

CRAMOND KIRK



JUNE PRAYER DIARY

Jesus said, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

(John 3 : 5 - 8)

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Topics are arranged over 7 days which you may find helpful.

Sunday

Pray for Russell & Margaret as they resume parish ministry. Pray for the teaching of God's word through Russell & Colin.

Pray for Tom Cuthell as he continues with a time of teaching in Rome.

Monday

Pray for all the families & friends affected by the multiple deaths in the terror attack in Manchester. Pray also for those injured in the attack that they might make a good recovery from their injuries. Pray also for political leaders & the security services as they attempt to deal with ongoing threats.

Tuesday

Pray this month for the Church & Society Council of the Church of Scotland. The Church & Society Council's remit is to engage on behalf of the Church in the national, political & social issues affecting Scotland & the world today. This includes a huge range of issues including human rights, asylum, ethics, science & technology, concerns about gambling, climate change & education issues. It aims to do this through the development of theological, ethical & spiritual perspectives when formulating policy & by effectively representing the Church by offering appropriate & informed comments.

Wednesday *(from the Christian Aid website)*

Give thanks & pray for the work of the Poorest Areas Civil Society programme (PACS) which is operating in seven of the poorest states in India. Pray that they will help socially excluded people to access their rights. Pray for Christian Aid as it seeks to lead the consortium of agencies that makes up PACS & for Anand Kumar, its director.

Thursday

Pray for the people of Yemen as they face up to a new cholera outbreak. The country continues to be affected by war which is hindering the provision of effective treatment for the cholera outbreak.

Friday *(from the Christian Aid website)*

Friday, 16 June is the Day of the African Child. Pray for the thousands of children who were orphaned by the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone in 2014-15. Give thanks for the role the faith community played to educate & inform, in order to prevent stigma & a return of the disease. Pray for the Christian Aid team in Sierra Leone & for the country manager, Jeanne Kamara & pray for SABI, a four-year programme funded by UK aid & being delivered by a consortium of international & Sierra Leonean partners, led by Christian Aid. Pray that SABI will strengthen community-led accountability, increasing awareness of & demand for the delivery of basic services – including health, education, social protection, water & energy – in every district of the country.

Saturday

Pray for the Egyptian Coptic Church community that has suffered recently with many dead & injured in an attack on a bus providing transport for them. Pray for strength in the face of such persecution. Pray also for the families of the people of Kabul affected by the recent terrorist bombing in which so many were killed & injured.

REFLECTION

from a sermon by Professor Richard Bauckham, recently retired from St Andrew's University Divinity Department

So what is there about the wind that helps us to understand the Spirit of God? Jesus, in a little parable which uses the wind as a picture of the Spirit, says: "The wind blows where it chooses & you hear the sound of it but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes" (*John 3:8*). You can't see the wind; it's an invisible, mysterious force, but you can see its effects. It's unpredictable & it's uncontrollable. The wind is a movement which we cannot predict or control, which seems to come from nowhere, which affects things & carries things along with it in its movement.

So it is with the Spirit. One of the first things we have to learn about the Spirit of God is that the Spirit is not under our control. You can't catch the wind & direct it where you want it to go. You can't get control of the Spirit & channel it where you think it ought to be going. The church has always been tempted to try to do that, to confine the Spirit like a genie in a lamp that only the people who know the right magic words can dispense. I think we modern people are even more tempted to want to control the Spirit, because we are addicted to control. We think life is better the more we have it under control. Taking control of our lives is what it's all about & there is a limited value in that. But it misses the fact that so much of what is really important in life is precisely what we do not control & cannot predict - what happens *to us*, the people we

encounter, the situations that occur, the tragedies that overtake us, the unexpected opportunities that come our way. It is very often in these unpredictable aspects of life that God meets us - sometimes forces himself on our attention because we wouldn't otherwise be noticing, sometimes pushes us in a direction we would never otherwise have thought of going.

So, to summarise this ... picture of the Spirit: when our lives lack direction or when they are all too firmly set in the wrong direction, then the wind of God's Spirit, sometimes a gentle breeze, sometimes a great hurricane, always a movement we cannot predict or control, sweeps into our lives, catches us up in its movement, takes us out of ourselves & takes us where God is going.

<http://richardbauckham.co.uk/uploads/Sermons/Pentecost.pdf>

If you have a prayer request or a favourite prayer which you would care to share in a future Prayer Diary, please e-mail cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk.