

PERTH METHODIST CHURCH MESSAGES AND INFO

Friday 3rd July

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.

Nik Wooller gives us her Manse Musings.

The gospel passage that I am reflecting on this week is **Mark Ch 4 vs 35 -41** I am sure that it is a passage that is familiar to you.

In many ways, it seems to me that this passage is very apt for our times. We are in the middle of a stormy passage of life. Storms tend to come upon you out of nowhere; they come whether you like it not. This Covid 19 pandemic certainly falls into that category!

Storms can terrify us, they leave us very uncertain - how long will it last, will we survive intact? I think that is probably how the disciples felt in that boat. Even though some were fishermen and accustomed to the unpredictable ways of the Sea of Galilee, there was panic in the boat. And Jesus? He was taking the opportunity to catch up on his sleep!

The disciples were probably very confused. Why wasn't he awake? Did he not care what happened to them? I wonder if the words of **Psalm 44 vs 23, 24** came to their minds "*Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever. Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?*"

Perhaps that is how many people have felt, or are feeling, through this time. In their fear, are they begging God to sort it all out? Are they worried that he has indeed forgotten his people? I wouldn't be surprised if that was the case and, in some ways, I would be pleased about that because it, at least, shows a belief in the existence of God!

In the Gospel story we read that Jesus did wake up and he took control of the situation. He commanded the wind and waves to be still. He doesn't just leave it there however. He has a question for his disciples; "why are you so afraid. Do you still have no faith?"

Perhaps he wants to ask that question of us too. Do we not trust that he has power over the storms of life, that he experiences them alongside us, that he loves us and that, crucially, he wants us to trust him more?

Look at the lesson from the boat. Storms (of any kind) don't worry Jesus. He is perfectly calm about them. We need to learn to trust. He is in the middle of the storm beside us. There was never a promise that storms wouldn't come into our lives. I suspect that you, like me, often feel like we go from one kind of storm to another. Also, we do tend to go through times of fear and panic when we are being storm-tossed! All of that is quite natural and part of being human.

What we have to learn is that Jesus is there with us in the storm. It may not be immediately evident but he is. He is not afraid, he is ultimately in control and we are safe with him. He just asks us to have more faith in him!

“Oh where’s your faith? Even your little faith?”

In the storm, in the darkness, I am with you.

Let the waves roar. But don’t be distressed.

Otherwise, you might never hear me saying ‘Peace! Be Still’

Prayer

Our confidence is in you, loving God. You are the foundation of the universe, Mother-like you brought us to birth. Father-like you watch over us, protecting. You are the source of life and faith alike. If you were not, we would cease to be. We, your children, have rested our hope on you and sought to follow Jesus. Yet, even with such confidence, there are times when faith bends under pressure, bends, and almost breaks:

times when it seems the family door has closed on us, closed and we are orphaned; times when our peace is disturbed, and we are tiny craft on a stormy ocean.

For we know pain and sadness, frustration, fear and loss,

Even when we have sought to follow Jesus.

Our pain, and the pain we feel for others, is like a heavy burden to us:

Cruelty and anger, war and attack by virus, bereavement and the loss of a loved one, Can bring such moments, even when we are followers of Jesus.

But then we pause before the sight of a cross,

And stay our eyes on a young man’s agony in death;

Your own purpose in him seemingly thwarted.

And learn afresh that you are in our sadness as in our happiness;

In the dark shadows of life as well as the bright joy.

In our uncertainty as well as our confidence,

For you are walking with us throughout our days.

Thus we accept afresh the risk and joy of trusting you, offering all that we are; and with renewed delight rejoice to follow Jesus. Amen **God Bless, Nik**

Live-streamed services can be found on the Methodist Church website:
methodist.org.uk

On Sunday at 11.45am on BBC1 there will be Reflections at the Quay

A message from the church stewards

We did not hold a Church Council in June but we did request the usual reports and circulated them to Council members. We have agreed we would make these reports available to the wider congregation. If you want to see these reports, please ask Gerald. In the meantime we can tell you two really good pieces of news. Since the front door was re-hung the problem around ensuring that it is locked has been resolved. Also Yvonne Clarkson has been elected, by electronic vote, to be Church treasurer from 1st September. The next piece of good news would, of course, be to tell you when we might be opening up for worship and for all the groups that meet on our premises. But we are unable to do

anything about this until there is firm guidance from the Government. Please get in touch if you have any other questions.

Beryl, Bill, Brenda, Lesley, Pam and Sheryll

Nick Baker is still unwell. Please continue to remember him and Petra and their family in your prayers.

Sundays at 7.00pm. We are reminded that Scottish Church leaders encourage us to continue to light a candle in a window and offer a prayer on Sunday evening.

The prayer for this coming Sunday is as follows:

Lord, we come to you as we are
For we can come no other way.
We come acknowledging the burdens we carry
And trusting in your promise of rest.
Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*

Lord, we come to you
In the sure knowledge that we are not alone.
We come in the company
Of all who know the challenge of these days.
Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*

Lord, we come to you
Acknowledging that you have already come to us.
We journey to the place where you are to be found
And rediscover that you have always been with us.
Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*

.Lord, we come to you
As the One who knows our past and sees our present.
Set us free from that which binds us to our past
And liberate us to serve you in the present.
Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*

Lord, we come to you
Through the One who is the same, yesterday, today and forever.
May he hold our lives safe
As we embrace the future and the promise of his rest.
Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*

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.