

# Park Pages

the magazine of Uddingston: Park United Free Church of Scotland



## Pastoral Letter

Summer 2021

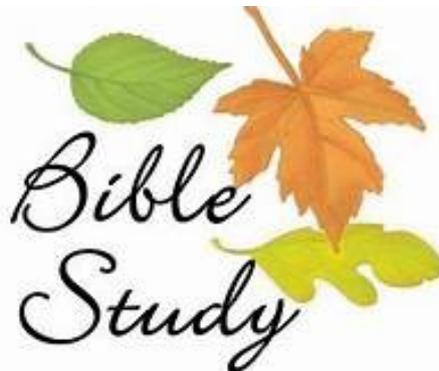
Dear Friends,

Park Pages, and its predecessor magazine, has been seeking to communicate with members and share the story of our congregation's life for 100 years. In the first regular bimonthly magazine in March 1921, the Pastoral Letter from the Rev James Murray said that he hoped that the magazine would **deepen and develop the awareness of the life and witness of the wider congregation**; for the past century - with a break in the 1980s - it has continued to do just that.

When I came to Park Church in 1999, a team of folk had been entrusted with the task of producing the magazine and also the weekly Sunday leaflet. Like all teams whose members have been dragged into something, the membership of the group rapidly decreased until Irene Bryson was left with the sole task of editing and printing the magazine. She did that faithfully and well for a number of years until Helen Ooi took over the task in 2015. We are indebted to both of these women for their hard work and diligence and we thank them warmly for that.



Of course, one of the great challenges of producing a magazine is getting the material to fill it!! Whilst the Pastoral Letter from the Minister is part of the content, it is vital that others can share something about the life of faith that they, and perhaps the group within the church that they attend, have experienced. In this magazine, you will read of just such stories and testimonies. Helen has asked a member of each of the adult fellowship groups, those who meet in person, and those who meet online, to share something of what has been happening and its impact on them. Our Session Clerk, who has faithfully supported our weekday devotional services, has also reflected on what these times have meant to him and Aileen during these past challenging days. I warmly commend their story to you. Be encouraged and edified by what they have to say.



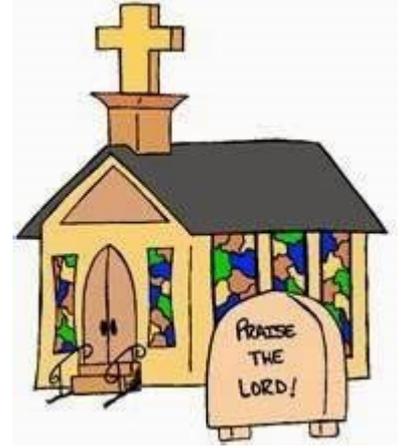
Ironically, despite the restrictions and regulations of lockdown, more people are now accessing some form of additional spiritual nurture - apart from the Sunday morning service - than did before. Perhaps precisely because it has been a time of trials, our awareness, both of the blessing of Christian fellowship and our need for spiritual food, has been deepened. The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews says this:

*Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 12: 24 - 25*



One of the consequences of various forms of lockdown and church closures, is that we can become isolated in our lives and faith. While I know that some have taken to Zoom and YouTube like ducks to water, for the majority of the congregation it has been a helpful, but partial, support during difficult days.

*I joyed when to the House of God, go up they said to me..Psalm 122 v 1, has come to many with a renewed emphasis on the importance of meeting together. Whether as individuals at the church opening times for Reflection and Prayer, or in small groups or now on a Sunday morning, that vital gathering together of the Lord's people is central to our spiritual growth and encouragement; not only for our own growth, but for the help and encouragement of others. We are a body of believers, and we need each other in our walk with Jesus. I am confident that whatever the months that lie ahead have in store for us, the Sovereign Lord will continue to build us up in our most holy faith as in various ways, and at varying times, we meet together as brothers and sisters in Christ.*



Some of course might say...*How can you be so confident?* The last year has reminded us how fragile and changeable life can be. As the Church of 1921 was emerging from the long shadow of the First World War, and was entering into a long period of economic depression, we are now emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, with many social, economic and ethical challenges to face. The old certainties of the post-war welfare state humanism that undergirded how many of us of a certain age and generation saw life and society, is passing away. Tribalism, in all its divisive tension and strain, is re-emerging within our society. The Church is often ill-equipped to face such deep issues as we vainly try and keep up with the speed of change that technology as well as Covid-19 has brought.

### **ALL THE MORE REASON FOR US TO HAVE THE CONFIDENCE THAT THE BOOK OF HEBREWS SPEAKS ABOUT.....**

*Therefore brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with full assurance that faith brings..... Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10 v 19 - 23*



*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13 v 8) does not mean that Jesus Christ is locked, either in some long forgotten past, or in some unattainable future, but that He holds ALL TIME together in His hands as He meets us in the present.*

Our confidence therefore lies in His unchanging character and purposes and in our access through Him to the very throne room of heaven. It is knowing and experiencing those truths, sometimes when we are in fellowship with others in study and prayer, and at other times when we are sitting quietly in His presence, that gives us hope for the future. Whatever it may bring, the God who has journeyed with us over the past 100 years of Park Pages, will continue to journey with His people until that day when He comes in glory and in power.

May the words of testimony from our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ given in this magazine, and the words of Scripture in this letter, be that spiritual food for our own faith journey during these summer months.

