

From the Minister's Study

I write this from the study just a few days away from the major decision-making event in the Houses of Parliament concerning the future of our relationship with the European Union. As you sit down to read, this situation may be clearer or indeed may continue to be travelling down a road of increasing uncertainty.

Whatever the outcome of the voting on 15 January three things are vital for the future of the peace and prosperity of our nation. These three things we spent time praying for at our Brexit Prayer Event on Saturday 13 January and we realised that, both in the lead up to the decision itself, and in the seasons beyond it, these three things have been sorely missing from the journey thus far.

What are some of the key aspects of what we might focus in on during and beyond the journey towards a maybe aye or maybe no Brexit?

We each will have our own views and thoughts on the Brexit issue. We each will have either voted yes or no or not voted at all.

Since 2016 when the vote was taken we have been exposed to a daily presentation of many different aspects of the Brexit question and a burning question for all involved in this process is what is RIGHT for us as a nation?

Some years ago Dr Martin Luther King said:
"Cowardice asks the question, 'Is it safe?'
Expediency asks, 'Is it politic?'
Vanity asks, 'Is it popular?'
But conscience asks, 'Is it RIGHT?'



And there comes a time when we must take a position, neither because it is safe, nor politic, nor popular, but because it is right."

This, friends, is that time and therefore the focus and goal of our continuing intercessions and prayers should be that the right path will be taken. Why so? Because as the wise writer of Proverbs 14 vs. 34 affirmed: "RIGHTeousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people."

It is for the right way to be found through the maze or quagmire we may feel we are in today – this is our goal in it all. What are some of the critical things for us to focus on as we plead with God to allow such righteousness to prevail?

1. Peace, respect and unity

Why so?... for I believe we are a divided nation.

A close vote, such as we had over the decision to leave the EU simply reminds us that going into this journey we are clearly a divided nation.

As the weeks have passed and given the nature of the aggressive rhetoric that is the hallmark of the public image of our political decision-making, (think PM question time) the polarisation of the nation has become increasingly evident. This perhaps culminated in what we saw some weeks ago of the sad reality of what our leaders, of all political persuasions, suffer all too often. Alongside the verbal abuse hurled at Anna Soubry MP during a television interview and as she walked to the Parliament, last year MP Jacob Rees-Mogg and his family were harassed outside their home – all over matters concerning Brexit.

Our ongoing prayer... that our leaders may disagree agreeably.

As Christians we are called to love our neighbours (Mark 12:31), and that includes people we do not agree with. We are also called to "show proper respect to everyone", including those in authority (as 1 Peter 2 encourages us to do). While we all accept that robust and passionate disagreement is part and parcel of political conversation, the tenor of current debate is far from what any of us would expect, especially when it becomes personalised.

The importance then of praying for a climate marked by peace, grace, respect, honest and open reflection.

2. Wisdom

Why so?... Many paths are possible.

I don't need to catalogue for you the range of issues concerning which path is the right path... Deal or no deal... backstop or no backstop... the Norwegian or Canadian model... another referendum or not...

Sorry, I promised not to list them, but just at the mention of their titles such paths reveal the need for Wisdom.

Wherein lies the source of wisdom for a time such as this? – in God.

Our ongoing prayer... that our leaders may have God-given wisdom – remember in James 1 at verse 5 it is freely offered: "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault and it will be given to you."

3. Courage

Why so... for it is the antidote to fear.

Throughout this whole journey the fear card has been played on so many occasions. It was after a week of such scaremongering and fear-filled rhetoric that I felt so moved one Sunday morning to declare that despite all this we are a people who put our trust, our hope and our future in God's firm grip. Joshua, when contemplating which path to follow, chose for himself and his family God's way over all others – in Joshua 24 vs. 15 he affirmed... "That as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." In other words, we will put our trust, hope and future in God's hands. Joshua and the people of God had experienced God's protection, provision, power and presence and as a result he was going to put his trust and faith in God.

Such a powerful sentiment was affirmed many years ago during another time of crisis in our nation's history.

It is recorded that our own Queen when aged 13 years old passed a copy of a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins to her father King George VI as he prepared for his Christmas broadcast in 1939 - all this as the nation stood on the cusp of WWII.

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

It is as we put our hand in God's hand, journeying as we are into an uncertain future that his COURAGE comes: our on-going prayer – that God's courage may flow through the nation.

Peace – Respect and Unity – Wisdom and Courage - let these inform our ongoing prayers as we seek for our political leaders and our nation the RIGHT way forward.

Blessings
David

Holy Land Pilgrimage

Four of us from Dalmeny Kirk and Queensferry Parish Church went on a 10-day pilgrimage to Israel in Autumn 2018, along with 32 others, mainly from Kirkliston and the Stirling area. The Rev Stan Brook and Rev Maggie Lane, who happen to be brother and sister, led it. They have both led pilgrimages on numerous occasions and their experience was invaluable. For the whole duration of the trip we had a dedicated coach driver and an Israeli guide, both being excellent.

The places we visited included Caesarea, Tel Aviv (and adjacent Joppa or Jaffa) and Akko (the Crusader city) on the Mediterranean coast. Inland and in the North, we travelled in the region of the Sea of Galilee and visited key sites of Jesus ministry in that area. These included Mount Tabor (Transfiguration), Nazareth (where Jesus was brought up), Cana (where Jesus turned water into wine), the Mount of Beatitudes (where Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount) and Tabgha (where Jesus fed the 5,000 from 5 loaves and 2 fish). We sailed on the Sea of Galilee on an old boat where the ancient way of fishing was demonstrated, and stopped at the place Jesus barbecued fish after his resurrection and where Peter was restored after his 3 denials of Jesus. We headed south to Jerusalem along the Jordan and visited the location where Jesus was baptised, collecting some



water from the river to be used in baptisms (we boiled and filtered it!). En route, we stopped at Jericho and saw the Mount of Temptation (where Jesus was tempted) and the sycamore tree that Zacchaeus supposedly climbed.

Visiting Jerusalem was amazing. The first view we got was from the Mount of Olives (see photograph). We walked into the city taking the path Jesus took on a donkey on Palm Sunday then we walked part of the Via Dolorosa, the road Jesus took carrying his cross. We visited many places in Jerusalem that were referred to in the Bible – too many to mention but including the Garden of Gethsemane just outside the city gates, and the Garden Tomb where Jesus may have been buried. The modern museums were on our itinerary, including the disturbing Holocaust Museum. Bethlehem, just 5 miles from Jerusalem, was a must on our tour.

Going further south to the Dead Sea, we had to see if we floated – and we did. En-route we visited Masada, Herod's mountain palace and the site where the Dead Sea scrolls were found.

It was a full-on pilgrimage with early starts and not much free time.

The questions we are asked most often are:

a) What were the highlights?

This is very difficult to answer, as there were so many highlights. Probably the Bible readings at appropriate places, the time on Galilee and Communion in Jerusalem



were amongst the top. Driving into Jerusalem, worshipping together with the help of a worship CD was amazing. Seeing the geography of the country gave a much greater insight into so many Biblical events. For example, the amount of wilderness/desert and lack of water was obvious as were the challenges facing those travelling long distances in Biblical times. Perhaps it is easier to mention the “lowlights”- probably the over-ornate churches which had been erected over the centuries at the various locations where significant events were deemed to have taken place.

b) Did you feel safe?

We always felt safe. There were soldiers obvious in many places, particularly Jerusalem. They seemed to be mainly teenagers, as National Service is compulsory. However, we were kept well away from “hot spots”.

c) Would you go back again?

Several of the group were returning to Israel after previous visit(s). Because of the full itinerary, sometimes we were on overload. No doubt we would pick up more on a future visit, but the “wow factor” would not be there...so perhaps not. We would thoroughly recommend this trip to any Christian. There are rumours of a further trip in 2020!
Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

31st Edinburgh (South Queensferry) Boys' Brigade

Do you shop in Tesco?

Do you collect Blue Tokens at the checkout?

If yes, then you can now support our Boys' Brigade Company by selecting our collection container for your Blue Tokens.

We hope to raise money to allow ourselves to purchase new Uniforms (including fleece jackets) for all boys, to subsidise activities such as weekend camps and outings, and to purchase new sports equipment. Your help with as many Blue Tokens would be greatly appreciated. Many thanks from The Boys' Brigade.



Christmas Recap

Christmas is now past, but the joy of the season is worth remembering. We threw a Sunday School Christmas Party, experienced Christmas magic at Messy Church, staged a delightful Nativity play, shared the story at schools through S.U. and at assemblies, celebrated the unexpected together on Christmas Eve, and tried something new—a cheerful Christingle service for local families up at Dalmeny. Thank you to everyone who planned, prepped, and attended, making this season so special. During a very busy month, you brought me so much peace and light! - Jill

Family Activity: Psalm Stretches

Especially during the cold winter months, it is important to remember to move our bodies. And every day, it is important to remember to give thanks to God. This month, try stretching your body to Psalm 100 at the start or end of each day.

