

# PORTREE PARISH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND



## SUMMER 2025

## Church Office Bearers

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## **TIME FOR EVERYTHING**

***The fear of the Lord is the beginning  
of all wisdom, and knowledge of the  
Holy One is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10)***

The scientific definition of TIME is : *a progression of events from the past to the present into the future* ( Encyclopaedias). A nice, popular proverb says, *TIME is slow when you wait, and is fast when you are late. Time is deadly when you are sad, and is short when you are happy. Time is endless when you are on a path, and is long when you are bored. Have a nice time always!*

The Bible portrays TIME as a line, with a beginning (Creation) and an end (Eschaton, or Final Judgement). This linear view of time is evident in the historical narratives and prophetic scriptures, which trace God's actions through history. However, TIME is also seen as PURPOSEFUL, with each event contributing to God's overall PLAN for SALVATION in Christ. God is presented as existing outside TIME yet interacting within it.

***There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven***, - says Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 1. The writer of the Book of Ecclesiastes – probably King Solomon – says that our TIME through life will be like this: - ***a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.*** (Ecclesiastes 3: 2-8). No matter how you slice it, the sovereignty of God lies behind everything that happens. God is not always pleased, but He is never perplexed. No piece of the puzzle of the purpose of Creation is left over at the end. Come, then, and let us meditate together on God's way of understanding TIME:

It says that it does not matter if you are a man or a dandelion, there is a purpose for your birth, your death, and everything in between. Life is going to be like this, and there is nothing you can do about it. Weeping when a loved one or you die, and you'll have children, and full of joy you will laugh. There are times of happiness and times of pain. There is a time that you destroy something by throwing stones, but there is also a time when you gather stones to build something, - like the stonewalls here in Skye. There will be a time to embrace, but there will also be times when you do not want anyone around.



There will come a time you will be full of hope and will want to search. There will be a time when you will be hopeless and want to give up. The things you own will be useful for a while, and you will want to keep them. But one day they become useless, and you will take them to a charity-shop; it will be time to throw them away. There will be a time for agony. You will be hurt so bad, you will want to tear down clothes, and then, there will be a time to sew up the tears, because the pain and war will be gone, and you enjoy peace in your soul. There will be times when you will want to keep your mouth shut, and times when you just have to tell somebody something. There will be a time for love, and there will also be a time of rejection. These are facts. All these things are appointed because this life is far not perfect. So, you, sooner or later, may ask yourself: WHY ??? Why does God want me to go through all these things? How can you live in a world that is out of your control? How do you live with a God who doesn't always make sense? Biblically, the true platform for life is **TO FIND REST FOR YOUR SOUL** in the Sovereign **LOVE OF GOD** (Matthew 11: 29).

For ***I know that everything God does will endure for ever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere (fear) Him*** (Ecclesiastes 3: 14). Whatever happens in my life I have to know that GOD IS ALWAYS IN CONTROL. His plan is unchangeably perfect, with the goal that men would FEAR HIM. God is not trying to produce cynicism, but REVERENT FEAR. He wants to create TRUST in us. For the foundation of a GODLY LIVING, we have to find wisdom that begins with the FEAR OF THE LORD. Not fear in the sense of PANIC or DREAD. Rather our relationship with God should be characterised by REVERENCE, OBEDIENCE and TRUST, as of a child towards the loving Father and Mother. Then, we will be able to understand the unbelievable: - ***FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE*** (John 3:16). The unseen, timeless Almighty God had taken upon Himself our human frame in Jesus Christ to become approachable by WHOEVER uses His free gift of FAITH in his or her TIME called earthly life. Our limited, far not perfect existence, from birth is ***running out of Time***. Therefore, the main question for everyone is how we are using or losing our GOD-GIVEN-TIME, ***TO BE, OR NOT TO BE*** any longer.

In essence, the Bible's view of TIME is not the passage of moments, but about God's sovereign, purposeful direction of history towards its ultimate fulfilment in SALVATION for all ETERNITY through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU; THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE SHINE UPON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU; THE LORD TURN HIS FACE TOWARDS YOU AND GIVE YOU PEACE*** (Book of Numbers 6: 24-26).

Sandor, your Minister.



## **SESSION CLERK'S REPORT**

As you will see from the contents of Pages 18 to 21 of this magazine, Portree Church has seen plenty of activity since the publication of our last edition.

The most important events were, for obvious reasons, not photographed. These all involved our future minister Rev Rebecca Bartocho, known to us all as Beckie.

Following Beckie preaching to the joint congregations of Portree, Kilmuir and Staffin churches on Sunday 06 April and being accepted as the minister for the future united parish of Portree, Kilmuir and Staffin. As she will not take over responsibility for the Portree part of this union until Sandor's retiral Beckie was inducted to the charge of minister of Kilmuir and Stenscholl parish until October 2027 after which she will move into the Portree manse.

Beckie has now started her ministry on Skye and has been getting to know the area and the people she will be serving. She has also attended our August Preparatory Service and other meetings.

We are coming to the end of our programme of Summer Opening of the Church to Visitors. This is the second year of running this post Covid and it has been a great success. Final figures of the numbers visiting will be given later but it is safe to say that we have had people from every continent coming into our church.

Like all such activities we are dependent on the goodwill of members of the congregation to meet and greet the visitors and we are indebted to all who have given of their time to open the church.

At the Preparatory service on 03 August, Flora MacPherson professed her faith and became a communicant member of the church and joined in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on Sunday 03 August. In recent months we have had three people added to our Communion Roll.

It is sad to say that many people will not come forward to profess their faith because "they are not good enough." As Jesus said in Luke 5 : 32 *"I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"* None of us is perfect. We all commit sins in word, thought or deed. Remember that Jesus forgave the sins of criminals, tax collectors, prostitutes and the thief crucified on the cross beside him. Are you a greater sinner than any of them ?



So, the first eight months of 2025 have been busy and productive for Portree Church, and, with your commitment, we look forward to the remainder of the year continuing in this vein.

God bless you all

*Bill*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

*For this edition of the magazine, I attach the report I made at this year's Church AGM, held in June 2025. The comments related to the financial figures for 2024.*

I think it's safe to say that with inflation and the general increases in the price of food and heating costs, many people had to keep a very careful watch on their finances last year.

That can cause major problems for charities like our church which depends on donations from its members. Every year since 2007 when I became your Treasurer I have been immensely impressed by the generosity of our congregation. Even in the most difficult of times they demonstrate their commitment to their church through their offerings.

In previous reports I have asked that, if you miss a Sunday's attendance, to put your weekly offering amount aside and put in two weeks offering the following Sunday. I am pleased to say that more people are now doing this.

While we can still meet all our financial commitments this is only possible because of our ability to reclaim tax on those offerings made to the church which are linked to Gift Aid. Each year we reclaim more than £11,000 from HMRC. Many people shy away from anything that involves the tax man, but linking offerings to Gift Aid is perfectly painless with no form filling required. Please consider this is you have not done so already.

Regular giving is so important for us . It lets us know that we will have sufficient income to meet our regular expenditure.

Non-regular giving such as bequests or special donations is a welcome bonus as we are then able to consider other improvements to the church properties.

This was the case with the wonderful bequest we received in January 2024 when Gordon and Betty Craig in their wills left to the church a legacy in excess of £26,000. Part of this enabled us to carry out the badly needed renovation of the kitchen in the Hall and the installation of the Audio-visual equipment in the Church and Hall.

Preparing reports for meetings and the annual accounts can be a bit time consuming with the added difficulty of trying to think of something new to grab your attention, but when I see how our congregation is constantly supporting the church, both financially and in so many other ways, it makes all my tasks a pleasure.

Thank you, one and all.

*Bill*

## APPRECIATION

Dear Folks,

Thank you very much, Portree Parish Church.

To the Nominating Committee, led by Bill, thank you all for your hard work and tireless commitment throughout the entire process- I am truly grateful.

To everyone who attended the induction service, joined the celebration at Columba 1400, shared in conversation, or offered gifts, thank you!

A special thanks to all who helped make that day so meaningful and memorable through your prayers, your time, and your efforts.

Once again, thank you all, and may God bless you richly!

*Beckie Bartocho*

*On Saturday 28 June, at the Social event held in Columbsa1400 following the induction service for Rev.Rebeccah Bartocho (or Beckie as she likes to be known) the following summary of Beckie's journey with God was read out to those present.*

I was born and grew up in Kenya in a Christian family, where my mum (Rosemary) was the first person to introduce me and my five siblings to the faith. Her deep love for God and faithful witness left a lasting impact on my life. From an early age, I was surrounded by a strong sense of prayer, a nurturing community of believers, and a heart for service — all of which shaped both my character and my sense of purpose. These formative years laid the foundation for my calling into ministry and inspired within me a deep love for mission and compassion.

In 2016, after completing my theological training, I responded to God's call to full-time ministry. Since then, I have been privileged to serve in a variety of settings, including institutional chaplaincy and parish ministry across both urban and rural Kenya. It has been a profound honour to be counted among the first generation of women ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament by the Reformed Church of East Africa.

Throughout my ministry, I have been deeply involved in mission work across Kenya. In 2020, God called me to serve God's people in Scotland, and in 2022 I began that chapter of my journey. I have served with diverse congregations within the Glasgow Presbytery, and now here in Skye.



## ST COLUMBA OF IONA

In 563 AD St Columba sailed from Ireland to Iona – a tiny island off Mull, in the Western Highlands. He brought Christianity with him.

Columba (c. 521 -97) was born in Donegal of the royal Ui Neill clan, and he trained as a monk. He founded the monasteries of Derry (546), Durrow (c.556) and probably Kells. But in 565 Columba left Ireland with twelve companions for Iona, an island off southwest Scotland. Iona had been given to him for a monastery by the ruler of the Irish Dalriada.

Why would a monk in his mid-40s go into such voluntary exile? Various explanations include: voluntary exile for Christ, an attempt to help overseas compatriots in their struggle for survival, or even as some sort of punishment for his part in a row over a psalter in Ireland. Whatever the reason, Columba went to Iona and spent the rest of his life in Scotland, returning to Ireland only for occasional visits.

Columba's biographer, Adomnan, portrays him as a tall, striking figure of powerful build and impressive presence, who combined the skills of scholar, poet and ruler with a fearless commitment to God's cause. Able, ardent, and sometimes harsh, Columba seems to have mellowed with age.

As well as building his monastery on Iona, Columba also converted Brude, king of the Picts. Columba had great skill as a scribe, and an example of this can be seen in the Cathach of Columba, a late 6th century psalter in the Irish Academy, which is the oldest surviving example of Irish majuscule writing. In his later years Columba spent much time transcribing books.

Columba's death was apparently foreseen by his community, and even, it seems, sensed by his favourite horse. He died in the church just before Matins, and it is a tribute to this man that his traditions were upheld by his followers for about a century, not least in the Synod of Whitby and in Irish monasteries on the continent of Europe.

*Here is a prayer of St Columba:*

Christ With Us

My dearest Lord,

Be Thou a bright flame before me,

Be Thou a guiding star above me,

Be Thou a smooth path beneath me,

Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me,

Today and evermore.



## PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd  
he says I lack nothing  
but honestly some days it feels like I lack everything  
time, energy, patience, hope

Then he makes me lie down  
I don't go willingly  
I've got too much to prove  
too many plates spinning  
but he knows me better than I know myself  
he knows I'll run till I drop  
so sometimes he just says  
stop  
lie down right here  
on this patch of soft grass  
let the sun warm your face  
let your shoulders loosen

He leads me beside quiet waters  
not the roaring sea of my to-do list  
not the swirling current of guilt and comparison  
quiet waters  
where my reflection isn't a stranger  
where I can see how tired I am  
and know that's okay

He refreshes my soul  
not just my body  
not just my mind  
but the deep down places I keep locked up  
the parts that forgot what laughter feels like  
the tender bits that bruise so easily  
he says rest isn't lazy  
rest isn't selfish  
it's sacred

It's the way he tends to me  
brushes the dust off my skin  
puts balm on my cracked heart  
whispers you're allowed to pause  
you're allowed to breathe  
you're allowed to be cared for

So let him shepherd you  
let him slow your frantic pace  
let him take your hand  
and lead you to stillness  
where your soul can be restored  
and you can remember  
you were never meant to do it all on your own

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*Psalm 23: 1-3*

*Reproduced by kind permission*

*Facebook: Whispers of Grace*

*Submitted by Donna McEwan*

## CLARE OF ASSISI - A LIFE OF PRAYER AND SIMPLICITY

In the year 1212 Clare, the 18-year-old daughter of a local Count, heard a young preacher called Francis. A few years earlier he had caused a sensation in the centre of the town where they both lived, Assisi in Italy, by stripping himself of his wealthy clothes and declaring that from now on he would live the life of a peasant. This, he said, was in obedience to the call of Christ, for whom the poor were 'blessed' and the rich were in peril of judgment.

Francis gathered a group of seven men prepared to embrace what he called 'joyful poverty' for Christ's sake, but that day he was to enlist a female disciple. 'You are a chosen soul from God', he told Clare, when she expressed her eagerness to embrace the same strict rule as his male followers.

In due course, after a period in a Benedictine convent, Clare and her sister Agnes moved into the church of St Damiano, which Francis and his friends had restored, and gathered there a group of like-minded women. Eventually Francis made Clare the abbess of a religious Order, at first called the 'Order of Poor Ladies', eventually, and universally, to be known as the 'Poor Clares'. Unable to operate an itinerant ministry like the men, Clare's sisters concentrated on a life of prayer and simplicity. In fact, their dedication to poverty was such that it affected the health of many of them.

Francis and Clare remained friends and colleagues over the next 14 years in this remarkable movement of renewal and mission. During the preceding century (as we can learn from Chaucer, among others) the religious Orders had in many cases substituted indulgence for discipline. Francis and Clare found this scandalous, and despite opposition from high places, set out to demonstrate that an effective Christian message required an appropriate Christian life-style. For them, poverty was not a burden but a joy - a release from the delusions of power and ambition. Their witness made an enormous impact on the poor people of Umbria and beyond, who saw an authenticity in their lives which spoke as eloquently as their words.

Clare helped to nurse Francis through his final illness, which lasted several years. She lived for 27 years after his death, like him suffering from the effects of long years of strict austerity. She died in 1253 and was canonised two years later. She is buried in the basilica of St Clare in Assisi, a few hundred yards from the basilica of St Francis. In life they proclaimed the same message of sacrificial love and service, and in their deaths they were not divided.

### ***Some thoughts on 'living well' in difficult times...***

Make the least ado about your greatest gifts. Be content to act, and leave the talking to others. - *Baltasar Gracian*

The quality of life is determined by its activities. - *Aristotle*

No great achievement is possible without persistent work. - *Bertrand Russell*

Shattered dreams are a hallmark of our mortal life. - *Martin Luther King*

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.  
- *2 Timothy 4:7*



## THANK GOD FOR FARMERS!

*This August we are being asked to remember farmers. This prayer contemplates where our food comes from, and then celebrates the work of the farmers who produce it.*

Cabbages come in polythene bags, devoid of hidden insects and other creepy crawlies. Potatoes are mud free and ready for the oven. Meat is presented in sterile packs whilst milk is pasteurised and semi skimmed in conveniently shaped containers that fit in the fridge.

It's all a million miles from where the story began, and the world of those who should tell it. Those who prepare the land, plough it and cultivate it; sow it and plant it, weed it and spray it, irrigate it and harvest it, and sort and transport the crop that's produced.

Those who calve the cow, stay with it and tend it; feed it and milk it, help with the birth and watch the calf grow. Who tag it and protect it, nurture it and feed it, until it's ready for market as a strong healthy beast. So many hours and so much skill.

Generations of experience, tending the land and caring for stock. So much effort, so many risks, the weather, disease, the whim of the market all to put food on my plate.

Lord, we thank you for those who produce the food that we eat, for their commitment and effort, their knowledge, their skills. And forgive us, we pray, that we take them for granted, forget what they do and ignore what we owe.

May we value their work and all it produces, May we give them the respect and the appreciation they deserve. And may we give You the glory, as Creator Provider, the giver of all that we now thank You for.

Amen



## “IF WE DON’T HELP, NO ONE WILL”

Dear Friend,

Several weeks ago, Thander Bo, who works for The Leprosy Mission in Myanmar, came to visit our office. While there, she told us of the horror the people of Myanmar are facing right now. It shocked me to hear story after story of people, made in God’s image like you and me, desperately clinging to the edge of existence. Today, a shocking humanitarian crisis is crushing those who already have nothing.

Families have been shattered by years of civil war. The devastating earthquake in March only added to their fear and suffering. Survival is a daily struggle. And as in any disaster, people living in poverty and those with leprosy are forgotten.

It’s impossible to get leprosy care. Many hospitals are closed. Landmines and fighting make travelling to the few open clinics dangerous.

People like Zaw Win (opposite) need to be found and cured before disability strikes. Many also need vital surgery to restore movement to hands and feet. Perhaps most of all, they need to know someone cares.

Together, we must act now. Will you help bring urgent medical care to war-torn communities in Myanmar today?

Time and time again, you have been there for people like Zaw Win. That’s why I’m asking for your support today. If we don’t help them, no one else will.



