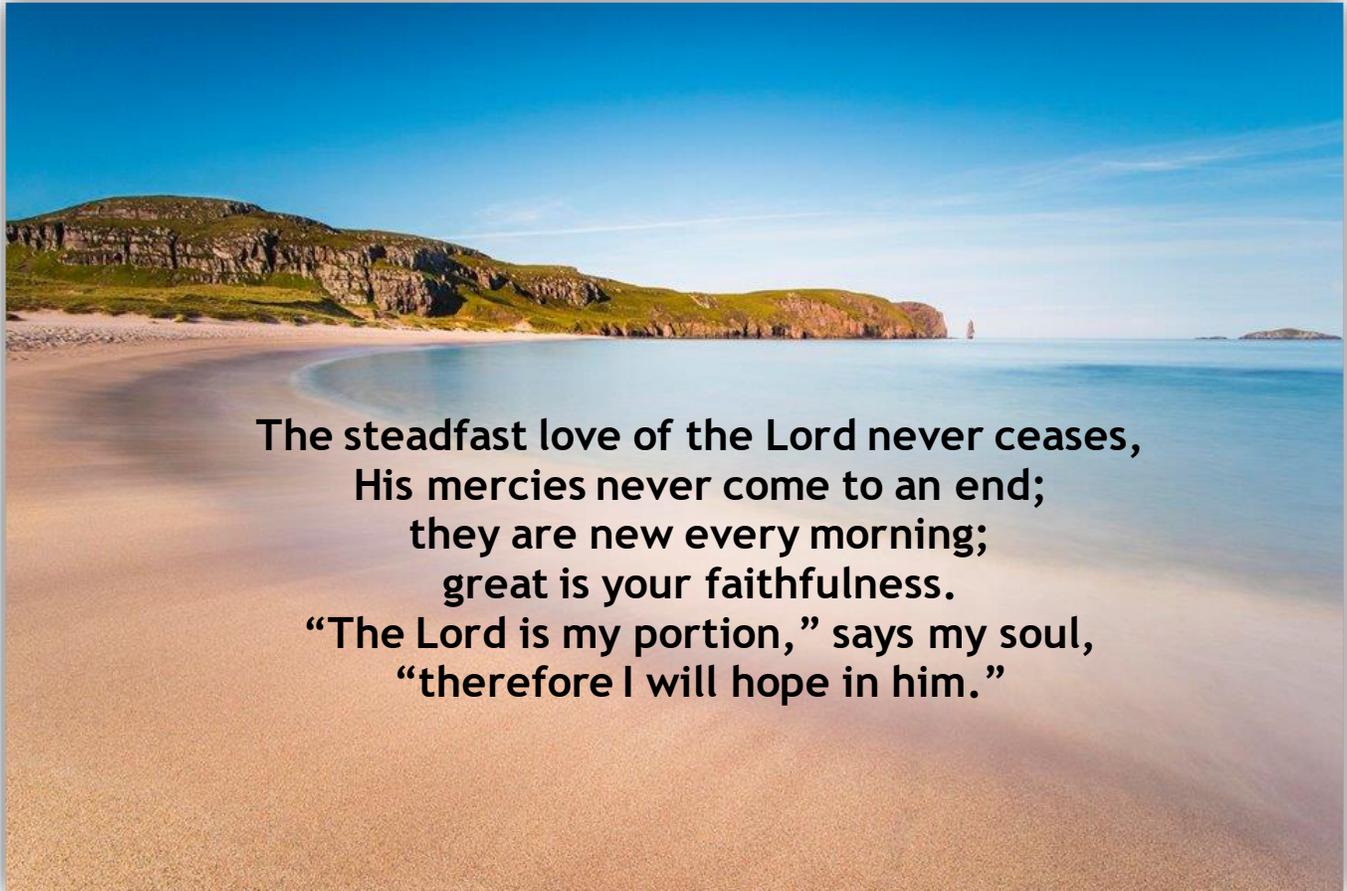


# WEEKLY CONGREGATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Thought For The Week  
Sunday 6th September



**The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,  
His mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.  
“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,  
“therefore I will hope in him.”**

**Lamentations 3:22-24**

**A prayer  
From whatever binds us,  
from that which holds us back,  
from the fear of change that traps us,  
release us Lord to go in faith,  
to step forward with your grace,  
and to live the gospel of love,  
in our community and world.  
Walk with us now and always.  
Amen**

East Neuk Trinity

Sunday morning services will resume from

6th September at 11am.

