



Woodside Road
Glenrothes

KY7 5HD

21 March 2020

Dear Friends,

We are living in strange and unfamiliar times, and although life as we knew it has changed for now, we are not unequipped to deal with the challenges. We cannot come to church on Sunday, but there are many other services online, on the radio, and television that we can listen to or watch. Although listening to or watching something is not quite the same as participating in something and being part of a community, which is a fundamental part of being human.

A few years ago, our family gave my husband a gift of a flying lesson in a small aircraft and I was allowed to be a passenger. On a sunny Saturday morning, we took off from the runway of Glenrothes Airport in the 4-person aircraft. The pilot seemed very competent. And when Geoff took the controls, I was reassured to notice that there were dual controls in the front!

All seemed to go well as Geoff flew the plane across Fife towards the bridges, the Queensferry crossing was still in process of construction. The view was amazing, I began to relax, and we carried on our journey towards the bridges. Then suddenly and completely unexpectedly out of the clouds, Geoff spotted another plane in the same flight path as ours! The pilot clearly had not been expecting any other planes in our flight path as there had been no warning from the flight controller but fortunately Geoff had seen it and alerted him. The pilot took the controls and safely guided us out of the path of this other plane.

I learned two things from this experience:-

1. We were not flying solo. There was someone else there in the plane with more experience and with a hand on the dual controls.
2. When a crisis comes, what matters is who you have with you and who is in control.

In Mark 4, verses 35-41, the disciples were crossing the lake in a boat, when a storm suddenly began so fiercely that even the experienced fishermen on board were afraid. The boat started taking in water and was in danger of sinking. What made all the difference in this situation was that the disciples were not alone. Jesus was on board with them and, after the disciples woke him up, he was able to stop the storm with a word and restore calm and safety.

The storm of anxiety and uncertainty all around just now. We are all in the same boat, so to speak, as in sharing the same experiences although actually we are all in separate little boats as we become socially distant. But one thing is for sure - we are not alone. Jesus is in the boat with us. There is nothing more certain. In all the changes all around, God is unchanging; the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. And Jesus is in the boat with us. So, let's take up the new challenges of how to live well in these changing times and not let social distancing lead to social isolation. We can all find ways to keep in touch with each other. It won't be plain sailing as there are storms ahead. But like those disciples, we need to learn to trust Jesus through the storms of life and to grow in our dependence upon him and in our capacity to be a resilient and creative community of people who find new ways to love God and our neighbours from our homes.

On Sunday 22nd March, the Church of Scotland is supporting the call for a National Day of Prayer and Action, which is also Mothering Sunday.

Rt Rev Colin Sinclair is joining the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and other church leaders to issue a national call to prayer.

The Moderator said:

“There are many different ways the Church can and should offer support and help to their communities at this time, but one way is through prayer. We believe in a God who hears and answers prayer.

“We are encouraged to come honestly in prayer, sharing openly our emotions, questions and concerns in the light of COVID 19.

“We have become aware in a new way of our frailty and need to renew our dependence on God. I welcome this call to prayer across the UK and encourage you to join in it this Sunday wherever you are.”

The call to prayer asks everyone to light a candle at 7pm on Sunday as ‘a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source and hope in prayer.’. So let's do just that. We cannot meet together on Sunday, but we can pray so let's make it a day of prayer. At 7pm let's light a candle.

This is the link for the call to prayer.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/moderator-joins-call-for-national-day-of-prayer>

Here is a prayer I have written for you.

Father God,

Life goes on but everything has changed.
So in the midst of the anxiety about the future
And about this unknown virus
we offer our prayers.

Protect and shield those most vulnerable to coronavirus
May we all grow robust and resistant to it
and gentle and compassionate to each other.

Remind us again and again,
of your faithfulness and mercy
and of all you have done for us
in sending your son, Jesus,
when we were powerless to save ourselves
from our sin.

In Jesus, we remember
that You are with us
that You have not forgotten us
And in Jesus, we put our trust
for today and for the days ahead.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be yours,
Amen

If we can be of any assistance to you over the next weeks, please do not hesitate to telephone the office on 01592 328162 and leave a message with your contact details, if there is no one available to take your call. We have a small group of volunteers who are able to deliver shopping prescriptions etc.

Yours in Christ,
Eileen

Rev Eileen Miller