Your compassion will send health volunteers into communities, bringing care and hope to people who have nowhere left to turn.

£184 provides essential medical supplies for two months.

For £282, you can train, equip and send out a community health volunteer for three months. You can ensure people with leprosy are found and cured quickly to prevent disability.

With a gift of £1,362 you can set up three mobile reconstructive surgery clinics. These specialist operations will restore movement to hands and feet, healing lives broken by leprosy.

Please, will you give what you can to stop leprosy from devastating lives in Myanmar?

By choosing to act today, you are bringing life-changing care to communities enduring the trauma of leprosy and war. And you’re restoring precious hope, showing people affected by leprosy that they are not alone.

Thank you so much for your incredible compassion. In the name of Jesus, you are transforming lives forever.

Every blessing,

**Rachel Ormston** Partnerships Advisor

Donations can be made at [leprosymission.org.uk/donate](https://leprosymission.org.uk/donate)

*Submitted by Mairi Nicolson*

## ***Praying with the Prayers of the Bible - Praying with Penitential Tears***

*Psalm 51:2; 'Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.'*

Psalm 51 is the most personal, the most passionate and the most profound prayer for forgiveness found anywhere in the Bible.

Without any introduction, explanation or excuse, the Psalmist cries out, 'Have mercy on me, O God.' Jewish and Christian scholars have been almost unanimous in seeing this Psalm as David's personal prayer for pardon, following his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and then scheming to have her husband Uriah killed (2 Samuel 11).

As we go through the Psalm, its various stages take us from deep contrition to joyful testimony. First, the confession; vv.1-4. As David bares his soul to God, there is no blaming other people, no excuses made, no pleading special circumstances.

'Have mercy on *me*, O God.' Notice the personal pronouns. 'My transgressions,' twice (vv.1 and 3); 'my iniquity,' 'my sin,' twice (vv.2 and 3). And David knows that while he has sinned against his own family and against the murdered Uriah, all sin is ultimately against God. 'Against Thee, thee only, have I sinned' (v.4).

Second, the condition; vv.5-6. While David alone is responsible for the sins he has committed, he recognises that he is part of fallen, sinful humanity. Both Judaism and Christianity have a doctrine of original sin. So deep and all pervasive is the condition of fallen humanity that he speaks of being 'conceived' in sin and 'brought forth' in iniquity (v.5).

Although some commentators have tried to dismiss this teaching here by saying that David was conceived out of wedlock, its implications are far more profound. In v.6 he speaks about 'the inward being' and 'my secret heart.' David knows only too well that behind the sins he has committed lies a human heart prone to sin, attracted by sin and enticed to sin.

Third, the cleansing; vv. 7-12. With this deep, penitential confession of his transgressions, his iniquity and his sin, David now cries out for the only remedy – God's power to conquer human sin. The prayer began with a plea for mercy (v.1) and then followed the repeated petitions for the 'blotting out,' the 'washing' and the 'cleansing' from sin. Now the plea is for something deeper still; 'Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.' (v.7).

But David wants still more, and so we have the prayer in v.10; 'Create in me a clean heart.' And still David prays, 'Cast me not away from Your presence and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.'

Resulting from this sincere confession and heart-felt prayer for forgiveness and cleansing, comes the assurance of God's gracious answer. When David is spiritually restored, he will teach others the way of God's salvation (v.13) and praise God for his own deliverance (v.14).

So Psalm 51 promises forgiveness, cleansing, restoration and a place to serve God *when* we, in true penitence, make the same unqualified confessions of our sins.

*Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle, a former Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology & Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester.*



# THE GRAND PHYSICIAN

Health is something we all take for granted in this life. A good friend of mine used to regularly remark “Your health is your wealth.” When we have our health, it allows us to fulfil all our ambitions be it professional, sporting, or spiritual. Health after our faith is the second foundation by which we lead our lives.

But what if suddenly your health were to fail? Suddenly you do not have the independence you used to have, and you cannot lead as full a life as you wished. At this point many of us would seek the care and help of a doctor. We can make an appointment to see them and sit in the physicians’ office and explain in detail the issues we are experiencing with our health.

The doctor will listen carefully to our issues and eventually provide a diagnosis and treatment plan. Depending on the health condition, our treatment could take days, months or even years. But many conditions now can now be treated and healed.

But what if the health of our souls is called into question? Whom do we seek for treatment should our spiritual health be failing and we find ourselves in hopelessness and despair?

In the gospel of Luke, we read about Luke’s witness to Jesus sitting with tax collectors and sinners. Just before Jesus sat with these individuals he had done nothing less than heal a man with leprosy and healed a paralyzed man. Healing was a central pillar of Jesus’s ministry.

Having healed these two individuals of their physical afflictions, Jesus then went on to show that just as the body required treatment for ill health, so too the soul requires treatment for ill health. In Luke chapter 5 verses 27 to 31 we read:

*“After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. “Follow me,” Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything, and followed him. Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”*

*Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*

Jesus sits and eats with the tax collectors and sinners. There I believe Jesus would proclaim the gospel of truth given to him by the Father to these individuals.

When we read the gospels, one of the consistent criticisms of Jesus from the existing religious order at the time was why he associated with sinners. Jesus is clear that these

individuals are the very ones he is here to help. But these individuals do not have a physical sickness, they have a spiritual sickness.

What is the diagnosis we might wonder? The news is not good for the patient. The condition is the fallen nature of mankind and is untreatable by human means. Worse than that, the prognosis is not good. A sinful nature if left untreated is terminal and leads to spiritual death.

What hope is there for the patient?

We are reading the account of this event through the eyes of our observer Luke. Luke was one of the most highly educated apostles and is believed to have been Greek in origin evidenced by his excellent command of the Greek Language. In the book of Colossians Chapter 4 verse 14 Paul describes Luke as *“Our dear friend Luke, the doctor”*. Therefore, Luke more than any other individual near Christ at that moment, fully comprehended the profoundness of his words.

The patients have a terminal illness called sin. This illness has spread throughout the land and all existing treatment methods have failed.

The Grand Physician who sat at the right hand of power is so moved by the sickness of the sons or daughters of men that a divine intervention is initiated. It is a search and save operation launched from the heights of Heaven itself – orchestrated and delivered by the King of creation.

In this house in the Middle East 2000 years ago, Luke watches as the Christ provides medicine to these sick individuals. But what is the medicine of choice chosen by The Grand Physician? If we have a headache we can take a tablet. But what is the treatment for a fallen nature?

The medicine of Jesus is his gospel of truth given to him by the Father. It is a gospel that not only shows us the truth of existence but also teaches about Gods character, his standards and what he expects from us. It not only teaches us of the origins of the spiritual illness of sin but also how we can overcome it.

Jesus taught the crowds that *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* This treatment plan does take months and years, but by simply proclaiming Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and following his commands we shall not perish but inherit eternal life. Suddenly a terminal condition has been nullified. Suddenly there is hope beyond the grave for the souls of the sons and daughters of men.

The Grand Physician has administered his medicine, and the gospel begins to spread throughout the Earth. But what if there are patients who refuse the treatment plan? What will happen to them?

There are no alternative treatments for our sinful nature. There are no second chances once our time on Earth is finished. We either accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, or we reject him. We either take the spiritual medicine of renewal through Christ, or we reject it and perish in our sins.

There is only one way to eternal salvation – belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. By that belief we can allow Jesus and his Father to enter our lives and renew our souls and help us to overcome our sinful nature.

Just as a doctor desires that his patients be made well from their afflictions, so too the Lord desires that we should not perish but inherit eternal life. As we read in 2 Peter Chapter 3 verse 9: *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

Let us take heart brothers and sisters that we have a Father in Heaven who loves us and through his son brought life where there was once death. That through this divine intervention through our Lord Jesus Christ there is now hope beyond the grave for all who believe in his name.

He will forever be the Grand Physician, healing not just physical ills, but also spiritual ills.

Amen.

Hugh Campbell

Portree Church of Scotland

### *Miscellaneous observations on our Christian pilgrimage...*

Prayer is the breath of faith. Prayer meetings are the lungs of the church. - *C H Spurgeon*

Many of us cannot reach the mission fields on our feet, but we can reach them on our knees. - *T J Bach*

Prayer is not a convenient device for imposing our will upon God, or bending His will to ours, but the prescribed way of subordinating our will to His. - *John R W Stott*.

Humility, after the first shock, is a cheerful virtue. - *C S Lewis*



## GOD IN THE SCIENCES

*Dr Ruth Bancewicz is based at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

### Keeping Calm in the Storm

One of the most famous stories about Jesus is the calming of the storm (Luke 8:22-25). Of course, anyone could say that the wind stopped suddenly of its own accord, but the disciples were not fooled. They had seen a number of these 'coincidences' in Jesus' ministry, and they weren't about to ignore this one. Jesus had calmed the waves with only His words. Wasn't this an act of God? Who else could be in complete control of creation?



Jesus dealt graciously with the very pressing and practical issue of the raging storm before He did a bit of teaching, asking His followers "Where is your faith?" It's not surprising that they were scared, given the circumstances, but clearly Jesus expected better of them. He had already been teaching them for some time, and clearly knew they were ready to trust Him.

In similar circumstances, Christians often do several things in quick succession. We start by panicking and being afraid. After a while we might remember what we know about God's character and pray for help, trusting that whatever happens He will help us to handle it. Most often, we don't get the storm-calming effect when we ask for it, but battling on with faith and God's help is much easier than trying to keep going in a panic.

'Peace' in this kind of situation is a very active holding on to what we know about God. The difference between trusting and not trusting can be like night and day in terms of stress levels. I have found that it can make the difference between unmanageable stress and something that stretches me and teaches me something new.

Knowing some science can help us to trust God. A Being who created the whole universe, sustaining the wonderfully creative processes that produced diverse life on earth, must be both extremely powerful and extremely wise. The God who can both calm the waves and walk on them must be in complete control of the things He made. When this knowledge goes hand in hand with experience of God's intimate love for us and care for us in every situation that we find ourselves in, I am reassured that He's got things in hand.

I will always need help from others to pray faithfully in stormy situations, but hopefully I've seen enough now not to panic for too long.

Time (and my closest friends) will tell!

## A BUSY YEAR FOR PORTTREE CHURCH



Ross MacLean and Carrie Bruckner were married in the church on 4 April.



Sandor conducted the wedding of Laura-Catherine MacLean and Vern Pütter on 20 April







On 2 May, Grant MacRae and Iona MacInnes were married by Rev Donnie G MacDonald



On 6 May, a representative of Blythswood was invited to the Church Hall to give an illustrated talk on the work the charity does throughout the world.

As usual, tea ,coffee and chat were essential components of the activity.





During part of his annual leave, Sandor and Susan returned to Hungary where Sandor conducted the wedding ceremony for his younger daughter Szeréna and Zsolt



On Sunday 22 June, five members of our congregation were ordained as Elders

**Your** new Kirk Session







Friday 08 August  
Preparing shoe boxes for the  
Blythwood Shoe Box Appeal



On Sunday 17 August, Sandor  
baptised his fourth grand-  
daughter, Ava Rowan Fazakas

Ava Rowan with her three  
cousins, Hanna, Liza and Flora



After the baptism, Hanna, Flora  
and Liza sang a traditional  
Hungarian hymn



The assembled families

## THE TRANSFIGURATION - A GLIMPSE OF JESUS' FUTURE GLORY

The story is told in Matthew (17:1-9), Mark (9:1-9) and Luke (9:28-36).

It was a time when Jesus' ministry was popular, when people were seeking Him out. But on this day, He made time to take Peter, James and John, His closest disciples, up a high mountain. In the fourth century, Cyrillic of Jerusalem identified it as Mount Tabor (and there is a great church up there today), but others believe it more likely to have been one of the three spurs of Mount Hermon, which rises to about 9,000 feet, and overlooks Caesarea Philippi.

High up on the mountain, Jesus was suddenly transfigured before His friends. His face began to shine as the sun, His garments became white and dazzling. Elijah and Moses, of all people, suddenly appeared, and talked with Him. A bright cloud overshadowed the disciples.

Peter was staggered, but, enthusiast that he was - immediately suggested building three tabernacles on that holy place, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. But God's 'tabernacling', God's dwelling with mankind, does not any longer depend upon building a shrine. It depends on the presence of Jesus, instead. And so a cloud covered them, and a Voice spoke out of the cloud, saying that Jesus was His beloved Son, whom the disciple should 'hear'. God's dwelling with mankind depends upon our listening to Jesus.

Then, just as suddenly, it is all over. What did it mean? Why Moses and Elijah? Well, these two men represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they are handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their true and final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

Why on top of a mountain? In Exodus we read that Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the sacred covenant from Yahweh in the form of the Ten Commandments. Now Jesus goes up and is told about the 'sealing' of the New Covenant, or New Testament of God with man, which will be accomplished by His coming death in Jerusalem.

That day made a lifelong impact on the disciples. Peter mentions it in his second letter, 2 Peter 1:16 - 19 - invariably the reading for this day.

The Eastern Churches have long held the Transfiguration as a feast as important as Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension and Pentecost. But it took a long time for the West to observe the Transfiguration. The feast starts appearing from the 11th and 12th centuries, and the Prayer Book included it among the calendar dates, but there was no liturgical provision for it until the 19th century.

## JOHN BUNYAN – THE MAN WHO WROTE PILGRIM’S PROGRESS

After the Bible, John Bunyan’s wonderful Christian allegory, the Pilgrim’s Progress, is one of the most celebrated and widely-read books in the English language. It has been translated into more than one hundred languages around the world and keeps its place as a Christian classic.

Names of people and places from its pages have been commonplace wherever English is spoken. We need only recall Mr Great-Heart, Mr Valiant-for-Truth, Giant Despair, Madame Bubble, the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, the Delectable Mountains, the Hill Difficulty and the Celestial City.

Bunyan was born on 28 November 1628, at Elstow, near Bedford, England, of a poor family. He had little formal education and his father taught him to be a metal worker. His first wife died young. His second wife, Elizabeth, helped him considerably with his blossoming literary career. His conversion was the result of reading the Bible, and the witness of local Christians. From that time the Bible became the great inspiration of his life. He wrote more than fifty books on Christianity. A Baptist by conviction, he had little time for the Established Church.

Bunyan became a popular preacher, but because of his opposition to the Established Church and because he did not have a Church of England preaching licence, he was imprisoned in 1661. It was in prison that he wrote Pilgrim’s Progress. It was not only Bunyan’s greatest book but was destined to become one of the most popular Christian books in the world.

Pilgrim’s Progress is an allegory, using the names of people and places from the Bible to teach spiritual lessons. The vivid and unforgettable imagery in the Pilgrim’s Progress covers the whole Christian gospel from sin and condemnation all the way through faith, repentance, grace, justification, sanctification, and perseverance to heaven itself.

Bunyan died on 31 August 1688. His portrayal of the death of Mr Valiant For Truth is Bunyan at his allegorical best. This brave old soldier of Jesus Christ had received his summons to ‘go home.’ Calling his friends together he says, *‘My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my pilgrimage ... My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought His battles, Who will now be my rewarder.’ ... So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side...*



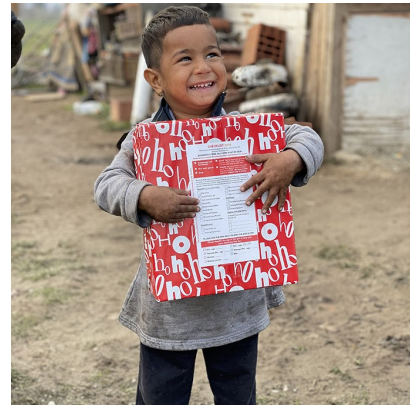


## BLYTHSWOOD SHOEBOX APPEAL FOR CHRISTMAS 2025

Many in our congregation have been involved over the years in the annual Blythswood Christmas shoebox appeal, since it started in 1983. Boxes are individually wrapped, and filled with small, practical items such as toiletries, stationery, and small essentials like a hat, scarf, socks and gloves. The filled boxes are transported to Eastern Europe by lorry, then distributed by people in partner churches and agencies to schools, hospitals, orphanages and care homes, and to households in very low income communities. Many have gone to people affected by the war in Ukraine.

Here are some examples from the Blythswood website of people receiving their boxes:

This Kosovan boy is one of a family of 11 living in a one bedroom house, surrounded by mud.



This man from Western Romania only owns his walking frame and the clothes on his back. He lives in a semi-derelict building with no heating, electricity or running water

This family of 7 live in central Hungary and are very poor, with no running water and using firewood that they collect for heating.





This boy is from the Roma community in central Bulgaria, one of 7 children who live with their parents in 1 room.

This year our church has decided to get involved in the shoebox appeal as a joint effort since there are many benefits to working together on practical projects like this. We've already made a start by having a very productive and enjoyable **shoebox wrapping session** on Friday 8 August in the church hall. This required great concentration as you can see, and several cups of tea (with delicious baking!), and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who helped



This may seem early for Christmas, but it can take some time to find all the items for a box, and we want to be well organised for the completion date which is usually at the end of October.

