

MAYFIELD SALISBURY PARISH CHURCH
EDINBURGH

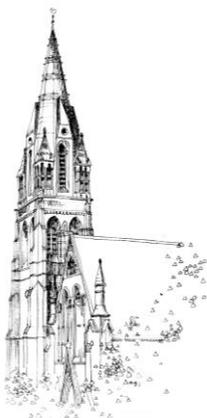
Online Worship Material Available 8.00am Every Sunday

Sunday 14 June 2020

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Psalm 100

- 1 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.
- 3 Know that the LORD is God.
It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
- 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.
- 5 For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.



www.mayfieldsalisbury.org

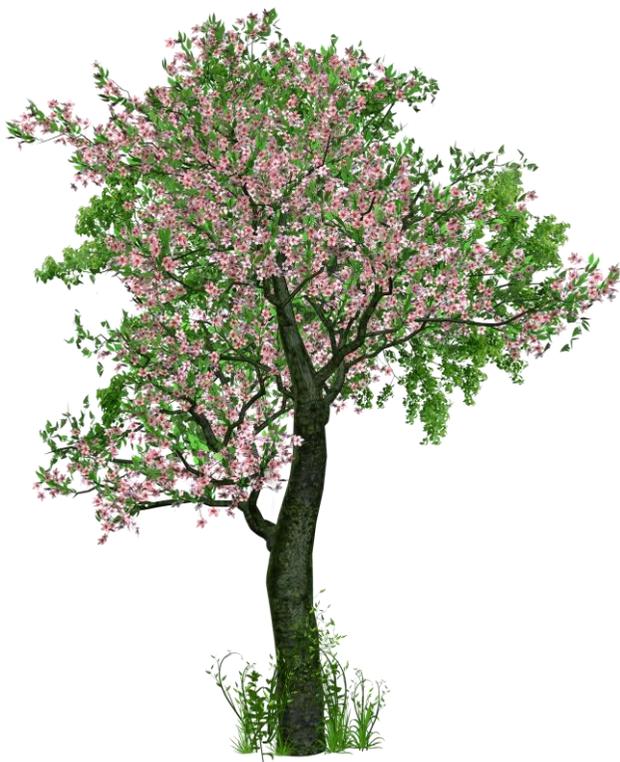
AS A DIVERSE PEOPLE, THE CHURCH GATHERS TO WORSHIP ALMIGHTY GOD

Welcome and Introduction *Revd Helen Alexander*

[Click to listen](#)

Good morning to the members and friends of the congregation of Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church, and welcome to this worship online for the 1st Sunday after Trinity.

We've now entered into what's known as Ordinary Time in the church's calendar. Having focussed on the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ and celebrated Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, we're now embarked on a significant number of weeks when the church traditionally reflects on her life, before entering the Season of Advent and beginning the annual cycle all over again. The Christian season that stretches ahead is devoid of particular sense of occasion, for most Presbyterians certainly, and when you add in the continued restriction of lockdown it may feel even more of a long haul than usual.



In all this, it might help to remember that the liturgical colour for the next few months is green. While we're not currently in a position to see this in the vestments and hangings in church, the colour green is all around us in nature, reminding us of growth and goodness, promise and hope. May these blessings be ours, whatever our circumstances today and in the weeks that lie ahead.

I invite you now to join me in a short period of silence in preparation for worship.....

Scripture Sentences

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God...

When we cry Abba! Father! it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.....

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit.....

Let us pray

Teach us to pray, good Lord.

When our words grow stale and meaningless, help us to discover anew the grace of silence and simple openness of heart.

When our hearts remain closed by intention or because we seem to have lost the key, help us to know that you search for us even in darkness, for darkness is as light to you.

When we are burdened with guilt, or worry about its absence in our hearts, hear our thanksgiving that you know our hearts better than we do ourselves, and that your grace is sufficient for us.

When we have lost courage or comfort or hope, help us not to recoil from these realities but to trust that no feeling is final and that the Spirit that breathed the world to be is active even now and holds us ever in the eternal arms.

And when we experience the release of happiness, gratitude and awareness of solid goodness, help us to rest in these blessings as gift and grace; for your love's sake.

The Collect

Almighty God, without whose grace we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

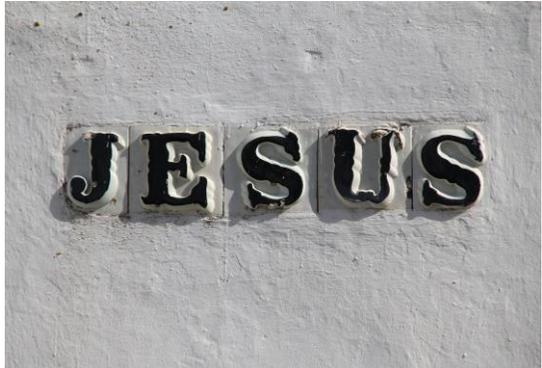
Good morning everyone! I hope you're doing well today.

Has anyone ever seen the movie 'Peter Pan'? They play a game in that film called 'follow the leader,' which I'm sure many of you have played yourselves. They even sang a song that goes like this:

*'Following the leader, the leader, the leader
We're following the leader wherever he may go!'*

I remember playing the game with my friends when I was growing up. The rules are very simple. You choose a leader and you follow them wherever they go and do whatever they do. You might end up jumping through puddles, climbing trees, or running around in circles - all to stay in the game because nobody wanted to lose or give up!

In each of our lives, we have many people who we follow – our teachers, our parents, our friends, our minister, and leaders of our sports and clubs. As Christians, we follow Jesus, too, just as the disciples are hearing the call to follow Jesus in our Bible reading today.



But what does it look like for us to follow Jesus? This morning we're going to be singing another song that has us thinking what it means to follow Jesus; it's called 'The Summons' or 'Will You Come and Follow Me?'

In the Bible, we hear many wonderful stories about Jesus, and all of the amazing things that he did for the people around him. These stories that we hear about Jesus in church and our Sunday School groups set examples for us to follow in our own lives.

One of the lines in today's song shows us that following Jesus means that our lives will be changed as we grow in our understanding of Jesus' lessons, and begin to live them out in our own lives. It says:

*'Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same
In your company I'll go
Where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
In you and you in me.'*



Jesus teaches us many things in his stories, but I think the most important message he teaches us is to love. Jesus teaches us what it means to let our faith move, and live, and grow within each one of us, so that we can learn how to love as best as possible.

In his time on earth, Jesus cared for the people that most others forgot about, or who were pushed to the side. Jesus sets an example for us to follow by showing us that everyone is welcome into the house of God, and no one is apart from, or undeserving of the love of God.

Jesus teaches us how to love God, and how to love our neighbours (friends, family, strangers); how to share God's love not just through our words, but also through our actions; how to come alongside people when they are hurting or suffering; how to listen to the stories of those who are different to us so that we can understand our neighbours better, and learn to love them better.

When we play follow the leader with Jesus, we grow in our faith, and learn how to share love with those around us. Maybe this week we can learn how to love the people around us better by playing a game of follow the leader with Jesus.

Let's close our eyes, put our hands together and close our time with a prayer – please repeat after me:

*Holy God, thank you for this beautiful day.
Thank you, Jesus, for calling our names.
May we follow in your footsteps,
Learning how to live and grow in you,
And learn to love those around us better.
Please be with those who are sad or hurting today,
That they may feel your peaceful presence.
Amen*

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

John L. Bell (b.1949) and Graham Maule (b.1958)

*Words and Music: (c) Wild Goose Resource Group, The Iona Community, 4th Floor, Savoy
Centre, 140 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3DH*

WE LISTEN FOR THE SPIRIT OF GOD

First Reading **Genesis 18:1 – 15**

[Click to read](#) [Click to listen](#)

Second Reading **St Matthew 9:35 – 10:8**

[Click to read](#) [Click to listen](#)

Readers: *Andrew Cubie and Kay McIntosh DCS*

Reflection

Revd Helen Alexander

[Click to listen](#)

‘Hebrew narrative art at its best’: this is how one Biblical commentator sums up the story from the Book of Genesis that we’ve heard this morning. ⁽¹⁾ One can see why, for the story runs like a series of skilfully edited film shots: Abraham, the patriarch to be, dozing off at midday in the entrance of his tent beneath the oak trees, the emergence of three strangers, the old man’s somewhat over-the-top welcome, his demand for fresh baking from his longsuffering wife, his crazy rush in the heat of the noonday sun from his tent to his herd for a calf to be slaughtered, and back to his tent again, his respectful waiting at the visitors’ table, the repetition of the seemingly ridiculous promise of a son, the elderly Sarah’s disbelieving laugh, not dissimilar to Abraham’s own just a few verses before; and the final scene’s dramatic change from amicable courtesy to accusation and denial: ‘she laughed.’ ‘I didn’t!’ ‘Oh, but I know that you did.’ The story is comical, graphically human and spiritually profound.

Who were the desert strangers? The writer of the story employs artful ambiguity whereby the visitors metamorphose from God to men, to God and back to men, two of them becoming angels as they leave. Tales of appearances of gods disguised as human beings were common in antiquity, and this may be an example of skilful adaptation whereby the devout monotheistic author of this story conveys his belief that God’s ways can appear strange and sometimes seemingly impossible to mere human beings.

This being so, rather than ruminating on the precise identity of the strangers it might be more helpful to ask what message or messages their story conveys. Aside from taking account of the mysterious nature of the purposes of God, all three monotheistic faiths agree that the story highlights the central importance of the practice of hospitality.

1. R.N. Whybray *Genesis, The Oxford Bible Commentary* Ed John Barton and John Muddiman OUP 2001



Abraham and the Three Angels by James Tissot. 1896-1902

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks writes this: *‘Abraham, father of monotheism, knew the paradoxical truth that to live the life of faith is to see the trace of God in the face of the stranger.....He knew that serving God and offering hospitality to strangers were not two things but one.’* (2)

St Matthew’s Jesus pursued the same line in what’s often called the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats: *‘I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.....Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’* (3)

And it’s pretty likely that the unknown author of the New Testament Letter to the Hebrews had the story of Abraham and Sarah in mind when he wrote: *‘Be not neglectful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.’* (4)

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2. Jonathan Sacks *God and Strangers (Vayera 5779) Covenant and Conversation* www.rabbisacks.org
 3. St Matthew 25: 35, 40
 4. Hebrews 13: 2

Mona Siddiqui, Professor of Islamic and Interreligious Studies at the University of Edinburgh in her very informative book on Islam points out that the Qur'anic version of the story is also interpreted by Muslims as one of welcome to the stranger or traveller, and she quotes the celebrated Medieval Muslim theologian and mystic Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali in what seems an interesting turnaround of the text in Hebrews: *'A house that is not entered by guests is not entered by angels.'* (5)

Of course, it's hardly surprising that the three monotheistic faiths with their roots in the desert lands of the Middle East should emphasise the importance of hospitality when the promise or the lack of it might prove a matter of life or death for the traveller.

But the focus of the story in Genesis is on the blessing that is offered to, rather than given by Abraham and Sarah. For all the lavish hospitality, the visitors were there to confirm the momentous promise.

The suggestion is that if you open the doors of your home or your heart (the heart being foremost as we are learning now when of necessity our homes are mostly closed to others) you might just find yourself in the presence of angels or God.

*Stay awake for new surprises,
Angels come in strange disguises.*

That's not a text from the Bible or the Qur'an, but it contains scriptural truth. In fact, the Biblical witness tends to favour the least likely candidates as the ones most likely to convey blessing.

This topsy-turvy reversal of expectation is applicable to every time and circumstance. That weird wee buddy down the road, that unpleasant-sounding character who gets on everyone's nerves at a meeting; those people who look different, dress differently, don't speak the same language, worship in a different way: we're invited to be open to the possibility that all may be bearers of light for us if we're prepared to draw close enough to see them, and may speak words of truth to us if we stop long enough to listen. This may go for a community and a nation as well as for any individual.

