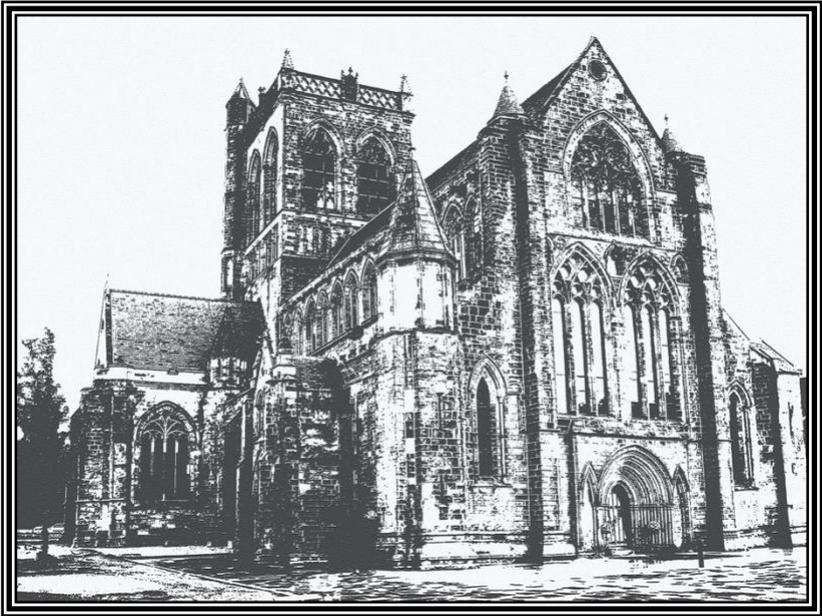


Paisley Abbey



Abbey Herald

July 2020

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My dear friends

Slowly, we seem to be emerging from lockdown. Who would have thought, back in early March, that we would be where we are now, with the Abbey deserted, no services, no music, no visitors, no civic events bringing the community into the Abbey in their hundreds if not thousands? I am sure all these things will return. In the meantime, we continue to focus on how we can maintain worship and Christian witness along with maintaining our fellowship as the Abbey community.

Worship: at the heart of our life as a church is worship and the Abbey's worship does continue, although, as I mentioned last month, in a very different way from that to which we were all used. On the Abbey website, Facebook page and YouTube channel, there is posted a daily reflection and prayer. Some of these are recorded in the Abbey, some at the manse and some by our student assistant Gillean at her home. Our choristers, choral scholars and organists continue to provide us with music for these daily prayers, contributions that enrich the short acts of worship and remind us all of the important rôle liturgical music plays in our Abbey worship. People from the rota of readers have also been contributing most effectively from their homes and at the end of June, children from the Sunday School led magnificently a large part of the Sunday short service. The Abbey website address is **www.paisleyabbey.org.uk** and there are links from the 'front page' of the website to both our Facebook page and YouTube channel. Do 'tune in' if you have not already done so – and encourage your friends and neighbours to do likewise. Carol and I plan to keep the daily prayer and reflection going to the end of July and, if services have not resumed by then, we will produce a short service on the 2nd and 9th of August. Thereafter, Sunday worship ('real' or online) will be provided by The Revd Jim Gibson – see further below under 'Retirement'.

Fellowship: The Kirk Session Quiz night using Zoom was great fun and Sally's most recent quiz is also proving popular.

Pastoral: Carol and I continue to phone round members of the Abbey family (it is taking a very long time!) and I know district elders are also keeping in touch with people as they are able. If anyone would like to get in touch with me on any matter, or simply for a chat, please do not hesitate to phone or email.

Re-opening of the Abbey: we hope to re-open the Abbey for private prayer on a limited basis and in accordance with Scottish Government and Church of Scotland guidelines on **Wednesday 15 July**. However, we plan initially to open for only a short time (maybe 2-3 hours) on two or three days a week. To manage a safe route in and out of the Abbey, to welcome people into the Abbey, to advise them on sanitising and social distancing measures and to monitor numbers coming in, we will need a number of volunteers on duty when we are open as well as member(s) of our Church Officer team. If you could help with this please let the Church Manager, Linda Barrett, know either by phone (0141 889 7654) or email (linda.barrett@paisleyabbey.org.uk) sometime after 1 July when Linda will return to work after being furloughed. It is not envisaged that the Gift Shop and Coffee Shop will open for some time and at least initially, toilet facilities will not be available to visitors.

