

He restores my soul

Dear Friends

The twenty-third psalm has been our inspiration from the very beginning in Restoration Ministries. As we journey together this year, we seek to be re-energised by going back to our roots!

“The Lord is my shepherd. I have everything I need.” Trust is the gifting we need along the way,

especially when things are tough, or when nothing seems to be happening. But trust is a very fragile plant, largely because it is rooted in relationship. We are all broken, wounded people. No matter how mature we are in certain areas, we have all got our Achilles heels; we are going to let other people down and they are going to disappoint us. This is as true for us in our collective journey as it is for us as individuals. We were made for relationship. It's probably the most important thing in the world to

us. The problem arises when our human relationships, understandably enough, become everything to us. Sooner or later cracks will appear in the foundations of what we had trusted was a solid structure either through gradual erosion or sometimes through a major breakage. If we have pinned our entire *raison d'être* on such a structure, then not only does it come tumbling down, but we can come tumbling down with it also. This can happen with another individual, especially if it's someone we have placed upon a pedestal and have not allowed them into full membership of the human community, or it can happen with a group of people or sometimes, most painfully, with our particular branch of institutional church. When such a breakage comes we can feel as if we will never trust anybody or anything again. And yet, miraculously, we do. This is because, whether we have fully recognised it or not, our trust is rooted not solely in human beings and structures but in God, in our relationship with Jesus. Somehow, even at the times when we feel as if we can't hold on any longer, we discover, usually in retrospect, that he has been holding on to us. He is our

shepherd, which is another way of saying that he is our guide, our protector, our leader, our companion and our provider. Our relationship with him is one that never alters from his side, although it may do from ours. And our relationship with him is also inextricably bound up with our relationships with others. But he is the one who is, or should be pivotal in every relationship. When we enter the strange world of learning to trust him no matter what, then

we also learn, albeit slowly, to trust him for the practicalities of our journey which can often loom larger than the vision. I think we have all discovered that when we worry over much about the why and the how, we get diverted and use up too much emotional energy about things that he has indicated he will take care of. So while it is very important that we use and share our gifts and abilities in order that we might together travel the road of res-

toration, not for ourselves alone, but for a much larger purpose, there is a great freedom in recognising that the final responsibility for every detail, including funding, the care of the property, the resourcing of projects is not ours, but God's. He is our shepherd along this road. One version says, **“I have everything I need.”** Another one says, **“There is nothing I shall want.”** Needs and wants aren't always the same. Wants can be very different and at times out of kilter with the purposes of God for us. Needs are quite another matter. I find it very reassuring to accept the fact, in faith, that this God who is our beginning and our ending, knows what we need before we even ask for it and has limitless provision to meet those needs. I'm grateful, too, although sometimes that gratitude is a delayed reaction, that he chooses to withhold some of our wants that, in the end, had they been granted, would have proved to be an obstacle rather than a blessing along the road!

Peace to you all.

Ruth





My name is Andrea Wigglesworth and I work for the Church of Scotland in Crossreach in the National Counselling Service. My main work is to train Christian Counsellors and plant a federation of Christian Counselling Centres throughout Scotland. We now have six counselling centres in Edinburgh, Dunbar, Dundee, Dunfermline, Skye and Moray, and in the last year we facilitated over 10,000 client appointments. This means we had 10,000 opportunities to demonstrate love and kindness, compassion and support.

For the last fifteen years I have been visiting Restoration Ministries as a friend of the ministry and the team there has helped me to organise and facilitate several schools of counselling to train and equip people in Northern Ireland to heal the broken hearted and to work with those who need to know restoration in the area of the soul.

For the team who work in Restoration House in Belfast I call them “Restorers”. The word restore means:

“To bring back to a former state/reconstruct/reinstate/re-establish or use again”

So much of this definition mentioned above describes the work of Restoration Ministries where the team offer prayer ministry to individuals and encourage the building of relationships and work hard to reconnect those who have become disconnected from friends and families, or have become disconnected from their communities. Recently in another setting a “friend” offered his negative opinion of me and I was caught up in the destructive fallout of this opinion. I felt both bullied and imprisoned by his opinion. I needed someone to pray for me and to come alongside me and to restore a sense of peace and harmony within. In Restoration House the team have created *“an environment of counsel”* or a *“listening culture”* which enables the sort of reconciliation that I so badly needed. I was listened to, cared for, prayed with and my wounded soul was set free. Thank-you for all the wonderful work you do.

 *Over the next year we are inviting Restoration Ministries’ ‘friends’ to give us some glimpses of their journey. Thank you Andrea.*

Dates For Your Diary

Monthly Meeting

Monday 31st October at 8.00 pm

Continuing journeying through the gospel of St John

Reflection Days

Our next day of reflection will be held on Saturday 3rd December from 2.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Open House

Every Wednesday
12 noon - 2.00 pm

All Welcome



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