



What A Great Book To Read

Dear Friends,

As I write, we are in our fourth week of lockdown and the government has announced that it is being extended by 'at least' three weeks.

I wonder how you're coping? As I've spoken with many of you on the phone or by some form of virtual communication, I've been hugely encouraged by the way many of you are dealing with the enforced isolation.

- Many of you are saying that it's not that different to how your life is normally - that is, that you live alone, that contact with others is minimal anyway and that you are perfectly content.
- Many of you are working hard at reaching out to others, ensuring that they have everything they need - you're collecting shopping, prescriptions and so on for those who can't get out and you are busy on the phone checking in that people are okay.

And in the midst of it all many of us are realising, now more than ever, that our faith is crucial to us and that the nearness of God is unaffected by social isolation and that we remain bound together as brothers and sisters in Christ despite not being able to meet together physically.

I've been caused to think about two people in recent days - both of whom knew what isolation was all about.

Firstly I've been thinking about Anne Frank who, with her family, endured 761 days - over two years - of isolation. This they did to keep themselves safe from Nazi persecution, hiding for all of that time in a small attic - along with four other people who joined them. And throughout all of that time, they had to remain more or less silent for fear of giving themselves away.

And secondly, I've been thinking about Terry Waite who along with various others was taken hostage in Beirut in 1987 and was held for a total of 1,763 days. For much of that time, he was chained to a radiator.

It's impossible for us to imagine the horrors of those kinds of situations, or to ponder as to how we would have managed. But our simplest response should be to begin by being thankful for what we have. We have radios and televisions. We have phones. Most of us have a connection to the internet allowing us to communicate with the outside world and to stream endless forms of entertainment. And for many of us, we can enjoy brief 'break outs', whether for an extended walk or cycle or even just into the garden or back door. Our deprivations may be social but they're certainly not material.

I wonder if you were to find yourself captive, not so much in lockdown but locked up, and you were told you could have one book... what would you choose? I've read *War and Peace* (as a teenager) but I could go back to that - it's long enough that it would last for a good while. Or, being a big fan of the musical, I've always fancied reading *Les Miserables* but have been daunted by the size of the novel.

But when all else is said and done, the choice I'd make would be to have the Bible. Maybe you're thinking, 'Well he would say that - he's the minister'! Yes, I am, but it's more than that.

- It's the book I know best.
- Though I've been reading it for over forty years, it still surprises me and challenges me.
- It reassures me in difficult times - promises that I've come to trust and rely on.
- And even if these things weren't true, it's more than a book - it's a library! What other volume could I opt for that would give me history, poetry, prophecy, romance, war, philosophy, personal correspondence and more!
- Most important of all, it contains the story of Jesus.

Do you remember the old hymn?

*Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear,
Things I would ask him to tell me if he were here.
Scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
Stories of Jesus, tell them to me.*

Of everything that we might be doing during this lockdown, reading our Bibles seems like an obvious choice.

With every blessing,

Martin and Elaine

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ST. ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Member Records****April 2020****Baptisms and Blessings** - None**Weddings** - None**Funerals** - None

Martin and Ian, our pastoral assistant, conducted other funerals though none were of members of our congregation. Nonetheless, we remember the bereaved families in our prayers.

IMPORTANT DATES**JUNE EDITION**

Word Processed files, as attachments, should be sent directly to the Editor.

Please **DO NOT** embed articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.

Monday 25th May (Word-Processed file)

WE'VE BEEN BUSY!

Lockdown has not translated to 'not much happening'!

- Our tech team is busier than ever with ensuring that our worship services are organised and ready to go online at 11am on Sundays
- For those with no internet access, members have been printing and posting Sunday sermons
- Our Prayer Team has been meeting on Zoom at least twice weekly to pray for the church and the nation
- Our monthly Quest magazine is still being produced and is available online
- We've been distributing food to needy families every day since the crisis began
- We've been phoning as many of our members as possible, saying hello and checking that everyone is okay
- We've been responding to local need - lots of members donated £10 each and we bought and arranged for the installation of a new washing machine for a vulnerable local family that had come to our notice
- And we've distributed Messy Church resource bags to well over two hundred families with young children

No doubt there are other things that could be added to the list but the point is clear: our Church is alive and well!

