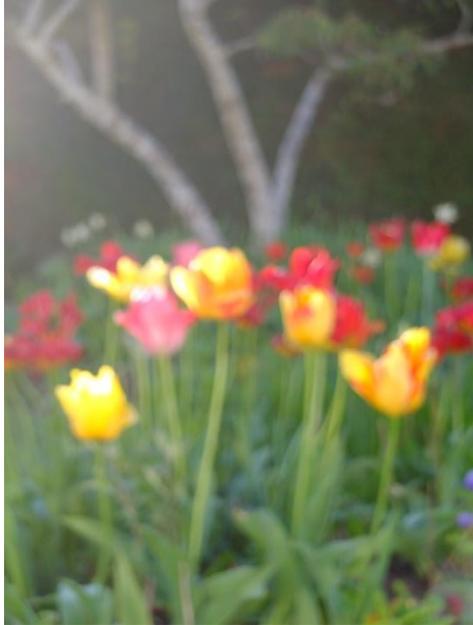


Dear Friends in Christ,



There is a feeling of change in the air. It is in the media, and present in nature – things are moving on... The poker red tulips that I have been enjoying on my early morning walks, these past weeks, are beginning to fade. The radio is talking about the possibility of change. Indeed the conversation has long since moved on from toilet paper and pasta. New Zealand has emerged from 'lockdown'. And the critical difference to life is that New Zealanders can have a haircut! The priorities of life-how they change! The talk of loneliness appears to have subsided, along with thankfulness for delivery

drivers, nurses and shop workers. Will it be the Churches turn soon? Sadly, I think not... not just yet!

Radio Scotland, the other day, had an interview with a nurse, Sarah Pirie, talking about the sadness and joy of her work. She had written a poem which ended:

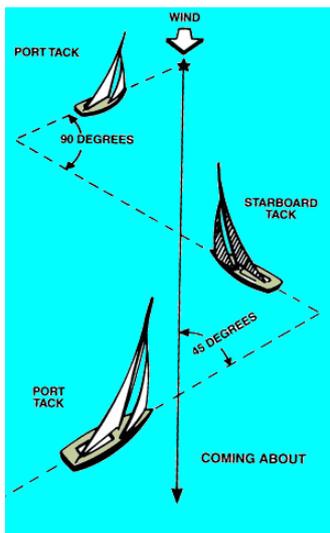
*We deal with death,
But not like this,
No family allowed,
To give you one last kiss.
But the next family will need us,
We will need to do the same.
But I hope I gave you good care.
And I will always remember your name.¹*

Memories are important, but Christian 'Hope' could have transformed this situation. I wonder if a hospital chaplain was able to be present? This time of 'lockdown' has had a feeling of being 'parked up' rather like a Boeing 737 MAX. I wonder if there is someone in power who doesn't

¹ Sarah Pirie, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow.
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18441161.coronavirus-scotland-glasgow-nurse-captures-final-moments-covid-19-patient-poignant-poem-emotional-shift/>

want the Church to be active spreading the message of Love and Hope for ALL!

The Church's year is moving on, and we are on the cusp of great change! The Feast of the Ascension will soon be upon us. I have often wondered how the disciples felt, as they experienced the resurrection appearances of Christ, and wondered what would happen next? They were clearly asking questions about the future "*..is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?*"² As usual they were on the wrong tack! Perhaps tack is the right word. As a sailing term 'tacking' means to change direction using the force of the wind. We as Church need to pray for renewal in the Holy Spirit this Pentecost. The Feast of the Ascension is where Christ unlocks the Holy Spirit. He commands us to "*stay here.. until you have been clothed with the power from on high.*"³ Is this an historic act? Or does it have meaning for you and me, as we walk the path to this great season of change?



We are on the verge of 'going about'⁴. Life will be different in the 'new world' we will be entering. A number of commentators⁵ see this pandemic as a turning point in history. It has shone a light on the "*dark corners of our world*"⁶. Margaret MacMillan writes "*that people coming out of calamity are open to sweeping changes*"⁷. We, as Church, must be part of this process. We should be there to help effect positive change: locally, nationally, and globally. We have a role to play. That is why our prayer has to be that the 'Holy Spirit' will renew us, and lead us into God's future. Where that will be, and what it will look like, only God knows. We can

arrive there if we are open to God, and His 'Calling'. As we prepare for 'The Spirit' to blow through our lives this Pentecost, we should consider what this text of St. Paul's may mean to us:

¹⁹*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God,* ²⁰*built upon*

² Acts 1: 6b

³ Luke 24: 49b

⁴ A sailing term for tacking, changing direction.

