



CHRIST CHURCH LANARK
CLYDESDALE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SUMMER 2020

*The Summer Garden.....
beautifully maintained by Joan and Brian East*



Amos 9: 14

I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit

News in the Pews.....

Robin Murdoch, the Session Clerk of St Nicholas Parish Church and a well kent face around the town and district, died after a short illness on 17th June. He leaves a wife, Margot, two grown up children, grandchildren and many, many friends. When I came to Lanark four years ago Robin went out of his way to make me feel welcome in town and church circles; and when I suffered the loss of my mother in November 2017 he was one of the first to come round to the Rectory with a card and a sympathetic word. He was a lovely man, who touched many lives with his calm and steady presence in so many areas of Lanark's civic and religious life. He will be sadly missed. In the words of his son, former Lord Cornet David: "his was a life to cherish and celebrate". Indeed it was. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Richard Harrison, who originally hailed from "Flowerhill", Belstane Road, Carluke, and who, with his parents, was a faithful attender at Christ Church when he lived in the area, got in touch with me recently to ask for some photographs of the interior of the church so that he could reminisce about the place where he was baptised, confirmed and where he gave devoted and valued service to Canon Hugh McIntosh as one of his altar boys. Richard now runs a very high-class Bed & Breakfast called "Ardoran House" on the holy island of Iona. He sends very best wishes to us all at Christ Church and extends a warm welcome to Ardoran House to any in the congregation who feel brave enough to venture that far north and west! For full details, google "Ardoran House Iona".

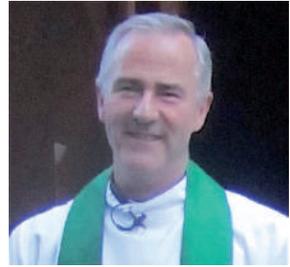
Congratulations to Gemma and Jack Horsburgh who will be hearing the pitter patter of tiny feet later in the year. Here's hoping this will be the first of many and that, in due course, she will be able to open a Sunday School in Christ Church - full of her ain weans!!!

At its last meeting Christ Church Vestry decided that it was not practical to open the church at this point in time. While a very small number of congregations in the Diocese are now opening for private prayer, they are communities that had the custom of being open in the past; they also have the people-power to be a presence in the building during the hours of opening and to conduct a deep clean afterwards. The Scottish Bishops, working in close conjunction with the Government, regularly update Rectors with charge and give instructions as to what is possible, when and how. As soon as clear guidance for a post lockdown reopening and reinstatement of public worship has been received we shall put it in place and let you know.

Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

I'm not sure what you're going to be doing this summer, I'm not sure what I'm going to be doing this summer, but whatever we end up doing my wish for us all is that we have a very happy summer holiday!



Holiday. Now there's an interesting word to ponder. Did you know that the word 'holiday' is one that is now quite commonly used in secular culture, but that its origins are very distinctly Christian?

If you look up any good etymological dictionary you'll discover that the word is derived from the Old English haligdaeg – halig (meaning holy) and daeg (meaning day). So, literally speaking, a "holiday" is a "holy day"!

Historically this always referred to specific holy days in the Christian liturgical calendar, Christmas being one of the highest holy days of the year. But, over time, the original meaning was lessened as holy days became associated with vacations and time off from labour. As Christians weren't allowed to work on these days, rest and relaxation were a built-in part of every holy day.

Whether you are going to risk taking one of the so called 'holiday corridors' to a hot spot European destination, or simply having a staycation in your back garden with your paddling pool and your parasol, may this year's summer holiday be a series of "holy days" for you... days full of gratitude for the many blessings we enjoy... days spent in the socially distanced company of family members and loved ones... days rendered blissful by the chance to rest and recuperate... days in which to think of God and to pray as we journey on through the year staying safe and keeping well.

With every blessing

Drew



The Curate writes

The New Normal



A phrase that has been repeated endlessly to describe what our uncertain future will be like is a ‘New Normal’.

Politicians on both sides of the border have used this idea to prepare citizens for the reality of things not quite being the same when restrictions are lifted. Whatever happens, life will never be exactly like it was before.

