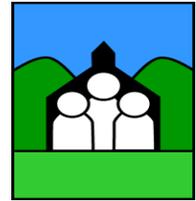


BALLANTRAE PARISH CHURCH
 linked with
ST COLMON (Arnshean Barrhill & Colmonell)
PARISH CHURCH



Ascension 21st May

to

Pentecost 31st May



Pray at 7pm

Light a candle in your window at 7pm on Sundays.
 Join people around the country in praying for the healing hand of God
 to be on our world, our community and you at this difficult time.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/scottish-churches-join-together-in-call-for-prayer-on-sunday>

Let's Keep in Touch

We all appreciate a friendly word by telephone, letter or social media.

Send Claire P. your news to pass on in this Newsletter.

Send your comments and ideas for our Church Facebook sites where you will find:

Words of encouragement; Prayers; Music; Videos;

Space for your prayer requests, comments, pictures.

Minister: Rev Theo Corney

Email: tcorney@churchofscotland.org.uk

Telephone: 01465 831252

Ballantrae Church

Session Clerk: Mrs Claire Strain

Email: clairestrain@live.co.uk

Telephone: 01465 831246

www.ballantraeparishchurch.org.uk

Facebook as Ballantrae Church

Scottish Charity No. SC008536

St Colmon Church

Session Clerk: Mrs Claire Pirrie

Email: stcolmon.sessionclerk@gmail.com

Telephone: 01465 841644

www.stcolmonparishchurch.org.uk

Facebook as St Colmon Church

Scottish Charity No. SC014381

From the Minister

Dear All,

Greetings to you during these testing times. I hope that this message finds you well and that you are coping with the changes in life that lockdown has brought. Please be assured of my personal prayers for you all at this time. As a family we are all keeping well and trying to make the most of this unique time. I am taking daily walks and it has been nice to see people and wave or exchange a few words at a distance. I have been able between phone calls to read some of my long neglected books, and the manse garden has been very much appreciated in recent weeks.

Please do get in touch if you would like to talk as we are all feeling somewhat frustrated. It is good to count our blessings and to thank God for all that he has given us, and to bring all before him in prayer. There have been some excellent worship services on TV and various great online services. The lockdown has brought out some promising creativity, and there have been lots of acts of loving service between neighbours at this time which has been heartening.

Sunday the 31st of May is Pentecost. Jesus had returned to the heavens to be our great high priest and to be crowned with glory. On Pentecost while the disciples were met together the Holy Spirit came upon them in a new way. Acts 2 verses 2-4 read "Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them". The apostles had been commissioned to take the gospel to all nations. As the apostles spoke in languages unknown to them, other visitors to Jerusalem heard them speaking in their own native dialects/languages. The Holy Spirit equipped the apostles to share the good news in many ways. These timid men began to address crowds of people with gospel truth, and they were equipped and strengthened in their resolve as they faced trials and persecutions of various kinds.

The Holy Spirit comes to Christians today and will build us up and equip us to be his messengers and servants in these days. Pentecost is often referred to as the birthday of the church. May we celebrate this wonderful day in gospel history and give thanks that the Spirit is still at work today. May we know his strength and presence as we face the days ahead.

Every blessing,

Rev`d Theodore Corney

A Prayer

Father God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit.
In your great mercy hear our prayer.
We look to you our heavenly Father
For comfort in this time of desperate need.
To Jesus our Lord and Saviour to calm our fears
And The Holy Spirit to intercede with God
when we find it difficult to pray.
In your mercy Lord hear our prayers.
We find strength Lord in knowing you are near
and offer prayers for those who are struggling
to come to terms with this virus.
We remember those who have lost loved ones
and those who are recovering.

In your mercy Lord hear our heartfelt prayers.
We pray for your people all over the world
And pray that many will turn to you, Jesus,
Our Lord and Saviour through this difficult time.
Help us to keep faith and remain faithful
to our Christian calling.
Keep us strong in the face of adversity
Oh Lord.

Father God I ask these prayers
in and through Jesus Christ our Lord
and Saviour
And in the power of The Holy Spirit
Amen

Patricia Thackray

AN INVITATION for PENTECOST

Sunday 31st May 10-10.30am

Streamed on the Church of Scotland website and Facebook

The Moderator of the General Assembly will lead a service to mark the birthday of the Christian Church with contributions from many different places. Like the disciples on that first Pentecost here is the invitation to step confidently into whatever the future holds. We would like to invite you to make this the service for your congregation on that Sunday so that as much of the Church of Scotland as possible will be gathered in fellowship and praise.

Best wishes,

Rev Dr George J Whyte
Principal Clerk
The Church of Scotland

Thy Kingdom Come

21st to 31st May

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global>

Since its start in May 2016, just three and a half years ago, God has grown Thy Kingdom Come from a dream of possibility into a movement. In 2019 Christians from 172 countries took part in praying 'Come Holy Spirit', so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

This praying together has been across our diversity and differences as every person, household and church are encouraged to pray in their own way. Whilst an astonishing 92% of people said they were praying for family and friends to come to faith in Jesus, and 40% of those taking part in 2019 did so for the first time, we recognise there is much more we can do together to help *Thy Kingdom Come* be fully in the lifeblood of the Church.

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- *Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ*
- *Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus*
- *Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness*

Join in with this year's inspirational hymn -

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/thy-kingdom-come-hymn-2020>

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Watch and Listen

St Colmon Church & Ballantrae Church face book sites – Sunday reflections by Rev Theo Corney

<https://www.luminatescotland.org/luminateathome> Activities for home

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/services-online> All Churches putting services online

You Tube – Hamilton Old Parish Church, Rev Ross Blackman leads a daily Bible study

BBC1 Scotland Sunday Reflections at the Quay

Sunday BBC1 Service of Worship

Sunday BBC1 Songs of Praise.

<https://youtu.be/I5WLZAVKB88> “Nearer my God to Thee”

Scripture Readings for the Church Year

The Church of Scotland follows the *Revised Common Lectionary*, which assigns particular readings to each Sunday in the Christian calendar:

Sunday 31st May Pentecost Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30 / Psalm 104:24-34, 35b /

1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21 / John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

Trinity Sunday 7th June Genesis 1:1—2:4a / Psalm 82 / 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 / Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday 14th June Genesis 18:1-15 / Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 / Romans 5:1-8 / Matthew 9:35—10:8

Sunday 21st June Genesis 21:8-21 / Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17 / Romans 6:1b-11 / Matthew 10:24-39

Sunday 28th June Genesis 22:1-14 / Psalm 13 / Romans 6:12-23 / Matthew 10:40-42

THANKS to our volunteer Local Resilience Teams

Throughout our parishes wonderful volunteer efforts are ensuring everyone has access to help with shopping, prescriptions, hearing aid batteries etc. and village food banks for those in need.

For information contact:

Ballantrae – Laura Cunningham 01465 831785, Mhairi McKenna 0790 150 6691

Colmonell & Lendalfoot – Mark Bradley 01465 881052, Claire Pirrie 01465 841644

Pinwherry & Pinmore – Peter Walker 07801 070614, Claire Pirrie 01465 841644

Barrhill – Andy Clegg – 01465 821456

The Times in Our Lives

We are in difficult times, when many are in lockdown and unable to go far from the door. Our garden has been a blessing to us giving us time to reflect, count our blessings and appreciate the wonders of nature. This is a time when we should be looking forward to coffee mornings, summer fayres, and garden parties but gatherings are not permitted and we cannot see our loved ones.

Through all these difficulties I still see God's hand at work. He gives us hope when we despair. He gives us strength to carry on and peace to accept our restrictions. His love and care is boundless and will see us through. My prayer is for all to experience the love, peace and joy that the Lord offers us.

May God Bless each one.

Patricia Thackray

Presbytery of Ayr Daily Prayer

Each Church within the Presbytery of Ayr is invited to have a representative on the prayer group and the group produce daily prayer booklets. The booklet of prayers for each week can be accessed through St Colmon Church face book or website. St Colmon's prayer convenor is Pat Guthrie.

We all need a Smile

Q. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

A. Samson. He brought the house down.

Q. Who was the greatest female businessperson in the Bible?

A. Pharaoh's daughter. She went down to the bank of the Nile and drew out a little prophet.(profit)

Q. How long did Cain hate his brother?

A. As long as he was Abel.

Q. What do they call pastors in Germany?

A. German Shepherds.

From Bob Stirling



Louisa Jordan

During these difficult times we have often been amazed by the selfless work of our doctors and nurses. It is appropriate, therefore, that the emergency hospital in Glasgow should be named after a nurse, Louisa Jordan; but who was Louisa Jordan?

Louisa was a Scottish nurse who died in service during the First World War. She was born in Maryhill in Glasgow in July 1878.

