

Ross Presbytery Prayer Diary 2021

The purpose of this Prayer Diary is to provide some short and practical suggestions to help you pray, when you can, throughout each month for the wider work of the Gospel in Ross Presbytery.

Some Scriptures which encourages us to Support One Another in Prayer:

This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one. **Matthew 6:9-13**

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. **Romans 8:26-27**

Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. **James 5:13**

May my prayer be set before you like incense; May the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice. **Psalms 141:2**

I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer. **Psalms 17:6**

1st June, 2021: Our Front-Line Workers

Give thanks to God for all our NHS Staff who continue to work tirelessly in the care of others.

Ask God to protect and watch over all those who will continue to give of themselves for others in the coming months.

Pray for the ongoing roll-out of the vaccines for Covid-19, and that these will be used by God to bring this virus more fully under control.

Ask God to provide resilience, stamina and his rest to those who are exhausted from the intensity of giving themselves in the service of others.

2nd June, 2021: Roskeen

Minister: Rev Phil Gunn

Church website link: <http://www.spanglefish.com/rosskeenchurchofscotland/index.asp>

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/rosskeenparishchurch/>

- Give thanks that our move to live-streaming has gone smoothly and that the congregation is able to engage with the services
- Pray for God's guiding hand as we prepare to open our doors again this month and welcome the congregation into the buildings once more

- Pray for God's wisdom as we make plans for the future - what projects do we continue with, what projects do we say goodbye to and what projects can we begin
- Give thanks for the schools in our Parish who are willing to engage and connect with us through the term, and give thanks for all the staff who have worked so hard in getting the children safely back into their education and for their desire to help the children develop into fully rounded individuals

3rd June, 2021: Chaplaincy to Vulnerable Groups

Ordained Local Minister: Rev Irene Munro

Prayer:

I will answer them before they even call to me. While they are still talking about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers. **Isaiah 65:24 NLT**

Currently, there are over 100,000 people living with dementia in Scotland and this figure increases by approximately 20,000 every year. 66% of residents in care homes are living with dementia requiring specialist care.

- Thank God for the creative ways that care homes kept connected with relatives and friends of residents during lockdown.
- Thank God for the technology which enabled worship to continue online and can now continue to do so should local lockdowns occur.
- Pray for those vulnerable folk who may have lost confidence and be fearful of mixing back in community activities for both social and medical reasons that they will feel God's support through their community.

4th June, 2021: Contin linked with Fodderty & Strathpeffer

Minister: Rev James Bissett (Locum)

Church website link(s): <http://www.strathpefferchurchofscotland.org/>

Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. **1 Chronicles 16:11**

Please pray for the locum minister, office bearers and those associated with Christ's church who seek to serve God faithfully in these local communities.

5th June, 2021: Urray and Kilchrist (Muir of Ord)

Minister: Rev James Munro (Locum)

Church website link: <https://www.muirofordcofs.co.uk/>

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/urrayandkilchrist.churchofscotland>

Guidance:

For well over a year now, our lives have had to conform to the government's guidance on all things pandemic: guidelines for opening church buildings, guidelines for social distancing, guidelines for conduct of worship and so on.

If you ask people about this, some will say the guidance is clear; others that it is not so; others that it is too complicated for them; and yet others that whatever it is, they don't understand or their circumstances don't fit the context.

And right now, arguments are raging about the guidance on travel and holidays, inconsistencies in the traffic light system, what to do about holidays already booked and what is fair and unfair about it all.

What should we make of all this?

Know where to seek the best guidance of all..... in the verses of Scripture, of course!

Psalms 32:8 says *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.....but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him."*

And **James 1:5** says *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*

Isaiah 30:21 says *“And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.”*

Psalms 119:105 says *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”*

John 14:26 says *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”*

So, in the spirit of the verses above, let's pray:

Loving Father, help us to cultivate spiritual disciplines, so that we are more able to receive what you have to tell us, and more willing to do what you require. May we not only come to you with our needs, our praise, and our thanksgiving, but make a habit of spending time in worshipful listening. Help us not to allow the distractions of social media, the bickering of politicians, the fear and uncertainty of not understanding guidelines, the busyness of life and the longing for a return to some sort of normality drown out your still small voice. Help us to be guided in all things by you, rather than our own imperfect judgment.

