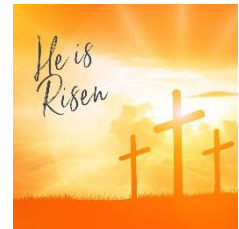


## ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

### FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

5<sup>th</sup> April, 2021



#### Easter Sunday: John 12: 20 – 36

##### The Death that produces Life

Although there is no specific command to observe Easter it has, from early days, been the practice of Christians to celebrate this time as the beginning of new life – that from a vicarious death there is a new beginning; for this death of Jesus produces life.

It was an enquiry that brought the events of that time into focus. Though not Jews, these genuine seekers wanted to see and encounter Jesus to find out who he was, what he could do, what his remarkable life could mean in reality. It was no idle curiosity: it was a simple, but serious, request.

It was an hour that revealed the powerful meaning of that first Easter. In response, Jesus made it clear that the apparently disastrous happenings, and what they represented in terms of rejection, were what he came to deal with. He had come to destroy death and powerfully overcome it for the salvation of others. Using a simple illustration - a corn of wheat dying in the ground but producing life in abundance - he showed that belief, which entailed accepting one's death, would, through trust in his accomplishment, result in newness of life: a seed producing fruit.

It also highlights the confusion that can only be illuminated by that Easter. Though not fully understanding what was happening - the humble submission, the acceptance of what faced him, the paradox of death being the means of life - bewildered them, they trusted in Jesus and his exposition of what it was all about - that His death produces life.

That belief in the crucified and risen Jesus ensures new life and the privilege of being called a child of God with all that his divine nature offers us. So, should not we also be asking: *We want to see Jesus?*

#### Sunday Meetings

From this Sunday (April 11<sup>th</sup>) it will be a return to (almost) normal for our gatherings. There will be a 10 30am meeting in the church, albeit still with compliance needs for social distancing, hand-sanitizing, no singing, etc. And, there will be a separate evening meeting again at 6 30pm on a different teaching theme. A good time to make a fresh start.

Unless otherwise intimated, midweek meetings, such as the Prayer Meetings and Bible Study, will continue on Zoom; while the Mothers and Toddlers, #One2Seven and Ladies meetings continue to be in abeyance for the time being until the situation becomes clearer.

#### Prayer meetings and Bible Study

The Prayer Meeting will resume on Tuesday evening, 6<sup>th</sup> April, at 8 pm on Zoom and will be supplemented by the half-hour times on Wednesday and Fridays at 10am. The Bible Study will pick up on our study in Exodus chapters 16 – 19 on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April at 7 30pm, again on Zoom.

#### Finance

As a result of your generosity a sum of £750 has been sent to SAT-7 which was the Mission Cause for the month of March. This will assist SAT-7, a Christian satellite television network, to broadcast in Arabic, Persian and Turkish across 25 countries in the Middle East and North Africa, along with about 50 countries in Europe.

Your generosity also enabled a sum of £500 to be sent to MAD Ministries who through Brian Lowrie, ably assisted by Jenny and Danielle, presented the Easter story on-line during the past five weeks to the children in Milngavie.

The Mission cause for April is the Slavic Gospel Association.

### Update on SU Easter Camps

Despite having had 200 bookings, the 1-Day SU Camps planned for the Easter period had to be cancelled because of restrictions on travelling out of local boundaries and the imposition of only two leaders per event. Now, with the prospect of restrictions being lifted, SU is actively planning regional camps for this summer.

**A Spiritual Journey Through Lockdown** – Here is a personal reflection from Betty Mackay with lessons for each of us to ponder.

*Away back a year ago, at the beginning of the pandemic, I remember feeling happy with the 'lockdown'. It was liberation! No restrictions or deadlines or appointments. I felt free. There was time, an abundance of time. I found enjoyment in a range of activities, one of which was to sit down and pray. I began to read through the Bible from Genesis and on through the Prophets acquainting myself again with the ups and downs of God's Chosen People. It is a fascinating story of their repeated waywardness and God's love and forbearance.*

*But, gradually, I lost that diligence: the impetus waned. My other activities began to take precedence: phoning friends, baking, sharing and walking - all legitimate and worthwhile in themselves - became my prominent activities. More and more my Bible reading was rushed or postponed: God was side-lined.*

*Not for the first time in my life I became aware that this was a spiritual battle. I had to galvanise myself to sit down and make time to read God's Word and pray. All this other enjoyable and useful work had become the 'wiles of Satan'. My priorities were wrong. My life was out of balance.*

To be continued. More next week.

### Hope For Glasgow.

Hope for Glasgow continue to be active. During the past year 160 different people accessed their services, they were able to meet on 138 nights. 2,157 interventions were recorded when Hope for Glasgow intervened and provided support in the life of someone with addiction issues.

Since the start of this year around 65 people have been 'attending' the weekly meetings, people have been attending online from as far as New Zealand and London.

Terry McCutcheon will be with us on Sunday August 1<sup>st</sup>. Meanwhile, they appreciate our prayerful support.

### Prayer:

We remember Danny Sutherland and Rosemary at this time of bereavement at losing Danny's mother. And also all the others in the Fellowship who would appreciate our prayers in these challenging times.

### Finally,

The perennial appeal to guard against the commercialism of Christmas could now extend to Easter. We have the staple items of chocolate and cards being supplemented with specialist food items and a suggestiveness that gifts would not go amiss!

What is really intriguing is that the central item for the Easter meal is lamb. I am not sure if the commercial world is aware of the connection to the Jewish Passover or to the significance of the Lamb to Christians, but roast lamb has become to Easter Sunday what roast turkey is to Christmas. However, whilst we can find no spiritual significance for a turkey (I'm sure some have tried!!) we cannot escape the significance of lamb at the time when the Church recalls the sacrifice of the Lamb of GOD for us. Pray that many who gather around family tables in these days will be touched by the message of the Lamb of GOD who was slain for the sin of the world.

John Macleod