

## Friday 26 June 2020

Dear Friends,

*<sup>17</sup> Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. <sup>18</sup> For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. <sup>20</sup> He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. <sup>21</sup> Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.*

1 Peter 3:17-21

I hope that this letter finds you well. We have all been living through an extraordinary time. For many it has been very painful, but it now looks like things are easing a little and for that we can give thanks.

As I have been thinking this week about all that has happened, and the circumstances we find ourselves in, I read the passage above. Scripture is given to point us above all else to Jesus Christ and this passage does that wonderfully. It reminds us that:

1. This is not forever – we are ‘foreigners’ here and have another home. It is easy to forget this and live our lives as if this is all there is.
2. This is not forever – all we have is ‘perishable’, except Christ, who is perfect in every way.
3. This is not forever – we are in the ‘last times’, in which Christ has been revealed.
4. This is not forever – so put your faith and hope in God.

All the way through this crisis, the Lord has asked of us, “Are you keeping your eyes on Jesus?”. Will you go on doing so in all that lies ahead? He is, and will be, with us!

## **Church News**

**Farewell to the Turners** – We say goodbye to, and pray for, Diedra, Mike, Masen & Malek at this Sunday's Online Worship. They are moving to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. We are so grateful to the Lord for their friendship, hard work, support and encouragement. We miss them already!

**Jane Ross** will be coming off furlough on a part-time basis from Wednesday this week. Initially she will be in the church for three mornings a week from 9am-12pm in order to help with the church being open for prayer and to begin to help us prepare for any further easing of lockdown.

**Thanks** to those who have been offering the online prayer times over the last few weeks. It's great to have a team of people who are willing and able to do this – Angela & Sandy Benzies, Kerstin & Thorsten Prill and Phil Taylor.

**New email address** – please change the email address you use for me to [david@stt.church](mailto:david@stt.church).

## **EMERGING FROM LOCKDOWN**

The working group has been working hard on how to best facilitate a partial return to using the church building. Here are the details of what we are aiming for.

### **St Thomas' Church, Edinburgh – Open for Prayer & Reflection**

From **Wednesday 1 July**, St Thomas' Church building will be open for personal prayer and reflection as follows:

Monday 10am-12pm

Wednesday 10am-12pm

Friday 10am-12pm

Though we can pray anywhere of course, we are delighted to open our building again for this purpose and offer a warm welcome to all who wish to visit.

## **What to expect in the building**

The church will be laid out with 14 chairs, some set as singles and others as doubles so that couples can sit together. Each chair, or pair of chairs, will be at least 4 meters from any other. This allows everyone to keep appropriate social distancing. If a family chooses to use the space, a staff member will arrange a suitable number of chairs. You are free to sit wherever you choose, but if the church is empty, please consider using the ones at the front as this makes it easier for others who arrive. The chair used by you will be replaced with another once you leave and set aside for 72 hours.

The disabled toilet in the hall will be available for use. The other toilets are closed in order to restrict how much cleaning has to be done.

We ask that, if possible, you leave via the door from the sanctuary into the organ loft and from there into the front garden.

We will be following strict guidelines to ensure the safety both of those who visit and of our staff.

## **What you will need to do**

Please try to follow on your visit:

1. If you have any symptoms of Covid-19 (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of taste or smell), stay at home and get a test.
2. Maintain social distancing of 2m at all times.
3. Please wear a mask (unless you are exempt from this for health reasons). We have disposable masks available.
4. Thoroughly clean your hands upon arrival with the sanitiser provided.
5. All doors will be open, so please avoid touching handles if possible.
6. Our church staff may be meeting several different people each day. Please help us keep them safe and protected by maintaining your social distance and minimising any unnecessary contact with them.
7. Follow the signs and any directions of staff.

## Sunday Online Worship

### Bearing Fruit in Hard Times



*<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23

- |                       |                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday June 28</b> | <b>Love &amp; Joy</b>                |
| <b>Sunday July 5</b>  | <b>Peace &amp; Forbearance</b>       |
| <b>Sunday July 12</b> | <b>Kindness &amp; Goodness</b>       |
| <b>Sunday July 19</b> | <b>Faithfulness</b>                  |
| <b>Sunday July 26</b> | <b>Gentleness &amp; Self-control</b> |

## Online Worship, Gathering and Communications

Please read [beyond my signature](#) at the bottom of this letter for details of our online gatherings this week.

We continue to use Facebook Live for much of our online presence. A reminder that you do not need a Facebook account to participate in our live worship times. You simply need to go to <https://www.facebook.com/stthomasedin> and look for a red symbol which says 'Live'.

Online worship is also available live on our YouTube Channel (please subscribe!) at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1r0Eq3PqBmxioDssYXCbGQ>

We are also streaming to <https://www.pscp.tv/StThomasEdin> if you want to try something different!

**Website enhancement** - We hope to change over our new website template within the next few weeks. More information to follow.

Our Twitter account has also been reactivated. Search for @StThomasEdin.

If you are interested in taking part in Online Worship on Sundays either with reading or praying, please let us know. You'll have to be able to make an audio recording of your reading or intercessions in advance and then send the file to me electronically.

If you have prayer concerns or needs, please let me have them by email, text or message. You continue in my thoughts and prayers. Please continue to hold Ali and me in yours especially this week as we try to switch off!

All love In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn McNamara". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

## St Thomas' Church Online Week Beginning 28 June 2020

### **Online Worship & Gathering**

All worship events are available online at:

<https://www.facebook.com/sthomasedin>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1r0Eq3PqBmxioDssYXCbGQ>

<https://www.pscp.tv/StThomasEdin>

### **Sunday 28 June**

**Online Worship @ 10.30am – Love & Joy Galatians Chapter 5**

### **Monday 29 June**

**@12pm – Midday Prayer (Facebook only)**

### **Tuesday 30 June**

**@9.30pm Night Prayer (Facebook only)**

### **Wednesday 1 July**

**@12pm Midday Prayer (Facebook only)**

### **@2-3.30pm Rooted Bible Study**

Contact Kerstin Prill ( [kerstinprill67@gmail.com](mailto:kerstinprill67@gmail.com) ) for how to join this 'Zoom' meeting.

### **Thursday 2 July**

**@ 10am - 'Zoom' Coffee Online**

See information from church office for how to join this Zoom Meeting

**@9.30pm – Night Prayer (Facebook only)**