



Good Morning,

A Warm welcome to our October Devotional. I hope that you are contending with all the changes going on, not least the distinctive change in the weather temperature and significant rainfall of the last few days. Last week at our Harvest Sunday service we sang the hymn "We plough the fields and scatter" And as we came to the end of the first verse, I could not help but smile at the thoughts expressed in it,

**"He sends the snow in winter, The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft, refreshing rain."**

Matthias Claudius, the author of the hymn having lived for the most part of his life in Wandsbeck in Northern Germany clearly had never experienced the "soft refreshing rain" off the west coast of Scotland with Gale force 7 winds behind it. There have been times when I have felt the rain to be not so much soft and refreshing but cold, soaking and stinging.

I suppose we can look at the weather as a barometer of life in general. Sometimes it can be gentle and pleasant, at other times it can be harsh and unforgiving. In many ways the past 18 months has reminded us of these things too.

Having already written a letter to the congregation inviting all to come to communion I would just want to say at this juncture that I trust that in the event of you not being able to enjoy the fellowship of that occasion, that you find our Written Devotional for October to be one that encourages and re-assures us again of God's Almighty hand upon us during the good and the bad, the times of struggle along with the times of blessing.

Most of all I just Hope that in the week, if it rains that it is indeed soft and refreshing and not just cold and miserable. Have a great Week.

Yours in Christ

Calum D. Macdonald

The Park Church Bulletin Board

Our Harvest Appeal 2021
Sunday 26th September



Carnwadic Church

Helping Hands Community Foodbank

A gift of £70 from Park Church was donated along with two car loads of Groceries which included the fresh produce that had been given which was donated to the Rainbow Centre at Carnwardic Church, Day Care Centre that looks after some of the Elderly providing company during the week along with a meal during their stay. Thanks to all who made this Happen

Sunday 3rd October 2021
11am

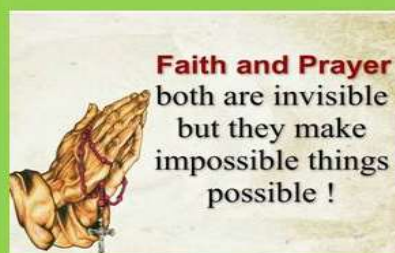


Our Retiral Offering that day will be in support of Alzheimer's Scotland's work here in East Renfrewhire

A Celebration round the Lord's Table

Kirk Session

Kirk Session will convene at Park Church from 7.30pm on Wednesday 20th October



Faith and Prayer both are invisible but they make impossible things possible !

Tuesday mornings from 10am in the Session house The Powerhouse of Prayer

R.E.A.P.

bible study method

READ Read and reread the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you. As you read ask:
 - What is happening in the passage? What things are emphasized, repeated, related?
 - What do you see about God? What is God doing in this passage?
 - What do you see about man?

EXAMINE Spend some time reflecting. Ask yourself these questions, and write down your thoughts:
 - What is going on in the passage?
 - Who is writing and who is he writing to?
 - When was the author writing?
 - What are the circumstances the author is addressing?
 - Does the writer mention anything that might indicate his purpose or intent?
 - How do you think the author wants his audience to respond?

APPLY Meditate on what God is saying to you and how it affects your life. Ask yourself these questions:
 - Is there a truth to believe? Sin to repent of? A promise to claim? A command to follow?
 - What things need to change in light of this text?
 - How will I live differently and be different because of what I just read?

PRAY Pray through the passage and your application, asking God to change your heart and to change your life based on the time you've spent in God's Word.

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Bible Study

Having been unable to sit together since Covid Lockdowns Began, we can now begin to meet again to Read and Examine God's work seeing how we might Apply it to daily life and prayer

*Tuesday 5th October
 Session House
 7.30pm*

Church Mice

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Church Diary

Monday

Craft Club, Eastwood Choral Society
McCarthy Dance School & Chess Club

Tuesday

Prayer Meeting , Mother & Toddlers ,
Bible Study , Girl Guides

Wednesday

Mother & Toddlers & Brownies

Thursday

Indoor Bowls, Keep Fit

Friday

McCarthy Dance School

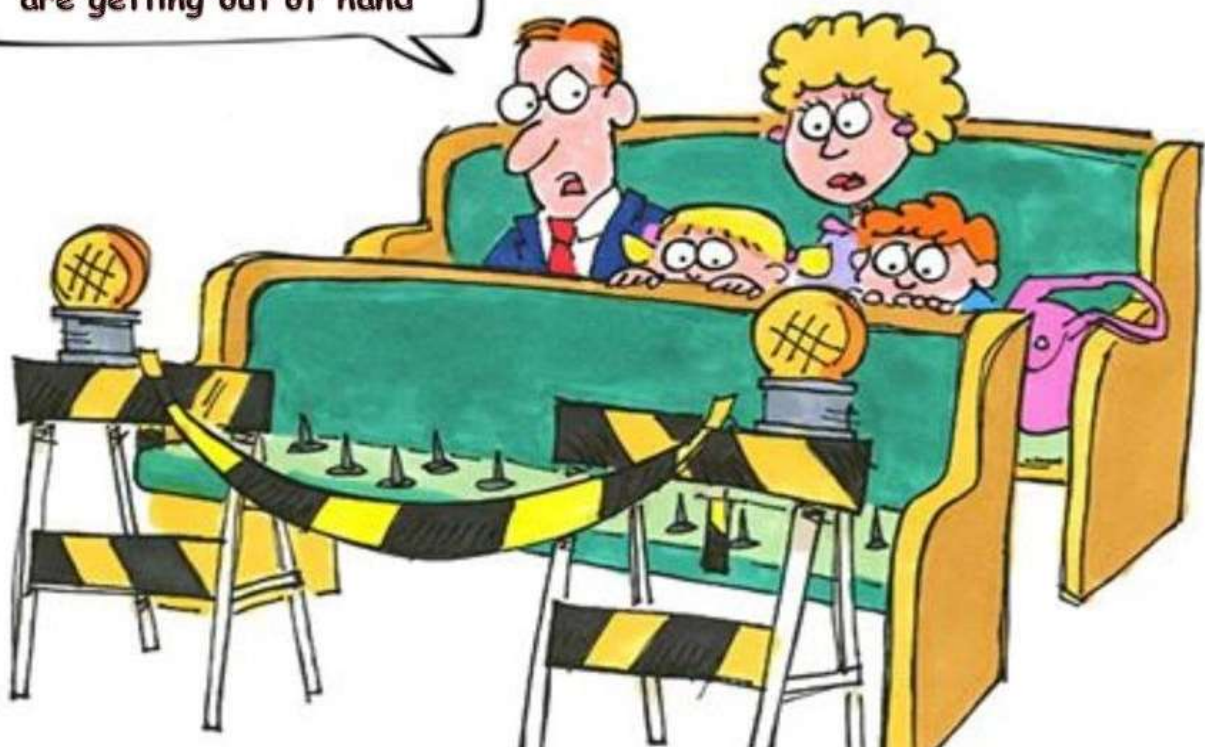
Saturday

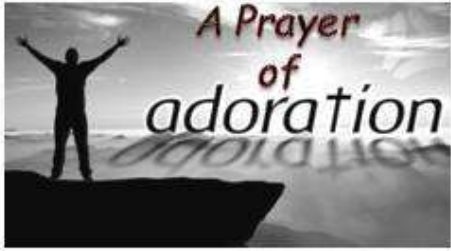
Keep Fit

Sunday

Morning Worship

These new Covid guidelines
are getting out of hand





Spending Time In God's Presence



***To You, O Lord, we lift our voice; We call from this world of pain.
You left us with Your blessing, Lord, and promised to come again.***

Let us Pray

Gracious God and Father, thank You for the opportunity to reflect on your Goodness to us once again. We thank You once more as we enjoy the privilege of instant access to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, able to receive grace and mercy not because we deserve it but through the sacrifice of Your Son - our Saviour.