Retirement: Carol and I have progressed our plan for retirement. Our retirement date is now 31 August but we will take some 'holiday' allowance before then, during which time we will make the move to Aboyne and return to Paisley to finalise things here before the end of August. The Revd Jim Gibson will provide 'pulpit supply' on Sundays 16, 23 and 30 August ('real' or online) and will then take over as locum on 1 September. The Interim Moderator for the vacancy, The Very Revd Lorna Hood, spoke to the Kirk Session on the night of the Zoom Quiz outlining the vacancy process in these very strange and unprecedented times. Basically, little progress can be made in filling the vacancy until it has been possible to hold a congregational meeting to elect a Nominating Committee whose task it will be to find the 'new minister.' In the meantime, the Kirk Session can take steps towards the production of the electoral roll and a parish profile - and I am

sure that that is something with which they will be busy in the weeks ahead.

Finance: as mentioned last month, the loss of income since lockdown began continues to be a challenge for the Abbey. In addition to the ways in which you can make a donation to the Abbey that were mentioned in last month's *Abbey Herald*, there is now a very straightforward way of making a donation to the Abbey through the Church of Scotland website. Go to the Church of Scotland website (www.churchofscotland.org.uk) and on the front page, click on the red button 'Donate' at the top of the page. That takes you to another page. Half way down that page under step 1 click on 'donate to a congregation', type 'Paisley Abbey' into the box and follow the instructions from there to make your donation.

Robin Craig

We were very sorry to learn recently that Robin has been diagnosed with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. At the time of writing this note, the right palliative care for him is being worked out. Our thoughts and prayers are with Robin, Cathy and their family.

SUNDAY READINGS AND COLLECTS FOR JULY

5 July - Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Readings Zechariah 9. 9-12
 Psalm 145. 8-14
 Romans 7. 15-25a
 St. Matthew 11. 16-19, 25-30

Collect Almighty God,
 your Son Jesus Christ has taught us
 that what we do for the least of your children
 we do also for him.
 Give us the will to serve others,
 as he was the servant of all,
 who gave up his life and died for us,
 but lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, for ever and ever, Amen.

12 July - Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Readings Isaiah 55. 10-13
 Psalm 65. 9-13
 Romans 8. 1-11
 St. Matthew 13. 1-9, 18-23

Collect Almighty God,
 you made us for yourself, and our hearts are
 restless till they find their rest in you.
 Give us peace in your service,
 and in the world to come
 the joy of seeing you face to face;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever, Amen.

19 July - Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Readings Isaiah 44. 6-8
 Psalm 86. 11-17
 Romans 8. 12-25
 St. Matthew 13. 24-30, 36-43

Collect Almighty God,
 your Son has opened for us
 a new and living way into your presence.
 Give us pure hearts and constant wills
 to worship you in spirit and in truth;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever, Amen.

26 July - Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Readings 1 Kings 3. 5-12
 Psalm 119. 129-136
 Romans 8. 26-39
 St. Matthew 13. 31-33, 44-52

Collect O God, the protector of all who trust in you,
 without you nothing is strong, nothing is holy.
 Increase and multiply upon us your mercy,
 that with you as our ruler and guide
 we may so pass through things temporal
 that we love not the things eternal;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever, Amen.

CHORAL TREAT!!

**The Abbey Choir sings Mass for Double
Choir**

by Frank Martin.

Some time ago, the Choir recorded

Mass for Double Choir by Frank Martin.

