

Park Pages

the magazine of Uddingston: Park United Free Church of Scotland



Letter from the Minister

Summer 2018

Dear Friends,

At the front door of the manse, we have a flowering honeysuckle. It's been there for 19 years—I know that because I moved it from the garden of the manse in Mt Vernon to the garden in Douglas Gardens when we moved here in 1999. It was situated in a shaded position in Mt Vernon, and although in the ground for a few years, it had failed to live up to the colourful picture on the card attached to the plant when I bought it. However, over the years, in the south-facing, sunny position here in Douglas Gardens, it has grown and flourished. Pruned a number of times, it has required careful training and support with a series of wires threaded through masonry screws in the wall. Each year, the small, but fragrant, flowers continue over the late spring right into late autumn. Little white berries appear after that, only to be eaten by the small birds that find the bush a convenient feeding ground and nesting place. Frost, wind and mildew have all taken their toll, but it springs back to life, richer in colour and verdant in growth.



You may wonder why I have spent so much time ruminating about a garden plant! It is because it is a helpful illustration of the message of a book I have recently been reading, *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne. It is one of the “in” books on the Christian circuit at the moment. Picking up the metaphor of the vine from [John 15](#), and the Great Commission from [Matthew 28](#), it explores the picture of what the Christian Community should look like—a vine bearing fruitful disciples.

I am the vine and you are the branches. Abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. Apart from me, you can do nothing....This is for my Father's glory that you should bear much fruitfruit that will endure. John 15 v 5,8,16

It is built into nature that plants should grow, flower and fruit. This is how they produce a new generation of plants. In the “vine” that is God's Kingdom, fruit-bearing is also to be integral to what we are about. Seeing people come to faith, and then maturing as disciples of Jesus, is central to what the Christian life and Christian community should look like. Like my honeysuckle plant when it was in Mt Vernon, we often are not as flourishing and fruitful in our personal and corporate discipleship as we could be. However, at other times, in different settings, the sap of the Holy Spirit powerfully moves



within us and amongst us, and amazing things happen for God through our lives! This is not to be an unusual, extraordinary event for only a few “special” Christians, this is to be part and parcel of the life of any Christian community! As the writers of *The Trellis and the Vine* say:

The Great Commission to go and make disciples, is not just for the original 11 disciples. It's a commission that makes disciple-making the normal agenda and priority of every church and every Christian disciple. To be a disciple of Jesus is to be a disciple-maker of others.

However, as my plant at the front door needs some underwiring to enable it to be supported, flourish and flower properly, so a vine needs support and training of its branches so that it might do what it is meant to do — bear much fruit. The Church, God's Kingdom people, is meant to be like a flourishing and fruit-bearing plant. To be that, it also needs to be supported and undergirded to be fruitful. Structures of committees, variety of organisations, presbyteries and Kirk Sessions are all meant to provide the support and underpinning to the Kingdom work of God's people. They are a vital means to the end, for without a proper team of leaders and opportunities for service, the Christian community would soon either fall apart or lose sight of "whose we are and whom we serve".

Unfortunately, in my work for the presbytery, I often see structures that have become a means to themselves and more important than the actual flourishing "plant". I have visited too many churches which are small and struggling, with little sign of spiritual growth and dynamic. However, almost religiously, they still have their Session meetings and reports from this, that and the other. Denominational structures, which were meant to serve and support congregations in their Kingdom work, can so easily become stumbling blocks to fresh life and new growth.

WE always need to be aware of the danger that structures, rather than stimulating the work of the Spirit, actually stifle and even strangle spiritual life. How sad it is when this happens. How easy it is to see this problem in other churches of Christian organisations, but forget our own struggles. As the writers of *The Trellis and the Vine* say:

What would you rather do: go to a church meeting about the state of the carpet, or share the gospel with your neighbour over the back fence? To do the former, we can rely on our own wisdom and resources. To do the latter, we need to depend on God to open our mouth and speak his word.

The Trellis and the Vine p 9 © Matthias Media 2009

Karen, Ian McQuarrie and myself have spoken together of the need for us to reflect, as a congregation, on where spiritual life can be strengthened and deepened within the life of the whole church family and how best we might engender a "fruitfulness" mentality within **ALL** of us. Some thoughts on this will be shared at our Harvest Thanksgiving service on Sunday 2 September. This is a very apt day for us, as a Christian community, to reflect seriously on what it means for all of us to be fruitful for Jesus on the frontline of life and living.

Please pray for the structures of the church, both at denominational and local level. May they truly be that, almost unseen, undergirding to the work of the Spirit, true channels of God's grace, wisdom and power to the people of God so that we truly fulfil the calling that Jesus gave to us when he said:

*You did not choose me, but I chose
you and appointed you
so that you might go
and bear much fruit.
John 15 v 16*



Wishing you a flourishing summer

Your Friend and Minister

Wm B Russell

Church News

Church Hall

After our successful redecoration of the church last summer, the Board of Managers has now decided to redecorate the church hall and side entrance hallway. The work is due to commence on Monday 16 July 2018 and should take about two weeks. There will be no coffee service on a Tuesday or Thursday morning for weeks beginning 16 and 23 July.



Wedding Bells



We extend our congratulations to Andrew Strawbridge and Lara Pocock who are getting married here in Park Church on **Friday 13 July 2018 at 1pm**. The Church family are invited to the service and Tea in the hall afterwards. We wish them every happiness in their future married life.



In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul describes 15 characteristics of love to the believers in the church in Corinth who were using their spiritual gifts, but neglecting love. The love Paul is talking about is agapé, “a caring, self-sacrificing love”. Jesus’ death for us on the cross is the embodiment of this love but we, as believers in Christ, are also exhorted to show this kind of love to one another. Love is to be the distinguishing mark of the Christian, not just in marriage, but in every aspect of our lives. The poem below helps us think about the characteristics Paul mentioned.

Sometimes Love...

*Sometimes love can be quiet
And sometimes love can be still,
But always love is patient
And is a choice of our will.*

*Sometimes love can be vibrant —
Sometimes it's not easily felt,
But always love is eternal
And is never boastful or proud.*

*Sometimes love can be tender
Then sometimes hard to express,
But always love is truthful
And believes in the very best.*

*Sometimes love can be exciting
And love can sometimes be sweet
For love is always trusting
And chooses never to envy.*

*Sometimes love can be painful
Then sometimes love's like a song,
But always love is forgiving
And keeps no record of wrongs.*

*Sometimes love can be gentle
Then sometimes it's just a word,
But always love protects and hopes
And love is always preserved.*

*Love is never self-seeking
And is never angered or rude
Love can never fail us,
For God's love is faithful and true.*



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Lots to be thankful for.....

Karen Stangoe

At the first planning meeting for the Holiday Club, I read Colossians 3: v 12-17 to the team, as an example of how we, as a group of believers, should strive to be. As I read the words I was challenged by one particularly short sentence Paul includes in the middle of the passage:

“And be thankful.” Col 3v15b

We sing and worship God with words of thankfulness for His great love for us through the cross and rightly so, as this is His ultimate act of love and faithfulness. But for me the challenge came, not in my praise of God's faithfulness in Christ, but my attitude to things that go on around me. Do we stop and recognise God's hand at work in the day-to-day and in turn give Him thanks? This is a challenge, not only in my personal life, but also in my ministry with children and young people. And so, in light of this, here are some stories of how God has been at work in the Children's and Youth Ministry in the past year.



Park Kids has now been running for two years and is thriving. During the past year in particular, we have seen growth in the numbers attending, partly through a new family joining us, and also through grandchildren visiting. This in particular has been a huge encouragement as some little ones have even been asking to come to church with their grandparents. **We give thanks**, both for the children and for the key role Christian grandparents are playing in the lives of their grandchildren.

For me a lovely sight on a Sunday morning is the relationships the children have with one another and with the adults on the **Park Kids** team. It's heart-warming to see the children moving around the congregation saying hello to different leaders. Or to see a leader spend the first five minutes they are in the building kneeling down in the children's corner, catching up with the kids on how their weeks have been. These small acts of Christian love and community are not only beautiful, but go hand in hand with the opportunities for praise and bible teaching that go on in Park Kids. **We thank God** for the children He has entrusted to us and pray that Park Kids will be a place where they grow in faith and knowledge of His love for them. **We also give thanks for the loving team** as they lead and care for the children.

Alongside the growth in Park Kids, we've had to re-launch the Bible Class this year as some of the children from Park Kids have moved on to Secondary School. So in August **Park Teens** began to meet monthly, during the service, with a particular focus on discipleship and helping the young people to be 'grounded' in the basics of the faith. On some Park Teens' weeks we've come across the issue of where the young people can meet, due to the crèche (**Park Tots**) and **Park Kids** using the halls. If ever there was a problem to give thanks for, this would be it!

We thank God for the young people in our congregation and for the monthly opportunity of teaching and fellowship for them.



On Monday nights at **Connect** we've covered a variety of topics through the year, from discussions using the *Youth Christianity Explored* material, to creating dramas based on the life of Jonah. This group has grown in the past year with about 15 young people attending most weeks. Many of the group are children we knew from the Muiredge SU group. The massive benefit to this is the strength of relationship we are able to build.



A typical night at Connect currently tends to involve a lot of noise, a much-loved game of hockey, and small group bible studies, some of which are at a basic level, while others go a lot deeper – as we have some very deep thinkers. One really encouraging night I was asked questions ranging from: *How do I really know that I'm a Christian?* to *Do you believe that all religions reach to the same God?* **We thank God** for minds open to exploring Him and His Word, and for those young people who confess Jesus as their Lord and are seeking to follow Him.



At times Connect has been hard over this past year; we've seen familiar faces disappear for a variety of reasons, as is so often the case when working with this age range. However, **we give thanks** that through it all, God has been reminding the team that the young people we meet with are *His* young people and not ours, and sometimes they are only with us for a season where we are called to care and to teach, but at the end of the day God alone knows His perfect will and timing.



Holiday Club

We decided to try something different this year by having our Holiday Club and Community Café during the Easter Holidays, in the hope that we would reach more young people. **We thank God** that this was the case as we had a number of extra children from last year. Our theme was **Polar Explorers**, so the church was transformed into an Arctic expedition base camp, with snowflakes fluttering above us, and an igloo housing a polar bear and Olaf the snowman!

The Holiday Club was great fun with the children taking part in a range of activities and games, as well as spending some time looking at some key people from the early church. The highlight for me was looking at Timothy with the theme: ***You're never too young to be part of God's big expedition.*** A large number of the children were from Christian families, so it was great to reinforce this point and encourage them to be active in living out their faith.

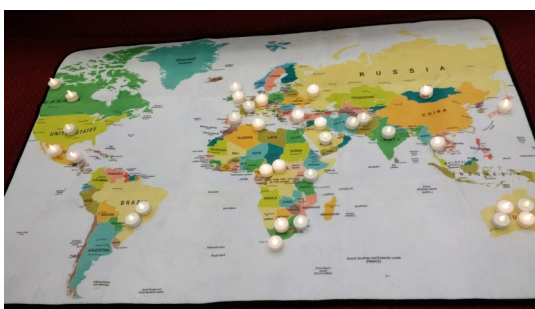


As always, the team were amazing, both in the planning stages and during the week of the event. It was such a blessing to work alongside such an enthusiastic, creative and fun group of people! Joining our team this year were nine young people from **Connect**, each of them taking on different roles: working the AV desk (audio visuals), starring in the drama or working with a small group of children. The young people brought lots of enthusiasm to their roles and were great role models for the younger children. Another highlight for me was the 'Team Takeaway' we had on the Friday before the club started; it was a very special time of fellowship. **We thank God** for the amazing team of people of all ages, for the opportunity to meet new children and the space to share some amazing 'Adventure Tales' from the earliest Christians.

In MEGA this year we have been looking at different themes from Paul's letter to the Philippians, alongside stories of his life in the book of Acts. Part of this has included learning Ephesians 3 v18 as our memory verse using actions, which basically states that knowing Jesus is the most important thing ever. As always at MEGA, everything we do is surrounded by games, activities and crafts, as well as a new 'Science Slot' by Gregor one month to emphasise that Jesus is the light in the darkness. **We give thanks** for the opportunities to meet with children in our community, and for creativity to explore the good news of Jesus in fun and interactive ways.



We thank God that alongside the different opportunities we have within the church, we also have opportunities in the local schools to serve Him. By the end of the school year we will have run four different schools' workshops, meeting every child from P5, 6 and 7 at Muiredge Primary – that adds up to 142 children! Plus the different members of staff who come with them. We also lead services for Uddingston Grammar at Remembrance, Christmas and Easter for the S5-6 students. Alongside all of that, I was invited into Muiredge Nursery this Easter to teach the Easter story to about 60 little children. **We thank God** for the doors He has opened within our community.



There is still so much more to be thankful for over the past year; for the children and young people who attend the SU groups at both Muiredge Primary and Uddingston Grammar; and for the opportunity to attend the SU Lanarkshire weekend away with a group of children from Muiredge Primary. And over and above all of this, **we give thanks** for the opportunity to share Jesus with the children and young people who we meet with; for every question asked, for every conversation that points to Him, and for the many opportunities to show His love to not only the children and young people, but also their families.



I hope I can encourage you to join with me in prayer, remembering to pause and give thanks for the works of His mighty hand.

***"Devote yourselves to prayer being watchful and thankful"** Colossians 4 v2*

Do What will Last

Martin Paterson

If you were academically capable, and accomplished at sports, educated at Eton and Cambridge, it would be fair to say that you would have the world at your feet. The potential is huge; what are you going to do with your life? That was the question which was placed before a young man called C.T. Studd, who possessed all of these credentials. However, what concerned him most was not receiving status in the eyes of others around him, even though he had that; no, his driving passion was that others would know the Lord Jesus. He summed it up this way, ***“only one life it will soon be past, only what’s done for Christ will last”***.

Clearly, this is not the CV that either Jennifer or I possess; however, we have both been struck by the all-encompassing message of the good news of God’s coming kingdom, just as Studd was. You see, in the eyes of God, the CV is not what counts; it’s the heart. And that is why we find ourselves where we are today.

Since I was at Bible College, it has been clear to both of us that long-term, cross-cultural ministry is what God has been asking us to be involved with. As you can imagine, it has not been an easy process but it is one where we have known the kindness and sovereignty of our Father in heaven. An open door was presented for us to serve in Stonehouse and it is something that we are grateful to God for. During our time with Paterson Church, many things have changed; for us personally as well as for the church communally. It has been a blessing to see some of the people grow in their love for Jesus as they got to grips with God’s word. The church family walked with us as we adapted to life as new parents and they have loved seeing Sophia grow and become more active.

I have had the privilege of learning more about communicating God’s word of life and hope into a variety of situations. In all of these changes, we were aware that it was only through the grace of God at work in us that we had the strength which was needed. It was with both a sense of sadness and excitement that we came to the decision that it was time to move on and concentrate on preparation for cross-cultural ministry. We moved on from local church ministry as of May 1st. As mentioned earlier, it has not been an easy process, but we know that this is where God wants us to serve Him in a way which will bring lasting fruit.

We are currently working part-time with OMF as area representatives in Scotland and this will increase to full-time as of September 2018. Some of you may be wondering why we are moving in this direction when there is a great need in Scotland; others may think that we are being a little impractical at this stage of our lives. There are many more questions which we have also asked in a similar vein. However, we could not get away from this one.

How are we to be used by God, so that what we do, with the life we have been given, will last for Christ?

For Jennifer and I this means following the path of global mission, among East Asia’s peoples.

There are still details that need to be worked out regarding our future ministry in East Asia, but most likely this will involve us walking with local believers in theological education and discipleship training. Until then, we will be based in Scotland with Jennifer completing her initial theological studies and me completing a Masters degree in theology.

We are grateful to God for your partnership in the gospel with us, as together we see the kingdom of God grow among East Asia’s peoples. If you want to know more about what this looks like, or how you can be involved, please do not hesitate to get in contact with us. Please pray that God would choose to use even us to see His kingdom come and His will be done, and that there would be lasting fruit. May God be glorified in all that we do.

Blessings, Martin, Jennifer & Sophia



John Harden

John Harden is a busy man; he's both a consultant in Emergency Medicine and a government advisor in Edinburgh. Here he shares with us a little of his journey as a Christian, and how that impacts him, both in his personal as well as his working life.



Tell us a little about your early life and education.

I was brought up in a small ex-mining village called Twechar, between Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch. My dad was a senior manager in the Coop, and my mum worked as a clerk for a tyre distribution company. I have a sister, Linda, who is four years younger than me. I went to the local primary school, and was regarded as pretty good at my schoolwork. We went on holidays in our caravan to Perthshire and the north-east and attended Sunday School at the local Nazarene Church with our friends.

However, things changed suddenly for us all in 1984, just after my 11th birthday. My dad had a brain haemorrhage two weeks before the summer holidays and was admitted to hospital. He was paralysed down one side and, although he got slightly better initially, he had another one soon after his admission and died on 28 June, aged only 42. He'd had Polycystic Kidney Disease for many years and this was a complication of this disease. I didn't go to church after this for a number of years, as it reminded me of his death.

Following this, my grandad and gran (my mum's parents, who lived just round the corner from us) played a huge role in my life. My grandad encouraged me to do my best at school and to push myself to be the best I could be. I did as he told me, and, although initially planned to follow a career path in automotive design (I even had a place at Loughborough University and a sponsorship with Jaguar cars lined up), I felt this wasn't what I should do, so stayed at school for a 6th year and applied, and was accepted, to do Medicine at Glasgow University.

I graduated in 1996, and initially followed a surgical career for four years before changing to do Accident and Emergency medicine. It was during my surgical training, when I was working in the Victoria Infirmary, that I met Alison. She was a nurse at that time. We moved to Aberdeen for my senior training and got married in November 2003. Three years later, Abigail came along and the following year was pretty hectic with a new baby, living away from parents and me sitting my exit exams so that I could become a consultant. I passed the exams, took up a consultant post in Wishaw General in 2007, and moved to Bothwell. Zoe came along the following year and we've lived here for nearly 11 years now.

What brought you to Park and tell us a little about your journey to faith?

I hadn't gone to church much during my early years as a doctor, except for funerals and weddings. When I met Alison, her family were regular church-goers and active in their local church. I went with them to church when I was able.

Before we got married, Alison and I went to church together more often, and then afterwards, we went when we could, but it was difficult due to our working patterns. When Abigail came along we made more of an effort as we wanted her to be brought up knowing about the church.

Shortly after we moved to Bothwell, Alison's mum and dad decided to downsize and move to the village too. They looked for a church to attend, found Park and suggested to us that we should try it, as we were also looking for a church. We found Park to be very welcoming and Bruce to be fantastic.

I haven't got a dramatic, transformational story to tell about my coming to faith. For me, it has been a gradual thing, initially wanting to know more as a result of the enquirers' classes Bruce asked us to attend before Zoe's christening, then understanding and reconciling my beliefs to those I was learning about.

I explored deeper and deeper, with Bruce's help, and my faith gradually developed. As you all know, I professed my faith in church just a couple of years ago at Easter. For me that was a surprisingly emotional day, and one that I will remember for the rest of my life.

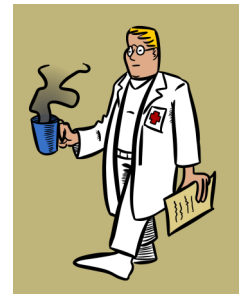


Tell us a little about your present job.

I have two jobs at the moment. I'm still a consultant in A&E at Wishaw General, working two days a week and doing my full share of "On Calls", when I am at the beck and call of the department for 24 hours at a time. I see patients on these days, and support my junior colleagues. I see all walks of life and the extremes of human tolerance, suffering and behaviour. I still get surprised though and never take anything for granted or get complacent.

My other job sounds a bit more grand! I'm the **National Clinical Lead for Quality and Safety in Health and Social Care** for the Scottish Government. I'm essentially a government advisor, giving clinical advice to policymakers and ministers, mainly the Cabinet Secretary for Health, or the Ministers for Health and Sport or Mental Health, but sometimes also the First Minister herself.

I am responsible for the clinical link between the government and the Health Boards on matters to do with patient safety i.e ensuring the care we deliver does no harm to patients as it's delivered. We are working to improve the quality of care we provide in all aspects of health and social care in Scotland. Part of my remit is to give talks about the work we are doing in Scotland to audiences from around the country (Scotland and the rest of the UK) and also abroad, which means I travel a lot more than I used to.



Have you ever experienced conflict between your career in medicine and your faith?

As a doctor I see all walks of life, and, as I've said already, the extremes of human behaviour. Initially I felt that the "scientific" side of medicine couldn't be reconciled with a faith, and found it too difficult to try. As I've matured and become more experienced, and as I learned more about what it means to have a faith, I now realise that it can.

Being a Christian has allowed me to be more compassionate, more supportive, more honest with my patients and has given me the ability to understand more about why and how they deal with the stresses in their lives that are impacting upon their health.

I've never experienced any conflict, but my faith allows and supports me to be more realistic and respect the patients' beliefs more - after all, I should not be practising medicine **to** them, but **with** them. Having a faith helps me cope with these, especially when difficult situations and decisions arise.



Do you have a favourite hymn and piece of Scripture?

My favourite song is *How deep the Father's love for us*. This speaks to me of the immense sacrifice God made in giving his Son for us. It sums up for me the whole meaning of what it is to be a Christian, that, if not for Christ, we would not be free and truly alive.

I don't have a particular, favourite piece of scripture, but recently when going through the Easter story, and breaking down how the prophecies from long ago came to fruition in the last days of Jesus' life on earth, and how He rose again, I find that this time it means so much more to me than it ever did before. What a great thing He did for us.

Lastly, one for fun, if you were a superhero, which one would you be and why?

This is the most difficult one for me. I can say that I've never really thought about this before. I suppose I would love to be Spiderman. Getting to hang around wherever I wanted, climbing walls and swinging on webs would be great fun. The spider sense would be really useful too. I'm not sure that the skin tight lycra would suit me though!!

We thank God for all Christians working in the medical profession and pray that they will be given the strength and compassion to carry out their work in sometimes difficult circumstances; we pray that Your love would shine through all they do.

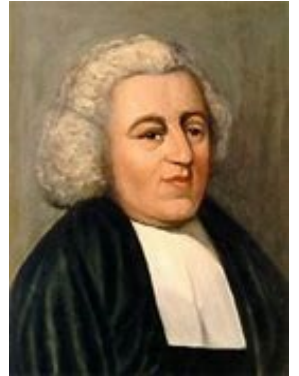
Come let us sing for joy to the Lord!

We look at a much-loved hymn, sung both within and outside the church, which tells the story of how a man was radically transformed by the grace and mercy of God. Our second song is fast becoming a modern classic, and the 10,000 Reasons of the title, echoes the 10,000 years in Amazing Grace!



Amazing Grace

John Newton was born in London in 1725 to a Puritan mother and a stern sea captain father. He joined his father as an apprentice on a ship at the age of 11. His early life was marked by headstrong disobedience due to heavy drinking. He was conscripted into the Royal Navy, attempted to desert and duly received eight dozen lashes and was demoted. He managed to get himself traded to a slave ship where he began a career in slave trading. During a violent storm off the coast of Ireland in 1748, when all hope of survival seemed lost, he called out to God for mercy. God delivered the ship safely to land and Newton claims this event marked his spiritual conversion. However, he continued in the slave trade until 1754 when he ended his seafaring days and began to study Christian theology. He was ordained into the Church of England in 1764 and began to write hymns.



Amazing Grace was first written to illustrate a New Year's day sermon in 1773 but did not appear in print till 1779 and it wasn't until 1835 that the music "New Britain" was linked to it. Its message of forgiveness and redemption through the mercy of God has made it one of the best known hymns around the world.

**Amazing Grace! how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost, but now am found
T'was blind but now I see.**

This first verse expresses Newton's personal thankfulness to God for lifting him out of his wicked and profane way of living and giving him new life in Christ, but they are words we can all sing. In later years he recognised that his participation in the slave trade was wrong and he became a supporter of William Wilberforce, who led the fight to abolish slavery.

**Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.**

God's grace is pivotal in our everyday living, but Newton encourages us to think back to our own conversions, "the hour we first believed". He acknowledges that he owes everything to the grace of God. On his death bed he said, "*I am a great sinner and Christ is a great saviour*".

The hymn was largely forgotten in England for a while but made its way to America where it gained a new lease of life and a new melody, thought to be brought by settlers from Scotland. Nowadays this hymn is sung in both religious and secular settings and brings comfort to a great many people as its message remains the same. It was sung when Nelson Mandela was released from prison, when the Berlin Wall came down and after the atrocities of 9/11.

The last verse was added later, and its theme of eternity is reflected in our next song, **10,000 Reasons**.

**When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.**

If you would like to listen to the song, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0gLntLIBYw>

10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)

Matt Redman's **10,000 Reasons** has become a firm favourite, not just in Park, but in churches up and down the land. Redman and his Swedish co-writer, Jonas Myrin, wrote the song in 2011. Myrin had written the melody and as soon as Redman heard it, he thought it was a perfect fit for Psalm 103.

**Praise the Lord, my soul:
All my inmost being, praise his holy name
Praise the Lord, my soul,
And forget not all his benefits...** (Ps 103)

The chorus of the song echoes the beginning of the psalm.

**Bless the Lord, O my soul,
Oh my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before
O my soul;
I'll worship your holy name.**



Oh my Soul

In Psalm 103, David lists many reasons why our hearts should be full of worship for God; He heals diseases, forgives sin, redeems our lives from the pit, crowns us with love and compassion and so on. The list is never-ending so we should never be short of a reason to praise God !

Verse 1 encourages us to praise God at the beginning of a new day and all the way through the day, whatever our circumstances!

**The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning,
It's time to sing your song again.
Whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me;
Let me be singing when the evening comes.**



Praising God in all circumstances is not always easy, so the story of the prisoners who faced a firing squad in Indonesia in 2015 is all the more remarkable. These men, known as the Bali Nine, had been imprisoned for drug trafficking and had been incarcerated on death row for about 10 years. All but one had become Christians during their imprisonment, and were actively transforming people's lives within the prison. Despite international pleas for clemency, their death sentence was upheld. As eight of them faced the 13-man firing squad, they refused to wear blindfolds and faced their executors. After reciting the Lord's Prayer, they sang both **Amazing Grace** and **10,000 Reasons** before their voices and lives were silenced by the sound of the gunfire. Even the non-Christian among them sang. They died with a song of worship on their lips. What a testament to their hope and faith in their heavenly Father.

Verse 2 focuses on the nature of God.

**You're rich in love and you're slow to anger.
Your name is great and your heart is kind.
For all your goodness I will keep on singing,
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.**



The last verse anticipates our demise and encourages us to sing God's song until our dying day. However, death does not silence our song, we will continue to sing it in eternity, in the New Jerusalem when all creation will be made new. We will continue to sing for "10,000 years and then for evermore". The 10,000 years theme echoes the last verse of **Amazing Grace**.