**Your friend and Minister**

*Mr B Russell*



## Church News

Love is certainly in the air this Spring, despite the lockdown! We are delighted that two of our young men have found their soulmates and have announced their engagements! The church family would like to take this opportunity to wish both couples God's blessing as well as much love and happiness for their futures as they start out on life's journey together.



♥ **Gregor McDowall** and **Sarah Whittaker** got engaged in April and

♥ **James Paterson** and **Rachel Tait** got engaged in May

The Book of Proverbs gives good advice to Gregor and James!

**He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favour from the Lord.**

**Proverbs 18 v 22**

### In Memory of Julia MacLeod

Julia was born and brought up in Partick, Glasgow but was very proud of her Isle of Skye roots.

She worshipped in what was known then as The Tabernacle at St Georges' Cross, now Findlay Memorial Church, where she became a Christian.

Julia had wide-ranging interests and musical skills and taught in a number of schools including Eastbank Academy and Bannerman High School. She lived in Mount Vernon for many years and was a member of Sandyhills Parish Church. She played the organ in a number of churches and played at Cameron and Ruth Urquhart's wedding!

She also served as organist at Bargeddie Parish Church during Harry Mealyea's time and came to Park in 2002. She helped out here on the organ, in particular at Christmas time and at our services at the Bield Housing. She especially loved the old Redemption hymns. She was also a faithful member of the midweek meeting for many years.

With age, her eyesight diminished until she was officially registered blind. However, this did not stop her enjoying her hobbies. She was a long-standing member of the Lanarkshire Philatelic Society, the Caledonian Philatelic Society, Scottish Postcard Society and was an expert on St Kilda and its postal history.

She enjoyed travel and holidayed throughout the world, including the Amazon Delta, Antarctica and drove across Canada.

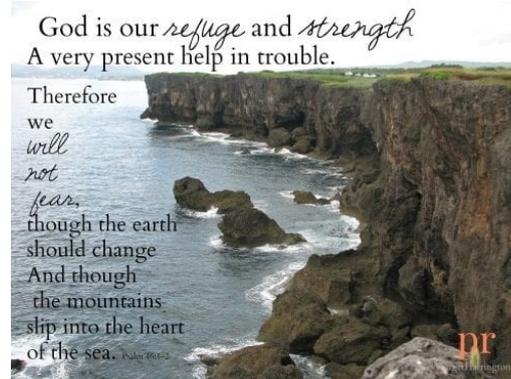
Increasing frailty determined that Julia was admitted to Croftbank House in late January 2021; she passed away on Monday 24 May aged 89.

We give thanks for a life well lived and we rejoice that Julia is now free of illness and is singing her own praises to the Lamb at the Throne of Grace.



God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Psalm 46 v 1-3

God spoke these verses to me at the beginning of the pandemic last year, and over the last year He has reminded me of them again and again, both in my role as Children and Families' Worker and in my own family circumstances. God is steadfast and true; when everything around us begins to crumble, He remains! This has been the message we have tried to communicate to our children and young people in the past year by ensuring that **Park Kids** and **Connect** have continued to run week after week when much of what was known has been put on pause or stopped completely.



For most of the past year **Park Kids**, like our Sunday services, has been online. We managed to meet in person in the hall for about seven weeks in the autumn before returning to Zoom again, right through until the beginning of May.



During all of this time, be it in person or online, the children have been great. They are all growing faster than the weeds in the garden - a couple of the older children are the same height as me now! But more importantly, they are all growing spiritually, as they continue to pray at home in their families, as they read the bible and as they engage with Park Kids. We have even managed to mark the festivals, albeit not in the traditional way. We had a 'Topsy-Turvy' Crib Service on Christmas Eve, where, although restricted in many ways, it did not stop us from worshipping God - Emmanuel who entered the world in a somewhat topsy-turvy fashion!



Park Kids in person and online

At Easter, the older Park Kids children had an afternoon on Minecraft. This is a popular computer game which is similar to LEGO, where the children use blocks to build things. The beauty of this game is that the children can meet in the same 'land' at the same time and can see each others' characters. So, Park Kids ventured into Minecraft and had an afternoon reflecting on the stories of Holy Week, building them together while marking the journey Jesus took for us.

We also met outside on Easter Sunday to have an Easter Egg hunt and celebrate that Jesus is alive. It was a cold day but so lovely to see the children reunited, having not been together in person since Christmas Eve.



Praise God that we can continue to teach our children and provide them with opportunities to worship Him – even in new and different ways!

## Prayer Buddies

As many of you know, each of the Park Kids children has a prayer buddy – someone from the church family who prays for them regularly. In the past year, the children have sent cards and pictures to their prayer buddies thanking them for their continued prayers and updating them on how they are getting on. This has grown and developed through the year to the point where many children and their buddies now send cards and message back and forth.

- One member of our congregation, on receiving a card from her child, knitted a love heart to send back to her.
- Another member, whilst recovering from an operation, received a Get Well Soon card from his child, letting him know that he was praying for him.
- Yet another child received a card back from her prayer partner and was thrilled to hear that they share a joint love of reading.



Praise God for the bond of love in Christ that spans the generations of our church family. Praise Him for the encouragement this brings to both the children and their prayer buddies.





Connect continues to meet online on a Monday night; however in recent weeks we have managed to meet in person in my garden on a couple of occasions where we can safely play games and do a Bible study together whilst physically distancing.

It has been a hard year for Connect. The young people have been hit hard by the pandemic, not just in missing school, and isolation from friends, but also in the cancellation of exams. This has meant that the young people who were due to sit exams have been receiving constant assessments, sat under exam conditions, and so have been facing a lot of pressure. Since January, many of the young people have logged on to Zoom for a short while each week, but have not been able to engage as fully with Connect as they normally would.