NOT Fake News!

A bit of genuine history—NOT fake news!

In 590 AD, Rome was suffering from a terrible plague that killed off vast swathes of the population. Amongst the first to die was the Pope. By unanimous vote, he was immediately replaced by Gregory I, descended from one of Rome's most eminent Patrician families, and himself a former urban prefect. Rome, over the course of the previous century, had become a city marked by corruption, decadence and decline. In every sense, Gregory was the new broom determined to sweep the city clean and restore the Church. In his opening address to the crowds he proclaimed, "God is full of mercy and compassion, and it is His will that we should win His pardon through our prayers".

He issued a call to repentance and prayer, to which the terrified, demoralised crowds rushed to respond. For three days Gregory led the people in procession round the city, crying out to Lord for deliverance. The plague unexpectedly stopped, and there was a great turning back to God.

Gregory I was a Pope much admired, even by the Reformers. John Calvin wrote of him with great commendation. So did Robert Bruce, Minister of Great St Giles, in his sermons on Hebrews 11; he also quotes from his writings with warm approval. There have always been plagues, but nothing like the present worldwide epidemic. Would we have faith to ask God to intervene and heal our land? Frankly, I'm not at all sure.

David Searle.

Moderator

Despite all of the current uncertainty, Martin is going to be installed as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at 11am on the morning of Saturday 16th May. The extension of the lockdown means that this will be in private, with only a few people present - including the outgoing Moderator, Colin, and of course Martin.

The good news is that the installation is going to be live streamed and so those with internet access will be able to 'be there'. Of course it's not what we had hoped for but in the present circumstances it's as good as it gets.

Following that, on Sunday 17th, Martin is scheduled to lead the 'Reflections from the Quay' programme on BBC1 that has been airing since the start of the crisis and later, to appear on the Heart & Soul Online that will go out from 2-4pm.

Beyond that weekend, Martin will be working out how best to fulfil the role of Moderator in ways never before seen - given the restrictions that will no doubt continue in relation to gathering and travel. In short, this means that although he will be Moderator he will continue to be based in Arbroath for the time being, continuing as minister of St. Andrew's Church while carrying out some Moderator functions remotely. Only time will tell whether it will be possible to take the role up fully but that will, of course, depend entirely on how the COVID-19 crisis plays out in the months ahead.



Guild News

We mentioned in our last Guild News that our Soup Lunch was on the 23rd of February and we would like to give you all a big thank you for your generous support of the lunch, all proceeds going to our projects for the year "Malawi Fruits - Growing the Future" and "CrossReach - Join the Dots".

On the 24th of February Margaret Clarke was our speaker from "Malawi Fruits", giving us an update of the work going on in Malawi of helping the young farmers by installing solar irrigation systems. This allows them to grow a variety of crops and have an additional harvest.

On the 9th of March we enjoyed an evening with the musical group "Accord", with a variety of songs, jokes and a quiz.

Unfortunately we've not been able to finish our session in the usual way but we are still keeping in touch with one another and all received an Easter gift.

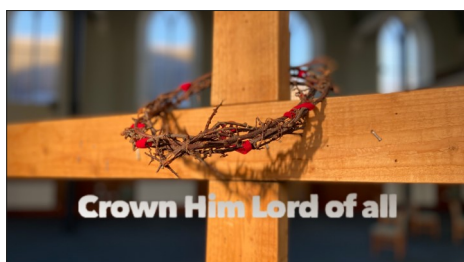
We are now working on next session's programme which will include the last two projects for the three year period - "Free to Live Trust - Seema's Project" which no doubt many of us have heard about through Pam Cairns. The following comes from their recent report: "Over the next year with your support, we will continue to develop our feeding programme, support girls escaping prostitution and develop training opportunities for our teenagers". Our 'home' project is the "Sailors' Society"- supporting the chaplains in their work making contact and helping seafarers. To this end....**calling all knitters in our church family**.... would you like to help by knitting hats to keep these folk warm? Just simple pull on hats, any pattern, but no pom poms!!



Virtual Messy Church!

Dementia Café

We had a lovely time at our last Café, in March when the other half of the Primary 3s from Ladyloan joined us. There was much fun, laughter and chatter. After a time of getting to know each other the children took part in either the putting, bingo or craft. We had a Spring craft this time and it went down well with both adults and children. We look forward to when we can meet again.



