

Dear Friends in Duke Street and Saughtonhall,

I hope this correspondence finds you well in these hard times. As our lockdown state continues and our Churches remain closed, we continue to live in uncertain and anxious times. The impact of COVID-19 on how we have been living over these last few months was never really imagined by any of us when we last met for worship on Sunday 15th March. Hindsight is indeed a wonderful thing.

It has been very encouraging to see our worshipping communities in Duke Street and Saughtonhall remain connected in so many new ways. Attendance and interaction at both of our live 10am and 12pm Facebook services has been amazing, as has the take up of and response to our new telephone reflection (0131 322 1474). Telephone calls have become invaluable and I am grateful to all of you for taking time to phone others. In both Duke Street and Saughtonhall we have tried Zoom, the online meeting hub. I think this more or less worked as I hope to develop our use of this facility as our lockdown situation continues.

The big questions are of course; when will this all end and when can we get back to Church? Unfortunately, there are as yet no clear answers to both and it should be appreciated that as restrictions are eased, gathering to worship will sadly be far down the list of permissible activities. Even when we do, there are many issues that will have to be considered such as singing, how we participate in communion and where we sit.

I am pleased to say that the United Reformed Church has published guidance in the form a discussion paper titled "Ready for the new normal". From the outset this recognises that whatever 'normal' will be, it will not be what it was. However, it is not all negative as much of what we have been doing during this lockdown in terms of worship, will have to be evaluated and I suspect maintained. The paper comes in three sections:

1. A road map for the way ahead.
2. Some practicalities
3. What is the 'New Normal' for your Church?

I have been taking part in online reflections on this paper as we do have a once in a life opportunity to consider and perhaps reset how we do Church. This lockdown has taken us from a mindset of how to maintain Church to a mindset of how to be Church, which is actually what should really matter. Thoughts on the issues raised in the paper have to begin now. All of our Elders have a copy and if you are interested in reading it, please get in touch and I will forward one to you.

On a very practical level, can I make an appeal? If you can, please maintain your standing orders and keep filling your freewill offering envelopes. Although we have reserves in both congregations, our income has taken a significant hit and this will have longer term consequences. Thank you

I am going to finish by taking a reflection that features in the 'Ready for the new normal' paper.

We are on a journey through a pandemic, not knowing our destination, but aware we follow in a line of saints of old, who have set off before us in the footsteps of Jesus, walking the way. Like those before us, we may travel with faith and doubt, hope and fear, and, perhaps, have a holy encounter along the way. That we travel at all will mean that we are changed. Pilgrimage is about taking and risking such a journey, faith is knowing that we are accompanied by God, hope is in a Kingdom destination, and love may be experienced with companions.

Let this reflection lead you into a time of prayer, thanking God for His close presence, and asking for courage to face the uncertainties, and wisdom to understand the direction ahead and the speed at which we should travel.

Stay safe, stay well, stay connected and stay smiling as we continue to be apart and yet together.

Grace and peace.

The Revd David M Scott, BSc BD(Min)

Website : <http://www.saughtonhall.com/>

Facebook :-

https://www.facebook.com/saughtonhall/?modal=admin_todo_tour

HELP NEEDED! Blythswood Care.

Shoe Box Appeal 2020

We are working with our friends at Duke Street to fill shoe boxes for Christmas for Blythswood Care. Please see list of needed items.

There's a box at the back of the church for donated goods.

If preferred, a monetary donation will be very welcome.

For further information please speak to Hazel.

Suggested Items (all items must be new)

Toiletries (NO TALCUM POWDER)

Shampoo

Soap/Shower gel

Face cloth/Moist wipes

Deodorant

Moisturising Cream

Comb/Brush

Sanitary Products

Shaving foam/Razors

Underwear Socks/Tights

Clothes and other items

Miscellaneous

New Make-up

Sewing Equipment

Household Candles

Screwdrivers/Plier

Kitchen Utensils

Small Toys

Stationery

Pens/Pencils/Sharpener

Notepads/Colouring book

Rulers/Rubbers

(T-shirts/Pyjamas/Jumpers/Shirts etc



Following the most recent meeting of the support group, held on 16th March 2020, Judith Scott, Convenor, wrote to Esther Wanjohi to ask what she felt about the proposed visit to MCT in September 2020. Esther responded explaining that the present situation in Ngong is dire. She is in desperate need of funds to enable her to pay wages and to continue to support local families. She is, however, hopeful that the planned visit can take place in 2021. The support group were saddened to hear of E cudare’s plight and considered ways in which we might offer financial help at this time.

One suggestion was to send the funds currently held on our behalf by MEDET (approximately £500). Thanks to Steve Yates, MEDET Treasurer, we were able to reclaim Gift Aid quickly and, as a result, sent £1,200 to Esther.