## How to get involved

There are many ways to contribute to the appeal, for example:

- By wrapping and filling a box yourself
- By getting together with one or more others to fill a box
- By donating specific items such as soap, toothpaste or socks
- By giving a donation to help with transport costs

This year Portree Parish Church will be making wrapped boxes available that can be collected at any of our services, and anyone can take one if they wish. We'll also have a list of essential items on a sheet so that if you'd like to donate any particular things then it would be helpful to note that so we end up with the right balance to fill complete boxes.

You can choose who you'd like to fill a box for e.g. boy/girl, man/woman, and what age group. All the details are in the Blythwood leaflet which goes with each box, and these will also be available at the church. We've been asked if possible to fill boxes for teenage boys, so the list we're making up for particular items will focus on this age group, but boxes for all ages are very welcome.

## Finding out more

We will be providing more information at our morning service on **24 August**, which will be followed by a soup and sandwich lunch in the church hall. Its encouraging for us all to work together on an important project like this, and doing so we can achieve more than we do on our own, so we hope as many as possible will come along.

You can also find out more about the shoebox appeal on the Blythswood website at <https://blythswood.org/shoeboxappeal/>.

Catriona MacDonald

### HE IS ALWAYS THERE

It is funny that when we're in trouble  
We immediately kneel down and pray,  
And expect that the good Lord in heaven  
Will all of our fears allay.

It's amazing that when we're in crisis  
We turn to the Lord straight away,  
But we barely spare Him a moment  
When everything's going our way.

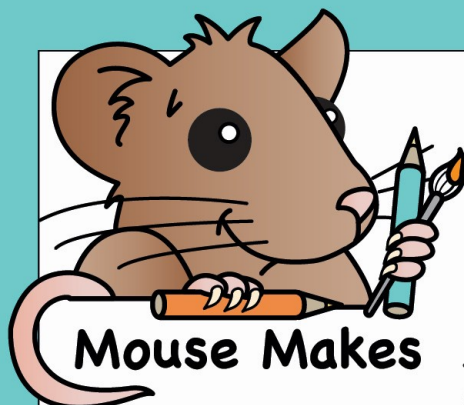
We seem to seek God when it suits us  
And we fail to keep in touch each day,  
Yet regardless how badly we treat Him  
His love means He's not far away.

So perhaps we should stop for a moment  
And give thanks to the Lord in a prayer,  
For no matter how neglectful of Him we may be  
For us, He will always be there.

*By Colin Hammacott*



# ALL AGE PUZZLE SECTION



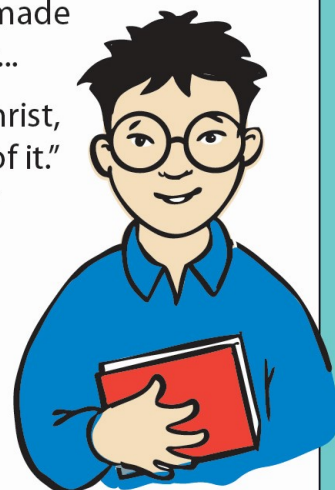
"Just as a **body**, though **one**, has **many** parts, but all its many **parts** form one body, so it is with **Christ**. For we were all baptised by one **Spirit** so as to form one body... Even so, the body is not made up of one part but of many...

...Now you are the body of Christ, and **each** one of you is part of it."

from 1 Corinthians 12:12-27



Just as the different parts of our body need each other to make a **whole**, living person so Christians need each other to make a whole living church!



"Though we are many, we are one body in **union** with Christ, and we are **joined** to each other as **different** parts of one body."

from Romans 12:1-7



K N E E S  
J O W H O L E  
T E E T H H Q J V  
E A F H E A D O E  
Y C F M A N Y I R  
H E B O D Y N Y  
C E Y E S D E F  
H T K C P M D I  
R U Q U I O I N  
I N F T R U F G  
S I M O I T F E  
T O G E T H E R  
O N O S E A R S  
N G D B Q I E N  
G I W O U A N F  
V U F A P A R T S M  
K E T L R L M V Y D  
B W S L E G S Q E B

Look in the Bible verses for the words written in **bold** then look for these words too!

GOD • TOGETHER • EQUAL • ALL • EVERY  
HEAD • EYES • EARS • MOUTH • TONGUE  
TEETH • NOSE • ARMS • HANDS • FINGERS  
LEGS • KNEES • FEET • TOES • GIFTS



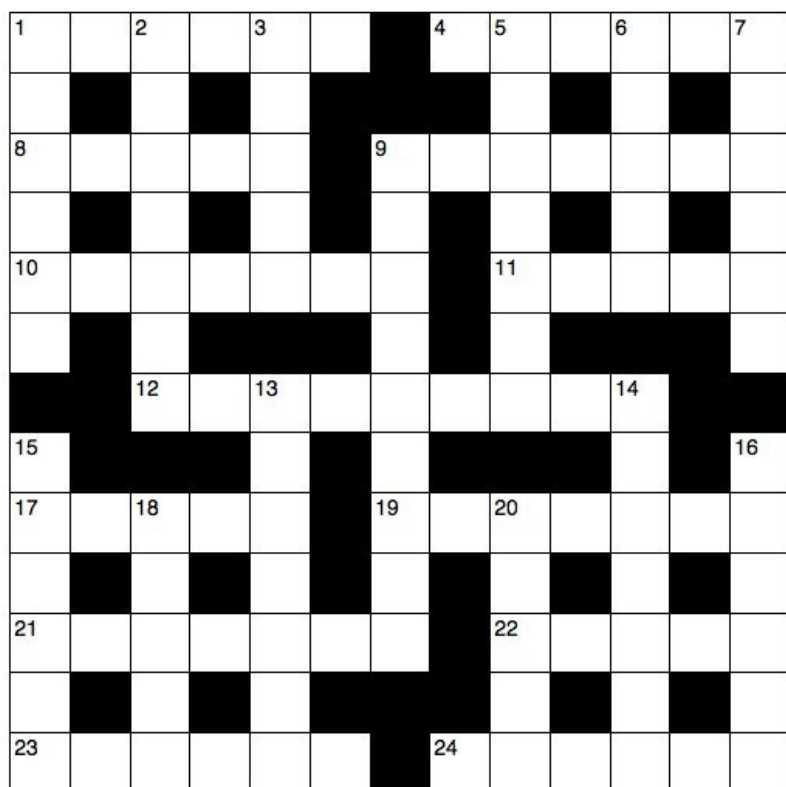
# CROSSWORD

## Across

- 1 'The people were — at his teaching' (Mark 1:22) (6)
- 4 'He saved —; let him save himself' (Luke 23:35) (6)
- 8 He addressed the crowd in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14) (5)
- 9 Father of James and John (Matthew 4:21) (7)
- 10 One who charges another with an offence (Job 31:35) (7)
- 11 ' — thy ministers with righteousness' (Book of Common Prayer) (5)
- 12 and 15 Down 'All — is God-breathed and is — for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16) (9,6)
- 17 'No — of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up' (Genesis 2:5) (5)
- 19 Made to feel embarrassed (Isaiah 24:23) (7)
- 21 This man built his house on sand (Matthew 7:26) (7)
- 22 David's hypocritical message to Joab on the death in battle of Uriah: 'Don't let this — you' (2 Samuel 11:25) (5)
- 23 Detest (Job 10:1) (6)
- 24 'God made two great lights, the greater light to govern the day and the — light to govern the night' (Genesis 1:16) (6)

## Down

- 1 To make a serious request (1 Corinthians 1:10) (6)
- 2 Launches an assault against (Genesis 32:8) (7)
- 3 'The wicked man — deceptive wages' (Proverbs 11:18) (5)
- 5 Tuba ale (anag.) (7)
- 6 'The day thou gavest, Lord, is — ' (5)
- 7 Old Testament measure of weight, equivalent to about 12 grammes (Exodus 30:13) (6)
- 9 Where Elijah restored life to the son of a widow with whom he lodged (1 Kings 17:10) (9)
- 13 Paul said of whatever was to his profit, 'I consider them — , that I may gain Christ and be found in him' (Philippians 3:8) (7)
- 14 City visited by Paul, described by the city clerk as 'the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis' (Acts 19:35) (7)
- 15 See 12 Across
- 16 Rioted (anag.) (6)
- 18 She had a surprise when she answered the door and found 8 Across outside (Acts 12:13) (5)
- 20 Maltreat (1 Chronicles 10:4) (5)



# SUDOKU

		7	3					
		4			6		3	9
	9			7				4
5		9		2				
						4		2
2				6			1	
1	3		5			2		
					4	5		

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The solutions to these puzzles are given on Page 39

# WORDSEARCH – THE TRANSFIGURATION

The story of the Transfiguration is told in Matthew (17:1-9), Mark (9:1-9) and Luke (9:28-36).

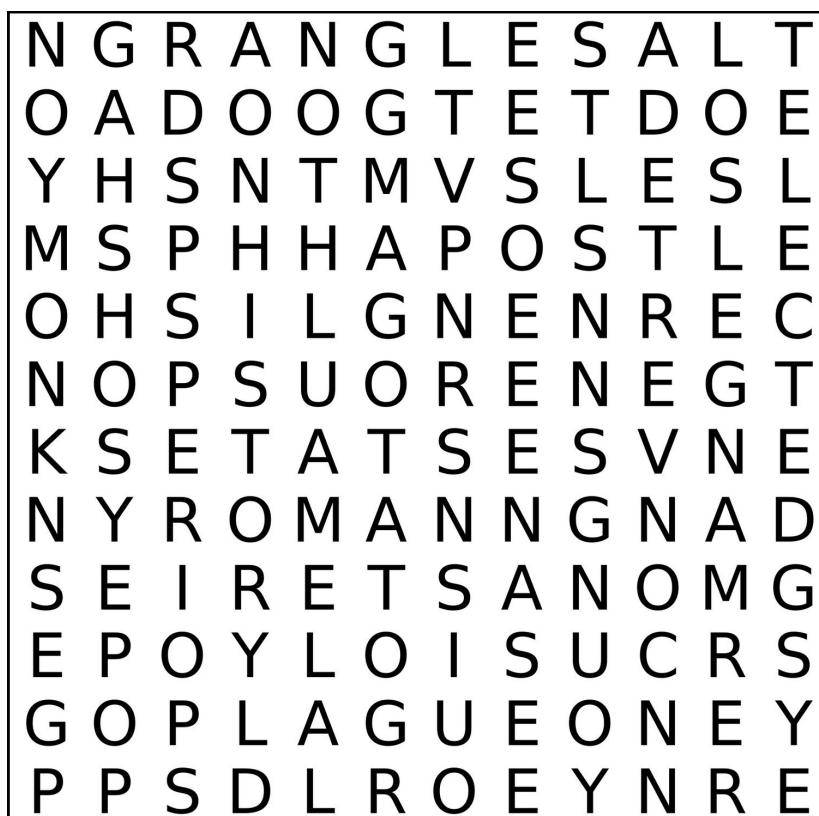
On that day, high up on a mountain, Peter, James and John were given a glimpse of Jesus' true glory. For Jesus' face began to shine as the sun, and his garments became white and dazzling. Then Elijah and Moses, suddenly appeared, talking with him.

Overwhelmed, Peter offered to build three tabernacles on that holy place, one for each. But God's 'tabernacling', or God's *dwelling* with mankind, does not any longer depend upon building a shrine. It depends on being in the presence of Jesus, instead. And so a bright cloud covered them, and a voice spoke, saying that Jesus was his beloved son, whom the disciples should 'hear'. God's dwelling with mankind depends upon our *listening* to Jesus.

*Why did Moses and Elijah appear?* They represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they were handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

*Find the following words in the Transfiguration grid.*

*Transfiguration, high, mountain, glimpse, glory, shine, sun, garments, dazzling, appeared, moses, tabernacles, holy, dwelling, shrine, presence, Jesus, bright, cloud, mankind, listen, law, prophets, handing, fulfilment*





## BARNABAS , PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY COMPANION

Would you have liked to go to Cyprus on holiday this year? If so, spare a thought for the Cypriot who played such a key role in the New Testament.

He was Joseph, a Jewish Cypriot and a Levite, who is first mentioned in Acts 4:36, when the Early Church was sharing a communal lifestyle. Joseph sold a field and gave the money to the apostles. His support so touched them that they gave him the nickname of Barnabas, 'Son of Encouragement'.

Barnabas has two great claims to fame. Firstly, it was Barnabas who made the journey to go and fetch the converted Paul out of Tarsus, and persuade him to go with him to Antioch, where there were many new believers with no one to help them. For a year the two men ministered there, establishing a church. It was here that the believers were first called Christians.

It was also in Antioch (Acts 13) that the Holy Spirit led the church to 'set aside' Barnabas and Paul, and to send them out on the church's first ever 'missionary journey'. The Bible tells us that they went to Cyprus, and then travelled throughout the island. It was at Lystra that the locals mistook Barnabas for Zeus and Paul for Hermes, much to their dismay.

Much later, back in Jerusalem, Barnabas and Paul decided to part company. While Paul travelled on to Syria, Barnabas did what he could do best: return to Cyprus and continue to evangelise it. So, if you go to Cyprus and see churches, remember that Christianity on that beautiful island goes right back to Acts 13, when Barnabas and Paul first arrived.



Barnabas the generous, the encourager, the apostle who loved his own people – no wonder he should be remembered with love.

### QUOTES - *With our world leaders in mind....*

Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power. - *Abraham Lincoln*

Being a character and having a character are NOT the same thing. - *Anon*

Only those who do not desire power are fit to hold it. - *Plato*

Power intoxicates men. - *James F Byrnes*

It's dangerous to try and be number one, because it's next to nothing. - *Anon*

It is easier to look wise than to talk wisely. – *Ambrose*

Never expect to govern others until you have learned to govern yourself. - *Anon*

## FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE – NURSE, SOCIAL REFORMER

If you have a strong sense of calling from God, then you will well understand Florence Nightingale. At the age of 16 she felt God was calling her to some great lifework, and so she determined to avoid marriage, and thus be available to obey Him.

Florence had been born in Italy in 1820, while her parents were travelling - hence her name. But she grew up at Lea Hurst in Derbyshire. Her parents were Unitarian, but Florence later joined the Anglican Church.

Florence had a strong sense of God's personal presence in her life, and in 1844, when she was 24, Florence came to believe that her calling was to nurse the sick. In 1849 she set off to study nursing in the hospitals of Europe.

It was on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 1850 that she wrote in her diary: 'Today I am 30 – the age Christ began His mission. Now no more childish things. No more love. No more marriage. Now Lord let me think only of Thy will, what Thou wilt me to do.'

Later that same year she went to train in the hospital of Alexandria in Egypt, and then the Lutheran Deaconess Institute at Kaiserwerth in Germany. In 1853 she returned to England, and was appointed superintendent of the Hospital for Invalid Gentlewomen in London.

Then the following year, 1854, war broke out in the Crimea. Florence contacted friends in high places, and soon got permission to take 38 nurses to serve at the military hospitals at Scutari in Turkey, and later Balaklava in the Crimea. These hospitals were dreadful places, but with better nursing and better sanitation, the mortality rate among the sick and wounded men soon fell dramatically.

When, by night, Florence took to patrolling the hospital wards, carrying a dim lamp, the legend of 'the Lady with the Lamp' was born.



After the Crimean war, Florence returned to England determined to establish the first professional nurse training scheme in the country. She found a base at St Thomas' Hospital in London, and through her efforts the stature of nursing gradually rose to become that of a respected medical profession.

But Florence had been working too long and too hard, and now her own health broke down, and she became an invalid. But she was not forgotten, and the honours rolled in. In 1907 she became the first woman to receive the Order of Merit. Florence died in London on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1910, aged 90, and was buried in St Margaret's, East Wellow, in Hampshire. Her tombstone says simply: F.N. 1820 – 1910.

## LOOKING BACK ON JAWS – 50 YEARS ON

The shark that came to Amity Island for dinner – most people aged 60 and over remember him as the scariest fish they ever saw.

As this summer the famous film celebrates its golden anniversary, here are some fun facts about the film which you may not have known...



1. When *Jaws* was released in the summer of 1975, its 28-year-old director Stephen Spielberg was very nervous – making the film had been beset with disasters. He worried that he might never work on films again. But *Jaws* was an instant success – spending 14 consecutive weeks at number one in the USA and eventually grossing \$470 million worldwide.
2. *Jaws* was shot on the island of Martha's Vineyard, and scared people so badly that seaside resorts on the eastern US coastline reported a marked downturn in visitors that summer.
3. *Jaws* is based on the 1974 novel by Peter Benchley, who was inspired by the Jersey Shore shark attacks of 1916. Five attacks, four fatal, had left New Jersey residents terrified of the water.
4. The three 1.2 ton, 25-ft-long pneumatically powered sharks were given a name on the film set – Bruce. They were named after Spielberg's lawyer, Bruce Ramer.
5. These mechanical sharks were so prone to malfunction that the script was rewritten, so as not even to show the shark until one hour and 21 minutes into the film. But this served as a stroke of genius – for it allowed the tension to build and build.
6. There were endless problems on the set: bad weather, water-logged equipment and even the main boat sinking. The actors were often seasick, and sometimes feuding. The 55-day schedule overran to 159 days, raising the budget from £3.5m to \$9m.
7. George Lucas, who visited his pal Spielberg on the set, got his head stuck in the shark's mouth. They nearly broke the mechanical shark in their frantic efforts to free him.
8. The film's most famous line, 'You're gonna need a bigger boat', uttered by Chief Brody (Roy Scheider) when he first saw the shark, was not in the script, but improvised. The film crew had been constantly saying it in their complaints about the support vessel on set.
9. When Spielberg first heard composer John Williams' score for the film, the famous 'dun-dun', played on a tuba, he thought it was a joke. Later he said it was 50% responsible for making the film a smash hit.
10. *Jaws* has not been good for the conservation of sharks. It reportedly led to an increase in killings, much to Spielberg's regret.

## The Nurses' Chapel

In March, along with a nurse/midwife friend, I visited the Nurses' Chapel in St Andrews Cathedral in Glasgow. The chapel is housed downstairs in the cathedral.



It is a place of prayer and meditation for members of the nursing profession.

Eight chairs are embroidered with bible verses from Genesis 1 : 29 – 30

*“Behold I have given every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth and the fruit of every tree yielding seed, and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to all things that creepeth upon the earth where there is life. I have given every green herb for meat”*

What is the significance of this to nursing ?

*“Behold I have given every herb bearing seed”* - This is illustrated by the hand of God reaching down holding a poppy and its seeds. In medicine, the poppy is used in the production of morphine.

*“Which is upon the face of all the earth”* – The earth, which is often used as a symbol of the Church, gives man shelter, as does the Church. – The illustration on this chair shows a cross planted in the earth along with a thistle. The cross is symbolic of the crucifixion, and the thistle is used in the preparation of drugs for digestive disorders.

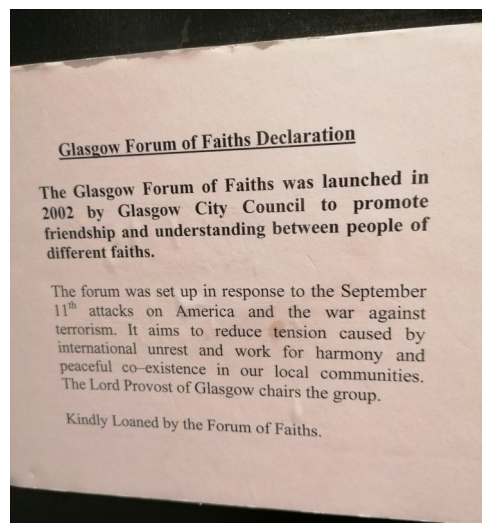
*“The fruit of every tree yielding seed”* - The illustration on this chair is a tree and the herb is deadly nightshade (Belladonna) which is used in the production of antispasmodics to relieve acute inflammation and cholic. It is also used in Neurology and Ophthalmology.

*“To every beast of the earth”* – The chair shows a horse and a clover leaf. The horse is an ancient symbol of the sun which represents the life giving source and the clover leaf is a Christian symbol of the Holy Trinity. Among the stems of the clover is the St Andrew's Cross which, besides being the symbol of Scotland is also a symbol of humility and suffering

*“To every fowl of the air”* – The illustration is of an owl and mistletoe. The owl is a symbol of wisdom reflecting the wisdom of Christ who sacrificed himself to save mankind and *“to give light to them that live in darkness and the shadow of death”* (Luke 1 : 79). The mistletoe is used by some physicians for preparations in the treatment of cancer.

*“To all things that creepeth upon the earth”* - The serpent shown is a symbol of evil which like a disease insinuates itself throughout humanity. The herb shown is the common blueberry which in addition to being a food has leaves and seed coats which are used to produce medicine for the treatment of diabetes.

*“I have given every green herb for meat”* – The illustration depicts Eve holding an apple. Eve represents women and the apple symbolises the fruit of salvation. Eve is seen surrounded by grain. Grain is a breeding ground of *ergot fungus* which is used in obstetrics to check uterine haemorrhage (*Ergometrine*)



What I found most fascinating in the chapel was the Forum of Faiths Declaration.

Submitted by Kay MacKinnon

## **LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS**

Wide fields of corn along the valleys spread;  
The rain and dew mature the swelling vine;  
I see the Lord in multiplying bread;  
I see Him turning water into wine;

I see Him working all the works divine  
He wrought when Salem-ward His steps were led;  
The self-same miracles around Him shine;  
He feeds the famished; He revives the dead;

He pours the flood of light on darkened eyes;  
He chases tears, diseases, fiends away;  
His throne is raised upon these orient skies;  
His footstool is the pave whereon we pray....

*From a poem by John Charles Earle (1749 – 1818)*

## Faith

When your prayers at times appear to go unanswered,  
And the words of your worse doubters seem so true,  
When it seems the whole wide world is all against you,  
Just put your faith in God and you'll pull through.

When your life is like a maze with no known exit,  
And your future appears to be as black as night,  
When it seems that all your efforts end in failure,  
Just put your faith in God, he'll see you right.

For those who put their faith in God have reason,  
For confidence to face each trial and test,  
And know better times are just around the corner,  
For faith is the soft pillow that gives rest.

*By Colin Hammacott*

A churchgoer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper complaining that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

He wrote : "I've gone to church for 30 years now, and in that time, I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time ,and the preachers are wasting their time by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column.

Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher :

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of these meals.

But I do know this : They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work.

If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.

Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today."

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something !

Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the Impossible !

Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment.

IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL, YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL.

*Submitted by the Ladies' Bible Study Group*

## ALL IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST

It was 1,700 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> August 325 that the First Council of Nicaea ended with the adoption of the Nicene Creed. It summarised the Christian faith and established the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

250 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1775 that King George III issued the Proclamation of Rebellion. It stated that the American colonies were in a state of open rebellion, and must be suppressed.

150 years ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1875 that Hans Christian Andersen, Danish writer, died. Best known for his fairy tales, such as *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Ugly Duckling*, and many more.

100 years ago, on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1925 that the Welsh nationalist political party Plaid Cymru was founded. Today it holds four of the 32 Welsh seats in the UK Parliament, 12 of the 60 seats in the Senedd, and 202 of the 1,231 principal local authority councillors.

90 years ago, on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1935 that John Hartley, British tennis player, died. He was the only clergyman ever to win Wimbledon, and in fact he was world number 1 player in both 1879 and 1880 – winning Wimbledon both years.

80 years ago, on 9<sup>th</sup> August, that the US Army Air Forces dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki, killing 40,000 immediately and more than another 33,000 by the end of the year. It was (so far) the last nuclear bomb to ever be dropped.

70 years ago, on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1955 that Emmett Till, an African American teenager was mutilated and killed in Mississippi, after flirting with a white woman. His death was one of the key events to motivate the Civil Rights Movement.

65 years ago, in August 1960, the following countries gained independence: Central African Republic, Chad, Cyprus, Dahomey (Benin), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Niger, Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), Senegal, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso),

Also 65 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1960 that the Twist became a national sensation in the US, and triggered one of the biggest dance crazes, when singer Chubby Checker performed the song on the show American Bandstand.

60 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1960 that the Beatles' Album *HELP!* was released.

50 years ago, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1975 that NASA launched its Viking 1 space probe on a mission to Mars. It became the first spacecraft to land successfully on Mars, and to complete its mission.

30 years ago, on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1995 that Microsoft released both Windows 95 operating systems and also Microsoft Office 95.

20 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2005 that the last Israeli settlers left the Gaza strip, ending 38 years of occupation.

20 years ago, from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2005 that Hurricane Katrina hit the Bahamas, Cuba and several southern US states. The city of New Orleans was flooded by 80 per cent when the levee system was overwhelmed. More than 1,800 people died. It was the costliest natural disaster in US history.



## **BOOKS**

I love reading!

This May I visited Haarlem in the Netherlands because of reading about Corrie ten Boom years ago. Her family had helped Jews during the 2nd World War. They were betrayed, her father died in prison, one of her sisters died in a concentration camp. Others in the family also died. She was released from the concentration camp days before all woman of her age were killed. She went world travelling, telling about her experiences and God being with her through it all. Look out for any of her books they are well worth reading.

From the Library Van I took out "Letters from Lebanon" by Wendy Davies who went to teach there in the 1970s. She was there for part of the civil war that began in 1975 till early 1990s. She is honest about the highs and lows of her time there and the importance of relying on God in prayer.

Our church prayer meeting is at 7pm on Tuesday nights.

Lebanon is very much on the news today, so it was very interesting to read about this earlier period. You don't need to buy this book you can get it from the library!

Mairi Nicolson

### **SAINT MICHAEL**

Saint Michael, angel of the sea,  
Lord of the horses he,  
Saint Michael, of the angels king,  
Of war, of shepherding;

On steed he flies across the skies;  
The first-fruits of the harvest corn,  
The first-fruits of the flock-lambs  
born,  
Are his, he meets the soul forlorn.

