

“.....and Jesus came and spoke to them saying:

all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth, go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all the things that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the ends of the age.” Matthew ch 28 vs 18 to 20.

This is how Matthew closes his Gospel message, and it is given this week as it reminds of the mysterious three fold personality of God. This is Trinity Sunday, and for many, if not all of us this concept of God – One and yet three, single deity, yet apparent to us as three different manifestations, single yet three. Some things are beyond our understanding, but that does not mean they are not true. Theologians have spent much effort in trying to explain the Trinity, and much of their thinking has been instructive. A recent description which I heard and have found very helpful is this:

God is around us in all creation, all that is; he is beside us in every part of our lives, our friend and our Saviour; and he is within us for every moment of our being, our comforter and our guide.

God, our Father, creator of all who holds us in His love – **God around us**

God the Son, who shows us the way to God and saves us from our sinfulness – **God beside us**

God the Spirit, who inspires our thoughts and actions, and who leads us into truth. – **God within us**

This is not a perfect analogy, but I hope it gives some help as we contemplate the wonder of God.

Sandy MacDonald:

We have this week lost another longstanding and popular member of our congregation. Sandy passed away on Monday in the Mid Argyll Hospital after being taken in unwell on Saturday. Sandy's latter years have been challenging for him as he fought to overcome the debilitation of a stroke, but he maintained a love of life, and a great sense of fun. We should remember him in his more active days, always willing to help out others, and enjoying Jimmy Shand, Celtic (winning) and a good dance.

Many of you will have more memories of him around the village – all days were “Fine days” for Sandy.

Please remember his family, and Dot, in your prayers.

Sandy's funeral will be on Monday 8th June at Carsaig, and in line with restrictions will be for the family only. The hearse will pass through the village at about 11.40 and I am sure many will line the roadside to pay their respects as he goes by.

Opening Church Buildings:

There is beginning to be discussions at national and Presbytery level to prepare for the reopening of our church buildings. How will this be managed? What types of activities will be possible? How will worship take place? There are many obstacles to be overcome, and many ideas to be considered. Many people have become used to attending "on line" worship, or taking part with services on Television and radio. Can these innovations and changes be integrated into church in the "new normal". What do you think? How do you feel about attending worship with 2 metre distancing, face masks and hand wipes – no singing and no physical contacts? Should we do this or wait for more relaxations? How can we integrate "on-line" services into our church buildings, and can this address our shortage of ministers and reduce our need for so many buildings?

There will be a "virtual" meeting by Argyll presbytery on the 16th June to discuss these and other issues around our way forward as church congregations "after lockdown". Several members of North Knapdale hope to attend: David and Louise Logue, Norma Kelly, Catherine Paterson and Catherine MacLennan. **Please let any of us know your own ideas or comments on "church after lockdown" so that we can be informed for this meeting.**

Here is an update on the position at national level:

Reopening Church Buildings – update from the Principal Clerk to The General Trustees

This has been the subject of weekly discussion with civil servants in the Scottish Government. One of the pleasing aspects of this engagement has been a willingness on behalf of the SG to let us comment on their draft regulations and guidelines ahead of them being published which has resulted in changes being made to the text.

I have also had a further meeting with the other Principal Clerks around the UK. As other jurisdictions are further ahead of us in easing lockdown restrictions their churches have by necessity had to develop protocols for such things as using churches for funerals, private prayer and then larger groups. Their learning has been generously shared and informs the work that we are doing within the Church of Scotland. For instance, the PCI calculate that a traditional suburban church with 300 seats downstairs will only be able to accommodate 50 people with social distancing and hygiene rules in place.

I was interested by the thinking of the Presbytery of St Andrews who intend to use their "cluster" approach (developed to assist with Presbytery Planning) to

identify perhaps one church building in a group of five or six which could be the place where “physical” public worship could be reintroduced as we move through the “Route Map” for emerging from lock down.

As for our own preparations we are aware that the next announcement from the Scottish Government on this is expected around Thursday 18th June, as part of Phase 2 of the framework for easing restrictions on lockdown. More information on these phases can be found [here](#). Phase 2 allows for churches to be open for private prayer, and for marriages to take place, with a limited number of attendees, all subject to physical distancing and hygiene safeguards.

Phase 3 of easing restrictions is expected to be announced on Thursday 9th July. Places of worship will be allowed to open for extended groups, again, subject to physical distancing and hygiene safeguards.

These phases are conditional on a number of requirements, all set out in the framework document, mainly around a low or decreasing infection rate. Please note too that no building can legally open without a legally mandated COVID risk assessment, the paperwork for which is being prepared.

Whilst the dates of moving into different phases will be communicated by the Scottish Government, there is no expectation that all Church of Scotland buildings will open on these key dates. It will be for Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to consider carefully how these permissions might be used in local contexts.

A group is meeting on a weekly basis to compile guidance and expects to release this material ahead of 18th June to help congregations and office-bearers to prepare their response.

Also – Marlyn Sheddin has sent this out to all in Presbytery for information from the Northerly Synod of the United Reform Church

“Dear Colleagues,

One of our Iona Community members from the URC church shared this with us last night at our Family Group Zoom meeting, and I thought you might be interested to see it.

Northerly Synod meeting 2nd June

Entered 11am approx.

Question given to Groups/ then plenary session.

How do we engage with people outside the Church?

Suggestions pooled from the groups.

