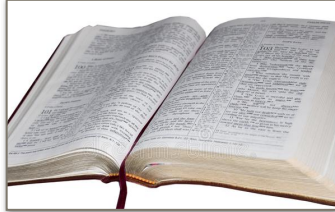


Summer 2020

The Challenge



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A View From The Manse

Dear Friends,

As Stevenston High Kirk enters the early stages of Phase 3, we will still remain closed. At a recent meeting of Presbytery it was agreed that no church within the bounds of Ardrossan Presbytery will be allowed to reopen their buildings for worship until the 16th August 2020 at the earliest. No groups will therefore be able to meet in our buildings for now. We all want to get back together as soon as possible. At the same time we as a faith community are called to care for one another and that may include remaining apart to protect the most vulnerable among us.

During this time, our Kirk Session hopes to be in discussion over the coming months, as we are required to complete a "Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Reopening of Church Buildings Checklist" and "Covid-19 Risk Assessment".

When the Covid-19 Risk Assessment is completed and all measures are in place for reopening our buildings for worship, the Risk Assessment has to be then approved by a Committee of Presbytery before we can reopen our buildings. We continue to adhere to the guidelines given by the Scottish Parliament & the Church of Scotland Offices.

During this phase, you will now be permitted to see more of your wider family and friends, and therefore we pray that you will continue to experience the peace of Christ and God's loving presence. We thank you for your patience.

Your Friend and Minister

Scott Cameron



CofS GUILD

Sadly, the Guild session ended abruptly when lockdown came into effect.

We missed our AGM, Strawberry Tea and other summer local get togethers as well as Guilds Together North Ayrshire summer rally to Millport. The Gathering in Dundee in September has also been cancelled.

HOWEVER, the fellowship of the Guild has not been stopped. We have kept in touch by telephone and computer and, for those with internet connection, the central Guild office has produced a newsletter each week, which several of our members have been able to access. If anyone would like this, please contact me on 01294 465740.

We look forward to being able to meet up physically again and taking up our theme for 2020-21 "The Extra Mile".

We were so sorry to hear of the death of our friend Margaret McCaa. She was a faithful member of the Guild, a hardworking Committee member and we will long remember her baking, table decorations and quizzes. A talented lady and we were blessed to know her.

Still we remember "Whose we are, and Whom we serve".

Mary Ford

Convener

YOUTH GROUP

Realising we weren't going to be able to run the Youth Group for some time, the Core Group met online and decided that, for the next few months we would try to run something online for the young people across all three churches.

On 19th May we had our first meeting. Only 2 people were unable to be there which was great. We had charades first which was good fun, although not easy to do from a distance sometimes!! Alexander then had everyone trying to find things in their house. He would mention an item, a pillow, a shoe etc and you had to find one and show it on the computer screen. John then ran an interactive quiz on Kahoot which we all enjoyed. We closed the meeting with a reflection.

Our next meeting was on Tuesday 23rd June. We had several crazy 1 minute challenges planned, a true and false quiz and a reflection to close.

It's great to be able to see everyone from the Youth Group and we hope to keep this going until we can meet together again.

West FM Cash for Kids 2.6 Challenge – a HUGE congratulations to the Youth Group for taking part in the West FM Cash for Kids 2.6 challenge and raising a massive £846. What an amazing achievement. Thanks to those who took on the challenge and also to those in the youth group, their families and friends and members of the three congregations who contributed. All this money goes to help children and families in Ayrshire and West FM Cash for Kids have been doing a lot right from the beginning of Lockdown to help local families.

The challenge was to do either 2.6 or 26 of something. Here are a few of the things that were done to raise money. Walking was by far the most popular, whether out and about or in the garden.

Well done Everyone!

Margaret Craik



walking 2.6 miles for 26 days hoping to lose 2.6 pounds

skipping 26 times for 26 days

for our basket ball fans - shooting 26 baskets in under 3 mins.

people were walking outside, walking on a walking machine inside, walking round their gardens

Walking 26,000 steps over 26 days

Cycling 26 miles

Knitting mask extenders, 2.6 a day for 26 days

Discipleship Under Lockdown

If that title sounds just a little pretentious, let me hasten to clarify that what we are referring to here is the way in which the Stevenston High Kirk Discipleship Group has been functioning during the restrictions imposed in connection with Covid-19. The Group's routine was to meet each Wednesday at lunch-time in the Church Hall, where we shared a sandwich lunch, (prepared by Margaret Durham – of course) and then read a chapter, or a section of scripture, regarding a particular topic. Some guideline notes were prepared and we followed these, as we sought, not only to increase our Bible knowledge, but also to understand how the Scriptures could help us in our quest to become mature disciples of Jesus Christ. Our key text has always been Colossians ch 1, v 28.