Mighty God, if we try and live our life without you, we will fail. Long ago, you sent your presence in a towering cloud and burning pillar of fire to guide your people through the wilderness. When we don't know which way to go, we ask that we would know your presence near us, nudging us and guiding us in the right direction. We do not want to go anywhere without you, Lord, because being in your presence is the best place for us. Protect us from harm and direct our steps. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

6th June, 2021: Ferintosh Parish Church

Minister: Rev Stephen MacDonald

Church website link: <https://ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk>

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FerintoshParishChurch/>

With the church building open again we give thanks that we are able to gather in the church for two services each Sunday. Please pray that God would continue to strengthen, through his Word, those who gather together at church services and who attend the Sunday evening Zoom services as well as those who receive the Worship at Home material each week.

Isaiah 55:10-11 - For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

7th June, 2021: Invergordon

Interim Moderator Rev S. Macdonald

Church website link: <http://www.invergordonparishchurch.org.uk/>

Church Facebook page: <https://en-gb.facebook.com/InvergordonChurchOfScotland/>

Give thanks to God for the appointment of Rev Iain MacLeay as Locum Minister.

Pray for much blessing to be upon the preaching of the Word of God and for God's grace and peace to be with Iain and his family.

Give thanks that the church building is open again and that church services have resumed each Lord's Day at 11am with the Zoom services on Sunday evening.

Pray that God would continue to bless the congregation and Parish of Invergordon and that God would continue to encourage the congregation, Nominating Committee, and office bearers as they prayerfully seek the Lord for a new minister.

8th June, 2021: Our Local Communities

Pray for our local businesses who have been affected in so many ways by the current Corona Virus Pandemic.

Intercede for those in our communities who are facing uncertainty over the future in regard to their employment, etc.

Pray that many folks will be drawn back to God, and that our churches and congregations will be used to share Christ and His Gospel with them.

9th June, 2021: Lochbroom & Ullapool

Minister: Rev Heidi Hercus

Church website link: <https://www.ullapoolkirk.org.uk/>

Church Facebook page: <https://en-gb.facebook.com/LochbroomAndUllapoolChurchOfScotland/>

"We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.
I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through'

Please pray for the Minister, Heidi, and for the session as they seek to best serve the parish through these strange times.

Pray for unity, compassion, empathy, kindness and love for a community fearful as Corona moves in. Please pray for a vulnerable church and community, our Faith may be bigger than our fear.

10th June, 2021: Education

Please pray for all our school teachers, college and university lecturers, and all those involved in educating those associated with our communities.

Remember all those who have now returned to face-to-face education, from the youngest to the oldest. Pray for the mental health of so many who are clearly suffering from the difficulties created by the lockdown restrictions.

11th June, 2021: Children's Ministries

Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. **1 Peter 5:7**

Please pray for: Existing ministries which have continued and will continue to adapt.

Children who are unable to attend activities due to Covid-19 restrictions. Families who may be struggling during this difficult time.

God's hand in leading and guiding and blessing all children's ministries as they develop and flourish in the coming days.

12th June, 2021: Kilmuir & Logie Easter
Minister: Rev Alistair Drummond

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Kilmuir-Logie-Easter-Church-of-Scotland-323528971170799/>

The long practiced spiritual discipline of Lectio Divina (sacred/prayerful reading of Scripture) is summarized by the French Benedictine monk Dom Marmion as follows:

“We read (lectio)
under the eye of God (meditatio)
until the heart is touched (oratio)
And leaps to flame (contemplatio)”

Please pray for the congregation

- preparing for the sale of Logie Easter Church
- thinking about renovation of Kilmuir Easter Church
- worshipping more and more in-person as well as on-line
- identifying new gifts and finding new avenues to be of loving service in the community

13th June, 2021: Prayer and Bible Study

Rejoice and give thanks to God for the power of prayer and the freedom we have to read and be taught the scriptures.

Give thanks to Him for those who have still been able to pray and enjoy bible study through on-line means of communication.

Encourage those who are really missing fellowship in the Word and in prayer.