Esther’s response is below:

*Dear MCT Family,
Hallelujah! Christ is risen!*

Today, we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Together, let us celebrate this good news, which is at the heart of our faith. May we be anchored in the promise of new life and the power of resurrection!

This Easter, our country and our world, are in the midst of a devastating global pandemic unlike anything in living memory, it may be difficult to feel hopeful. But we would like to pray for you to have hope in the risen Christ. Thank you for helping us extend that hope to people around us who are in dire need of **soap, masks, water** and who can hardly place a **meal** on their table. It is your faith in our work that enables us to keep transforming our community. God bless you and protect you from covis-19

HAPPY EASTER Love and prayers from Kenya

Esther Wanjohi, Director –

Ecumenical Day Care and Support Women Project

Thanks to some additional personal donations from across the three churches, a further £1,300 has now been sent to Esther. If you feel you would like to make a donation; Irene or Hazel will be pleased to explain how to make an on-line payment.

HJP/May 2020

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Bethany Trust Care Shelter Update.....

On the 7th April Duke Street volunteers Les and Alison Douglas supported by myself cooked meals for the 20 remaining staff and homeless people that were still using the Diadem Night Shelter, at the bottom of Chesser Avenue. Covid 19 has hit all of us hard but imagine if as well as the threat of ‘it’ you had no home. Whilst the Diadem centre was set up to accommodate 75 persons per night

by April the Charity and the Council had managed to find alternatives for many and to enable proper ‘social distancing’ they have stopped using the Diadem Hall and offered the alternative of the Old Waverley Hotel. This allows guests to social distance in their own rooms rather than using a shared hall. Bethany have also extended the opening of this service until the end of June. They also have lots of support available for the guests and hope to be able to move people on to more settled accommodation as quickly as possible.



As you may remember shopping at this time was extremely difficult, to say the least! Supermarket shelves were empty and we were all being advised to limit the trips out of our homes. So where previously we would have ‘shopped around’ for the ingredients to make the meals we were slightly daunted by the prospect of finding enough rice or pasta or potatoes to feed the guests. Step in Waitrose! Who, when asked, donated all the ingredients for the meal, Sausage Stovies with apple pie and cream for pudding. The Covid situation did mean that we were unable to stay and serve the food and interact with the guests ourselves but rather the three of us cooked everything in the afternoon, in the Diadem kitchen, and left it for the Bethany staff to reheat and serve.

With the extended opening and more catering dates to cover the Bethany Trust is appealing for help. This falls into several categories. They are trying to reduce what the catering teams need to supply themselves so are asking if anyone would be willing to donate food items such as boxes of cereal (not Cornflakes), jam (not marmalade), fruit, diluting juice, coffee, tea, sugar, crisps and individually wrapped biscuits. They are also trying to find ways of keeping the guests entertained so if anyone has any novels in a foreign language (they have plenty in English), single person board games, a guitar, jigsaw puzzles, puzzle books or art supplies that you would be willing to donate (and not get back), they too could be donated. There is also a need for male clothing. Please only clothing that is clean and suitable for the men using the shelter i.e. please no suits or shirts. Please no women’s or children’s clothing. They are not able to use these – sorry .Any of the above items can be left with Liz and Keith at 10/1 Glendevon Ave, tel: 337 8086. We will deliver everything to the Diadem hall on your behalf. It isn’t permanently staffed so this seems the easiest way to co-ordinate our support. Bethany also, rather obviously, need money. If you would like to donate direct to the charity you can do this via their web site

<https://www.bethanychristiantrust.com/support-work/make-a-donation/>

Lastly, they ask - please pray that all the above needs will be provided for, that they can give the best support needed to their guests and also for the wellbeing of the guests, staff and volunteers.



God Bless you all,

Liz Wilson

UMBRELLAS



Thousands of years old; the design is just the same
They keep the sun off you and also the rain.
Patterns and colours, there's hundreds to choose
Full length and fold-up-you just cannot lose.

Originated in China or so I've been told
Or perhaps the Egyptians, they're so very old.
Some made from paper, so delicate and thin
Some have ornate handles, some let the light in.

They indicated wealth in some parts of the world
A real city gent – underarm or unfurled.
The wind is their villain, blows them inside out
When the storm has subsided, dead ones lie about.

A fashion accessory, they've even got their own stand
In all kinds of buildings, some small, some grand.
Swords hide inside them, used mostly by spies
Deadly on crowded streets – be careful -your eyes!

Huge straw ones on beaches, they're called parasols
Small ones in cocktails, Bloody Maries and Bols.
So whether you be female or a young city fella
You'll always get noticed with your trendy umbrella.

Alas, the object's suffered the ravage of age
Baseball caps and hoodie, they're now all the rage.
But what goes around comes around and in a thousand years' time
We'll be back to umbrellas came rain or come shine.