⁵ Margaret MacMillan, a historian, at the University of Toronto. The Economist May 9th, 2020 p. 73

⁶ ibid

⁷ ibid

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the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²²in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.⁸

To help us, in this prayerful task, we should deliberate on the words of the Psalmist “*You send forth your Spirit... and so you renew the face of the earth*”⁹.



Life may seem rather monochrome, and lacking in colour. Walking in the Spirit, opens us to new possibilities! New ways of being, and yet allowing us to be the same followers of Christ, walking in all the colours of His ‘rainbow’ Covenant. Worship of God over the centuries, since the coming of God’s Son, has remained largely the same. What God asks of you and me is to share His Love, His Creation, His Hope!

Let us pray...

*Lord Jesus Christ, you have set before us the path that leads to eternal life. Give us the wisdom to follow this Way, the courage to persevere when times are tough, and the zeal to share what we have learned with others. For you are our Lord forever and ever. Amen.*¹⁰

Yours in the Risen and soon to be Ascended Christ.

Christopher
Rector

PS. If you would like to read about how Society moves and develops you might like to read ‘The Leopard’ by Tomasi Di Lampedusa. It is a witty, and amusing read – as I am finding. You may prefer to watch the film of the book ‘The Leopard’, by Luchino Visconti, with Burt Lancaster. I have yet to watch it, but I am told it is enjoyable.

⁸ Ephesians 2: 19-22

⁹ Psalm 104: 31

¹⁰ Michael Casey O.S.B.

Communing Beyond Communion--- *Bishop Hugh O.S.B (Bp of Aberdeen.)*

(We all live in communities. All communities have Rules. You may find this article helpful. It speaks for itself... My thanks to Bp. Hugh for allowing us to reprint this article. Christopher)

I read this the other day: “‘Communion’ is indeed the normal permanent condition of ‘live’ Christians, whose duty it is to cherish it. All their lives are lived in a spirit of communion, and it bursts into flame every time the sacrifice is completed with the reception of the ‘body and blood’” (J. A. Jungmann, *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer*, ET 1965, p.258). We can say the same thing the other way round: ‘Holy Communion’ leads to communing. It is given us for that. The Eucharist is celebrated so as to be lived. At this time, when Communion has gone ‘virtual’, I’d like to explore these wider dimensions, these Eucharistic echoes and repercussions in daily life and focus on that “normal permanent” communion / communing Holy Communion makes possible for us. The Eucharist as it translates into daily life.

Three forms of this communing come to my mind.

But let me lay a foundation first. We are in the Easter season. There is a tradition that, when he rose from the dead, Jesus appeared first, privately as it were, to his mother. The Gospels don’t say he did, but they don’t say he didn’t. We can accept this, or not, as we wish. However, an Austrian poet who died almost a century ago, Rainer Maria Rilke, dedicated a memorable poem to an imagined Easter meeting of Jesus and Mary. It is called the *Quieting of Mary*. Jesus comes to his mother and, in a gesture of reassurance, puts his hand on her shoulder. Then, goes the poem:

“They began,
quiet as trees in spring,
infinitely and at once,
their season
of utmost communing”.

It’s hard to catch the beauty of the original, but the point lies in the last two lines, and especially the final phrase: “utmost communing”. This mother and son always had a unique relationship, but after the shared

horror of Calvary and its reversal in the Resurrection, this relationship must have gone still further. It must have moved into an ultimate intimacy, the beginning of their relationship in heaven. It's worth pausing on this post-Resurrection union of Jesus and Mary. It fits well at the beginning of our Easter season. It underpins it. It symbolises the relationship between Christ and the Church opened for us by Easter and Pentecost. It evokes that "normal permanent condition" I began with. The whole New Testament is a song to the new "communion" the New Covenant has made possible. Take St Paul, for example: "now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; it is through him, by faith, that we have been admitted into God's favour in which we are living, and look forward exultantly to God's glory" (Rom 5:1-2).

Eastertide – and lockdown – are an opportunity for appreciating a little more "the breadth and length and height and depth" (Eph 3:18) of what Christ and the Holy Spirit have made possible. Imagine you have been given the very best and latest PC, but have hardly begun to explore all it enables you to do. Or your great aunt has died and left you a chateau in the Loire Valley. You have the title deeds, you have the key, but you've only so far spent a single night there. You have yet to discover the treasures it holds. As Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "If you but knew the gift of God!" (Jn 4:10).

