

Encouraging YOU to know JESUS

Trust in God. He has a plan.

Please note that our Interim Moderator and Locum, Rev. Rona Young, will be visiting those with pastoral needs by telephone during the Covid-19 pandemic. If in need of pastoral care, please contact Rona by telephone on (01292) 471982.

The Minister's Message

Reflection "Stress and Trust"

Bible reading Psalm 27: 1 – 3; 7 – 14 GNB

An Exuberant Declaration of Faith

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The LORD protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid.

2 When evil people attack me and try to kill me, they stumble and fall.

3 Even if a whole army surrounds me, I will not be afraid; even if enemies attack me, I will still trust God.

7 Hear me, LORD, when I call to you! Be merciful and answer me!

8 When you said, "Come worship me," I answered "I will come, LORD."

9 Don't hide yourself from me! Don't be angry with me; don't turn your servant away. You have been my help; don't leave me, don't abandon me, O God, my saviour.

10 My father and mother may abandon me, but the LORD will take care of me.

11 Teach me, LORD, what you want me to do, and lead me along a safe path, because I have many enemies.

12 Don't abandon me to my enemies, who attack me with lies and threats.

13 I know that I will live to see the LORD's goodness in this present life.

14 Trust in the LORD. Have faith, do not despair. Trust in the LORD.

When the new restrictions were announced on Wednesday, I had not expected Ayrshire and Arran to be included and, like all of you, I am really fed up at times with this pandemic. As I said in the second prayer last Sunday, "*Lord, we long for life as it used to be.*"

I know many people are really quite stressed - by all the present restrictions or confused by what they mean. We can also feel stressed about many different things in life and the symptoms of stress can vary, but can include: the feeling of great inner pressure, fatigue and sleepless nights, not eating or eating too much etc..

The media, newspapers and magazines are full of ideas to help us – lists of do's and don'ts and different ways of relaxation - which can help to a greater or lesser extent.

The word "**stress**" is not mentioned in the Bible and only in one of our well-known hymns, "*Dear Lord and Father of mankind.*" The fifth verse reads:

*Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace.”*

The 2nd Book of Samuel is about David’s reign as king, first of the kingdom of Judah in the south and then over the whole kingdom, including Israel in the north. David has a deep faith and yet at times he is ruthless and commits terrible sins. However, he confesses them to God and accepts the consequences.

To quote from Alec Gilmore’s commentary on 2nd Samuel chapter 22: He says “*First, trust in God does not mean we will never feel stress, but the presence of stress does not mean that we have lost our faith.*

Stress comes to everyone in many forms – from simple hurt and disappointment through to serious anxiety, bereavement and uncertainty about faith in God and our fellow human beings.”

Secondly, God is present with us in stressful situations. Alec Gilmore goes on, “*David’s God is not confined to sunny days and happy experiences and he is able to be in touch with God whatever was happening to him. Thirdly, faith and stress are not two separate entities. Often it is through stress that God’s voice is heard.”*

Perhaps, too often, we feel it is only when we are happy, when things are going well, we can be in touch with God. But for many people, especially those who are not involved in any church, it is only when things go wrong that they remember God, and as I have said before, part of the wonder of God is that he is always there, whenever someone turns to him.

But, if we really know God, if we are growing in our faith, then it is so much easier to turn to him when things go wrong.

Psalm 27 is a psalm written by David. He praises God and says, whatever happens, he will trust God. He says in verse 3 and I am quoting from the Good News Bible,

*“Even if a whole army surrounds me,
I will not be afraid;
even if enemies attack me,
I will still trust in God.”*

A question for you – “**How much do you trust God?**”

In verse 5 David says that, in times of trouble, God will shelter him, he will keep him safe in his Temple, make him secure on a high rock, but, as we know, everything does not go smoothly all the time for David. He has many faults and failings.

David killed Goliath and won many battles, but he had Uriah killed so that he could marry his wife Bathsheba. Because of this sin, he asks God not to hide from him.

I remember being told years ago that, if we do not at times struggle with our faith, times when we wonder of God is really there, then we have a shallow, superficial faith. Because we have no concrete proof of our faith, there are bound to be times when we ask questions, or when we doubt the reality of God.

