

June 2020

The Parishioner

The magazine of the Portland Parish Church of Scotland: Troon



**Shine, Jesus, shine,
fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze, Spirit, blaze,
set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your word, Lord,
and let there be light!**

CH4 Hymn 448

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

With God's support we are developing Portland as a dynamic, Spirit-led Church impacting on our town and beyond through encouragement, nurture and service

Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes.

Five hundred twenty five thousand moments so dear.

Five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes.

How do you measure,

Measure a year?

In daylights?

In sunsets?

In midnights?

In cups of coffee?

In inches, in miles, in laughter, in strife?

In five hundred twenty five thousand six hundred minutes.

How do you measure a year in a life?



-Lyrics from "Season of Love," *Rent*, 1996

How do you measure this time that we have had apart from one another? Is it in number of worksheets done for school? Kitchen upgrades finally completed? Miles ridden on a bike? Journeys postponed? Lives lost? Milestones missed? Laughs made? Bread baked?

2020 hasn't started off all that great. In January we watched as huge parts of Australia were ravaged by fire. February came and the terms Corona Virus and COVID were introduced to our vocabulary. March approached and panic set in as pandemic became a part of our daily news cycle. April disappeared, somehow slowly, but at the same time all too fast. May has come and gone and we start into June. 2020 is almost halfway over!

Some people have called this time Mebruary (What month is it again, March? April? May?) Not to mention what day is it again? How are we measuring time these days while we all get quarantigue (quarantine-fatigue)?

The *New York Times* took measure of things in its Sunday Edition for 24 May 2020. The USA approached and surpassed 100,000 lives lost to the COVID-19 and the *New York Times* filled the entire front page of Sunday's paper with death notices of victims from across the country. The front-page listed names, ages, and one personal detail of 1000 people. These were taken from obituaries around the United States and it is only 1% of US figures, less than 1/3 of 1% of our best global estimates. Imagine if they had printed all 100,000.

How does the church measure time?

Since the beginning of the year, the church has been in a liturgical season of some sort. It started with the season of Christmas, moved into the season of Epiphany, then through the season of Lent. While we may have missed the season of being together for Easter, the church still celebrated that God's love can never be dead and buried. The month of May was the season of Easter and we now move into the season after Pentecost or sometimes called the season of Ordinary Time.

Ordinary Time is the longest season of the church calendar, 33-34 weeks depending on how the dates fall. The lectionary, the texts chosen to be read, tend to systematically work through various parts of the bible. This year the narratives include the Genesis story, Matthew's account of Jesus's life, and the letter to the Romans.

Continued on next page

During these extraordinary times as a society, we enter ordinary time as a church. How ironic?

We don't know what the future of gathered worship looks like right now. We do know that in time, we will come together, but not right now. During this ordinary time, may we know what we already know:

Churches are essential. . .

When the faithful are scattered in every age, due to persecution, disaster, or plague, we persist in worship and service, in sacrament and sacrifice – feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, being good news for the poor, working to free the captives and oppressed.

Our highest and holy calling is to BE the church, not go to church.

Let us **be** the church together.

Stay safe.

God's peace and Love,

Rev. Mary Elizabeth Prentice-Hyers

Reflection from Spill the Beans—31st May, 2020

When my aspirations are high
but my spirit is low,
when other's expect much of me
but my spirit just cannot summon a
response
when the hope of faith speaks of light
but my spirit is in the darkest of places
come, Spirit of the Living God
like a dove to me,
like a fire to me
like a wind to me

Dove of peace
settle upon my weary shoulders
that carry the weight of the world
wing to me the peace of Christ
that passes all understanding

Wind of the Divine
gently breeze
or wildly gust
according to the messiness of my life's
cobwebs
the threads that entangle my mixed
emotions
and need to be blown away
carried away by your eternal love

Tongues of sacred fire
spark in me new flames
of passion for justice
and hope
and faith
ignite that which can warm the human
spirit
in me
in all I meet
friend and foe
that kindness might warm our spirits
and light lead our way

When my aspirations are high
but my spirit low
when other's expect much of me
but my spirit just cannot summon a
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When the hope of faith speaks of light
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CONGRATULATIONS.....

To Anne Mackenzie on the birth of another grandchild—her daughter gave birth to a baby boy, Adam.