The saints and angels watch o'er-  
head,  
Their wings and prayers o'erspread:  
The righteous ones in heaven wait,  
St Peter at the gate;

In might arrayed they shield and aid;  
Be with us e'er, archangel powers,  
Be with us, angels, life's long hours.

*From an ancient Celtic Poem*



## Solutions to the Puzzles on Pages 28 and 29

A	L	S	O		O	F	F	E	R	I	N	G
R		L		F		A		N		S		A
T	H	E	M	A	G	I		R	U	L	E	S
I		E		B		T		O		A		P
S	O	P	E	R		H	E	L	P	M	E	
T				I		I				I		A
I	S	A	A	C	A	N	D	J	A	C	O	B
C		R				C		A				U
	S	C	O	R	C	H		I	N	M	A	N
S		H		E		R		L		I		D
L	O	A	D	S		I	N	E	R	T	I	A
A		I		I		S		R		R		N
V	I	C	I	N	I	T	Y		B	E	L	T

6	5	7	3	4	9	8	2	1
8	2	4	1	5	6	7	3	9
3	9	1	8	7	2	6	5	4
5	8	9	4	2	1	3	7	6
4	6	2	9	3	7	1	8	5
7	1	3	6	8	5	4	9	2
2	4	5	7	6	3	9	1	8
1	3	6	5	9	8	2	4	7
9	7	8	2	1	4	5	6	3

### ***Miscellaneous observations on life today...***

If you can't shine, at least twinkle ! - *Alistair Begg*

Worry is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere. - *Anon*

People who cannot bear to be alone are the worst company. - *A Guinon*

You are only what you are when no one is looking. - *R C Edwards*

You must not always expect the wind to be at your back all the way to heaven.  
- *William Tiptaft*

Age: the only thing that comes to us without effort. - *Anon*

If you will be cherished when you are old, be courteous while you are young. - *John Lyly*



## URGENT PRAYER FOR A GLOBAL PLASTICS TREATY

Over the last few years, we've brought you many updates on **our work to secure a global plastics treaty**. Time and time again, you have faithfully responded to the call to pray and take action. You're reflecting God's love and care for the environment and communities most affected by the plastics crisis.

The fifth round of UN plastics treaty negotiations (INC-5.2) resumed on Tuesday 5 August in Geneva, Switzerland. We wanted to send you an urgent update on how you can partner with us in prayer that a plastics treaty is secured.

### Why is a global plastics treaty so important?

Plastic pollution is damaging our planet and impacting more than 2 billion people worldwide who don't have a safe way to dispose of their waste. It also affects the livelihoods of 40 million waste pickers who collect and sort waste, including plastic, for reuse and recycling. This is not God's plan for our planet or communities living in poverty.

A recent success story of fighting for a **thin plastics ban in Malawi** reminds us that not only is change desperately needed, but it is also possible when God's people work together. That's why we're calling for a **global plastics treaty** that addresses the full life cycle of plastics, from production to disposal. Simply put, this kind of ambitious, legally-binding treaty is vital for communities living in poverty.

Will you pray with us?

### How you can pray

- **Pray for ambition and courage** at the negotiations so that INC-5.2 will secure change on a global scale through a plastics treaty.
- **Pray for energy and perseverance** as our team travels and participates in the negotiations at INC-5.2. May they carry hope over despair and find God's favour going ahead of them in their conversations with negotiators and stakeholders.
- **Pray for decision-makers and negotiators** to understand the scale of the problem and to put aside politics, self-interest and corporate greed in favour of solutions that will benefit the whole world, particularly people living in poverty.
- **Pray for legally-binding targets** for countries to reduce plastic production, drastically improve waste management and scale up reuse solutions so that less waste is created.

Thank you for partnering with us in prayer as we approach a pivotal moment in the journey towards a global plastics treaty. We're so grateful for your faithful prayers and support.

Blessings,

**Eve Paterson**

*Senior Advocacy Executive*

*Submitted by Mairi Nicolson*

#### **A PRAYER FOR AUGUST 2025**

Heavenly Father,

August – summer holidays and sunny skies. All should be well and yet, around the world all is *not* well!

Every day, it seems, new wars begin, catastrophes occur, world politicians play power games - and people suffer.

It can feel overwhelming and we want to bury our heads in the sand, rather than build sandcastles on the beach.

Help us Lord, to look up; to see things with Your perspective; to remember that Jesus warned us that in this world we will have trouble. Then help us to remember that He told us to take heart, because He has overcome the world.

Father, help us to savor the summer, as we put our trust in You - our strength, our hope, our ultimate and unfailing security.

In Jesus name,

Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*

## THE ATOMIC BOMB THAT HIT HIROSHIMA

Eighty years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945, the US Army Air Forces dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima in Japan. The centre of the city was totally destroyed, and about 80,000 people were killed immediately. A further 60,000 died by the end of the year, from injury or radiation. Hiroshima was the first city in history to be hit by a nuclear weapon.

Three days later, on 9<sup>th</sup> August, the USAAF dropped another atomic bomb on Nagasaki, killing 40,000 immediately and more than another 33,000 by the end of the year. It was (so far) the last nuclear bomb ever dropped.

The world's first nuclear explosion – on land – had happened weeks earlier, on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1945, in New Mexico. This was known as the Trinity test, part of the Manhattan Project. It was called Trinity by Project scientific leader J Robert Oppenheimer, as a reflection of the Christian reality – death and resurrection – presented in the poetry of John Donne.

The Hiroshima bomb, called Little Boy, was dropped by the bomber Enola Gay and exploded about 1,800 feet above the city. Of those who died, many were vapourised by the explosion: others perished from burns and the effects of radiation. The second bomb, Fat Man, was even more powerful, but caused less destruction because of the terrain. Heavy cloud cover over Kokura, the original target, saved that city from the bomb.

The final Japanese surrender was signed on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Because of the terrifying devastation caused by the bombs, there was much criticism of their use. But Lieutenant General Leslie Groves, the military director of the Manhattan Project, argued that they ended the war, and “while they brought death and destruction on a horrifying scale, they averted even greater losses – American, English, and Japanese”.



### WHY CAN I SEE THE MOON DURING THE DAY?

It's holiday time, and you may be spending more time than usual with your children. That will give them ample opportunity to ask you those questions for which you have no answer. A survey has found the top ten questions that most stump parents are:

*Why is the moon sometimes out in the day? Why is the sky blue? Will we ever discover aliens? How much does the Earth weigh? How do aeroplanes stay in the air? Why is water wet? How do I do long division? Where do birds and bees go in the winter? What makes a rainbow? Why are there different times on earth?*

Research by the British Science Association found that two thirds of parents most dread those questions that have to do with maths or science. Prof Brian Cox, the scientist and broadcaster, has suggested that “the best thing parents can do is work with their children to find the answers – not only can it be fun, but you'll both learn something new along the way.”

## JOHN MASON NEALE, HYMN WRITER AND RE-WRITER

If you are the sort of person who looks at the small print beside hymns in the hymnal, then you may recognise the name J. M. Neale. For not only did he write some of our most beloved hymns, but he also translated many dozens more from the Latin, old German, or old French. J. M. Neale was so prolific, in fact, that fully one-tenth of the hymns in our *English Hymnal* are his.

So, who was he? Born in London in 1818, educated Trinity College Cambridge, and ordained in 1841, he was aiming for the parish of Crawley. But chronic ill health left him too weak for parish life, and so he was appointed warden of an alms-house in East Grinstead, where he lived and worked for the rest of his life.

Neale used the peace and quiet of his job to good effect: producing *All glory laud and honour, O come, O come Emmanuel*, and *Christ is made the sure foundation*, among many others.

But Neale's writing of hymns was only part of his wider passion for the worship and liturgical practices of the Early Church. Neale provided an important balance by reminding the Church of its largely forgotten Eastern heritage.

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### A STRONG HOLD

Should I slip and lose the way  
The Lord will hold me fast,  
Should I chose to walk away  
I'm firmly in His grasp.

Though I walk through death's dark vale,  
His rod and staff are there  
I would not dare to walk this path  
Without His loving care.

Although my hold on Him is light  
His loving arms are wide,  
What He's begun He will fulfil  
Till I am safe on Canaan's side.

What God is this who loves us so?  
Our future He has planned,  
We're ever safe in His embrace  
And none can snatch us from His hand.

*By Megan Carter*





August  
2025



See how the wild flowers grow! They don't work  
to earn, or craft their own clothes, but even  
King Solomon with all his wealth was not  
dressed as well as they are. Lk 12:27-28