Father in Heaven on yet another Lord's Day, setting apart all ordinary things for this holy time and space, we come before you first and foremost with hearts of gratitude. You have seen us through this last week, and as we stand on the cusp of new week beginning, full of new opportunities and new challenges we seek your blessing upon us.

Lord, we pray that we might begin this week in the right way - help us start each day with You and finish each night with a closing word of thanks. Stir within us that deep desire that seeks to deepen our relationship with You. Give us a hunger for Your Word and truth, oh Lord and fill us with a conviction of faith that is able to reach out to others by the things we say as well as the things we do and in Your Grace and Mercy forgive us when we get it spectacularly wrong.

God our Father, help us keep in mind always that worship is not just about going to church on a Sunday, that it is about a life lived, fully and devotedly, in the cause of the Gospel as we speak of the things of faith and demonstrate our faith in action. Our heartfelt prayer is that others might see the risen Jesus in our lives and that they find the desire for Him who loved them and gave himself for them to dwell in their hearts also.

By Your Holy Spirit this day draw near to all who struggle at this time, those who are unclear about the future, those who struggle with their health and are in hospital, those who struggle with the infirmity of their years and those who watch anxiously on as death draws near to a loved one. Bring Your Peace, Your Comfort, Your reassurance, Your hope and most of all your Love to all in need at this time. Draw near to us always as we seek to draw near to you in Jesus' name we pray...
Amen

"Blessed is he



who reads aloud

**...and blessed are
those who hear..."**

- REV. 1:3



"I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this Book that you can by reason and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man. It is the best Book, which God has given to man."

-Abraham Lincoln

Matthew 6: 25 – 34

Do Not Worry

²⁵ *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^[e]?"*

²⁸ *"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you— you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*



An Autumn Reflection Matthew 6: 25 - 34



Good morning,

As many of you will know the Church of Scotland nationally, like the rest of us, has been impacted by this Covid pandemic in ways that no-one could have foreseen and that some serious challenges lie ahead for the Church as a whole. Those in our Presbytery are currently struggling with the horns of a dilemma having been instructed to put a plan in place in the next 18 months with a vision of how they continue to flourish congregationally with a reduction in personnel from 143 posts to 84 potentially impacting ministers and ministry development support workers in full time service and part time service.

As they begin to review the story of all this, they elected to send to every church a survey about church life, what goes on and how things are going. There were however, at least to my mind, a number of inane questions being asked. For example, one question asked was,

“What would be the impact on your community if your church was not there?”

In our reply on behalf of Park Church we suggested that, *“there would be riots in the streets!”* The reality is - a question like that is unquantifiable. You may be pleased to know we told them that as well. The survey later asks the question,

“As a Church, where do you think you will be in ten years’ time?”

Our reply in response to that question was ...

“Let’s try not to micro manage the future. That’s the task of our Father in Heaven”.

We then proceeded to suggest a good reason why we should take that line by citing the words of Matthew 6: 33-34.

“³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

These are after all, Wise words from the Master himself.

In thinking about what to bring before you this day, I thought to share some thoughts with respect to that part of the great Sermon on the Mount.

It offers us some reassurances about how we should look to the future and guidance about how to deal with the present. As a piece of writing, the Sermon on the Mount begins with the Beatitudes in Chapter 5 and finishes in Chapter 7 offering guidance on the avoidance of judging others, being wary of false teachers and bad examples, discerning who are true and who are false disciples and finally assessing the need for building one's life on a firm foundation. The Sermon on the Mount is regarded as having centred on the core issues facing humanity not just then when Jesus walked this earth but across the centuries of time till now where these issues still remain at heart problematic for Humanity as a whole as well as in the case of individuals. They are seen by many across the Church as some of the most precious parts of the Bible because they have recorded for the benefit of all some of the central teaching of Jesus himself. So often we read about Jesus having taught the disciples or the people without us knowing what it was he taught. Matthew 5 - 7 remains a nugget of gold for us to pour over in that respect.