Like every other group in every church in the land (in the world, even?) our routine was knocked sideways by the all-pervading virus and, of course, we were not permitted to continue meeting. It was here that, again like so many others, we turned to technology.

This has not been without its frustrations but the routine has now become that notes are emailed to the Group members each week and they are encouraged to respond to the challenges raised by the Scriptures under consideration. Some very thoughtful responses have been received but the important point is that each person thinks deeply about how the issues highlighted apply to their everyday lives.

When the restrictions were imposed, we were beginning to consider the letters that the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy. The plan had been that we would complete this series on Wed 24th June and then the Group would break up for the Summer. However, the Covid-19 crisis

has led to a slight re-think, especially because of the lack of actually meeting together.

We have just completed the series on Timothy and the plan now is that, for the school holiday period, we continue to keep a "supply-chain" going- but with greatly reduced notes. Rather than a page or two being sent out, a brief "Thought for the Day" will be circulated and no "homework" will be set. The notes will relate to the Bible Reading Plan which is included in The Challenge.

Depending on the general situation - regarding restrictions - by the beginning of September, we shall decide whether to continue operating online or by actually meeting-up. It may be that it will be decided to continue online, anyway. This would open the studies to a wider audience and would also mean that people could consider the notes in their own time. For people interested in following the study material but without access to the internet, arrangements could be made to send the notes by post, or have them delivered.

Please note that, if the Group starts to meet again, everyone is welcome to join. The Group is NOT just for new Christians. If it is decided to continue online and you would like to receive the notes, please let either the Minister or David Wilson know and arrangements will be made for this to happen.

David Wilson

KESWICK MINISTRIES

As many of you know, Peter Maiden was taken ill with cancer around the time of last year's Convention. Peter has been such a faithful servant of Keswick Ministries and a wonderful friend and brother to so many of us. He has just sent this update. Let's keep on praying for dear Peter and Win, as many of you already are.

"Soon and very soon we are going to see the King"

Dear Praying Friends,

Greetings in our Lord Jesus.

For nine months with careful chemotherapy treatment, I've enjoyed reasonably good health and a very good year. Recently things have been going downhill extremely rapidly and yesterday I visited my oncologist once again. His news was exactly what I was expecting and that is that no further treatment is going to be helpful, therefore I have been moved to palliative care. He also made it clear that because of the severe deterioration in the liver, my time on this earth would be measured in weeks rather than months. "Of course," he said, "this is not a science, but that is my best guess as I look at your recent results."

Without being triumphalistic, I trust, I want to assure you that I have peace which is overwhelming. It's not the same, of course, when I think of Win, the children and the grandchildren. My heart breaks and my prayers are intense for them, that they will adjust to life without me.

It's quite a prospect to be thinking that within a few weeks I may be with the One whom "having not seen, I love". It's also an unbelievable prospect that very soon I may have no further struggle with the flesh, the world and the devil. Please pray that I make it through these weeks or months, which remain without being shipwrecked. Satan is a most subtle foe, as all of us know.

Many of you have been friends and prayer and financial supporters for many

years. Some of you 50 years and more. To my continuing astonishment, many of you assure me that you pray for me every day. What can I say, but thank you on behalf of Win and myself? The ministry which God has given us for these last 50 years would not have been possible without you. So, thank you, thank you, thank you.

I'm determined to live life to the full as long as I possibly can and looking forward to further time with family. One specific prayer request would be for my son, Dan. He lives with his family in Canada and, of course, wants to visit. Choosing the right time over the next few weeks, with his work and family responsibilities and with quarantine at both ends is a tough one.

I don't think I will write another update, unless something dramatic occurs. God bless you and thank you sincerely for your love, support and prayers given over the years.

I leave you with the verse that my granddaughter, Erin, sent to me when she heard the news.

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

Your brother in Christ,

Peter Maiden

A MUSICAL MISSION

Rebecca, 98, on a musical mission to raise money for NHS

A 98 year old woman is raising money for the NHS by playing the piano every day for 100 days.

Rebecca Parker, a member of St John’s Parish Church in Carluke, South Lanarkshire, is more than halfway through her quest despite having arthritis in her hands.

