

The Informer



The Newsletter of Clincarthill Parish Church of Scotland

Issue 59: Mid-May 2020

Letter from the Manse

Church Website Address www.clincarthill.org.uk

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Hello from the Manse

³⁴'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' (John 13 NIVUK)

As I write this, we recently heard from our Prime Minister, as he outlined the steps to take us out of lockdown. I say, "us": I really should say England. Despite how the announcement might be perceived, it does not apply to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, as lockdown in those countries is administered by the devolved governments. To add to the further confusion, a short time after the Prime Minister's statement, all three devolved administrations stated they would not be following his example, and would not be taking steps to relax lockdown any time soon: the situation remains too dangerous.

With such mixed messages, it is understandable that some find the current situation confusing. That does not, however, excuse the flagrant disregard of lockdown (itself in place for our protection and to help our health service cope) which has been witnessed up and down the country. I have read how other countries have reported the UK's response to COVID-19, both in terms of how our government have acted, and how the general public have reacted. We are being looked upon with a mixture of confusion and horror. I do not often advocate caring about what others think of us... but in this instance, I believe we would do well to take notice.

For the Christian, there is no such confusion. Jesus' teaching about how we are to act is clear: we are to love one another as He loved us. This means showing a genuine and deep sense of care for others, and goes beyond merely "what we do". As Christians, this is who we are! We are to love, and show that love in our words and deeds, but also in our attitude and our mindset. Indeed, we should be so well known for our love for others that, when people look at us and give their opinion, they should say, "well, of course they are a Christian - you can see that in the way they love!".

This is a critical time... and I don't just mean in our response to the viral outbreak. Research is showing that people are turning to things like prayer in a way we haven't seen for at least a generation! As the certainties of modern life have been overhauled by an invisible organism, people are turning to something bigger than themselves for help: God. There are potentially many "seekers": those who are now on a path to following Jesus. We may encounter someone like this at any moment, and not realise they are on this journey: hence, it is imperative that we help them along the way by living and loving the way Jesus did. How off-putting might it be if someone seeking God encounters someone who claims to be a Christian, but shows none of the love and care of Jesus?

This is a critical time: so, love all you encounter as Jesus loves you. By your love will the world know that you are His disciple.

We continue to be well at the manse, though we are aware of the pressure of the current situation. I hope you are all still keeping well. Please remember that you can call me at any time, and it would be lovely to hear from you - even just for a chat to hear how you're getting on. You don't need to wait for me to call you, and you certainly won't be disturbing me!

One last thing: if you are receiving this through the post, but have an email address, can you please let me and Roger know (email addresses below). The more email addresses we have for people, the easier it is to keep in touch!

May God bless you, *Stuart*

Stuart: SLove@churchofscotland.org.uk Roger: sessionclerk@clincarthill.org.uk

Next Issue

Email any items for inclusion in the next Newsletter to sessionclerk@clincarthill.org.uk or call on 0141 632 4206

Congregational Register - Deaths

8th May 2020 - Mrs Jean Aitken

You may have noticed in the last *Informer* the intimation of the death of Mrs Muriel Paris. In the current circumstances, attendance at the funeral was very limited. However a video was taken by Mrs Paris' nephew, so if you would have liked to have gone but couldn't, it can be seen on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/S6TK3Ly1qM> There will be a memorial service in the church at a later date.

Communications Team

Please keep an eye on our social media outlets for Stuart's 'Study from the Study' and other posts.

www.clincarhill.org.uk www.facebook.com/clincarthillchurch

Graham Shankland

Youth Team

Hi to all our young folk and hope you are all well and not too bored. We are trying to organise some online activity for everyone. Let me know what you would like to see or do.

Contact slove@churchofscotland.org.uk with your ideas. Stay Safe,

Graham Kilpatrick

Bible-Based Trauma Healing - COVID-19 Session

Would you, or do you know of someone, who might benefit from exploring the difficult questions arising from the impact of COVID-19 crisis, e.g. loss, fear, the changes to our daily lives? If you do, we are offering online sessions, through Zoom, when we will reflect and discuss how this virus affects the way we are living and feeling just now. Please contact, either of the following for more information and to sign-up: Rev Stuart Love SLove@churchofscotland.org.uk or Mrs Joan Kilpatrick je-kilpatrick@sky.com

Mission and Outreach Team

It is a strange time as churches and Christians rediscover what it means to be God's people. Going online, helping in foodbanks and directing vulnerable people in our community have become greater priorities for the people of God. There is much support around but often difficult to know where to go. This is something I have been doing to support the community council and being available as part of a small team. For example, maintaining contact with folk that attend the Seniors Friday Diners.

Looking ahead we would ask you to pray for the organisations we support financially and in prayer, for example the Lodging House Mission, Glasgow City Mission and Bethany Christian Trust.

We look forward to welcoming all the groups back. We miss the children and adults that we are getting to know. I've had a chat recently with the Book Bug leader regarding a future party to celebrate the end of the lockdown. Until then we remain willing to serve the community in acts of kindness. We are called to be a blessing to others. Let me know if you can join us in the work of the team. God bless,

Stephen Kennedy

Christian Aid

Christian Aid week is 10-16 May. Their work is possibly more important than ever this year, please give generously. <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Prayer

We are installing a banner on the railings at the front of the church and inviting passers by to tie a ribbon (ribbons provided) to the railings and to say a prayer. If you are passing the church, we encourage you to take part. Also, our monthly Prayer Walks have been suspended due to the lockdown, however, walking hasn't been, so we encourage you to combine your daily walk with prayer.

Our own Sunday at Seven service may be postponed for now, however, Christians throughout the UK are lighting a candle at seven o'clock every Sunday and praying for nineteen minutes (19@19). Also, a Virtual Prayer Vigil has been planned for Wednesday 20th May from 7am until 8pm. We would like to spend twelve continuous hours praying for our God of miracles to break into this season of darkness, anxiety and sorrow. We will be worshipping God through prayers of thanksgiving and also offering intercessory prayers for ourselves, families, communities, church, nation and world. If you would like to take part or would like prayer please email slove@churchofscotland.org.uk or phone 0141 632 4206.

The prayer meeting still takes place on Wednesdays at 8pm. Some of us pray alone at home and some together using Zoom. If you wish prayer or have a prayer request for someone else please contact the prayer group via their email or call 0141 632 4206 and you will be prayed for.