God is still in control even when we feel that he is far away. Do we really believe this? Do we really trust God? David says to God at verse 9,

*“Do not hide your face from me,
don’t turn your servant away.
You have always been my help,
don’t leave me or abandon me,
O God, my Saviour.*

David knows that he has sinned and yet he believes that God will still be faithful to him. He says at verse 10,

*“My father and mother may abandon me,
but the Lord will take care of me.”*

The psalm ends,

“Trust in the Lord. Have faith, do not despair.

Trust in the Lord.”

However, trusting in God is not always easy especially just now with the numbers of people with Covid-19 rising. As I said, here in Ayrshire and Arran along with the other four areas in the central belt, we have to face stricter regulations than the rest of Scotland and so there are bound to be people feeling very anxious. It is therefore very easy to forget the spiritual side of life and stop saying our prayers for example. We may find it hard to still trust God.

Hannah Pearsall Smith says that there are two things that are even more incompatible than oil and water, and they are **trust and worry**.

Occasionally, when driving along a road, you see a sign that says, *“Beware of falling rocks.”* I have never heard of anyone being hit by falling rocks but, if someone sees this sign, they may feel very worried as they drive along. But worrying is not going to affect the rocks, but it will have a tremendous effect on the driver. Worry is essentially distrust of God.

The promises of the Bible are true, there is no perhaps about them. How does the prophet know that God will not leave us or forsake us? How does the psalmist know that God will comfort the broken-hearted?

It is because they have been there - they have gone through dark days and lonely nights. As Alec Gilmore says, it is often through times of stress that God’s voice is heard.

Despite what is happening due to the increase in the numbers with Covid-19 in this area, **let us hold on to our faith and really trust God.**

Amen.

Prayer

Let us pray,

Loving Father,

we thank you for your guidance over these past months, when the future now seems again to be uncertain, we know that when we turn to you in prayer, you are always there.

Sovereign God, even although there are times, when we feel that you are hidden from us, you are a God who cares for every one of us and, despite the pandemic, you can bring hope out of despair, light out of darkness and wholeness out of imperfection.

Whether you are seen or unseen, recognised or unrecognised, appreciated or taken for granted, you are moving through your Spirit striving to build your kingdom, and fulfil your will.

Living God,

we pray for all those who are finding these days so difficult, those who have doubts about their faith, or who are troubled by questions to which they can find no answers. Lord, be especially close to them at this time.

We pray now for those on our church family who are in special need of our prayers – Jean Allardyce in Ayr Hospital, Chrissie Martin in the Biggart Hospital and we give thanks that Nettie Clarke is home after spending weeks very seriously ill in Ayr Hospital. We remember too, Loving Father, Elsie Burgess who is seriously ill in the Berelands Care Home in Prestwick.

Eternal God,

teach us that doubts and questions are a part of faith, and are able to led us to new insights and enrich our experience of your grace.

This we pray through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, Amen.

Rona



Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.

Corrie ten Boom

Please remember in your prayers this week all of the people below in hospital, care homes or in their own homes:-

Mrs Margaret Burgess (Berelands Care Home)	Mrs Nettie Clarke (now home from hospital)
Mrs Christine Martin (in Lindsay Ward, Biggart)	Mrs Jean Allardyce (in Urquhart Ward, Biggart)
Mrs Anne McRonaldd	Mrs Maude Smillie
Mrs Rae Beattie	Mrs Heather McLeod
Mrs Betty McPherson	Mrs May Wilkinson
Mrs Maie Dickie	Mrs Catherine MacDonald
Mrs Isa Lawrie	Mrs Jean McCamily
Mrs Anna Irving	Mrs Patricia Fraser

Please let the Session Clerk know of any member/relative who goes in to hospital or is ill at home. For those in hospital, please ensure you have their given Christian name which may not necessarily be the name by which s/he is usually known.

