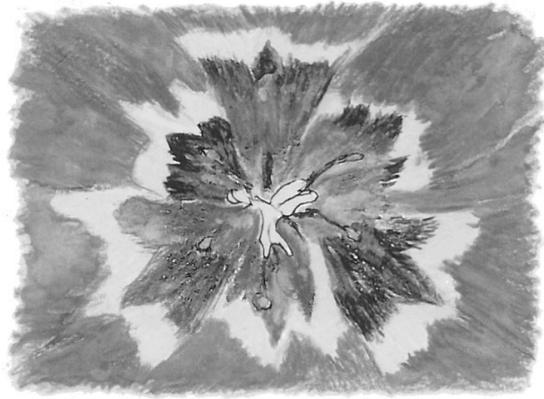


“Great countenance of the unknown known

You have looked upon me all my days.” (Kathleen Raine)

Cults Parish Church

Prayer Diary March 2020



YOU ARE FILLED WITH EVER FRESH WONDER
WHEN FLOWERS UNFOLD ON THEIR SCALES
ABOVE THE LEAVES' MULTIFORM FRAMEWORK.
IN THEIR GLORY HOWEVER, THEY HERALD A WHOLE NEW CREATION
YES, THESE PURE-COLOURED PETALS FEEL THE TOUCH OF GOD'S HAND.

GOETHE

(Calligraphy and art -- the centre of a tulip – by Isobel Archibald.

Our Calligraphy Group is in its 26th year.)

The Worship and Faith Journey Core Group hopes that this Prayer Diary will be a useful daily companion that will help unite us in prayer at Cults Kirk. Please send your contributions or requests for the April diary by March 20th to Andrew Fairhead. andrew.fairhead@btinternet.com Phone 01224 861926.

At 7pm on the last Wednesday of each month, everyone is welcome to meet in Morven at the Kirk Centre for prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, and to talk informally about praying. (You don't have to talk if you would rather just be there in silence.)

Our prayer team prays in private for individuals, or about more confidential matters on your behalf. Please put your written request into one of the prayer boxes at the Kirk or the Kirk Centre, or let Shuna know and she will confidentially notify the team.

Sunday March 1 Lord Jesus, thank You for portraying us as branches connected to You the vine. It helps us to understand we must stay close to You for comfort, safety from temptation, and of course for the best chance of leading fruitful lives. Christ, we honour You, our Bearer, and our Source of nourishment and fruitfulness.

Monday March 2 *May there be a meeting of minds – precious young minds – this evening at Abbie's Wellbeing Group. Lord, we try to be kinder to our children and young people these days, but there are aspects to their upbringing that seem to harm them. We are grateful for Abbie's determination to help them cope with the challenges of their teenage years. We pray that You will continue to inspire her mission to them.*

Tuesday March 3 Our film this evening, The Greatest Showman, shows us how easily temptation can take hold of us. We may not even see it as such – just as “making good”. Lord Jesus, Your experience in the wilderness shows us how to test attractive propositions and to firmly refuse those that would lead us away from God, our safe refuge. Grant us all, perhaps through our Lent Bible Study Group starting on Thursday, this deeper wisdom.

Wednesday March 4 *With the installation underway of new audio-visual equipment in our Sanctuary, we pray that it will benefit not just those of us who worship there, but also anyone, near or far, who is keen or just curious to know what happens in this beloved space. Holy Spirit, make fruitful our wish to be progressive for Christ.*

Thursday March 5 Lord Jesus, You clarified God's Holy Word to Your followers. We too crave a clear interpretation, and are fortunate to have two series of Bible studies running: one on Your glorious Sermon on the Mount, and the other on how Your journey in the wilderness, showing us how to avoid the danger of temptation. We thank You for the bible's interpreters, and for those in our midst who want us to know more.

Friday March 6 *Jesus, you effectively asked the paralysed man at Bethesda: "Do you want a new future?" The women of Zimbabwe, who have planned today's World Day of Prayer service for us, desperately want their troubled country to have better times. They want us, who may also feel powerless about something, to know your answer: "Then you must act." By you, our gentle leader and loving healer, we are made bold.*

Saturday March 7 (A prayer for the many of us who are growing old.) "Lord, I do not ask for improved memory, but for growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that I occasionally may be mistaken. Keep me reasonably sweet; ... a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil." (Anon. 17th cent.)

Sunday March 8 *We pray for Jesus's sake that our cluster group of churches will find a way of working even more closely together. We all wish to serve Him strongly and truly. May the beautiful examples of Christian cooperation in the past carry His Church in West Aberdeen vibrantly into the future. This requires a loving commitment from each of us.*

Monday March 9 Winter won't be letting go just yet, but the signs of spring are all around. Lord of Creation, we love Your frogs, birds, insects and plants, our revitalised companions. Thank You for the Light that brought us through the winter and sustains us every day.

Tuesday March 10 *Loving Lord, help us to value and treasure each day. Forgive us when we forget to give you thanks for each day's dawning. Help us to recognise opportunities to serve your people every day in even the smallest way. Every day is a gift - that's why it is called "the present".*

Wednesday March 11 Whether we are more or less able, sport can bring us together; and this Sport Relief week, leading to main events on Friday, gives us the goal of making life less tough for people in the UK and around the world. We thank You Lord for chances to help others, which change and challenge us as well.

