

# CRAMOND KIRK



## JANUARY PRAYER DIARY

Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

*(Isaiah 60 : 1)*

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

### **Sunday**

Pray for Russell & Tom & their ministry in teaching & pastoral activities. Pray for Tom as he takes up the role of Associate Minister with us & that he will quickly feel at home among us once again.

### **Monday** *(from the Christian Aid website)*

15 January is Martin Luther King Jr Day in the US. King believed that peace was the way to bring about change in societies where the poor & marginalised were affected by inequality, human rights violations & conflict. He said: 'Through violence you may murder the hater but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate.' King's message of equality & social justice continues to inspire & resonate today. Pray that Christian Aid's work to tackle violence & build peace around the world will flourish & be effective.

### **Tuesday** *(from the "Together We Pray" prayer diary, Church of Scotland website)*

Listen to God: think about the people who are important to you in your community or you come into contact with regularly (neighbours, teachers, carers, shop workers, community workers, police officers).

Speak to God: perhaps tell God what your highest hopes are for the people you have been thinking about & ask how we as the church can help them.

### **Wednesday** *(from the Christian Aid website)*

Give thanks for the new opportunities provided by a new year. Pray for all those who are making resolutions to volunteer for Christian Aid, that they will find the right fit for their talents & time.

Give thanks for the difference that volunteers make to the life & work of Christian Aid in Britain & Ireland & across the world. Pray also for the new director of Christian Aid. Pray for anointing, wisdom, vision & leadership for the next stage of Christian Aid's journey.

**Thursday** *(from the "Together We Pray" prayer diary, Church of Scotland website)*

Listen to God: what are the key decisions that would make the greatest difference to the Church? What are the greatest strengths of the Church of Scotland? And what do you think is its greatest weakness? What do you think are the greatest opportunities? What are the greatest threats to the Church of Scotland?

Speak to God: give thanks for the work of the Church of Scotland. Ask God to help the leaders & decision makers within the Church & to give them the gifts to discern where God's Spirit is leading.

**Friday** *(from the "Together We Pray" prayer diary, Church of Scotland website)*

Listen to God: think about the people who are closest to you & are most important to you.

Speak to God: perhaps tell God what your highest hopes are for the people you have been thinking about. Are there particular things you could give thanks for or situations to seek God's help or strength for?

**Saturday** *(from the Church of Scotland website)*

Here we are at the start of 2018 - Scotland's Year of Young People (YoYP). We're celebrating the Church of Scotland's engagement with children & young people & look forward to many exciting initiatives within congregations, churches & presbyteries throughout 2018. Right Rev Dr Derek Browning, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland said: "There is a lot of good work going on in our churches involving a lot of time, a lot of energy, a lot of dedication, a lot of imagination & a lot of faith. I encourage all churches to 'seize the moment' & opportunities of the Year of Young People to engage a new generation of young people in a faith that is constantly evolving & adapting to the times in which we live & they will live in a Church that is both similar to & different from the Church we live in today." Pray for the success of this initiative.

## REFLECTION

### Reflection on Isaiah 60 : 1 - 6

This text has been read & heard on the Feast of Epiphany for centuries. Epiphany being the Christocentric feast of the resonance of the light of Christ to the nations. The gospel story (Matthew 2) recalls the visit of the Magi - wise folks from afar. They followed a light - an anomalous star. The light of which drew them to the incarnate Son for whom they brought gifts, the riches of their lands: Gold. Frankincense. Myrrh. The Epiphany story of the magi with hints of the fantastic draws the magnificent, vivid vision of Isaiah 60 into the orbit of a small child, to *the* light, to the glory of the Lord as revealed in the weakness of a child. No pyrotechnics. Just a simple encounter of those from afar with the Light who drew them to himself. By the most basic experience of darkness & light we are drawn to the very presence of God. Welsh priest & poet, R.S. Thomas (1913-2000), penned a simple verse that draws me in as it creates an intersection with this vivid vision of Isaiah on this Feast of Epiphany. Perhaps it will draw you in as well.

...Now  
in the small hours of belief  
the one eloquence to master  
is that of the bowed head,  
the bent knee, waiting,  
as at the end of a hard winter  
for one flower to open  
on the mind's tree of thorns.

Without exhausting the poem by way of explanation, Thomas' words here seem to come from the confluence of Isaiah's vivid call, "...your light has come & the glory of the Lord has risen upon you," & Matthew's story of the revelation of the one in, by & through whom the cosmos came to be drawing all people to the light that is himself. The Feast of Epiphany draws us deeper into the mystery of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. Light in the midst of darkness. A flower on the mind's tree of thorns. A swelling heart at the good news of the Lord.

*(Samuel Giere, Associate Professor, Wartburg Seminary, Iowa)*  
*([https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3524](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3524))*

*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](mailto:cramond.kirk@blueyonder.co.uk)*