

Cupar Old Parish Church

Where Everyone Matters

Newsletter 16 October 2020

Dear Friends:

Joe at the Cupar Foodbank tells me that donations at Tesco have seen a marked increase in recent weeks. If that's you making your Harvest contributions, thank you! They are very grateful for all of the gifts they receive.

At our Harvest worship services this week we're offering our prayers of commitment and blessing to go with all of the gifts that are brought to the church, as well as those that have already been given. We pray that those who receive the gifts may be blessed with the resources necessary for a good and stable life, free of want or fear.

With kind regards,
Jeff

From Our Prayer Team

Refugees are some of the world's most vulnerable people, yet they often face barriers that make them unable to access healthcare. Please pray that refugees, particularly pregnant women, can access the help and support they need.

Give thanks that through all the Covid-19 restrictions God has been with us, and that God is in control, the same yesterday, today and forever.

The prayer groups continue to meet weekly and pray for our church family and the community. If you require prayer for yourself or have a prayer request for someone else, or wish someone to pray with you then please contact either -

Jeff Martin -
01334 656181 jmartin@churchofscotland.org.uk

Janice Geddes -
01334 652957 janice.geddes2@btinternet.com

Kilombero Rice

Margaret Lawrence is happy to make arrangements if you'd like to order Kilombero rice, both white and brown, from Malawi. The cost is £3.20 per kilo. Please text Margaret at 07732 972 965, or email her at margaretduffy95@gmail.com to arrange home delivery.

Scottish Poppy Appeal

One of our members in Monimail is an area organiser for the Scottish Poppy Appeal. If you aren't able to make a donation through your usual channel, you can make use of the Just Giving page they've set up. Your gift will go directly to Poppy Scotland.
https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ao-letham?utm_source=Sharethis&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=ao-letham&utm_campaign=pfp-email&utm_term=2da3df3afe0d45a1815f5d533ad636c2.

Reflection from Peter Meager

Many moons ago, I was heading back after conducting a funeral. As I was the only passenger in the small military plane, I was sitting in the co-pilot's seat and wearing a headset so that I could talk to the pilot. It also enabled me to listen to his interaction with air traffic control.

Immediately after taking off from Edmonton, in Alberta, we had entered thick low cloud and there was zero visibility. I knew from a film I used in Padre's Hours with the pilots in an Army Air Corps squadron I looked after back in Germany, that, in such conditions, a pilot will become completely disorientated within 30 seconds with almost certain loss of control, unless he relies completely on his flying instruments. He cannot trust his normal instincts.

Our immediate destination was the town of Red Deer where the pilot had to drop off some supplies. In those pre-GPS (Global Positioning System) days, the pilot was using RDF, Radio Direction Finding, to navigate and had locked onto the radio beacon at Red Deer. He was told to start his descent when he passed over the beacon. Eventually, the RDF needle swung through 180° indicating we had flown over the beacon and we started down, further into the mirk. After three minutes we were told to reverse our course. The pilot turned us around, still with nothing to see but the spinning propeller in front of us, splattering water droplets on the windscreen. At 500 feet we suddenly emerged from the cloud to see the runway just ahead of us.

To say I was relieved would be an understatement. It was only by having complete faith in his instruments and total compliance with the instructions he was being given that we arrived safely at our destination.

With no end in sight for our current situation we need to rest assured that God is able to guide us and guard us on this disconcerting stage of our life journey; we need to go on, obediently listening for His voice and putting our faith into practice each day,

wherever God has put us. J B Phillips translates Second Timothy 1:12 like this, *'For I know the one in whom I have placed my confidence, and I am perfectly certain that the work he has committed to me is safe in his hands until that day.'*

A couple of years before, I had been in Belize. Part of my parish was the RAF radar hut. I'd pop in from time to time to catch up with the duty officer. On the screen, the arm of the radar tracked round illuminating any aircraft in the vicinity. It would show up as a little blip of orange light. The operator would track the flight path using a manually operated cursor; so that, should anything untoward occur, there would be a record of its last location.

As I looked at the extending line on the screen, I knew that, when I flew up country to take services on the next Sunday, I would be tracked from the moment we took off until we reached our destination and eventually got back to base. The knowledge that the Lord is watching over us, second by second, in turbulence or when all is going well can be a reassuring, calming source of comfort, strength and peace.

In Psalm 121 we read:

"He who watches over you will not slumber...He will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." Would it be very irreverent to insert 'socially distanced' before the 'coming and going' in the latter verse?

You may wish to join me in prayer:

O Lord of the revolving year, as we prepare to celebrate Harvest, we praise you for your boundless bounty; generously and freely providing enough to satisfy the needs of all. You give food for our bodies and nourishment for our souls. Father, we thank you and are mindful of those who have to rely on food banks or relief programmes through no fault of their own. May they too have cause to thank you for the way you provide for them.

We thank you too for all who work on land or sea, in shops or on market stalls to provide our food. May they know your presence as they cope with climate change and the risks presented by coming into close contact with others in these uncertain days.

As hedgerows and forests turn golden yellow and brilliant red, we thank you for the autumn beauty which cheers our hearts. As skeins of overwintering geese appear again in our skies, we hear their honks of encouragement to their neighbours and our spirits are lifted too. Father, we thank you and are mindful of those whom life has treated harshly, who have little to dispel the gloom or give them hope. May they not be broken by these difficult times and may they have cause to thank you for sustaining them through the love of families and friends and the support of governments and communities.

As our hospitals and care homes come under renewed pressure, we thank you for the degree of health and strength that we enjoy and pray for all those who care for others so professionally and cheerfully. May they find courage, strength, joy and fulfilment as they respond to your call to love and service. We offer this prayer in the name and for the sake of Jesus our Saviour, Master and Friend. Amen

I usually close by sharing an old hymn. Last week I came across a brand new one by Bishop Timothy Dudley Smith (author of contemporary favourites like 'Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord.') He was commissioned to write it by the Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association. I think it is a fine summary of our faith, reminding us, amongst other things, that Jesus comes to meet us each day, wherever we are and that we need to be ready for the difference that encounter will make. They didn't give the tune but, when I contacted them, they agreed that 'Aurelia' (The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord) would be a good fit.

Praise God for those who brought us to know and love the Lord, who nurtured us and taught us the treasures of his Word;

to read in Scripture's pages of God's eternal plan,
fulfilled through all the ages in Christ, the Son of Man.

Give thanks that God has given his written Word of Life,
The pilgrim's path to heaven, the Spirit's sword in strife.
The eye of faith, beholding the way that Jesus trod,
In Scripture finds unfolding the loving heart of God.

Proclaim the Gospel story, forgiveness for our sins,
Exalt the Lord of Glory through whom new life begins.
Our hearts be strong and steady to trust in him alone,
Alert prepared and ready to share the faith we own.

Rejoice in free salvation, through Christ who died to save,
Who bore our condemnation, our guilt and cross and grave.
Now risen and ascended, he makes his promise plain.
When earthly time is ended, the Lord will come again.

He comes when least expected at God's appointed hour,
no more despised, rejected, but glorious in his power.
Be ready, then, to greet him according to his Word,
prepared each day to meet him, our risen, reigning Lord.

Feel free to get in touch: meager52@btinternet.com

Stated Annual Meeting

Due to the lockdown, we weren't able to have our stated annual meeting in the spring. Normally we include a focus on our plans for the coming year; the one act of required business is to receive the audited financial report from the treasurer. Because we're now spread out over three worship services, we will have a **brief** meeting via Zoom to meet the legal requirement. It will take place at 7:30pm on Tuesday 27 October. A meeting of the Kirk Session will follow immediately afterward. Please email Jeff if you would like to receive a copy of the 2019 financial report.

You may join the meeting via Internet:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89951887609?pwd=VjhSK0NaUFRjZnFTUVZKZ1djQWY0dz09>

Meeting ID: 899 5188 7609

Passcode: 582208

If you know of members who do not have an Internet connection, please share this information for telephone connection with them:

Dial 0131 460 1196

When prompted, enter the meeting ID: 899 5188 7609

followed by the hash key (#).

Then enter the passcode: 582208

followed by another hash.

Worship

Our worship services are in the Old Parish Centre, 10:30am on Thursday, and 11:00am and 4:00pm on Sunday. If you're not able to be present for one of our three worship services each week, you may listen online. Please go to our church website and follow the link to the recording of the service.

www.cuparold.org.uk

Donations

If you would like to make an online donation to the church, you may do so through the Church of Scotland website:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk.

Just click the red 'donate' button and it will guide you through. You may also speak with David, our treasurer, if you would like to set up a regular direct deposit.