

PAX

Dear friends in Christ,

Last week we were all wishing to visit a hairdresser. This week, we appear to be wishing to apportion blame, perhaps fear and loss is leading to anger? Whatever your political hue, there does appear to be a restlessness in the media and the political parties. This is present among the churches too. The Times had an article by Matthew Parris (who tends to be of the secular persuasion, I believe) pondering who had had a good or bad Covid-19 (if there could be such a thing?). He ranked the Church [of all denominations] as losers: *"Its leaders, from [the Archbishop of Canterbury] down, have been feeble," he wrote. "They should have fought for every-one's right to enter a tranquil and beautiful place of worship to pray or meditate alone. Social distancing was always possible. The Church has let down the laity."*<sup>1</sup> The concern appears to be that people will not return to church in the numbers that there used to be. Until we return to our churches, no one will know the answer.

We live in a very secular age. I was dismayed, this Ascension Day, to hear on Radio Scotland's 'Thought for the Day' more said about 'mindfulness' than the feast day. However, we do need to meet people where they are, and bring them on to God's ground. This can often mean that we stand on uncomfortable earth. We really need to stand alongside people, in their shoes, to see what it feels like. When we can start to empathise with them, we may be able to explain how God can transform their lives. They do need to see that the Christian 'Way of life' offers something that this world cannot give. I have been greatly heartened by the generosity of the people I have met with. There is a desire to engage (all be it at a 2 metre distance). There is a joy in discovering nature. I, myself, have been fascinated by the Blackbird that wakes me in the morning, and sings Compline for me in the evening! The Lennon/McCartney song is rather appropriate to our age:

*Blackbird singing in the dead of night  
Take these broken wings and learn to fly  
All your life  
You were only waiting for this moment to arise*

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<sup>1</sup> The Tablet p.5 ,23<sup>rd</sup> ,May 2020.

There is an air of change for the better, abroad, and the Church must make sure that it is at the forefront of this change. Our world is full of inequality, many ...'isms', and this pandemic must surely have taught us that we are all human beings together. We stand or fall together. There is strength in our common humanity. We would do well to live the Beatitudes (Matt 5: 1 – 12).



*<sup>2</sup>Then [Jesus] began to speak, and taught them, saying:*

*<sup>3</sup>'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*<sup>4</sup>'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

*<sup>5</sup>'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*

*<sup>6</sup>'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

*<sup>7</sup>'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.*

*<sup>8</sup>'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*

*<sup>9</sup>'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

*<sup>10</sup>'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*<sup>11</sup>'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Our society needs to listen to the stories of those on the margins, especially to those that globalization has left behind, and to the younger generation that are inheriting an uncertain world, and future. Poverty, grief and meekness may not be the words that would naturally come to mind to make us happy. We may accept that mercy, purity and peace-making are good, but how much do they figure in the choices we make on a daily basis? If our society is to fly again (like the Blackbird with the broken wing), we will only succeed by hungering for righteousness for everyone. The persecution mentioned in the Beatitudes will take us all out of our comfort zone, but the Church will need to stand up for God's principles. Perhaps, we have all become complacent about gospel principles, and let our societies cultural norms become the unquestioned acceptable position.

There is a Greek word in the New Testament: *sklerokardia*. It means a hardness of heart, that a person has no understanding, and has lost the capacity to be moved or changed. Such a condition experiences no regret and can see no reason for changing direction<sup>2</sup>.

Let us pray that the Church is ready to respond to God and His children's needs, as we approach this new beginning, the new Covid-19 age. Let there be no hardness of heart. No anger. No looking for someone to blame for how we arrived here. Let there be a unity in all we do and a desire to work together for the good of all the world. May we have the courage to embrace the necessary changes and accept the sacrifices we maybe asked to make. In short, may we have the courage to live the Beatitudes!

May God's Holy Spirit renew you, and those around you. May Love and Joy flow gently through your lives and to those you meet. And may the Risen and Ascended Lord Bless you greatly in Jesus' name.

With love in Christ

Christopher  
Rector

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## 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 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.

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<sup>2</sup> Mark 6: 52

**Foodbank at The Heart of Galloway Visitors Centre, Castle Douglas**

Open Noon to 2pm tel: 07730 788 335 Manager Sarah-Jane Allsopp

**Dalbeattie Food Bank**

Heart of Galloway food bank, 24 High Street, Dalbeattie. If you need food stop in Monday-Friday 12noon-2pm.

