



Good morning everyone,

Welcome to another Reflection, the first of our Monthly Reflections since having suspended the weekly devotions. Today's Church service is a truly special occasion where we will see the Baptism of Skye Sanford, the granddaughter of one of our members now deceased, the late John Moxey. I hope it will be a reminder that despite all that has been happening throughout these Covid times where we have heard so much about death, we will see this as an opportunity to celebrate new life in all its fullness.

Speaking of Fullness of life I would take this opportunity to congratulate Wilma Hastings as she is in the final 9 days of her 99th year and will celebrate her 100th Birthday on the 13th July.

I trust that we have all been able to enjoy the glorious sunshine of the last week and bathe in its rays. Scots are often accused of being dour and crabbit, to use two good Scottish words, where it has often been said that we see the glass as half empty. It has also been said Americans will often see the glass as half full - where a Scot might see a problem, an American may see a challenge.

I came to a conclusion many years ago when on Holiday in the "Sunshine State" of Florida that Americans (especially Floridians) have that optimistic disposition because of the number of days of sunshine they enjoy across the year whereas here in Scotland it could well be true that we are somewhat more pessimistic because of our lesser number of days in glorious Sunshine. The sunshine does seem to lift the spirit at times and I am sure that's why an entire industry of travel and leisure has been primarily built around "a holiday in the Sun". I am not sure whether you are one who sees the glass as Half full or half empty, but I do know that for the Psalmist, "his Cup Runneth Over". Whether we have problems or challenges, trials or celebrations, through it all we can still know the blessings of God and I trust that you will in this coming week.

Calum D. Macdonald

Announcements

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Many thanks
from all at Carnwadric Church
For your Support with our
Foodbank



The Church Flowers

The Flowers this week were
donated by Edith Darling in
Fond memory of her
husband Jim Darling.



Congratulations to
Wilma Hastings
upon reaching her 100th
Birthday on Tuesday
13th July

When Coming to Church

Please remember to Phone in for Track and Trace
purposes. To reserve your place please phone Bert or
Sandra Dickov on 01413168143 or 07947611412



Calling all Knitters and Crocheters

This summer a Scottish Charity called SiMBA (Simpson Memory Box Appeal) has put a plea out for 5,000 tiny bears to be knitted or crocheted by 31st July. These tiny bears will be put into a Memory Box which is given to parents whose baby has sadly died in the early stages of pregnancy, up to around 14 weeks.

The bears are around 6cm tall and take about 5 grams of wool to knit. Once knitted/crocheted you embroider a face and sew front and back together shaping two ears as you go. I found it easy - once I had made the first pair. They can be any colour EXCEPT pink or blue and please make them in matching pairs tied together when complete. One bear will stay with the baby, the other goes home with the parents.

There are some paper copies of the pattern printed in black and white on the table in the foyer as well as being attached to this intimation. You can find a colour version of the pattern on our web page (<https://parkchurch.org.uk/>) by clicking on the weekly messenger box.

Once completed please drop off your bears in the box on the table in foyer or can be dropped off when you bring your donation to the food bank or on a Wednesday afternoon 2-3.30pm when the gardening gang will be around in the garden, unless it's raining.

For more information on the work of the charity please go to www.simbacharity.org.uk

Thank you

Isobel Watson

(NB There are copies of the Bear Pattern on the following pages if you cannot access the website)



Small Crochet Bear

Requirements: 2.75 mm hook

Any DK wool

Please knit in matching pairs

Finished size: 6-8 cm tall

They are fine without any stuffing as they are so tiny

1. Start here at the bottom of the right arm, Chain 2 + 1 turning chain (3ch) turn.
2. Now do 4 rows of 2 single crochets for the arm. Don't forget the turning chains, to keep the teddy's straight line.
3. When you have finished the 4 rows for the arm, chain 6 + 1 turning chain to the left for the head. Turn, skip over the turning chain and crochet back 8 stitches.
4. For the left leg chain 7 + 1 turning chain to the right. The whole row consists out of 2 chains for the arm + 6 chains for the head + 7 chains for the leg = 15 chains altogether. Do now 3 rows of single crochets over these 15 chains. Don't forget the turning chain.
5. In this row just do 11 single crochet.
6. Then chain 4 + 1 turning chain for the right leg. Again do 3 rows of single crochets 15 stitches
7. In this row just do 8 single crochets + 1 turning chain. Turn your work.
8. Now do 4 rows of single crochets over the 2 arm chains.
9. Do one extra row of single crochets to fold your work over later on. (for sewing up)
10. The second part of the bear has to be done in the same way. Start at point 2
11. If you have reached point 8 for the second time then your next part is finished.
12. To finish the bear, fold your work in half and sew around. Leave the top of the head open, turn your work inside out, add features to face, close the seam of the head. Pull a piece of yarn through the neck and pull it tight to give it a nice shape. Form the ears, fix them with a few stitches. Add a ribbon, small crochet chain or a piece of wool as a scarf. Place around the bears neck and tie in a bow.
13. Now your teddy is finished.
14. Please tie identical pairs together loosely.