1st and 3rd Sundays in Elie Church

2nd and 4th Sundays in Kilconquhar Church

5th Sundays to be arranged.

Before coming to church please take time to read the arrangements that are in place to allow us to safely meet together for worship. These are attached with this email.

## Church Giving

Thank you very much for continuing to support the church over the past months by giving through bank transfer or by sending your WFO envelopes to the Treasurer either directly to her home or to the Church Office. The account details for Bank Transfer are:

*East Neuk Trinity Bank Details.*

*Sort Code- 83-24-24*

*Account Number 00634002*

As we begin to open our church buildings and return to worshipping together the Treasurer would prefer if you would continue to give to the church in this way. Banks are making increased charges for handling cash.

If you would like any more information please contact the Treasurer Mrs Victoria White. [toriwhite@btinternet.com](mailto:toriwhite@btinternet.com)

Craignish, 41 Viewforth Place, KY10 2PZ. Pittenweem

## Quiz Night via Zoom

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30.**

**Invitation open to everyone.**

**Contact Olive Weir [jamandlor1@gmail.com](mailto:jamandlor1@gmail.com)**

## EAST NEUK ALPHA

East Neuk Trinity, St Monans, and Coastline Community Churches are working together to offer an on-line Alpha Course, on Thursday evenings, starting on 17 September. The course will offer people the opportunity to explore the big questions of life, faith, and meaning, joining Zoom meetings from the comfort of their own homes. If you would be interested in attending or you know of someone who may be interested, further details of what the course is all about, and how to register interest, is available on the ENT website ([www.eastneuktrinity.org.uk](http://www.eastneuktrinity.org.uk)) or you can also find us on the Alpha website ([www.alpha.org/tryalphaonline](http://www.alpha.org/tryalphaonline)).

## Evening Bible Study Group is moving online!!

This group has decided to meet virtually to consider a Lifebuilder Study, looking at The Fruits of the Spirit . The meetings will be monthly, on the last Thursday of each month at 7.30. Our chats are informal with a free flowing discussion based on a passage from Scripture, but with no pressure to share or contribute. The first of the series will be on Love on 24 September. Please do consider joining us for BibleChat, either virtually or by phone link. Contact Eleanor 330512.

## Televised and Radio Services from Church of Scotland.

10.00am Sunday Morning Live. Sean Fletcher and Sally Phillips take a look at the week's talking points and explore the ethical and religious issues of the day.

Later in the afternoon again on BBC 1 at 1.15pm Songs of Praise. This week Claire McCollum visits Cornwall's Eden Project and JB Gill goes surfing with a Christian who came back to faith whilst catching waves.

For radio listeners, there is a regular religious service on **BBC Radio 4 between 9.45 and 10.00 am Mondays to Fridays** with hymns, prayers and reflections. You have to have digital radio (DAB) or turn to the Long Wave, if you have a smart speaker just ask it to play BBC Radio 4.

Radio Scotland will continue to feature Thought for the Day within the Good Morning Scotland news programme each weekday. Every New Sunday has moved forward an hour to a new slot of 7.30AM and Sunday Morning with Cathy Macdonald will continue to feature conversations with guests from across all faith groups.

**Rev Rosemary Frew** at Bowden and Melrose Church will be posting short Reflections on their Church Website. Please click on the link below to listen to these:

<http://bowdenandmelroseparish.org/covid.html>

Across the BBC, our network services will include live worship and virtual church services as well as special new content on the BBC's flagship religious strands on TV and radio, as well as providing content to mark the major festivals of worship. There's much more detail to be found on the BBC website, at

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2020/easter> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2020/religion-coronavirus> at

Don't forget to light a candle and place it in your window on Sunday Evening at 7pm to call upon God that his light might shine into our darkness. Attached with this email is the Prayer from Rev Hugh Wallace for this week.

### Bible Readings for 6<sup>th</sup> September to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020

#### 3 Welcome one another

Sunday 6 September Romans 14:13-23  
Monday 7 September Romans 15:1-13  
Tuesday 8 September Romans 15:14-22  
Wednesday 9 September Romans 15:23-33  
Thursday 10 September Romans 16:1-16, 21-23  
Friday 11 September Romans 16:17-20  
Saturday 12 September Romans 16:25-27

This list is from The IBRA publication '*Fresh from the Word*

#### EAST NEUK FOOD BANK

Appleton's of Elie continue to be a collection point for the foodbank There will be a box outside Appleton's Hardware shop during opening times (8am-1pm). The donations will be delivered to the Foodbank every Thursday.

The Diving Gannet in St Monans has reopened for take away only and is a collection point as well.

If you prefer to make a cash donation then this can be done by bank transfer. Details for Bank Transfer are: Account Name: East Neuk Foodbank. Sort Code 83-15-21 Account Number 00227490. Please consider a donation if you are able.

#### Mobile Post Office

The mobile PO is now calling in Colinsburgh on a Friday 9.30 - 10.30. Opposite the corner shop. It will still continue to call at Elie on Mondays 12.30 - 1.30 and Wednesdays 12.40 - 1.40.

Please do send me anything you would like to share with everyone. It may be a poem, a Bible Reading, a favourite hymn, a quiz even recipes to keep us busy in the weeks ahead.

Please send these to: [Eastneuktrinityoffice@btconnect.com](mailto:Eastneuktrinityoffice@btconnect.com)

Keep safe everyone  
Helen - Church Secretary

#### IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

REV GAVIN BOSWELL, INTERIM MODERATOR [GBoswell@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:GBoswell@churchofscotland.org.uk)

OLIVE WEIR, SESSION CLERK, [jamandlor1@gmail.com](mailto:jamandlor1@gmail.com)

Sermon for Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September by Rev Hugh Wallace

**Reading:** **Philippians 1:** <sup>1</sup> Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: <sup>2</sup> Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. <sup>8</sup> God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God. <sup>12</sup> Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup> As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

## Sermon

I was given this mug as a farewell gift when I left Aberdeen nearly two years ago by a colleague and friend. It says on it one of the verses that has just been read to us. <sup>3</sup> *I thank my God every time I remember you.*

We've been doing a lot of remembering over the past six months. Remembering meeting up with friends and family, travelling to various parts of the country and the world, jumping on a train or bus or plane, and thinking very little of it. Going out for a meal, or to the theatre, or the cinema.

And remembering meeting up with friends at church, catching up with their news and then - singing - singing hymns and listening to the buzz of children running around, turning around to smile and greet one another.

Remembering church, with the fellowship groups, cups of coffee and pancakes, things we took for granted - and then it was gone. And I think we have grieved for some of these losses, felt that something deeply personal and central to our lives has been cruelly ripped out of our hands.

It's why today, having and taking the opportunity to meet up again is so important, to remind ourselves of those things that matter to us. But our Bible verse says something more profound

and fundamental. The Apostle Paul says - as my friend was saying to me - <sup>3</sup> *I thank my God every time I remember you.*

I thank my God. I pray with thankfulness in my heart and on my lips. I have had to choose to give thanks because my nature, and maybe yours, is to think of all the things that have been taken away, rather than the things that can never be removed.

Paul had started the Church in Philippi. We read about it in Acts chapter 16. And they cemented a bond of friendship and support with him throughout his missionary journeys. We read later in this letter about one of their members, Epaphroditus, who travelled to Rome where Paul was imprisoned, to bring him their greetings and also money which they had collected to help him. Although they had been separated from one another firstly by Paul's call to mission in other parts of Asia and Europe, he was now cut off from them and the rest of the church by his imprisonment because of his faith in Jesus.

But Paul declares with passion and assurance in the following verses

*<sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

This thankfulness that is prompted by his continual remembrances of these fellow Christians in Philippi, leads him to prayer. But it's not prayers of regret or complaint, of what he is missing. He says - <sup>4</sup> *In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy.*

How wonderful is that! Prayers of thanks that are filled with joy. Is that how we pray? To say "thank you" to God for all the good things we have, or do we come with a list of wants and questions and moans?

Look at what prompts Paul's joyful and thankful prayers - and remember he is uttering them in the squalid conditions of a first century prison with none of the basic facilities and hygiene we would expect today.

