

Weekly Newsletter No 18 – Sunday 26 July 2020

Dear friends,

Every now and then, something pops up to remind us of the wonders of God's creation. In the latest of his 'It's a Fair Question', found on the Church of Scotland website, the Moderator of the General Assembly is in conversation with Bro. Guy Consolmagno, a Jesuit brother and an astronomer. In this conversation Bro. Consolmagno, an American, explains the relationship between God, Religion and Science. These explanations are clear, succinct and revealing eg it was a Catholic priest, Georges Lemaître, who first proposed what is known as the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe.



It is well worthwhile spending a little time viewing this conversation (it sure beats 'Love Island Australia') - the enthusiasm of Bro. Guy is infectious.

Churches re-opening.

The updated guide to the re-opening of church buildings arrived last Friday (if you want to read the full document, it can be found on the CofS website). The guidance is comprehensive and not something we can put into effect quickly. Church buildings are important and as the guidance so neatly puts it,

"Theologically, congregations have often stated that the church comprises the people and not the buildings, however when faced with the reality it becomes apparent that our church buildings provide a sense of place for many to express their faith, experience worship and grow in relationship."



There is a great deal of work to be done before the church buildings can be opened. Some may think that cleaning the building is the most important part of re-opening but that is only part of the story. Yes, the buildings must be cleaned before and after each opening but there are a whole host of other considerations eg hygiene practices, physical distancing, provision of toilet facilities, waste management, personal protective equipment (ppe) and that's just the start. There is another consideration. The Scottish Government has stated that for the time being, a maximum of 50 persons can occupy a church at any one time and must adhere to the 2metre distancing rule.

Phase 4 will allow churches to be open for all regular activities whilst sticking to the 2metre rule etc but we can only move to Phase 4 at the direction of the Scottish Government and currently no date/time has been set for Phase 4.

To be honest, it looks like we may have to wait till Phase 4 comes before we can realistically reopen our church buildings.

In the meantime, we have the on-line worship and don't forget the 7.00pm prayer time on Sunday evening when we join with our sisters and brothers all over the country in a time of joint prayer.

Birthdays, Anniversaries and Special Days.

Last week, in the KNL, we were reminded of some birthdays which occurred during the lockdown period. There will be others coming up in the next week or so and also various anniversaries and special days for others. So, to all of you who have a birthday, anniversary or a special day,



Holidays.

Some of you may have managed a wee holiday this year and some may yet manage something before the schools go back in a couple of weeks. For some, it may be a caravan holiday or even camping. For others, it may have been in a luxury hotel but whatever it was, even a few days with parents, grandparents or other relatives in such exotic places



as Glasgow, Kenmore, Inverness, Foyers, MacDuff, Durness or even a tent in your back garden, we pray you have had or will have a super time and ready for the fun of autumn.

During the last few months, we have seen some great examples of people working together and helping their neighbours – Christianity in action – so well done to everyone. To those who have been helped, ‘Thank you’ for allowing us to bring that help – it has been an honour and a privilege. And ‘Thank You’ to those who have circulated little messages of encouragement to others. It may not seem much but a wee message, especially first thing in the morning, helps to start the day with a smile. The weather for next week doesn’t look great but that is no excuse for not smiling – did you know you can see a smile through a face mask! So, keep smiling, say ‘Hello’ to strangers as well as friends – we will be all the better for it! Keep praying – you know it works.

With love and blessings to all
John

