



Ardeer/Livingstone Newsletter

April 2020



Letter from The Minister



Friends,

We're living in strange times; we've been in lockdown for 3 weeks and it looks likely that that will continue for a few weeks yet. The things that we normally do have given way to a new "normal" and living life differently. For us, as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have a certainty who remains with us, and is our hope and provides us with our unfading and imperishable inheritance.

Church has had to change to take this situation into account and services are being live-streamed using Facebook, Zoom, and YouTube just to name a few. Our own services are pre-recorded and available on the Livingstone Church website – www.livingstonechurch.org.uk. We've also used Zoom for the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. Zoom is also being used for Sunday Night @ the Manse and for necessary meetings. Zoom can also allow people into the meetings through a phone call and so offers a different way of connecting.

Our church buildings may be closed but we can continue to worship our God as a family together. We'll be looking to set up a midweek Zoom worship meeting very soon and, in the meantime, the Sunday services will continue to go on the website: they can be downloaded and shared with others now. Sunday Night @ the Manse will continue on Zoom and is open to anyone who wishes to join in.



Please continue to pray for one and another and:

- Key workers
- All NHS staff
- Police and Fire Service
- That we all realise the importance of staying at home to stop the spread of the Coronavirus.

May God bless you and keep you,

Dave



Questions Answered

Thanks for all the questions that have been submitted. Unfortunately, the current circumstances have meant that we've had to deal with other issues but we will respond in due course in some way. The intention has always been to deal with these questions in an open forum with a recorded version being available after that. This will be dealt with as soon as possible.

Financial Impact Due to Church Closure.

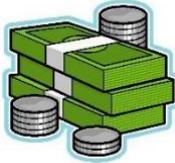
Firstly, we hope that you are all keeping well during these strange and challenging times.

giftaid it

Given the restrictions put in place recently by the Government, it was clear that Sunday worship as we know it would have to cease for a period of time to minimise social contact.

Although Sunday worship is no longer possible, many of the financial obligations faced by the congregation still need to be met. While energy

costs will reduce slightly due to the closure, other costs such as insurance, council tax, salaries and refuse



collection still need to be paid.

During the closure period our only source of income is from offerings provided by monthly standing order. Approximately 35% of our income from offerings is derived from standing orders, the balance obtained by way of Free Will Offering envelopes and the open plate.

We are sure that many of you will be faithfully filling your envelopes weekly and setting them aside until we are able to meet again on a Sunday morning.

We would however ask that, if able, you could consider making your offerings by way of a monthly standing order or on-line bank transfer, thus providing additional funding for use now. The standing order can be used to provide your offerings on an on-going basis, or if you prefer can be used only during the period of closure allowing you to revert to the Free Will offering envelopes when we can again worship in church.



We would be only too happy to provide you with a Standing Order Mandate and any support required. If you would

like to set up a standing order or make an on-line transfer please contact:

Jim Dunwoodie – 466895

Finlay Kerr – 553265

Please stay safe.

Jim Dunwoodie and Finlay Kerr
(Ardeer & Livingstone Treasurers)



Letter from The Session

The phrase “church without walls” is something we have heard on many occasions but little did we think that it would become an all too real experience. Sadly, all churches are now closed due to Coronavirus, but fortunately due to modern technology we can still be part of the church in our own homes. Thanks is due to Dave who has kept our services going throughout this period and to Ross, for his skills in helping with the technology required. We now not only can hear the recorded service we can also watch the video if we prefer.

At the start of lockdown Dave recorded short reflections which are still available on Facebook. Also, during Holy Week, we were able to have two live Zoom services. These were very successful and received good feedback from those able to join on line or listening in on their phone. Dave hopes to continue the use of Zoom services on a regular basis, so please



keep checking the church website and Facebook for further details.

The use of Zoom has also allowed Sunday Night at the Manse to continue. This allows us to see, hear and interact with everyone who is taking part. Zoom is also facilitating the minister, the two treasurers and the two session clerks to have weekly meetings to ensure that church business is ongoing.



A new venture Dave was about to launch was 'Local Houses of Prayer'. I am sure that at this worrying time all our houses will be houses of prayer, as we pray for the victims of Covid-19, their families, front line and essential workers and of course for successful research into a vaccine to help end this dreadful situation.

In the meantime, take care, stay safe and keep well.

Sandy (Livingstone Session Clerk)

Prayer Thoughts (Covid-19 Shut down)

In times of stress we often recall a particular passage of scripture, if you're like me it can be taken out of its original context, but even so it can bring great comfort. Such a passage is the last few verses of Roman's chapter 8 where Paul reminds us that nothing can separate us from God's love. It's worth reading again to remind us of all that God has done for us.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession



Heavenly Father we come to you at a time when pandemic is causing devastation through illness and death. We thank you for all those who carry on despite the dangers, to bring care, comfort, food and friendship, those in hospitals, those in shops, carers, transport and council workers, police and military personnel. Remember each one of them as they go about their work.



We thank you for all those who support this work through volunteering and the giving of donations.

Almighty God, each one of us know of individuals involved in the work, we ask that you are with them as they face the dangers of infection. We ask that those who are now isolated will have contact with others to take away the loneliness. We pray that those who have lost their livelihoods and have no income are not forgotten and are provided with sustenance. Young people too are suffering through the restrictions and loss of contact with friends, we pray that they will know your presence and the comfort of your arm around them.



Lord, we pray especially for those who have lost loved ones. Grant them comfort, peace and the strength to rebuild their lives despite the loss.

Lord, be with those who lead in your church, that they have opportunities to deliver your good news and bring spiritual comfort. We pray for those who miss the fellowship of church, remind them that your church does not need walls.

Hear our prayers and grant us your peace.

Amen



Digital Services

Every Sunday during the lockdown period, a pre-recorded service is available on the church website – www.livingstonechurch.org.uk. There is now an option to watch a video of the service where you can sing along to the hymns with the lyrics on the screen. Alternatively, you can listen to, or download, the audio version of the service along with the hymn sheet.



Stevenston Ardeer Parish Church is a registered Scottish Charity:
No. SC015397.

Stevenston Livingstone Parish Church is a registered Scottish Charity:
No. SC000452.

A Poem by Kitty O'Meara

First published by the Catholic Health Association of the United States

And people stayed home
and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper

someone meditated
someone prayed someone
danced someone met their
shadow

and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who lived
in ignorant ways,
dangerous, meaningless and
heartless,
even the earth began to heal

and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people and
they made new choices and
dreamed of new visions and
created new ways of life and
healed the earth completely
just as they were healed themselves.

