

PERTH METHODIST CHURCH MESSAGES AND INFO

FRIDAY 5TH MARCH

Our usual news-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's Manse Musings

The reading I am musing on today, like last week's, takes place during that final supper Jesus and the disciples shared. Jesus has spoken about himself as the Way, Truth and Life; he has encouraged his disciples not to despair, and to believe in God the Father, and in Jesus himself. Now, Jesus takes a new direction, a new "I am" saying, a new hint at who he is, and who we are as his followers.

'I am the True Vine and my Father is the vine-grower,' he says. In saying this, he uses an image found in the Hebrew Scriptures so familiar to his early disciples, where Israel herself is seen as the vine. Jesus goes further, 'I am the Vine, you are the branches.' Those of us who seek to follow God, to deepen our relationship with God, must do so connected to Jesus. Gone is the language of believing, or trusting from the previous chapter, now Jesus calls us to abide – to abide in the Father and in Jesus, God's Son. Now, Jesus' life isn't just to be a way to follow, but it will be the source of our life and growth.

We hear this image of the Vine each year at our covenant service and it is important not just for understanding who Jesus is, but in understanding who we are in Jesus. To be a branch on Jesus' vine is not just to be connected to Jesus, but it is to recognise that we are connected to one another as well.

Our faith isn't just about our personal relationship with Jesus, but it is also about being part of a wider family – all children of God. We don't get to choose who the other branches are, but we are called to recognise our connection one with another.

When we choose to remain branches connected to Jesus, the Vine, it is also to seek to bear fruit. In so many places in the Bible we see that the greatest fruit we are to desire is to love. In his parable that we call the Good Samaritan, Jesus makes clear that to love our neighbour means to love those we encounter who are in need, regardless of whether they are like us or not. What is more, it is a practical love that seeks the best for them, not just having a warm, fuzzy feeling.

Fairtrade Fortnight, which finishes on Sunday, gives us the opportunity to put that love into action. It reminds us to listen again to stories of those who grow our food and produce our clothes, as we remember those stories may we seek the best for them and put our love into action as we shop by paying a fair price so that they have the resources to develop their communities, can afford education and healthcare, become more resilient in the face of the climate crisis. How we shop, and the effect that has on our neighbours around the world, isn't something separate from our lives of faith, but is a central element to how we show love of neighbour and love of God.

Seeking to abide in Christ the True Vine is to draw strength from Christ – to be nourished by his words and his Spirit so that we may blossom and produce fruits that will transform our world. This Lent, may we seek to be nourished by Christ in order that we may love like Christ. May the vision for who we should love not be limited by artificial national boundaries, but may we remember that it was because God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, to be our Vine, the source of our life and strength. **Nik**

Traidcraft Catalogue

If reading Nik's musings this week has inspired you to think more about fair trade and you would be interested in looking through the new Traidcraft catalogue, please ask me for one. Pam

Worship this Sunday, 7th March

This Sunday's services, will be on the YouTube channel from 9am Sunday. To access the service or any of the earlier services go to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and where it says 'Search' enter: 'Angus, Dundee and Perthshire Methodist Circuit'.

If you know of anyone who doesn't have access to YouTube and would like the service on DVD or a full script, please tell Nick Wooller or Sue Marshall-Jennings smj4409@hotmail.co.uk so it can be posted to them each week.

LENT COURSE - Angus Dundee and Perthshire with Strathclyde Methodist Circuits

Our Lent course this year will take place on zoom at 7pm on Wednesday evenings: 3rd, 10th, 24, 31st March 2021

We shall be considering what it means to follow a Methodist Way of Life and you will be invited to connect with material on the Methodist Church website.

You will find this leaflet a good introduction to the subject:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/19302/mwol-a6-booklet-1020.pdf>

and you will be prompted to look at the material in this A5 booklet as we progress through the weeks of study:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/19583/mwol-finding-the-way-booklet-1120.pdf>

We are hoping that we shall all find this to be a refreshing experience, renewing us in our Christian lives.

To get the zoom link please register your interest with either of us
God Bless. Nick, and Nik.

The International Cafe

Amanda Brown brownmackay@gmail.com

has sent the following message and it is passed on for info recognising that some who may otherwise be interested will be 'attending' Church Council.

"After almost a year, and no clear idea of when we can resume meeting face to face, the organising group for the International Cafe have decided to experiment with taking the cafe online.

Monday March 8th, from 7- 8pm. Bring your own refreshments.

This will, of course, be a different experience but we hope to organise it so that small groups can chat together for some of the time.

If you think you might be interested in joining please let me know by email and I will ensure that you receive the Zoom link".

Church Treasurer Sadly, Yvonne has had to resign from being church treasurer for health reasons and, following a recent Church Council online vote, Alan Anderson has been appointed in her place.

Now that Alan has taken over from Yvonne, any of the church family who wish to make a church collection contribution towards our continuing costs in support of ministry is asked to send cheques, payable to Perth Methodist Church, to Alan at the address in the Church Directory. If sending a cheque is difficult, then please phone Alan using the number in the Church Directory.

Sundays at 7.00pm. Scottish Church leaders encourage us to keep on lighting a candle in a window and offer a prayer on Sunday evening.

God of Space and Time,
Meet us in the place where we are today.
Meet us in the place where we are
And transform us by the presence of your Son.
In this place, may we encounter the One who embodies your love.
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

God of Space and Time,
Meet us in the place where we are today. Meet us at the break of day
And be with us in all that lies before us.
In the place in which we live, may we see life renewed.
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

God of Space and Time,
Meet us in the place where we are today.
Meet us in the place of suffering
And bring your healing presence among us.
In the place of suffering, enable us to reach out to those beside us.
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

God of Space and Time,
Meet us in the place where we are today.
Meet us in the place of sorrow
And bring your light into our darkness.
In the place of sorrow, may we become bearers of your light.
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

God of Space and Time,
Meet us in the place where we are today.
Meet us in the rhythm of life
And renew hope within us.
In the community in which we live, may we bear witness to the God of hope.
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

God of Space and Time,
Meet us in the place where we are today.
Meet us at the close of day
And be with us through the night.
Keep us safe and bring us to the dawn of a new day.
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)