

PERTH METHODIST CHURCH MESSAGES AND INFO

FRIDAY 23RD JULY

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

Whilst musing on this week's bible readings the story of Jesus feeding 5000 people led me to think about these things.

Imagine that you are the little boy in the crowd, holding the cloth bag with lunch in it, moving it round in your hands, seeing the crowd, hearing Jesus asking his disciples how they'll feed everyone. And he asks: What can I do?

Imagine being Andrew, the little boy tugging your sleeve, holding up his bag – can I seriously take this to Jesus? Imagine being the other disciples seeing this play out before your eyes – a small boy, one of our own – this preposterous notion that so little could go so far.

Imagine a mounting sense of awe as Jesus takes the nothing that he's offered and turns it into a feast for so many.

On a hill in Galilee, a boy offered his lunch. In 'lockdown', did someone offer you food? Did you deliver food? Huge numbers of ordinary people pulled together so that everyone was looked after. Many did jobs out of their normal experience. Footballers delivered food parcels. An airline pilot drove a van. Office workers helped on the shop floor. Children earned sponsorship money.

What about you? What in your life can you offer to God that he can take and use? In worship, do you feel too awkward or embarrassed to offer to be involved? Spare a thought for Andrew who suggested those few morsels would feed a crowd! We don't need the answers to 'how', rather we need to have faith that what we bring, God will multiply.

Food poverty in the UK is as bad as it has been in living memory. So, what exactly is food poverty?

People living in food poverty either don't have enough money to buy sufficient nutritious food, struggle to get it because it is not easily accessible in their community, or both.

It can be a long-term issue in someone's life or can affect someone for a shorter period of time because of a sudden change in their personal circumstances.

Food insecurity leaves many people reliant on emergency parcels from food banks and means that for many children, their free school meal could be the only guaranteed hot food they eat in a day. It pushes families into crisis during the school holidays because they cannot afford to pay for the food their children would have received during term time. That can also mean parents eat less or skip meals to make sure there is enough for their children to eat.

Some people find they can only afford unhealthy food lacking nutrition, widening health inequalities between wealthy and disadvantaged people in the UK. A House of Lords report published in 2020 said that low-income families were left with "little or no choice" about diet, forced to eat unhealthy food or simply go without. Others don't live in a home with facilities for cooking or storing meals.

Food bank use, creative schemes by schools to feed hungry children, soup and meal runs for the homeless – these are all ways in which people have responded to this.

What lessons are there in the way Jesus responds to the need around him in this story? How much is this a cooperative effort between Jesus and his followers? What do we learn from this about how we can respond to the need around us? What stories from nearby might inspire action on our part?

I was reminded of this story. Two young children were left alone at a table; in front of each was a covered plate. After a pause one child, then the other, lifted their cover. One had a sandwich, the other an empty plate. What do you think happened next? The children shared the sandwich, broken untidily in half.

So simple! Whatever God gives us is to be shared, not saved. Are you aware of food poverty in your area? Is the Good News needed in your community? What can we learn from children about how to break and share what we have? **Nik**

Sunday in-person worship This is in place now with a joyful sense of being together again to worship God. Compliance with Covid regulations is observed. Everyone is welcome.

The Morning Service this Sunday 25th July at 11.00 am will be led by Revd Nik Wooller. Readings: Psalm 145,10-18. John 6,1-15. Hymns: StF 254, 258, 252.

The Evening Service at 6.00pm following our new 'Oasis' approach of quiet devotion, will be led by the 'Craigie and Oakbank' small group. Please feel free to come and please give any requests for prayers for healing to Gerald.

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 so it can be posted to them.

This Sunday, 25th July. We hope that after morning worship, and weather permitting, we will be able to serve teas and coffees in the garden at the side of the church. Please feel free to bring your own cup if you prefer to do so.

Large print Hymn books

Anyone who has difficulty reading hymns from the screen is invited to speak to a steward re 'borrowing' a large print hymn book, taking it home each week and bringing it back next time.

PMC Recipe Books Only 14 copies left! £4 each. Every penny will support young people in Uganda via the work of the Methodist charity 'All We Can'. This book includes many favourites of members of the congregation and you will surely enjoy trying out a new recipe. Please support this lockdown project! Just ask on a Sunday morning or email Fiona who will reserve a copy for you!

Action For Children

A huge thank you to all our faithful Lantern Box holders. The sum raised this year is £660.75, a magnificent sum. We have already received a thank you from AFC who are delighted with the amount raised. They asked me to pass on their grateful thanks for our on-going support of their valuable work helping vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Chris Parkin

A Message from Jill Baker

Dear Friends,

As the Methodist Church in Scotland prepares to be involved in new ways in the Connexional Evangelism and Growth strategy we have been encouraged to pray, perhaps finding new and varied ways to pray together.

As one small offering towards the wider prayer menu of the whole district, Andrew and I plan to offer '**Prayer in the Evening**' on each of the following Saturday evenings – and if you would like to join us on Zoom to share in that, you would be very welcome.

- Saturday 31st July Saturday 7th August
- Saturday 14th August Saturday 21st August

A Zoom link (the same for each week) is available from either of us or from the District Administrator, Sue Marshall-Jennings. [ejillbaker@btinternet.com amb.strathclyde@btinternet.com or districtadmin@methodistchurchinscotland.net]

Our hope is that different people attending the prayer time would read/lead various sections of the worship. The liturgy will be based on the one found at pp15-25 in the Methodist Worship Book and will be posted in the chat for each meeting and sent out with the Zoom link (although any printed copies must be destroyed after the meetings for copyright reasons).

The whole service takes less than 15 minutes; the Zoom room will open at 9pm on the dates above, allowing a short time for conversation/sharing concerns for prayer and the liturgy will begin at 9:15pm after which participants will depart in silence, with the meeting closing by 9:30pm.

So do contact one of us or Sue if you would like to give this a try on one or more of the Saturday evenings over the summer period.

With all good wishes, Jill

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 open your hand towards us And offer to us good gifts.

We accept your gifts with gratitude And respond with thanks and praise.

Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You open your hand towards us And offer to us the gift of life.

We acknowledge that we made in your image

And recognise your image in the life of each person upon the earth

Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You open your hand towards us And offer life to the world.

We receive your offer As a sign of your faithfulness towards us.

Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You open your hand towards us And offer your gifts to all.

We resolve to share the gifts we have received And not to close our hand towards others.

Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

Living God, You open your hand towards us And offer to us signs of your kingdom.

We pledge to bear witness to your enduring kingdom And to your abundant grace.

Lord, in your mercy, *Hear our prayer.*

The 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)