5. Mona Siddiqui *50 Ideas You Really Need To Know: Islam* Quercus Edition Ltd 2016 pp104,105

All this is easy enough to say, but much more difficult to put into practice. And of course, not everyone is a light-bearer or truth-speaker. We're not asked to leave our discernment behind when we interact with other people. Yet we are invited to be open to the possibility that they may have something important to offer us, even if we don't much like them, especially perhaps if we don't much like them.

This may have been something that Jesus himself had to learn in practice. In the passage from St Matthew's Gospel that we've heard today, he forbade his disciples to go among the Gentiles, instructing them to focus their attentions solely on their fellow Jews.

Nonetheless, at the end of the Gospel Jesus sends them out to the ends of the known world. Whether this development reflects his gradual self-understanding or that of the early church doesn't really matter, as long as we're encouraged to take seriously the blessed opportunity of hospitality of heart, and to be prepared to experiment with its truth.

RESPONSE TO THE SPIRIT OF GOD WITHIN

*Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707) [Click to listen](#)
Auf meinen lieben Gott: Allemande and Gigue*

Thanksgiving and Intercession

[Click to listen](#)

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for the gift of life itself; for sunshine and rain; for the birds of the air and the fruits of the field; for the wind that blows and the swell of the sea.

Blessed be God for the company of friends near and far, for their warm remembrances and for ours of them; for whispers of mercy and glimpses of glory that permeate our minds and hearts with the eternal promise that all shall be well.

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit for our commission to care and to pray for all in need today and every day.

Our prayers rise to God for the state of the earth: for beaches cluttered with detritus, for vast islands of plastic in the oceans, for holes in the ozone layer, and for onetime forests and meadows now denuded and bare.



And our thanks rise to God for signs of hope and healing: for cleaning and planting, for the harnessing of the energy of nature to meet the needs of humankind; for the call that grows ever louder for the transformation of human thoughtlessness and greed toward a better future for all.

Our prayers rise to God for the nations of the world: for leaders confronted by crises and overwhelming need; for their people who are restless and afraid; for nations brought together in the common search for lasting solutions of the problems of our time, at the same time threatened by rivalry and economic loss.

Our prayers rise to God for all who are disadvantaged and dispossessed and who are cast adrift on the seas of anger, turbulence and fear.

Our prayers rise to God for all humanity: black, coloured and white whose lives are haunted by past wrongs and who carry the consequences in behaviour and attitude to the present day. And our prayers rise to God for the recovery of conscience, the spirit of sanity and ongoing work for equality for all.

Our prayers rise to God for all those suffering great trials of body and soul: for people in hospitals and those who desperately need to get there; for anxieties and mental pain; for people without shelter and those who feel they've been sheltered too long. And our thanks rise to God for all who reach out hand and heart to do the work of good in the world, in whosoever's name they do it.

Our prayers rise to God for those we know and love; for particular people and situations we pray for now in silence.....

Even as our thanks rise to God for those we have loved and lost and love still who are held with us in the everlasting arms of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit to whom be glory now and for ever.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. For ever and ever. Amen.

HYMN 162 The God of Abraham praise

[Click to listen](#)

Leoni

The God of Abraham praise
who reigns enthroned above,
Ancient of everlasting days,
and God of love.
Jehovah, Great I AM!
by earth and heaven confessed,
I bow, and bless the sacred name
for ever blest.

The God of Abraham praise,
at whose supreme command
from earth I rise, and seek the joys
at his right hand.
I all on earth forsake,
its wisdom, fame and power,
and him my only portion make,
my shield and tower.

He by himself has sworn,
I on his oath depend:
I shall, on eagle's wings upborne,
to heaven ascend;
I shall behold his face,
I shall his power adore
and sing the wonders of his grace
for evermore.

The whole triumphant host
give thanks to God on high;
'Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!'
they ever cry.
Hail, Abraham's God, and mine! --
I join the heavenly praise --
all might and majesty are thine,
through endless days.