!. Pastoral care. Provide resources ie tablets to members in the church that wish to learn the technology . Provide smart phones for the anxious within the congregation/ Engage someone to help with the technology if necessary.

2. *Make the outside of the church attractive eg flowers. banners, cross lit up, up to date notice boards.*
3. *Work towards being an Echo Church*
4. *Messy church via zoom*
5. *Engaging ecumenically with other churches.*
6. *Link with partnership churches .*
7. *Have Memorial / Thanksgiving service together with the above two at the end of Lockdown.*
8. *Make church space available to outside groups when appropriate.*
9. *Provide a Listening ministry / provide a chat bench*
10. *Build up relationships in our own communities where we live.*
11. *Use of prayer stations on line.*
12. *Death cafes are available after Lockdown*
13. *Engage with local Schools. Do they require help?.*
14. *Experiment with new worship styles on line via website or through facebook.*
15. *Continue to open to new ideas and being willing to change."*

On Line Services:

The following services are being provided online for local congregations and those who wish to log in from places further afield:

West Kintyre and Gigha – Rev Scott Burton -

<https://www.westkintyreandgighachurchofscotland.org/> Worship

The United Church of Bute – Rev Owain Jones -

<https://www.unitedchurchofbute.org.uk/>

The Shore Kirk – Rev Janet MacKellar –

<https://sites.google.com/view/theshorekirk/home>

or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/345399762209092/>

Ardchattan lw Coll lw Connel – Rev Willem Bezuidenhout

<https://www.ardchattanchurch.org.uk/>

West Cowal – Rev David Mitchell

<https://www.westcowalchurches.org.uk>

South Kintyre – Rev Steve Fulcher

www.kintyreparishes.org.uk

Netherlorn Churches Worship Team

<http://www.netherlornchurches.org.uk/>

West Lochfyneside:

<https://www.westlochfyneside.org.uk>

Kilmore and Oban: Rev Dugald Cameron

www.obanchurch.com

Barra and South Uist : Rev Lindsay Schluter(audio only)

Can be accessed via telephone (01871-200336) or the South Uist website

(www.southuistchurchofscotland.com)

Daily Hope line

It is introduced by the Archbishop of Canterbury. There are three options, you can:

1. Listen to a well-known hymn being sung then listen to a reflection on it, about 15 minutes.
2. Listen to well-known hymns being sung and sing along.
3. Listen to a prayer relevant to today's world

This service is called Daily Hope, the phone number is **0800 804 8044** Phone calls are free.

Weekly Psalm

The Psalm for this week is a wonderful celebration of the glory and grace of God, His wonder, power, and "completeness". The psalm causes under to wonder, to meditate on who God is, and who we are: Set aside a little to ponder on this:

Psalm 8

O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth,
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!
Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider Your heavens,
The work of Your fingers,
The moon and stars, which You have ordained.
What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?
You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with
glory and honour.

You have made him to have
Dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet
All sheep and oxen –
Even the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.
O Lord, our Lord
How excellent is your name in all the earth!
Psalm 8 New King James Version

The Tyndale commentary by Rev Derek Kidner on this Psalm describes it well:

This psalm is an unsurpassed example of what a hymn should be, celebrating as it does the glory and grace of God, rehearsing who He is and what He has done, and relating us and our world to Him; all with a masterly economy of words, and in a spirit of mingled joy and awe. It brings to light the unexpectedness of God's ways in the roles He has assigned – to the strong and the weak, (v2) the spectacular and the obscure (v 3-5), the multitudinous and the few ((vs 6-8); but it begins and ends with God Himself, and its overriding theme is "How excellent is Your name!"

Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - Psalms 1 to 72, Rev Derek Kidner.

The following services are being provided online for local congregations and those who wish to log in from places further afield:

West Kintyre and Gigha – Rev Scott Burton -

<https://www.westkintyreandgighachurchofscotland.org/> Worship

The United Church of Bute – Rev Owain Jones -

<https://www.unitedchurchofbute.org.uk/>

The Shore Kirk – Rev Janet MacKellar –

<https://sites.google.com/view/theshorekirk/home>

or

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/345399762209092/>

Ardchattan lw Coll lw Connel – Rev Willem Bezuidenhout

<https://www.ardchattanchurch.org.uk/>

West Cowal – Rev David Mitchell

<https://www.westcowalchurches.org.uk>

South Kintyre – Rev Steve Fulcher

www.kintyreparishes.org.uk

North Knapdale Church : Newsletter 5.6.2020: Trinity Sunday

Netherlorn Churches Worship Team

<http://www.netherlornchurches.org.uk/>

West Lochfyneside:

<https://www.westlochfyneside.org.uk>

Kilmore and Oban: Rev Dugald Cameron

www.obanchurch.com

Barra and South Uist : Rev Lindsay Schluter(audio only)

Can be accessed via telephone (01871-200336) or the South Uist website

(www.southuistchurchofscotland.com)

Daily Hope line

It is introduced by the Archbishop of Canterbury. There are three options, you can:

4. Listen to a well-known hymn being sung then listen to a reflection on it, about 15 minutes.
5. Listen to well-known hymns being sung and sing along.
6. Listen to a prayer relevant to today's world

This service is called Daily Hope, the phone number is **0800 804 8044** Phone calls are free.

You can find news on our church website: www.northknapdale.org

And our Face Book page – North Knapdale Church.

North Knapdale Church of Scotland - Charity No: SC001002