

Life at St. Paul's Milngavie

June 2019



Dear Friends,

We live in an age when we face constantly a barrage of images and pressure from society, and not least the media, telling us who, how and what we should be. Countless self-help and self-esteem gurus and programmes are thrust upon us to prevent us from feeling inadequate. However, as the initial motivation wears off, worrying thoughts threaten to engulf us. What if I cannot keep all of those balls in the air, or all of those plates spinning? When can I stop having to prove myself? What will other people think if I fail or if I give up?

In life, it is so easy to slip into approval mode – constantly performing and pleasing, while thinking and worrying. These fears are extremely powerful. Naturally, we want to be admired, loved and accepted. Yet often we don't believe that we will be if we display weakness or admit our fears. Very often, we live in fear of vulnerability and believe that the shame it may bring us will break us when, in fact, it is when we do not embrace vulnerability that we are hindered from living to our true, God-given potential.

We often balk at allowing ourselves to become vulnerable because we assume that it will involve bearing everything to the world. Yes, it involves risk, but vulnerability embraces boundaries and trust because it often involves no more than our feelings, our fears, our concerns and our experiences with people who have earned the right to hear them. After all, to be human is to be vulnerable!

Perfectionism can be addictive, because when we do invariably experience shame, judgement, criticism, blame and guilt, we often believe that it is because we were not flawless enough. Rather than question the faulty logic of perfectionism, the tendency is to become even more entrenched in our quest to live, look and do everything just right.

We live in a culture that places great value on independence. We scorn those who appear to be clingy or dependent. The Hebrew word used for “cling” (dabaq) confirms the lustful, prideful and dependant nature of mankind's vulnerability. It expresses a man's deep attraction for a woman, almost at the level of irresistibility.

Scripture repeatedly depicts vulnerability in men and women, both in manipulative forms, such as the deceitful story of David's deceitful liaison with Bathsheba, or in celebrated fashions like that of the lover and his beloved on the Song of Songs.

Goliath's vulnerability and the young David's strength were not their weaponry, but their contrasting world views. David, as a shepherd, placed no importance on military propriety. Goliath, as a seasoned warrior, anticipated a fair fight. This disparity was the real gap through which David slung his stone. David was simply being David to defeat the Philistine. (1 Samuel ch17).

Invincibility is the opposite of vulnerability. However, world history had proved that nothing but the Kingdom of God is impregnable. All of the great empires have risen and collapsed. Unsinkable ships like the Titanic have sunk. Even in sport, seemingly unbeatable boxers have been felled, like Sonny Liston by the no-hoper Cassius Clay. For those of you who are Rangers fans, who would have believed that a team like the mighty Glasgow Rangers would be dumped in the bottom tier of Scottish League Football with teams like Clyde and Queens Park?

Even God became vulnerable, when the "Word became flesh and dwelled among us". (John ch1, v14). God entrusted His only Son into our hands. He was as vulnerable then as He was on the cross when He cried:- "Eli, Eli, sabachthani", which means:- "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" His cry at this dreadful moment showed that there was still some vitality in Jesus from which extreme anguish of body and soul forced that desperate pleading as He was momentarily separated from God the Father before His ascension to be with Him in heaven.

By being people of the second, third and fourth chance, we can carry each other's burdens. We are here to embrace our humanity and imperfections. Together, we can practice grace and compassion, we can have the courage to be vulnerable, and we can shatter the silence of shame and guilt. The world views vulnerability as a weakness, but in reality, it is a God-given strength.

We can only truly love ourselves and others when we allow ourselves to be vulnerable. Vulnerability is in fact the most accurate measurement of courage. To be honest about our fears and shortcomings not only makes us real, but also demonstrates that true power and grace resides not with us, but with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Ramsay B. Shields

Flower Donations - June

Anyone wishing to record their name in Life, in memory of a loved one, should send the donation a month prior to publication of the magazine.



Donations for June: Ms M A McLean, Ms M Phillips, Mr and Mrs J C More, Mrs M M Reid, Sunday Club/Bible Class, Mr A Marshall

Please send donations to Mrs M Thoms, 66 Braeside Avenue, Milngavie, G62 6NN, or put them in the flower guild pigeon hole at the back of the Church. Cheques should be written to St Paul's Flowers.

Japan Jottings



Dear Friends,

It was lovely to see so many of you at the recent Cherry Blossom Fair when I skyped in. Thank you to everyone who organised the brunch, helped on the day, and provided baking. It was also so encouraging to receive the gift into our support. Thank you.

I thought I would give a more personal update this time, since many people have been asking how the boys are doing. Daniel is enjoying working in London, and is coming back to Japan in the summer for a holiday. Matthew is back here at the moment, then returning to Glasgow for the final year of his degree.

Calum has been offered a football scholarship at a University in Florida to study business administration, starting early August. As well as dealing with all the documentation required and applying for an American visa, he is keeping going with football training, and working part time. He needs to do maths as part of his degree, so is learning how to do it in English, having only ever done maths in Japanese before.

Alistair has started his new high school and made lots of friends. He goes straight to football practice after school, and eats dinner there before coming home. It is a long day, since he leaves the house at 7am and isn't usually at home until 10pm, but he seems to be enjoying it. Long days are typical for many high school students in Japan.

We are enjoying being part of our local church here. Each week some of the men cook an amazing lunch after the service. Recently they organised a barbeque in a local park with delicious chicken, Korean beef, and vegetables as well as the usual sausages. Most Sundays I take the young people's group, which has three girls aged 18-25. It's great to be able to encourage them as they seek to live out their faith in their Universities and work.

The church is also thinking and praying about how they can reach out more into the local community. I hope to be able to help them do that. Our part of the city has 4 small churches for 150,000 people. OMF Japan's vision is to see a vibrant church impacting every community. That is a huge vision, so it is exciting to serve with Japanese churches who want to do something similar. Please pray for this small church as they seek to be salt and light where they are.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

With our love,

Lorna, Daniel, Matthew, Calum and Alistair

Stamp 2019 Appeal

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your ongoing support of the World Mission Council Stamp Appeal, please pass on our thanks to everyone involved in collecting the stamps. Last year we raised an amazing £2,433 for the Hungarian Reformed Church of Transcarpathia who give valuable support to children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The 2019 Stamp Appeal will be supporting the Chigodi Women Centre in Blantyre, Malawi who deliver a broad range of skills training to address the challenges faced by women in Malawi. The Centre aims to improve the women's socio-economic status and increase their chance of future employment. More information about the Chigodi Women Centre can be found on our website: www.churchofscotland.org.uk/stamps

It is thanks to your dedication that we are celebrating our 50th anniversary this year. An article in the upcoming April/May issue of the WM magazine looks back on the projects we've supported over the years.

Keep a look out for it on the website.

https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/world_mission/



Book Group

We have been reading *Adventures of a Young Naturalist* by David Attenborough. The book begins in 1954 when he had the opportunity to travel the world to find rare and elusive animals for London Zoo's collection. The expeditions were also filmed for the BBC for a new show – *Zoo Quest*. This book is the story of his travels and the wildlife he encountered on his journeys.

As you can imagine we had a wide and varied discussion. The first thing to say is that this expedition would not be tackled in the same way today. The animals and indigenous people David Attenborough encountered would be treated with more respect, but that was “then” and this is “now” and approaches to endangered species are quite different. One of our members thought the book would be perfect for a biology teacher! These pioneering expeditions were also a platform for the early development of film on television and paved the way for the wildlife photography of today.

If you like an autobiography and/or wildlife then this book is for you, although some of us did prefer to watch and listen to David Attenborough. Perhaps the written word may have been overtaken by the spoken word where wildlife exploration is concerned.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 25th June when we will be discussing *The Hunting Party* by Lucy Foley.

Joyce Clark

The Overseas Committee

The Overseas Committee, following approval from the Kirk Session, have agreed that the overseas donation for 2019/2020, should be given to Water Aid. This will include the offering from the Harvest Festival and also the Christmas Eve service.

A coffee morning during 2020 will also be arranged for Water Aid.

Further donations of £1,000 will be given to the charity Free to Live and also £1,000 to the Barnabas Fund.

We wish to thank the Congregation and friends for all their support in the past year.

Marilyn Ure

A volunteer is still required to do an arrangement on behalf of St. Paul's Church, which involves doing the arrangement in St. Andrew's Church on Thursday 6th at 6pm.

As the flower arranging team are already committed to doing regular arrangements in St. Paul's Church for Sunday worship, we would value another member of the congregation to represent St. Paul's in the flower festival.

Please contact Marjorie Thoms, or Angela Rigg at St. Andrew's Church.



Lunch Club

12th June is the last Lunch Club of this session before we close for the summer break. We open again on 4th September when all are welcome.

A big thank you is due to the many volunteers who so faithfully help week by week and the many who come to enjoy the food and company.

But we have a problem in that some of our regular volunteers are having to give up after many years of service and they are going to be sadly missed. This means that we are desperately short of men who can move tables and help in practical ways and also ladies who can help prepare and serve food.