Prayer Chain Anyone having a request for prayer may contact Sheena Hunter on 01292 570200 or e-mail her at sheenachunter@hotmail.com

Congratulations! Our good wishes go to Stuart and Elaine Bell on the safe arrival of their second son Joshua John who weighed in at 7lbs 2 oz on Monday 5th October. Congratulations also go to proud grandparents Janet and John and to young Sam who has become a big brother.

NWC is open for worship The church is now open for worship at 11.00am on Sundays. To comply with Scottish Government and Church of Scotland Guidelines, places available in the church building are limited therefore systems are in place at present for booking seats. Please be aware that, depending on demand, it may not be possible for you to worship in church every week so that we can be fair to all members of the church family. To book a seat, please either phone Sheila between **9.30am** and **12.00noon** on **Thursday** or e-mail her between **12.00noon** on **Thursday** and **12.00 noon** on **Friday**. Her contact details are on page 7.

Our streamed service online will continue as normal at 11.00am on Sundays.

The Guild As you will no doubt understand, the Guild is **not now starting** as planned on 15th October. Further information will be given as and when appropriate. *Eleanor Lunn*

Can YOU help? We are looking for someone to be NWC's contact with Nkhata Bay Church in Malawi. This is open to all members of the congregation. If you are interested, please speak to Rev. Rona Young or John Bell in the first instance.

Salvation Army Foodbank Please remember that donations should now be left in the box in the vestibule as you come to worship. There is no longer an afternoon collection on Sundays.

Difficult times While these are times of worry and hardship for many people, the Church is also struggling financially. If you are able, we would be most grateful if you would consider making an extra donation (according to means) to help cover ongoing bills etc.. Please contact Janis Meredith whose details are on page 7. Anyone wishing to donate to Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church online can use this link:- <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/support-your-local-church-with-our-new-online-donations-system> Thank you. *John Bell*

Online Donations Do you shop online? If you do please remember that you can raise donations for the church at no extra cost to yourself. All you have to do is go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and register Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland as your charity, then shop at the many different retailers who donate through the site. Remember though, that you have to go to the retailer through easyfundraising.

You can also raise donations when you shop at Amazon. Instead of shopping at the usual site go to <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> and register Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland as your charity and the business will make a donation to the church on qualifying purchases.

Birthdays Our Happy Birthday wishes go this week to each of the following:-

12th October Emma Valente, Danny McPherson and Phil McAnespie **(70!!)**

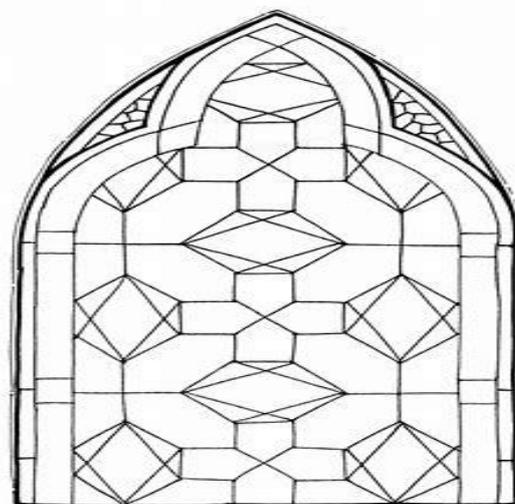
17th October Nancy McKillops **(95 years young!!)**

18th October Betty McPherson and Ethan Williams



Remember Streaming of our morning service conducted this week by Christine Tierney and next week by Rev. Rona Young will commence at **11.00am** then our **prayer time** starts at **12.30pm** with the Lord's Prayer followed by personal prayers. This helps to bring us together to reach out to him in prayer while we are distancing physically.

Children Here is a stained glass window and message for you to colour.



TRUST IN THE LORD WITH
ALL YOUR HEART.
PROVERBS 3:5

I do not know what lies ahead,
the way I cannot see;
yet one stands near to be my guide,
He'll show the way to me:
*I know who holds the future,
and He'll guide me with His hand;
with God things don't just happen,
everything by Him is planned.*
*So as I face tomorrow,
with its problems large and small,
I'll trust the God of miracles,
give to Him my all.*

Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland

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Twinned with Nkhata Bay Presbyterian Church, Malawi

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