Ralph Hunter



This prayer appeared in the URC Prayer Handbook recently.
I thought it worth sharing. Hazel Pryde

It's just me

Here I am, Precious God.
I come.

I don't know quite what I have to offer.
I am not great,
not learned;
not wise.

I don't have the deepest insights
nor the greatest understanding.
I am not the most devout
or most faithful.

I'm just me.

And yet I hear you calling –
even me!
unremarkable as I am.

You call.
And by your grace you equip me
for whatever it is I am called to do
and be.

So here I am, Loving God.
I come.



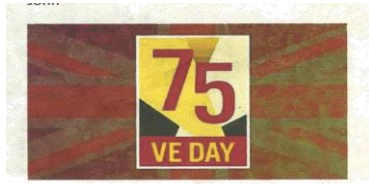
Karen Campbell, URC Prayer Handbook 2020

Funerals.

Mrs Suzie Lough, Saughton Park Died 4th April 2020
Mrs Ella Watson Queens Bay Lodge, (formerly Glendevon Ter.)
Died 20th April 2020
Mr John Robinson Saughtonhall Drive Died April 20

John Webster.....

As well as being one of our Elders I am also an Air and Space Operations Manager with **602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAUXAF)**.



I am the longest serving part-time Volunteer Reservist within the RAUXAF and, as part of the celebrations to mark VE Day 75 (75 years since Victory in Europe), some personnel from **Reserve Forces** in the Lowlands of Scotland were interviewed about VE Day and their unit's involvement during World War II. I told the story of 602 Squadron's war effort and how it became the first Squadron to receive the Spitfire aircraft at the outbreak the war. In conjunction with 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron one of our pilots shot down the first German aircraft which crash-landed near the village of Humbie in East Lothian in October 1939.

602 Squadron then moved to the South Coast to take part in the Battle of Britain and continued to fly from various airfields, mostly in the south protecting UK airspace against invading German aircraft until the Normandy campaign when we followed the ground troops into France to provide close air support as they re-took Europe.

VE Day marks the Victory in Europe 8 May 1945 when the Allied Forces announced the surrender of Germany in Europe. After six years of war and millions of lives lost it was a huge relief to the people of our country and gave them hope for the future. It is important we remember the sacrifices made by all the people in the country. Whether it was a sacrifice in how they lived their lives during the war years or in giving their lives in the service of their country, we should remember that and celebrate that it culminated in victory.

It puts into perspective what we are going through now as a country as we battle a different kind of enemy in the form of the Coronavirus.

<https://www.lowlandrfca.org.uk/lowland-reserve-forces-celebrate-ve-day-75/>

John Webster

THE ANSWERS ARE SCOTTISH PLACE NAMES

1. Put the church on the market
2. Nothing not permitted
3. Winnie the Pooh's study
4. Whip the young sheep.....
5. Girl, walk through the water
6. A Glesca handcart
7. Entrance Lodge for the Armada.....
8. Two parts of the face.....
9. It might accompany vinegar jackets.....
10. You would get a date here Spectators.....
11. A choice between the bull's two projections.....
12. 1 to 6 on a cube.....
13. Departing
14. Proverbially, there's brass here
15. Pushed on pots.....
16. Two are healthy
17. Might throw the ball in the wicket.....
18. Thirsty males
19. Swindler from Exeter
20. The Spanish drink made from sloe berries.....
21. The French police informer
22. Greetings from Hawaii
23. Think it over

Can't get enough, here's more.....

24. Sibling Sun God.....
25. Mushy Beach.....
26. Half a Melon Got Up.....
27. Borrow the Principle.....
28. Stupid Chips.....
29. Happy Raincoat.....
30. Bird Alley.....
31. Cry Not, Blue and Yellow.....
32. Church for 24 hours.....
33. Oxygen.....



COPING CALENDAR: KEEP CALM. STAY WISE. BE KIND



30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together. Please use & share 🙏

1 Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact

2 Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you!

3 Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why

4 Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system

5 Get active. Even if you're stuck indoors, move & stretch

6 Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them

7 Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help

8 Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly

9 Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them

10 Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up

11 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you

12 Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast

13 Respond positively to everyone you interact with

14 Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger

15 Make some progress on a project that matters to you

16 Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits

17 Learn something new or do something creative

18 Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity

19 Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small

20 Make time for self-care. Do something kind for yourself

21 Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with

22 Find positive stories in the news and share these with others

23 Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news

24 Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go

25 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths

26 Take a small step towards an important goal

27 Thank three people you're grateful to and tell them why

28 Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year

29 Connect with nature. Breathe and notice life continuing

30 Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time



“Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances” ~ Viktor Frankl



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org

Find out more about the Ten Keys to Happier Living, including books, guides, posters and more here: www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys