

Thursday 18th June 2020

*One of the saddest things about our present global age is the culture of exploitation - of nature, and of the gap between poor and rich—that seems to be out-with any control, or accountable to any values beyond profit maximization. It is a hard, aggressive culture of dominance that seems to know little of compassion, or delight in mystery and beauty.*

*We recognise also that it is a culture so far away from the vision of society and community that is presented in our scriptures—and is a culture that clashes profoundly with those of us who seek spiritual depth, co-operation and harmony in life.*

*Here below is a short article by Freda Stobo of Libberton & Quothquan Church that arises out of delight in the wonders and richness of God's creation.*



This is a pretty little bellflower. It's botanical name is *codonopsis mollis*. It originates in the high woodlands in the Western Himalaya and Kashmir, up to 3,500 metres. The outer colour of the bell is China blue. But when you look inside the bell there is a wonderful surprise of a myriad of colours.

Every plant has special properties and many are used in healing. The roots of *codonopsis* are used to treat HIV infection and to protect cancer patients against side effects of radiation treatment. The roots are also used to boost the immune system; and to treat weakness, loss of appetite (anorexia), chronic diarrhoea, shortness of breath, noticeable heartbeat palpitations, asthma, cough, thirst, and diabetes.

The parables of Jesus are rich in nature imagery eg. The Parable of the Mustard Seed; the grain of wheat in The Parable of the Sower. When Jesus was growing up in Palestine he learned all about God's care for everything in Creation.

We are able to learn valuable lessons from every living thing in God's Creation. We just need to take the time to study God's handiwork to learn the fascinating knowledge of how we are all interconnected to every living thing in God's perfect web of life.

God has given us plants with properties to cure most illness on Earth... probably even Coronavirus. We just need to try to make the connections.



Photos: Freda Stobo

*Karl Barth, recognised as one of the greatest protestant theologians, was giving a lecture when a student stood up holding a Bible demanding to know whether Barth believed it to be the Word of God or not.*

*The theologian responded, "It depends on whether you are holding the book or if it is holding you."*

**To hold** the Bible is to use it as a weapon against our enemies.

**To be held by it** is to not only be called to love our neighbours as ourselves, but to love our enemies and pray for our persecutors.

**To hold** the Bible is to use it as a tool for our own agenda. **To be held by it** is to subject ourselves to be servants of 'the Kingdom of God among us.'

**To hold** the Bible is to believe we have God all figured out, that we can contain God in the box of our own understanding. **To be held by it** is to recognise the Divine as fundamentally untamed, beyond our imagining or comprehension.

**To hold** the Bible is to make it about us. **To be held by it** is to recognise that it is God's story not ours.

*Adapted - the blog of St David's Memorial Park Parish Church, Kirkintilloch.*

#### Tinto Parishes REFLECTION phone line.

The line is available to call at any time, and a new reflection is added on Friday every week.



**01899 205410**

A reflection from Rev. George for those who cannot access the internet or take part in the Sunday worship.

Or for just anyone!

### A Prayer from the Corrymeela Community

God of the community well,  
God of our individual needs:  
having gone through this together, we will draw  
from these days a shared experience for years  
and years.

Yet each of us balances  
this pandemic's challenge  
with private struggles  
and dissimilar circumstances.

May we take into account the additional weight  
that we and our neighbours will carry, so that as  
we lend (and accept from) each other  
support  
we can draw out more lessons from this well of  
community,  
and bring home all that we can. Amen.

[www.corrymeela.org](http://www.corrymeela.org) 15 June 2020

**A MOSAIC.** In Matthew's Gospel we are told that the Holy Family fled "to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod." A brief postnote perhaps for us here in Scotland, but for the Coptic Church in Egypt, an important opportunity for local traditions to develop about those early years in Jesus' life (somewhere between 3 and 7 years), and to celebrate that foundational journey.

This is a modern mosaic on the theme of the flight of the Holy Family to safety in Egypt. It can be found within the Coptic Orthodox 'Hanging Church', one of the oldest churches in Cairo, and built on a site that dates back to the 3rd Century AD.



### CALLING LOCAL CAMERA ENTHUSIASTS.

Our Sunday worship on Zoom now regularly begins with a photograph of a local scene up on the screen for the five minutes or so that people are gathering.

There are a number of enthusiasts within our church network and families, and we would be happy to use any that you think would be of interest. A landscape, scene of nature, event in community life, now or in the past. We would be very grateful for any on offer. Contact Rev. George on 01899 309400, or [George.Shand@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:George.Shand@churchofscotland.org.uk)

### USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

**Biggar** Coronavirus Community Action Group. Shopping and Prescription Delivery Helpline—07376 318724 (10-3h daily). A Biggar Community Council initiative for those who must self isolate due to age, health issues, or symptoms.

They also run a confidential Listening Ear Service, 10-3 daily, if you are bored, lonely, anxious, or just want a chat because you feel isolated, give them a call on **07422 356835**. They don't collect any details, just need your first name, so they can chat.

**Carmichael.** Contact Margaret Telfer on 01555 880266 if you need help. Carmichael Community Council also provide contact names for assistance, guidance—Jamie Clarkson 01555 880213; Jen Martin 07811 045 578; Danielle Nesbit 07814 332 699; Ray Peace 07711 544 956—list is updated at the Community Hall.

**Lanark and surrounding Villages.** LanarkHelps is a volunteer led community helpline offering practical support along the lines of the other support helplines. It can be contacted Mon-Fri 9am to 4.45pm, Sat -9am to 12noon on **01555 437051**.

**Libberton**—Blackmount volunteers are covering Libberton. There are 5 volunteers numbers, and 19 volunteers offering support. In the first instance try Patrick on **07901 686759** or Nick on **07966 633428**.

**Symington** Community Coronavirus Support—a Community Council initiative for those affected by the national guidance on remaining at home—to assist with shopping, prescription uplift or other issues. Contact **07807 235 811** (10-12h and 2-4h)- at other times leave a message.

**Thankerton, Covington & Quothquan.** The Community Council is in partnership with Biggar, so call the Shopping and Prescription Delivery Helpline on 07376 318724

**South Lanarkshire Council**—they operate a Community Wellbeing Line—0303 123 1009—9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. For those shielding, over 70, long-term health problems including learning disability, pregnant, or with weakened immune systems. It gives access to services run by the Council and on behalf of the Scottish Government, and also signposting.

**NHS Lanarkshire.** Their Psychological Services run a Public Distress (Covid—19) Helpline offering advice and guidance to anyone in Lanarkshire experiencing anxiety or distress during the Covid-9 outbreak. **01698 687 567**, 8am—4pm weekdays.



**Tinto Parishes REFLECTION line is available at any time.** A weekly reflection from Rev. George for those who cannot access the internet or take part in the Sunday worship—or just anyone!

**01899 205410.** A new reflection is usually available from Friday morning onwards.

THE TINTO PARISHES are Cairngryffe, Libberton & Quothquan, and Symington Parish Churches—all part of the Church of Scotland.

**If you would like to speak to the Minister for any reason, please contact**

**Rev George Shand on 01899 309400 or on [George.Shand@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:George.Shand@churchofscotland.org.uk)**