

# PERTH METHODIST CHURCH

## MESSAGES AND INFO

### FRIDAY 7TH MAY

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**

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises. – Psalm 98:4

This week's lectionary readings include Psalm 98, it speaks of creation praising God. Whilst spending time musing on the Psalm I have begun to notice just how much of recent (non-election) news has been taken up with the relationship between humans and nature. Either what we can do to help creation, to right the wrongs of previous generations or what it can do for us, especially for the good of our mental health.

There has been much said recently about how spending time in green space or bringing nature into our everyday lives can benefit both our mental and physical wellbeing. For example, doing things like growing food or flowers, exercising outdoors or being around animals can have lots of positive effects.

We all have different experiences of nature, and different reasons for wanting to connect with it more – or maybe some of us are feeling unsure about whether to try something new. You might find that you get something completely different from one activity compared to others, after all I know that some of you really enjoy gardening!

One of the terms that was often heard in Christian circles about creation is dominion, this was interpreted as if we had full rights to do what we pleased with God's good creation, fortunately I think we hear this less now because we know that God calls us to care both for the poor and the planet. Climate Change is a daily reality for millions of the world's poor, and it is a matter of faithful discipleship and of justice, to ensure a healthy climate for future generations and our fellow creatures. God is calling us to respond!

Celtic theology takes a somewhat different approach to understanding what constitutes the sacred when it comes to creation. Celtic theologian John Philip Newell, has this to say in his forthcoming book, *Sacred Earth Sacred Soul*:

In Celtic wisdom we remember the earth as sacred. Every tree and bush, every flower and creature, every hill and mountain is on fire with the divine. (creation shouts, there is a creator) The life within all life is holy. What we do to the body of the earth is what we do to God.

Of course, Newell is not the only person to champion the concept of the sacredness of all creation. Others call us to pay attention to how we either care for and steward our planet, or denigrate and destroy it.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem "Aurora Leigh" and these lines:

Earth's crammed with heaven, And every common bush aflame with God; But only those who see take off their shoes; The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.

Even William Shakespeare understood the powerful communication between all of creation and its creator.

And this our life, exempt from public haunt,

Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,

Sermons in stones, and good in everything. – *As You Like It* (II.i.14–17)

Psalm 98 calls us to pay attention to and praise God, “us” being all that lives, all that is created. Soil, for example, is not a dead substance. Hold a handful of soil in your hand and sense how it teems with life and energy. Ecologist Suzanne Simard discovered some twenty years ago that trees communicate with one another and will even attempt to communicate with humans. All of the created order is connected and somehow praises the Creator of the Cosmos. What does this mean for us as 21st century Christians? First of all, simply being aware of the connections, the power, and the beauty of creation matters. Secondly, how we interact with the natural world matters. Do we, for example, attempt to harness nature, or do we coexist and appreciate God’s good creation? Finally, what will we do about living in this vast interconnected cosmos, where every atom and molecule rises up in its own way to praise the God who created and sustains it? Many questions for us to ponder, but this is a subject we can no longer ignore. Blessings and joy as all the earth breaks forth into song and praise! Let us sing a new song. ~Nik

### **Sunday in-person worship**

This is in place now and there has been a joyful sense of being together again to worship God. Compliance with Covid regulations is observed. Everyone is welcome.

**The Service for this Sunday 9th May** is taken by Beryl Cowling & Jenni Whittle

Readings: John 15: 9-17, Acts 10:44-48 Hymns: StF 691, 158, 685, 487

The Plan for the remaining Sundays in May is as follows:

	<b>Preacher</b>	<b>Pianist</b>	<b>A/V desk</b>
16th May	Gerald Bostock	Judy Jarvis	Sheila L
23rd May	Rev Alan Anderson	Sheila Anderson	Sheila L
30th May	Rev Nik Wooller	Judy Jarvis	Marcus

And Bill and Brenda have kindly offered to be the stewards on duty each week.

**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 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.

### **To all key holders**

We have 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.

Revd Nick Baker suggests we draw your attention to the report of recent **Scottish churches research**. He says we might ask ourselves what this means for the Perth church, the Circuit, ecumenical partners and the communities in which we serve

The report is called ‘**Adapt and be flexible – the mission doesn’t stop**’ and draws on the experience of the Scottish Church during the pandemic. Page 2 is the executive summary, pages 41-43 summarise the key findings and recommendations:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wt4aFqtVXQxjx5KHTiUHIR5-thFHD1kf/view>

### **General Church Meeting**

This is being held by Zoom on Monday 10th May at 7.30pm and every member and regular attender is invited. If you do not have access details please contact Sheila Lamont.

St Matthews are holding an on line **Quiz Night on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May at 7 pm**, in aid of Christian Aid..Enter in teams or individually. If you are a single player you will be assigned to a team. To enter contact Jean Young on [jy2@btinternet.com](mailto: jy2@btinternet.com)

### 'Place for Hope',

a Scotland-based charity in partnership with the Methodist Church, is recruiting a part time Training Manager. A job pack can be downloaded at [www.placeforhope.org.uk/about/vacancies](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/about/vacancies). **Closing date for applications is 19th May..**

### Renew Well-Being Movement

This is a “no strings attached” invitation to join an open meeting (via ZOOM) for interested people in churches in the Perth area on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm. The meeting is to explore the possibility of opening a Renew Wellbeing Café in Perth city centre. The meeting will be hosted by Ruth Rice who set up and runs the Renew Wellbeing Movement. If you are interested in this meeting, Pam can provide details re access and info about the movement.

**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:

Living God, You call us to love because we have first of all been loved.

May we know that love abides in you  
And is expressed in your love for the world.  
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You call us to love because we have first of all been loved.  
May we know the depth of your love  
In the contemplation of the life and death and resurrection of your Son.  
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You call us to love because we have first of all been loved.  
May we hear the call to live by a new commandment  
And so bear the mark of a disciple.  
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You call us to love because we have first of all been loved.  
May we know what it is to be embraced and affirmed  
And called a friend of the One who has given his life for us.  
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You call us to love because we have first of all been loved.  
May we, who have been embraced and affirmed,  
Reach out to the lonely that they might know true friendship.  
Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You call us to love because we have first of all been loved.  
May we know the abiding presence of your love  
In the life we share in the community of the Risen and Ascended Lord.  
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)