

Dear all,

We have so much to be thankful for in our living in this quiet and beautiful environment. This has challenges in our access to support services, but also blessings in our relative isolation from large population centres. I am sure that we all give thanks daily for the freedom we have to step outside and enjoy our surroundings, to exercise and to see nature all around. We can also give thanks for our neighbours and friends, our telephone and internet conversations.

The Psalm for this Sunday is Psalm 130:

Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Lord  
Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

To the voice of my supplications.

If you, Lord, should mark my iniquities

O Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with You

That you may be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits

And in His word I do hope.

My soul waits for the Lord

More than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord;

For with the Lord there is mercy,

And with Him is abundant redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel

From all his iniquities.

Amen

Can I suggest that we each read this Psalm quietly and thoughtfully. Invite God to speak to you as you read, and pick out three phrases which seem to particularly relate to you today.

As I read it through I was struck by:

“Let your ears be attentive” - sometimes we think God isn’t listening! But it is OK to say to Him – please listen, hear my prayer because I want you God to hear my voice and know that we are in this together. God is with us, and knows us – this phrase reminds me that he is listening – just as we ask.

“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits” – Many of us get a bit stressed, uncertain, anxious, but can’t say why? I do, and each time I think – “what is going on, why am I like this? – I must relax and chill out.”

But each time, the answer does not come from myself, from within me – it comes as I wait for God to say – its OK, I am with you, I am in control. Each time, “my soul waits”, and I allow God to bring His peace and security into my soul. Read a psalm, and listen!

“And with Him is abundant redemption”. God’s love is not limited to a few, it is not rationed out or held back. God’s love is more than sufficient for all of us – all the people of the world, He would want us all to know Him, His forgiveness, and His love. What a privilege we have that we know Him now, and His love, His presence.

There are lots of opportunities on the internet to join in to Worship services , sermons, encouraging talks and music – so give thanks for those.

This is a link to the Church of Scotland page giving some suggestions, do have a look at it for ideas.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/services-online>

If you have found something yourself which you like, then please share the link to all of us with a “reply all” e-mail.

Finally – there are many prayers to help us through this period, and please look these out on Facebook and You tube.

Here is a link to this week's prayer from the Church of Scotland:

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/locked-down-a-prayer-from-lezley-stewart>

But I also have another suggestion – we are all called to pray for our friends and neighbours - to love our neighbours, and our enemies!

We have a long way to go with this isolation – so choose five people in your community – and pray for them daily – for their wellbeing, for their families, and that over this time of “lockdown” they will each know God's love, experience God's presence, and be invited by Jesus into His Kingdom.

Who knows what answers to prayer we may hear of once this is over.

We are a praying people – let us pray for the peoples of our communities.

And so:

May the God of peace Himself

Give us peace at all times and in all ways.

The Lord be with us all.

Amen.

Keep in touch

David