Please pray for our young people that they would know God sustaining them during this very trying time. Pray too for more opportunities for us to meet in the garden, rather than on Zoom, as it is hugely beneficial for the young people to meet in person ... sadly the Scottish weather is impacting this a lot.



In my update last May, we were on the verge of trialling MEGA on Zoom, unsure how well it would work, if the children in the community would engage with it, or practically how leading crafts etc would work remotely. Amazingly, the answer to all of these uncertainties was that MEGA on Zoom *does* work!



In the past year we have run five online sessions of MEGA, each with between 20 and 25 children attending, with a mixture of children from the church and those from the community. While meeting on Zoom has its challenges and limitations, it has also created new opportunities. For example, in the week prior to MEGA the children all receive a MEGA pack in the post. This normally comprises of a book of puzzles, a cartoon strip of a bible story, craft materials to use during the call and a sweetie.

This has meant that each household has been receiving part of the bible into their homes – a new opportunity we would otherwise not have had! During the call we also have some parents and siblings in the room with the children, hearing and seeing first-hand what MEGA is about.

This growing relationship with families allowed us to host a MEGA Christmas Quiz on Zoom in December, where family teams took part in an interactive quiz along with the MEGA team and some of their own households. It was a great afternoon of family fun and a great opportunity for people within the church to meet with those in the community we are serving.





Please pray for the future of MEGA, that God would guide us through the ever-changing restrictions, and that we would be open to His leading, recognising the work He has done this year which we could never have envisaged or imagined.



Sadly, the restrictions have meant that we have not been able to run Scripture Union (SU) Groups at either Muiredge Primary or Uddingston Grammar this year. We've also not been able to have schools' workshops or services. However, I have been part of an online SU Group for children throughout Lanarkshire for the last six weeks. It's been really encouraging to have Muiredge Primary children make up one quarter of the group and to be able to share the gospel with them.

From September until the lockdown in November 2020, I was also able to return to Uddingston Grammar in the role of one of the chaplains to offer a support service to young people who were really struggling and needing someone to talk to. Please give thanks that God has sustained the relationships we have with both of our local schools, and for the practical help we have been able to offer during the pandemic.

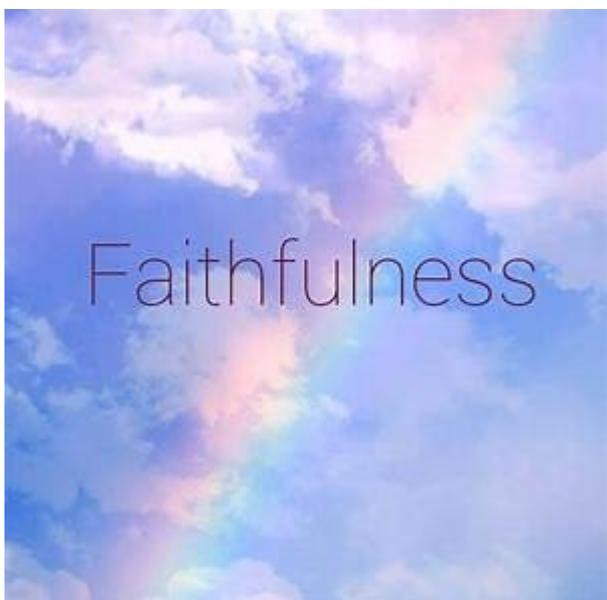


Looking ahead, I will be going into Muiredge Primary in June to work with each P7 class, using Bible stories to help them to prepare for the transition to High School.



Praise God that this is able to go ahead, albeit in a different format and with only me delivering the programme rather than the team who would normally work alongside me.

For us all, it's been a year of uncertainty, a year of upheaval, a year of learning new computer skills! Yet through it all, one thing we can be assured of is God's unfailing love, His unchanging presence and the unstoppable work of His hand!



**For the Lord is good and His love is forever,  
His faithfulness continues through all  
generations.**

**Psalm 100 v 5**

## Keeping Connected in a Covid-19 World

The Book of Acts paints a picture of the church as small groups meeting in each others' houses. These house churches played a pivotal role in the rapid growth of Christianity and allowed the believers to challenge the social order of the day. They became witnesses to the gospel through their lives, their words and suffering. The house church exuded a family atmosphere and practised brotherly love in a personal and very effective way.



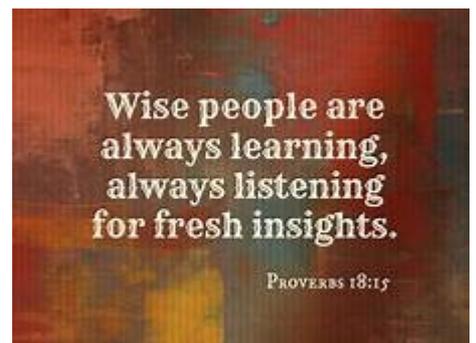
When the pandemic struck and our churches were forced to close, the small group format was the obvious way forward for fellow believers to continue to have fellowship, first on Zoom and as restrictions eased, face to face in the church hall. Six groups have met throughout the pandemic as well as devotional groups led by the minister in the church three times a week. A representative from each group explains what it has meant to them to be able to continue studying the Word with their fellow believers while praying for each other and the wider community. What comes out of all these reports is the joy and encouragement that we all feel when meeting together in fellowship with one another and the Lord.

