



St Columba's Bathgate and St Peter's Linlithgow



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**27th September 2020
Pentecost 17**

Dear friends, as we once again face the challenges of living with Covid 19 I do hope that this Sunday's readings, prayers and short reflection make a connection with your lives.

Readings

Ezekiel 18: 1 - 4, 25 - 32; Philippians 2: 1 - 15
Matthew 21: 23 - 32

Collect

O Lord, may your grace at all times go before us, and follow on behind:
and so continually direct us to good works; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Reflection

I am sure that at some point in our lives each one of us will have encouraged others to take a holiday or at least a day off, and what of urging our children to get on with their homework? And how frustrating is it when they don't seem to get round to taking up our suggestions which seem so sensible to us. We can nag, we can cajole but, in the end, it is down to them!

Perhaps this is what it is like for God who sees what would be such lasting good for the children he loves and yet has to watch us making wrong choices, wasting opportunities, taking no notice of his hints and teaching, his examples.

And we can sense that longing for our good and grief at making wrong choices throughout the bible. Ezekiel is one example of the way God keeps speaking to his people through the voices of the prophets, to urge them to look seriously at the consequences of wrong choices and the joyful hope of right ones. Time and time again he explains that he is not out to destroy them, or to condemn; there is no way God finds pleasure in anyone perishing as a result of leading a life of wrong choices. But it is impossible for God, who is the ultimate truth, goodness love and justice,

to have a deep life relationship with evil, deceit, hypocrisy and corruption.

Each one of us is only responsible for the choices we ourselves make, but how often do children feel responsible for the actions of their parents? God will never hold us to blame and any guilt really does not belong to us, but to them. It is God's will that we should be free of such unjust burdens.

The comforting truth is that God promises to teach us how to make good choices, and through Jesus is working in us, inspiring the will in us to do good and giving us the drive to carry it out. This is I think what the religious leaders in today's Gospel needed to see - that talking about doing something is not enough; a good choice is completed in the action. And it is the son who gets round to doing the work who is recommended rather than the one who talks the talk but does nothing. We will all know people who fit into both of these scenarios and I know which one I would trust! Amen.

Prayers

Loving and faithful God, we thank you that you walk with us throughout our lives, sharing our joys and our challenges and guiding us ever onward. Help us to make good choices, to look beyond our own needs to the needs of others in our families and communities. We pray for our world so torn by war, hatred and greed. Bless all who seek to bring about peace and reconciliation. We pray for world leaders during this global pandemic, for wisdom as they make crucial decisions in the coming days.

We pray for your Church living out the gospel message of love forgiveness, justice and hope. Pour your blessing upon all church leaders, especially Mark our Primus and John our Bishop. For the churches in the communities where we live and serve and for our church families of St Columba's and St Peter's. And in the coming days bless our curate Peter as he begins his priestly ministry. We pray for all who are suffering in body, mind or spirit



at this hugely challenging time and for those from our church families who have asked for our prayers: from St Columba's: Margaret Elder, Geoffrey Gerrard, Kath Stutt, Iain Swanney, Cllr Harry Cartmill, Rev Duncan and Marjorie Shaw, Doug and Pat Laurie, Young Harry, Paul Moffat, Anthea and Katie McAlpin and Elma Webster. And from St Peter's: Rita Manion (David's mother), Annie Gibbs (Olivia Moss's future mother in law), Barry Greig (Terry's twin brother), Anna Pink, Joe Lavery, Ronnie Adams, Chris Belton and Bob Philip (Jude and Andy's parents) Dot Pringle, Brenda Cook, Harry and Connie Payne, Father John, Ruthie Cadell, David Szkudlarek, and Jan Robson. And for all their families.

We pray for all who have died in recent days and for all who mourn. And we remember those connected with our church families whose anniversary of death falls this week. From St Columba's: Robert Mitchell, Liz Armstrong, Margaret Philp and Eric Clarke. And from St Peter's: Isabella Magaughran, William Tuplin, Norman Crowton, Duncan (Tony) Cameron, Mimi Cameron, Mary Field and Finlay Forsyth.

Blessing

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Notices



Dear Friends, another week and more challenges to rise to as we journey through this Covid 19 pandemic. Thankfully the autumn colours catch our eyes and, for me anyway, remind us of the wonder of God's creation always at work like a steady calming heartbeat. Tuesday this week was a day of contrasts; after the joy of worship at St Peter's in the morning the early afternoon brought the announcements from the First Minister of further restrictions to our lives and the lives of our communities. And then in the evening great joy at our curate Peter's ordination in our magnificent Cathedral in Edinburgh. I hope that this photograph gives you a sense of that joy! Sadly, numbers were restricted but I do know that many of you shared in the service on line.

To mark this very special occasion Penny Lyons and Tom Pringle created wonderful gifts from our two churches for Peter, beautifully crafted out of wood – a candle holder and a cross with stand and an amazing bendy fish, a symbol of Peter the fisherman to Peter our new priest! And June Bremner and Liz Beetham made



lovely, very appropriate cards. Again, I hope that this photograph does justice to their creativity.

While much of our lives have become more restricted in recent days, I am so thankful that meeting for public worship is still permitted and our church life can continue with our regular services in church with the Sunday morning service from St Peter's @ 9.30 being Zoomed live. Those who are joining us from home are asked to ensure that your speaker volume is turned up to maximum; and there is a separate attachment in the notices of a Eucharist prayer that you may like to say as you receive Communion spiritually.

IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE. You now will need a passcode to join the Zoom service (this is due to Zoom's security upgrade). The meeting code is unchanged at 118 321 305. The passcode you need is 670383. Judy Goldfinch will send round the embedded link with the weekly list of Zoom codes.

We are celebrating **Harvest Festival** on Sunday October 4 this year. Please do not bring any fresh produce for display to St Peter's or to St Columba's to minimise COVID-19 complications. Please bring any packaged goods on Sunday September 27 or to one of the midweek services in between. Cash donations will also be gratefully received, and all the proceeds will go to the local foodbanks.

Services for the coming week:

Rev Peter will be presiding at his first Eucharists this Sunday in both St Columba's and St Peter's.

Sunday morning St Peter's short said Eucharist @9.30am – Zoomed live

St Columba's short said Eucharist @ 11.15am

Tuesday morning St Peter's will be open from 10 – 12 noon Short said Eucharist 10.30 – 11am Private Prayer 11 – 12 noon

Wednesday morning St Columba's will be open from 10 – 12 noon Short said Eucharist 10.30 – 11am Private Prayer 11 – 11.30 Prayer Room 11.30 – 12 noon

A **reminder** of St Columba's opening arrangements

The church will be maintaining a 2m separation between people (unless they are buddies). You will be required to:

- Wear masks and take them home for disposal
- Hand Sanitise on arrival in the vestibule area
- Give name and contact phone number on entry to the church. (The sides person will record it on the computer)
- Follow the sides person's instruction as to where to sit.
- At the end of the service remain seated until instructed to leave via the meeting room.
- Sanitise hand on way out (sanitiser opposite toilet doors by fire alarm). The accessible toilet will be open but please follow the one-way system and follow the instructions for sanitising before and after use.

A **reminder** of St Peter's opening arrangements

The following simple rules should be followed which will give all who enter the church the confidence that everything is in place to ensure their safety and well-being. As we all know we are a small church and have space only for 10 to allow for the necessary 2-meter distancing. Tuesday morning and Sunday morning services are now well attended. If you would like to have a place at either of the services, please contact Jane

Ramsay who will ensure that the places are fairly distributed each week. Tel 843176 or email her jane.ramsay48@gmail.com. PLEASE LET HER KNOW BY THURSDAY OF EACH WEEK. ·

A sides person will ensure that all hands are sanitized at the front door before entering the building. Please wait until invited into the church. · Masks must be worn and taken home for disposal. · Entering and leaving the building will be by the red doors only. · You will be led back out of church by our sides person, this will be done from back to front of the church. Please wait to be invited to leave. · Hands should be sanitized when leaving church. ·

Our church has been deep cleaned and undergone a “fogging” process. We will continue to “fog” on a quarterly basis as recommended by the cleaning firm who will be professionally cleaning the church on a monthly basis for the foreseeable future. · Toilets and accessibility arrangements: Level access via the side door is available for those with mobility issues. A wheelchair accessible toilet is available if required and will be sanitised after use.

Working together as we have done in the past and will continue to do now as we slowly begin to re-enter a new way of coming to church, we will keep each other and those in our community safe and well until the day comes when we gather together once more in St Peter’s as one large and very happy church family.