The great-grandmother plays traditional Highland Dancing and Scottish tunes on a baby grand piano at McClymont House care home in Lanark, bringing a smile to the faces of fellow residents and staff.



Mrs Parker, who also played the accordion and fiddle in her youth, said she wanted to help NHS Lanarkshire as it continues to battle the COVID-19 crisis.

She was inspired by Captain Tom Moore who raised nearly £33 million for NHS Charities Together by walking 100 lengths of his garden.

Mrs Parker, who grew up in Broadford on the Isle of Skye and used to be a primary school teacher, said: “My mother was a fine pianist and she taught me.

“I get a fine big cushion to sit on and I like to play some Scottish tunes.”

Amazing heart

Rev Dr Elijah Obinna, minister of St John’s Parish Church, described Mrs Parker, who has raised £1,350 through her online fundraising page so far, as an “amazing lady”.

“Each time I visit her and sit and listen to her stories, her testimony, I leave feeling really inspired,” he said.

“She has an amazing heart and is very godly.

“I am very impressed, proud and excited that she is raising money for the NHS in this way.”



Charles Delaney, manager of McClymont House, said Mrs Parker's piano playing lifted people's spirits and put a smile on their faces.

"Rebecca's faith and her church are very important to her and she is doing this to replicate what Captain Tom did to support the NHS.

"She is a remarkable woman, inspiring and selfless.

"The fact that she is 98 and still determined to continue helping people in the wider community is inspiring."

Money raised by Mrs Parker will be given to Lanarkshire Health Board Endowment Fund which invests donations to improve patients' health.

Kirk responds to Scottish Government Phase 3

The Scottish Government has announced churches may reopen for communal worship and prayer from 15 July with continued strict physical distancing and hygiene measures, as the country enters Phase 3 of the easing of restrictions. The latest updates include some relaxation of restrictions for attendance at funerals and weddings and a limited number of people will be allowed in a church building at the same time.

Rev Dr George Whyte, the Principal Clerk to the Church said:

"We welcome the news that worship services will be able to resume on a limited basis after being required to close our buildings earlier in the year due to the COVID-19 emergency. We have been grateful to the Scottish Government for the way in which they have listened to our

concerns and worked with us to get to this stage.

"Ahead of today's announcement, we have prepared guidance to help ministers and congregations as they consider if they should open their church building at this point. As we continue to live with the threat of coronavirus, ministers and congregations must consider carefully whether or not they should return to the church building in these early phases, depending on their own circumstances and the nature of their church.

"Our guidance is designed to support those who will need to implement the changes and restrictions which will need to be put in place so that congregational worship, funerals and weddings can safely take place.

"Parishioners and ministers in high risk groups may be at particular risk from infection and many will prefer to continue with online worship options at this stage. Others will know that with physical distancing and a cap on numbers that there simply will not be room for all those who might wish to attend Sunday worship.

"However, we recognise that for many the buildings themselves are an important sacred space and the opportunity to return to their place of worship, even on a limited basis, will bring spiritual and mental-health benefits."

The Church of Scotland has created extensive guidance to help congregations as they prepare to return to church buildings. The existing guidelines will be updated in the next week following the latest updates from the Scottish Government regarding phase 3.

What Can Christians Learn from This Pandemic?

By Harold L. Senkbeil

The initial romance of our collective quarantine has worn off. What seemed at first like an exciting adventure has turned into monotonous drudgery. Each day now has a certain groundhog-day feel to it, with very little variety and no immediate relief in sight. The kids are getting on our nerves. The eccentricities of that special someone are beginning to drive us nuts. We're starting to wonder if maybe absence really would make the heart grow fonder. We're full of questions, but there just aren't many answers available right now.

One pastor summed up our predicament in two short sentences: "We don't know," and "Lord, have mercy."

What's God up to?

Jesus taught that not even a sparrow falls from its nest without the Father's knowledge (Matt 10:29). This whole mess surely is not some cosmic accident. Nor is God out to get us. He makes the sun rise on evil people and good people, Jesus says, and he sends rain for the unjust as well as the just (Matt 5:45). This virus, too, falls within the boundaries of his good and gracious will. Yet his will remains inscrutable to us mere mortals.

So don't try and figure out God's attitude toward you by reading the tea leaves of the times. He already showed you his heart when he gave his Son to death for you and raised him up to life again. At the cross he revealed his will for all the world to see: God is love. Not death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation—including a coronavirus—will ever be able

to separate us from his love in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:38–39).