### Women in the Word

Janet Grey

I have always appreciated meeting in the manse with the **Women in the Word** group. During this past year it has meant even more. We have had to meet on Zoom and in socially-distanced arrangements in the church hall, but seeing friends, hearing their stories and sharing items for prayer, as well as studying The Word, has been so encouraging.

We were blessed by the **Book by Book** study material that Elizabeth sourced for us. Several sessions were spent looking at the Book of Proverbs; so much great advice for daily living. We spent time watching video clips where experienced Christians discussed their understanding of the passage. One of the contributors was George Verwer of Operation Mobilisation. He told us that he reads a section of Proverbs every day and is convinced that this has shaped his thinking and has saved him from making many mistakes in life. He also pointed out that none of us are able to uphold all that is written there and so we need the grace given to us through Jesus to help us gain wisdom, righteousness, kindness, generosity, patience, guarding our tongues, bringing justice to the poor and sharing what we have, to name but a few. To succeed, above all else we need to look to Jesus and abide in Him. Challenging!



The apostle Peter knew what it was like to fail and we had a lovely one-off bible study about him just after Easter. Jesus provided the breakfast for his disciples and sat with them as they ate before he discussed issues with Peter. He cared for him physically and then restored him spiritually, enabling Peter to go on and work mightily for Him.

Proverbs 15 v 13 says, "Good news gives health to the bones".

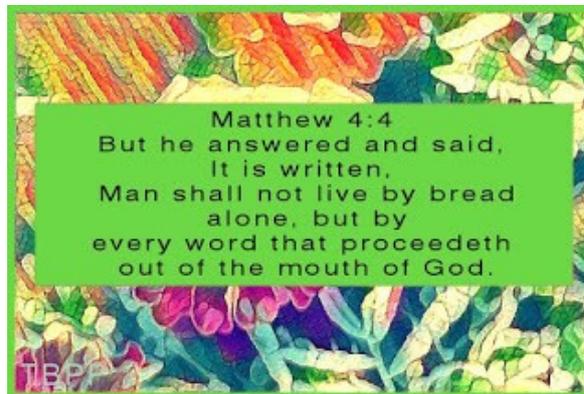
For me these studies have been Good News!

During lockdown Aileen and I have been regulars at the Tuesday morning **Devotional Service** where around a dozen of us share an opportunity for quiet reflection and prayer led by the Minister.

Often, Bruce draws on a daily reading from the UF prayer guide for the devotional content of the service but inspiration can also come from another piece of scripture that is germane to the situation at that time.

Being in the sanctuary and being able to speak to others from the church family feels special, with a chance to say hello and ask after one another. There is wonderful atmosphere too, with much beloved music softly playing, stilling our hearts and affording us a release from the pressures of the day. When Jesus was tested by the pressures of the world he said:

*It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'.  
Matthew 4 v 4.*



The devotional services offer a chance for spiritual nourishment in these trying times, when we can sense we are in the presence of the living God, in His house. We've learned on reflection that in its long history, Park Church congregations have already come through much, including two World Wars and a devastating 'Flu pandemic.

*It has been a privilege to pray together with those seeking spiritual help and to talk through our concerns with the Minister, each offering support by just being there.*

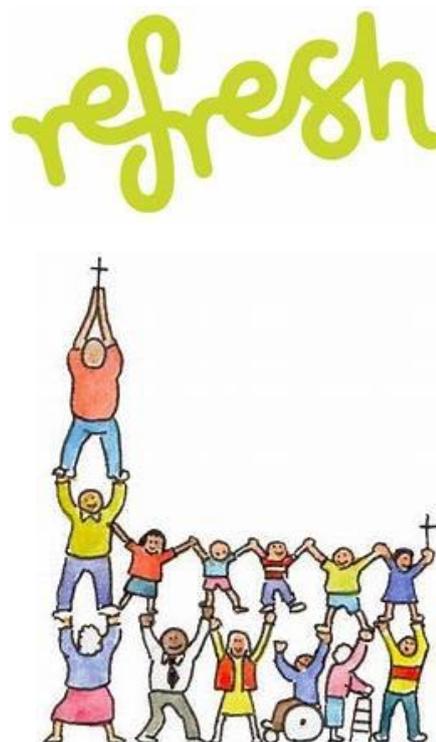
## Wednesday Afternoon Refresh

Margaret Cameron

When Helen asked if I would be up to contributing to Park Pages for the **Wednesday Refresh Group** my first thoughts were "oh my goodness, what would I say"? Then I thought, what a privilege and an opportunity for me to express my own personal thanks to Bruce and everyone in our group. I love my small group (extended family) as I can be myself with the knowledge of acceptance and God's love. It provides a safe and warm, friendly, environment to discuss different topics; it is a wonderful experience to learn and grow together as a group. We have a good mix of Bible study and teaching, fellowship, prayer and sharing Jesus. More recently we have been studying Corinthians; we've been looking at the divisions in the church there and how Paul responds to the opposition within the church.

The restraints of this pandemic have affected so many and our group has discussed how we as individuals respond to others. As a group we pray for each other and pray that we can reach out, engage and encourage those we meet to explore how Jesus can work in our lives.

I find it amazing to see the Spirit at work in each one of my friends in our group and I am so thankful for all their support; this helps me keep my focus on Jesus throughout the week. Jesus can be with me and work through me.