**And on that day when my strength is fading,
The end draws near and my time has come,
Still my soul will sing your praise unending:
Ten thousand years and then forevermore.**

This song is a call for us to bring our praises to God, to remember how He has blessed us, and how our worship is, in turn, a blessing to Him.



If you would like to listen to the song, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtwIT8JddM>



Uddingston Pride Update

During May, the large planters were given a complete overhaul and replanted with fresh shrubs using funding from our friends at Patersons of Greenoakhill. We have lots of daffodil and tulip bulbs in store. These are free to anyone wishing to keep them to plant out in their own garden next autumn. Please contact **Liz Wilson** on 01698 814822 if you would like any.

The floral mangers and hanging baskets have now been installed along the Main Street. Thanks go to the Community Pay Back team who helped us with the heavy lifting necessary. It is good that these people are able to contribute to our community in this way as part repayment of their debt to society.

The new wooden planters at the David Milne Centre, which were constructed by South Lanarkshire Community Pay Back teams, look very colourful now that they have been planted; the seating area there is very well used. These planters, and the clearing of the whole garden area, were funded by Scotmid and Uddingston Community Centre Management Committee, and the labour was provided by the Pay Back teams. We will be using these teams regularly to assist with various improvements throughout the village.

A new bench was installed beside the war memorial at the beginning of May to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War. Rev Fiona McKibbin led a service of dedication and Bobby Keys, resplendent in full Highland dress, piped a moving lament during the service after the minute's silence was observed. Refreshments were provided in the Old Parish Church Hall and we thank Liz Vasey and her team for their support.



Craft Fayre

Please come and support our **Craft Fayre** in Park Church from **6—9 June**. We have 34 talented crafters coming along to display their goods, including Chocolat Blanc, Tartan and Tweed, as well as jewellery makers, shapes and slates, cards, knitted goods and a local woodworker. We hope you will pay us a visit!

As usual, teas and coffees with home baking will be available in the Church Hall at a cost of £2.50.

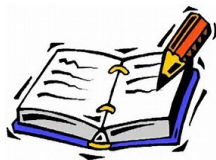


Keep Scotland Beautiful



The judging of this year's **Keep Scotland Beautiful** campaign will take place between 30 July and 12 August. We will be organising work parties to carry out the tidying up work that needs to be done to get the village looking its best again. Any volunteers would be made most welcome! Many of you may have watched the recent BBC television series about **Britain in Bloom**, and you will be aware of the amount of work that is carried out by volunteers, like ourselves in Uddingston Pride, to get all the entrant communities ready for judging day. We are a small group and always appreciate any help we are offered. Please get in touch with **Sandy Robertson** on 01698 813539 if you can spare an hour or two to assist us.

Dates for the Diary



Sunday 3 June	10.30am Communion Work of Scottish Bible Society in Malawi 6.30pm Bield Housing Service	 SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY <i>The Word for the world</i>
Wed 6 June-Sat 9 June	Uddingston Pride Craft Fayre Café in Hall	
Monday 11 June	9.30am It's Your Move! Visit of P7 from Muiredge Primary to the church for a morning of preparation and bible reflection on moving up to Uddingston Grammar	 
Sunday 24 June	10.30am Thanksgiving Service for the past session of Worship and Witness. Members of the congregation share their story of journeying with God and the young people of Park Kids tell their story. 7.30pm Praise Gathering 2018 Glasgow Royal Concert Hall	Give Thanks 
Sunday 1 July	6.30 pm Manse Garden Fellowship Meal All welcome but especially those who have been part of our Fellowship Groups	
Sunday 8 July	10.30am Encounter—based on SU model Encounter - something different! Come and encounter God in a new way with the help of different themed prayer stations.	 

Summer Schedule

From Sunday 24 June– Sunday 26 August there will only be ONE service each Sunday at 10.30am. We will use the UF Prayer Guide as the basis for our thoughts on a Sunday morning.

Re-Fresh will continue as normal throughout the summer on Wednesdays at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

The Open to God Prayer Time will meet fortnightly on a Saturday at 8.30am.

The other Fellowship Groups will have a break in late June and July and will resume in August.



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