The rough spots

Despite his love for us, God never promised us a rose garden. In fact, just the opposite. Jesus warned us: "In the world you will have tribulation" (John 16:33). Like Humpty Dumpty, the world has taken a bad fall from its initial perfection. Yet even in this fallen world all things work together for good for God's beloved children. Hardship, suffering, sickness, and even death serve to draw us ever closer to the God who is at his best when things are at their worst. In life's tight spots, you can learn dependence on your Father in heaven, who made us all and ransomed you with the blood of his dear Son. He gives daily bread to all creation, yet so easily we forget to give him thanks for everything we need to support this body and life. Even the hairs of your head are all numbered, and you are of far more value than many sparrows, whose plight is pitied by the Father in heaven (Matt 10:30–31).

How long this plague will last, no one really knows. But you can be sure that God will use it, too, for your good. By hardships and perils God seeks to draw you ever closer to himself. As gold is purified through fire, he seeks to cleanse your faith of impurities so you can see him more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.

Refined by fire

In these days of plague, look for how the contaminates in your life are being laid bare and stripped away. Are you noticing yourself longing for closer ties with people near and dear to you? Are you discovering that things you once considered necessities were expendable after all? Are you learning to prize once more the simple things you never made time for before?

What important lessons is your church learning in this situation? As peripheral and secondary trappings have been stripped away, is it dawning on your fellow congregants that only one thing is actually needful? Sitting with Jesus, giving rapt attention to his word and prayer, is far more important than the frenzied scurrying around we've come to expect in church life.

"In this [salvation] you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:6–7)

We're slow learners. But God has captured our attention in this pandemic. By his grace, may our households and churches alike emerge cleansed and refined for joyful service to Christ's glory and honour.

Article By Harold L. Senkbeil, author of The Care of Souls (Lexham Press, 2019). Reproduced by kind permission of Lexham Press.

John Piper's Prayer for the Covid-19 Pandemic

Father,

At our best moments, by your grace, we are not sleeping in Gethsemane. We are awake and listening to your Son's prayer. He knows, deep down, that he must suffer. But in his perfect humanity, he cries out, "If it is possible, let this cup pass."

In the same way, we sense, deep down, that this pandemic is appointed, in your wisdom, for good and necessary purposes. We too must suffer. Your Son was innocent. We are not.

Yet with him in our less-than-perfect humanity, we too cry out, "If it is possible, let this cup pass" (Matt. 26:39). Do quickly, O Lord, the painful, just, and merciful work you have resolved to do. Do not linger in judgment. Do not delay your compassion. Remember the poor, O Lord, according to your mercy. Do not forget the cry of the afflicted. Grant recovery. Grant a cure. Deliver us—your poor, helpless creatures—from these sorrows, we pray.

But do not waste our misery and grief, O Lord. Purify your people from powerless preoccupation with barren materialism and Christless entertainment. Put our mouths out of taste with the bait of Satan. Cut from us the roots and remnant of pride and hate and unjust ways. Grant us capacities of outrage at our own belittling of your glory. Open the eyes of our hearts to see and savour the beauty of Christ. Incline our hearts to your word, your Son, and your way. Fill us with compassionate courage. And make a name for yourself in the way your people serve.

Stretch forth your hand in great awakening for the sake of this perishing world. Let the terrible words of Revelation not be spoken over this generation: "Yet still they did not repent" (Rev. 16:8-10). As you have stricken bodies, strike now the slumbering souls. Forbid that they would remain asleep in the darkness of pride and unbelief. In your great mercy, say to these bones, "Live!" (Ezek. 37) And bring the hearts and lives of millions into alignment with the infinite worth of Jesus.

In Jesus's name, amen.

This prayer is taken from Coronavirus and Christ by John Piper.

What is hate speech?

Should expressing your non-threatening view be prosecuted for “stirring up hatred” simply because others found it insulting? This is the controversy surrounding the Hate Crime Bill making its way through the Scottish Parliament. For instance, the author J K Rowling’s recent reasoned opinions on gender have been called “hate” by prominent politicians. Should she be in danger of up to 7 years in prison for expressing them? Some have noted how this legislation abolishes blasphemy at the same time as establishing new blasphemy laws. In fact, you only need to possess objectionable material with a view to passing it on. Criminal law must punish hate crime, but it already does. These proposals are about prohibiting certain views rather than protecting from actual harm. Many are concerned that biblical views may be prosecuted under such laws. Who defines hate speech? Such debates should prompt us to understand from Scripture what real hate speech is and how to avoid it. In fact, we need this for all our personal interactions.