## Younger Women in the Word

Emma McDowall

The **Younger Women in the Word** house group has been meeting on Zoom on Wednesday evenings, fortnightly, throughout the pandemic. We have been studying various Books of the Bible, including Ephesians and Psalms, plus exploring the links between the core texts we've been looking at and other passages elsewhere in the Bible.

Since Easter we have been doing 24-7 Prayer's 'The Prayer Course' together, which explores prayer through the lens of The Lord's Prayer and asks important questions including why and what we should pray. All with a healthy dose of chat, support and laughter served up alongside!



The house group has been something of a lifeline for me throughout the pandemic. It has been so nice to take the time out to study God's word with friends, and to share some of the highs and lows of life, including what sustains us and what challenges us as we try to walk more closely with God. Zoom has been a big blessing, allowing us to schedule time to spend together, which fits in with childcare demands, and means I can attend without an hour's commute each way!

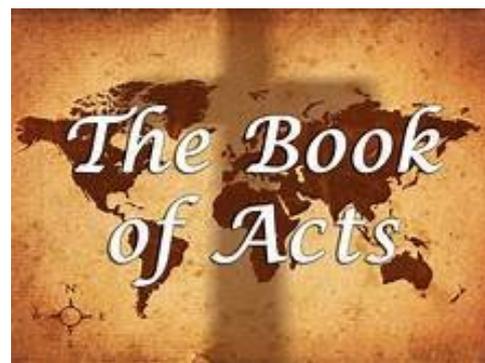
On a personal level, spending time regularly with other young(ish!) women of faith has been a revelation, as this demographic has not been well represented in any other church I've attended! Thanks to Karen for inviting me to join. I pray that we continue to support, sustain and gently challenge each other in our Christian journeys, and hopefully one day we can meet in person!

## Wednesday Evening Zoom Bible Study

Cameron Urquhart

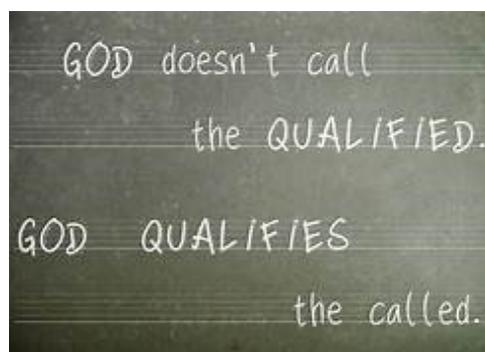
The **Wednesday evening Zoom Bible Study** has been studying The Book of Acts (starting at Acts 13). This study has given me a more rounded picture of Paul, but even more importantly, it has given me an even clearer picture of the sovereignty and authority of God.

The study is entitled, '**Paul & Co Church Builders**'. Paul is no 'one man band'. His travelling companions, and fellow workers on Paul's mammoth missionary journeys, were as committed as Paul to speaking about Jesus. Life is not easy for Paul & Co. There are threats, beatings and imprisonment and yet God uses this to provide the means which would eventually take Paul to Rome.



## God calls, then He equips

God called Paul and gave him a specific commission. God then equipped Paul. The church building and planting needed a team. God provided the team who would provide support, wise counsel and fellowship during these arduous and difficult times. When Paul was before the Sanhedrin, with both the Pharisees and Sadducees wishing his execution, God gives Paul the wisdom to speak words that have the Pharisees and Sadducees fighting each other. Paul, as a Roman citizen, is saved from being torn apart by Roman soldiers and even although he is imprisoned by two Roman governors, saving him from certain death at the hands of the Jews, he is allowed visitors to take care of his needs. Indeed even plans to ambush and kill Paul are thwarted. God had a plan for Paul and nothing would derail it. It is equally true that life was very challenging for Paul.



**As God had a plan for Paul, He has a plan for each of us and God will bring it to fruition in His time in the way He ordains. Sometimes life can be very challenging, but this study has reinforced the truth that God is sovereign over all things.**

## Men at the Manse

Jim Stirling

I have been attending this fellowship group for a number of years now, finding it stimulating and rewarding, always interesting and frequently challenging. While we are studying God's Word and discussing His Work, we also have fun and laughter as fellowship is a huge part of what the group is about.



It is encouraging meeting fellow Christians in an informal setting as we study diverse subjects across both Testaments. With a reasonable mix of ages, and coming from different faith backgrounds, we don't always agree, but that stimulates debate and questions. I derive great comfort from the group, learning something every meeting.

Indeed, I have benefitted hugely from being part of the group. Many years ago, after attending Communicant Classes at another church, I found that I alone could not honestly profess my faith. The blockage for me was the resurrection. Through being part of the Men's Group, I found my understanding of Jesus, His death and resurrection become so much clearer and a solid foundation for my faith, subsequently publicly professing my faith before the congregation in Park.



As ever the pandemic has created its challenges. We moved to Zoom, but not all members were comfortable with that. We currently meet in the church hall as the manse is still off limits. Again, some members are not comfortable meeting in person at this stage. So we have undoubtedly been disrupted by COVID-19, but through Bruce's hard work and encouragement, the group remains strong.

## Faith on Friday

Linda Hillan

Faith on Friday is a new fellowship group which was born out of the desire to offer as many opportunities as possible for folks to come together for bible study during lockdown, and the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines.

Since October 2020, a small group of us have had the privilege of meeting every two weeks on Friday mornings for a time of fellowship and bible study, led by Bruce. We mostly meet in the church hall (adhering to social distancing guidelines, of course!) but have also tried WhatsApp and Zoom calls when face-to-face meetings have not been possible.



