

**St. Margaret's Community Church of  
Scotland Dunfermline**

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**8<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Newsletter**

Allow me to first of all wish you a peaceful and content New Year.

At the "Zoom Service" on Sunday Morning I used the following as a Prayer for the New Year:

'God Knows' [Better known as "Gate of the Year"]

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

*So my heart be still:*

*What need our little life,*

*Our human life to know,*

*If God knows all things?*

*In all the dizzy strife*

*Of things both high and low,*

*God hides His intention.*

*God knows. His will*

*Is best. The stretch of years*

*Which wind ahead, so dim*

*To our imperfect vision,*

*Are clear to God. Our fears*

*Are premature; In Him,*

*All time has full provision.*

*Then rest: until*

*God moves to lift the veil*

*From our impatient eyes,  
When, as the sweeter features  
Of Life's stern face we hail,*

*Fair beyond all surmise*

*God's thoughts around His creatures*

*Our minds shall fill.*

This of course is the full version of a poem/prayer by an economist called Minnie Louise Haskins written in 1908. Our current queen showed this to her father King George in 1939 and he was so taken by the first part of it, he used it in his Christmas broadcast to the nation as it faced its darkest hour at the beginning of World War 2.

It is a poem/prayer of both wisdom and faith that encourages us to look beyond ourselves, our leaders, our circumstances and place our faith firmly in the One who knows and directs all things.

Who can blame us for the degree of panic and uncertainty that we are experiencing? We would not be either normal or human otherwise! But faith takes us beyond what we see and our circumstances to grasp the reality of the Sovereign who says this in Isaiah chapter 40:

"The nations of the world are nothing in comparison with Him. They are but a drop in a bucket, dust on the scales."

That is not to put us down but to put our world into context. Of course we are grateful for the vaccine but we need also to learn from all of this that our sufficiency is in God and in particular our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us then move forward into 2021 with renewed faith, courage and hope in the One who truly rules and reigns forever and whose wisdom is the only true source of future well-being.

**Iain**

## Intimations

Services will be at the normal times on Sunday – Facebook will go on at 9am, Zoom at 9.45.

[As you will no doubt be aware the 11.00am Service in the Church was cancelled due to increased concerns over Covid – we will therefore have no church service next week and review the situation for the service on the 17<sup>th</sup> January. Please note that this is being done for the safety of our members].

Zoom Service on Wednesday.

## HYMN VERSES

Do you have a favourite verse in a hymn – traditional or modern? I would like us to insert one every week that has been chosen by one of our Newsheet readers – either email or post it to me with a reason why it means something to you [It can be anonymous if you wish].

I am going to kick off with the second verse of “Crown Him with many crowns”, written by Matthew Bridges born in Essex in 1800 whose father was a minister in the Church of England – he wrote this hymn [originally with 12 verses] in 1851.

“Crown him the Lord of life  
Who triumphed o'er the grave,  
And rose victorious in the strife  
For those he came to save;  
His glories now we sing  
Who died, and rose on high.  
Who died, eternal life to bring  
And lives that death may die.”

The part of this verse that really stands out for me are the last two lines and the wonderful paradox they speak of.

As we grow older in life, years somehow seem to shorten and New Year's Day approaches with an ever increasing tempo. The more mature we get, the more we realize that time is only relative; how we live means more than how long we live. Haply also we do not live by years, but by days. In His wisdom God does not show us all that lies ahead. So we enter a new year to live it day by day. What is past is past. Today we start anew, and what we do today will make our life for tomorrow. Chin up, shoulders straight, eyes a gleam, let us salute the New Year, and each day let us follow more faithfully, more courageously, more daringly the lead of our great Captain who bids us follow Him – William Thomson  
Hanzsche

## Story

Jemima was taking an afternoon nap on New Year's Eve before the festivities. After she woke up, she confided to Max, her husband, 'I just dreamed that you gave me a diamond ring for a New Year's present. What do you think it all means?' 'Aha, you'll know tonight,' answered Max smiling broadly. At midnight, as the New Year was chiming, Max approached Jemima and handed her small package. Delighted and excited she opened it quickly. There in her hand rested a book entitled: 'The meaning of dreams'.

**And finally – may your troubles last as long as your New Year Resolutions!**