



Beath and Cowdenbeath North Church



Newsletter 272 June 2020



MINISTER'S LETTER

From the manse..

Unprecedented has been the buzzword of the last couple of months, I have probably lost count of the number of times that I have heard it. We are living through a pandemic with restrictions on our daily lives which we have never seen before. We are learning to live, to work, to shop, to keep in touch with one another differently. Many of us have had to get to grips with technology which we have not used before. I had never heard of zoom at the beginning of the year; for me it meant to move fast, now I am using it every week as a way of meeting.

For many it is hard. We are all living with loss of much which is familiar, the activities which regulate our week are on hold. We are missing seeing family and friends, hugging our loved ones. There is the uncertainty around jobs and the economy and whether many small businesses will survive. We do not know what life will be like on the other side of this, but we all know that it will be different.

As I have reflected on the last few weeks, I have been reminded that in biblical times people often lived in unprecedented times. The grand sweep of scripture is the story of God's people who lived through slavery, forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the conquest of a new land. A people who were sometimes obedient and close to God and who also disobeyed God's commands and followed other gods. A people who were exiled, removed from all that was familiar, then who returned home eventually to a land that looked very different from the one they had left. At times they felt as though God had abandoned them, yet the overriding theme of the bible is that God was with them. They may not have felt like God was there but he was with them in all that they went through. Our God is the same yesterday, today and forever, so we can take comfort from the fact that as God's children, God is with us too.

We will emerge from this pandemic and for a time life will be different. I wonder what lessons we will have learned from the experience, how will it shape our values, our thinking, our worship? How will we use this time to listen to what God is saying to us. Many in the church have been crying out for change, so maybe this is the time to reflect on what we value about church life, what is important and what needs to change. The God who walks with us through this storm will walk with us into the future and we know that he will keep us and hold us.

The eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. Deuteronomy 33:27

Debbie



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BCNC Social Media Update

Well, who would have thought when we had our 'Hogmanay Bash' some months back, that in 2020 the whole country would be in 'Lockdown' due to the Coronavirus and that meeting to worship would be put on hold for the foreseeable future?



With people being asked to work from home rather than risking going into work and not being able to meet up with family or friends, the use of social media in whatever form has never been greater than right now. Teachers are using it for lessons to reach pupils studying at home. Nurses/Care home workers are using it so loved ones can stay connected while visiting is not being permitted. Even crematoria are having to use live streaming at funerals due to restrictions on the numbers who can attend.

Church is no different. We have had to find new ways to stay in touch with everyone during this time. Debbie now uses the internet to upload a weekly reflection onto our Facebook Page. Our talented young folk have made their own video which you can watch either on our Website or Facebook Page. Gill Beattie has recorded several worship songs which you can listen to on either the church Facebook or Website.

On the 21st April 2020 our church website received its 100,000th hit which is quite an achievement.

As we are being told to 'Stay at Home', we have decided to use 'ZOOM' which is a social media platform allowing us to meet together using our mobile phone, iPad or computer. To join up and to make things safe you require a username and a password to take part (PM me for this information). We come together every Wednesday and Sunday evening from 7pm till 7.30pm (the 'waiting room' opens at 6.50pm).

It's great fun and helps us stay connected during this time when we can't meet as a congregation. As the weeks have passed, more folk have joined us. It is very informal and you will see many familiar faces you haven't seen for a while (their hair might be slightly longer for starters!).

As always Stay Safe, Stay Home and Stay Connected.

Website - www.beathandnorth.org.uk - updated weekly.

Facebook Page - www.facebook.com/beathandnorth (please 'like' us) - updated all the time.

Andy



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Our Church in Lockdown

With the impact of Coronavirus and on the instructions of the Church of Scotland and the Government, we had our last service at Beath & Cowdenbeath North Church on 22 March, 2020.

The future is still uncertain as we are now into our eighth week in lockdown and this will continue for some time yet. Our most sincere wish is that everyone is staying safe and keeping well and coping in this difficult time. I am sure everyone is missing Church, our church family and the fellowship, especially that we chat over a cuppa.

Our church depends totally on you the members of the congregation and our friends who support us weekly with your donations, i.e. Gift Aid Envelopes, Freewill Envelopes and by the open Plate. The closure of our Church, of course, means that our income has all but disappeared except for those who contribute by Standing Order. However, we still have to meet our monthly expenditure.

On average our monthly expenditure is approximately £5,000 to cover Ministry & Mission, Insurance, Council Tax, Heating and Lighting and regular monthly costs such as internet and Telephone Charges etc.

The amount of income we have at present from those members who pay by Standing Order is £1,600 so as each month goes by, we have to find the sum of £3,400 to meet our costs.

We have continued to try to keep our members and friends up-to-date through the 'Church News' in the Central Fife Times but we cannot reach everybody. I encourage those who have Gift Aid and Freewill Envelopes to continue to donate as they would usually do but only if you are able to in these difficult financial times. We also understand and would like to reassure those who cannot contribute at the present moment for whatever reason, that we understand and it's OK too. However, it has also been brought to my attention that, as the weeks go by, it is difficult if you are not able to get out and about, to continue to lay aside your envelopes. Therefore, I would encourage you to consider setting up a Standing Order.

If you would like to do this, please give me a ring on 01383 510360, text me on my mobile 07789813526 or e-mail me at magsclar7@gmail.com and I will get back to you to help you to set up the Standing Order and provide the forms necessary for you to do this.

Please everyone stay safe, stay well and stay home and let's look forward till we can meet again in church.

Margaret Clark



God's Garden

The organisers of the 2020 Chelsea Flower Show have asked the public to send them a picture of their garden and write in 250 words what their garden has meant to them during lockdown. Dorothy Frances Gurney, an English poet and hymn writer, penned the famous poem below in 1913 after a visit to the garden at Hammerfield in Penshurst. Perhaps we will be equally inspired when we are in our local green spaces?

*The Lord God planted a garden
In the first white days of the world,
And He set there an angel warden
In a garment of light enfurled.*

*So near to the peace of Heaven,
That the hawk might nest with the wren,
For there in the cool of the even
God walked with the first of men.*

*And I dream that these garden-closes
With their shade and their sun-flecked sod
And their lilies and bowers of roses,
Were laid by the hand of God.*

*The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth, –
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.*

*For He broke it for us in a garden
Under the olive-trees
Where the angel of strength was the warden
And the soul of the world found ease.*

Dorothy Frances Gurney



Gail Stenhouse