If you can help now or when we start in September please speak to Ann MacLeod 942 8339 or John Macpherson 942 4550. We are usually around the church and would greatly appreciate your help in this outreach to adults. Thank you.

Church Of Scotland News

Assembly appoints 12-person trustee body

The General Assembly has agreed to appoint 12 people to be Assembly Trustees. A selection committee convened by Very Rev Russell Barr presented the names to the General Assembly in line with the reforms passed by the Assembly on Monday (20 May).

Members will serve for three, two and one-year terms to ensure continuity as well as change.

Commissioners rejected an amendment by Dr Alison Elliot regretting the lack of gender balance on the new trustee body and urging the nominations committee to seek equal numbers of men and women for 2020. Diversity in age was also discussed as well as the potential influence of a Church 'establishment'.

Commissioners agreed on the following list of trustees who will begin their terms in June.

Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, Convener (3 years)
(Parish minister, Principal Clerk, Moderator, Convener of World Mission Council)

Mrs Norma Rolls, Vice Convener (2 years)
(Session Clerk, head teacher Mary Erskine's School, Convener of Governance Group on Council of Assembly)

James McNeill QC, Administrative Trustee (3 years)
(Elder, Procurator to the General Assembly, Special Commission on Structural Reform, expertise in charity law with wide experience in various charitable organisations)

Alan Campbell CBE (2 years)
(Elder, Chief Executive Aberdeenshire Council and Grampian Regional Council, Chair of the future of Fisheries Management in Scotland, member of Accounts Commission)

Jamie Lockhart (3 years)
(Chair, YMCA Scotland, professional expertise in charity law, finance and governance, involved with Edinburgh Campus Ministry)

Anikó Schuetz Bradwell (3 years)
(Parish minister, Church and Society Council, Ecumenical Relations, World Mission Council, represented Church of Scotland at WCRC)

Rev Dr George Cowie (2 years)

(Parish minister, Presbytery Clerk, Convener Legal Questions Committee)

Dr Gary MacFarlane MBE (1 year)

(Elder, GP, member of Scottish Government working groups on Performance Management, Health Board roles and responsibilities, Joint Working group on purchasing, runs Designed to Succeed working with 35 congregations on project management)

David Watt (1 year)

(Elder, actuary with KPMG, Vice Convener of Council of Assembly and Convener of Finance Group)

Sandra Carter (1 year)

(Elder, CEO Voluntary Action Fund, Trustee of Faith in Older People, Chair of Faith in Community Scotland)

Very Rev Professor Iain Torrance (1 year)

(President Princeton Theological Seminary, Pro-Chancellor University of Aberdeen, Moderator, Convener of Theological Form)

Professor Brian Ashcroft (2 years)

(Fellow of Royal Society, Edinburgh, Professor of Economics University of Strathclyde, Director of Policy Fraser of Allander Institute)

The Assembly Trustees will appoint a chief officer to oversee the professional staff of the Church. The new governing structure comes after a Special Commission, convened by Professor David Fergusson, concluded that the existing structures could not deliver the radical changes needed by the Church, and called for a new trustee body.

Delivering the report, Professor Fergusson said: “It is a programme of establishing a strong trustee body at the centre of the Church but also devolving power and resources to the regions and parishes. The Council of Assembly found it difficult to function as a trustee body because council conveners were voting members and they experienced a conflict of interest.” Professor Fergusson said some tough decisions to reduce staffing levels will have to be taken because they are at the same level as 20 years ago when the Church was much bigger.

“We have to act responsibly in relation to the money that people give very generously. The Trustees will be a more powerful body than the Council of Assembly, there will be greater transparency and accountability and it will answer to the General Assembly.”

Intentionally Left Blank

The copy date for the September issue is Wednesday 21st August for e-mails and Sunday 18th August if using the church pigeon hole.

Please send any articles to st.paulslifemagazine@gmail.com

Thanks to all who have contributed over the last few months.
Enjoy the summer!

Date	Flower Deliveries	Crèche Rota	Vestibule Rota
2nd June	A. McLeod S. Stenhouse	Berry Chapman	Team 6 J. Clark
9th June	J. Ford C. Tanner	Richell Wilson	Team 7 B. Lawson
16th June	P. Barlow S. Robertson	MacAllister Tracey	Team 2 J. Foggo (C)
23rd June	S. Anderson L. Cowie	Wallis MacKinnon	Team 8 R. Rutherford
30th June	M. Conway K. Edwards		Team 9 J. MacPherson