So, how in lockdown, can "ultimate communing" be begun? How does Holy Communion morph into daily communing? How can our whole life be Eucharist?

I'd just mention three things – all close at hand, all for cherishing, all simple.

1. St Benedict wrote a rule for households – of monks. You could say he wrote for households in lockdown; he expected monks to be at home. And one of the many striking things his 6th c. Rule insists on is respect for things, material things, the objects around us, the objects we use on a daily basis. St Benedict's monastery has two focal points: the oratory and the kitchen. It has two tables: the altar and the table in the refectory. They are both holy. The bread of both is holy. They both involve service, of the Lord and of the brethren. They are as connected as the two great commandments. There's a flow between the two. So, he tells the monk in charge of

the domestic economy: "Let him look upon the utensils of the monastery as upon the sacred vessels of the altar" (Rule 31:10). The pots and pans, the cutlery and crockery, the cupboards and chairs are sacred. So, "if anyone treat the things of the monastery in a slovenly or careless manner, let him be corrected" (32:4). Everything is to be kept clean and in good condition. If someone working in the kitchen or storeroom or bakery or garden breaks or loses something, he must go before the abbot and whole community and disclose it. He wants the cooking to be done well. "God walks among the pots and pans", said St Teresa. St Benedict would have warmed to that. He expects respect for the paten and chalice, as it were, and the "sacramental matter", of our daily life. He rather likes lists and inventories. He seems to enjoy mentioning things: items of clothing and socks and shoes and beds and bedding, needles and writing materials, belts and knives. We would have to add tablets, phones, cars. For St Benedict, daily household life is a kind of Eucharist. Christ is present there as well as in the church. The whole of life turns sacramental. Cherishing things is a way of cherishing the Lord and sensing his presence. What's made can connect us with our Maker. We don't have to turn our lives into a perpetual Japanese tea-party, certainly, but it is good to remember that things are not simply "ours". "The Lord's is the earth and its fullness", says a Psalm. Our world tries to recycle, but it's a battle. We live in a world of plastic wrapping and a throw-away culture, where everything can be replaced, where the only value of things is their cost. Things are not respected for being what they are: works of nature, works of art, works of God. St Benedict was an ecologist, really. He would have shaken his head at the litter accumulating during lockdown, when waste collections are reduced. By contrast, like the prophet Zechariah, he would have us anticipate the day when "every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be sacred to the Lord of hosts" (Zech 14:21). Lockdown slows us down and slowing down can help us sense things we normally don't.

2) Closer still is the "now", the present moment. The "sacrament of the present moment" is a fine phrase attributed to a 17th / 18th c. French Jesuit, Jean Pierre de Caussade. He was an apostle, as it were, of a simple theme. We are called to commune with God, to live lives united to his will. This is holiness, this is grace. "Thy will be done." But where do we find this will? "The word is very close to you", de Caussade would say. God's will comes to us in the ordinary events of daily life. It's in front of our nose. It's in our ordinary responsibilities. It's in the ups and downs

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of every day. We do God's will by doing what we have to do and undergoing what we undergo, the sorrows and joys. God is at work everywhere: "everything that takes place within us, around us or through us contains and conceals the divine action", he wrote. He often wrote to nuns, whose lives in those days were indeed in permanent lockdown. And his message was, cherish the present moment: leave the past to God's mercy and the future to his providence; don't live in bitterness about the past or in fantasy about the future. Live in the now. That's where Christ comes to us and we meet him. Life is simple. There is something very beautiful, sacramental, just in the shape of a day, with its sunrise and sunset, its phases, its rise and fall. Perhaps our current stillness can give us more sense of this: every day is a host we can offer to God on the basis of our baptismal priesthood. Unsurprisingly, de Caussade draws a comparison with the Eucharist. "How many people understand that every cross, every action, every attraction according to the designs of God, gives God to us in a way that nothing can better explain than a comparison with [the holy Eucharist]?...Don't we know that by all things and people, and by every event the divine love desires to unite us to himself, that he has ordained, arranged or allows everything about us, everything that happens to us with a view to this union? ...He uses the worst things and the best things for this, the most distressing events and the pleasantest ones...If this is true, every moment of our lives may be a kind of communion with the divine love, and this communion of every moment may do as much as that which we receive in the Communion of the Body and Blood of the Son of God. This latter, certainly, is effective sacramentally which the former isn't, but on the other hand how much more frequently cannot it not be renewed?...O great feast! O perpetual festival?" (*Abandonment to Divine Providence*, Ch. 2, §VII). "All you who thirst", he says, "learn that you have not far to go to find the fountain of living waters; it flows very close to you in the present moment; therefore hasten to find it" (Ch 2, §IX). It's through the sacrament of ordinary life, the here and now, in the furnace of each day, that we really learn – heart-knowledge – of God, and can live at peace with him.

3) Lastly, very close again, part of the same thing and another dimension for "communing beyond Communion" is simply one another. If we're not alone, it's those we are locked-down with. We all know the challenging side of that; we're good at being part of the challenge ourselves. But there's an old monastic saying, "Your brother is your salvation". We can say, your brother is your Easter, your cross and your resurrection. And for "brother" you can substitute wife, husband, child,

parent, friend. "Whoever does not love his brother whom he can see cannot love God whom he cannot see" (1 Jn 4:20). My brother is my Easter.

There's a story here from the life of St Benedict. As a young man, he became a hermit up-country away from Rome. He lived in a cave with minimal human contact. It was Easter, and the local parish priest, some miles away, was sitting down to a good meal to mark the end of Lent. Then the Voice spoke: here are you sitting down to your Easter meal while my servant [Benedict] is going hungry." The priest was a good man. Up he got, put together a doggy bag and went off into the wilds to find our man. He had to climb cliffs, navigate valleys, cross ditches. Finally he found St Benedict. They sat down and talked about spiritual things. Then the priest said, "Let's eat. It's Easter." So cut off, so locked-down, had the young Benedict been that he didn't even know it was Easter. But he made a beautiful reply to the priest: "I have the grace of seeing you; so it must be Easter." (Cf. *Dialogues of Pope Gregory the Great*, II, 1). Well, it will be good when we can see each other again, won't it? But even now, those I do see are an Easter, and Easter, like the meeting of Jesus and Mary, is the beginning of our "season of ultimate communing".

So, let's cherish the things around us, cherish each day and its happenings, cherish one another.

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.

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 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.



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>

Prayer Themes for Wc. 17th , May

Easter Sunday 6: 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.

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Gospel Readings for the 6th week of Easter

Easter Sunday 6		Jn 14: 15-21
Monday	Caroline Chisholm (social reformer)	Matt 5: 1-12
Tuesday	St. Dunstan	Matt 24: 42-46
Wednesday	St. Bernadine of Siena	Jn 16: 12-15
Thursday	Feast of the Ascension	Lk 24: 44-53
Friday		Jn 16: 20-23
Saturday	William of Perth	Jn 15: 18-21

People you could 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/22997/Community-Bulletin-Edition-11/pdf/Newsletter-Tuesday-12-May-web.pdf?m=637248008809230000>

Key Contacts Dumfries + Galloway

NHS24 111 www.nhsinform.scot

Emergency 999

Doctor Out of Hours 111

Dumfries and Galloway Council 030 33 33 3000

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

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 'I AM' crossword

Across

5 Yah is spirit and His worshippers must **worship** Him in Spirit + Truth.

6 I am the **Resurrection** and the life. He who puts faith in Me will live, even if he dies.

8 I am the **bread** of life. He who comes to Me will not be hungry...

9 I have no greater joy than to hear my children walk in the **truth**.

10 The Word became **flesh** and He lived among us.

Down

1 If you hold to My teaching, you are really My **disciples**. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

2 **Yeshua** is the promised Messiah. (Yeshua is the Hebrew name for Jesus)

