I feel certain it would make for hilarious viewing.

Special mention to Moira for the huge amount of work she does in singing solos and our hymns, but also for her work in singing a 'starter for ten soprano line' on the backing tracks for the other choir members to sing along with. Also many thanks to Eilidh and Steph, our choral Scholars, for the work they have done on solos and duets. Tom has now moved on to university outwith Aberdeen and we wish him well, and thank him for his contributions up to the end of the summer.

With time on my hands, I have also learned the new skill of video editing, and I can now assemble the individual videos. However, special mention to Callum who has done, and continues to do a huge amount of work in this field for QX and the West End Churches.

Our virtual performances can be accessed through the website or on our Facebook page. Also, we have been asked to contribute a virtual performance to the Church of Scotland advent calendar. A link to this will also be placed on the website in due course.

I wish you peace, and the best Christmas possible.

Take care.

Ewen Ritchie, Director of Music at Queen's Cross

QUEEN'S CROSS CHURCH

QUEEN'S CROSS HARLAW

MEETINGS

Virtually @ 7pm on the 2nd Tuesday of the month

See important new updates on
HEALTH and SOCIAL care
Aberdeen New Locality

PLUS
Minutes, Police Reports,
Councillor Reports, Planning
Applications, and Events in
the area

SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

QXCC.WEBBLY.COM



STAR *of* HOPE

This is our Star of Hope. Colour in the illustration and display it in your window. Let's bring some Hope to the streets of Aberdeen for 2021!
Artwork by Alison Ewan.

QX CONNECT



Winter 2020

Celebrate Christmas with us!

Queen's Cross Church

Sunday 6th December @ 10:30

Second in Advent on Zoom

Sunday 13th December @ 10.30

Third in Advent on Zoom

Sunday 20th December @ 10:30

In Person Worship at Queen's Cross and Zoom

Thursday 24th December @ 19:00

Christingle Service on Zoom

Thursday 24th December @ 23:40

Watchnight Service on Zoom

Holburn West Church

Thursday 24th December @ 18:30

Christmas Eve Service Online

Every Sunday evening

Jubilee Service, gather online from 17:40
with informal worship from 18:00.

Email holburnwestsessionclerks@gmail.com
at any time for the link. More information is at
www.holburnwestchurch.org.uk/

St. Mark's Church

Sunday 20th December @ 11:00

Conducted by Rev John Watson.

Details of how to register for the services are on
their website www.stmarksaberdeen.org.uk
and Facebook page.

Midstocket Parish Church

Thursday 24th December early evening - Christmas Eve family service on Zoom.

For timing, further details and how to join, please see our website www.midstocketchurch.org.uk
or the Midstocket Parish Church Facebook page.

Thursday 24th December - Watchnight Service

Recorded service available for all to watch on www.midstocketchurch.org.uk
or the Midstocket Parish Church Facebook page.

Friday 25th December @ 10:30 - Christmas Day Service Live in Church

Pre-registration required.

Please register on their website www.midstocketchurch.org.uk or contact the Church Office on 01224 319519.

WEST END & CITY CENTRE ABERDEEN CHURCHES JOINT SERVICE - Every Sunday

A joint service of worship is recorded weekly with ministers of Queen's Cross Church, Holburn West Church,
Rubislaw Church, Kirk of St. Nicholas, St. Mark's and Midstocket Church, Aberdeen.

This service can be accessed **every Sunday**
on the Facebook page and Youtube channel of the participant churches.

Queen's Cross

Albyn Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1YN

Office opening times:

Monday-Friday 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

01224 644742

www.queenscrosschurch.org.uk

[@queenscross](http://www.facebook.com/queenscross)

Find us on iTunes!

Queen's Cross Church of Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland. No. SC002019

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Minister: Rev Scott Rennie

minister@churchofscotland.org.uk