

Bellie & Speymouth Church

Reaching out - Welcoming in

Weekly Newsletter No 23 - Sunday 23 August 2020

From the minister



It has been such a change to the rhythm of our lives to not have weekly worship or various church groups and activities running these last months, and I know that many are interested to know what we are planning about reopening.

So, to give you all an update, the Kirk Session had its first online meeting last week! It was so encouraging to get together again to begin making progress on the future, however, it is not a simple task that we have ahead.

Anyone who has seen the documents explaining what needs to be done for a church to reopen will know that it is not as straightforward as putting out a bottle of anti-bacterial gel and shuffling the chairs around! There are many risk assessments to be done and extensive criteria to be met, all of which require time and effort.



While we have no date for restarting our regular services or activities, please be assured that the session is prayerfully working away at getting things ready to resume when it is appropriate and safe to do so.

We would like our church family to feel confident and excited to return to our normal gatherings, which means that we want to do things properly and carefully.

I will keep you updated on any developments, but in the meantime please do tune in to online worship where you can (there are some amazing church services available all over the world!), and join in with what we are currently able to do – Messy Church, online reflections, newsletter etc.

Imagine you've never seen a bird before!

Imagine never having seen a bird before. You've only experienced empty skies. Then you see this beautiful little thing, dancing effortlessly through the air, as if it was nothing. You then hear birdsong for the first time.

Although they are amazing creatures, these little birds that skip around our gardens and villages are just normal. We're so used to them that they become part of the background sight and noise of our lives. And back in Jesus' time, they held barely any value at all. You couldn't farm them for food, they didn't help with any practical purpose. If anything, they stole seeds and grain, and were a pest, an inconvenience.



However, in Luke chapter 12 we find Jesus using little birds as an example to talk about God's care for us. Sparrows were being sold as sacrifices in the market for a really low price. But Jesus says that not one of them will fall without God noticing.

The world is not spinning around in chaos unseen. God is not distant and uncaring. You watch any little bird, and you know what? God knows it. This is not something that only you are seeing. Although our creation is broken, nothing goes beyond His love and sight. Every feather He knows; every flap of their wings.

And that goes the same for us.

You may feel alone and uncared for by the world. At times overlooked or forgotten. At times worried or scared. It is okay to feel this way. But I hope it will be of some strength to remember that YOU ARE KNOWN BY GOD. Jesus goes on to say in the passage that every one of our hairs is numbered, God knows EVERYTHING about us.

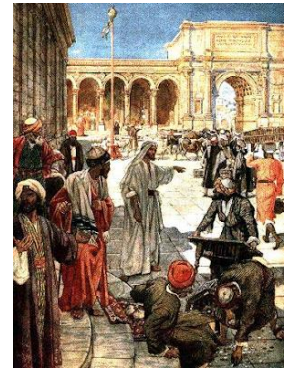
At some point in the next few days take a moment to reflect on this. Find a little bird and stop and pray. Thank God that He sees this little creature and knows everything of that moment.

Allow your heart to praise the fact that YOU ARE KNOWN. That His love for you is so much more than anything in the world that you can see. He knows and loves you so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die for you, so that you can have a relationship with Him.

I know that there's quite a few of our church family who are fond of a good ole' chorus, and one that is quite well known is "Said the robin to the sparrow"

"The Robin and the Sparrow"
Said the robin to the sparrow,
"I should really like to know,
Why these anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so."
Said the sparrow to the robin,
"Friend I think that it must be,
That they have no Heavenly Father,
Such as cares for you and me."

God bless you all,
Seòras



Lisa Campbell came across this poem – Thanks Lisa for sharing this with us.

The Interview With God

I dreamed I had an interview with God.
So you would like to interview me? God asked.
If you have the time? I said.
God smiled: My time is eternity.
What questions do you have in mind for me?
What surprises you most about humankind?
God answered...

That they get bored with childhood, they rush to grow up,
and then long to be children again.
That they lose their health to make money...
and then lose their money to restore their health.
That by thinking anxiously about the future,
they forget the present,
such that they live in neither the present nor the future.
'That they live as if they will never die,
and die as though they had never lived.
we were silent for a while.

And then I asked.
As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn
To learn they cannot make anyone love them.
All they can do is let themselves be loved.
To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others.
To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness.
To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those they
love,
and it can take many years to heal them.
To learn that a rich person
is not one who has the most, but is one who needs the least
To learn that there are people who love them dearly,
but simply have not yet learned how to express or show their feelings.
To learn that two people can
look at the same thing and see it differently?
To learn that it is not enough that they
forgive one another, but they must also forgive themselves.

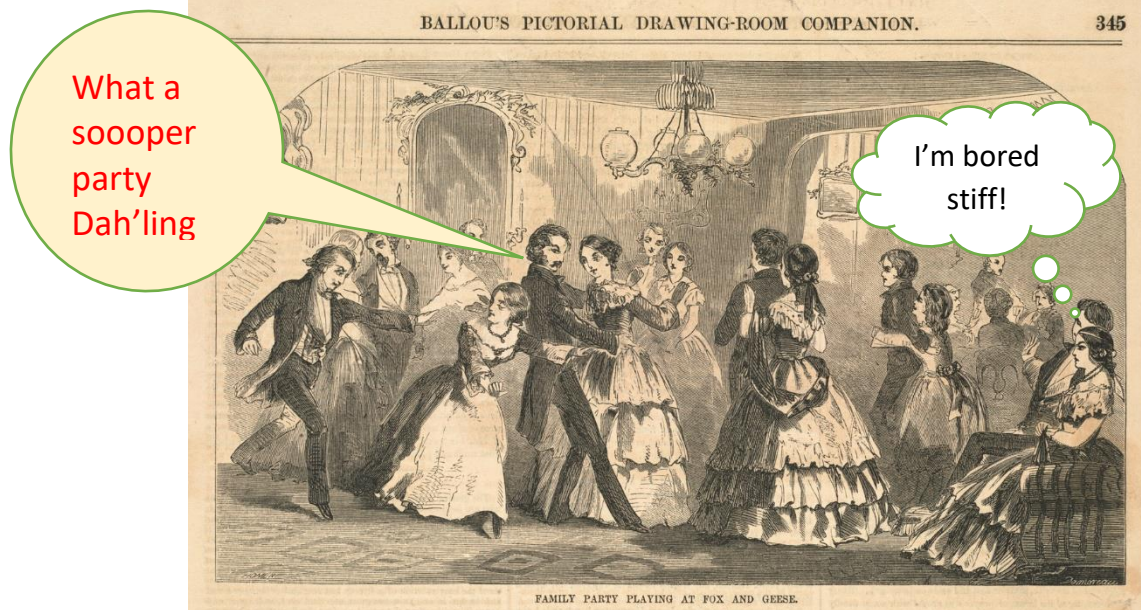
'Thank you for your time, ' I said
'Is there anything else you would like your children to know'
God smiled and said,
Just know that I am here... always. by Hamid Yeganeh

Celebrations

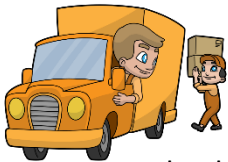
We know there are some birthdays this coming week and for one couple, a BIG wedding anniversary but they don't want it mentioned.

Whoever you are and wherever you are

Enjoy a great day with family and friends



As we head back to work and school this week take time to give thanks that many of us have survived this pandemic so far. Pray for those families who have lost someone dear to them, especially those who couldn't attend the funerals. Let's also remember and give thanks for all those who kept things going during the lock-down; the food preparers and deliverers, the CO-OP staff, the butcher who now sells flour, the carers for those stuck at home or in care homes, the lorry drivers – we could write a huge list but thanks to all.



And before we go, Seòras mentions the changes in churches, so check out the alterations to the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. Wonder if Michelangelo would have approved?

Go this week with smiles, jokes, laughter and encouragement to others. It's great to see how people say 'Hello' to each other in passing and especially nice when they are strangers.

Remember Seòras video on Sunday morning – check Facebook pages.



Feel the blessing of God around you like the warmth of a towel after you have been swimming in the North Sea or a highland loch.

John