Louisa began her working life in 1901 as a cloak maker. However, she decided very soon that she wanted to be a nurse. Louisa was employed in various hospitals including the Fever Hospital in Shotts and her last position in Scotland was in Buckhaven where she worked as a district nurse. While she was there, war broke out, and Louisa signed up with the Scottish Women's Hospital for Foreign Service in December 1914. She

joined the 1st Serbian unit which arrived in Serbia in mid-December. The unit was deployed to Kragujevac, a city 100 miles south of Belgrade.

Conditions for the wounded Serbian soldiers were dreadful: they had very little medical services and they were half starved and exhausted. In early 1915, a typhus epidemic broke out and Louisa was placed in charge of the new typhus ward. Working alongside her was Dr Elizabeth Ross from Edinburgh. When Elizabeth herself contracted the disease, Louisa volunteered to look after her. Unfortunately, Elizabeth died on 14 February 1915. "We really felt that we had lost one of our own" wrote Louisa. Sadly, this would be one of the last entries in Louisa's diary as, a few weeks later, on the 6th of March, she too died from the disease.

Louisa is buried in the Chela Kula Military Cemetery and she is commemorated at Wilton Church in Glasgow and on the Buckhaven war memorial.

The people of Serbia have never forgotten the remarkable courage and self-sacrifice shown by Louisa. She, and the other nurses who served during the 1915 epidemic, are remembered there in an annual ceremony.

From Mary Stirling

Scottish Government Route Map Out of Lockdown

If progress against the virus continues Phase 1 is expected to start on 28th May. There is no set timetable to move from one phase to the next as it depends on monitoring the virus. We can all help by following advice, handwashing, cough and sneeze hygiene, social distancing and face covering when appropriate.

NB Washing your hands while saying The Lord's Prayer takes as long as singing Happy Birthday twice.

The following information is taken from the Scottish Government's website and outlines the way the route map relates to Church. There is detailed information on the website below for other organisations and activities.

Phase 1

As with the current lock down no public gatherings are permitted except for meetings of two households, outdoors and with physical distancing. Funerals take place with limited number of attendees.

Phase 2

Church can open for private prayer under physical distancing rules and hygiene safeguards. Marriages and funerals can take place with minimal number of attendees.

Phase 3

Church can open to extended groups subject to physical distancing and hygiene safeguards. Relaxation of restrictions to attendance at funerals and marriages beyond "close family".

Phase 4

Church gatherings resume in line with public health advice. All ceremonies can take place, with improved hygiene and other precautions.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/>

THE GARDEN PARTY

If a garden had a party who would it invite
The urns and pots and garden gnomes
Perhaps the coloured lights
The rambling rose, the iris blue
Marigolds and daffodils too
Trellising and garden hose
Violets sweet and shy primrose
Barbeque and the fol-de-rols
Carrots, onions, cabbage and swede
It may even invite a weed
Rake and hoe, fork and spade
Invite the trees to give some shade
The list is endless, it just goes on
Oh dear we've left out wheelbarrow and sun
The difficult bit is what to eat
What do gardens consider a treat
A bit of bonemeal,-- a sandwich of peat
Perhaps some horse muck, or potash sweet
A jolly time would be had by all
If a garden had a party
Oop's we've forgotten the garden wall

Patricia Thackray

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

Rev Dr Martin Fair, the minister of St Andrews Parish Church in Arbroath, has been installed as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for 2020 to 2021.

Speaking ahead of the service for his installation which comes at a time when church buildings are closed and spiritual nourishment is catching fire online, the Moderator Designate Rev Dr Martin Fair said: "Taking on the role was always going to be a challenge.

But at least I had many others to follow and there was an established pattern.

But no one has been this way before so I'm going to have to step out into new territory without a map.

So for me, trusting in God to lead is where I'm at personally.

And that perfectly mirrors the place of the Church as it looks toward a yet unknown future.

I guess that's what my year is going to be about, not what was planned.

But I'm ready to embrace it and go forward in faith."

Mr Fair will adopt the title "Rt Rev Dr" and continue in his role as minister of St Andrew's Parish Church in Arbroath for now and carry out Moderatorial duties when appropriate.

The ceremony of Installation and the Moderator's full address can be seen on the Church of Scotland's website or face book site.

Copyright

I apologise if I haven't used images you sent but I am advised to check that we are not breaching any copyright issues, so before you send an image please would you check that it is not subject to copyright law.

Keep working for the Lord –

the pay isn't much but the retirement plans are out of this world!

In Memory of Alvon Hirst



In autumn 1945 Alvon's mother was being treated for early onset menopause until one day she was told "we have found out what your problem is, you are six months pregnant". Alvon was born the following January.

At school he always favoured sports over academic studies and was a keen member of the Boys Brigade at Sheffield Victoria Hall Methodist Church.

He developed a love of driving and maps by travelling with his father in the school holidays in the lorry which he drove all over the country delivering refractory bricks for kilns and furnaces.

He learned acrobatics and stage dancing and was a keen cross-country runner and at twelve he started to go to country dancing classes with his older brother Trevor.

Through dancing he met Freda and they became firm friends, eventually marrying in 1969.

Alvon's job as office furniture salesman and showroom manager offered him the opportunity to transfer to Glasgow in 1988 but ill health brought him early retirement at the end of 1990. He and Freda then took a guest house in Perth for eleven years, then after a couple of small but interesting delivery jobs, retired to Barrhill (the scene of many holidays with friends) in 2005.

His ability for dancing slowly declined and he took up bowling but had to stop due to the advancing arthritis which he inherited from his mother and with which he struggled through all his adult life.

His heart finally gave up the struggle and he slowly declined refusing to give in, until he had to be admitted to Ayr Hospital where after a couple of days he died on 1st May, finally released from over 50 years of gradually worsening pain.

Alvon's strong faith has always carried him through life, and he is now at peace at last.

Dr Ruth Valerio is a theologian, environmentalist and author, and leads Tearfund's global advocacy and influencing work. Gideon Heugh is a poet and naturalist and is the Senior Copywriter in Tearfund's communications team. https://www.tearfund.org/2020/03/decoding_coronavirus/

Dr Ruth Valerio and Gideon Heugh from the charity Tearfund explore the questions that Christians might be wrestling with during the coronavirus crisis.

How to beat coronavirus:

Stay at home. Keep your distance. Wash your hands. Have a good theology.

Wait, a good what?

Theology is our understanding of the nature of God. This in turn influences the way we see the world. In times like these, when life as we know it has been turned upside down, it's crucial that we have a good Bible-based theology.

To help, we've put together answers to some of the questions that Christians might be wrestling with at this time:

Will God protect us? Why is this happening? Is the virus God's judgement? Does sin cause illness? Are these the end times? And, how should the church respond?

And the church, of course, means all of us. We are one in Christ, and no amount of social distancing can sever that connection. Speaking of which...

Will God protect us?

Having the right theology can save lives. Literally.

Most churches around the world have stopped meeting in person – for obvious, sensible and necessary reasons. Some, however, have not, citing their belief that God will protect them from the virus. This is bad theology, and it might cost lives.

God does protect. God does heal. Yet we are his hands and feet, and it's vital that we play our role, listening and acting upon the advice of experts.

I trust God with my health – but I also try and make sure that I exercise and eat well. If I break my leg, I'll pray for healing – but I'll also go to the doctor.

Trust God, but take action too.

Why is this happening?

To answer this question, we need to go back to the beginning.

God created a world that he declared to be very good (Genesis 1:31) – a world in which everything exists in harmony with God. Relationship with God, with others, with ourselves and with the rest of creation is central to God's loving purposes.

After those relationships go wrong, the Bible then tells the story of how God works to restore them – a plan that finds its ultimate fulfilment in Jesus.

Poverty, conflict, suffering, climate change – all these are the result of those broken relationships. The Bible is clear that God, people and the natural world are deeply interconnected, so if one aspect of that is broken then everything will be impacted.

As hard as it is to hear, the outbreak of coronavirus is not a 'natural disaster'. It is a disaster of our own making. Viruses jump species and get into humans, and environmental destruction makes this more likely to happen as people are brought into closer contact with virus-carrying animals. Deforestation, mining, animal trafficking and unsustainable farming practices are all likely factors at play.¹

As hard as it is to hear, the outbreak of coronavirus is not a 'natural disaster'.

Is this God's judgement?

God's original intention was peace between all things – but this is not how we're living. He created a world in which everything is connected, and there are natural consequences when those connections are broken.

This doesn't necessarily mean that God 'caused' or 'willed' the pandemic – it is to recognise that the brokenness of creation ultimately causes us harm.

In some cultures, misfortune is seen as directly linked to that person's sin. But biblically, these links are rarely as simple as that. For example, in the story of Job, Job's suffering is not a result of his sin, but of the existence and work of Satan.

In Luke 13:1-5, Jesus is told about Pilate's massacre of some Galileans who were in the process of offering sacrifices. He responds by pointing out that those who were killed were not greater sinners than those who were not killed. And he makes the same point about the people who were killed when the tower in Siloam collapsed.

