

A very warm welcome to our September prayer / newsletter.

September is usually the month that sets in motion the wheel for the rest of our year. We see the return of students to campus, the AUCU activities cranking up for Freshers week and many of the connections we have in local schools taking shape. This year is different in lots of ways and this creates interesting challenges for us! Our building remains mothballed except for our essential Foodbank service on Thursdays and for our Facebook live Sunday morning worship service. This will remain the case until our next Leaders meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 06 October. Obviously, this is not ideal, but it is the safest and most appropriate solution to the Covid19 restrictions.

In a small Cotswold village called Painsick there is a September ritual that appealed to me. On the 19th September each year, the congregation gather around the local church building in a circle, they hold hands together, sing a praise song and give the building a big hug. Maybe we will feel like doing something similar when we are free to return to our building again?

Our 'Immerse the Mission in prayer' meeting for the month of September will take place at 7 00 pm on Wednesday 02 September via Zoom. During the meeting we will pray for our Mission of the Month which is Friends International. Although our connections with this mission have always been close, they have deepened considerably since the arrival of Bethany Marsh in Aberdeen. It is a joy to have Bethany as a member of our Fellowship and to share our office space with her. I am aware that she is due to have a couple of weeks' vacation during this month so we hope she will have a restful and relaxing time and return to us refreshed and energised.

One of the aims that Paul had when he wrote a letter to the church community in Thessaloniki was that he would instruct them 'how to live in-order to please God.' 1 Thessalonians 4 v 1. In my own personal experience, I have learned that we share this objective when:

- We believe in the power of love rather than the love of power.
- We are faithful in small matters.
- We are faithful in the secret areas of life, where nobody can see what we are up to.
- We are loyal to the 'means of grace' the Lord has provided for us (i.e. word, sacrament, prayer).
- We will not give to the Lord 'that which costs us nothing'.

These five are high, self-denying, and God-glorifying standards which are impossible to achieve without the grace of The Holy Spirit and the encouragement of one another. The scriptures put it simply and clearly in Isaiah 66 v 2 - 'This is the one I esteem; he who is humble and contrite in spirit and who trembles at my word.' Following Jesus is not only an individual choice but a collective or community responsibility and I'm praying that we as we grow and pray together, we will learn how to live in ways that please God.

Fred Drummond, the director of Evangelical Alliance Scotland (an organisation with which The Mission is registered), suggests that Covid19 has provided the church with an opportunity to invest more in 'shared lives' and create a culture of togetherness. I'm confident that we all agree with this hope, but we need to pray for guidance about how we achieve this both meaningfully and sustainably. One starting point could be when we hold this year's 24/1 prayer event. This will be held online from noon to noon on Friday 25th - Saturday 26th September. A link is provided at the end of this letter and further details will be available soon. I hope you will participate both in the preparation phase and by choosing a slot during the 24 hours to pray. Our hope is that the experience will be creative, fresh and fruitful.

Snippets;

During one of our recent bouts of inclement weather, part of our lower hall was flooded. I am grateful to Alasdair Matheson who came along with his Hoover/Vac and soaked up a few gallons of water from the carpet tiles. The hall has dried out nicely. The only slight damage was to the curtains, but Jessie Cameron very kindly arranged for them to be dry cleaned and, with Bill's help, has rehung them – so, thankfully, all seems to be back to normal.

We continue, even in Lockdown, to be an environmentally aware and practical church. We still collect used stamps and printer cartridges for Blythswood Care and empty crisp packets for the Air Ambulance. Please don't discard these items but save them and in due course we will process them. Similarly with clothes, shoes and other items that can be reused we are happy to arrange for them to be passed on to either Blythswood or Somebody Cares.

I should remind people that if you would like to join us for our Zoom prayer-n-catch-up time at 7 00 pm on Wednesdays, please get in touch for the Zoom details. During these meetings we usually explore the sermon/theme from the previous Sunday in a bit more depth, helping us to apply the teaching to our lives. If you have comments/questions about the teaching, please send them to us. Also, it has been encouraging to have a range of people involved during our Sunday morning Facebook Live services but there is always space for more. If you would like to suggest something or someone that would enhance our services, again, please get in touch. I was encouraged last week to receive positive feedback about our online service from far-afield places like Kenya and Pakistan.

Matters for prayer carried over from August:

Please continue to pray for our August mission of the month, Scripture Union, as well as all the other children's ministries we are involved with (e.g. SAMS, NESYFC, School Pastors and the Lighthouse).

We should also give thanks that the local schools seem to have returned safely.

We thank the Lord for the significant numbers of people who joined us on Friday 21st August when we hosted the city-wide prayer gathering. Special thanks to Jeannette Mackay who prayed so beautifully and knowledgeably for The Mission. May her prayers for increase be answered.

Dates for your dairies and prayers;

Tues	01 Sept	9 30 am	Local pastors and church leaders meeting
Wed	02 Sept	7 00 pm	'Immerse the Mission in prayer' for the month of September.
Sun	06 Sept	11 00 am	Online family service with communion via Facebook Live
Mon	07 Sept	10 00 am	CAMEO resumes. Contact Anne Wilma for more information.
Mon	21 Sept		Fresher's week begins in both AU and RGU
Fri	18 Sept	7 30 pm	City-wide prayer gathering hosted by Oldmachar Parish Church.
Fri-Sat	25-26 Sept	Noon-noon	Online 24/1 prayer event.

Link for this event: <https://www.24-7prayer.com/signup/ee7cf2>

Tues 06 Oct 7 00 pm Mission leaders meeting.

In 2 Thessalonians 1 v 3, the apostle Paul prays for the church in Thessaloniki in this way - 'I ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.'

My prayers for you echo these precious sentiments. Enjoy a safe and super September.

With warmest blessings and best wishes, Yours sincerely on behalf of the elders,

Hector

You're invited!

Join us every

Sunday at 11am on



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