Colourful Craft Creations!

Ken's Garden Quiz

Spring/early summer is a great time for colour in a garden and I took these photos on 22nd April. So, whether you are a 'beginner' or a garden aficionado, here is a quiz to test your knowledge and help pass the time in lockdown. Please send your complete or partial answers to me at - quest@arbroathstandrews.org.uk.

Answers will (hopefully!) be given in the June Quest and I do hope that many of you will respond, because I don't know them all even though they are in my garden! (I might still have the labels somewhere in my shed - hmmm, must go and have a dig!)

Remember that, because you are looking at Quest online, you should be able to make the pictures as large as you like.



A

Start easy and work to hard!



B

Also a lady's name.



C

Second flowering and past best. Crinkly leaves give a big clue.



D, E, F

Three types of bulb to name - two are related.



G

Part of a printing machine?!



H

Shall we sing a duet?



J

Takes a good photo?



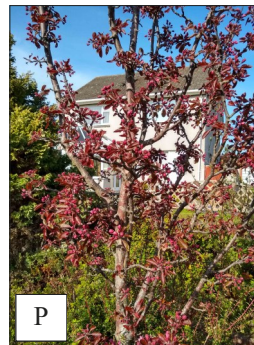
K

Small white flowers first, then bright red berries.



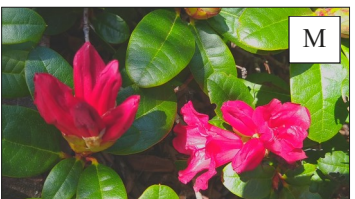
L

Never liked the colour much, so I tried to kill it off a few years ago - but a prickly one to kill!



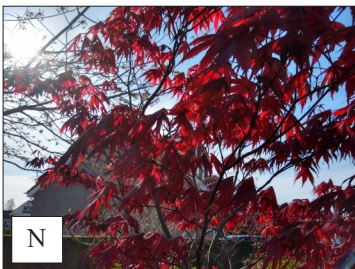
P

Soon to be beautiful deep red flowers. Partly a sea creature? Get working bees.



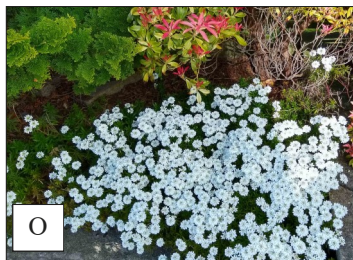
M

A larger variety than I.



N

The leaves of this type of tree are just beautiful when the sun shines through them. Not very hardy. I grew this one from a tiny potted plant.



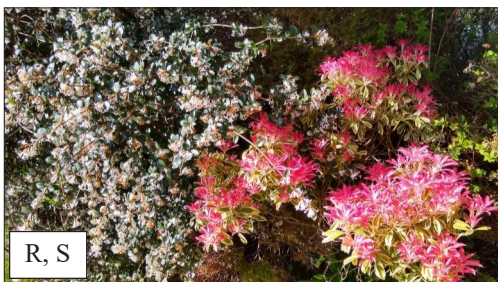
O

A mass of small white flowers.



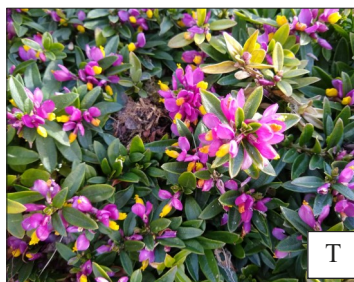
Q

No, my Kanzan has not flowered yet!



R, S

Small white trumpet flowers with a beautiful fragrance - difficult - but if you need to 'peer is' the pink one too small? (Easy!)

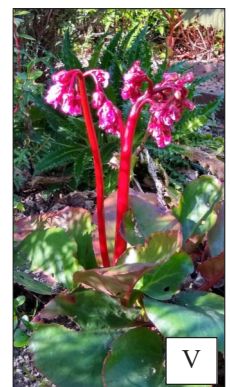


T

I need help here! Two small alpines and a plant that I bought at a garden centre on Loch Ness many years ago (with thick waxy leaves). Where are those labels again!



U



V