The future normal is wearing a mask in supermarkets; keeping a 1-2 meter distance from strangers and being unable to shake hands in church. When put in these terms, the new normal seems quite negative. But, of course, that’s only half the story.

Other activities and impulses have also become normal during this pandemic. Checking that your neighbours aren’t socially isolated by giving them a quick phone call. Offering to deliver shopping for those shielding due to their age or health conditions. Taking the bike to work because it’s not only safer but better for the environment – which, by the way, will make everything safer in the long term for everybody.

The new normal includes these generous, collective and environmentally aware ways of living that have emerged in society. Changes that will continue to make sense even when Covid-19 is another vaccine you need to receive each winter.

Jesus gave his followers a new normal a long time ago when he said “Love your neighbour as yourself”. Let’s hold on to that idea long after we emerge from this crisis and keep the good changes that many of us have embraced during the worst of times.

Lee



Wedding Bells



We wanted to wait until we had approval to go ahead with our wedding from Nicola Sturgeon, The Bishop, St. John's Church and Dumfries and Galloway Council before we gave you an update saying that we can definitely get married.

Thankfully all of those people have now said 'Yes'. Perhaps the only person we didn't ask was the Archbishop of Canterbury, but we hope he approves too!

We're now extremely glad (and relieved) to say that our wedding ceremony will take place on Saturday 4th July.

It will be held outdoors in the Rectory Garden at St. John's, Dumfries with our immediate family present, so we are praying for good weather whilst preparing a gazebo.

Thank you all so much for the messages of support, generous gifts and your prayers in anticipation of our special day.

Pictures and maybe even a video of the occasion will be available afterwards for you all to enjoy - we'll be sure to share it with you.

I look forward to being back with you after a few weeks of a 'stay-cation' honeymoon, during which we anticipate some cafes and beer gardens may be open to enjoy.

Until then, God bless and stay safe!

Lee

(Everyone at Christ Church wishes you both every happiness in your future life together.)



SUMMER REFLECTIONS BY THE REV HARRIET OXLEY (now Johnston)

Releasing the pause button

From the end of this week the lock-down in Scotland is to be gradually eased. I'm glad that the process will be an incremental one because easing out of lock-down will be a journey into the unknown. Some of us will feel wary, wondering what threats still remain and how safe we will be as we return to some semblance of normality. Almost three months ago the pause button was pressed on many aspects of our lives. Releasing the pause button will require wisdom so it's fortunate that we have time to make the transition. After all it will be a process of change and change takes time to get used to.

Last weekend in an online conversation with friends, we discussed what new habits we've acquired that we want to keep. Our friends have been working from home and, despite the challenges of negotiating a different kind of work-life balance, they've enjoyed having a simpler lifestyle and more time for one another. They acknowledged that moving to online meetings has proved to be so effective that business trips will be hard to justify and even daily journeys to the office will be a thing of the past. It seems some of the changes lock-down imposed on us have allowed us to rethink our priorities. We have been given a second chance to consider what we really want out of life. In his poem *The Second Life*, Edwin Morgan reflects:

Is it true that we come alive
not once, but many times?
We are drawn back to the image
of the seed in darkness, or the greying skin
of the snake that hides a shining one -
it will push that used-up matter off
and even the film of the eye is sloughed -
That the world may be the same, and we are not
and so the world is not the same,
the second eye is making again
this place, these waters and these towers,
they are rising again
as the eye stands up to the sun,
as the eye salutes the sun.

As we release the pause button and play begins once more, what will we choose to do? What will it mean to shed our old skins and reveal our shiny new ones?

The Bible full of stories of people being given second chances and God, who gives us these second chances, offers to be with us and help us to make the most of them. The Bible tells us, “if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all.” I hope you will have courage, wisdom and confidence as you emerge from lock-down and take hold of the second chances open to you.



Clear skies and blue water

Lately I’ve been thinking about how the environment has benefited from the travel restrictions across the world associated with Covid-19. Amidst the anxiety and uncertainty of the current crisis, I’ve delighted in the news that there are clear skies over many of the world’s largest cities and, for the first time in decades, the water in Venice’s canals is clear and blue.

As the lock-down begins to be lifted I wonder how much economic priorities will take precedence over environmental ones. As flights and cruises resume I wonder how long it will be before the air and the waterways will be clogged with pollution once again. Or will people, having tasted the clean air and delighted in the beauty of crystal blue waters, resist a complete return to life as it was before? If so, will they be prepared to make changes to their lifestyles so that the nature and marine-life that has been returning in abundance can be sustained?

It may surprise you, if you’re not aware of it already, that concern for the environment is one of the Church’s marks of mission. Churches in the Anglican Communion have a “common commitment to, and understanding of, God’s holistic and integral mission” and are to “strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.” This places a responsibility on me and others in the church to consider how we protect and look after the environment so that life on earth flourishes both now and in the future. That is a big ask and the question is, “how do we do this?”

In the face of such an overwhelming task it is easy to feel helpless but there are things each of us can do. Together all those things will add up to make a difference. It may mean making fewer car journeys, taking fewer holidays abroad, supporting local and fair-trade businesses. It may mean creating areas for wildlife to flourish in our gardens; setting aside areas for meadow-flowers and nettles to grow, putting up bug-boxes, bird-boxes and feeders. It may mean joining and supporting campaign groups to raise awareness and press for change.

When the lock-down lifts and we return to some level of normality, let us remember the beauty of the renewed environment we've witnessed during the lock-down. Let's consider what changes we're prepared to make to our lifestyles and how we can support those advocating for large-scale change. Let's allow all this to inspire us to keep acting to preserve and sustain our environment so that life on earth continues to flourish.

Harriet Johnston

A Summer Prayer

May you walk with God
This summer
In whatever you do
Wherever you go

Walking with God means...
Walking with honesty
And with courage,
Walking with love
And respect
And concern for the feelings of others

May you talk to God
This summer
And every day and
In every situation

Talking with God means...
Praying words of praise
For the beauty of creation
Saying prayers of thanks
For friends and good times,
Asking God's help
In all your decisions
Expressing sorrow
When you have failed

May you talk with God
Every day. Amen.



Giving Thanks for Summer

Father, Creator of all, thank You for summer!

Thank you for the warmth of the sun
and the increased daylight.

Thank You for the beauty I see all around me
and for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy Your creation.

Thank You for the increased time I have to be with my friends and family,
and for the more casual pace of the summer season.

Draw me closer to You this summer.

Teach me how I can pray
no matter where I am or what I am doing.

Warm my soul with the awareness of Your presence
and light my path with Your Word and Counsel.

As I enjoy Your creation, create in me
a pure heart and a hunger and a thirst for You. Amen.

Summer Activities

Take time to claim your strength; they are gifts of God.

Take time to have fun; it's God's way of teaching you your strengths.

Take time to grow yourself; only you can grow you.

Take time to trust yourself; God trusts you.

Take time to be self-reliant; it is better than being dependent.

Take time to share with others; they will bless you, and you will bless them.

Take time to have hope, you are a child of God.

Let's put ourselves into the hands of the Lord and pray that God will bless us and our families during the wonderful months of summer. May we all help make our home a place of relaxation, joy, love, peace and safety. May we be generous and considerate, not thinking only about ourselves, but helping others enjoy the blessings of summertime. Lord God, Creator of all things, guide our steps and strengthen our hearts, during these months of summer and vacation days. Grant us refreshment of mind and body. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Summer Blessing for Families

May we make our homes places of relaxation,
joy, love, peace and safety.

May we be generous and considerate,
not thinking only about ourselves,
but helping others enjoy the blessings of the summertime.

Lord God, Creator of all things,
guide our steps and strengthen our hearts
during these months of summer and vacation days.
Grant us refreshment of mind and body.

May we constantly strive to make a meaningful difference
in the lives of our loved ones and in the world around us
as we enjoy the warm days of summertime. Amen.



SUMMER TREATS FROM THE RECTOR'S RECIPE BOOK.....

A little something for afters...

Peach & raspberry fruit salad with mascarpone

Ingredients

2 ripe peaches or nectarines
50 g caster sugar
1 tsp lemon thyme leaves
100g mascarpone
100 ml double cream
drop vanilla extract
16 raspberries, halved
small handful pistachios, roughly chopped
1 tbsp maple syrup

Method

Stone and finely slice the peaches or nectarines and arrange the slices over four plates. Sprinkle over a little of the sugar and scatter over most of the thyme leaves.

Whisk together the mascarpone, cream, vanilla extract and the remaining sugar in a bowl until light and fluffy. Spoon or pipe blobs of the mixture over the peaches or nectarines and arrange the rasps over the plates. Finish with a scattering of pistachios, the remaining thyme leaves and a drizzle of maple syrup to serve.

The perfect drink for a hot summer's day in the garden....

Una jarra de sangria autentica

Ingredients

1 and a half bottles of young table wine (doesn't need to be fancy or expensive)

2 oranges

1 lemon

1 cinnamon stick

3 tbsp sugar

1 green apple

2 peaches or apricots

Carbonated beverage (lemonade, orange soda, or soda water)

Method

- If using the sugar, dissolve the sugar in two tablespoons of water over a low flame to create a clear simple syrup. Leave to cool.
- Wash the oranges and cut off thick pieces of rind before juicing the oranges.
- Wash the lemon and cut off pieces of rind before juicing the lemon.
- In a large pitcher or bowl, stir together the wine, simple syrup, orange juice and lemon juice and add in the chunks of lemon and orange rind. If making a truly traditional Spanish sangria, simply add the cinnamon stick and let sit at least two hours (preferably overnight) before serving over ice. This allows the sangria to take on the aromas of the fruit rind and the cinnamon stick.
- If you want to make a slightly more modern version, add in chopped up chunks of green apple and peach. For the modern version you can also top off with a carbonated beverage (lemonade, orange soda, or soda water) just before serving for some bubbles.



Laughter is the Best Medicine

Dangers of ‘Virtual’ Services

New version of Apostles’ Creed

When our church began live streaming its services, our minister was at first a bit nervous. Still, he kept his cool, and you would never have known he was struggling until he reached the Apostles’ Creed. Then he firmly announced that Jesus was...”confused by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary...”

New style of prayer

Our minister is still getting used to live streaming our church services. Last Sunday he invited us to join him digitally in prayer by saying firmly: “Let’s bow our eyes and close our heads.”

Lost in translation

Last year, some friends took their six-year-old on a car trip to France. To help pass the time on the way down to the Channel, they encouraged their son to practise his new reading skills by calling out road signs.

He fell asleep just before they entered France. When he awoke, he saw the French motorway signs and rubbed his eyes. In a worried tone he whispered, “I think I forgot how to read while I was asleep.”

I need to practice social-distancing
– from my refrigerator

Actual complaints received by a resort chain (before lockdown!)

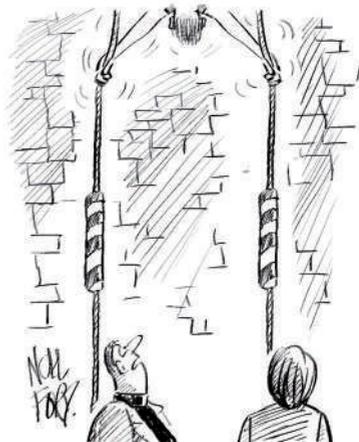
On my holiday to India, I was disgusted to find that almost every restaurant served curry. I don’t like spicy food.

We booked an excursion to a water park, but no one told us we had to bring our own swimsuits and towels. We assumed it would be included in the price.

The beach was too sandy. We had to clean everything when we returned to our room.

No one told us there would be fish in the water. The children were scared.

It took us nine hours to fly home from Jamaica to England. It took the Americans only three hours to get home. This seems unfair.



Eric took social distancing while bell ringing very seriously.

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