*Thomas Olivers (1725-1799) (alt.)
based on the Jewish Yigdal*

BENEDICTION

[Click to listen](#)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

INTIMATIONS

1. **NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:** Genesis 21: 8- 21 and St Matthew 10: 24 - 39
2. **KILOMBERO RICE FROM MALAWI.** I have new stocks of brown and white rice costing £3 /kg bag. For Malawian children 'a bag of rice can change a life' To request your rice contact Jean on 0131 477 6648 or jebleitch@gmail.com Happy to deliver to your doorstep by bike or on foot!
3. **BETHANY UPDATES**
Donations to the Bethany Care Shelter. Bethany are very thankful for all the donations they have received to date. They are no longer in need of food or games but still need the following items if you would like to donate: sleeping bags, men's roll on deodorant and men's razors. Donations have to be taken to the Diadem

Centre on Gorgie Road. I can give you the door code if you're planning on taking a donation. Please contact me by email at triciastevenson9@gmail.com

Update on the Bethany Care Van and Care Shelter. Throughout the Covid 19 lockdown, the Bethany Care Van has continued its work of providing food to the most vulnerable people on Edinburgh's streets every evening and five lunchtimes a week. Whilst it hasn't been possible for many of our church volunteers to be part of the teams because of government restrictions, as a church we have still been able to play our part.

Our scheduled runs in the van have continued, thanks to the dedication of Daphne Green who has driven the van and a handful of volunteers 'of suitable age', several of whom Daphne has recruited to our teams and had officially approved by the Bethany Christian Trust. Many of our regular volunteers have also generously donated food and money to Bethany for their work in the Care Shelter at the Old Waverley Hotel. Not only has the Trust provided hot meals and shelter but, in partnership with Edinburgh Council, have worked to move people on to alternative accommodation.

This shelter will remain open until 15 July. Also, on behalf of the whole church, the Kirk Session has approved a substantial donation to Bethany's work in the city, especially at this time of crisis. Finally, I'd like to pass on to you all a massive thank you from the Bethany Team who greatly appreciate the donations, volunteering and prayers of all who support them in their work.

More details in the next edition of *Grapevine*.

Tricia Stevenson

4. **GRAPEVINE MAGAZINE** The deadline for the forthcoming *Grapevine* magazine is **Friday 26 June at 6.00pm**. Please send submissions to: churchmanager@googlemail.com *William Mearns*

5. **JOIN SCOTTISH CHURCHES IN PRAYER THIS SUNDAY**
This Sunday (14 June), Christians across Scotland will once again join together in prayer at 7.00pm in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As with previous weeks during lockdown and the phased easing of restrictions, Christian churches and organisations across the country, including the Church of Scotland, have co-signed the letter calling for prayer. Scottish Christians have been continuing to answer the call to pray at the same time each week, and Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, has been taking part alongside them.

'I'm delighted to have read that in the last couple of months online searches for 'prayer' have increased dramatically,' Dr Fair said. 'But

reading about what prayer is and how to do it is only the start of it. After that it's time to actually pray. 'And what better than to join with brothers and sisters from across the nation at 7pm on Sunday to pray our way through this ongoing crisis. I commend it to you and look forward to being with you, in Spirit, on Sunday evening.'

This week's letter accompanying the prayer, which is also available in Gaelic, states:

'The experience of being powerless is one that will resonate with many of us. 'There are times throughout our experience when we sense that we are not in control of what is happening in our own world. Indeed, there will be occasions when we sense that the wider world is afflicted by the seeming absence of a guiding hand.

'The Apostle Paul expresses the reality that God acts through Jesus Christ, for us and our salvation, at the very moment in time when we are unable to act on our own behalf and we are powerless.

'The action of God in Jesus Christ is a demonstration of the love of God (Romans 5: 1-8, NIV). As we know ourselves to be powerless and, at the same time, to be those who have received the renewing and empowering love of God poured 'into our hearts by the Holy Spirit', we turn to God, and we pray:'

We pray:

Living God, you demonstrate your love for us
Though our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we are powerless,
Stand with us in our weakness.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, you demonstrate your love for the world
Through the self-giving of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We remember those who are powerless in our world
And stand with them in their weakness.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, as we stand with others
May we understand more fully the life we share in common.
In understanding more fully
May we embrace the richness of the life you gift us.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
Living God, your Holy Spirit
Is the Lord and Giver of Life.
May your love be poured into our hearts
And our lives renewed.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
Embrace us, and all Creation,
In the love you demonstrate through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

6. YOUTH UPDATES

Virtual Youth Programming: The *virtual* youth schedule for the month of June can be accessed on the church website under the 'Young People' tab. Please note the time and age group changes for various activities. All youth programming will be held over Zoom. New virtual youth consent forms must be sent to Hillary before attending a session. For log-in access to the Zoom sessions, or to get a copy of the consent forms, please contact Hillary!

Youth Group: Tonight, Sunday 14 June we will be playing Family Fortunes together over Zoom! All ages will meet from 630-8pm. Questions? Contact Hillary at hillary.mayfielddoyouth@gmail.com

Young People Art Request!! Hillary is looking for some of our children and young people to create a piece of artwork using the word 'Amen!' - drawings, paintings...anything crafty encouraged! These will be used in our online service on 21 June. All artwork will be shared anonymously. By submitting your child's artwork, you consent to it being used on our website for our online service. Please email pictures of the art to Hillary at hillary.mayfielddoyouth@gmail.com. **Deadline is Wednesday 17 June at 5pm.**

7. **CHRISTIAN AID DEBT JUBILEE PETITION** A huge thank-you to everyone who donated to the recent Christian Aid Week and Coronavirus appeals. Because of the way donations were collected this year, we won't know exactly how much money was contributed by our congregation, but we're sure members will have been as generous as ever. Many of you perhaps felt frustrated at being unable to support the charity in the usual way, so you may be interested to hear of another very worthwhile action you can take.

The coronavirus pandemic is spreading into the poorest countries in the world, where the most vulnerable are falling ill and the economic impacts are leaving people who were already struggling, without a way to feed their families and survive this crisis.

You can help by supporting calls for a debt 'jubilee' – requested by governments of poor and vulnerable countries. This would mean cancelling their debt repayments during this crisis.

Will you call on the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, to broker a debt relief deal for the poorest countries? To take part, go to the Christian Aid website and follow the links to

www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/debt-jubilee-petition

Thank you! The Christian Aid Team

Forthcoming Deadlines

Order of service for next week: Thursday at 6.00pm.

Next Grapevine: **Friday 26 June at 6.00pm.**

Please send submissions to the Church Manager, William Mearns.

Phone: 0780 801 1234 or email: churchmanager@googlemail.com

Books for the Journey

My Sour-Sweet Days: George Herbert and the Journey of the Soul by Mark Oakley.

Luminaries: Twenty lives that illuminate the Christian Way by Rowan Williams.

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WHO'S WHO IN MAYFIELD SALISBURY

Interim Moderator

Revd Neil N. Gardner ngardner@churchofscotland.org.uk 0131 556 3515

Locum Preacher

Revd Helen Alexander HAlexander@churchofscotland.org.uk 0131 346 0685

Pastoral Assistant

Kay McIntosh DCS kay@backedge.co.uk 0790 326 6307

Youth Worker

Hillary Leslie Hillary.MayfieldYouth@gmail.com 0745 372 2224

Church Manager

William Mearns churchmanager@googlemail.com 0780 801 1234

Organist

Kate Pearson kate.q.kate@gmail.com 0744 238 2296

Choir Leader

Walter Thomson walterthomson@hotmail.co.uk 0131 662 0405

Session Clerk

Charles Garland charles.edin@gmail.com 0776 290 8343

Treasurer

John Graham culkein@btinternet.com 0131 667 6331

Gift Aid Donations & Roll Keeper

Hugh Somerville hs.somerville2@gmail.com 0131 466 2446

Ecotip: Count up how much plastic you have used this week

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