To Matthew George Ling, son of Shona and Alasdair Ling, (daughter of Robert and Charlotte Faulks) who celebrated his first birthday on the 6th of May.

The day was celebrated with a virtual party with grandparents, great aunts and uncles and uncle Fraser. There was music with actions, present opening, singing and birthday cake made by his mum.

A great time was had by all given the current climate.



..... AND MORE CONGRATULATIONS

To Mrs. Anna Leith and Mrs. Betty Hunter who both celebrated their 100th birthday during May.



Anna Leith



Betty Hunter



Host a Virtual Grey Cakes Coffee Morning

As we all continue to live with the impact of COVID-19 and have to maintain social distance, is there someone you wish you could chat with over a cup of coffee and piece of cake? Holding a Virtual Grey Cakes Coffee Morning is a great way to connect with your friends and loved ones whilst helping CrossReach to continue to support those who are coping with mental health and wellbeing issues, made all the more difficult by COVID-19. You can get as creative as you like; share your recipes and compare versions of the same cake. More information: www.crossreach.org.uk/VirtualGreyCakes

For the 75th VE day celebrations

When Dad came home ...

Mum was all excited as demob day drew near. She would go on about the things they used to do together and how Dad was great fun to be with and I would really like him. I wondered if he would be like the man next door who was a wee fat man and came home drunk of an evening. No my Dad would not be like that – he was a soldier! On the day I passed him on the road to school. I didn't know him and he did not recognise me.



Robert Lee REME

The difficult part on the first evening of his return was the sleeping arrangements and I found myself in the single bed in my own room. This man with the muscles, deep voice and white teeth obviously intended to stay overnight. It appeared to be the plan that I had to sleep by myself not that anyone had consulted me on where I wanted to sleep.

However the next day Dad redeemed himself by declaring a school holiday. Off we sailed in the new Waverley up Loch Long to Arrochar and then to a cottage on the west shores of the Loch. Dad hired a boat for the week and we fished, made fires on the shores, boiled mussels, dug potatoes out of the field and fried them up with the fish. We sang campfire songs, Dad played the bagpipes, locals came round to welcome him home. All in all, I had the holiday of my life. I'll never forget the week that Dad came home.

And 75 years on he will never forget that others were not so lucky.

My pal's Dad did not come home. He had been a prisoner of war. On VE Day, the flags were up at her house but then the telegram arrived and her mother took the flags down. A year or so after that day they received a photograph of a white grave stone. It was taken somewhere in Poland.

Written by Tom Lee (Jennifer Davis and Joanne Scoular's Father)



You know that you have hit a brick wall during lockdown when you consider doing a fitness challenge to raise money for charity. For anybody that knows me, my exercise is being at work, completing tough-mudder assault courses with children, getting involved in gym lessons and undertaking other outdoor learning experiences. I am a teacher just to clarify. Like many I will partake in walks down the beach. That's my lot!

Obviously during lockdown I have had to find other avenues to keep active. I guessed that sitting at a computer or undertaking professional reading for work didn't really count as exercise; nor does partaking in the nations new favourite national past-time: painting fences. I did try my hand at some exercise classes on an app on my phone. I discovered some new muscles I had forgotten existed. The interest in this has certainly tailed off as lockdown became the norm. So, what better time to make the arguably foolish decision to climb a mountain! Fear not, lockdown rules have not been broken.

As some of you may know, I am a speaker for Tearfund, visiting other churches in the west to share about the work of Tearfund an International Relief Charity. All my speaking engagements have been cancelled for the foreseeable future along with the Re:fuel festival I normally volunteer at during the summer. I have been feeling a bit useless, helpless. So, I signed up to complete 'The Climb'. The aim is to climb Kilimanjaro by climbing the equivalent number of stairs. Living in a bottom floor flat has not stopped me. I have dragged out my stepper machine that has been collecting dust and have been powering on. Each day I have to 'climb' a minimum of 1140 steps on my stepper to reach the top within 28 days. In time, it's about 35 minutes going full pelt, on my now squeaky stepper. I would like to confirm I do not think I have sweated this much in this country! I wanted to be kind to myself since I am the opposite of a fitness fanatic and complete 'The Climb' in 28 days. However, I am currently on course to complete the challenge in 16 days.

| Date | Steps |
|----------------|-------|
| 8/5 | 1141 |
| 17/5 | 1760 |
| 18/5 | 2100 |
| 19/5 | 2150 |
| 20/5 | 2200 |
| 21/5 | 2100 |
| 22/5 | 2101 |
| 23/5 | 2102 |
| 24/5 | 2506 |
| 25/5 | |
| 26/5 | |
| 27/5 | |
| 28/5 | |
| 29/5 | |
| Total = 31,922 | |

So, why put myself through this? I can tell you it is not for the love of fitness but for the love of our neighbours. While this time is challenging for a variety of different reasons, for all of us, we are on the whole more fortunate than those living in extreme poverty in other countries. We have access to water, healthcare and information about the best way to prevent infection. This is not the case for everyone around the world. For the Democratic Republic of Congo, they are still fighting Ebola and now have the additional challenge of Coronavirus. Tearfund is supporting work in some of the poorest countries to fight coronavirus-to stop this devastating virus taking hold in places that have limited resources. This is why, when I would rather sit and have a chilled cuppa in the morning I am jumping on my stepper-stepping up and doing my bit to help those who are living in dire situations facing a new, unwanted challenge. If you are in a position to support the work of Tearfund I kindly you ask to donate to my fundraising page here: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lesleystheclimb?fbclid=IwAR3-o_ARQkoOdLmQvh1ILZ8cOeLFFcCoV7Ao3-rvtVhHONTjLpxjryVNW_U

A saying I have heard often is that 'We are all in the same boat', I don't believe that is true. We are all in the same storm, but our 'boats' look very different—circumstances for each of us here in the UK are different from each other without considering those living elsewhere. We will weather the storm, but the aftermath will be different for us all. Thanks for your support!



Although I am sure you are all singing along with the hymns on the on-line Sunday Service, we are all missing singing along with the church organ and piano .
Obviously replace 'he' with 'she'....

I wonder how the organist
Can do so many things;
He's getting ready long before
The choir stands up and sings;
He's pressing buttons, pushing stops,
He's pulling here and there,
And testing all the working parts
While listening to the prayer.

He runs a mighty big machine,
It's full of funny things;
A mass of boxes, pipes and tubes
And sticks and slats and strings;
There's little whistles for a cent
In rows and rows and rows;
I'll bet there's twenty miles of tubes
As large as garden hose.

There's scores as large as stovepipes and
There's lots so big and wide
That several little boys I know
Could play around inside.
From little bits of piccolos
That hardly make a toot
There's every size up to the great
Big elevator chute.

The organist knows every one
And how they ought to go;
He makes them rumble like a storm,
Or plays them sweet and low;
At times you think them very near;
At times they're soaring high,
Like angel voices, singing far
Off, somewhere in the sky.



For he can take this structure, that's
As big as any house,
And make it squeak as softly as
A tiny little mouse;
And then he'll jerk out something with
A movement of the hand,
And make you think you're listening to
A military band.

He plays it with his fingers and
He plays it with his toes,
And if he really wanted to
He'd play it with his nose;
He's sliding up and down the bench,
He's working with his knees;
He's dancing round with both his feet
As lively as you please.

I always like to take a seat
Where I can see him go;
He's better than a sermon, and
He does me good, I know;
I like the life and movement and
I like to hear him play;
He is the most exciting thing
In town on Sabbath day.

George W. Stevens

Submitted by Jane Potts

**DEADLINE FOR THE JULY ISSUE OF THE PARISHIONER—
SUNDAY, 21ST JUNE
FOR POSTING ON WEBSITE ON SUNDAY, 28TH JUNE
(assuming the church is still closed)**

As I am sure you will have already discovered in these times it is important to share and stay in touch so please submit something for the Parishioner—about your experiences, the kindnesses you have received, a poem, an article, a prayer—I for one will be very grateful! Margaret

Do You Know Your Hymns?

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| Dentist's Hymn | . . . | Crown Him with Many Crowns. |
| Weatherman's Hymn | . . . | There Shall Be Showers of Blessings. |
| Contractor's Hymn | . . . | The Church's One Foundation. |
| Tailor's Hymn | . . . | Holy, Holy, Holy. |
| Golfer's Hymn | . . . | There's a Green Hill Far Away. |
| Politician's Hymn | . . . | Standing on the Promises! |
| Optometrist's Hymn | . . . | Open My Eyes That I Might See. |
| IRS Agent's Hymn | . . . | I Surrender All. |
| Gossip's Hymn | . . . | Pass It On. |
| Electrician's Hymn | . . . | Send The Light.. |
| Shopper's Hymn | . . . | Sweet Bye and Bye. |
| Realtor's Hymn | . . . | I've Got a Mansion, Just Over the Hilltop. |
| Massage Therapist's Hymn | . . . | He Touched Me. |

AND for those who speed on the highway - a few hymns:

| | | |
|---------|-------|---------------------------|
| 55 mph | . . . | God Will Take Care of You |
| 75 mph | . . . | Nearer My God To Thee |
| 85 mph | . . . | This World Is Not My Home |
| 95 mph | . . . | Lord, I'm Coming Home |
| 100 mph | . . . | Precious Memories |

Give me a sense of humor, Lord, Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some humor out of life, And pass it on to other folks.

Submitted by Sandra McCallum

Gracious God,
You come into the locked rooms of our lives
and the dark cupboards of our hearts.
You come breathing peace and possibility.
Shine a light upon lives.
Many are the gifts of our lives
that remain unseen and unacknowledged.
May your spirit uncover the gifts
we ourselves have yet to find.
Give us the confidence to love boldly
and the humility to work compassionately.
Please give us the wisdom to question our limitations
and knowledge to set aside our egos
for the sake of your kingdom.
May we dedicate
all the gifts of our lives to you, O God.
In Christ's name, we pray.



Amen

Taken from Spill the Beans publication

Update from Malawi via Bill Weir

06:38, 24/05/2020] Asayiwe Mwenitete: Morning Bill,

It is pleasing to here from you, thank you for all the sharing. The issue of Covid-19 has really become a challenge worldwide, it has left no part of the world hence Scotland and Malawi are not spared but they are part of infected parts of the world. It is our prayer for God's intervention and save his people from this deadly disease. But we still need to apply all necessary measures to control this deadly disease such social distance and frequent washing hands.

I know that due to the lockdown there, it is has really become very difficult to do some of the issues which need group discussion at Church level but am glad that you can share and discuss some issues through internet globalization is now at its highest where the world has become so small and we praise God for that.

Let me say this to you Bill that the machine and the money which you sent to limphasa session and it shared to re join art were time sent and God is indeed a God of all times. Indeed the machine and the little funds given to this project has assisted not only the the rejoin art but the entire community as have seen in the pics. If we can source enough funds am sure many people will be given facemasks and many hand washing stations will be allocated to a good number of the community. On the same note let me thank you for your initiative to share to many what we are doing here in limphasa and that you sacrifice and commitment to source some funds for the project. May God bless you and all those whom are working with you tooth and nail to gather funds which will assist the lives of many here in Malawi- limphasa. You will keep informing me on the progress.

Glad to hear that plans are still there to visit us next year we will be praying for this visit.

We had a our two days2020 presbytery annual meeting at Phiri congregation from 22-23/05/20. The days and delegates were reduced due to Covid-19 pandemic. We still had fruitful discussions,where one of the issues was on our partnership and the failed visit and that people accepted the situation and hoping that one day it will be fulfilled.

At this meeting Rev Alex Mwafulirwa handed over the mantle of the moderator to Rev Knowledge Masako.

[06:39, 24/05/2020] Asayiwe Mwenitete: Some pictures during the handover of moderatorship

[06:42, 24/05/2020] Asayiwe Mwenitete: The out going moderator and the incoming moderator forgot the issue of covid-19 that they even hugged during the handover ceremony. God bless you once again. Asayiwe



REJOIN Limphasa, Nkhata-bay, Malawi
there is a way

Where there is a will

SUBJECT: OUR APPROACH TO COVID-19; NEED FOR SUPPORT AMOUNTING TO \$3000

The cases of Covid-19 are rising in Malawi. The situation is scaring many people in our communities mainly because our health system do not have capacity to handle the people affected with Covid-19. **WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

- It is caused by corona virus and spreads through air.
- It enters the human body mainly through nose and mouth
- It can be controlled by keeping social distance
- It can be controlled by wearing face masks
- It can be controlled by washing hands with soap properly as many times as possible or through the use of hand sanitizer.