He says - <sup>4</sup> *In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.*

His work had taken him far afield from Philippi in the north-east of Greece - over 4,600 miles away - but as far as Paul was concerned they were partners with him in his work, praying and encouraging him with letters and money, and even their own beloved Epaphroditus who travelled those miles to join him in the prison cell in Rome.

No wonder Paul felt joy every time he thought of them. He wasn't feeling alone or forgotten. Yes, there were the comforting visits of his Philippian friend bringing him food and news, but most of the time Paul was left isolated in a cold, bare, unhealthy room, not knowing when or whether he would be released. There might be no end to his lockdown. But despite it all he rejoiced in his prayers of thankfulness for the partners in the gospel whom he knew had not forgotten him but demonstrated in such practical and costly ways their love and care.

But there was more that prompted his joyful prayer. It was this. He was

*<sup>6</sup> confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Paul wasn't just thankful that HE was being supported in his work, but because of what he knew GOD was doing in his fellow Christians' lives in Philippi. He had not left them to their own devices but had commended them to the care and love of God, knowing that God would build them up in faith as they exercised their faith in daily demonstrations of their commitment to Jesus.

I love that Paul's joy is in the spiritual life of his friends. I think we all take joy when people tell us that they are well or feeling better from an illness. But do we delight to hear of friends and family speaking about their faith and their new discoveries about God's goodness to them? I have a lovely friend who always has a question for me when I see her. She will ask me,

*"So where did you meet with God this week?"* or

*"what new things do you sense God is showing to you and why?"*, or just simply,

*"what part of the Bible are you reading at the moment?"*

I know that my friend in Aberdeen who gave me the mug is not just interested in my health in retirement, but in the continuing work I am doing for God and the new things God is calling me to do. And I rejoice when I read of the continuing work he has been involved in even during the lockdown restrictions - whether the Food Bank that is run from his church, or finding more and more people looking to the church for help; some of the Syrian refugee families trying to work out what they can and cannot do, or supporting vulnerable families as they coped with their children home from school or without the security of employment. I've been so encouraged to read and learn about so many Christian friends who have not given into the general sense of heaviness of heart with the pandemic but have been asking God - *"What do you want me, my church, to do in the midst of this great time of need?"* And it has been wonderful to see the new initiatives and even opportunities that have resulted.

As you know there is a regular Online Prayer Gathering that zooms every fortnight with Christians from different churches and denominations around the East Neuk. We've discovered a new way to pray.

And we are making preparations to hold an Online Alpha Course. Since we can't meet with others in one space, we are inviting people to join us from the comfort of their own homes. I would never have thought that was possible or even worthwhile. But already 1500 different churches across the UK have started running a course in the past six months. And Alpha UK is now committed that even when the lockdown is completely eased and face-to-face Alphas can start up again, they will still run Online Courses because so many people have connected with them who would not have otherwise joined a course.

Another friend in Edinburgh talks about her surprise and joy that a number of older people who could no longer attend church have been able to watch their Online services, or join the church's Online Bible Study Group.

And that can't stop when things get "back to normal"!

And that's one of the many reasons Paul has for being joyful in prayer. He writes

*<sup>12</sup> Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup> As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.*

When so many would have thought that Paul's imprisonment would have stopped his work and his influence, it had actually opened new doors to him. The Palace guards who stayed at his side to ensure he didn't try to escape, heard from him about Jesus. They would never have turned up at a church where Paul was preaching, but here it's almost they who are the captive audience, not only hearing about Paul's faith but seeing it worked out in practice every day. Even in the discomforts and humiliation of prison life, Paul is still thankful to God, and inviting them to discover and trust in Jesus too.

I have found myself in conversations and encounters with lots of unexpected people - talking to shopkeepers, people at the checkouts, or at the recycling centres, asking people how they are doing. The opportunities for acts of kindness and thoughtfulness abound. Looking out for the stranger, the visitor not sure of what they should do, showing Christian compassion rather than groan or moan about others.

As someone said to me this week when talking about what church will look like going forward, 'there has to be new thinking, different thinking, about church out of the box, or as she so delicately put it, "*aye been is out the window.*"'

We won't be able to go back to the old ways, the way things were. In fact, this gives us an opportunity to take a fresh look, a radical look at ourselves, at our faith and at our church, to ask God -

*"What are you saying to us in this?"*

And as a new, young, vibrant, imaginative, committed Christian minister arrives to lead us, I have to ask myself as we all must do,

*"Will I stand in his way, or will I be a partner with him in the gospel?"*

Let's use our imaginations.