This has now been made available to listen to

during these days of lockdown when we

cannot hear the Choir 'live'

**[https://soundcloud.com/user-871753248/sets/frank-
martin-mass-for-double/s-AdXIHPCv bqk](https://soundcloud.com/user-871753248/sets/frank-martin-mass-for-double/s-AdXIHPCv bqk)**

ALAN AND CAROL'S DEPARTURE

As a congregation we are extremely grateful to Alan and Carol for extending their time with us when they should have moved on to their new life on Deeside after their departure on 7 June. Together, with help from Gillean, our student for the ministry, and others, Sunday services and daily reflections and prayers have been broadcast on YouTube, Facebook and the Abbey website. They have been busy in other ways, too. keeping in contact with members of the congregation; conducting funerals; checking our buildings; carrying out the business of the Abbey that goes on even during lockdown...and, with the assistance of Sean, cutting the grass in the Cloister Garth!

Having remained with us during this period, their official departure date has now been set for **Monday 31 August**. Prior to that date they will have three weeks' holiday during which time they will make the move to Aboyne and then return to tidy up loose ends here.

Alan will take the services in **July and on 2 and 9 August**, either online or "in reality". The Revd Jim Gibson will take services for the rest of August as pulpit supply before taking on the role of Locum (2 days per week and Sunday Services) from **1 September**.

Alan and Carol also hope to continue to provide daily prayers and reflections on the Abbey website, YouTube Channel and Facebook during July.

The Very Revd. Lorna Hood has been appointed by the Presbytery as Interim Moderator for the vacancy.

With times as they have been and the uncertainty even now as to when the Abbey will be able to open for services and we can meet as a congregation again, it is impossible to set definite dates in the future.

Alan and Carol will return for a farewell service followed by a reception in the Abbey to which all the congregation and friends will be invited. It is hoped this will take place in the Autumn. Before then we will arrange for members and friends to make donations towards a presentation to them and there will be more information about this in the near future.

Marion Sommerville – Session Clerk

PARISH REGISTER

Funeral

15 June: Elizabeth Hepburn



SCOUT NOTES

Online Zoom meetings have continued through June with a mixture of badge work, challenges and games. The Scouts have been set the challenge of climbing Ben Nevis ... in their own homes!! - by completing 30,000 steps over two days, or climbing 520 stairs over two days. This is part of their adapted Expedition Challenge - they will still need to plan a route as if they were actually climbing Ben Nevis, but the 'climbing' will be done at home. Good luck to all as they complete this challenge.

All sections will be involved in the UK's biggest digital summer camp over the weekend 11-12 July. From their garden or living room, they will take part in cooking, crafts, music and much more, including 'visits' from surprise celebrity guests and a UK-wide virtual campfire.

We plan to keep going over the summer and, hopefully, face-to-face scouting will return in the not too distant future.

COMPENSATION – FOR HOLIDAYS NOT TAKEN

As our holiday plans start unravelling
It's quite gratifying to find
Now no-one's allowed to go travelling
That, frankly my dear, I don't mind.

Nothing could surely be drearier
Than a 2-star apartment in Spain.
I've seen every inch of Iberia
Why on earth would I go there again?

I don't want to see Barcelona
And it's honestly such a relief
Not to run with the bulls in Pamplona
And never to see Tenerife.

All that I've heard about Hong Kong
Makes me think it's a terrible bore
And forgive me, but really, I don't long
To go anywhere near Singapore.

Why take ship to old Venezuela
Or Chile, or Peru or Brazil?
I was always a terrible sailor –
The thought of it's making me ill.

If you asked me to go to Cambodia
By way of Saigon and Vietnam
My reply would be, thank you but no dear
I'd much rather stay where I am.

If I wanted to view Nova Scotia
Or the picturesque slums of New Delhi
I could see all I want in a brochure
Or some reality show on the telly.

I can do without South Carolina
Drinking Buds in some sleezy motel
And the thought of a fortnight in China
Is my idea of absolute hell.

I wouldn't revel in a rave in Roumania
Or a stag do in Brussels or Rome
Nor a booze cruise across Lithuania
When the beer's so much better back home.

So no more will I go a'roaming
To Paris or Nice or Tobruck
My instincts are now all for homing -
A glass of wine and a jolly good book.