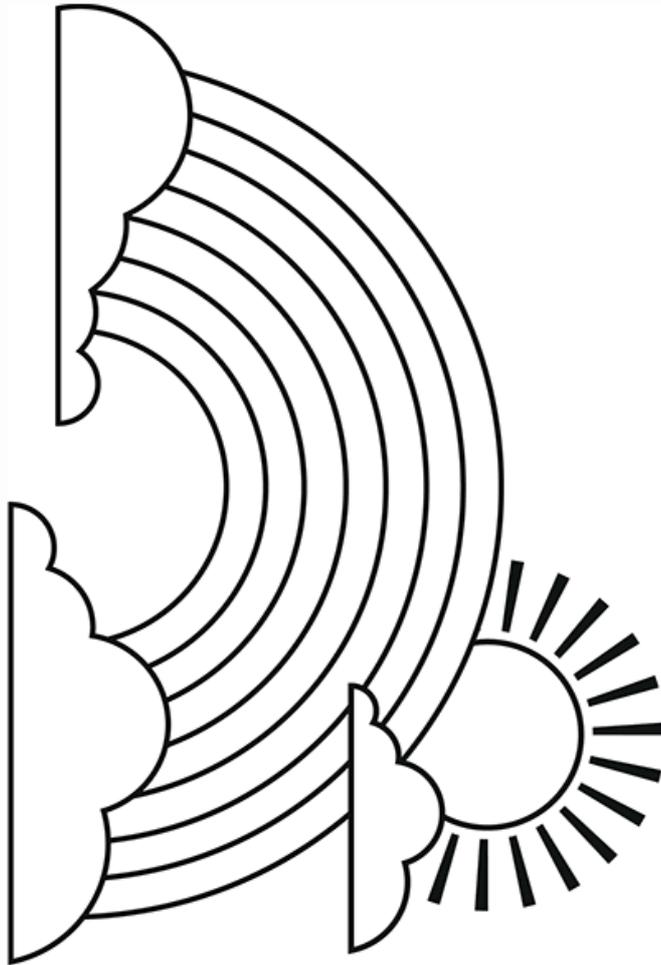
3 I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the **Father**, except through me.

4 God so loved the world that He gave His only **begotten** Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

5 Never take your **word** of truth from my mouth.

7 Your righteousness is everlasting and Your **Torah** is truth.

For more free Bible resources and Teacher Packs including coloring pages, worksheets, quizzes and more visit our website: www.biblepathwayadventures.com



Bible Pathway
Adventures
COLORING PAGE

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

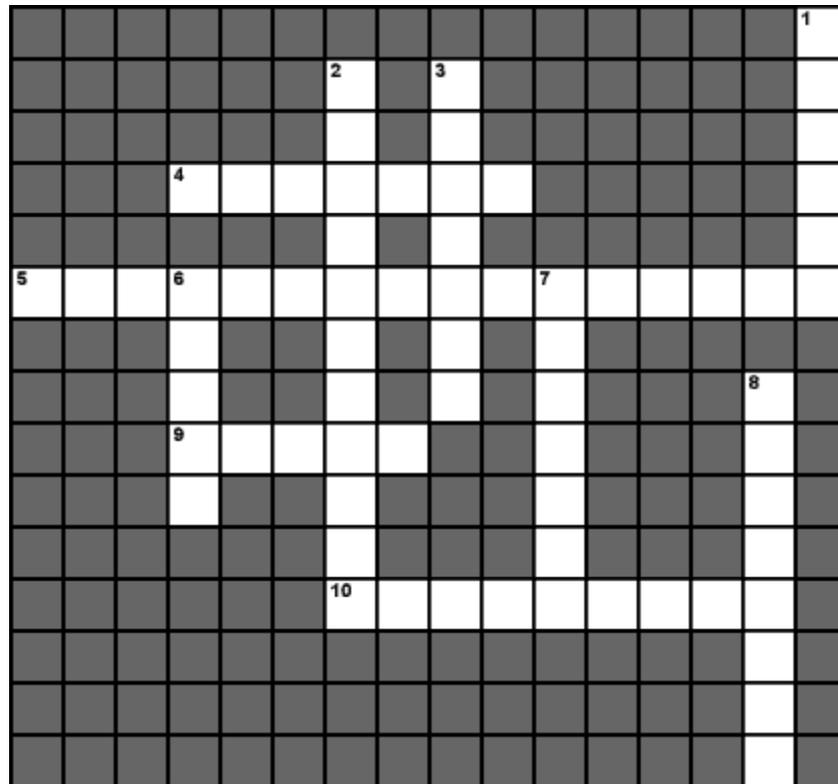
"I set my rainbow in the cloud and it will be a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth." (Genesis 9:13)

E	S	S	W	O	R	L	D	E	S
R	E	E	P	N	E	S	N	N	E
E	L	T	M	E	E	K	A	S	T
H	P	R	A	R	E	H	T	A	F
T	I	U	E	C	P	K	S	A	L
O	C	T	V	R	O	P	R	E	E
N	S	H	O	W	I	V	E	S	S
A	I	E	L	R	V	S	D	K	Y
E	D	S	I	V	O	L	N	A	M
N	A	T	R	E	D	N	U	R	T

- DISCIPLES
- LOVE
- FATHER
- ANOTHER
- ADVOCATE
- SPIRIT
- TRUTH
- WORLD
- ORPHANS
- UNDERSTAND
- SHOW
- MYSELF



Crossword based on 1 Peter 3 (NIV)



