East Kilbride Old Parish Church

SC000609

**Responding in Challenging Times:**

**Minister’s East Kilbride News Message No 8**

In normal times, this would have been a busy week for us in East Kilbride Old Parish Church because this is our annual Christian Aid week. Christian Aid is a charity founded in 1945 and is the official relief and development agency of 41 Christian churches in the UK and Ireland. It works to support sustainable development, eradicate poverty, support civil society and provide disaster relief in South America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. We have always supported this charity by undertaking a door to door collection in our area, and have had a special service in the church, and a fund raising coffee morning during the week. We have also joined with other churches in the town for larger events.

Needless to say, this year none of that will be happening. We can’t gather together for a large social event like a service of worship, and it is not safe to undertake a door to door collection. During our online service on Sunday, we asked people to remember the work of Christian Aid which is still going on at this difficult time and encouraged them to carry on giving which can be done through their website. [www.christianaid.co.uk](http://www.christianaid.co.uk)

Life is hard for all of us at this time. We’re still having to stay away from each other and are constantly being reminded to wash our hands as often as we can. Some of us are living alone, and some of us are living in more crowded households. However, this virus is not local to us, it’s affecting people across the whole of the world, many of whom are not living the same conditions as we are. This virus does not discriminate between the rich and the poor.

So while life is difficult for us, can you imagine living in a refugee camp or a shanty town? We’ve all seen images of these on our television screens and it’s almost unimaginable to consider how life must be for people in these conditions. They have poor sanitation and few facilities to wash hands. They are living in crowded places where it is almost impossible to socially distance. Christian Aid are working to provide basics like soap and buckets, and they are also communicating clear and accurate information to those who are most vulnerable and ensuring they are kept as safe as possible.

In these difficult times for us, perhaps we should remember that we are not suffering this virus alone, for it is affecting people all over the world. We have our most vulnerable people here being looked after by so many acts of kindness from official agencies, but also by family, friends and neighbours. In other parts of the world this is simply not possible. I’m sure we all have particular charities which are close to our hearts, and for us in the church, Christian Aid is one of ours. As Christians, we follow the example of Jesus himself who always sought out the weak and the vulnerable, and gave them his blessing.

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