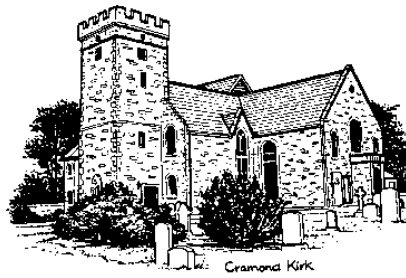


CRAMOND KIRK



OCTOBER PRAYER DIARY

Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

(Matthew 18 : 21 & 22)

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Topics are arranged over 7 days which you may find helpful

Sunday

Pray for Russell & Colin & their ministry in teaching & in pastoral activities. Pray for the ministry of the choir as they begin a new session & for Simon as he leads them.

Monday

Pray for families & friends caught up in the Las Vegas atrocity. People from many communities across the USA & beyond are affected by this tragedy. Pray for support for these families from within their local communities. Pray also for the family of the gunman who are at a loss to explain his motives.

Tuesday

Pray for agencies attempting to help the Rohingya people forced to flee Myanmar & living in makeshift refugee camps in Bangladesh. Pray that the monies raised through the Christian Aid appeal might provide necessary assistance.

Wednesday *(from the Christian Aid Website)*

“Pray for those who are striving towards ending fossil fuel investment, combatting climate change through our Big Shift campaign. Pray for campaigners who are visiting banks in September & October. Pray their conversations would help to shift how banks invest. Find out more at caid.org.uk/bigshift. Pray for a successful Big Shift campaign across the globe, asking banks worldwide to shift investments from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy. Pray for the World Bank meetings on 13 & 15 October. Pray that the World Bank will lead the transition to renewable energy.”

Thursday *(from the Church of Scotland website)*

Church members have been hailed at Holyrood for the “brilliant” community work undertaken across Scotland. Green MSP Ross Greer said the state would not be able to cope if services & support provided by faith communities were withdrawn. Conservative MSP Murdo Fraser & Dave Stewart, a Labour politician, praised the “inspirational” work carried out by Street Pastors – who support late night revellers worse for wear & the homeless - in cities across the country. “There is a general view that, across Scotland, church congregations are dwindling — at least, that is what recent censuses & surveys have told us,” said Mr Fraser. “However, perhaps what we are learning is bums on pews on a Sunday morning might be less important than the holistic work that churches do, particularly in the wider community, in reaching out with the gospel & in their other outreach work. Such work is a practical illustration of the Christian faith, in offering help & relief to & demonstrating love for those who are less fortunate.” Pray for the many ways in which the Church engages in such service.

Friday

Pray for the discussions of the new Scottish Government Working Group on homelessness, an issue raised by Russell when he was Moderator. Russell has been invited to join the group & will help shape the thinking of the group.

Saturday *(from the Church of Scotland Website)*

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has backed a fresh appeal for peace on the Korean peninsula. Right Rev Dr Derek Browning said he “warmly endorsed” an impassioned plea to the international community issued by the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCKK), which is increasingly alarmed by the “war of words” between the USA & North Korea. Pray for a way forward which eases tensions & prevents a military response.

REFLECTION

Forgiving is the hardest thing to do. Forgiving doesn't trivialize an offence – as if to say, “It doesn't matter – I forgive you.” It does matter. If it didn't matter, there would be nothing to forgive. Forgiving doesn't turn the clock back – not completely. It doesn't mean you pretend it never happened. It means that you choose not to take revenge, bear a grudge, demand an eye for an eye or worse. Why forgive, then, if it costs so much? Forgiving is about releasing chains that hold us. The offender is released, to some extent, by being forgiven. Often not scot-free because forgiving doesn't mean pretending something never happened. Forgiving a relative triviality might mean a total repair to relationship but there are circumstances where even though forgiveness is offered, the offender still has to live with conscience or consequence. Not all relationships can be completely repaired & the injury & memory of the past can't be wiped clean even if the sting is removed. But the offended party is released, as well as the offender, by forgiving. Carrying a grudge, a burden of anger, creates lonely souls. Unresolved, it makes some people explosive & others depressed & its corrosive effect produces points of isolation. And further, forgiving draws a line under the offence so that you don't spread bitterness to those around you or to the next generation. If you have unresolved grief, bitterness, resentment, it's almost impossible not to hand it on to those around you. So it is, in a sense, a duty of care to the world to move towards forgiveness for it stops the spread of the disease. This is true even if you are the offended party. Not to take the steps you can towards forgiveness (& sometimes it takes time & a lot of repeated baby steps to get there) is to create a further offence to others out of the one that was dealt to you. Forgiving a deeply felt offence really doesn't

happen in an instant. Especially so if it changed the whole course of your life (although curiously it seems that sometimes people find relatively trivial offences harder to forgive than ones of gargantuan proportions). Sometimes you have to live with a repeating cycle of forgiveness – coming back to that decision every single day until eventually it wears a deeper groove in your soul than the anger & hurt & grief. But what's the alternative? It's like choosing between which of two creatures you will feed. Feed the doves & sooner or later their peaceful cooing will float through your window. Feed the wolves & eventually they will eat you too.

Maggi Dawn, Associate Professor, Yale

(<https://maggidawn.net/2017/03/22/on-forgiveness-feeding-the-doves>)

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