

Marksman

September 2020



St Marks Church of Scotland (Oldhall), Paisley

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Scottish Charity SC011210

From the Manse (September)

Over the last few months I have been reading and singing many of the Psalms, because, as I wrote in a previous edition, there are psalms that reflect our emotions however we are feeling.

At the moment Psalm 122 - **I rejoiced with those who said to me “Let us go to the house of the Lord”** is singing inside my head. I am pleased that we have been able to gather again in Church for Sunday worship. It is a shame that more cannot come, but we must follow the guidelines and try to keep everyone safe. Nonetheless, it is good that some of us can meet, and others can join us from home with the live-stream, or watch later at a time that suits.

During lockdown I've been making a deliberate attempt to learn more scripture, word for word. Over the years I've been good at knowing the gist, but not always the exact wording, so I've a new App on my phone and I've been learning. Again the Psalms have featured strongly and currently I'm memorising Psalm 139, a few verses at a time, which has always been a favourite of mine **“You search me Lord and you know me, you know when I sit and when I rise, you discern my thoughts from afar.”** And **“For it was you who created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”** Amazing words, especially as I do appreciate just how complex the body is.

Regularly I come back to Psalm 23, **“The Lord is my Shepherd, I lack nothing,”** - a Psalm I loved when I walked in and past fields of sheep around Moffat, and beside the river there, rarely **“still waters”**, but an ever present reminder of the care and provision of God for us.

Which then reminds me of Psalm 1 **“whose delight is in the law of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season, and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers.”** So I'm praying that by meditating on God's word, I will put down good strong roots, and flourish and grow here in the community of St Mark's, even if this tree has had a somewhat challenging start since being planted here.

And those streams bring me to Psalm 42 **“As the deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God,”** – but I need to be careful not to get mixed up the hymn words for they are not quite the same. The psalm ends with words of hope, that although as the psalmist writes, he is in distress, and sitting with only his memories of God and the better times, but he remains hopeful

“Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.”

Hope is important for us all, at the moment, life for some is returning to more of a normal pattern, with return to school and work, for others many of the social things we do are not yet happening, and may not do so for sometime. However we remain hopeful and trust in God:

“The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” (Ps 46:10)

So I’m praying that you will know God with you in the good days and the bad, in the hopeful and the hopeless, in the days you want to praise and thank God, and in the days you don’t.

God bless you,

Your friend and minister,

Sonia

Stained Glass windows

Within St Mark's Church, in the apse, we have stained glass windows made by Douglas Hamilton. Rev Jeff Hopewell has recently made contact to say that he has written a book on Hamilton's work, called "Orchestrations of Colour: the stained glass of Douglas Hamilton" and has mentioned our windows and included photographs of them from when he visited here a few years ago.

Further details are available from
Jeff Hopewell
The Coplow Press
23 Weare Close
Billesdon
Leicester LE7 9DY

Email: coplowpress@gmail.com

Renfrewshire Foodbank

During this time the Foodbank is continuing to operate, and issuing more parcels than ever. I was amazed to see on the Church of Scotland website that Houston and Killellan Church have given them over 4 tonnes of food, enough for over 11,000 food parcels. Whilst our donations are on a more modest scale throughout lockdown I've been able to take donations from St Mark's to their main base in Westway Park in Renfrew. If anyone would like to make a donation of food to them, please drop it off at the manse or church (or I can collect it from you).

Key food items that they require at present are diluting juice, tins of potatoes, tomatoes, fruit and fish, and UHT milk. (They have plenty of pasta and beans).

Thank you for continuing to think of others at this time.

Sonia

24th Paisley Company Boys' Brigade

The BB has continued over the last few months in a reduced way. We have kept going via Zoom as you see by the images. It seems strange to be thinking about the new session when the last one does not feel like it ever ended. We have at least managed to keep in touch with the boys and in many ways it has been a greater blessing to be sharing the Gospel during these challenging times.

It has been surprising how well the Zoom sessions have worked. We have enjoyed a range of activities including quizzes, Morse code signals and various games. We have even tried some simultaneous experiments involving oil, water, food colouring and effervescent tablets. The ingredients required for a homemade lava lamp. (Apologies if you are a parent still trying to remove food colouring stains from your surfaces).

It is true to say that sometimes the simplest things provide the most fun. Who would have thought that 15 people online trying to count from 1 to 10 with each person saying a different number would be hilarious but it was. You have to avoid two people speaking at the same time and if this happens you have to start again at 1. Simple. We only got to 9 so there is still some unfinished business on that challenge.

We do not have a specific date yet for returning to face to face meetings even with social distancing. The BB centrally have provided good advice and risk assessments but we need the government and Church of Scotland to give us the green light too. The schools returning successfully is critical but also we need to be able to reassure parents that the boys will be safe. Some of the staff are also vulnerable themselves and may not be able to pick up where they left off.

It seems inevitable that we will have to restrict meeting times and activities when we do get back so we will be continuing online too. Rather than think about what we cannot do, we plan to focus on what we can do and still challenge the boys to achieve the various awards and badges and above all still have fun. We may see the glass is "half-full" at the moment but that is just so there is room for the other lava lamp ingredients!

The focus of our Bible Class last Friday was to recognise that regardless of having a good, bad or indifferent day we can be thankful every day. We take so many of God's gifts for granted. In the words of Psalm 100 "Give thanks to him and praise him". We certainly have a lot to be thankful for.....not least Zoom!



Tuesday Singers

I thought it best to let everyone know that the Tuesday Singers won't be meeting this session due to Covid 19. While I am sure you will have already worked that out, I just wanted to make it official!

For a few months I had been working on different Christmas music, but stopped about mid June. It won't be possible now to have our usual BIG SING event, which is a shame. I am having a think about how we could still get an opportunity to sing along at home – maybe just well known carols recorded for everyone to enjoy, and still raise a wee bit of money for funds and charity.

Meanwhile keep your vocal chords warmed up each week – and don't forget your warm up exercises! Thanking you all for your support over several years.

Irene

1st East Rainbow Unit

We have started back using virtual guiding via Zoom. It has been a difficult time since March for all my volunteer leaders. We are missing our weekly catch up with the girls but hope to be back to some form of face to face Guiding. At the moment we could meet up outside in groups of up to 15 including adults. But as leaders we have decided not to do that at the moment due to the numbers of girls in the unit.

Being on lockdown hasn't caused the rainbows to stand still, we have been working hard on our summer challenges which I delivered social distancing to the girls front doors. I can now do the drop off run without the aid of a road map or sat nav.

We have recently secured funding from Tesco Covid 19 fund and Neighbourly Community fund to help cover the costs as the unit funds were greatly depleted due to us having just paid our annual subscriptions and the unit having no income since March 20. Although we are Zooming it and completing the summer challenges the unit continues to grow in size. I thought I was returning with 9 girls but another 8 have since joined us.

Here are some photographs of what we have been doing:



Thanking Carers on a Thursday



Making wind chimes

If you have a daughter aged 5-7 and would like to know more about the rainbows at St Marks
Email [Roygbiv1st@ gmail.com](mailto:Roygbiv1st@gmail.com)
Regards, Purple

Peter's News

It has been lovely over the past few weeks seeing people back in the church sanctuary. Over the past few months when we have been recording the services I have been in the sanctuary on my own or with Sonia or one of the readers as they record their parts. It has been great to see other people coming into the church and seeing part of our church family again, and having socially distanced conversations with them.



Over the past few months Trash has continued every week with only a couple of weeks off in July. We have been looking at the protection that God provides, and studying the stories of: Joseph, Moses, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and Peter and also what protection God provides for us. We have also been looking at the story of Ezra and Nehemiah and them rebuilding the Temple and Jerusalem and seeking to help the people reconnect with God. This started an interesting discussion about what the young people would want if they were starting a church from scratch.

Following the news from the Scottish Government that face to face youth work can resume we are hopeful that we will be able to meet up again in the church following the appropriate guidelines. We are waiting for the updated guidance from the Church of Scotland about how and when we are able to do this.

We are meeting up with some of the young people from Trash this weekend. This would have been the weekend that we would have been staying at Teen Ranch for the weekend. With the residential part not available we were offered a day camp which most of the young people were keen to do. So on Saturday we will leave at 8am and head to Inchtute for a day of horse riding, archery, BMXs, rifle shooting and a trailer ride before heading home at 7pm.

The fortnightly church quiz stopped at the end of June as lockdown was easing and with nicer summer evenings more people had things on. The quizzes were good fun and closely contested. I would like to thank everyone who attended the quizzes and made it such a fun event.

During the summer months we started to prepare for the church reopening and what that would mean for recording the service so people could watch it on their computer or some TVs. “Live Streaming” was something that we considered, giving people the option of watching the service *live* at 11am from their own homes. To do this we needed to buy a new camera and computer that would allow us to record the services and put it online. A new media desk was put at the back of the church sanctuary that houses all this equipment as well as the sound board. Our first live stream on the 16th August has been watched 240 times with 109 people watching that first Sunday. As with many new things there were some teething problems that we will hopefully smooth out as we get more confident with the system.



The service is still recorded and put onto DVDs or CDs for anyone who wishes them. They will now be delivered on the Monday. If you know someone who would like a CD or DVD of the service please contact myself or Julie and we will add you to the list.