We have recently been studying the book of Ezekiel, and have also had some very lively discussions, debate, and even occasional disagreements, on a wide variety of topics including COVID-19, evangelism and how to share our faith effectively. All washed down with a cup of tea served by Bruce!

One of the biggest encouragements is the way God has used these meetings to deepen our relationships with each other – supporting one another, sharing laughter, thoughts and feelings whilst at the same time learning more about how God's word speaks to us and is relevant for today and the challenges we all face.

**It is a real joy and a blessing to be part of this fellowship group, and that is something we ALL agree on!!!**



## Come let us sing for joy to the Lord!

Another old and new song, both pointing us to Jesus, our Living Hope. Both songs invite us to look to Jesus as the One who alone can set us free from the bondage of sin and give us a life “abundant and free”.



### Turn your eyes upon Jesus

This devotional hymn was written in 1918 by Helen Lemmel who was an accomplished hymn writer and soloist. She was moved to write the words and music after reading a booklet by Lilius Trotter entitled “Focussed” which told her life story. She called the hymn, “The Heavenly Vision” but it is better known by the first line of the chorus.

Lilius Trotter was born in 1853 into an upper class Victorian family; she wanted for nothing, travelled widely, got a good education and had an inquisitive mind. Her father, a wealthy banker, died when she was only 12 years old and this loss devastated her. However, it was during this difficult time that she found Christ and developed a gift of love and sympathy for her fellow human beings. She worked in London for the YWCA. When her mother died in 1878, Lilius was convinced that God was calling her to work as a missionary among the Arab tribes in Algeria. She spent the next 40 years working among the Arab Muslims and with her own money founded The Algiers Mission Board. She used her artistic gift to communicate the gospel through drawings and paintings, illustrating tracts that were developed specifically for the Arab culture.

The following extract from her booklet, “Focussed” inspired the hymn writer.

*Turn full your soul’s vision to Jesus, and look and look at Him, and a strange dimness will come over all that is apart from Him, and the Divine “attrait” by which God’s saints are made, even in this 20th century, will lay hold of you. For “He is worthy” to have all there is to be had in the heart that He has died to win.*

**<sup>1</sup> O soul, are you weary and troubled?  
No light in the darkness you see?  
There’s light for a look at the Saviour  
And life more abundant and free**

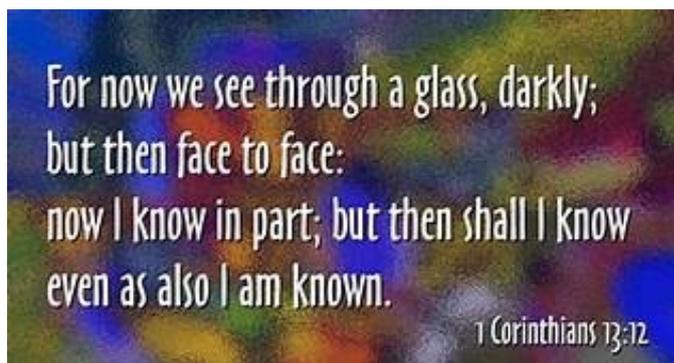
**<sup>2</sup> Through death into life everlasting  
He passed, and we follow Him there;  
O’er us sin no more hath dominion  
For more than conqu’rors we are!**

**<sup>3</sup> His Word shall not fail you, He promised!  
Believe Him and all will be well;  
Then go to a world that is dying,  
His perfect salvation to tell!**

**Chorus  
Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face  
And the things of earth will grow strangely  
dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.**

If we turn to Jesus through prayer and the reading of His Word, the things that disturb us in the world—heartaches, grief, challenges—grow dim as we see them through the eyes of God’s sovereignty. God allows all things for His glory and one day we will see Him face to face—no more sadness, no more tears—and all will become crystal clear. We will stand in His presence and declare His glory!

To listen to the hymn click [here](#).



## Living Hope

We watched the video of this song in church recently and hopefully we will learn it in the future once we are allowed to sing and are all back together again. It was written by Phil Wickham and Brian Johnson in 2018, through a series of text messages! Wickham explains why they wrote the song.

*God has rescued us from a place that we could never have rescued ourselves. Our future was death, but Jesus came in and brought life—a living hope—into our souls and into our lives.*

There is so much depth in the lyrics of this song which does not hide the stark reality of where we would be without God's grace and mercy in our lives. The first two verses depict a scene of desolation and hopelessness where we are dead in our sin. The chasm between us and God is insurmountable; it can only be crossed by the Living Hope. We are reminded of the great saving work Jesus has accomplished for us on that cross—"the work is finished, the end is written" - when he stepped down from his exalted place in heaven, in obedience to the Father, to take our place so that we might have fellowship and a relationship with God.

1 **How great the chasm that lay between us  
How high the mountain I could not climb  
In desperation, I turned to heaven  
And spoke your name into the night  
Then through the darkness, Your loving-kindness  
Tore through the shadows of my soul  
The work is finished, the end is written  
Jesus Christ, my living hope.**

2 **Who could imagine so great a mercy?  
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?  
The God of ages stepped down from glory  
To wear my sin and bear my shame  
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven  
The King of kings calls me His own  
Beautiful Saviour, I'm Yours forever  
Jesus Christ, my living hope**

### Chorus

**Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free  
Hallelujah, sin has lost its grip on me  
You have broken every chain  
There's salvation in Your name  
Jesus Christ, my living hope x 2**

