



A7 Centre of Mission
St Peter's, St John's & St Cuthbert's
Scottish Episcopal Churches
13th September 2020 newsletter



Reopening for communal worship from September.

St John's still has no handover date for getting back to using the church.

St Peter's 10.30am services on 1st and 4th Sundays will be Communion with Simon or other clergy. 2nd & 3rd Sundays will be Service of the Word. Thursday mornings will be a Said Communion service.

St Cuthbert's 10.30am services on 2nd & 3rd Sundays will be Communion, 1st & 4th Sundays Service of the Word. Wednesdays at 11.00am will be Said Holy Communion

The first time you attend you will be given a copy of the relevant Service Booklet. Please take this home, write your name on it and bring it with you each time you attend a service. Bring the current Newsletter as this will be used in place of service sheets. In addition to saving on printing this also means that those who feel they are unable to attend church for whatever reason will have the same input for their personal observance of our services.

Please if you wish to attend ring Sheena(01896 751694) or by e mail (smstcg1945@gmail.com) .

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU RING OR INFORM ON LINE SO WE KNOW NUMBERS AND FOR GOVERNMENT TRACK AND PROTECT.

Members of each congregation have been sent letters from Simon regarding the reopening of our churches for services. Please make sure you have kept them and can refer to them for information that is not included in this newsletter.

These times of opening may change without warning due to the ever-changing restrictions by Scottish Government rulings. We will try to keep you informed of any changes.

Please remember to bring a face covering to wear unless you have health issues.



The Scottish Government announce last week that face coverings must be worn in all places of worship therefore anyone entering one of our church buildings for any reason is required to wear a mask or other form of face covering unless you are exempt on health grounds.



As Reserved Sacrament has been temporarily suspended because of Covid 19

Bishop John has given Simon permission to take Communion with members of the congregation in their homes. If you have the space for 1 metre distancing this can be for up to 7 people plus 1 ordained clergy. If you would like to celebrate the Eucharist in your own home please phone Sheena on 01896 751694 or email smstcg1945@gmail.com Simon will then contact you to arrange a suitable time.

Spiritual Communion

Here is a prayer that can be used at 10.30 on Sundays when Simon will be celebrating the Eucharist

For an Act of spiritual Communion, the following prayer -

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in the most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.



Collect 13th September Guard your Church, O Lord, with your perpetual mercy: and since without your aid we lose our way, draw us always, by your help, away from harm, and steer us towards salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Psalm 103:8-13 Good News Translation

The LORD is merciful and loving, slow to become angry and full of constant love.

He does not keep on rebuking; he is not angry forever.

He does not punish us as we deserve or repay us according to our sins and wrongs.

As high as the sky is above the earth, so great is his love for those who honour him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our sins from us.

As a father is kind to his children, so the LORD is kind to those who honour him.

Romans 14:1-12 The Message Cultivating Good Relationships

Welcome with open arms fellow believers who don't see things the way you do. And don't jump all over them every time they do or say something you don't agree with—even when it seems that they are strong on opinions but weak in the faith department. Remember, they have their own history to deal with. Treat them gently.

For instance, a person who has been around for a while might well be convinced that he can eat anything on the table, while another, with a different background, might assume he should only be a vegetarian and eat accordingly. But since both are guests at Christ's table, wouldn't it be terribly rude if they fell to criticizing what the other ate or didn't eat? God, after all, invited them both to the table. Do you have any business crossing people off the guest list or interfering with God's welcome? If there are corrections to be made or manners to be learned, God can handle that without your help. Or, say, one person thinks that some days should be set aside as holy and another thinks that each day is pretty much like any other. There are good reasons either way. So, each person is free to follow the convictions of conscience.

What's important in all this is that if you keep a holy day, keep it for *God's* sake; if you eat meat, eat it to the glory of God and thank God for prime rib; if you're a vegetarian, eat vegetables to the glory of God and thank God for broccoli. None of us are permitted to insist on our own way in these matters. It's *God* we are answerable to—all the way from life to death and everything in between—not each other. That's why Jesus lived and died and then lived again: so that he could be our Master across the entire range of life and death, and free us from the petty tyrannies of each other.

So where does that leave you when you criticize a brother? And where does that leave you when you condescend to a sister? I'd say it leaves you looking pretty silly—or worse. Eventually, we're all going to end up kneeling side by side in the place of judgment, facing God. Your critical and condescending ways aren't going to improve your position there one bit. Read it for yourself in Scripture:

"As I live and breathe," God says, "every knee will bow before me; Every tongue will tell the honest truth that I and only I am God."

So tend to your knitting. You've got your hands full just taking care of your own life before God.

Matthew 18:21-35 Good News Translation The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," answered Jesus, "but seventy times seven, because the Kingdom of heaven is like this. Once there was a king who decided to check on his servants' accounts. He had just begun to do so when one of them was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. The servant did not have enough to pay his debt, so the king ordered him to be sold as a slave, with his wife and his children and all that he had, in order to pay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before the king. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay you everything!' The king felt sorry for him, so he forgave him the debt and let him go.

"Then the man went out and met one of his fellow servants who owed him a few dollars. He grabbed him and started choking him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he said. His fellow servant fell down and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back!' But he refused; instead, he had him thrown into jail until he should pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were very upset and went to the king and told him everything. So he called the servant in. 'You worthless slave!' he said. 'I forgave you the whole amount you owed me, just because you asked me to. You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you.' The king was very angry, and he sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount."

And Jesus concluded, "That is how my Father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

John Marsden's reflection for 13th September 2020

As many of you know, Kate & I spent the second half of our working lives in Bangladesh. There we led a Christian relief and development organisation. Although it was a Christian organisation the staff came from all the different religious backgrounds in the country, mainly Muslims but also Hindus, some Christians and even one Buddhist! To make the organisation effective one of our main tasks was to teach everyone the Christian values which underpinned the organisation and how to put these into practise in their work and life. Today's Psalm and Gospel were important resources that we used in this teaching.

One of the most satisfying things in our work was to hear from staff members their experiences of applying what they had learnt. Today I want to share with you what one staff member, Kabir, told us. He said, "Twelve years ago I made my cousin angry. In revenge my cousin burned down our family home. For twelve years the relationships between our families was broken. For twelve years there was no communication between us. I thought that it would be impossible ever to forgive my cousin. Then during the session on forgiveness in the Biblical Values training, I realised that it was God's desire that I forgive my cousin."

In obedience to God Kabir went through the process of forgiveness in his heart and received peace. Kabir also realised that he needed to ask his cousin to forgive him for making him angry in the first place.

Kabir continued, "On my first visit back to my village - to my father's house - I told my parents and family members that I had forgiven my cousin. I shared what I had learned in training about forgiveness. I asked that they too forgive him. When my father said that he couldn't forgive such a great injustice, I suggested we pray to God for guidance. For the first time, we stood as a family and requested God to guide us. Afterwards my father decided to go with me to my cousin's house to offer forgiveness. On the way I explained that first of all I wanted to apologise to my cousin for making him angry and to ask for his forgiveness."

When his cousin opened the door, Kabir immediately apologised for making him angry that time twelve years ago and he asked his forgiveness. His cousin became very angry and shouted abuse at Kabir and his father. Embarrassed and depressed, they went home. After they had shared what happened with the other family members, Kabir reminded everyone that God had guided them the previous night in response to prayer. He suggested they pray for guidance again. After prayer, they decided they should go again to his cousin's house with a family friend who was respected by both families.

This time his cousin greeted them with tears and fell at Kabir's father's feet before inviting them inside. The cousin expressed sorrow for burning their house down and asked if they could ever forgive him. Kabir's father explained that the reason for their coming was to offer forgiveness. They embraced and drank tea together. Kabir's father then invited the cousin's family to eat with them the following day. For the first time in twelve years, the two families ate together and experienced the joy of reconciliation.

The people in their village were astonished to see the two families together again and Kabir had the opportunity to share their story of reconciliation with many of the villagers.

A few days ago, in the daily meditations I often read, it said that almost two-thirds of Jesus' teaching is directly or indirectly about forgiveness. Forgiveness is important to God. That's made very clear in today's Gospel.

Today's Gospel ends on a hard note: *"The king was very angry, and he sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount."* And Jesus concluded, *"That is how my Father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."* We could mistakenly see this as evidence that God is "Punisher in chief" waiting to pour down retribution on all those who are unforgiving. That is how so much of our world works where the response to an injustice is to blame and seek punishment or revenge.

But that is at odds with the picture that is painted in our Psalm of a loving God who is Healer, Forgiver, and Reconciler. We need to look at the Gospel parable in a different way.

Have you ever taken note of your own feelings as you read or listen to this parable of Jesus? In the beginning we are pleased that the servant was forgiven by the king. We feel for the man who is helplessly in debt and shocked that his family must also suffer because of his foolishness. We are relieved when the king has mercy on him and forgives him everything.

Look what happens to our sympathy for this man by the end of the parable. After his shameful treatment of his fellow servant, especially after he had received such generous treatment himself, we are delighted to see the king sock it to him. He had been forgiven so much but was so hard-hearted toward the servant who owed him so little. We are delighted he didn't get away with it. Do you see what has happened to us?

So there's really not much difference in the story between the ungrateful servant and us. After we get over our brief moment of sympathy and mercy at the beginning of the story, we return to a much more familiar emotion - vengeance. That ungrateful wretch deserved everything he had coming to him for being so miserly and unforgiving.