Let's ask God to help us to see Douglas here in this place.

This morning I am at the front of the church speaking to you, but in a few weeks' time it will be Douglas Creighton, your new minister, my new minister who will be here. Will we thank God every time we remember him? Can we imagine him standing before us, speaking God's words to us, leading us in prayer and encouraging us in our faith?

How can we pray for him? Because he'll need our prayers.

How can we support him? Because he'll need our support.

What will we say to him? Because he'll want to get to know us and know what we think and believe.

Will we be ready to join with him in the work of the Kingdom, to partner with him in the gospel? Because he can't do that on his own.

And as he preaches God's words of hope and life, of promise and truth, will we be conscious that Jesus is sitting beside us, as he always is, as he is now, whispering in our ears -

*"these words are true, and these words are for you".*

And as Douglas leads us in prayer, will we join with him as he prays for those who grieve, for those who are struggling with their lives; as he prays for the congregation to be courageous

and bold to step forward in faith; as he prays for our community and villages, for our schools and young people, for the elderly and vulnerable, will we pray with him?

As he asks that we might be conscious of God's presence with us at work, at home, when we are with friends or family, or when we are on our own; and when he asks that we might be ready to speak to others of what Jesus means to us, will that be our prayer too?

And as he prays for forgiveness for our neglect of and coldness towards others, of our reluctance to let go of the past and embrace the present and the future as we seek to care and reach out to others, of our lack of faith and faithfulness, will we join with him in that prayer?

And as he leads us into the presence of God to worship him and thank him for all that we have because of Jesus, will we worship with Douglas too?

And when he urges us to listen to God's voice, will we listen?

And when he is looking for help, for volunteers, when he is asking us to join him in the work of the Kingdom, will we say YES?

And when he asks us to pray for him, will we?

## **Prayer**

*Let's pray*

*Lord, we give thanks today that we are able to sit here in this building, in a time of worship, listening to your word and reflecting on what you are saying to us.*

*We thank you that we are able to contemplate the future with our own minister leading us, teaching us, inspiring us and encouraging us to live out our faith in new ways.*

*But Lord, we also find this terrifying.*

*There is so much that we have loved about church that we might not regain. Our buildings may no longer be as important as we have made them out to be. Like the first Christians in Jerusalem, Lord, pour out your Spirit upon us afresh that we might open the doors of our churches so that we can move into our communities with the Good News of Jesus, empowered by your grace and filled with your love.*

*Teach us to love you again, to expect and rejoice in the new things you will do amongst us. Make us willing to serve you and honour you as we step forward in faith.*

*And we pray for Douglas, our new minister, as he steps out in faith to come here, to live amongst us and work amongst us. This is a big leap of faith for him. Lord, may you reassure him and strengthen him. Prepare him for the task. Give him strength both physical and spiritual for all that lies ahead. Give him wisdom and patience, compassion and love. And may his eyes always be fixed on you, Lord Jesus, the author and perfecter of his faith.*

*Lord, we bring our prayers today, prayers for friends and family, neighbours and colleagues, prayers we have struggled to pray over the weeks and months of lockdown, but which today in this familiar place and in the company of our fellow believers, we feel bold to bring now. In the quietness of this place, we bring our prayers to you, Lord.*

*All these prayers we bring in the Name of and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Redeemer.*

*And hear us as together we pray in the words our Saviour has taught us, saying*

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 debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory for ever. AMEN.

**Blessing** (using words from our reading)

*<sup>9</sup> May your love abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God.*

And may the blessing of God almighty, Father Son and Holy Spirit be with you today and always.  
AMEN

Reflections for Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August - Rev Tim Power

Scripture: Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity” (Colossians 3:13-14 NIV)

Topic: Community is life-giving—and essential to following Christ.

Scripture: For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Romans 12:4-5) NIV

Significant meaning & benefit;

Because we're better together than we are alone.

I met a neighbour in our little cul-de-sac this morning (Thursday). He works in the financial sector in Edinburgh. Or rather since late March he works from home and engages with the world of work through ‘The Zoomiverse’ or something similar. I asked, ‘when are you going back to the physical rather than virtual reality?’ ‘Not till next year, and then it might only be one day a week at the office.’ I commented, ‘you know what, I think for many of us we are

experiencing a paradigm shift not just in the way we work, but the way we live, as individuals, families, and community.' I was reminded of a story I hadn't thought about for many years.

