

PERTH METHODIST CHURCH

MESSAGES AND INFO

Friday 27th March

Our usual news-sheet sheet is renamed Messages and Info and we hope it will be one of the ways we can keep in touch with each other during this strange and difficult time. Please encourage others to read it and please print a copy for anyone you know who is not on email. Please also send in any items such as personal messages or info that you wish to share with members of the congregation.

Sadly we have to announce that our Sunday services of worship are cancelled due to the corona virus pandemic. Also, we have cancelled, with great reluctance, our coffee mornings, soup lunches and First Tuesday lunches for the foreseeable future. We are sad at not being able to serve the local community in our usual way.

(The above notice is on the Home page of our web-site and is displayed on the front door at church)

A Message from Nik Wooller

Like most people my diary has emptied of everything I expected to do this week. I should be in Cornwall enjoying the sun whilst on retreat. And the weeks to come have become blank too. I feel as if all the pieces of my life are like a jigsaw puzzle which has been thrown up into the air. I don't know where the pieces will land, or when and I wonder, in a bit of a panic, which will end up being lost altogether.

When adversity strikes, shock sets in. I know this, of course. I know it will take time to process what is happening to us, to people near us and people far away. I know that the first step is accepting what the situation is and naming it helps us to do that. I've experienced adversity before, in different ways, as we all have. I have found that not only naming and accepting what is happening is important, but also knowing that God is the one on whom we can call for 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble' (Psalm 46:1).

I sense that as well as filling up my diary with offering help, while I am able to, I will remember to ask God for help, not yet knowing what the picture will look like as the pieces land, but seeking to always trust in the name of the Lord.

This week I found a poem by Brian Bilston which just about sums up my efforts at "working from home" called 'The To-Do List' :

delay, defer, equivocate, make some tea, procrastinate,
scroll through news; stroke the cat, readjust the thermostat.
dawdle, dither, hem and haw, fill the kettle, chew my jaw,
write nine words, spin on chair, play six games of solitaire.
observe the merry, dappled light dancing on the the screen of white,
print out words, paper scrunch, stroke the cat, break for lunch.
prioritise new tasks to shirk, resolve myself to do some work,
look at Twitter, spin on chair, make a brew; loiter; stare.
scroll through news; stare some more, reorganise the kitchen drawer,
write nine words; cross six out, stroke the cat, stoke self-doubt.
make tea; stroke cat; scroll news; stare, Twitter;; chair-spin; solitaire
stroke tea; spin news; scroll cat; wallow, write To Do List for tomorrow.

Perth Foodbank

Staff at the Foodbank are working hard to cope but cannot accommodate any more volunteer helpers at present. Marjorie Clark asks us, firstly, to pray for the Foodbank, its staff, volunteers and clients. Secondly, to give donations of food, etc. Please take these to the supermarket collection points and **not** to the Foodbank premises. Items most urgently required at present are tinned potatoes, instant mashed potato, tinned vegetables, tinned tomatoes, small cereal packs, small bags of pasta and of rice...and, of course, toilet rolls!

You can keep up to date with what is needed by visiting www.perthkinross.foodbank.org.uk

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SCOTLAND - WORSHIP DURING COVID19 OUTBREAK

The Chair of the Methodist Church in Scotland will continue to live lead an act of worship this coming Sunday 29th March at 11am. There were over 140 live viewers last Sunday (including one person reportedly joining an act of worship for the first time in three years) and over 500 views in total up to mid-week.

You'll find Rev Mark Slaney's youtube channel using this link, where you can tune in on Sunday and subscribe ahead of time to receive notifications.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqMz31V_plsq89v_KXAAICw

and see Mark's promo for this coming Sunday here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mofmTDtEhig>

Or, you can go to the Methodist Church in Scotland's website to discover a range of other online and worship at home resources. Rev Chris Jackson (Moray Coast, North of Scotland Mission Circuit) has uploaded pre-recorded reflective worship including music and hymns. Rev Andrew Fox (Lerwick, Shetland) offers similar pre-recorded worship including Lent liturgies. In East Glasgow, Rev Laurent Vernet will be posting online live worship. As well as links to other Methodist live streaming you find resources for use with Children and Families at home and service sheets you can use for personal worship.

You can peruse what's on offer via this web-link:

<http://methodistchurchinscotland.net/resources-2/worship-resources-for-online-and-at-home/>

The Churches Together call to prayer is now being extended to this coming Sunday.

The invitation is to light a candle at 7pm this Sunday, 29th March**, in the window of our homes as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, the source of hope in this life.

We offer a prayer to use when lighting your candle:

For all that is good in life, thank you, For the love of family and friends, thank you.

For the kindness of good neighbour and Samaritan stranger, thank you.

May those who are vulnerable, hungry or homeless, experience support, May those who are sick, know healing, May those who are anxious or bereaved, sense comfort.

Bless and guide political leaders and decision-makers, with wisdom, Bless and guide health workers and key workers, with strength and well-being, Bless and guide each one of us, as we adapt to a new way of living.

And may the light shining from our windows, across road and wynd, glen and ben, kyle and isle, be reflected in our hearts and hands and hopes.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

*(**Please take all necessary fire precautions when using a lit candle)*

Two responses to the lighting of candles:

Lesley writes that she found it comforting. "I knew my Perth friends would be participating but on Sunday morning I had messaged it to my Dundee/Würzburg twinning what's app group. So lots of members here participated and then put photographs of their candles on the what's app site including Lyn in Würzburg who had been in lockdown since Friday. I found the messages particularly moving and creating a real sense of unity".

Judith says that her cousin's wife put eight candles in her window, each representing far flung members of her family, including some in Dubai.

The following hymn has helped Pam during this week:-

Calm me, Lord, as you calmed the storm; still me, Lord, keep me from harm.

Let all the tumult within me cease; enfold me, Lord, enfold me in your peace. (StF 624)

This **Messages and Info sheet** is currently being produced by Gerald, please send items for inclusion to him by 12 midday on Thursday each week. His details are in the church directory.