



Dore Methodist Church

Weekly Update

4th September 2020



Message from Gail.

Dear friends,

It's good to be writing in our weekly update again following a couple of week's break, thank you David for your messages while I have been away.

We travelled north for our holiday and spent a wonderful time on the beautiful Isle of Skye. Scotland is a very special place for me (being a McGregor before I was a Hunt) and I spent many happy family holidays in the highlands. However, it is probably 50 years ago since I last went to Skye and the only way to get to the island then was by ferry from the Kyle of Lochalsh to Kyleakin. Now it is reached by a bridge, and we laughed when I referred to it as the "new bridge" which was actually 25 years old now! But what I discovered hadn't changed, were the amazing mountains, the beautiful sunsets, the wonderful scenery, the lapping waves, bubbling streams and rushing waterfalls. There is something about the incredible tranquillity and inner peace that nature generates.

September 1st is "world day of prayer for creation," and Pope Francis commented: "The human person in prayer contemplates the mystery of existence around them". When we look at the immensity of the world around us it causes us to wonder upon the love that must be behind such a powerful work. Perhaps you too have stood gazing upon the incredible scenes which nature reveals, and that experience has lead you to prayer and contemplation too.

Genesis describes God creating the Earth with His own hands. It's an ongoing reflection of His beauty and awesomeness, and turning to nature can bring us closer to our faith and remind us, even when we find ourselves in sad and difficult times, how wonderful life is when you see it through God's eyes.

Blessings

Gail

Pause for thought and prayer

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him. Psalm 37: 7



In this Psalm, David calls us to take delight in the Lord and to commit everything we have and do in him. But how do we do this? To commit ourselves to the Lord means entrusting everything - our lives, families, jobs, possessions - to His control and guidance. **Mother Teresa said - "God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer."** Ask God to help you listen to him and those around you this week.

Pray for family and friends, colleagues and neighbours. Pray for the world and for those facing injustice, suffering, and hardship; for those searching among the chaos.

Lord speak into the stillness, give us ears to hear and words to act. Amen

Worship for Sunday 6th September.

Our worship material for next Sunday, produced for us by "Twelvebaskets", follows. It is good to know that we can gather together, albeit in our own homes, at 10-30 a.m. on Sunday and use this service outline.

Grace Food Bank.

Once again, many thanks to everyone who contributed to the latest Foodbank collection. The next collection will be on **Monday 7th September**. If you would like me to collect from you please phone me on (0114) 473 1998 (or email me at peter.ann.smith@gmail.com) and then leave a bag outside your front door for collection by **9-00 a.m. on Monday 7th September**. Peter

(Apologies to Peter for my putting the incorrect phone number previously. JB.)

Church Council Meeting.

A reminder to all Church Council members that there will be a meeting, by Zoom, on **Thursday 10th September at 10-00a.m.** Further details were sent out by Gail before she went on holiday. If members of the meeting need help accessing the meeting please speak to Bridget, Jackie or John.

Mary Jackson.

Mary Jackson is now permanently resident in Cairn Home at Crosspool. Unfortunately, at the present time general visiting is not allowed.

Please send items for next week's "Update" to the Baileys by TUESDAY EVENING.

Tel: 235 1085. Email: john.bailey23a@btinternet.com

Call to worship

The living God waits here for you. Waits for the encounter. Whether it's on paper, through video or on Facebook. Whether it's in small group conversation or deep-thinking God is here.

So come with worship-filled expectancy, ready to be prompted to learn, to care, to serve, ready for that encounter with the living God who is waiting to meet you. **Amen.**¹

Hymn: 28 STF – Jesus calls us here to meet him

1 Jesus calls us here to meet him
as, through word and song and prayer,
we affirm God's promised presence
where his people live and care.
Praise the God who keeps his promise;
praise the Son who calls us friends;
praise the Spirit who, among us,
to our hopes and fears attends.

2 Jesus calls us to confess him
Word of life and Lord of all,
sharer of our flesh and frailness,
saving all who fail or fall.
Tell his holy human story;
tell his tales that all may hear;
tell the world that Christ in glory
came to earth to meet us here.

3 Jesus calls us to each other,
vastly different though we are;
creed and colour, class and gender
neither limit nor debar.
Join the hand of friend and stranger;
join the hands of age and youth;
join the faithful and the doubter
in their common search for truth.

4 Jesus calls us to his table
rooted firm in time and space,
where the Church in earth and heaven
finds a common meeting place.
Share the bread and wine, his body;
share the love of which we sing;
share the feast for saints and sinners
hosted by our Lord and King.

John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule (b. 1958) Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 28
Words: From Love From Below (c) 1989, WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow G2 3DH Scotland. www.wgrg.co.uk CCLI 554990

¹ Additional prayers by Jane Bingham

Opening Prayers

Lord of all things we come to you knowing you are here.

We come recognising that you know us and care for us and we give you thanks

We come noticing all you have given to humanity – our wonderful world, the diversity of its peoples, vast knowledge and skill, an all-encompassing love and we give you thanks.

We come too knowing what you require of us and all too aware that we often fall short

We come to ask for forgiveness, through grace already knowing that you will forgive and we give you thanks

We pray that we might live like thankful people this day and every day. **Amen.**²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

Readings: Matthew 18:15–20 - Reproving Another Who Sins

15 “If another member of the church^[a] sins against you,^[b] go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.^[c] **16** But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. **17** If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. **18** Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. **19** Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”³

Romans 13:8-14 - Love for One Another

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbour as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

An Urgent Appeal

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; ¹³ let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.⁴

² Opening prayers written by Jane Bingham

³ Bible Text is from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The Vine at Home is compiled and produced by **Twelvebaskets** copyright © **Twelvebaskets 2020**

⁴ Bible Text is from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Reflection

Today we hear from Jane Bingham. A student local preacher from Yorkshire.

The passages of scripture we read today have probably got some of the most famous and well known phrases of faith we hear as church goes within them. “Again truly I tell you, if two or three of you agree about anything you ask it will be done for you by my father in heaven. For where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name, I am there among them” and “Love your neighbour as yourself” (or as the Passion Translation reads Love and value others the same way as you love and value yourself)

The fact that we know these phrases and feel like we understand them offers great comfort to us and although we recognise them as challenging we have them as quotes on the tip of our tongues and its as if we have known them all our lives. But as I was preparing and reflecting I asked myself did I really know what they were about and in particular what God might be saying to us right now. You know I’m not sure that I find either of them easy and when we read them in context – like we just have – they come with all sorts of associated questions. What about if I’m praying on my own does God hear me then? What if I’m not living the way God wants? What about the fact that elsewhere in the gospels God calls us to offer forgiveness rather than pick fault (you remember specks in our own eyes etc) What if two or three people agree on one thing and two or three others agree on another – how does God choose? What about the fact that God made me to be a complicated human being and I’m bound to fall into some of these habits- God says he loves me anyway? I could go on I guess so I think we’d best pause and wonder.....

During this pandemic we have heard the phrase “unprecedented” many a time. In fact its become in some ways a bit of a joke statement. The disruption, the scale, the spread, the nature of the novel corona virus, the impact of the disruption - all unprecedented and yet we probably know that the same can be said of the plague, the so called “Spanish flu”. Maybe not so unprecedented.

What is certain though is it is uncomfortable. The impact on who we are as people and in particular on who we are as people of God has been truly disrupting. The way we live our lives has changed. The way we go about our daily business while we’re living with it. Even the way we worship together and I’m guessing we don’t like it one bit.

So imagine then living when Jesus was around. Living when the early church was forming and growing and ask yourself if that was a place of disruption. Imagine how the God we know and love was shaking up the world by sending his son to model a new way of living, by suggesting that God is willing to listen directly to you if you gather together to state your case, by saying that the way you live had to change and no longer was it all about you but was more about your fellow human, by saying that you had to change entirely how you lived, put aside all sense of getting just what you wanted, to fulfil all that God requires of you. By asking you to seek out reconciliation and work hard at it. By seeking out the eternal quest to only love others and find a way forward. I’m guessing that the people who encountered Jesus and the early disciples felt and saw only disruption. Gods disruption as a means to a better and preferred future.