Having come through what is now moving towards 2 yrs of uncertainty with many having feared for our own lives as well as fearing for the lives of family members sitting at the heart of all this, it seemed to me that we could do with being reminded of what Jesus had to say about Worry and Anxiety, fear and distress and with that in mind I read Matthew Chapter 6 again with these words from verses 25 - 34 drawing Chapter 6 - the middle section of the Sermon to a close.

There are at least three things that stand out in these 9 verses.

- a) These words remind us that God is He who provides
- b) These words remind us that God is Sovereign over his Creation
- c) These words remind us why Faith should overrule Doubt and/or Fear.

Let's review each of these thoughts then.

a) **God is He who Provides**

Systematic theology is the discipline of Christian theology that formulates an orderly, rational, and coherent account of the doctrines of the Christian faith. It addresses issues such as what the Bible teaches about certain topics or what is true about God and His universe. Part of the method of study looks at the Characteristics or Attributes of God, the features of his nature and how such Attributes are found in references to God's name in the Old and New Testament. As 'the Great Provider' He is El Jireh and read about this attribute as early on in the story of the Bible when reading about Abraham and Isaac in Genesis Ch 22 and that moment of real testing where God prevents Abraham from sacrificing his Son Isaac at the last minute. Earlier as Isaac and Abraham are walking up the mountainside alone, Isaac asks where the sacrifice is. They have the Wood to build the altar but no sacrificial lamb. Abraham answers him by saying "God will Provide"

and as the story draws to its conclusion with the provision of a Ram in the thicket, they leave that place that would be thereafter known as "The Lord Will Provide". The birds of the Field don't sow or reap or store in Barns and yet God feeds them - said Jesus. (Matt 6: 26)

We sometimes forget how God has an amazing capacity to provide for our needs. Many will remember how Park Church supported a Deaconess from Faifley Parish Church who went out to Malawi for a year. She worked in a church there looking to help set up a Sunday School programme and was so successful, she had several hundred children who would walk for miles from all around to come to church and afterwards they would enjoy lunch together. On one occasion there was a particular problem. The money had run out and they had two hundred mouths to feed later that week. Unclear as to how best they resolve the problem they met to pray about it. Meanwhile not realising what was going on several thousand miles away in Giffnock the Park Church there had been a retiral offering had been taken resulting in a considerable sum of money sent by cheque that was despatched to Malawi arriving timeously so that they could have mouths fed and a Sunday School provided for that Sunday. For those in the Church that weekend they saw the hand of God's Provision at Work. For them the words of the Apostle Paul rang true,

"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 4: 19) Those in Malawi then experienced the same as Abraham himself at the side of the mountain that became known as the Lord Will Provide.

Many will fail to see the hand of God's provision at work at times, but because we don't see it doesn't mean He doesn't do it. Garth Brooks the American Country and Western singer sings a song called "Unanswered Prayers" where he concludes that "some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers."

b) God is Sovereign over his Creation

At the heart of our rich Presbyterian Tradition sits a core train of belief that God is Sovereign over all Creation. While some within as well as those outwith of the church today would seek to discredit any kind of notion of Creation much less one who was responsible for its inception. I have never felt the need to depart from this understanding. There is a story told of an old lady in England who had withstood the bombings of the Blitz with amazing courage. When asked the secret of her fortitude amidst such frightful danger, she replied "Well, every night I say my prayers and then I remember 'ow the parson told us God is always watching, so I go to sleep. After all, there's no need for two of us to lie awake."

Someone else postulated this theory, that in times of uncertainty it is good to know these simple facts from Isaiah 40: (Sextillion and Quintillion are numeric terms - vast numbers to say the least)

* The oceans of the world contain more than 340 quintillion gallons of water, yet God holds them "in the hollow of his hand" (Isaiah 40:12).

* The earth weighs 6 sextillion metric tons, yet God says it is but "dust on the scales" (Isaiah 40:15).

* The known universe stretches more than 30 billion light years (200 sextillion miles), but God measures it by the width of his hand (Isaiah 40:12).

* Scientists claim there are at least 100 billion galaxies and each galaxy is made up of about 100 billion stars. To such mind-boggling math Isaiah reminds us that God calls each star "by name" (Isaiah 40:26).

Bearing all that in Mind - If God can hold the waters of the ocean in the hollow of His hand, consider the weight of the Earth as but dust, measure the width of the Universe with span of his hand, and call each start by name, surely he can handle the details and dramas of our lives but more than that how can we not understand that He is Sovereign over his Creation?. Maybe that is why we can take the words of the Apostle Peter to heart... "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:6-7).

In Matt 6: 32 we read of how Our Father in Heaven already knows our every need. When He is in Sovereign Control, that's what He can do.

c) Faith and Trust should overrule Doubt and/or Fear

As we get to the end of Matthew Chapter 6 Jesus leaves us with the guidance what is a priority, namely that we seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness and that all these other things may be added to you. The result of which will be that we need not worry.

Someone once said **"Worry is faith in the negative, trust in the unpleasant, assurance of disaster and belief in defeat...worry is wasting today's time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterday's troubles."** Many today find it all too easy for worry and fear to predominate our lives failing to realise how easily it can bring a person down.

The Story is told of how a psychologist walked around a room during a teaching session on stress management. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected to be asked "is the half empty or half full?" Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: "How heavy is this glass of water?"

The students offered a number of answers ranging from 8 oz. to 20 oz. She answered, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralysed. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes." She went on to say that the stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them

a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralysed - incapable of doing anything." It's important to remember to let go of your stresses. As early ... as you can, put all your burdens down. Don't carry them through the evening and into the night. Remember to put the glass down!
The Songwriter perhaps summed this up succinctly by suggesting "We let go and let God..."

*"Storing up temporal treasures, Holding them as tight as we can
Only gives us passing pleasures, Then they slip through our hands
Hanging on to worldly deceptions, The only ones we fool are ourselves
When we've given up hope and we're in too deep,
There's only one thing that will help.
Let go and let God, Let Him have His way
With your life every day
Let go, let God
You can try on your own
But you'll find that there's no other way"*

When we read these words of Jesus in Matthew Chapter 6 we realise that the Call of Jesus in combating Fear and Worry is to have Faith and to Trust in God. If we have nothing to fear or worry about, there is no need for Faith and Trust. The reality in the world today is that there is much to be fearful of and to worry about but that we can, as the song writer wrote and the psychologist taught with a glass of water, we can let go of the stresses and trust that God in his sovereign power already has things in hand and in his provision give us the means by which we can ride through these moments of Worry and stress, whether that is related to Covid or some other health issue or uncertain times and job prospects as furloughs come to an end or the fears that world leaders might bring destruction upon us globally. Maybe we just need to seek God's Kingdom and his righteousness first all and all these other things will fall into place in God's good and perfect timing.

Said the robin to the sparrow, "I should really like to know
Why these anxious human beings rush about, and worry so?"
Said the sparrow to the robin, "Friend, I think that it must be
They have no Heavenly Father Such as cares for you and me."
—Elizabeth Cheyney

Have a great week

Calum

*In Seeking the
Best For You
May the Lord*

Bless you with what
you pray for.
Reward you with what
you work for.
Grant you with what
you hope for.
And most of all,
Surprise you
with what you
have not asked
for.



BECAUSE, ALL THE
TIME GOD IS TRULY
GOOD.