We need to avoid any contempt for others in expressing our view. Too often anger and contempt are revealed as words boil over in social media debates. Leaving aside the matter of when hate speech is a crime, we need to consider how hate speech is a sin.

As the Lord Jesus Christ taught, the sixth commandment is not simply about committing murder, it also reaches to our thoughts and words (Matthew 5:22). The words of the commandment simply mention the highest degree of the sin, but all degrees are forbidden. Sinful and rash anger and contempt are also condemned. As David Dickson points out, Christ expounds this commandment to forbid “rash anger and every evil motion against our neighbour’s person no less than it

forbids murder”. Christ warns us that the least degree of this sin will be judged. As Dickson says, this should drive us to “the rich ransom of Christ’s blood and largeness of his grace” for refuge.

As the Larger Catechism points out therefore, the sixth commandment forbids all “sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passion... provoking words...quarrelling”. It also requires “charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild and courteous speeches and behaviour”. It is possible to communicate the truth in this way. Love does not seek to work or speak evil against our neighbour (Romans 13:10; 1 Peter 3:9-11). This should characterise our relations within the church of God to a still higher degree (Colossians 3:12-13; 1 John 3:15; Ephesians 4:31).

We ought also to think about how we can sin by omission in our speech with destructive consequences to others. James Durham points out that sinful silence in not restraining people from sin (Ezekiel 3:18) or not reproofing sin has this effect (Leviticus 19:6). When heresy and false teaching go unchecked for instance, it destroys souls which is more serious still.

We can also reprove or restrain people in such a weak way that it has no effect. This is what happened with Eli and his sons, he did not reprove and restrain them with a holy severity (1 Samuel 2:22,25 and 1 Samuel 3:13).

One of the books that influenced the Larger Catechism was A Body of Divinity by James Ussher. The following updated extract is drawn from his treatment of the sixth commandment. He shows how the commandment requires us to speak to our neighbours kindly and use courteous and friendly speech towards them (Ephesians 4:32). In the Old Testament

such friendly speech is often literally spoken of as “speaking to the heart” (Ruth 2:13).

1. BITTER AND ANGRY WORDS ARE HATE SPEECH

Bitter and angry words or speech uttered in wrath or using evil or vile terms (Matthew 5:22) are condemned by this commandment.

2. MOCKING WORDS ARE HATE SPEECH

Mocking in general is sinful (Psalm 22:7-8; John 19:3). Mockery of a disability (Leviticus 19:14) or especially mocking others for godly behaviour (2 Samuel 6:20) are condemned. Sometimes, however, God’s children may use mocking in a godly manner as Elijah did to the priests of Baal (1 Kings 18:27).

3. SLANDEROUS WORDS ARE HATE SPEECH

Speaking evil of someone, even although the matter is not in itself false is still wrong if it is not done with a right purpose or in a right manner and at the right time. False accusations are also condemned (Luke 23:2; Acts 24:5).

4. ABUSIVE WORDS ARE HATE SPEECH

Brawling and angry shouting are sinful (Titus 3:9; Ephesians 4:31). Threatening, insulting and provocative speech is also condemned (1 Peter 3:9; 2 Samuel 16:5,7; 2 Kings 2:23-24; 1 Corinthians 5:11 Psalm 57:4 Psalm 52:2 Psalm 64:3-4 Ps 140:3)

5. HARSH WORDS ARE HATE SPEECH

Spiteful, disdainful and harsh words are sinful, especially when they are uttered contemptuously (Proverbs 12:8; Proverbs 15:1).

5. COMPLAINING WORDS ARE HATE SPEECH

When we complain about one another and grumble with malice (James 5:9).

APPLICATION

According to Paul’s counsel we should see that edifying words rather than “corrupt communication” are found in our mouths (Ephesians 4:29). Our speech should be always seasoned with the saltiness of grace so that we know how to answer every one in the right way (Colossians 4:6). If meat is not sprinkled with salt, it will smell. It will be so with those who do not have their hearts seasoned with the word of truth.

If we are not careful the words proceeding from our mouths will be angry, wrathful, and loathsome speech against our brother. Scripture compares such words to juniper coals which burn most fiercely (Psalm 120:4) or to a sword or razor cutting most sharply (Proverbs 12:18; Psalm 52:2). James therefore says that the tongue is an unruly evil, set on fire by hell (James 3:6, 8). We ought therefore to govern our tongues by the Word of God and beware of vile speech.