Small Knitted Bear

Requirements : 2.75mm (UK12) knitting needles

Any DK wool

Please knit in matching pairs

Finished size: 6-8 cm tall

They are fine without any stuffing as they are so tiny

Every row knit – Garter stitch

To knit teddy (whole teddy knitted in one piece)

Leg 1 Cast on 4st and work 8 rows - break yarn.

Leg 2 Cast on 4st and work 8 rows

Body Knit across all 8st

Knit 3 more rows

Arms Cast on 4st at beginning of next 2 rows (16 sts)

Work 4 rows

Cast off 4st at beginning of next 2 rows (8 sts)

Head Work 22 rows on 8st

Arms Cast on 4st at beginning of next 2 rows (16 sts)

Work 4 rows

Cast off 4st at beginning of next 2 rows (8 sts)

Body Knit across all 8st

Knit 3 more rows

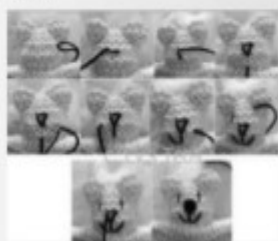
Legs Work on first 4st only, work 8 rows. Cast off.

Return to remaining 4 stitches and work 8 rows. Cast off.

Making Up

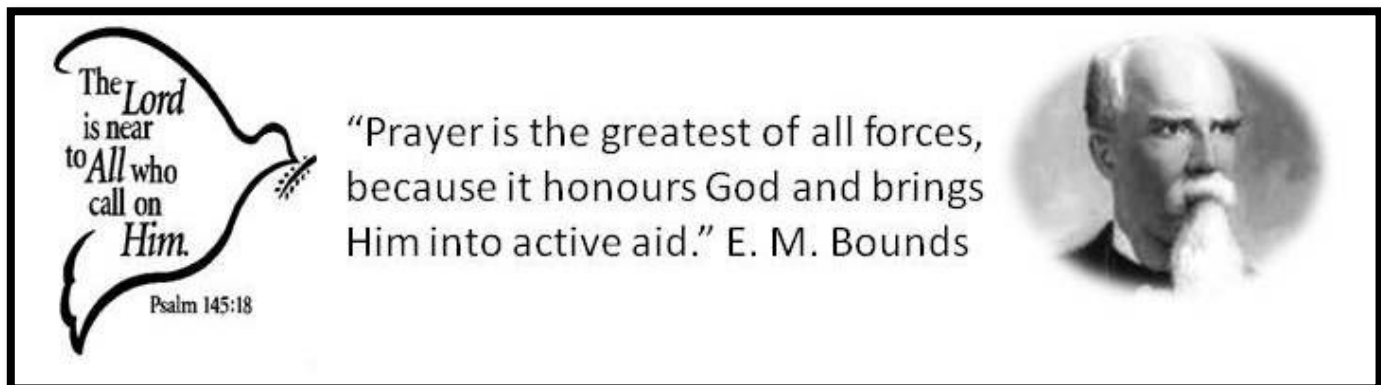
To finish the bear, embroider the face. Sew front and back of bear together. Sew across corners of the head to form ears. Add a ribbon, small crochet chain or a piece of wool as a scarf. Place around the bears neck and tie in a bow. Please tie identical bears loosely together.

Please note that we have been given permission by The Tigerlily Trust to use and share this pattern for SIMBA use only



4





Let us Pray....

My eyes are dry, My faith is old, My heart is hard, My prayers are cold
 And I know how I ought to be, Alive to You and dead to sin
 But what can be done For an old heart like mine?
 Please Soften it up With oil and wine.