Maurice Tripp (Sally's Brother in Law)



A NEW STANDARD

The Very Rev Dr. John Chalmers explains why the Church cannot afford to look back at life before the Coronavirus Covid 19

Since the beginning of the year Covid 19 and its consequences have dominated the news. Day in and day out, until we have become saturated by the science, the economics and the politics of the most disruptive and immediate global challenge that we have ever faced. And now, as we approach our fifth month since restrictive measures were advised and then enforced, the penny has dropped that life will never be quite the same again.

Like some kind of modern-day prophet Bill Gates, in 2015, warned that the greatest global threat facing humanity today was “not missiles but microbes” and he urged governments around the world to shape up and put in place the arrangements and structures to create early warning and rapid response systems. This was after the outbreak of Ebola; but, did we listen? Did we learn the lessons that would bring about greater global co-operation on health issues which could have global consequences? Far from it – instead we have been living through a period of growing isolation and xenophobia which have made it nearly impossible to effect a global response to a global pandemic.

It is, of course, the fault of every age and time to ignore the prophetic voices and go on living as if there was no tomorrow. This time, surely, we have endured enough distress and displacement to realise that some things have to change if we are to tackle the biggest issues which are facing in our global village. As we slowly emerge from this great difficulty make it a prayer that across the nations, we learn the kind of co-operation that will take us from defeating Coronavirus Covid 19 bug to tackling the climate disaster that is waiting for us if we don't make the lifestyle changes that these demands.

The Church too, has to learn lessons from our life in lockdown. Across the whole Church of Scotland from the most rural parish to the most ancient Cathedral, from our Presbyteries to our central offices we have been offered a tantalising glimpse of a very different kind of Church. One in which we have discovered that we are not as reliant on buildings as we thought we were and it is one in which we are able, online to reach a constituency that has been missing from our pews for generations. So, as we emerge slowly from this great difficulty, we need to make it a prayer that across the Church we build on the lessons we have learned and do not slip back into old ways.

Right now, there is a great uncertainty about when we may be able to return to our church buildings, but there is no doubt about the need to expand our online presence. While we long for the day when we can once again worship in our sacred spaces, we know that there are too many of them. And memories of what we once were, are no use to a church that must dream of what we can be in the future. We have discovered (if we did not know already) that so much of what we do is rooted in tradition and convention rather than relevance and necessity and that has to change.

The Bible is full of stories of onward journeys where God's people gain nothing from looking back, while they have everything to gain by pressing on. That image is also captured by Jesus who reminded his followers that when you put your hand to the plough – you can't look back. It has been a huge encouragement to feel the energy and see the imagination of those who have risen to the challenge of keeping worship and fellowship alive during this strangest of times; we have set a new standard for ourselves, the future is now full of new and exciting possibilities and for all sorts of reasons we can't afford to look back.

This article first appeared in the July 2020 issue of Life and Work magazine

“PLACES ON-LINE AT LOCKDOWN” QUIZ

At the time of writing this article, the names of the two winners of the quiz are not yet known. What is known, however, is that although, for obvious reasons, fewer quizzes than usual were sold, the generosity of those who participated has been truly overwhelming. It has been really humbling to receive so many generous donations from people who have no immediate connection with the Abbey but simply appreciate its importance to the area and realise just how badly affected its finances have been by the present circumstances. To those exceedingly kind donors, particular thanks are given – but, as ever, the support of so many others is deeply appreciated and to each and everyone who donated to the quiz most sincere thanks are given.

I would also personally like to thank all those – elders and others – who forwarded their e-mail copies of the quiz to their neighbours, friends and other organisations. Without their distributive ingenuity, the quiz would certainly not have been nearly so successful as, I think, it has been. Many, many thanks to you all.

The answers to the “Places On-Line at Lock Down” Quiz are:

PAISLEY
GLENCOE
COATBRIDGE
MOSCOW
KILLEARN
EAGLESHAM
OTTERFERRY
INSCH
LOCH LONG
FINDHORN
DUNBAR
QUEENSFERRY
AYR
STEPS

