

# PERTH METHODIST CHURCH

# MESSAGES AND INFO

## FRIDAY 9TH APRIL

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.

### **An Easter Message from Mark Slaney (District Chair)**

‘Close this place of worship and in three days I will open it again.’ (paraphrasing)

In speaking of his body as replacing the Temple Jesus relocates, refocuses the place and presence of God in himself. In breathing on his disciples, the risen Christ does the same for them, truly affirmed at Pentecost for everyone from all over the world.

Corona Virus pandemic saw the closure and restriction of public life, including public worship and associated places of worship. In the Methodist Church in Scotland and Shetland Districts we were swift to relocate and refocus our communal worship, mission and ministry as we shifted church-life to various online and virtual platforms. In so doing we discovered that the place of worship rather than being closed, opened up to more people as attendance at worship, bible study, prayer and even training and business meetings increased.

If our church buildings are no longer necessary for worship then what are they for, I wonder? How might we reimagine necessity and uses of our communal properties?

Not that we shouldn't return to communal worship in person. We have missed incarnate expressions of worship not least in the lack of bread and wine, Holy Communion, and we will want to return to the table together. We Methodists will want to return to communal singing in person as an expression of our worship. We will welcome opportunity for fellowship where we can speak face to face (rather than screen-face to screen-face) over tea, coffee, biscuits and cake.

On Maundy Thursday I found myself alone at home. Returning from a trip to the Post Office at the end of the day I was greeted by the sight of my neighbours sat, socially distanced of course, on the communal lawn in front of our homes. I was invited to join. During the hour or so we sat and talked together, one neighbour brought me a bowl of beef stew leftover from their family meal. Another neighbour reached over offering me a bottle of beer to go with the food. It was a little later, back in the house and back on my own, that I came to reflect on the sacred nature of what I had experienced. Jesus modelled service in washing his disciples' feet and shared bread and wine. My neighbours literally served me food and drink in an act of neighbourly hospitality, kindness and grace. I hadn't missed out on Maundy Thursday after all. I was still being invited to "remember me."

I believe that something profound is happening and being offered to us in and through lockdown and restrictions. It begins with the discovery that our own homes (our lounges, kitchens, dining rooms etc) are as sacred spaces as any chapel in which God is present and we may worship. It moves to the realisation that just as this 'everywhere' God makes my home holy space so Holy Spirit within me and you, makes us holy. Or, as we read in Romans 12, we are being invited "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship," which in turn invites us out of conforming to the passing patterns of this world and into transformation and renewal.

Please, let's not simply 'go back to church.' Remember that Jesus did not come back to life. He went forward to new risen life and identity. The same but different, somehow 'more than' He was before. He laid his life down and picked up a greater eternal life. Those who were still called to follow Him, He brought out of the lockdown of grief and guilt and doubt and despair, out of the lockdown of an upper room, to discover and share the resurrection promise 'I am with you, always.'

Happy Easter!

May pandemic have prepared us for Pentecost. (Mark Slaney Holy Saturday 2021)

## Worship at PMC

**Our church is now open for in person worship.**

**Here is the Plan for the remaining Sundays in April:**

	<b>Preacher</b>	<b>Pianist</b>	<b>AV Technician</b>
11th April	Rev Alan Anderson	Sheila Anderson	Alan Anderson
18th April	Rev Linda Rice	Judy Jarvis	Sheila Lamont
25th April	Gerald Bostock	Christine Aston	Marcus Humphrey

Brenda and Bill Gillespie will be the stewards on duty at all four services.

**Circuit Worship.** This Sunday's circuit service 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](mailto:smj4409@hotmail.co.uk) so it can be posted to them each week.

**Collections at Services during this COVID period:** As many of you will know, the government has recommended that handling cash be kept to a minimum during this continuing pandemic period. This means that church collections are safest given directly through the bank where possible, or by cheque to me as treasurer if direct banking is not possible. We are extremely grateful that so many of you have used these donation methods during the months of closure. This has been, and will continue to be, an ideal way of giving. If members and friends who are coming to church on Easter Day and the following Sundays still need to give to the church, a plate will be available inside the worship area for use on arrival. {Please note this facility is for church collections only. If you have money for other funds e.g. All We Can Smartie Tubes, please contact me.} The preacher will give thanks for our gifts, but the collection plate will not be taken to the front as that would mean unnecessary movement. After the worshippers have left the church, the stewards will deal with any collection in a covid-safe manner ready for banking.

Direct Banking is to the Bank of Scotland for Perth Methodist Church Sort Code 80-91-28 and Account No 00709208. Cheques should be made payable to Perth Methodist Church. If you'd rather give by another method, phone me using the number in the church directory and we'll find a solution.

Alan Anderson

and the **Envelope scheme** For the reasons given above, the envelopes for 2021 will not yet be distributed. Some members may not wish to recommence using them. Should you wish to return to envelope giving when possible, please let Susie Turner know and Susie will ensure distribution once safe to do so.

## To all key holders

Compliance with Covid regulations requires the Trustees to ensure that the building is maintained to strict hygiene standards. We do not, therefore, want any key holder to go into the premises unless it is absolutely necessary. If you must go in, please inform Rob

Reid or one of the stewards of your intention and please ensure that you sanitise all door handles, switches and surfaces that you have touched before leaving.

We would also ask that you do not plan to go into the building if any of our tenant groups will be there. At present this is solely PLUS on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

We are about to put a **padlock on the gate**. This is a temporary measure in an attempt to stop the dog-fouling in the garden area and also to discourage people from congregating there. During this time entrance will be through the front door. But when any group is meeting within the premises the gate will be unlocked to comply with fire regulations.

The code for the combination lock is to be found in the vestry drawer.

**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.

It is not yet available but will appear on the [methodistchurchinscotland.net](http://methodistchurchinscotland.net) website

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)