



May 2020

## A Greeting to Communicants and Friends of Tay and Lyon Churches

### Spring Reflections

Rev Robert Nicol

One of the positive things that has come out of this dreadful time has been the new sense of community in many parts of the country, and which is particularly noticeable in this Upper Tay region. Groups of able and active people have been formed to meet the needs of those who can't get out easily, or have to isolate, or who find themselves in financial difficulty. There has, rightly, been a lot of appreciation for those who are providing this help, but what of those who are the recipients?

There is a saying "it is better to give than to receive". And many of us are reluctant to ask for help. When I volunteered in a foodbank a few years ago, what I saw was that the most common feeling of the clients who came in was embarrassment. We all want to be able to provide for ourselves and our families, but for a host of reasons, people can find themselves unable to do so. Giving is good, but receiving graciously is also a special thing. This crisis has demonstrated how dependent we all are on each other, and has shown how some jobs which have been undervalued in our society are actually crucial to the smooth-running of our lives. So, we all have to learn how to receive from others, with gratitude and grace, without guilt or embarrassment, because in receiving we allow others to serve.

In God's economy, he is the giver and we are the recipients. At this time of year in the Christian calendar, we think about the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised his followers that, when he was no longer physically with them, they would still have God with them in the Spirit, who would guide them and empower them to do the things he had done. As Christians, we are not asked or expected to live the Christian life in our own strength, but to rely on the Spirit which God put within us. For that to happen, we have to accept

the gift. As with all God's gifts, we haven't the means to pay. We have to accept them graciously.

By the way, the Breadalbane Community Larder is moving from the Breathe premises, to the Lawers Hall, Aberfeldy Parish Church. This will make for a more efficient operation; opening hours & contact details remain the same. Its services are available to all in our area. If you know of someone who is struggling, or if you are yourself, please ask for help. The Larder is there to make sure no-one goes hungry and there's no shame to ask and to receive.

#### ***Sandra Seath, our Outreach Co-ordinator, writes...***

I hope you are all managing to stay safe and stay well. I write this on another Sunday in May. How these weeks go by! How we miss our chats and discussions over a coffee. Can I share some of my thoughts with you?

We have had to develop new patterns of life, giving us time to marvel at nature, colours appearing in the gardens, bird song, new lambs gambolling along in the fields, new blossoms and leaves on the trees. Sometimes it is hard to remember, living here, that we are in the midst of such anxious and worrying times with happenings way beyond our control. Lockdown is still with us and I have been asking myself ***What happens next?***

Nature in our world, God's wonderful planet, has very slowly been changing over the past decades. Because of the busy lives we have been leading, we haven't noticed or acknowledged the destruction to nature that has been happening around us. This enforced lockdown has given us time think about ... **WHAT NEXT?**

We can revalue ***What and Who*** matters most in our lives, with the realisation that our lives will not be the same as before. When lockdown ends we will have the opportunity to choose, to take time to appreciate and look after our surroundings, be thankful for the amazing acts of kindness and care happening daily in our communities, to choose a

life-style which embraces all that we have experienced and come to value through this pandemic. I asked, **what next?** Well, we can choose our pathway: our lives will certainly be different, but we are a species that will rise to the challenge!

As always if you have any worries, queries, or require any kind of assistance please contact me on 01887 830316 and I will do my best to help or find someone who can! Hopefully, it won't be too long till we meet together again on Sundays in our favourite seats, amongst our special friends. I'm looking forward to that!!

## Church News

Although still in lockdown with church doors firmly closed, work continues towards the time when we get the green light to advertise for our new minister. In particular, a Parish Profile has been produced describing our attractive Parish with all the good and varied works going on within it.

Our **website:** <http://taylyonchurches.org.uk/> has now been modernised and updated. The current weekly Sunday services we are all enjoying can be accessed and new information added keeping us all up to date!

**Lawers Church** was sold several years ago but we still look after the churchyard to ensure it's kept neat & tidy. This old churchyard down at the old Lawers village has had a lovely spring spruce and tidy up!! We are very grateful for all the efforts over the years made by Elizabeth McDiarmid in helping with the upkeep of the graveyard. It is located on the west shore of Loch Tay to the north of the Lawers burn. The old Lawers Village, deserted settlement & burial ground is registered as a scheduled monument and is worth visiting.



### Mrs Jean Woolley

It was with great sadness we had to say **Good-bye** to our friend and neighbour, Jean. She had suffered and fought bravely in recent years with ill health and finally gave up her fight at Ninewells Hospital on 10 April. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bob who is planning to carry out Jean's wishes for a celebration of her life. when our church doors open again.

### Rhubarb and Vanilla Cake Recipe



#### You will need:

- 23cm rectangular baking tin
- 175g butter, softened
- 250g golden caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 175g self-raising flour
- 300g rhubarb, in 2cm chunks, tossed in lemon juice
- 4 tbsp demerara sugar
- Icing sugar to dust

#### Method:

- Grease and line a 23cm rectangular baking tin. Grease the paper / sprinkle with demerara sugar.
- Beat the butter and caster sugar, then beat in the eggs and vanilla. Fold in the self-raising flour, followed by the drained rhubarb.
- Gently pour the batter into the tin, sprinkle generously with demerara sugar and bake in a pre-heated oven at 180 degrees C for 30-40 mins until golden brown and a skewer comes out clean.
- Cool completely on a wire rack before dusting with icing sugar. The cake will keep for up to a week in an airtight container in a cool dark cupboard.
- Enjoy on its own, with a spoonful of cream or, for a hearty pudding, serve with custard!