



St Margaret's Parish Church, Glenrothes

February 2021



Dear Friends,

With Covid-19 restrictions bringing our lives to a crashing halt again, many people have been pondering life's bigger questions. Do you know that prayer was the most searched word on Google in relation to spirituality during the first lockdown of 2020.



You may have seen a banner like this one on a bus, billboard or church? It is a movement to encourage us to (re)discover that we are created to connect spiritually with God through prayer.

Spirituality is the part of us which seeks meaning and connection beyond ourselves. Often this is heightened when we are in a place of crisis and suffering. With over 100,000 families grieving for relatives and friends who have died because of covid, we are a people who are grieving. We know families in mourning and some of those who have died lived in our local care homes. It is horrendously sad. How do we make meaning in suffering and help our children and grandchildren to do so too?

In Scotland we have been turning to prayer. Every **Sunday evening at 7pm**, there is a call to prayer which reaches beyond denominational boundaries as 14 Christian churches and organisations join together in praying the same prayer. You can find this on our church Facebook page.

In St Margaret's, we have a mid-week invitation to prayer on **Wednesday@1pm**. It is an invitation to make space in busy lives to sit in the presence of the God who loves us. A prayer is shared on our Facebook page. There is also a communal gathering to pray on Wednesday

@1pm on Zoom. You are welcome to join.

Wednesday@1pm

Meeting ID: 841 3387 6890
Passcode: 865176
Telephone: 0131 460 1196

There have been 24 hours of prayer in which we have worked together to try to cover a day and night in prayer.

There is currently a small group meeting on Tuesday evening to study the Prayer Course (see next column).

Recently, Archbishops Justin Welby and Steven Cottrell have released an open letter to the nation encouraging **prayer each evening at 6pm** from 1 February. Justin Welby says that amidst all the isolation, fear and hopelessness, "one thing we can all do is pray.....whether you're someone of faith, or not, we invite you to call on God in prayer".

You will find the 6pm prayers on the church Facebook page from 1st February.

I finish with a short prayer:

**God of compassion,
Be with us
When the stresses and strains
sap our energy.
Give us new strength
And let it bubble up within us.
Amen**

Eileen

Losses During 2020

Sadly during 2020 we lost 15 members, one adherent and others who were part of the Church family.

Helen and Jim Morrow would like to thank all who sent flowers, and who prayed on their behalf.

Covenanted Partnership Churches Lent Bible Studies on Zoom

The theme is the Beatitudes

When?

Sundays 21st and 28th February, 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th March.
Time: 7-8pm

Meeting ID: 816 9159 6391
Passcode: 434883
Telephone: 0131 460 1196

Prayer Course

*"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done."
Philippians 4:6*

Have you ever wondered about prayer and how to be better at it? Recently a small group of St Margaret's people have been getting together once a week online to chat for half an hour about different aspects of prayer. The discussions are based on eight different short videos that you can view on Youtube - prayercourse.org. Give it a try! If you are not online, you may prefer the book "How to Pray" by Pete Greig.

Church Services During Lockdown

All of our services start at 10am on Sundays and you can join them on Zoom.

Joining details:

Meeting ID 871 7204 3700

Passcode 090012

Telephone 01314601196

You can also watch the recorded service on Youtube. Just search for St Margaret's Glenrothes.

Calling All Crafters - Can you make Poppies?



It has been suggested that for Remembrance Day 2021 we create an "art installation" made up of hundreds, maybe even thousands, of poppies. They can be knitted, crocheted, made of felt, or made using any other craft.

You may have a knitting or crochet pattern and you can start right now, or you may want to wait till a couple of simple patterns appear on the church website.

Good Companions Meal



We may not have been able to meet in groups to celebrate Christmas 2020, but that did not stop our Good Companions enjoying some time together! At lunchtime on Wednesday 16th December they all said Grace and then sat down in their own homes to tuck into a three course Christmas meal. Many of them had set the table, got dressed up for the occasion, and even, it's said, pulled the cracker, put on the paper hat and told themselves the joke! After the meal they phoned each other for a chat and wished each other a Happy Christmas.

Thanks Wilma Craig for your extremely hard work – taking orders, communicating with Ewan Stark, the caterer, who delivered the meals the previous day, and making sure everyone got a phonecall.

Mission and Outreach Team

We were busy over Christmas. First of all we bought presents for the male residents of Alexander Road flats (formerly the WASH), the female residents in the Farmhouse and the residents of Gilven House. These were all wrapped up and delivered together with a St Margaret's Christmas card. We have been doing this for a number of years now and the gesture is really appreciated by those receiving the gifts. Christmas can be very bleak for some.

We were also delighted to send £500 to the Scots Kirk in Sri Lanka. We have a partnership arrangement in place with this church which celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2020. The minister there is called Saman Perera and they really appreciate the financial gifts which we send. Many people in his congregation are poor with no government support if they are out of work because of corona virus. This money will enable Saman to offer direct help to those in his church with urgent needs. I chat to him fairly regularly and I will get feedback from him when I catch him next.

Our fundraising efforts have been stopped now, but we will resume as soon as we can. We look forward to seeing you then!!

Brian Johnson and the Mission and Outreach team.

Lesbos Appeal

The Harvest Appeal for the refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece, amounted to £481. In December we received a reply from Callum King. Here is what he said:

As you may have seen on the news, the Moria refugee camp burnt to the ground around 3 months ago. At the time there were 13,000 people living there but

thankfully nobody was seriously injured or died. After the fire the most vulnerable people and unaccompanied minors were evacuated off the island so there are now just over 7000 people here. A new camp has been built where we're now working but the conditions are not good. The people are all in tents with no source of heat, there is no mains water supply, toilets are portaloos and electricity is by generator and only switched on at certain times in the day for people to charge their phones and have a light in their tent.



We continue to distribute food to around half of the camp population and another organisation distributes to the other half. We also have 3 English classes in our tent each day, a Greek class and 2 days a week classes for the teachers themselves. Up until about a month ago our English classes had 60 to 70 people in each class but due to Covid restrictions the authorities have limited us to 10 people at a time. Yesterday, after 3 months of waiting, the first set of hot showers became operational in the camp allowing 1000 people to shower each day meaning everyone can now take a shower once a week. The logistics of things like this however are difficult since water must be brought in by tanker and waste water removed.

It's hard to know what to say really. We continue to do what we can and be a light in the darkness. The atmosphere in the new camp is generally good and there is a lot less tension than before so that's a good thing.