CONCLUSION

The things summarised here are all too commonly heard in our culture. It is easy to become used to them and even to think that certain ways of speaking are justified if we are defending the truth. Righteous anger is a truly rare thing. None of us is free from the contagion of using words tainted or motivated by malice but we must flee from this as from every other sin. As we consider it carefully it should, as David Dickson says, drive us to “the rich ransom of Christ’s blood and largeness of his grace” for cleansing.

This Article was reproduced from Reformation Scotland Trust.

THE GREAT BIBLE CHALLENGE

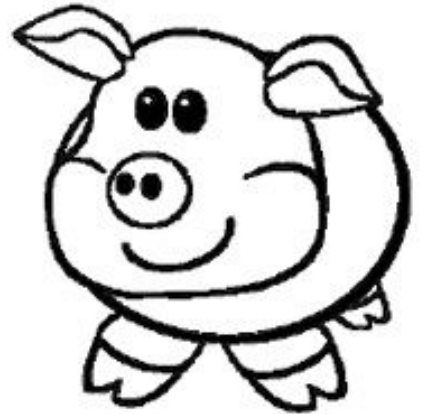


Can you find 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph?

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them?

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalised. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus. There really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God Bless.

The Parable of the Lost Son



Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. Luke 15:23-24 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 15:11-32 (NIV).

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

WEALTH	ESTATE	COUNTRY	PIGS	FOOD
COMPASSION	HIRED	FOUND	FEED	RING
CELEBRATE	STARVING	PROPERTY	FEAST	SONS
KISSED	FATHER	STOMACH	SPENT	LOST

Looking At Lockdown From The Inside

It still feels somewhat unreal to be living with all these restrictions in place but, at the same time, it is surprising how quickly the new becomes the norm. When lockdown was first imposed, none of us had any idea how it would all pan out, as it was completely new territory for everyone – there were no seasoned experts around.

When we were asked by the Minister to put our thoughts about the experience in writing, we sat down and tried to think logically through just how we had coped and what we had learned. The following is our attempt to summarise what we came up with.

For both of us, the first reaction was around how we would cope without our regular-sometimes daily – contact with members of our family and, in all honesty, it was the grandchildren that we were mainly thinking about. There was also the issue of no church meetings. Now, in some ways this was fairly readily accepted by Helen, but, me, quiet and reserved as I am, I'm a meeting buff! Helen did realise that she, too, would miss the contact with so many of the friends and acquaintances that she has made in the High Kirk.

Those who can cast their minds back to Scott's earliest inputs to the online Sunday morning services may remember his encouragement to seek God for ourselves in this "opportunity" to be alone and without so many distractions, Helen took this very much to heart and began disappearing regularly to her "Poustinia" (actually, the garden shed). However, she was pushed right out of her comfort zone by Scott's request that she provide the intercessory prayers at the Sunday morning online services. This has all led her to the firm conclusion that it is in this area of prayer that she is to serve the church and the community.

Thanks to the technology – when it works properly!! - it has been possible to keep the Discipleship Group going, with notes sent out to the members each week and some very thoughtful responses submitted in return. My experience with this arrangement has actually led me to wonder whether this is the way forward, regardless of restrictions. We don't have to operate to fixed times and I feel I can write (well, type- some of you have seen my handwriting!!) more clearly than I can speak. We could still meet occasionally but there would be more flexibility.

We have found that the time passes surprisingly quickly and we have found ourselves sitting down talking a lot, sometimes into the early hours. Without wishing to be sentimental at all, we have come to a new appreciation of each other and we feel very much for our sisters and brothers, who are either on their own, or without believing partners.

While we miss the contact with so many good friends from the High Kirk family, we share a fear that, once the restrictions are lifted completely, we could very easily slip back into "business as usual" and miss the opportunity to re-assess everything we do as a church to make sure that we really are seeking first the Kingdom of God.

David Wilson

OBITUARIES: In Loving Memory

ROBERT REID

Robert was born in Saltcoats in 1931, only child to Mary & Alfie Reid. He attended Saltcoats Public School, and then began his career as a Painter & Decorator. He went on to do contract work with various companies. Robert was a grafter, who worked hard all his days.

He had been invited to a dear friend's wedding, Tom & Ann Harper, and then fell in love with Ann's sister, May. They were married on the 20th of June 1959 at High Kirk by the Rev'd John Miller Scott. They were such an inseparable pair!