Jesus is a master story teller and the unforgiving attitude of the servant who had been forgiven so much highlights our own unforgiving attitude and hardness toward others. We are led to admit that the unforgiving servant is a brother to us, the unforgiving hearers.

The message of the parable is that it is God's desire that we forgive others, just as He forgives us. Forgiveness is a two way relationship as the Lord's Prayer makes clear "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us". That little word "as" is easy to slide over but Jesus phrased the Lord's Prayer that way to make clear that to be able to receive forgiveness we must also forgive.

The Epistle too urges us to accept differences. To welcome with open arms church members who don't see things the way you do. To be gentle with each other.

When we've been hurt forgiveness is not easy. It can feel like we are being asked to say the wrong that was done doesn't matter, that it was actually OK. But forgiveness is not about saying that the wrong was right. The wrong was wrong. Instead, "forgiveness is to let go of our hope for a different past." Such acceptance leads to great freedom in the present, and the possibility of healing as we move forward.

Another thing that we taught our staff in Bangladesh was from the beginning of the Bible, in the creation narrative. We are created in God's image – that is with God's characteristics. This was a life changing insight for our staff. We would ask them to identify characteristics of God by look at various passages including Psalm 103. What do we see there – merciful, loving, slow to anger, full of constant love – and that's just the first verse we read! If these are God's characteristics then Genesis tells us that we too have been created with these characteristics. God has not made us short-tempered, or stubborn, or critical, or resentful people. Beneath the distortions of our self-centredness, of our lack of self worth, beneath our selfishness these characteristics of love and mercy are there for us to access. As we seek God's help to push past our self-distortions we access how God intended us to be and we become forgiving and forgiven people.

Reflect on today's readings for a few moments. Is there anyone you need to forgive? Seek God's help to reach past the self-centred you to the love in your soul that is you created in God's image. What do you need to do?



Intercessions for 13th September 2020

Everlasting God, Lord of compassion and gracious understanding, we come with an openness to express our concerns for the Church and the world, and to thank you, for your goodness in helping us

reopen our churches for services. Thank you for all involved in making this happen. We pray especially for those who do not yet feel able to go out into the world again for whatever reason.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Merciful God, we recognise that the work of helping people through life can leave church leaders vulnerable to spiritual attack. We thank you for our church leaders and pray that they won't allow criticism or negativity to blunt their ministry; that they will hear encouragement, and that they will always respond in love and forgiveness when difficulties arise.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Creator God, we pray for our world, where through television, we see the misery and tragedy brought about by wrong choices and brought into our homes day by day. We pray for wisdom and compassion in all negotiations and decisions taken by our world and local leaders; and ask that there be humility in leadership and responsibility for right action shared by all and we particularly pray that this may apply to all things associated with the Pandemic.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Father God, help and guide our schools, colleges and universities as they return for a new educational year, especially with all their concerns about the Coronavirus and how they will cope with social distancing but still be with one another and learn with and from one another. May their teachers inspire a love of learning for its own sake and kindle joy in all subjects and sports and help them to grow into caring and knowledgeable adults.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, we raise before you those from the A7 Centre of Mission who are ill, hospitalised or recuperating and for those we know within our families and circle of friends especially anyone who is fearful and struggling alone

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, give us ears to hear and minds to understand the message of immortality for the children of your kingdom so that we may look forward with patience and confidence to that time when we will join you in the peace of eternity. And we especially pray for any we know who recently died and are on that journey to you.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Faithful God, forgive us for those times when we treat ourselves with less kindness than you do. We want to believe in ourselves the way you believe in us and so as we go out to live the coming week show us more of the life you have designed especially for us to live

Merciful Father: **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.**



1As part of the ongoing response to the Coronavirus pandemic the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) will be broadcasting video coverage of Eucharistic services via its website, social media channels and YouTube channel. The web page for the broadcast is located at www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship



For those who are not online the Archbishop of Canterbury has set up a Freephone Daily Hope service of hymns, prayers and readings. It is available 24 hours a day on 0800 8048044

Join Pip this week at Holy Trinity at <https://www.holytrinitymelrose.org/> and click on the link on the home (front) page - Holy Trinity YouTube channel. 11.00am <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJkxEqnglnze4SeN4I54Ecw>

St John's Selkirk now has their weekly Sunday services on their YouTube channel, with several (different) familiar voices each week, music, inspirational quotes and images at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9ITNAH6VHZkqM0NiH6Vt9w> available from 10am each Sunday morning. Please feel free to have a listen at any time which suits you.