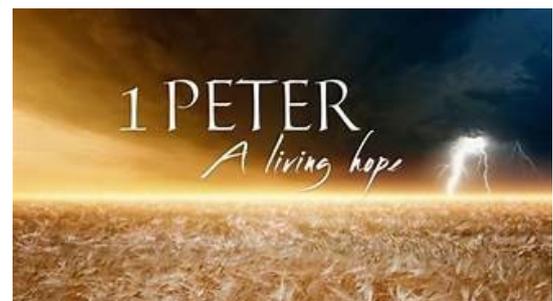
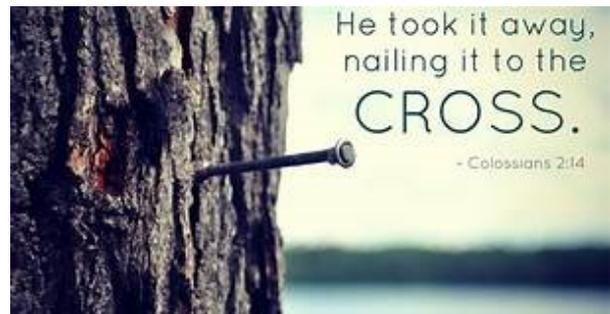
3. **Then came the morning that sealed the promise  
Your buried body began to breathe  
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion  
Declared the grave has no claim on me x2  
Jesus, Yours is the victory!**

The third and last verse reminds us of the wonderful events of Easter morning and the resurrection; this is the climax of the song. Christ's lifeless body was brought back to life and the image of a roaring lion is used to illustrate the majesty and power of Jesus.

**Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered.**

**Revelation 5 v 5**

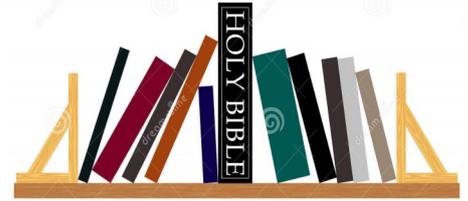
The song paints a picture of life before God, Christ's death and resurrection and life after receiving God. The chorus helps us to express our praise and thanksgiving to the only One who can redeem us and break the chain of death and sin. Its raw passion touches our hearts and causes us to worship!



**To listen to the song, click [here](#)**

# Books of the Old Testament

We continue our series on The Books of the Old Testament, giving a short overview of the content of the book along with a scriptural quote. This time we are going to look at what are known as the **historical books**, from Joshua through to Esther.



## Joshua

Joshua, Israel's new leader, leads Israel to conquer and partition the Promised Land. He then divides out territories to the twelve tribes of Israel. Incorporates the well known story of the Battle of Jericho.

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1 v 9



## Judges

The history of Israel from Joshua to Samson. The people of God begin a cycle of sin which repeats itself 12 times. God raises up 14 judges (holy men). When there was a judge, the people obeyed God but when there was no judge, the people forgot about God until a new one was appointed.

Then the Lord raised up judges who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. Judges 2 v 16



## Ruth

This book tells the story of a foreigner called Ruth who through marriage becomes part of God's people. The ultimate redeemer (Jesus) is foreshadowed through the picture of Boaz.

Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. Ruth 4 v 14



## 1 Samuel

Samuel means "God hears". Hannah prayed for a son even though she was barren; God rewarded her faithfulness with Samuel whom she dedicated to the Lord. The people demand an earthly king and Saul becomes first king of Israel. It follows the rise and fall of Saul and the anointing of David.

Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you. But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses, and you have said to him, Set a king over us. 1 Samuel 10 v 17-19



## 2 Samuel

The first half deals with the life of David and God's promise that He will establish the throne of David forever. Also relates David's affair with Bathsheba. Deals with Nathan's prophecy that calamity will subsequently befall the house of David.

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 2 Samuel 7 v 12-13



## 1 Kings

God's promises to Solomon, the building of the temple and the start of successors to the throne. Solomon took many wives and began to worship false gods. After his death there was a revolution and the country split into two, with Judah in the south.

So the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees...I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates". 1 Kings 11 v 11

## 2 Kings

The rebellion of the kings of Israel and Judah resulted in God allowing his people to be taken captive, paved the way for the prophets, and foreshadowed the coming of Jesus. Elijah was taken up to heaven in a vehicle of fire.

The people of Israel were taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria... 2 Kings 17 v 23

## 1 Chronicles

This book was written after the exile. It records David's ascension to the throne and his reign. It concludes with David's son, Solomon, becoming King of Israel.

I will be his father and he shall be my son; and I will not take my loving-kindness away from him, as I took it from him who was before you. Chronicles 17 v 13-14

## 2 Chronicles

Tells the story of the kings who lived in Jerusalem, especially on the line of David, focusing on kings who were faithful and unfaithful to God in the hope that generations to come would choose to be faithful to God.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. " Chronicles 7 v 14

## Ezra

50 years after their return from exile, the Israelites rebuild Jerusalem, the temple and their lives. Ezra teaches God's people the law and re-establishes the worship of God.