Robert and May carried a deep and sincere faith, and held great respect for their church. As a young boy he attended the Boys Brigade and would enjoy going along to the Gospel Meetings in the local Brethren Assembly.

Although they never had children of their own, they did have a greatly loved Alsatian called Major. Major was a very pampered dog and loved long walks.

Robert would often share stories of the great highlights of his life... their holidays to Spain, especially Tenerife; and he never forgot his first Ford Capri. His face would light-up when he would tell you how he and May flew on Concorde and visited New York for their Ruby Wedding anniversary.

Robert was a wonderful character, a gentle man with a warm smile. He appreciated his wider family, and his church family at the High Kirk. We give thanks to God for Robert's life and for the memories we all cherish.

LORRAINE ROBERTSON

Although born in Kilwinning, Lorraine grew up in Stevenston along with her 2 sisters and 2 brothers. She received her education at Stevenston High School, Kilmarnock College, followed by 3 years at Glasgow Bible College.

Her career consisted of working at ICI, followed by nursing at Crosshouse hospital. Many will also remember her from the North Ayrshire Criminal Justice Services in offender rehabilitation. On a voluntary capacity she then worked with Prison Fellowship.

She was a deeply committed Christian, having experienced saving faith in Christ, following the death of her Mother, Moira Scott, in 1991. Days before Lorraine's passing, she spoke passionately about how she hoped the angels would come and carry her to Heaven's gates, where she could be re-united with her Mum. Lorraine's faith was there for all to see and she always provided guidance or readings from the Bible whenever people needed such support.

Lorraine will especially be remembered as one who loved her family deeply. She and Graham married in August 1973 and were blessed with 2 boys - Graham & Scott. This was followed by 4 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

It was an absolute joy when Graham and Lorraine made their home with us at the High Kirk. It was her initiative that led to the establishment of the Crisis Bag ministry at the High Kirk, which continues to this day.

Lorraine will be greatly missed, but we do give thanks to God for the memories we share with the family.

MARGARET McCAA

Margaret was born in Glasgow but grew up in Islay. After leaving school, she went to work in the local Co-op. There she met Willie and they married in 1962. They lived in various locations in England. They had 2 boys, Christopher and Bruce.

In 1967 the family moved back to Scotland. Margaret then qualified for a place at Craigie College and graduated in 1972. Tragically, just two days after Margaret's graduation, Willie was drowned.

She survived this ordeal and taught for some years in Kilwinning and Saltcoats. During these years, Margaret met John and they married in July 1980.

After leaving teaching, she looked after her two grandsons until they started school. Her grandsons gave Margaret a renewed purpose in life. She enjoyed a number of creative pastimes and she had pen-friends in different countries.

Margaret survived brain surgery in 2013 and then, in November of that year, her second husband, John, died. She joined the High Kirk in March 2014 and made many new friends. She came through 2 bouts of cancer but in March of this year, she learned that cancer had spread and she was told that she had just months to live. She responded with great faith and in a characteristic manner, she began to make plans for her own funeral!

As well as being a faithful member, she was a wonderful lady, and a dear friend.

Margaret's family received the bigger blessing, but we are grateful to them for sharing her with us. We thank God for a wonderful lady.

Please continue to remember the family in your prayers.

DAN McNEIL

Dan McNeil was born in 1924 in Greenock, to Daniel McNeil and Peggy Alexander. He had a younger sister, and two younger brothers. On leaving school, he started his apprenticeship at Kincaid's Ship Yard and then attended the Nautical College. After serving in the Merchant Navy, he joined British Railways as a Chief Engineer, working on the Clyde Steamers..

Dan was married to Margaret McNeil Knox (known as Pearl). They had first met when they were very young and then met again when they were in their teens. In 1944, Pearl "eloped" to Greenock and they were married there in St George's Church. They had 2 daughters and two sons but sadly, the older one lived only a few months. Eventually, they had 6 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. He was very much a family man who loved making things, and even built a boat in his garage.

We especially remember Dan as a loving, kind and very honest man and very even-tempered. He was a very committed Christian and, for a number of years, served as an elder in Stevenston High Kirk.

Both Dan & Pearl were greatly loved by us all. Dan had been involved in the early days of our Church magazine, and his green fingers kept the Church grounds looking immaculate.

We give thanks to God for an absolute gentleman.

BOOK REVIEW

DARING TO HOPE - Finding God's Goodness in the broken and beautiful.

