



The sea is His, for He made it,
and His hands formed the dry land

Psalm 95:5

GARRABOST

FREE CHURCH

Weekly Bulletin

24th May 2020

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The bulletin will look a bit different for the next few months or however long it takes until we can worship together in the way we are used to so will have to do church differently for a while. We should be thankful that we are able to do so.

Today we have this week's pastoral message from Andrew and, as before, some links to sermons and livestreams as well as details of our prayer meeting for Wednesday night. Not everyone will be able to access the bulletin from the website or the Facebook page or listen to the online sermons, so we all need to work together to enable everyone to feel part of our fellowship. Please think of how we can support one another during these uncertain times.

The prayer notes are different as well and can be used for prayer today and each Monday and, in fact, anytime, as we meet together at the Throne of Grace where we can find mercy and grace to help in time of need.

Pastoral Letter from the Interim Moderator

Dear Friends

Recent weeks, with mist and showers, have changed our grass from yellowish brown to lush green and....it's getting longer! This used to give me a sinking feeling, as I knew that soon I'd have to haul out the lawn-mower, struggle to fix it (because it would never work right away) get more petrol for the portable can (yes, always just enough in the mower for about half the grass, then it would run out), drag it up and down the slope and round the rocky outcrops, and then start fixing the strimmer for the rough patches and edges. Then last year, the mower finally packed in. A disaster? Yes, but what it actually meant was we "had to get someone in", paying them to cut the grass with their own equipment, at what in the end turned out to be a very reasonable rate. The professional just seemed to breeze effortlessly over the slopes, lumps and rocky outcrops of the garden, barely breaking sweat and accomplishing in a few short hours, what it would have taken me a whole day to do. It was done, and the price duly paid, and every time it was needed, it was done again. So, nowadays I look at the lengthening grass without fear.... because I know it's taken care of. It's a worldly and shallow example of course, but it did make me think about that far deeper and eternal task, the work of my salvation, which I could never accomplish for myself, and which, no matter how I tried, had eventually broken me. But my "breaking down" at last, was the best thing that ever happened in my life, because I invited Someone "in" at last, to do for me what I couldn't do for myself. Like the grass, my Salvation, and the forgiveness of my sin, is an ongoing task, needs constant attention, and is beyond me to do. But it's not beyond Christ. So I don't have to be afraid now, because it's all taken care of. **The price is paid**, but it wasn't me who paid it, and yet the work is accomplished. Ongoing, and yet complete. It is finished. *"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."* (Isaiah 40:8)

But still, many of us, I imagine, are keeping an eye, day by day, on the news, and the press briefings from both Edinburgh and London, listening for, longing for, any sign that things might at last be coming under control, and returning to "normal". That seems a long way off for now. As was pointed out by the First Minister, there are dangers in exposure to the Coronavirus, but there are dangers too in Lockdown. So, the "phased return", when it comes, is likely to be a balancing act of the respective risks.

This life however has **always been** a balancing act of risks. The Coronavirus has made us all perhaps more **conscious** of our mortality – but the fact is that **any** of us could **always** have ended our days suddenly or tragically by any number of unforeseen circumstances. We are more aware too, perhaps, of our human **vulnerability**, and although our leaders have for the most part stepped up nobly to their responsibilities, they cannot actually do anything to save us. The press briefings are helpful and may even give some of us more hope, but they also underline our vulnerability and helplessness in the face of the virus. So these realities, which were always the case in life, we are now perhaps able to appreciate more accurately.

So whether this immediate threat passes soon or not, we will have to go on taking sensible precautions yes, but we ought not to succumb to any "spirit of fear" – because that is not honouring to the Lord. *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* (2nd Timothy 1:7) There is no doubt that we are **all** being shaken and tested, each in our different ways. One person's struggle will not be the same as someone else's, but whatever memories, good or bad, we are building at this time of trial, **what** we build **does** matter, yes, but **WHO** we build **upon**, matters not only for this time, but for eternity. (1st Corinthians 3:11)

With Every Blessing
Andrew

Online services

To access any of the services live as they happen, please **click** on the red link **below** which will take you to the **Online Services** page on the main **Free Church** website or **click** on the individual ones for **local** services.

[All Free Church Livestream Services](#)

Western Isles Livestream Services

[Barvas](#), [Cross](#), [Crossbost](#), [Kinloch](#), [North Harris](#), [Pairc](#), [South Harris](#), [Scalpay](#), [Stornoway](#)

Sunday School

Christine and Andy will be having the next **Jesus Story Club** via Zoom today at **3pm**. Please contact Andy on andrew_n_cumming@hotmail.com for details of how to access. **Christine Cumming** has also done an amazing job of recording Bible storytelling videos for the children to watch. This is available on a closed Facebook group (which also has the Zoom access details). If you would like to join, please search for **Garrabost Free Church Sunday School** on **Facebook** or contact **Andy** on the above email

Prayer meetings

Please remember that the **Western Isles Presbytery** have appointed each **Monday** at **8pm** as a time of prayer

Our **midweek** prayer meeting via Zoom will be on **Wednesday** at **7.30pm**. It will be open from **7pm** in order to get everyone set up and ready to start and to have a wee chat beforehand. If you are using your mobile or iPad/tablet, you will need to download the **Zoom App**. Please ensure you have the current version installed.

Alternatively, you can just dial in on **01314601196** and input the meeting ID and password to join which will also be provided by email for any who request it.

Congregational Fellowship

There will be a congregational fellowship **tonight** at **8pm** via **Zoom**. The access details were in the weekly email which was sent on Monday. Please email garrabostfree@gmail.com if you are not on the mailing list and you would like to join.

The May Record (NEW)

The **May Record** is available free digitally and is accessible by **clicking** on:

[May Record Free](#)

Pastoral Care

As a result of the current Coronavirus Pandemic, it is also not possible to provide pastoral care and support in the same way as previously. The list of elders and contact details were on an insert in the last printed bulletin and if anyone has any requirements please feel free to contact any of them or indeed any one you know. We want to be as supportive as we can to everyone, and it is important to know that even if you are in isolation that you are not alone. We also acknowledge that many will struggle financially and in other ways in the coming months so again please do not hesitate to ask for help if you require it. [See below](#)

Pastoral Support

Garrabost Free Church would like to support people in **Point** who are struggling financially at this time. We have vouchers for **Bùth an Rubha** which we would be delighted to give out (these cannot be used to purchase alcohol or cigarettes). To request a voucher please either call or text **Finlay Stewart** on **07979 932441**, or email garrabostfree@gmail.com, or contact one of the Deacons in the congregation. Please be assured that all requests will be dealt with using the utmost discretion.

Free Will Offering

Due to the fact that we are unable to meet together in the church buildings, many will be unable to pay their contributions as they normally do. Those who use the envelope system may have quite a build-up but unfortunately as a result of the current lockdown and social distancing, we do not plan to collect or count this at present. If you wish to set up a standing order to replace the envelopes, can you please email garrabostfree@gmail.com or contact one of the office bearers. There will be a unique reference for each person to identify them and also for Gift Aid purposes. Also please do not worry if you are unable to give at the same level as normal during these unprecedented times.

Contact

It is important to have up to date and the most relevant contact details for everyone. If you are happy to receive updates by email, please send your details to garrabostfree@gmail.com. Also, if you know of anyone who is unable to get online but has a mobile then please ask them to phone one of the elders and provide the number and they can be updated or contacted by text if required.

Free Church Youth Camps

FCYC plan to release a Camps 'Story' each week on the **FCYC** website at <http://www.freechurchyouthcamps.org/stories>. Praise God for His faithfulness and that He has blessed so many through camps over the past 60 years. Pray that the stories will encourage Christians to tell their own story of how God has worked in their lives, and that those who are not yet Christians will see what an amazing God we worship, and will want to know Him for themselves.

The everyday sayings below are all based on Bible texts.

Can you think of any more?

If so, please email garrabostfree@gmail.com and we can include them next week.

- Earn something by the sweat of your brow.
- A man after my own heart.
- Nothing but skin and bones.
- Escaped by the skin of my teeth.
- Out of the mouths of babes.
- Spare the rod and spoil the child.
- Pride goes before a fall.
- A time and place for everything.
- Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we will die.
- A fly in the ointment.
- A drop in the bucket.
- Rise and shine.
- A leopard cannot change his spots.
- Go the extra mile.
- United we stand. Divided we fall.
- The blind leading the blind.
- A little birdie told me.
- The powers that be.
- In the twinkling of an eye.
- The writing is on the wall.

PRAYER POINTS

Rejoice always, pray continually,
give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



Congregation and Community

Coronavirus related issues

- Those who are sick and suffering due to the virus
- Those caring for those who are ill, both in hospital and care homes. Please remember the situation at Home Farm in Skye at present.
- The Governments and others with decision-making responsibilities
- Online worship services – that God would bless these and that people who don't normally attend the church buildings would be able to attend these.
- That the congregation's unity would grow even as we are apart but realise our desire to be together in worship and fellowship.
- The Jesus Story Club meeting today at 3pm and the stories on Facebook – that these would be blessed to the children and those who care for them.
- The voucher scheme for helping those in Point who are suffering financial hardship at this time and pray for the families that have benefitted so far.
- Teachers and pupils as they get used to online teaching methods and prepare for different work patterns in the months ahead.

Other matters

- Please pray for our elder, **Norman Macmillan** who is recovering following a fall at his home.
- The vacancy – that we would be able to progress with the previously planned congregational meeting before too long.
- Pray for those in our community who are unconverted.
- Pray for those connected with the congregation who are housebound, hospitalised or in nursing homes and those who are recovering at home after being in hospital.
- Pray for those receiving cancer treatment and any who are awaiting test results for themselves or for a loved one.
- Pray for any in our community who struggle with different forms of mental illness and pray for understanding and patience towards them.

Activities

- **ABC** – Please pray for all the children, that they would remember the things they learnt, and that God would bless it to them and their families.
- **Point2Life** – Pray for all who have attended so far this year and as they continue to meet regularly via Zoom.
- **Sunday School** – Please pray for the teachers, **Christine Cumming, Janis Brand and Finlay MacIennan**. Pray for the children and parents.
- **Children's Church** - Pray for Anne Mackenzie who has been managing the programme and rota and for all those who volunteer to help out.
- **Creche** – Pray for the children who were attending creche and we thank God for young families who come along.
- **Scripture Union** – Pray for **Christine Cumming** and **Elizabeth Ferguson** and the children that have been meeting each week before lockdown.
- **Parent and Toddler Group** - pray for the parents and the children.
- **WFM** – Pray for the group as they meet online. Also pray for the work of WFM and the projects they support.

Free Church Youth Camps

Please pray for the leaders and young people who had hoped to attend camp this summer. Pray for **Kirsten, Donald** and others as they consider plans for the coming months including the new camp stories feature on the FCYC website.

Please also pray for local churches as they look to bless, encourage and equip young people at this time.

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Livonia (Michigan)

Minister: Kent Compton

The church was built by immigrants from Scotland and opened in Detroit in 1951. The church moved to Livonia in 1977 and is located in a neighbourhood setting. We are evangelical relying entirely on the Word of God only. We are mostly an older congregation and are spread out geographically with almost none of us living near the church. This makes our evangelistic efforts in the area difficult.

Prayer Points:

1. We have begun a lecture series following the lunch after the morning service. We have studied, among other things, the Protestant Reformation and compared other religions with Christianity. Please pray that this on-going lecture series will help us to be better witnesses to those around us in our every-day lives.
2. Please pray that our church will be able to develop some sort of outreach program that would work with our current small number of members, and that we will be able to bring the gospel to lost souls.

Rosskeen

Minister: Calum MacMillan

Rosskeen serves the towns of Alness and Invergordon, with our main church building sitting alongside the A9 between the two towns and our multi-function Capstone Centre on the High Street in Alness

Prayer Points:

1. Please pray for the ongoing outreach work through the Capstone Centre. Please pray that we would be able to connect more and more with the community, to provide help and support to those in need and to share the good news of Jesus.
2. Please pray for the elderly and housebound in our community. Pray that they would be encouraged in their faith and they would remain well connected to the life of the congregation.