What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this. Ezra 9 v 13

## Nehemiah

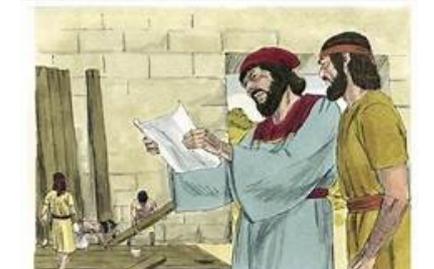
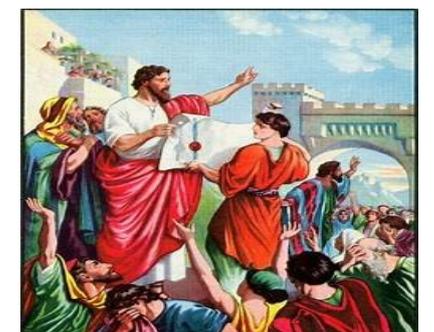
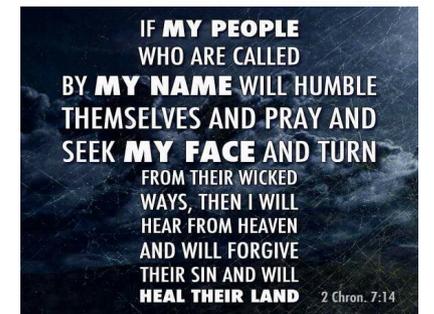
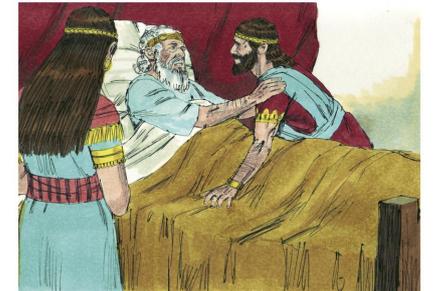
Nehemiah got permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. Despite opposition this was completed in 52 days. The people had short memories and often still did not obey God.

But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them. Nehemiah 9 v 16b

## Esther

This book takes place during the exile of Israel and Queen Esther, a Jew, saves her people from an evil plot to destroy them.

Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this? Esther 4 v 14



# The Tapestry of Life

As we get older, we tend to reflect more and look back over our lives. The idea of God weaving a tapestry, with both light and dark colours—to depict happy and sad times in our lives—is a favourite picture. However, as long as we remain on earth we often only see the back side of the tapestry, full of knots and loose threads. Things don't make sense and we sometimes struggle to see what God is doing. Some things become clearer with the fullness of time but others will remain a mystery this side of eternity. This poem reflects on the different Seasons we go through on our life's journey. It was inspired by this verse from Ecclesiastes 3:

***To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.***

Our times and seasons have been foreordained by God. This verse reminds us that we are to live by faith and to trust God's judgment in all things.

## Seasons in Life

To everything in life there is a season  
with every phase a purpose and reason

When one season ends a new one will begin  
gaining wisdom from where we have been

A season to press forward to what lies ahead  
leaving the past behind and by Jesus being led

A season to labour in the harvest field  
and a time to rest while in comes the yield

A season to weep and a time to rejoice  
a time to be silent and a time to lift up our voice

A season to meditate on God's love and His word  
a time to tell the gospel to others as you have heard

A season to be healthy, robust, and strong  
a time of weariness and pain and for Heaven long

A season to abound and a time to suffer need  
all the while ploughing to sow the gospel seed

A season to be active and a time to be still  
all things according to God's perfect time and will

A season to be born and a time to die  
when we fly away and go to our home on high

By Cindy Wyatt



## Uddingston Pride Update

With the current limitations on communal activities due to the lockdown, we have been very limited in what we have been able to do around the village. However, we have cleared some of the planters along the Main Street in preparation for summer planting in June, and the large containers outside Park Church have been replanted. We have also planted out a new permanent floral container donated by Scotmid Undertakers outside their premises; it is looking very smart.

A number of friends of the group have helped us this year by picking up litter, and we are most grateful for their assistance in keeping our streets tidy.



Sadly, Crofthead Park has been quite badly vandalised and the local police have agreed to patrol the area regularly, which we hope will help the problem. Members of the public would help in this respect by keeping a watchful eye on our park, which is such a valuable asset to the community. South Lanarkshire Council will hopefully carry out repairs to the damage sometime soon.

Earlier in the year we tidied up around the Uddingston sign at the entrance to the village. Most of the shrubs we planted last autumn

have thankfully survived the harsh winter.

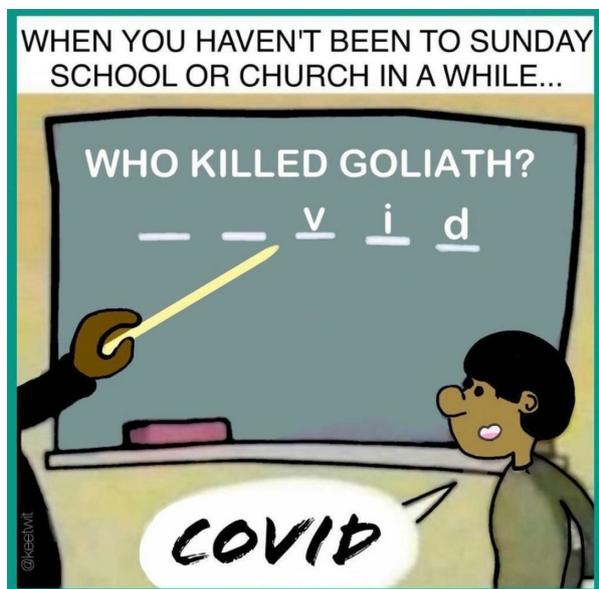
The major planting out of the baskets and the mangers along the Main Street, the churches, the station, and elsewhere, will take place in early June, so that our village will once again have an attractive display of colour to cheer us during the summer.

We are poised to get to work once again; all we need now is some decent weather!



By Sandy Robertson

And Finally....



Thank you to Bruce for providing this edition's cartoon!



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