About twenty five or thirty years ago I flew over to the States to see my sister Frances and her family. My wife Christine and I arriving in Las Vegas, there, because it was cheaper to do that than fly direct to the nearest International Airport to Frances, San Francisco. So we flew to Vegas, then Reno, staying a few days at Lake Tahoe and then driving 'The 101' to Palo Alto to stay with my sister and brother-in-law. We stayed in Vegas for a few nights either end of our holiday, what a pit of sin that place is, but that's another story.

My brother in law Bahman is one of the brightest people I know, by this time he was a Vice President for Apple. He asked me if I would like to visit Apple HQ at Cupertino. I was at the time a lecturer in business related subjects and studying organisational design, to get the opportunity visit and go into the heart of the world-renowned centre for innovation and design, you bet I did!

Whilst I was there something quite funny happened. I visited the on-site Apple shop, staff discount, whoo-hoo! As I came out with Bahman this chap came up to us, and I was introduced to Bahman's boss, 'welcome' he said, 'Its good to meet you, I hope you enjoy your time here. I said 'Thank-you very much', out of the corner of my eye I could see people on the outside of the perimeter fence, bus loads of them, many pointing their cameras at our little meeting which was soon over. Bahman said to me, 'you have no idea who that was, do you?' I said 'no', as Steve Jobs walked away from us!

Privileged to meet one of the brightest minds on the planet, and I didn't even recognise him in front of me!

What did catch my attention was the manner in which the place was designed.

Imagine a wheel with spokes, at the centre of the wheel was a hub, at the end of each spoke, a cell or office space, at places around the wheel were other interconnecting hubs, leading to other wheels whose spokes overlapped at other place with other wheels, loosely a bit like a multiple Venn diagram. The idea was that these geniuses working there could and often would work away in isolation, however, the very design of the building was such that every time they went out they inevitably met others at the hub or interconnecting points, the reasoning not just to break isolation, but to create innovation and discussion. Employees were encouraged to stop and talk to each other. Deemed to be not only healthy, but beneficial and profitable.

I, as some of you will know, engage with a new church plant over in Kinross. The recent lock-down has undoubtedly caused some associated with the church to experience isolation. Even though this particular church has Sunday Services live on Zoom, and four house groups connecting similarly, it has been noticed that numbers engaging have dropped off a bit, even though for many the virtual connection really is welcomed. In A Zoom meeting in the evening this week we discussed it. Yes, meeting virtually is ok, better than not meeting for most, but something is definitely missing. So, we talked about how, now that lockdown is easing, we could find ways to meet, in small groups within the guidelines, and rotating people within the groups to ensure no one who wanted to was left out. We can even meet as a church outside in a very big gazebo offered free by a local entertainment venue. All good we thought, but then and quite rightly in my view, some concerns began to be expressed. 'We need to be

careful!’ ‘I’m not sure about people coming to my house, maybe outside.’ ‘Outside can we sing, even with masks on, I think so’ said one, ‘I don’t’ said another. ‘The rules are 50 can meet at church, I don’t know, can more meet at an outside venue?’ ‘If there is more than 50 want to attend, we’ll join by Zoom, or just watch the whole thing livestream.

And what we soon perceived was an underlying fear associated with meeting up again in groups and in person.

Nonetheless, the scriptures don’t give the wrong guidance. We have to obey the law, yes (Titus 3:1-2), but it is undoubtedly better to meet together (Scripture verse above).

In conclusion of my reflection today, I ask you to consider the benefits of finding safe ways to begin to meet up again, ensuring no-one is made fearful, and no-one left out. If you would like, create your own version of the Apple Hubs - ways to connect. This could be outside or inside, church, cafes, beach, home, whatever fits. But be positive in doing this, knowing that the benefits are that we become bound in unity, we are better together than alone!

Another verse springs to mind, obvious really, Matthew 18:20,

‘For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

The one with a mind that surpasses all knowledge will be with you. And unlike me with Steve Jobs, if he welcomes you in, you will certainly know who he is!

Rev. Tim Power