With everything that is going on in the world just now a lot of the things that we did as “church” can’t happen right now. As hard as that might be for us all to deal with there still is opportunity for us to “be church” in different ways at this time. I am in discussions with Ralston Primary school about what we might be able to do to support them. Also with Messy church not able to happen just now I am considering how we engage with the families that came along to our first three Messy church events from the end of last year and the start of this year. This is all about us doing things differently to reach out to the wider community of Ralston.

There is opportunity for new mission and discipleship at this current time. In our discussion at TRASH about Nehemiah we spoke about Nehemiah’s desire to seek God’s guidance in reconnected the people to God. So please do pray for the opportunities that God might be giving us as individuals and as a church community to take the gospel out to our community.

God bless, Peter

Relocation of Paisley Grammar School

On 20 August 2020 the education and children's services policy board agreed to a formal consultation on a proposal to consult on the relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a new build Community Campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley.

The Council's vision for its school estate is to promote learning and achievement, and to give children and young people the opportunity to learn in the best possible environment by providing facilities that are fit for learning in the 21st century.

From 31 August 2020 – 20 October 2020, Renfrewshire Council is consulting with communities, interest groups and parents on the relocation of Paisley Grammar School to a new build Community Campus at Renfrew Road in Paisley.

The indicative timetable for the consultation is as per the table below:

Date	Action
31 August 2020	Start of public consultation period
22 September 2020	Public meeting with live streaming to be held in Lagoon Leisure Centre at 6.30pm
20 October 2020	End of public consultation period
30 October 2020	Information to Education Scotland
21 January 2020	Report to education policy board

The public consultation period will close at **noon on Tuesday 20 October 2020**.

The board report is available via this link:
[link to Paisley Grammar consultation report](#)

The on-line response form is accessible via this link:
[link to Paisley Grammar on-line response form](#)

The on-line registration form to register interest in attendance at the public meeting (depending on Scottish Government Guidance) is accessible via this link:

[link to Public Meeting registration form](#)

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

Stephen Gorman, Resources Support Manager

0141 618 5197 / 07789653684 stephen.gorman@renfrewshire.gov.uk

**Children's Services, 3rd Floor Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street,
Paisley PA1 1TZ**

Prayer diary for September 2020

Tuesday 1

Who would have thought that we would still be under restrictions six months down the line? As we begin another new month, we ask that God would continue to be with us and to work through us as a church. We are slowly getting back to worshipping in our building, but it will be some time before things seem normal again.

Ask God to give us patience. Many folk are beginning to find time weighing heavy, and the lack of social contact difficult. He understands that and wants us to let Him know how we feel. Take this time to express your feelings before Him and seek His help for the month ahead.

Pray for the Brownies who start again properly this evening. Outdoors face to face weather permitting, or by Zoom if not. Remember Sheena and leaders as they organise this. Rainbows also starting back via a Zoom meeting – having a rainbow chat and a zoom game. Pray for Donna and the youngsters.

Wednesday 2

Our **Zoom Prayer meetings** have continued throughout lockdown, and we have seen many answers to our prayers throughout this time. We will be continuing with these meetings at present, and are looking at what options we may have to meet again in person. This may be a good while down the line yet. If you haven't thought about joining the prayer group yet, why not think about it again. 7:00 on Wednesday evenings, details from Irene. If Zoom isn't your thing then you can still join in at home at that time.

Thursday 3

This pandemic has affected every organisation, and **the Guild** is no exception. It is hoped there may be a committee meeting in September to discuss the way forward. Pray for all in the Guild as they look forward to Sherwood Greenlaw ladies joining with St Marks this year. This is a wonderful opportunity to share with each other and we pray Gods blessing on this new link.

Friday 4

We pray for **the BB**. Specific prayer for guidance and understanding for all involved, as no definite date has been set yet for reopening. Zoom meetings have kept things going through Spring and Summer, and this has been a real blessing. Give thanks for being able to share the Gospel with the boys.

Saturday 5

Today is **International Day of Charity**. Help us to use what You have given us to help others less fortunate, and be with all agencies working to provide support for people.

Sunday 6

We pray for **Sonia** as she leads us in worship today. For those who manage to attend and for those watching at home, may we all know God's blessing.

Monday 7

We continue to remember the people in our community and pray for those living in **Drummond Drive, Duchray Road and Dunchurch Road**. While we don't know everyone there we know that You are aware of all situations, and we ask for Your presence to be with those in need this week.

