

Christ Church, Dalbeattie & St. Ninian's Castle, Douglas
SC010918 & SC011079

Newsletter No. 5 Low Sunday

19th, April, 2020

PAX¹

My dear friends in the Risen Christ,

What a very different Easter we celebrated apart, and yet together, as the Body of Christ last Sunday. A year ago, we held a Sunrise Service at Carlingwark Loch, attended by 60 people, on a lovely clear morning. Last Sunday, how very different it was: the loch was shrouded in mist, as Jane, 'the boys', and I kept a lonely Easter Vigil by the loch side.



You might have thought this would be a disappointing experience, but the misty gloom, appeared as a metaphor for the testing age we are currently living through. The way ahead is not clear as we heard this Thursday evening, the 'lock down' is to continue for another three weeks, and possibly into June! This will be very difficult for some of us. The current restrictions on movement and travel, remind me of the shock to my system, when I began training for the priesthood at Mirfield. Suddenly, my world had shrunk to just the Community grounds - I even had to ask permission to go beyond the walls to post a letter! The difference between the early 90's and today, was that we were allowed out into a world that we would see as the 'old' normal, against our existence today. What is constant, in our world of yesterday, and today, is God's Love for us, and His ability to surprise us! As the Letter to the Hebrews tells us *Jesus Christ "is the same yesterday and today and for ever"*.² Imagine our amazement, on Easter morning when out of the mists came two other 'disciples' looking for the Risen Jesus! (There followed an impromptu, service, with us all correctly socially distanced!) It was almost as it was in the gospel, on that very first Easter Sunday.

Life during Holy Week appeared easy. There was so much to observe each day, as we walked with Jesus to the Cross, and beyond... As we continue our journey, life has seemed so much more difficult, especially in the light of Thursday's announcement. Perhaps we feel on a roller coaster: with its fear, it's exhilaration, and the tedium of going round, and round again, with no discernible end in sight? Yet, this roller coaster is all part of God's train. It is

¹ PAX is the a traditional Benedictine greeting that wishes the recipient God's Peace

² Heb 13: 8

the express train of our lives that will transport us directly to Paradise. On Saturday next week we will celebrate the Feast of St. Mark. In Mark's gospel the Parable of the Sower (4: 1-9) we hear how only three seeds are lost. The sower sows thousands of seeds and yet only three are lost! One fell on the path, another on rocky ground, and the last fell among thorns and weeds. All the rest fall in good soil. Our life may seem truly difficult, if not boring, but we would do well to remember this parable. It is spring, the season for sowing seed. This year God has given you and I the opportunity to grow (the Gk word for this is *auxano* it is used only once in Mark's Gospel at Mk 4:8. It means to grow, to increase, inward Christian growth³). God is giving you and me, indeed the world, the time to take stock, and reappraise our lives. Time may hang heavy when the usual distractions of life are removed from us, and we may fear what the future will bring. Just as the sown seed doesn't have to do anything to grow, it just lets the natural process take its course. So it is with you and I!

¹⁶ *...it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy...* ¹⁷*For the scripture says... 'I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.'* ⁴

We may have stopped (or some of us may be working harder than ever before), but God's work in you and I is unstoppable. His kingdom will bring us the gifts of Peace and Joy in the Holy Spirit. We must be disciplined in prayer, study and patience.

I would like to finish by quoting from a new anthology of poetry by my favourite poet Fiona Sampson:



*Dry season
in the heart
you have to pray
although you can't*

*but still the valves
of the magnolia
wrench
themselves upwards⁵*

³ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/auxano.html> Strong' No 837

⁴ Romans 9: 16,17

⁵ Wild Equinox VI from Come Down by Fiona Sampson, Corsair Poetry

The Magnolia trees are budding and straining heavenwards. Let us emulate them and always have God's kingdom before us.

For a number of our community 'Lockdown' is a permanent feature of their lives. Please do keep them in your prayers at this time and always. If you know who I am referring to perhaps you could phone or write to them. For this is their normal reality.

Wishing you every blessing in the Risen Lord.

Yours in Christ

Christopher
Rector

Keith Dennison, from Christ Church, sent this poem to share with you:

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

Luke 23:34



*Father forgive, and so forgiveness flows;
Flows from the very wound our hatred makes,
Flows through the taunts, the curses and the blows,
Flows through our wasted world, a healing spring,
Welling and cleansing, washing all the marks
Away, the scores and scars of every wrong.*

*Forgiveness flows to where we need it most:
Right in the pit and smithy of our sin,
Just where the dreadful nails are driven in,
Just where our woundedness has done its worst.
We know your cry of pain should be a curse,
Yet turn to you and find we have been blessed.
We know not what we do, but Heaven knows
For every sin on earth, forgiveness flows.*

Malcolm Guite

The Daily Prayer Offices

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices/>

It is an important part of the tradition and spiritual life of the Scottish Episcopal Church that prayer is offered throughout the day. Set times of prayer, called the Office, are set aside for this purpose. Clergy are obliged, by reason of the vows they make, to pray at least the Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer and should also offer Compline (Night Prayer). Others are invited to join this round of devotion and praise, to strengthen their own spiritual life with God.

The Offices may be prayed either alone or in Church with others.

Each day, the Offices will be available on this page. Morning Prayer is made available from 6am, Evening Prayer after Midday for use later in the afternoon and Night Prayer from 6pm.

Prayer Chain

Prayer is perhaps the only help we can give to people in need throughout the world. Please consider joining our growing 'Prayer Chain'.

Contact Sandra Walsh tel.01557 331596 email sandrawalshkbt@yahoo.com.

17th April RIP Dunlop Ewart

His casket was placed in the Columbarium at St. Ninian's on Friday
May he Rest in Peace.

Congratulations to Francis & Jean Turnbull on their 60th Wedding Anniversary



Opera free Downloads

Those of you that enjoy opera may to sign up for these free downloads at:

<https://operadepot.com/pages/sign-up-for-updates-and-free-downloads>

Prayer Themes for Wc. 12th, April

Easter Sunday:	Our Church Community, Diocese, and Province
Easter Monday:	The NHS, our local surgeries, and all at DGRI
Easter Tuesday:	For those affected by the Coronavirus
Easter Wednesday:	Our local community, key workers & volunteers. Bothwell House, Hanover House, Carlingwark Care Home, Barlochan House Care Home, Munchies Park House, and Alma McFadyen Care Centre
Easter Thursday:	The Government, and all in authority
Easter Friday:	Refugees throughout the world
Easter Saturday:	Guidance of the Holy Spirit, and ourselves.

Gospel Readings for the 2nd week of Easter

Low Sunday		Lk 24: 1-12
Monday	Fst Maelrubha of Applecross	Jn 14(1-7) 8-17
Tuesday	Fst Anselm of Canterbury	Jn 14:18-31
Wednesday		Jn 3: 16-21
Thursday	Fst George	Jn 15: 12-27
Friday		Jn 6: 1-15
Saturday	St. Mark	Mk 16: 15-20

Here is the link for the latest D & G Community Support Magazine

https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/UKDGC/2020/04/16/file_attachments/1428708/community%20newsletter%20Friday%2017%20April%20web.pdf

New Help Line for those at high risk from COVID-19

Tel: 0800 111 4000

Offers practical and emotional support for those who do not have a support network. This includes disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, or those receiving a flu jab. Available 0900hrs to 1700hrs