



St Columba's Bathgate and St Peter's Linlithgow



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4th October 2020
Harvest Thanksgiving

Dear friends, this Sunday we celebrate our Harvest Thanksgiving and like so much of life at the moment it won't be quite the same this year. But it is good to give thanks for God's bounty on so many levels and I do hope that this Sunday's readings, prayers and short reflection make a connection with your lives.

Readings

O.T.: Deuteronomy 8: 7 – 18;
N.T.: 2 Corinthians 9: 6 – 15;
Gospel: Luke 12: 16 – 30

Collect

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Reflection

Each year at our Harvest Thanksgiving service we have the chance to admire the fruits of our labours, as we plant and nurture and harvest. But we also have the chance to reflect upon the very Creator who give everything life. Our God is a great giver of life and for this we need to have thankful hearts even if at the moment life really does seem a struggle. This year gardens and allotments have been a lifesaver for so many people, places to spend time of which there has been an overabundance during spring and early summer. Time to be out in the sunshine growing watching vegetables, fruit, flowers all flourish, at home and in our church garden. And now they will have been harvested and enjoyed...but what of those who haven't had gardens to enjoy, those who go hungry and rely on our Foodbanks, who will be the recipients of our harvest gifts today.

As a community of faith, we give thanks for all that God has given us, most especially for giving us Jesus for 'God so loved the world



that he gave his only begotten Son to the end that all who believe in him will not perish but have eternal life. God gave his Son that we might have life'.

The scriptures remind us always to be thankful, and this is hugely important at times like these, we need to be reminded that God is in charge.

In our Gospel we have that lovely passage from Luke on Jesus' teaching about anxiety and worry. 'Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear.

This passage relates to the previous verses on the place of money in our lives. And earlier in the gospel we are told that no one can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and money. If our loyalties are divided and greed gets the upper hand it goes without saying that it is going to be harder to give thanks, for there may be the tendency to say 'it is by my own work that I have gained this wealth and I can choose to enjoy it in any way I wish. And while this is quite true, that very ability to work, to create wealth, to be independent, comes from an inner capacity to work hard, and that capacity is given to us by the one who created us and knows us.

And of course the flip side of creating wealth is that for many, the opportunity doesn't exist. And sadly this is becoming a growing reality with the economic ramifications of Covid – many people have lost their jobs, and many more face redundancy in the coming months. There is a growing demand for Food Banks, and indeed our gifts today both in tins and packets and in money, will be going to support Falkirk/West Lothian Food Banks. Tragically, for many people anxiety and fear are very real. Yet in the midst of all of this we are told – do not be anxious. If God has given life, which is so much more than food, will he not give the lesser gift of

sustenance? Anxiety over daily bread can almost paralyse and has a huge impact on people's mental and spiritual health. But it is what we do. We cannot rid ourselves of anxiety, and if ever there was a time to realise this it is now. A little anxiety is no bad thing for it surely challenges us to be aware that we are not in control. But, as Peter promised in his ordination service not

two weeks ago, with the help of God, with God's grace, if we call upon Jesus in our hour of need and rely on the power of prayer, help will be at hand. Jesus promised that we would not be left alone to face our struggles alone. He promised to send the Holy Spirit, the spirit that lives in each one of us.

Look at the birds of the air Jesus said; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. As we consider the earthly challenges of this life may we, in this Harvest Thanksgiving, give thanks for the ultimate act of love on the cross that gives us eternal life. And may that same thankfulness lead us ever onward with acts of love and service that bring about healing and wholeness in our families and communities. And finally, may God bless each one of us as we continue this journey together. Amen.

Prayers.

Let us offer our prayers to God for the life of the world and for all God's people in their daily life and work.

God, the beginning and end of all things, in your providence and care you watch unceasingly over all creation; we offer our prayers that in us and in all your people your will may be done, according to your wise and loving purpose in Christ our Lord.

We pray for all through whom we receive sustenance and life; for farmers and those who work the land, for packers distributors and seafarers; as you have ordered our life that we depend upon each other, enable us by your grace to seek the well-being of others as well as our own.

We pray for all engaged in research to safeguard crops against disease, to produce abundant life among those who hunger and whose lives are at risk. Prosper the work of their hands and the searching of their minds that their labour may be for the good of all.

We pray for your Church worldwide and for our Scottish Episcopal Church, for Mark our Primus, John our Bishop and the churches and communities of our diocese.

We pray for governments and aid agencies and those areas of the world where there is disaster, drought and starvation. Touch the hearts of all who live in comfortable plenty and make us wise stewards of your gifts. And strengthen, we pray, our leaders in these unprecedented and challenging times.

We pray for all who are ill, remembering those in hospital, care and nursing homes and all who are challenged by this current pandemic.

We hold up to you 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.

from St Peter's: 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, including David Olwa's brother in law Alfonse Kivungi Mulwa who died in Kenya last week, 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: John Kerr, Helen Simpson, James Brown and Emma Bell. And from St Peter's: Father Alfred Apeto, John de la Rue, Madeline Harvey, Allan Melville and Eileen Robertson.

Blessing

May God our creator, who clothes the lilies and feeds the birds of the air, bestow on you his care and increase the harvest of your righteousness and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you and all whom you love this day and for ever more. Amen.

Notices

Dear Friends, I do hope that you and your families are keeping well and keeping your spirits up. This is such a challenging time when it seems impossible to plan anything with any degree of certainty beyond the day or so. Hopefully the coronavirus will be brought under control again and we will be able to enjoy another taste of more normal life before too long.

With Rev Peter ordained priest I am going to take the opportunity for a couple of weeks off from after worship on Sunday 4th until Monday 19th October. Some of this time, hopefully, will be spent up on the Black Isle at The Coachhouse, a retreat house, with Claire Starr. I will take your good wishes to her and bring back news of her settling into her new life up there. While I am away Rev Peter (07747023108) and my two wardens - David Graham Service (07901947345) for St Columba's and Jane Ramsay (1506843176) for St Peter's are 'on duty' should the need arise.

And services will be led by Rev Peter. A reminder of the arrangements:

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** this coming Sunday (4th October). Because of the covid restrictions please don't bring any foods on the day but cash donations will also be gratefully received, and all the proceeds will go to the local foodbanks. **Please mark the envelope Harvest Donation** and leave in the collection plates in either church.

Services for the coming week:

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, except in extreme circumstances. 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.

Also, at this time we have been advised by the Bishop's Advisory Group that giving lifts to people, out-with your household, to church is not possible either at this time. This is slightly different to the government guidelines which say 'not advised'.

Please do look after yourselves and keep well and safe

Rev Christine

Zoom Coffee and chat once a fortnight on a Monday morning. Next one will be held on 12th October : 11.15 ID 5111791282 password 3i1TYq

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/>

St Columba's – **Donations for the flowers** are now invited from those who wish give towards our flower arrangements week by week. Thank you.

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=ZXpMWndaY210empVY1daL09paGluZz09>
Any queries please contact Rev Peter (pw@woodifield.com)

For the coming week beginning Sunday 4th October we enter into the week of Pentecost 18.

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

Morning Prayer we will be using the form: Week C on p. 35. 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 C on p. 70

*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:	Joshua 3: 7 – 17;	1 Corinthians 2: 1 – 16;	Matthew 10: 1 – 22
Monday:	Hosea 14: 1 – 9;	Acts 22: 30 – 23: 11;	Luke 6: 39 – 49
Tuesday:	Micah 1: 1 – 9;	Acts 23: 12 – 24;	Luke 7: 1 – 17
Wednesday:	Micah 2: 1 – 13;	Acts 23: 23 – 35;	Luke 7: 18 – 35
Thursday:	Micah 3: 1 – 8;	Acts 24: 1 – 23;	Luke 7: 36 – 50
Friday:	Micah 3: 9 – 4: 5;	Acts 24: 24 – 25: 12;	Luke 8: 1 – 15
Saturday:	Micah 5: 1 – 4, 10 – 15;	Acts 25: 13 – 27;	Luke 8: 16 – 25

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

O Lord, we beseech you: give your people grace to turn away from evil; and to follow you, the only God, in pureness of heart and mind; 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 Woodifield – 07747023108

Rector's Wardens contact numbers:

David Graham Service – 07901947345
Jane Ramsay - 07982252666