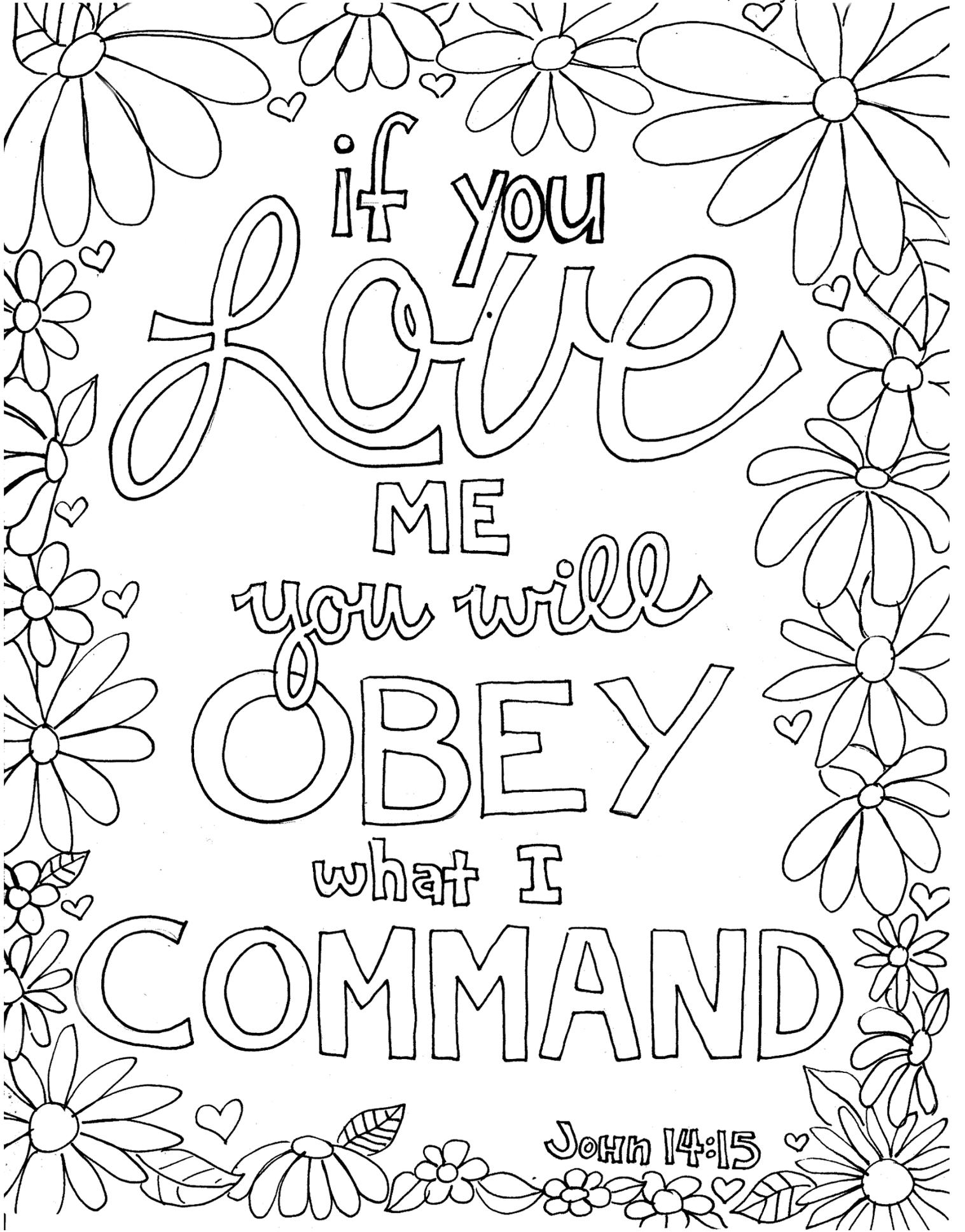
Across

- 4 Who did Sarah obey?
- 5 What should beauty not come from? (7,9)
- 9 How many people were saved by Noah's ark?
- 10 Who are the eyes of the Lord on?

Down

- 1 What is the gentle and quiet unfading beauty?
- 2 One of those items that beauty should not come from? (7,4)
- 3 What of theirs will they be ashamed of who peak maliciously against you?
- 6 Who are submissive to husbands?
- 7 With what is how husbands should treat their wives?
- 8 What should you repay insult and evil with?

Answers next week.



if you
love
ME

you will
OBEY

what I
COMMAND

JOHN 14:15