Jesus is clear that the existence of disasters doesn't mean that those who are affected by them are worse people than anybody else. Such events should never be an invitation to judge others. God's ultimate nature is love (1 John 4:16). He is a God of infinite grace, compassion and mercy. God cares deeply about humanity, and about you as an individual - so much so that he gave up his Son for you. Any suggestion that coronavirus is some kind of divine judgement is fundamentally at odds with God's character.

Does sin cause illness?

In John 9:1-5 Jesus meets a man who was blind from birth. The disciples ask about the sins that have caused this blindness – was it his sin or that of his parents? But Jesus tells them that his blindness has nothing to do with sin. Not only that, but it provides an opportunity 'that the works of God might be displayed in him'.

That is not to say that there are no links between spiritual and physical healing. As we have seen above, the Bible does present links between sin and suffering in the world: our physical suffering is part of that whole chain of sin from Genesis 3 onwards. And, there are lifestyle choices we can make that either promote or neglect our health and wellbeing. The Bible indicates there can be times when a person's sickness is the result of personal sin, but, if and when people fall ill, there is no biblical warrant for automatically linking that with a person's sin and we must never use that as a basis for stigmatisation and rejection. The Pharisees did that – Jesus did not. His message was one of acceptance, inclusion and compassion for all.

Are these the end times?

Widespread conflict in the Middle East. A plague of locusts spreading across Africa. Flooding around the world. Surely these are signs of the end times?

If there's one thing that we can say for certain, it's that no one can know for certain. If Jesus himself did not know when the end times would be (Matthew 24:36), who are we to try and say? It is important to keep a wider perspective throughout all of this. Christians have been trying (and failing) to predict the end of the world since the early days of the church. Although the word 'unprecedented' keeps being brought up, this is not the first crisis of this scale – indeed, there have been far, far darker times in human history. The great plague of the 14th century is estimated to have wiped out nearly two thirds of Europe's population. I'm sure they were convinced that the end times were upon them too.

War, disease, natural disasters – these are, sadly, nothing new. Jesus said his return would be sudden and unexpected, and he said we were to ignore anyone who thought they knew about specific dates and times, likening people who look for scare-mongering stories to vultures (Matthew 24:28).

The answer is that there is no clear answer, and that we should ignore those who think they have one.

How should the church respond?

The church should be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). As the shadow of coronavirus falls across the land, the church's mission is to shine as brightly as it can.

We must follow Jesus in showing God's love, bringing healing to a broken world and responding to people's needs: economic and emotional, spiritual and physical, both locally and globally.

We can and we must act.

When Ebola ravaged West Africa in 2014, it was local churches that helped lead the fightback. In Sierra Leone, Christians used video and radio broadcasts to spread vital health messages. Tearfund trained pastors and gave them phones so they could call people suffering with Ebola and pray with them. Churches gave practical help to people in quarantine and church members provided food, water and toiletries.

We are already seeing the church rising to the challenge of coronavirus. In many communities around the world, it is Christians who are coordinating local care, creating neighbourhood WhatsApp groups, dropping off food and toiletries to those who are self-isolating, and being there to provide emotional response.

In Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh – the largest refugee camp in the world – life is becoming even more miserable. Sanitation and hygiene facilities are already inadequate, and the streets are narrow and crowded. But Tearfund's church partners are distributing hygiene kits and leaflets to educate people about handwashing, social distancing and recognising the symptoms.

Creating a better world

If we lean deeper into God's love, choosing faith instead of fear, we may find that new opportunities emerge. There is the potential for communities to come together more than ever before; for families to re-discover themselves; for busy people to slow down and build a rhythm of rest into their lives; for people to reconnect with God and his world; for nations to re-tune into God's word; for churches to learn how to use digital technology to enhance ministry; and for us to develop more local, environmentally-friendly economies.

One day, we will make it out of this crisis. But what sort of world do we want there to be on the other side? Can we repent of the world we have created, and instead look to build one without such a huge gap between rich and poor – a world where we live in harmony with creation, in which we understand that the well-being of one is bound up with the well-being of all?

In Christ, there is always hope. We can let that hope motivate how we live our lives today as we hold on to God our rock. And, with the love of Christ in our hearts, let us continue to reach out with compassion and determination.

PLEASE PRAY

God of love and light,

In this time of fear, give us your peace.

In this time of isolation, give us your presence.

In this time of sickness, give us your healing.

In this time of uncertainty, give us your wisdom.

In this time of darkness, shine your light upon us all.

In Jesus' name, amen.

¹ Reference: 'Tip of the iceberg: is our destruction of nature responsible for Covid-19?' The Guardian, 18 March 2020e