

Hi all, this week sees the World Day of prayer service on Friday, and, as we cannot take part in our usual way in Church buildings this year, I have included some of the service below.

Last Friday we had a Kirk Session meeting on zoom. Here we approved last year's accounts, as well as thinking about the Christian Aid week in May.

We intend to have the usual distribution of gift envelopes throughout the parish. Also some people (Chris Tabraham and David Logue at least) are also planning to do "Kilt Walk" to raise funds. Let me know if you would want to do a walk yourselves.

Here is the Treasurer's report for 2020 and the minute will be put up on the Church website.

### **Treasurer's Report 2020**

North Knapdale church closed its doors to public worship in the middle of March 2020 because of the global COVID pandemic.

Almost all those members with standing orders remained faithful with their givings and three others occasionally gave a cheque. Three people started standing orders during this time.

As most of our income comes from standing orders our income did not drop by as much as expected. We were unable to hold any fundraising events which usually bring in the region of £2,000. Outgoings also decreased as we were no longer paying for pulpit supply. Nevertheless, our outgoings exceeded our income by £4,000.

It looks unlikely that we will be able to open our doors before the summer 2021 but with our Ministry and Mission allocation being reduced I would expect to be able to break even in 2021.

The Finance Committee met in February and proposes that £20,000 in our deposit account should be transferred to the growth fund as interest rates are very low and expected to drop even further, whereas investments still have some room to improve over the coming year. The committee also proposes that a bank card be acquired to enable the efficient running of the bank account.

Louise Logue

Treasurer.

## Youth Pilgrimage

The session is also pleased to support the proposed “Columba Experience -Youth Pilgrimage” for later in the year in which a group of young people led by Kenny Wilson, Presbytery Youth Worker, will walk from Tarbert to Iona, via North Knapdale. As in previous years, we hope to provide a meal for them as they pass through Achnamara. This is all of course subject to Covid restrictions so we will keep you informed.

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - ‘Build on a strong foundation’

**This Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> March is the World Day of Prayer, prepared by the people of Vanuatu, in Polynesia. The full service can be found at this website:**

<http://www.wdpscotland.org.uk/dload/WDP21-WorshipBookletA5.pdf>

Here are some of the main aspects of the service:



### Design on the theme "Build on a Strong Foundation"

About the artist:

Juliette Pita is currently the most well-known artist in Vanuatu. She was born in 1964 on Erromango Island and is the third of eight children. She is a widow with three children and an adopted niece.

The painting titled Cyclone Pam II: shows a mother bending and praying over her child. The waves crash over her but a palm tree bends protectively over them. The palm tree is Juliette's favorite tree with strong roots able to withstand strong winds. The woman's skirt is modelled on the traditional clothing of Erromango. On the horizon you can see small crosses representing the lives taken by cyclone Pam in 2015

## **GREETINGS FROM THE SCOTTISH CONVENOR:**

‘Build on a strong foundation.’

Vanuatu proudly waves its flag and its coat of arms with the words, “In God we stand,” for anyone to read. This faith carried them through Cyclone Pam and the Coronavirus pandemic.

With the writers of the 2021 service, let us pray that communities around the world may exercise the attentive listening and responsible action that grows out of our

united prayers. What better way to do this than in taking these words from the material sent by the writers for the Children’s Service. ‘Be good listeners to God’s Word, be obedient to His ways, put God first in all you do, build wisely for eternity.’ It is the children who call us to reflect on this message for today and to respond in actions to God’s call.

May we know the inspiration of our Heavenly Father and may we all respond to the call to action in our personal lives and our communities....

May God bless you all.

Margaret Broster

## **A letter from WDP International Committee Executive Director**

Dear WDP sisters and friends,

### **“Build on a Strong Foundation”**

Prepared by WDP Vanuatu March 5, 2021

It is with joy that we share the materials prepared for the 2021 WDP celebration. One of the first things we learn with Vanuatu women is that, “Land to a Ni-Vanuatu is what a mother is to a baby.” The relationship with land is at the foundation of the Ni-Vanuatu identity and spiritual strength.

We listen to their voices through the worship service, which invites us to focus on the Bible story in Matthew 7:24-27. Jesus tells a story about the kingdom of heaven using the image of a house and the land on which the house is built. Choosing the land on which to build the house is an important decision for people in Vanuatu.

The combination of considering the terrain and the climate is crucial in a tropical archipelago located in the South Pacific Ocean prone to earthquakes, cyclones, volcanic eruptions and rising sea levels.

In Jesus' story, the wisdom of the builder of the house comes from hearing and acting on the word of God, which is a word of love. This is the foundation on which our sisters call us to build our homes, our nations and the world. A call of faith to be earnestly considered when responding to the prayer of commitment: "What is the house that you would build?"

The Vanuatu sisters praise God for fertile land, the sweet melody of the birds and for the sound of children. All of these together reflect their way of life and their everyday struggles with production of food, care for the environment and the education of children. Those challenges are reasons to praise God for being the source of their strength while they pursue opportunities in education, keep children

away from malnutrition and provide alternatives to young people. In receiving their voice as a gift of wisdom, we share their hope and creatively engage our communities in "Informed Prayer. Prayerful Action."

May the everlasting God, on whom Vanuatu stands, be the one who inspires communities around the world to exercise the attentive listening and responsible action that grow out of our united prayers.

Rosângela Oliveira

**Some extracts from the Service:**

### **WELCOME:**

Welcome to the 2021 World Day of Prayer, prepared by Christian women of the Republic of Vanuatu. We welcome our sisters and brothers around the world in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Vanuatu's culture, languages, traditional values and spirituality have their source in the population of mostly Melanesian and minorities of Polynesian origin. The black and white sandy beaches, coral reefs with coloured fish, lovely birds, fruits and nuts in the forest all make the islands a pristine environment, while they are also vulnerable to frequent tropical storms, earthquakes, cyclones, tsunamis and active volcanoes.

In times gone by, each island and village had its own chief and style of governance; its own gods and language. Houses were thatched, constructed from

leaves and trees, using stone axes. Women and men would come together at the Farea - the village meeting house - to discuss major issues. Vanuatu is a small country in the South Pacific Ocean, a Republic formed in 1980 after independence from a French and British Condominium government. Today, Vanuatu proudly waves its flag and its coat of arms declares, **“In God we stand.”**

### **Prayer of Confession**

Let us confess to God, who is faithful and just to forgive us. (1 John 1:9).

Our Father in heaven, your name is holy. We stand in your house of grace to confess that we have listened to your words, but have not acted on them. We do the things we should not do and leave undone the things we should. *(silence)*

We face adversities and challenges in our homes and nations. We build our homes, thinking we are building on the words of Jesus Christ, but actually building on sand. We long to be changed. Restore us, that we may do what is right and just.

*(If desired, insert here a short prayer of confession based on the local context)*

Creator God, we confess that we have polluted the environment and harmed the creatures of the sea by throwing rubbish into their habitats. We endanger marine life and ruin sustainable livelihoods. We know we can change. *(Silence)*

We confess and regret our wrongdoing and commit ourselves to fulfilling the mandate to be good stewards of your creation.

God, hear our prayers.

### **Prayer of Commitment**

God is looking for a house to live in. Where is the house that you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? (Isaiah 66:1-2, NIV). We come humbly before you and pray that you will grant us your Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. *(Silence)*

Teach us to discern the truth. Lead and guide us that we may live in a way that is pleasing and acceptable to you. *(If desired, insert here a short prayer of commitment based on the local context)*

Humbly we offer ourselves to be a house that you can dwell in.

By the power of your word, transform our lives and our nations. Make us a household of justice and peace.

Gracious God, accept our commitment.

## **LISTENING TO THE WORD OF GOD**

Let us hear the Word of God according to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 7, verses 24-27, where one of Jesus' parables is recorded:

***“So then, anyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them is like a wise person who built their house on rock. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, and the wind blew hard against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on rock. But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them is like a foolish person who built their house on sand. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, the wind blew hard against that house, and it fell. And what a terrible fall that was!”***

Our reflection is based on three chapters of Matthew's Gospel known as the Sermon on the Mount - the teachings of Jesus on the Kingdom of heaven. The parable of the house builders concludes the teaching that begins with the Beatitudes, found in Chapter 5. Jesus' words herald a new and challenging way of living. The teachings of the Sermon on the Mount encourage two things: hear and act or listen and do. The Kingdom Jesus proclaims will grow depending on the choices people make and the actions people take. The final picture in his teaching on the mountain is a short parable of comparison. The house of the wise builder was safe and secure in the storm while the house of the foolish one was lost. It is wise to hear and act on Jesus' words, building firm foundations in life. It is foolish not to, and a weak foundation leads to disaster. Let us consider this carefully in making our own decisions in life.

## **Prayer of Intercession**

Let us be united in prayer with Vanuatu and the world.

Everlasting God, the God on whom Vanuatu stands, help us stand for peace in our families and in our nations. We commit the leaders and people of Vanuatu into your wise hands. Help us stand against the forces of injustice and division present in our nations.

We pray that in Vanuatu and everywhere, we can all live in unity, love and peace, respecting and celebrating ethnic and cultural diversity.

Bind us together in love, peace and joy.

We ask for your protection for people living in places prone to cyclones, hurricanes and volcanoes and the damage they cause. We bring you our concerns for those suffering from addictions.

Almighty God, protect our communities from disasters and suffering. Heal the souls of your people; let them feel love.

Let's pray together the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**You can find news on our church website: [www.northknapdale.org](http://www.northknapdale.org)**

**And our Face Book page – North Knapdale Church.**

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**North Knapdale Church of Scotland - Charity No: SC001002**