WHAT WE INTEND TO ACHIEVE

- Making enough face masks to be donated at the market area, community clinic, community hospitals and other areas
- Each household should have a hand wash facilities.
- Formulating By-laws with the Chiefs that will restrict village gatherings and unnecessary movements.
- Meeting leaders of various Churches to plead with them to observe social distance and set up the hand wash facilities
- Donating hand wash buckets, soap or hand sanitizers in areas where hand wash facility can't be constructed

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE VILLAGERS

- Scarcity of face masks
- Lack of hand wash facilities, it is expensive to buy them from the shops in the city
- Limited education on Covid -19. Much information is on internet yet many locals can't afford to have an access to it. Villagers lack interest to listen to the radios as they are polluted with political messages. Voting for the president will take place in less than 3 months.

WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY DONE (see the video clips and pictures sent)

- We have made 200 masks. These masks have been made by ReJoin Youths using a tailoring machine which was donated to us by Troon Church of Scotland. The masks will be donated to the local community hospitals and clinics, market places, churches and other areas
- We have designed hand wash facility outside ReJoin (Youths Art Community Project) office. The similar facility is required to be built in each and every household. The Chiefs and Church leaders have liked our ideas and encouraged us to proceed with the project.
- We have identify a supermarket where we can buy soap, sanitizer or plastic hand wash materials.
- We have organised a lot of information in the form of pictures and explanations on how to prevent contacting corona virus. We have also translated the information in local language to be well understood by those who do not understand English in the villages.

AREAS REQUIRING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

FACE MASKS

We need to make a minimum of 2000 face masks.
The total estimate is \$600

LOCALLY BUILT HAND WASH FACILITIES

We need to reach out to a minimum of 300 households. The funds will be used to buy empty plastic bottles (2 litres or 5 litres) and strings. It will also be used to transport the local bottles from the suppliers to the village including specific households.
Estimated at \$1400

PLASTIC HANDWASH FACILITIES/ SOAP/ HAND SANITIZER

- Plastic buckets with taps = \$500
- Tablet soap = \$300
- HAND SANITIZERS = \$200

CONCLUSION

According to the Minister of Health in Malawi, COVID-19 can kill up to 250 000 people in Malawi if prevention measures are not followed. REHOPE (REJOIN and HOPE NURSE-RY) believes something should be done to contain the spread of COVID. We all need to be united and fight the pandemic.

Please give us a hand to fight COVID.

I personally believe that there is a way to rebuild the economy of any country but there is no way we can bring back the people dying of COVID-19. We highly need your support to stand up and stop the spread of COVID 19.

NB Any donations should be gift-aided to Portland Church and then funds can be transferred to Malawi—Bill Weir

The Alternative Gift Schemes run by Ayr Presbytery last Christmas have raised a grand total of £6,485 with Portland members generously contributing £675 towards this success.

Prior to Easter each of the twelve congregations that are partnered with local congregations received 200,000 MKW (approx. £250) for seeds and fertiliser with these funds being distributed at specially convened meetings of the presbyteries of Bandawe and Limphasa.

It had been our intention to present the gifted solar lamps during the 2020 visitation to Malawi but due to the Covid - 19 restrictions this visit has had to be postponed for a year. Instead, arrangements have now been made by Jane Potts, who organised the gift schemes for presbytery, for each of the twelve partnered congregations in Malawi to receive four dozen solar lamps, making a total distribution of 576 gifts of light.

In these dark times throughout the world it is a real joy to be able to brighten the lives of so many families in this manner as well as helping to facilitate the education of young people during the long nights of darkness.

'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life'. John 8; v 12.



Visit the Troon Portland web page for our Weekly Sunday Service—Choir anthem, prayer, bible reading, sermon and hymn singing—JOIN US.

Locum Minister: Rev. M. E. Prentice-Hyers

Interim Moderator: Bill Duncan

Session Clerk: John Reid

Treasurer: Catriona McKellar

Church Officer: Ruairidh McKellar

Church Office:

Organist/Music Convener: Dorothy Howden

Hall's Convener: Catriona McKellar

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