

## Worship at Home—18 April 2021

### Call to Worship

Christ is risen in our world,  
Alive in our hearts, our conversations and our activities  
His presence brings peace to each space and time  
He bears His love to us,  
Ready for the whole world to share  
Let us open our hearts and minds to His risen presence  
So that heaven's purpose may be revealed in us.

### Opening Prayer

Risen Christ  
Your living presence is celebrated  
At city gates and market squares,  
On country walks and garden spaces  
By those in need of healing and those who are amazed.

As your children  
We thank you that you love us and know us  
You know our inner workings  
You are able to name what is right and wrong  
You help us to recognise  
The upset and hurt we may cause when we use harsh words  
Or allow selfish ambition to live  
You enable us to see that we must be better stewards of your creation  
Yet sometimes we fail to care  
We are tempted by the easy to use and readily available  
Rather than the need to sustain all of life.  
In a world Pandemic you enable us to see  
those who are the last to receive the support they need  
You call us to bless the least of these, seeing your presence in them  
And yet we could do more to seek a fairer society  
To ensure all are given much needed support and care.



It is with great sadness  
that we have to intimate  
the death of

Mrs Mary Alderson  
Muirfield Nursing Home,  
North Berwick

Mrs Alderson's funeral  
will take place at Seafeld  
Crematorium at 12 Noon  
on Monday 26 April.

Please pray for the family.

Loving Lord

We long for your presence

To turn us around with forgiveness and place our feet

Upon the path of holiness and love.

In ordinary moments, you can be in our midst

Disrupting our perspectives

Inspiring us to discover the possibilities

Of the kingdom of heaven in our ordinary world

Expand our desire to notice you in unexpected ways and places

Help us to marvel at your presence

To invite you to be with us and in us

in every walk, conversation, meal or prayer. Hear us as we share Our Lord's Prayer. . .

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.  
Amen

### Reading: Luke 24: 13-35

#### On the Road to Emmaus

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognising him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" "What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."



He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, “It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.” Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognised by them when he broke the bread.

## MEDITATION

So much about our world changed a year ago when new words became part of our daily lives; Covid, PPE, vaccine roll out, lockdown. As we had to adapted to the new world, our life seems to have become defined more by the things we can't do than things we can. We can't sing in church. We can't visit our friends. We can't travel or share a meal or go to a restaurant or a pub. Kids can't go to school. We can't see family out with our 'bubble.'

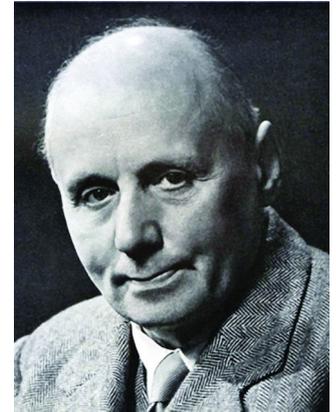
Amidst all these “cant's” over the last thirteen months there has been one thing we can do. We can go for a walk. We are allowed to meet another person for a walk. In such a time, how blessed we are in this area to have the water of Leith, the Lymphoy, the Reservoirs, the Pentland Hills. We can walk. And, unsurprisingly, we have all been walking. Darren put on a few pounds in lock-down and he has started walking a couple of hours every day to get fit—and it's working. When I join him, I'm amazed how many people, (how many of you!) are also out walking, enjoying the scenery.

Walking gives us that 'can' feeling. We can get out of the house. Our homes have become far more than homes, they are now our workplaces, our school classrooms, and for some, prisons of isolation. Walking not only takes us out of the house but for those who are able, a walk can provide us with such mental, physical as well as spiritual benefit. I know that when Mum died, one of the most therapeutic and helpful things was to go for a walk with my sister or a good friend. It is proven that walking is a great therapy. Last week as I listened to Radio 4 in the morning, the author Rhiddian Brooke provided a lovely short reflection and I will try to paraphrase some of it for you.

Brooke said, “Walking and talking is a double therapy; a spiritual exercise and a physical exercise rolled into one.” He said, “The walking might be limited to a certain mileage but the talking can take you anywhere!”