As we look to the future and the possibility of meeting in person, may God enable these valuable ministries to be re-established safely and wisely.

14th June, 2021: Ministry Candidates at Various Stages of Training

Please pray for those involved with the selection and training of all our ministry candidates: Deacons, OLM's, Readers and Word and Sacrament.

Remember all candidates who are commencing, mid-way through and completing their theological studies on-line.

Give thanks to God for the way he has used the Highland Theological College and all the staff associated with it to provide sound and robust theological and academic learning to so many students. Pray that God will continue to use, enhance and bless the work of HTC.

Please pray for our two current Candidates in Training for Ross Presbytery, Tommy MacGregor and Alister Murray.

15th June, 2021: Castle Street, Dingwall

Minister: Rev Drausio Goncalves

Church website link: <https://castlestreetchurch.org/>

Church Facebook page: <https://en-gb.facebook.com/castlestreetchurch/>

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. **Isaiah 43: 18-19**

What is God telling us in these verses? We are entering a new phase of church life due to the pandemic. Do we need to make major changes in our services, outreaches, etc. or do we carry on as before? Tradition can be a stumbling block to both believers and unbelievers so we really need wisdom from God as to the way forward. There's a hurting world out there and the Church has to be a source of healing. We need to pray for God's leading and guiding.

Give thanks for the 9 children who came to Sunday School on the resumption of this children's ministry at the end of May. Pray that this would continue and thrive and flourish.

16th June, 2021: Informal Drop-In Ministries

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. **1 John 3:16-18**
Please pray for those who are lonely and vulnerable. For example, those who miss the weekly opportunities to meet for a cuppa and chat at informal drop in ministries provided by the Church.

As we look to the future, and the possibility of meeting in person, may God enable these valuable ministries to be re-established and developed safely and wisely.

17th June, 2021: Kiltearn Parish Church Minister: Rev Donnie MacSween

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
1 John 4:9-11

Please pray for the minister, office bearers and those associated with Christ's church who seek to serve God faithfully in the parish of Kiltearn.

18th June, 2021: All Foodbank Ministries

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
Matthew 25:35

Please pray for all churches who are providing basic food essentials for those who find themselves in need of this practical help.
May God use this practical way of demonstrating Christ's love to show the power of his Gospel.

19th June, 2021: Fearn Abbey & Nigg linked with Tarbat (Portmahomack) Interim Moderator - Rev Andrew Fothergill

Church website link: <http://www.easter-rosscofs.co.uk/home.php>

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PortmahomackandFearnChurchofScotland/>

Please pray that the linked congregations will grow stronger in unity as they desire to see the good news about Jesus proclaimed in Tarbat & Fearn.
Pray also that in 2021 significant progress is made towards filling this vacant charge.

20th June, 2021: Tain Parish Church
Minister: Rev Andrew Fothergill

Church website link: <http://www.tainparishchurch.co.uk/>

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/tainparish/>

Please pray:

That our congregation will remain resilient in a significant time of change.

That many in our community hungry for hope, peace and good news, will see Tain Parish Church as a welcoming family church to attend now that services have resumed on Sunday mornings.

21st June, 2021: Ross-shire Guilds

Please pray for all the local branches of the Guild that are still faithfully operating and meeting on-line in Ross Presbytery.

Give for the blessing the Guild continues to be to the Church of Scotland.

Praise God for the fellowship provided, and the amazing practical projects that share the Love of God and the Gospel of Jesus with others.

22nd June, 2021: Killearnan linked with Knockbain

Minister: Rev Susan Cord

Church website link: <http://kandkcofs.org/>

Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/kandkcofs/>

Praise God for the success of the roll out of the Covid vaccine, where many congregation members have received their first (or maybe even second) dose, throughout the presbytery.

As we all move to a new stage in the pandemic, help us all to have a vision of how the church should and needs to be; truly loving God and loving others. Grant wisdom and courage to the office bearers, as the congregations deal with impact of the pandemic.

Pray for our church communities. May they build up one another, whether meeting in church buildings or on-line.

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." **Joshua 1:9**

23rd June, 2021: St Clements, Dingwall

Minister: Rev Bruce Dempsey

Church website link: <https://www.dingwallstclements.org.uk/welcome.htm>

Matthew 11:28: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Pray for all who are still suffering from the impacts of Covid-19, especially in countries where there is not enough equipment, beds, and vaccines to relieve the suffering (e.g. India). Pray that the West will continue to supply and support them, and help the process of recovery.

Pray for the doctors and nurses and all who care for the sick and the bereaved. Lord God, may You be with them and uplift their spirit, so that you enable them to cope with whatever challenges they face.

Pray for all those who make decisions on our behalf, governments and all those who have been elected to represent the people. May their decisions be honest and transparent. May they call on you Lord for guidance and wisdom, so that they may represent truth and justice in all their actions.

Lord, we pray for your body, the Church. We pray for the things discussed and the decisions made at the General Assembly, that they would be in line with your laws, Lord.
Bless all Christian ministers, their wives and their families. May they continue to serve you each day, empowered by your Holy Spirit, in order to fulfil the purposes you have for each one. Pray for all the congregations, especially those whose churches are closing at this time. Guide them with your love and wisdom, knowing that you will never leave them nor forsake them. Bless them all in these uncertain times. Pray for the lonely, the sad, the mentally ill and those marginalised by society. May they be comforted by your loving presence, and received professional help where needed. We pray all these things through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

24th June, 2021: Our Government and Leaders

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. **1**

Timothy 2: 1-2

Pray for our politicians, those whom God has given the responsibility to govern our land. Ask God to help our leaders to make wise and right decisions.

Pray that He will direct the paths of those who know Christ, and that His sovereignty will overrule in all things.

Pray for all those who have been elected following the recent Scottish election.

25th June, 2021: Alness Parish Church

Minister: Rev Michael Macdonald (Auxiliary)

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. **James 1:17**

Please give thanks for the scientists who have created the vaccines and that many in our congregations have received their first jab and are encouraged by it.

Give thanks that we are once again able to worship together in person.

Ask God for wisdom and practical help as we update our technology to be able to reach out into the community.

Pray for the young folk of our community and church, that they may be comfortable returning to school after their Easter Break and that once again we will be able to welcome them to Church.

26th June, 2021: The International Justice Mission

Pray for those in poverty who are sadly and wrongly being harmed by violence and exploitation

Pray for the work of the International Justice Mission as they seek to rescue and restore victims, strengthen justice systems and bring criminals to justice

Take time to find out more about this organisation, so you can pray more intelligently and regularly for its invaluable work – see link below

<https://www.ijmuk.org/our-work>.

27th June, 2021: Youth Ministries

Please pray for:

All youth groups who are still able to meet together for fellowship. Young people who have, for now been unable to meet together.

Those who may be finding things difficult.

God's hand in leading and guiding and blessing all youth ministries as they develop and flourish in the coming days.

28th June, 2021: Presbytery Prayers

Pray for Ross Presbytery, and indeed each Presbytery of the Church of Scotland as they debate, discuss and agree their response to the same-sex marriage proposals which came down under the Barrier Act at the recent General Assembly.

May God's people stand up to what His word clearly teaches on this matter.

In Matthew 19:4-6, we find what Jesus (quoting Genesis 2:24) taught, adding his own endorsement: "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

29th June, 2021: Avoch linked with Fortrose & Rosemarkie

Minister: Rev Dr Warren Beattie

Church website links: Avoch - <http://www.avochchurch.co.uk/>

Fortrose & Rosemarkie - <http://www.fortrosemarkiechurchofscotland.com/>

I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. **Psalm 63:2-3**

Let us pray for us all, in the year ahead, to find the strength, love and determination to identify and help those in need.

Pray 'for those in our, and indeed all, congregations unable to attend either virtual or physical services during this continuing lockdown.'

Pray, especially, for the minister and kirk sessions that the Lord would open up ways to reach out in practical and, where necessary, financial ways in the local community at this difficult time.

30th June, 2021: Cromarty linked with Resolis and Urquhart (Culbokie)

Minister: Rev Terry Burns

Church website link: <http://www.cromartychurch.org/>

Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself. **Matthew 22:37-39**

Please pray for the minister, office bearers and those associated with Christ's church who seek to serve God faithfully in these local communities.