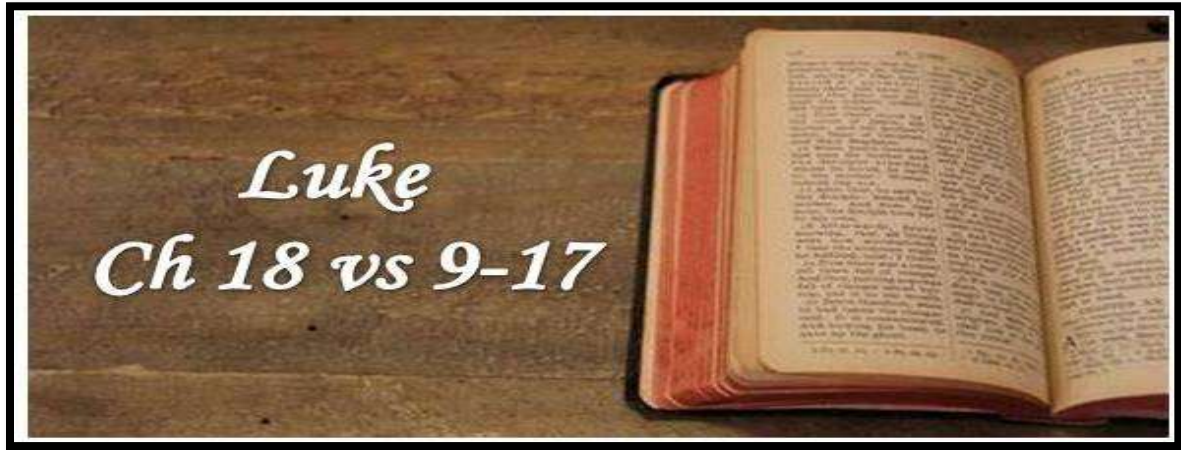
The oil is you, Your Spirit of love, Wash me anew with the wine of your blood.
 Father in heaven , *We come before You in these moments to thank for the opportunity of another Sunday in Church, A time to spend with one another but more importantly a time to spend with You. Once more as we come into your presence whether at home or in church, we pray that you would see within us first and foremost a heart filled with gratitude, Gratitude for your love for us, gratitude for the gift of your Son Jesus, for his love and sacrifice on the cross, for his rising again and the presence of your Spirit at work in each of our lives in ways we cannot see or fully understand at times. We are grateful that you are there.*

Father forgive us for the Ways we have acted on occasion, for the thoughts we harbour against you against others and even against ourselves, for those moments when we have acted or spoken when we should have held back, when we have held back or spoken and not acted when we should . Most of all we pray that you would forgive us not because of anything we have done merits such Grace but because our faith and trust is on the one who loved and gave himself for us.

Father You have seen us through yet another week, and once again we stand at the threshold of a new week beginning, full of new opportunities, challenges and blessings. Lord, keep us right with You. Stir within us that deep desire to know you more and serve You better. Remind us that it is not solely by going to church on Sunday that we worship and come before You; rather, it is through our Daily walk with the Spirit, the discipline of prayer and the guidance of your Word that will keep us right before You.

Help us once more that we might be your witness in a broken fallen world that needs you now more than ever. Let the light of your love shine that others may be drawn to you through it for all this we pray in Jesus' name and for his Sake.

Amen



Luke 18:9-17

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

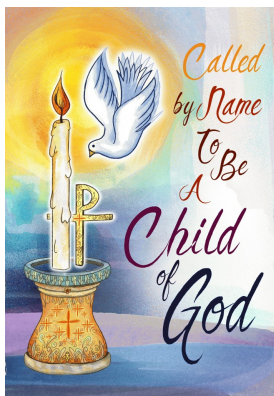
¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’”

¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

The Little Children and Jesus

¹⁵ People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”



Baptism – A moment for Reflection For All who Reject Him – He Rejects None



Congregations like ourselves will be looking forward to the opportunity of singing God's praise again in anticipation that the next round of relaxed restrictions will allow this to happen and presumably the need for wearing masks in Church will be suspended, (if not totally at least while one is seated). Our Sunday school will hopefully reconvene as will our other organisations and we might even be able to see off the need for Zoom meetings. (Hallelujah I hear you say.) In the meantime of course, we carry on as usual with our focus being on Prayer and Reflection

It has been a wee while since we last had the occasion of celebrating such a moment as the baptism of a youngster in our midst. At a time when we are hearing so much about the 'R' rate, admissions to hospital and deaths and the risk of infection, a time where we are still experiencing restriction of life and liberty which is all for our benefit of course. This is an opportune moment to see something positive in life in the affirmation that the action of parents making their vows in faith during the Sacrament of Baptism as they look to God's richest blessing upon the life their young one.

That has been the theme for our consideration this week as we explore our understanding of what Baptism is and Why it is an important part of Church life. Unlike some of the other Church Denominations, the Church of Scotland has only two Sacraments, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or Communion as we sometimes refer to it, which we celebrated together only a few weeks ago, and here today we undertake the second of the Church of Scotland's Sacraments in the Baptism of Young Skye Sanford.

People have a variety of understandings about what Baptism is. For the Sociologist and psychologist, they may simply view Baptism as a rite of passage for some in society who want to celebrate the arrival of new life in a particular way. For many others outside the Church, there is an almost

superstitious concern that Baptism is something mysterious but important in the grand scheme of things and that if "you don't get the Wean done" and something happens to that youngster they could be lost forever. I remember hearing of how a friend was coming home from Australia. Her cousin was going to come with her to let the family back home meet the newest addition to her family who was less than 6 months old. She refused point blank to set foot on the plane till the child had been Baptised - just in case.

Even within the Christian Church there are differently held views. Roman Catholics believe Baptism, one of their seven sacraments confers Church membership upon the youngster in that moment of Baptism and several years later their second Sacramental Act will see the youngster able to avail themselves of the Eucharist - a means by Which God confers his Grace upon them and from that moment are fully members of the church. (Possibly the "Getting the wean done" story is a corruption of this way of thinking diminishing Baptism as something that is more a superstition than anything) For others the question might be -Does the Practice of Full Immersion otherwise known as Believer's Baptism take priority over that of Infant Baptism? You will also have the story of those in the Salvation Army, where there are no sacraments and issues such as Baptism and Communion are really of lesser consequence. There are those who say that you cannot be saved without being Baptised and they hold to this view staunchly till you confront them with the moment that Jesus was asked by the thief on the Cross to remember him when he came into his Kingdom to which Jesus Replied, "Today you will be with me in Paradise" No time for Baptism there ! (Luke 23: 39-43)

Now I don't want to take task with our Baptist friends on this issue because I have learned an important lesson in the story of Baptism and that is simply that whether Baptist or Presbyterian or Salvation army we want to see the same outcome - that people come to that place in their lives where they put their faith in Jesus. When it comes to Baptism, Presbyterians and Baptists may be at opposite ends of the story but they desire the same result. Parents in Baptist circles will present their Children to the Church in an Act of Dedication in the hope that when they come to faith they will make their profession of Faith and their Baptism becomes a central part of the Act of Profession of Faith publicly. Us Presbyterians meanwhile will host a Baptismal Service with a view that we are taking a real step of Faith on our part as parents and as a church fellowship in the act of this Sacrament, seeking that in time as our youngsters grow into maturity we will see them

come to that place of Faith seeking to Make their Profession of Faith Publicly as they are admitted to the Fellowship of the Church as Church Members in their own right having acknowledged their need for repentance and faith in Jesus, and God's Grace upon them.

I have chosen Luke 18 verses 9-17 as our chosen reading for this morning partly because the parable of the Pharisee and Publican is one of my all time favourite parables but perhaps more importantly for our purposes, Luke immediately follows up the parable with this story of the parents seeking to bring their little ones to Jesus for his blessing.

Infant Baptism often draws on this particular moment because Jesus highlights the importance of having that child like trust when it comes to receiving God's precious Gifts, The Birth of a Child is surely a precious Gift and it cannot be anything but a good thing that we want to Bring this wee gift of life in our arms to seek God's Blessing upon the journey of faith that we are about to begin as we make the first step with the Act of Baptism, an Act we believe to be a means of God's Grace, such Grace being something which we will most certainly need in the days, weeks, months and years that will follow.

In this celebration of Baptism these words of Jesus I think reveal three things that we can take to heart.

1. In Baptism we celebrate the Seal of God's Love upon us
2. In Baptism we celebrate the Promise of Christian Faith
3. In Baptism there is a Proclamation of God's Great Message to a Broken and fallen World that needs Him now more than ever.

In Baptism we celebrate the Seal of God's Love upon us:-

"Setting the Seal" is an old fashioned expression that stems from olden times in a number of ways. There are a lot of documents that are of no value without a seal. A diploma, a deed, a will, a title and other documents are useless unless they have a seal. A notary or solicitor uses his or her seal to validate such documents. In times gone by, it was customary, when purchasing goods of any kind, they mark it with a seal and conferring the mark of ownership. A retired minister I know arranged to buy a parcel of land from a farmer for he and his wife's retirement. They made the agreement in the absence of lawyers and they sealed the agreement with them both spitting in their hand and then shaking on it to "Seal the Deal". The lawyers came in at the end to tidy up the loose ends legally after the deal was set in the Shaking of hands. In these Covid times we begin to forget how important a

Handshake could be. And let us not forget one of the greatest example - that of the King's Seal where a letter sent by the King with the seal of wax stamped by his signet ring carried the authority of the King offering protection to his bearer and assuring that none should read the king's letter before the one it is addressed to. Our Baptism has God's stamp upon it - the Stamp of his great Love.

A minister told the Story of when he was growing up, "I grew up on a farm and my mother used to make jam, I would watch her pour wax over the top of the preserves until it was at the brim of the jar. She would then carefully wipe some wax around the rim itself, and place the rubber lined lid on tight. The wax and the vacuum caused by the cooling preserves would seal that jar so tight that it could have sat on a basement shelf for years, and the jam would have been good when finally opened. Sealed, preserved, protected. The Word of God was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, and after listening to the message of truth, the good news of our salvation, and having believed, we were sealed in Him (Christ) by the Holy Spirit of promise". A seal of God's ownership was placed over our lives in Baptism, and unlike Pilate's seal, no power in Heaven or earth can break that seal, a seal that means a great deal to God. He shut us up tightly. We are set aside for His use, for His eternal fellowship. Preserved, protected until the day of the Redemption. - Baptism, the seal of God's Love.

In Baptism we celebrate the Promise of Christian Faith;-

In the story of every infant Baptised, The Promise of Christian Faith is both conferred and Avowed. As parents it is our faith in Christ that is affirmed in the moment of Baptism but it is also tested from that moment forward. Not only is the faith of parents to be avowed and tested, it also applies to the congregation for we in the church have a central role equal to that of the parents for as Parents promise depending on the grace of God to teach their child the truths and the duties of the Christian faith and that by faith, example and prayer to bring her up in the life and worship of the church, so we too as members of the Church promise to be faithful to the Call of God ensuring that as members of this fellowship and of Jesus' Church, we bear witness of and be an example to this little one to the best of our ability, that we may see her grow up in the knowledge and the love of Christ?

In Baptism there is a Proclamation of God's Great Message to a Broken and fallen World that needs Him now more than ever.

In our final thought for reflection it must be to voice again that which should sit at the centre of every aspect of Church life, namely the Proclamation of God's unmerited grace to a fallen world and broken church through Faith in his Son. In Luke 18: 15 people were bringing their Children to Jesus and his disciples turned them away. Sometimes in the Church we can be guilty of turning people away by how we behave and treat one another. Sometimes it is how we react to strangers in our midst, a reaction perhaps born out of fear or anxiety, perhaps mistrust and even in some cases of rejection and blatant prejudice. They need our love and not our condemnation - which we don't even Have the right to do, "Judge not lest ye be judged" (Matthew 7: 1), Love one another as I have loved You, (John 13: 34 -35)

The songwriter was maybe right when he said,

"And they'll know we are Christians by our love."

The Act of Baptism is a public reminder of not so much what we do but why we do it and on this we can all agree, no matter our Denomination, our central mandate is to proclaim afresh as parents and as church members our Faith in a Saviour who loved us and gave Himself for us and that our wish for our children and all whom we come in contact with is that our faith in the Saviour while real and important and relevant for us can be so for them with the Seal of God's Love, the Promise of faith in Jesus and the a message to proclaim to all. Baptism is indeed for all - even those who reject Him for He will never reject them.

Have a great week

Calum

*May the waters of
God The Father's grace surround us
and uphold us.*

*May our baptism strengthen us
for the work ahead
through Faith in Jesus.*

*And may the Spirit of God
that descended upon Jesus at his baptism
fall upon our shoulders
as we seek to do God's will
This Day and in
the Days to come.*

Amen.