AUTHOR: Katie Davis Majors

This is, indeed, a beautiful book. Katie devoted her life to serving people in Uganda, with all its poverty, addictions, desperation and disease. It is a book about joys and sorrows - and questions. The main question tackled is how to react when God does not answer prayer, at least not in the way we expect. Amongst the many memorable statements is the following, "He didn't take the pain away but He made it Beautiful. He held me close and whispered secrets to me and revealed things about Himself that I had not yet known". This typifies the relationship that the author developed with the Lord. Although she faced many disappointments, she dared to hope in a loving God, who was always by her side. As you read this book, you may well shed a tear but you will want to keep on reading. Katie tells an honest but encouraging story and one that is very relevant to what is happening in our world today.

Helen Wilson

DONATING ONLINE

Whether you are a church member who wants to continue to give your regular offering to your own congregation or a friend to the Church who is moved to contribute for the good of your community, we want to help you support the Church in whichever way you feel led.

Through the Church of Scotland's new donation form, you can choose to give a one-off donation or donate every month. You can then opt to direct your gift to "Stevenston High - Ardrossan" (*Ardrossan is our Presbytery name*).

By clicking the 'donate' button below, you can then follow the steps:

1. Click on donate to a congregation - "Stevenston High" - Ardrossan (Presbytery)
2. Fill details if you want to opt in to gift aid (applicable to UK taxpayers only)
3. Complete your donation via PayPal

[Donate now](https://churchofscotland.org.uk/donate) - <https://churchofscotland.org.uk/donate>

A big thank you from all your support in this time of unprecedented crisis. For further information, please contact Ruth Burns our Treasurer: ruthhighkirk@gmail.com

STEVENSTON HIGH KIRK



**EVERY
SUNDAY**

**Available
From
7AM**

Sunday Club

WORSHIP ONLINE

<https://stevenstonhighkirk.com/sunday-club-online>

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2020

	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
1	Revelation 5	Matthew 2:19-23	Matthew 8:28-34
2	Revelation 6	Matthew 3:1-12	Matthew 9:1-8
3	Revelation 7:1-8	Matthew 3:13-17	Matthew 9:9-13
4	Revelation 7:9-17	Matthew 4:1-11	Matthew 9:14-17
5	Revelation 8:1-5	Matthew 4:12-17	Matthew 9:18-26
6	Revelation 8:6-9:21	Matthew 4:18-22	Matthew 9:27-34
7	Revelation 10	Matthew 4:23-25	Matthew 9:35-38
8	Revelation 11:1-14	Matthew 5:1-12	Matthew 10
9	Revelation 11:15-19	Matthew 5:13-16	Matthew 11:1-19
10	Revelation 12:1-13:1a	Matthew 5:17-20	Matthew 11:20-24
11	Revelation 13:1b-10	Matthew 5:21-26	Matthew 11:25-30
12	Revelation 13:11-18	Matthew 5:27-30	Matthew 12:1-14
13	Revelation 14:1-5	Matthew 5:31-32	Matthew 12:15-21
14	Revelation 14:6-13	Matthew 5:33-37	Matthew 12:22-37
15	Revelation 14:14-20	Matthew 5:38-42	Matthew 12:38-45
16	Revelation 15	Matthew 5:43-48	Matthew 12:46-50
17	Revelation 16	Matthew 6:1-4	Matthew 13:1-23
18	Revelation 17	Matthew 6:5-15	Matthew 13:24-30
19	Revelation 18	Matthew 6:16-18	Matthew 13:31-35
20	Revelation 19:1-10	Matthew 6:19-24	Matthew 13:36-43
21	Revelation 19:11-21	Matthew 6:25-34	Matthew 13:44-46
22	Revelation 20:1-6	Matthew 7:1-6	Matthew 13:47-52
23	Revelation 20:7-10	Matthew 7:7-12	Matthew 13:53-58
24	Revelation 20:11-15	Matthew 7:13-14	Matthew 14:1-12
25	Revelation 21	Matthew 7:15-23	Matthew 14:13-21
26	Revelation 22:1-6	Matthew 7:24-29	Matthew 14:22-36
27	Revelation 22:7-21	Matthew 8:1-4	Matthew 15:1-20
28	Matthew 1:1-17	Matthew 8:5-13	Matthew 15:21-28
29	Matthew 1:18-25	Matthew 8:14-17	Matthew 15:29-39
30	Matthew 2:1-12	Matthew 8:18-22	Matthew 16:1-4
31	Matthew 2:13-18	Matthew 8:23-27	