NB If you have any symptoms (temperature, cough, loss of taste or smell) you should not attend church and you should book a test

And a **reminder** for St Peter’s, that in order to avoid unexpected contacts, for the foreseeable future Jane Ramsay will be keeping a record of requests to enter the church. Please check with her beforehand to ensure that our little church will be empty and virus free before going in. Jane’s number is 843176

Pastoral visits – sadly, the new guidelines mean that pastoral visits to people’s homes, including for home communion, are not possible at this time. Those whom I have been in the habit of visiting I will keep in contact with by phone and hopefully this restriction won’t be for too long. And please remember that I hold you all in my prayers.

Strange emails – I am aware that a number of people have been receiving some strange emails purporting to come from me. They certainly aren’t from me and I am sorry if they have caused any confusion. I only have 3 accounts – my personal Gmail and one for each church.

There is an opportunity for new volunteer Chaplains to engage with workplaces along the M8 corridor. Anyone interested please have a word with me.

Please do look after yourselves and keep well and safe

Rev Christine

Zoom Coffee and chat 28th September 11.15 ID 5111791282 password 3i1TYq - then fortnightly **thereafter**.

Parish Magazine (contact Peter Lewis) The deadline for articles for the church magazine is Friday 25th September for an early October publication.

Choir with a Mission! Vox Coelestis, conducted by the internationally-renowned Nigel Short, has launched a video to introduce themselves to future audiences as they re-plan their ‘Cathedral Series’ of performances around Scotland in support of MtSS. Click on the link to go to the MtSS website to see the video - and maybe donate! <http://www.mtss.scot/vox-coelestis-mtss-music-video/>

SEC Morning, Evening and Night Prayer Liturgies

Morning, Evening and Night Prayer daily liturgies are available at:

www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices

Rev Christine and Rev Peter will be saying Morning Prayer @ 9am and Evening Prayer @ 6pm each day in their own homes and invite you to join in from yours. On Thursday mornings we will be sharing a virtual service via Zoom. If you would like to join in, the link every week will be <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/756114372?pwd=ZXpMWndaY210empVY1daL09paGlwZz09>

Any queries please contact Rev Peter pw@woodifield.com

For the coming week beginning Sunday 27th September we enter into the week of Pentecost 17.

*If you have a paper version of the big blue Prayer Book, for

Morning Prayer we will be using the form: Week B on p. 32. Follow the psalm set for the day in Set 2. Follow the Benedictus antiphon set for the day.

Evening Prayer we will be using the form: Week B on p. 67

*If you want to do it online by far the easiest way to do it is to click

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/spirituality/prayer/daily-offices/> which is updated three times a day for Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline

*If you just want to do the readings and collect for each day they are as follows. (The online version of Morning Prayer uses the first two readings and Evening Prayer the third, the Gospel.)

Sunday:	Exodus 24: 1 – 18; Revelation 18: 1 – 8;	Matthew 9: 1 – 18
Monday:	Hosea 2: 14 – 23; Acts 20: 17 – 38;	Luke 5: 1 – 11
Tuesday:	Hosea 4: 1 – 10; Acts 21: 1 – 14;	Luke 5: 12 – 26
Wednesday:	Hosea 4: 11 – 19; Acts 21: 15 – 26;	Luke 5: 27 – 39
Thursday:	Hosea 5: 8 – 6: 6; Acts 21: 27 – 36;	Luke 6: 1 – 11
Friday:	Hosea 10: 1 – 15; Acts 21: 37 – 22: 16;	Luke 6: 12 – 26
Saturday:	Hosea 11: 1 – 9; Acts 22: 17 – 29;	Luke 6: 27 – 38

The Collect applies to both Morning and Evening Prayer each day.

O Lord, may your grace at all times go before us, and follow on behind: and so continually direct us to good works; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Each day we pray for:

- The world: people, governments and leaders of the countries and specific issues arising in the news. Issues relating to social justice, peace, suffering and creation. And of course at this time for the devastating global covid-19 crisis.
- Our wider church, the SEC, our diocese, individual churches.
- Our community – residents in our area. For those with no faith, we pray for their introduction to the Christian faith, and for those with faith, that their faith may develop further.
- Those known to us who are unwell or in need.
- Our own church communities.



Clergy contact numbers:

Rev Christine – 07964175914; 01334769303
Rev Peter Woodfield – 07747023108

Rector's Wardens contact numbers:

David Graham Service – 07901947345
Jane Ramsay - 07982252666