Thursday March 12 *May the Holy Spirit be present at our Care Group's meeting today, and as they take their important friendship to our elderly brothers and sisters.*

(On Messy Church day, a children's prayer.) Lord Jesus, sometimes I want something that may not be good for me. Grown-ups say that too. The devil offered You nice things in the wilderness, but You knew they weren't really nice. Help me to know what is really good.

Friday March 13 We pray for the millions who have been displaced from their homes in Idlib Province, Syria. Many are wandering in the wilderness with stark uncertainty ahead of them. Father, as you gave strength to Jesus in the wilderness, we pray You will protect these people from harm, and persuade mankind to establish a future for them.

Saturday March 14 *God of Grace, we bring you our heartfelt prayers of hope for the tenuous peace processes in Afghanistan and South Sudan. The disparate peoples of both countries have pushed each other over a precipice, and have a long and difficult climb out of it. May the rest of the world give them respectful, impartial help.*

Sunday March 15 Lord, if I ever pray to You that one day I may mend my ways, let me hear You saying: "One day isn't good enough. Why not now?" You are right, Lord. With Your help, I can do it now. I'll be in the same places, but I need not be the same person.

Monday March 16 *Creator God, I have always thanked You for my amazing body. (I use that adjective not to boast but to show gratitude.) I know I must look after my health and fitness, and though I can get encouragement in various ways, I ask for it from You as well.*

Tuesday March 17 Let us pray that there will be a keen attendance of our Guild members at their AGM today, and that good discussion will produce wise decisions. So may the Guild in Cults develop in a positive and meaningful way.

Wednesday March 18 *Lord Jesus, we pray about all the need in the world, which is the result of so many things: cruelty, natural disaster, illness, adverse circumstances, or individuals taking one of life's wrong turnings. To help everyone seems overwhelming, yet You showed us that we must do that to our utmost. We don't have Your ability, but we have Your example and will follow it as best we can.*

Thursday March 19 One thing the individuals need, whose lives are shattered by such natural disasters as the flooding in Britain and the fires in Australia, is a strong community to cling to. May we all be part of their safety-net of solidarity.

Friday March 20 *Parent God, we pray for a world reeling from coronavirus, particularly for those affected by it. Bless the nurses, doctors and carers looking after them and the scientists working to create a vaccine. May as many lives as possible be saved.*

Saturday March 21 We are invited to celebrate with our Guild at their coffee morning. As well as coming together for refreshment and good company, may we all take an active interest in our Lord's work that the Guild is doing.

Sunday March 22 *(Words by Margaret Coles about Julian of Norwich also apply to the God revealed to us by Jesus.) "... whose love enfolded all; ... whose arms were opened wide to soothe the frightened child; whose tender caress touched me with understanding; whose gentle entreaty breached my resistant heart; whose compassion pitied my sadness; whose joy diminished the darkness touching my soul; ... whose mothering, limitless spirit sought out my sorrow and hurt and brokenness, desiring to hold me and make me whole.*

Monday March 23 We are encouraged to embrace diversity, to be inclusive, but it seems that as we do so our society is becoming ever more divided, made up of even more factions – religious, political, sexual persuasion, race – an endless list. Holy Spirit, help us ensure that we remain united in our faith and with love.

Tuesday March 24 *Lord, thank You for the Street Pastors, who protect those out in the bustle of Aberdeen's night life. May they feel encouraged by our Guild's interest this evening.*

We thank You Lord that our Church has so many serving You with different skills. We bring to You today a prayer of gratitude for those who look after our finances.

Wednesday March 25 Lord, we pray that in this holy season of Lent, we may listen for Your voice more attentively, and follow Your footsteps more closely, so that we may daily be aware of Your transforming presence with us. Amen. (Rev. Canon Alison Peden, Rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Stirling)

Thursday March 26 *Barnum "the greatest showman" is, like all of us, in need of redemption. As he did, may we find our way to it through the humble kindness of others. Bless such people, Lord Jesus, who live in Your Light, and make us like them.*

Friday March 27 God bless our Youth Group, busy providing more entertainment with the purpose of outreach and fundraising. Friday Café for S1 – S4 today is followed by a Beetle Drive for all, and on Sunday we have music from Abbie's friends. May we all, always, build our lives round service to our Saviour and His flock.

Saturday March 28 *Father God, we dedicate this day to the earth You have given us to look after. In advance of Earth Hour this evening, our Green Group is holding a coffee morning at which we will share the pledges we have made for the future of the planet and everything on it. In shame, we promise to keep those pledges as best we can.*

Sunday March 29 Lord, we have our annual stated meeting after our service this morning. May we practise Christian fellowship in our discussions. Give us enthusiasm for the challenges that lie ahead. We will remember it is You leading us into the future.

Monday March 30 *Father God, we continue to betray your love by mistreating this amazing planet. Please help us to be more careful and stop being so extravagant in the way we live. We can see the climate changing year by year, yet we are reluctant to make the necessary changes to our lives that might help reduce the damage we are causing. Give us the strength we need to stand up for Your justice, and live more frugally so that there may be hope for a better future for our children. In Jesus' name, let it be so.*

Tuesday March 31 Lord, I frequently pray via this diary and my personal prayers that I can do better; but I remain painfully aware of my shortcomings. Yet I know Your unfathomable grace is with me. "Take, O take me as I am." Amen.