Shout for joy to the LORD, everyone on earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness.
Come to him with songs of joy.
Know that the LORD is God.
He made us, and we belong to him.
We are his people.
side

Reach to sky
Touch toes
Star pose
Hands on hips
Twist at hips
Right arm overhead to left



We are the sheep belonging to his flock.
Give thanks as you enter the gates of his temple.
Give praise as you enter its courtyards.
Give thanks to him and praise his name.
The LORD is good. His faithful love continues forever.
It will last for all time to come.

Left arm overhead to right side
Lunge, right leg
Lunge, left leg
Child's pose
Seated toe touch
Butterfly pose

Church Flowers

Consider the lilies of the field

Flowers for celebration, thanksgiving and remembrance, it is always a joy to see flowers on the Communion Table at a Sunday service. Recently there have been queries about how to donate flowers to the church. It is hoped that this short step-by-step guide will be helpful.



- Enter your name against a selected date on the flower list, which is on the right hand notice board in the coffee lounge.
- Should you wish to arrange the flowers yourself, the church will be open on the Friday morning between 10 am and 12. The flower vases are kept in the old vestry, behind the pulpit, and there you will find instructions.
- Should you wish the flowers arranged for you, please contact Rosemary Bain 331 1558 or Linda Robinson 331 4194, QPC's own “florists in residence”, who will be happy to help and advise.
- Thereafter, following recommendations by the minister and parish assistants, the flowers are distributed to folk who are ill, or bereaved, or who have a special celebration.

Rosemary and Linda would be happy to have others join the “flower team”. Please call Rosemary to discuss.

Longcraig Scout Centre

This year represents a significant milestone for Longcraig Scout Centre, based at Longcraig Pier, just to the east of South Queensferry, as it represents exactly 50 years since Scouts first started to take part in water activities from the base.

Originally set up in 1969 as a base for Sea Scouts to pursue their training programme with a strong water based content, the Centre, established on the pier provided much better access to the water, less affected by tidal drying out than other locations used previously, such as Granton harbour and Cramond.

By the late 1970's, the Centre was developed much more widely to offer and provide training and experience on the water for all Scouts and Guides, whilst not forgetting its roots as a Sea Scout activity base.

It has always been run entirely by volunteers, many of whom also help with the running of scout troops, cub packs, and the like; they give up additional volunteering time not only to provide a training experience for today's young people, but also to pursue their own training to ensure they remain up to date in all the latest teaching techniques, safety measures and risk assessments.

Over 50 years, the 'centre' has evolved from a single wooden hut and some borrowed boats and canoes, to a custom designed facility with training rooms, changing and shower facilities, and a fleet of modern sailing and paddle sport craft, all supervised by reliable and effective safety boats at all times. During this time, something approaching 100,000 young people have had the opportunity to experience 'messing about in boats' some just the once, but for many it has become a sport of choice, and yesterday's young people have gone on to run activity centres, train as boat builders and surveyors, and operate some of the world's largest and most famous boats afloat. Others have graduated to manning local and other lifeboats as their interests have developed, and many have acquired lifelong interests in canoeing, kayaking, or sailing in it's many forms.

As a volunteer led and run Centre, Longcraig is always on the lookout for additional help, whether skilled or not, from people who have an interest in helping young people develop their best potential. But it is also a community-based facility, in between running activities for young people there are opportunities for others to visit or make use of the Centre and its facilities as well.

Please contact us on getinvolved@longcraig.info



Mary and Martha

As it is the twentieth anniversary of this event and this comes under 'china' a Mary and Martha afternoon tea is being planned in Dalmeny Church Centre, using their lovely china and other facilities on Sunday 7th April 2 - 4.30pm. Invitations and sign up sheets will be distributed before the event.

Church and Parish Register

Marriages

16th Nov Andy Mason and Emma Taylor,
29th Dec Andrew Burnside and Sarah Black

Deaths

1st Nov Helen Lamond, Lawson Cres, SQ
2nd Nov George Topping, Shore Road, SQ
11th Nov Evelyn Harrower, formerly Station Road, SQ
25th Nov Terence Coates, Moubray Grove, SQ
2nd Jan Jack Inglis, Echline View, SQ
13th Jan Linda Mercer, Station Road, SQ

Website and Facebook

If you have something that you would wish to share on the church Facebook page or Website, please send an email to communications@qpcweb.org

Communion

Communion will be celebrated on the first Sunday of March.



Next issue

The next issue of the magazine will be available from 29th APRIL 2019. Any items for inclusion should be given to the editor at magazine@qpcweb.org by **8TH APRIL 2019**. Please send any pictures as separate attachments.

The editorial team reserve the right to amend items submitted for publication. Items submitted may not necessarily be included in the next edition.