If you cannot attend then call 07730788335 or email [projects@castledouglas.info](mailto:projects@castledouglas.info) and we will deliver to your door.

**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](mailto:sandrawalshkbt@yahoo.com).



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

Daily Hope, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period

of restrictions in mind.

Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop before being able to choose from a range of options, including hymns, prayers, reflections and advice on COVID-19.

**Museums online:** This link takes you to a page with links to collections from museums and art galleries worldwide.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner>

The Natural History Museum has a lot to offer for all ages. Look at the Discover Section for how to grow a cress caterpillar or explore the skull of Dippy the Diplodocus. <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/>

**Prayer Themes for Wc. 24<sup>th</sup>, May**

Easter Sunday 7:	Our Church Community, Diocese, and Province
Monday:	The NHS, our local surgeries, and all at DGRI
Tuesday:	For those affected by the Coronavirus
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
Thursday:	The Government, and all in authority
Friday:	Refugees throughout the world
Saturday:	Guidance of the Holy Spirit, and ourselves.

**Gospel Readings for the 7<sup>th</sup> week of Easter**

Easter Sunday 7		John 17: 1-11
Monday	The Venerable Bede	Matt 7: 21-29
Tuesday	St. Augustine of Canterbury	Matt 13: 31-33
Wednesday		John 17: 11-19
Thursday		John 17: 20-26
Friday		John 21: 15-19
Saturday	Josephine Butler	John 22: 20-25

**People you can talk to:-**

I am just a phone-call away 01556 505894 or you could speak to Helen 01556 504007 or Christine 01556 670275. (All calls would be treated confidentially).

Here are some websites that you may find useful:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/loneliness/how-to-overcome-loneliness/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/feeling-lonely/>

Relationships can be quite tense during this period of 'lockdown' and this is a useful website for those that suffer from domestic abuse:

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/> or you could phone tel: 0808 2000 247

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

<https://supportdg.dumgal.gov.uk/media/23010/Community-Bulletin-Edition-13/pdf/Newsletter-Tuesday-19-May.pdf?m=637254103297570000>

**Key Contacts Dumfries + Galloway**

NHS24 111 [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

Emergency 999

Doctor Out of Hours 111

Dumfries and Galloway Council 030 33 33 3000

[www.dumgal.gov.uk/SupportDG](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/SupportDG)

Business Support Helpline 01387 260280 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 030 33 33 3001

Social Work Out of Hours 01387 273660

Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway 0300 303 8558

Dumfries and Galloway Citizens 0300 303 4321 Advice Service

[www.dagcas.org](http://www.dagcas.org)

Samaritans 116 123

SHOUT Text SHOUT to 85258 for free

Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247

Age Scotland 0800 12 44 222 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

Shelter Scotland 0808 800 444 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

LGBT Helpline Scotland 0300 123 2523

Childline 0800 1111

**Answers to last week's Crossword**

**Across**

4 Who did Sarah obey? **Abraham**

5 What should beauty not come from? (7,9) **Outward adornment**

9 How many people were saved by Noah's ark? **Eight**

10 Who are the eyes of the Lord on? **Righteous**

**Down**

1 What is the gentle and quiet unfading beauty? **Spirit**

2 One of those items that beauty should not come from? (7,4) **Braided hair**

3 Those who speak maliciously against you will be ashamed of their...?

**Slander**

6 Who are submissive to husbands? **Wives**

7 With what is how husbands should treat their wives? **Respect**

8 What should you repay insult and evil with? **Blessing**

### Ascension Quiz

Match the question with the correct answer given on the right.

#### Questions

1. What is Jesus's Hebrew name?
2. Jesus was of which tribe of Israel?
3. How long between the Resurrection and The Ascension?
4. What did Jesus promise his disciples?
5. Where did Jesus tell his disciples to wait?
6. Which feast was about to begin?
7. Where did Jesus ascend to heaven?
8. As he ascended, what hid Jesus from those watching?
9. Who appeared to the disciples after Jesus ascended?
10. What did they say to the disciples?

#### Answers

- Pentecost  
Mount of Olives  
Jerusalem
- Two men dressed in white  
Judah  
A cloud  
Holy Spirit  
Jesus will return the same way he left  
Yeshua
- Forty days



## Bible Crossword I

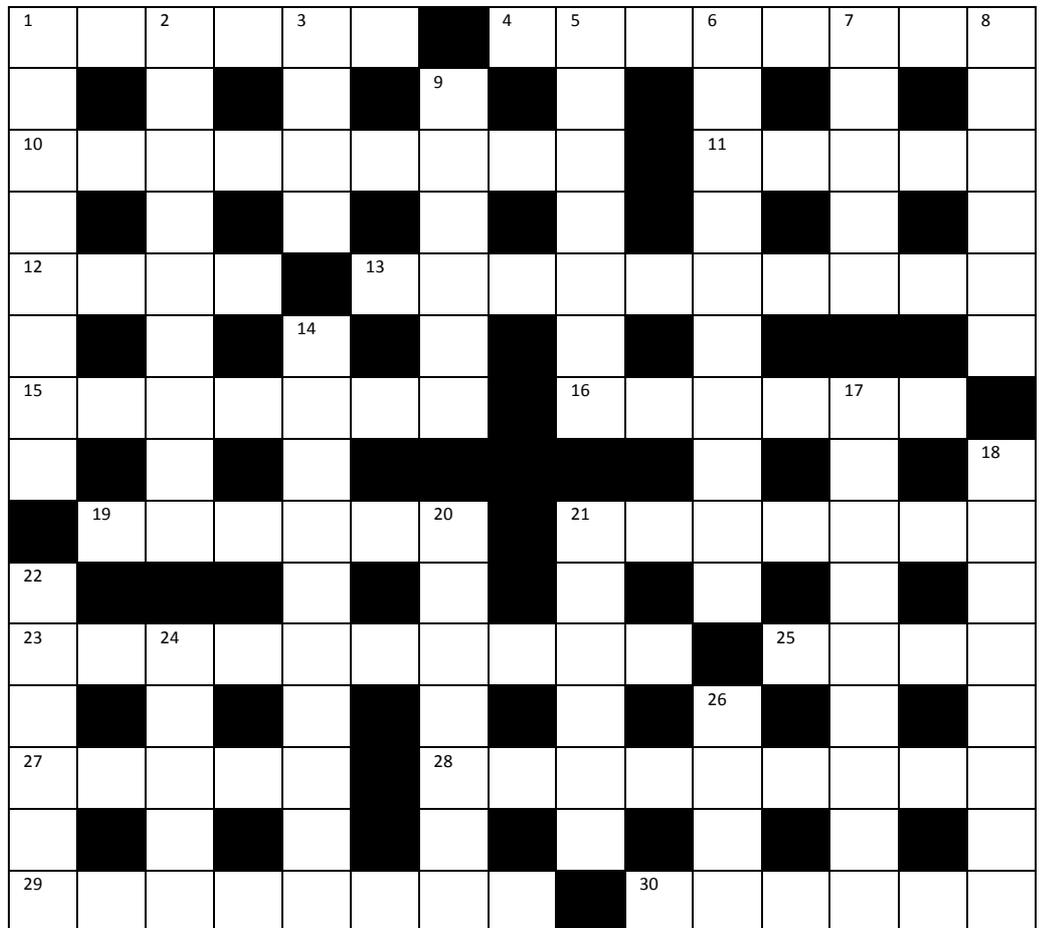
by Philologus © BiblePuzzles.org.uk

### Across

- 1 An ancient weight (6)  
 4 Seemed (8)  
 10 New Testament book (9)  
 11 Unit of length (5)  
 12 '...it is a \_\_\_\_\_ thing the king requireth' (Dan 2:11) (4)  
 13 Contemplation (10)  
 15 Abigail supplied David with one hundred clusters of these (7)  
 16 A son of King David (6)  
 19 Concurred (6)  
 21 Light sources (7)  
 23 Propitiations (10)  
 25 A false god (4)  
 27 Gather (5)  
 28 Abimelech was hit by this (9)  
 29 Instructors (8)  
 30 Hastily (6)

### Down

- 1 Skilled animal workers (8)  
 2 Inspiring (9)  
 3 Compass point (4)  
 5 Intense emotion (7)  
 6 The words of Jeremiah



- said not to listen to these (10)  
 7 Jewish leader (5)  
 8 'He is proud, knowing nothing, but \_\_\_\_\_ about questions and strifes of words...' (1 Tim 6:4) (6)  
 9 Bread makers (6)  
 14 In this year of King Nebuchadrezzar's reign, Nebuzaradan arrived in Jerusalem (10)

- 17 Ancient city of Og, King of Bashan (9)  
 18 Stringed instrument (8)  
 20 Joseph, perhaps? (7)  
 21 Tiny amount (6)  
 22 Jesus did this with authority (6)  
 24 Last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)  
 26 Province of the Roman Empire (4)

Answers next week.