



Weekly Newsletter No 28 – Sunday 27 September 2020

Phew – that was close!

Tuesday was a day of some trepidation – what was Nicola going to do? Well it wasn't as bad as we thought. Our fears were that the brakes would go on for church services but, 'No', we can carry on. We can still push ahead with getting our buildings reopened. Things are going well and we are still on track. The big jobs like the risk assessments and operating protocols are all but done. There is some fiddly work to do eg measure out the seat placings at Bellie church – not difficult but takes time (boy – did - it - take - time). Then there is all the signage to print, laminate and get in place plus the floor markings. Once things are definite, we will let you know dates for your diary.



Vacancies in Moray Presbytery

Now for some good news. Over the past few years, there has been several churches in Moray Presbytery without a minister. However, during this year things have improved. On Thursday last (24 September 2020), Rev Wiekus van Staaten was inducted to the charge at Keith: St Rufus, Botriphnie and Grange and on Thursday 8 October 2020, Rev Eduard Enslin is due to be inducted to



Mortlach and Cabrach (that's Dufftown!). This means there are now 7 parishes or churches which are vacant. Vacant churches place an additional burden on other ministers and some Elders who act as Interim Moderators to the Kirk Sessions of these charges. This involves much more responsibility than just acting as Moderators at meetings of the Kirk Sessions.



Let's pray that the other vacant charges will soon be filled and while we are about it, pray also for those ministers and Elders who act as Interim Moderators.

From Seòras – Praying

The world around us is an inspiration for our worship of God. It can also serve as a catalyst for a joyful prayer life.

What do I mean by that? Well, we can use items in our day-to-day lives that can remind us to pray more regularly, or encourage us to pray differently.

For example, last year a good friend of mine gave me a great idea: every time that I heard the bells ringing in the Bellie church tower, I should stop for a moment and dedicate whatever I was doing to God. It was actually a really great practice, as it meant I was peppering my day with short prayers, stopping what I was doing to recognise that God was with me and it is Him that I am serving. Of course, that hasn't been possible recently as the clock has wound down for the time being!



Prayer is not something just for worship services, or times where we have something to ask God for. In fact, it says in 1 Thessalonians 5, “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”

That however isn't an easy discipling to keep – to pray throughout the day. But we do have things that can help us. One great little resource that some of you may be familiar with is the



Try Praying booklet. This wonderful little resource has been used to introduce so many to the amazing gift of prayer, and the testimonies that have come from it are so encouraging.

It works on a basic premise. Try praying for a week.

Each day there is a story about prayer from a real person, some wise words, and also a suggestion for something to try to help remind you to pray. I'll go through them for us, and perhaps you could choose one to take on this week and use to encourage your prayer life.

- Every time you pick up your phone, pray, “God I need communication with you”
- Carry a stone with you and every time you put your hand on it pray, “God I want you to be the solid thing in my life”
- Every time you use a key today pray “God unlock my life for your influence”
- As soon as you start walking from your home pray “God, please walk through the day with me”
- Take a piece of paper and write on it anything you feel ashamed about. Then draw a cross over all you have written and thank Jesus for paying your debt. Then if possible, you can shred the paper.
- Go to your door and say to Jesus, “Please enter my life today. You are welcome.”
- Go to a place where you can see a nice view and pray, “God you are bigger than this world and bigger than my biggest thought of you. So I want you to be the biggest thing in my life”.

If this booklet sounds like it could be a help to you in your prayer life, send a private message to the Facebook page, or a message to me, and I'll get one posted to you.

In the meantime, let's practice what I'm preaching ... Let us pray,

Heavenly Father, you who hears every prayer we say, and knows the cries of our heart before the words are on our lips.

Thank you for the gift of prayer, for the wonderful truth that our hearts can cry out to yours and be heard. Would you stir up our spirits to pray to you in all circumstances. That we would bring our worries, joys, fears, confessions, petitions and everything in between to you in all things.



Inspire us through the world around us to pray sincerely without ceasing, by your grace. In Jesus name, AMEN.

God bless,
Seòras

Kirk News Light (KNL)

It is hoped to produce issue 5 of KNL about mid-October. This important magazine is all part of trying to keep people in touch with what's going on in and around the parish. Please send your contributions (photos, thoughts, wee stories, greetings) to Margaret King at (margaretking889@gmail.com) **by 3 October at latest.**

New Lockdown Rules

OK, Nicola and the Scottish Government have allowed us to keep our churches open but the restrictions on not visiting other people in their homes or allowing other people to visit our homes are tough. It does seem a bit daft that we can meet others in pubs or restaurants but these places are controlled. We know it's all for the best but that doesn't make it any easier. It's probably spoiled the modest birthday or special day celebrations which were planned for this weekend but remember that for all those who have birthdays or special days this week your church family says,



Happy Birthday

For people who live alone, it is important to keep in touch and for us all to try to look after each other. How then are we going to make the best of this?

Well, here are some suggestions but remember, only two households and a maximum of six people:

- Meet your friends for coffee (or tea or lunch) in a café or garden centre restaurant, especially as the weather cools down.
- Meet up outside with friends for a wee picnic – remember though, only two households (last week while watching the dolphins, we had a fish and chip supper down at the beach at Cullen – smashing).
- Meet with a friend in the garden – many a sound decision has been made over a garden hedge!
- Get back into using electronic media, WhatsApp or Zoom for a chat, even with a cuppy and a chocolate digestive beside you.



- Give someone a phone call (remember phones? – the ones that don't have a picture of who you're talking to).

• Share some baking with a friend or neighbour – a couple of scones or even a slice of Victoria Sandwich (yum).



These are only the suggestions which come to mind at the moment and we are sure you can think up other innovative ways to keep in touch and support each other. Remember also that for those who are feeling stressed or distressed by this new regime, please speak to someone and tell them how you are feeling. During the last lockdown and since, it has become apparent that lots of folk have suffered from loneliness, depression or a lack of motivation.

And don't be afraid to speak to God about it. One of the most beautiful verses in the bible,

*Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,
for I am gentle and humble in heart
and you will find rest for your souls.*

(NIV) Mathew Ch 11, v 29

Feel the love of God in you and around you.

John