Tuesday 8

Continue to uphold all those in the NHS – doctors, nurses, assistants, administration, paramedics, records departments, cleaning staff and all involved in day to day running of our hospitals and clinics. As virus numbers fluctuate, give them time to re- group and recharge. Pray, too, for forward planning by those in charge to prepare for winter months. **International Literacy Day**. So often we take for granted the educational opportunities we have in our own country. Due to Covoid 19 we have seen the impact of children not being able to access school for many months. We pray for them

as they have now returned, but also turn our thoughts to lands where education is denied to many, through poverty, gender or economics.

Wednesday 9

Prayer group meets again this evening on Zoom. We give thanks for all those who join in at home too, and for the faithful prayers of so many during this time. Thank You for the blessings You have given us, and for the many amazing answers to prayer. We remember Brownies and Guides too as they start up face to face soon. Pray for Christine and Karen and other leaders that they can support the girls in these difficult times.

Thursday 10

Remember the work of Tearfund throughout the world. Working with partners in local areas, they are bringing relief aid, supporting people to set up their own businesses, and helping provide clean water and toilets. Pray for all who are involved.

Friday 11

Schools have been back for a few weeks now, and we ask for Your continued protection on staff and pupils throughout the country. May the youngsters settle back into their routines, and watch over those who are still anxious and finding change difficult.

Saturday 12

As the weekend arrives, give thanks if you are able to take time out from the daily routines and relax. Enjoy the leisure time God has given you, and celebrate His wonderful world around you.

Sunday 13

Our services this morning continue to be live streamed at the same time as limited numbers meet in church. Pray the God will continue to use this dual delivery to reach many people with the Good News.

Monday 14

The streets this week we bring before You are **Gartmore Road, Gartatan Road and Glasgow Road**. May the people in each home come to know

Your love through the way we live our lives before them. More restrictions are planned for lifting today. We ask that You would continue to watch over the country and help us all to do our part in keeping each other safe.

Tuesday 15

Think of a local charity that you know of, and bring them to God today. Many are struggling due to financial difficulties during lockdown.

Wednesday 16

We pray for the leaders of our country that they might have integrity, and look to God for guidance and wisdom as they lead.

Thursday 17

Given all we have been through over almost half a year now, we bring before You all who are patients in our hospitals. This is **World Patient Safety Day** and we ask that when things are difficult in the NHS, there will be those who still keep the safety of patients to the fore. We do give thanks though, that we have the NHS available, and once again help us be grateful for such services, when so many cannot access medical care easily or cheaply.

Friday 18

Pray for all who suffer from mental health problems which have been exacerbated by the restrictions. Many have had no face to face appointments during this time. As things begin to open up help those who are vulnerable.

Saturday 19

We remember sporting organisations and arts who are beginning to find their way to returning to something more normal. Pray for all those preparing places for returning visitors: for safety, for common sense to prevail and for the economic impact caused by Covid.

Sunday 20

Remember Sonia as she leads worship this morning. Prepare our hearts to listen and act on what You have to say to us.

Monday 21

Golf Drive, Hawkhead Road and Killearn Drive and are brought to You this week in our prayers. Be with the community here. This is also the

International Day of Peace. May we be peacemakers where You have placed us.

Tuesday 22

Again, remember our Brownies and Rainbows as they continue to meet in very different ways.

Wednesday 23

Our community needs our prayers too. Pray for local businesses who have been affected. Be with those who are still furloughed and are uncertain as to what happens next.

Thursday 24

We give thanks for those front line workers who have kept going throughout this time, providing us with access to shops etc. Bring before God those people in lands like Lebanon, Yemen, South Sudan, where there is no guaranteed access to food or water, and for those whose lives have been completely disrupted due to explosions, floods or famine.

Friday 25

As we reach the end of another week, stop and reflect on how God has spoken to you this week, and how you have responded to Him. Is there something He is asking you to do this coming week?

Saturday 26

Use your prayer time today to remember those specifically known to you who are in need of prayer, or those for whom you can give thanks for answered prayer.

Sunday 27

Prepare our hearts to listen to the word brought to us today by Sonia. Be with her in her preparation and delivery of Your message. Bless all in church and online.

Monday 28

We pray for all who live in **Kinpurnie Road, Lanfine Road and Marchbank Gardens**. May they know Your love and peace this week.

Tuesday 29

You ask us to take care of this world You have made and placed us in. Today help us think more carefully about what we eat and what we waste on **International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste**. Help us find ways to be more prudent in how much we consume, about the packaging it comes in, and have gratitude for the wide variety of foodstuff we have access to here in the UK.

Wednesday 30

We give thanks for another month gone by, for the many blessings You have given us, for Your care and protection over us, and ask that You will be with us for the weeks ahead.

For your steadfast love
is before my eyes, and
I walk in your
faithfulness.

Psalms 26:3