11am to 11:30 every Wednesday morning.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87979280424?pwd=UEJzRXk0UFpVcnJuaUVZTzJvaE92UT09>

Meeting ID: 879 7928 0424 Password: 023545 Host: Tim Hatton

Bible Studies hosted on Zoom. *Wednesday 7:30pm & Thursday 10:30am*



For this week John Marsden will host the Wednesday study and Tim Hatton will host the Thursday study. So please take care to choose the correct link for the appropriate day:

Wednesday: <https://zoom.us/j/7538094986?pwd=Q0x4YVvk2b3Y5eEt0VkoXSOZWWVxGUT09>

Meeting ID: 753 809 4986 Password: 751474 Time: 7:30pm

Thursday: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87979280424?pwd=UEJzRXk0UFpVcnJuaUVZTzJvaE92UT09>

Meeting ID: 879 7928 0424 Password: 023545 Time: 10:30am

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT

Priest in charge of St Peter's, St John's & St Cuthbert's Rev Simon Cake 07710523856 cakekands@btinternet.com



Hymn 49 Morning has broken The well loved hymn 'Morning has broken', in it's beautiful simplicity, is still universally popular. It was written by Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965) who was inspired by the village of Alfriston in East Sussex where she lived. Eleanor was an established poet, and wrote children's books too. She was asked to write a new hymn in 1961 to the already established Gaelic melody 'Bunessan' by the authors of the Gaelic hymn book 'Songs of Praise' where it was already sung to the Hymn 'Child in a manger, infant of Mary' The result is that the tune Bunessan became intertwined with both hymns. 'Morning has broken' was likewise inspired by Genesis 1 verses 3 to 5.

God said "let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good" The tune Bunessan was originally used in Lachlan Macbeans 'Songs and hymns of the Gael' in 1888. I have travelled to Mull and Iona a number of times and always try to stop at the the memorial to Mary McDonald , Gaelic poet, and composer of the tune Bunessan to 'Child in a manger' Her memorial is situated on the left hand side of the road from Tobermory to Fionnphort just before Bunessan, where Mary and her husband farmed. Cat Stevens, the pop musician and folk singer, has recorded 'Morning has broken' which can be seen on U Tube illustrated by an array of lovely natural photography. Sometimes I come across a plaque or inscription which reads 'One is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth' in someone's garden. A constant reminder of the words in verse 2 of Morning has broken 'Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, sprung in completeness where His feet pass' When I was a child we sometimes held our Sunday morning worship outside in a local farmer's field, away from the hustle and bustle of the community. I loved those services. A lasting memory. So many of us find the love of God when we are outside in His natural world. Morning has broken! An uplifting hymn of hope and joy, sometimes sung at baptisms weddings and funerals. Yes! Morning has broken! John Roberts



Thankyou! I appreciate all you put into the newsletters. As you say, prayer for each other day by day is vital. Also not to pursue negative thoughts and feelings, however valid they seem. You probably know the old song "Accentuate the positive, Eliminate the negative, Latch on to the affirmative, Don't mess with Mr In-between!" Spot on, even if not Christian. Rosie Lee

Thank you Rosie, your thoughts fit in beautifully with this week's Reflection and readings.



Coconut milk has become a very popular non-dairy alternative to cows' milk for people who are lactose intolerant and others who choose a vegan lifestyle. There are a couple of things you need to know when choosing which type to buy.



The cartons that are found in the refrigerated milk aisle are suitable for drinking, pouring on cereal and adding to tea or coffee. In other words, it is a dairy alternative product.

On the other hand, Coconut milk that comes in tins is not for drinking on its own though it is great added to smoothies. Use in cooking – it takes the sting out of a curry that is too spicy, adds a wonderful creamy texture to soups and stews. Use it in baking. The full fat variety whips up beautifully as a replacement for regular whipping cream.



Porridge is a really creamy treat when made with either the full or reduced fat in place of cows' milk.



Hi everyone, I just wanted to let people in your area who have relatives in care homes know about a Facebook group that aims to safely improve visiting guidelines. If you know anyone concerned about a relative in a care home, please let them know about us. We have reps from most areas in Scotland but not many in Dumfries and Galloway

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/627304807896793/?ref=share>



Keep On Forgiving

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 18:21-22



A P T Z U H W J E S N N M H H
A W U K G T K E S X G X Q D X
H T K G T W U S M A N Y I D B
E K A J I B F U B C G E U K G
A F S T I M E S U K O O C U W
M W K W N B O T G P E T E R A
O P E R G R E L P W W O X H T
F A D X B R O T H E R G H X E
K O N A F X S D C R Z L Q W Y
X E R S V Q J L E I L O Z R Q
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S W U Q H V R S E V E N A C W
W L B Q L L E E I I F W C A C
H U S I N S K T D C F X M T C

PETER	ANSWERED	MANY	JESUS
SINS	FORGIVE	HOW	LORD
ASKED	TIMES	BROTHER	SEVEN