He and a walking friend “coined a new word—to strollock—essentially to stroll and talk at the same time.” He explained further, “to strollock requires a pace that allows you to combine your walk with the talk without one inhibiting the other. Strollocking doesn’t require talking about anything of consequence. You can step through the shallows for miles without getting beyond the weather, what’s for dinner or your favourite tv show. Then again, you can be half-way through a stroll and you might stumble upon deeper terrain. You might find yourself in more profound territory. To walk and talk is to undertake two journeys at the same time: The one where your legs take you and the other where your mind wanders. Sometimes the conversation takes a steeper gradient.”

Being outdoors enables us to have a new experience. We might walk the same route every time but the weather, the seasons, the birds we spot or plants we notice change every time. Brooke is right too that the conversations we share while walking can have a different energy. One person who was a great advocate of outdoor education was the late Duke of Edinburgh who sadly passed away at the age of 99. As a youth, Philip attended Gordonstoun—a school founded by a Jewish refugee named Kurt Hahn. Kurt Hahn had a huge influence on the young Philip because he prized outdoor education as much as classroom education. Hahn had noticed how so many younger soldiers were killed in the second world war whilst many older soldiers who were less fit survived. He realised it was because the older men had more life experience, had learned resilience and how to work together in a crisis. In the USA, where I grew up, there is no the D of E programme but there is an organisation also founded by Kurt Hahn called Outward Bound. As a teenager I spent a month hiking and sailing with Outward Bound and after college I worked for them for Outward Bound for a year. That year certainly shaped my life. In the recent news so many people have talked about how the D of E challenges changed them, enabled them to grow, to experience something that was life changing. Like the author Rhiddian Brooke explained, when we are walking or hiking, we are undertaking two journeys—one with our legs, the other with our minds.



Kurt Hahn

Brooke’s reflection provides a great introduction to the story we heard today. Hamish read about two disciples. Some biblical scholars say that it could have been Cleopas and a friend—others argue that it may well have been Cleopas and his wife.

Like so many Jewish people, they had travelled to Jerusalem for the Passover and to enjoy a great religious festival and more excitedly they would be there when Jesus was there. However, what should have been a celebration turned out to be an agony as they had watched the young Rabbi from Nazareth, the teacher who held so much promise crucified. They were bereft. Bereavement is always hard- but there is something especially tough about the loss of a young person. There is a sense that the future has been cut short, hope been cut off. Cleopas and his companion understood Jesus was the Messiah and that God was at work in him. He was going to do great things. But with the events of the Passion, their hope for the future was blown apart.

Cleopas and his friend were walking the seven miles back to Emmaus with heavy minds and even heavier hearts when they were joined by a stranger. The bible says they were downcast. Then the stranger asked them, “what are you talking about?” They reply as if to say “are you the only one who doesn’t know the horrors of the last few days? Are you the only one who hasn’t heard about what happened at Calvary?” And they proceed to tell him about Jesus the prophet, powerful before God, and how he was crucified and that the women had reported that the tomb was empty and their friends had rushed to see that indeed the tomb was empty. . .

As disconsolate as they were, we might expect the Stranger to offer words of comfort and reassurance, but in fact he rebukes them. He tells them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Jesus now began to explain everything to them, unfolding to their hearts and minds all the many ways that the words of the prophets and the truth of scripture are now fulfilled concerning himself.

With this Jesus is telling them how God has been in his ministry from day one. He is telling them, "search the scriptures and you will see that evil will never have the last word, that God is truth, worthy to be trusted and that God's salvation had to be by the path of the cross."

These days it seems we put a great amount of reliance on the scientists to tell us the truth. We want factual evidence before we believe anything. We want everything presented logically and rationally. We need concrete facts to avoid mistruths or fake news and so forth. We might be looking for scientific proof or historical evidence to explain what Cleopas and his friend experienced when they encountered this stranger.

But this was not the kind of truth that Jesus unfolded on the walk to Emmaus. He was encouraging the disciples to search the scriptures and to allow God's spirits to touch their hearts with the truth. And the truth was not a mere fact to process, but an experience to feel and know, an experience to change their lives. When Jesus was explaining the resurrection, they felt their hearts burn within them. And as they begged the stranger to stay with them, something else miraculous took place. In verse 30, as Jesus sat at table with them, when he took bread, gave thanks and broke it and began to give it to them, they recognised him. They knew because of all that he had said, because of the truth he revealed to their hearts and in eating with him they experienced his divine presence and their hearts knew who he was.

The next day, they got up and hastened back to Jerusalem to tell everyone, "It is true, the Lord has risen."

At the end of his Thought for the Day last week, Rhiddian Brooke, whilst reflecting upon a recent walk with a friend said, "We'd walked seven miles but we'd covered a lot more ground. Some say that God cannot be comprehended by the finite human mind, but can be known and discovered through an intimate encounter found in an ordinary experience."

*Lord God you reveal yourself to us in the reading of scripture, in our prayers for one another, our companionship along the road. Please be with us Risen Lord as we travel through and out of this strange and hard Covid time and bless us, and be with us as we journey through.*

*Amen*

## PASTORAL PRAYER

Christ of life and death and resurrection,  
We cannot understand how you appeared to Mary in the Garden, to the disciples in a upper room and  
to the disciples on the Emmaus Road  
But we do understand that you changed the lives of those who met you  
And you change the lives of those who encounter you now on our journeys of life.

In this Pandemic world  
We give thanks for all those who offer sings of resurrection  
In their work commitments, social concern and personal care  
We pray for doctors, nurses and support staff  
Who tirelessly care for those who enter their care,  
Even at times with potential harm to themselves  
We pray for the whole scientific community  
As it continues research and development in care and prevention.

The virus has had a world-wide impact  
We pray for those deprived of adequate treatment and support  
Or access to immunisation.  
Raise up into your resurrection hope,  
All who are excluded from fullness of life by poverty, or stigma.

Breathe your peace upon places of agitation and rioting  
We pray for the victory of human rights over and against  
All forms of prevalent oppression, racism, genocide, trafficking and slavery  
We pray for all who are homeless or landless because of war

We pray for the day when all powers, rulers and governments  
would look to all human children  
As equally deserving of love, freedom, education, health and wellbeing.

Christ, our comforter, be with all those in need of comfort and care  
We pray for the Royal Family in this time of loss  
We remember too your love and the dedication to service the amazing contribution to the youth given by  
Prince Philip through the Duke of Edinburgh Awards

We offer thanks for the many lives influenced, uplifted and changed through that experiential education"  
And for all grieving husbands, wives, children and families.  
Speak to their hearts in the words of scripture,  
in the kindness of strangers and friends.  
May our shared memories of love  
Allow your hope to rise from the loss

Enable us to hear your voice  
Each day as we walk and talk  
Energise us by your Spirit so that we may continue to learn,  
even in this strange Covid time  
How best to serve, to love, to accept and share  
The Good news of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord  
In whose name, and in whose risen presence we pray.

Amen

### **Blessing**

We have hope in Christ  
Who frees us, heals us, reshapes us and loves us  
Let us go into that Good News  
Confident as children of God  
May you know Christ's peace, God's love and the Holy Spirit's Energy  
This week and always.

Amen



We are all awaiting a name for the Heron that  
has joined us in the manse.

This is the last week to offer suggestions  
before the name is selected.

Please send in your suggestions.



## Currie Kirk Guild

Another successful coffee and chat was held last Tuesday and it is heartening to realise how many members have had or are about to receive their second vaccination. Along with the sun shining outside and the sound of the birds, it makes us feel that the end or the beginning of the end is in sight.

This Tuesday, 20th April, sees our AGM. Having started this session with a zoom AGM, I never dreamt that the next one would also be via zoom. We will start at 7 pm and, being an evening meeting, you might want to have a small refreshment to hand for a chat after the formal business has been concluded. All necessary documents will be emailed or delivered prior to the meeting.

Unfortunately I am having problems with accessing my email account – waiting for tech assistance to get back to me – so please use [elflamb25@gmail.com](mailto:elflamb25@gmail.com) or phone 466-3472.

Hoping for a good turnout next Tuesday.

Take care of yourselves and look after each other,

Louise Lamont      Guild President



In the 1990's four members of the Red Cross from Currie were selected to be presented to the Duke of Edinburgh at Holyrood Palace—Janet Steven has fond memories of that special day.

If you have a special memory of meeting Prince Philip please get in touch we would love to hear from you.

### Kirk Contacts

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We have friends willing to listen, shop, walk a dog, fix a garden.

Website: [//www.curriekirk.org/](http://www.curriekirk.org/) or [//www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/](https://www.facebook.com/CurrieKirk/)

All sermons from Currie Kirk can be found on the Kirk's website and on YouTube—search Currie Kirk