If I was the kind of person to set you church homework, I'd be saying look how God works through the unusual and the different. The disruptive. The birth of a great nation through an elderly barren couple. The work of a small child to defeat the most giant of enemies. The words of a prophet advocating peace and ploughshares not war and weapons. The challenging words of an itinerant preacher full of humility as a mark of greatness. The spirit-filled exuberance of sharing the good news to anyone who was around in the street as opposed to the ritual of prayer and fasting that was commonplace. What can you think of in the stories Gods people placed before us as truly important in our scriptures? Where do you see disruption of the status quo.

You see for me this is the God we adore. Faithful, unchangeable but not static or bland. A God seeking always to love us and encourage us to do the same for others. A God whose love knows neither measure or end and will do anything to make it known. Even if it means showing us something fresh.

Don't mishear me. I'm not saying God sent this virus to teach us something or to test us. No. I am saying though that we can see God clearly in the midst of great disruption if we look - and we must look and notice right now what God is saying about the way we live as individuals, as community and as church. What must we shake up to live like God requires rather than the way we'd like to? How do we need to change and morph ourselves into the people we are called to be? Or as the Methodist Way of Life might put it "How and what are you learning now?"

Listen to the urgency of the letter writer again

Love and value others the same way as you value yourself.....

To live like this is all the more urgent for time is running out and you know it is a strategic hour for human history. It is time for us to wake up..... Instead fully immerse yourselves into the Lord Jesus, the anointed one, and don't waste even a moments thought on your former identity to waken your selfish desires.

This is a truly challenging call to action. To live up to the disruption of God's love for all. To put what God prefers for us first. To live as community in a way that is a disruption to society. Advocating love and forgiveness, care and concern, not selfishness and personal gain. To once and for all clothing ourselves in the radiance of light offered by knowing Christ. For now is the time for us to wake up. For us to start again today living as if these 2 phrases we hold dear really mattered. Praying and being - with God. Asking for his help and living for others. Amen⁵

Take a moment to think about the words of this song by John Bell and ask yourself what will you start to do today that brings about the kind of world God inspires.

*Behold Behold I make all things new beginning with you and starting from today
Behold Behold I make all things new, my promise is true for I am Christ the way.*⁶

⁵ Reflection written by Jane Bingham

⁶ Copyright © 1995, Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community, Scotland

Prayers of intercession

Loving and everlasting God we bring to you our concerns for others

We bring before you the complexity of our world at this time. The horrors of conflict and war. The political landscape and all its arguments. The poverty and famine that affects people all over the world. The changing environment that is causing many challenges. The impact of living with a devastating virus.

Help us to be still and ready to notice you - So that we might know how to do your will.

Lord in your mercyhear our prayer

We bring before you our local community and those known to us who are struggling with life. Particularly we think of those affected by loss of income & independence and all of the upheaval in their lives.

We think of those who are ill or grieving and in the silence we name them before you.

Help us to be still and ready to notice you - So that we might know how to do your will.

Lord in your mercyhear our prayer

We bring before you ourselves. All we are facing. All we are rejoicing in. All that we are wondering about. All that we are worrying about. All that we are considering.

Help us to be still and ready to notice you - So that we might know how to do your will.

Lord in your mercyhear our prayer

We bring all these things to you in the name of Christ who gave so much that we might know you better. **Amen.**⁷

Hymn: 67 STF – This this is the God we adore

1 This, this is the God we adore,
our faithful, unchangeable friend,
whose love is as great as his power,
and neither knows measure nor end:

2 'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
we'll praise him for all that is past,
and trust him for all that's to come.

Joseph Hart (1712-1767) Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 67

Blessing

Whether you be one, two, three or more go, knowing that God hears you and loves you. That God delights in your love for one another. That God requires of you this - to Love and value others whoever and wherever they are;

Go ready to be a beacon of God's love in the world. **Amen.**⁸

⁷ Prayers written by Jane Bingham

⁸ Additional prayers by Tim Baker