



Fort William Free Church

Newsletter ~ March/April 2018

Issue no. 3



Dear Friends,

There hasn't been much "news" to impart in our newsletter this time but hopefully you will find something interesting to read and contemplate. Devotional readings used are public domain articles from several sources (mainly YouDevotion.com), other articles are submitted by our congregation, and authors are credited where possible. As Easter approaches, we look forward to celebrating our Lord's sacrifice and resurrection, and this year our Communion Service will be held on Easter Sunday, 1st April. Our introduction to this newsletter was kindly written by a member of our congregation whom we graciously thank for their inspiring words.

An Easter Meditation

"And the LORD turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the LORD, how He had said unto Him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." - Luke 22:61, 62 (KJV)

We see in these and the preceding verses how fearfully low any of the LORD's people could fall at any time. This was Peter, who boasted vehemently that he would never deny his Master, that he would die with Him rather than deny Him. This was one of the foremost apostles shamefully doing that very thing through fear and terror. And if this could happen to Peter, how we ourselves need to pray daily that we might be kept by the power and grace of the Most High. *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" - 1 Corinthians 10:12 (KJV)*

But to me, the most wonderful aspect of this portion of scripture is the amazing love of the LORD JESUS for Peter at this time, despite the apostle's treacherous behaviour. What was the look on the Saviour's face when He turned and looked upon Peter? It may have been a look of sorrow and disappointment – even although the LORD had plainly warned Peter that this would happen. It may have been a look of compassion for Peter in his utter weakness. I feel sure that it would not have been an angry look. But is it not amazing that the beloved Saviour, who was about to be mocked, insulted and physically abused, who had in prospect further unjust trials by wicked men, the agonizing period on the cross of feeling forsaken by His father, and finally a humiliating and excruciating death – that He yet showed tender care for the disciple who had so shamefully disowned Him.

That look from CHRIST JESUS utterly melted the heart of Peter. He remembered the Saviour's warning to him, and the horror of what he had done no doubt swept over his conscience. We are told that *"he went out, and wept bitterly."*

(...cont.)

The compassion and forgiveness of the Saviour was further shown to Peter in amazing ways. When the women went to the tomb early in the morning, the angel told them that *“He is risen; He is not here. Go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee”* This must have given Peter encouragement, when, after his fearful fall, he was particularly mentioned by name. Is Jesus calling us by name? Let us listen attentively for His gracious voice speaking to us when we come humbly to Him in prayer and in the reading of His word. We are also told that the disciples shared the news with each other *“The LORD is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.”* We are not told where this wonderful appearance to His repentant apostle took place, but how it magnifies the amazing grace of our glorious Redeemer!

We are told finally how the Saviour fully restored Peter to his former place among the apostles. He questioned him three times over his love to Him, and this surely brought painfully back to Peter’s mind his three denials of his Master. No doubt the LORD intended to speak to Peter’s conscience, and we believe that thereafter, Peter would have walked more humbly, having learned a solemn lesson.

May we take comfort from these beautiful portions of scripture and be assured that if we truly repent of our sins, looking to the Cross of Calvary, we too will be forgiven, and will know blessed fellowship with Him who is “altogether lovely”. Let it be our earnest desire to exalt so glorious a Redeemer in our hearts, and magnify His great and holy name.

Newsletter

Please feel free to contribute any news or articles you think may be of interest to others, perhaps you’ve read something elsewhere that you feel is “newsworthy” or thought provoking, if so please consider sharing it. The deadline for articles to be submitted is a week prior to the bi-monthly newsletter publication date. May/June newsletter will be published on 29th April 2018.

CD’s of Services

CD’s of services are available on request, free of charge. If you would like any CD’s please ask, weekly morning and evening services are also available to listen to on the church YouTube channel. Please encourage others to visit this channel, analytical data has revealed that the channel has been viewed in over 17 countries worldwide, even if it is only a few views (even one view) per country this is still encouraging to think that our sermons are reaching out with God’s word to others. Search Fort William Free Church on YouTube to find our channel.

Church Website

The Church website has a new section called **“Announcements”**. Please visit to be kept up to date with any important information/intimations.

Upcoming Services

Services at 11.00am & 5.30pm

Sunday 4th March

Morning service only, conducted by visiting speaker Mr. Alan Pettit. The evening service will be shared with Kilmallie Free Church in Caol, where you are welcome to join with them for their Communion service.

Supply List

The list of speakers for the remainder of March and April has still to be confirmed. As soon as we have it the list will be available on the Church website in the new “Announcements section and a printed list will also be available in church.

Keep in Prayer

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

John 11:25(KJV)

We all suffer bereavement at some point in our lives and those who trust in God are comforted by the knowledge that He is with us through the pain of loss. For He knows our suffering, He gave his only son Jesus Christ to die for our sins, who better to comfort us than someone who knows the grief and sorrow of losing a loved one. Please remember in prayer those who may be grieving after the death of a family member or friend.

The Eye of The Storm

Fear not that the whirlwind shall carry thee hence,
Nor wait for its onslaught in breathless suspense,
Nor shrink from the whips of the terrible hail,
But pass through the edge to the heart of the gale,
For there is a shelter, sun lighted and warm,
And Faith sees her God through the eye of the storm.

The passionate tempest with rush and wild roar
And threatening's of evil may beat on the shore,
The waves may be mountains, the fields battle plains,
And the earth be immersed in a deluge of rains,
Yet, the soul, stayed on God, may sing bravely its psalm,
For the heart of the storm is the centre of calm.

Let hope be not quenched in the blackness of night,
Though the cyclone awhile may have blotted the light,
For behind the great darkness the stars ever shine,
And the light of God's heavens, His love shall make thine,
Let no gloom dim thine eyes, but uplift them on high
To the face of thy God and the blue of His sky.

The storm is thy shelter from danger and sin,
And God Himself takes thee for safety within;
The tempest with Him passeth into deep calm,
And the roar of the winds is the sound of a psalm.
Be glad and serene when the tempest clouds form;
God smiles on His child in the eye of the storm.

Anon.



In Prayer

I am no longer my own, but Thine.
Put me to what Thou wilt,
Rank me with whom Thou wilt,
Put me to doing,
Put me to suffering,
Let me be employed for Thee,
Or laid aside for Thee,
Exalted for Thee,
Or brought low for Thee,
Let me be full,
Let me be empty,
Let me have all things,
Let me have nothing,
I freely and heartily yield all things
to Thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, o glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Thou art mine and I am Thine.
So be it.

Amen.

To Write the Love of God

Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made,

Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade,

To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry,

Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Tho' stretched from sky to sky.

F.M. Lehman

Thought for the Day

A commentary on 2 Corinthians 1:12-23

“As Paul moves into the body of his second letter to the Corinthians, he addresses the complaint that he had not been open and honest with them. Although he promised to visit Corinth again, Paul had backed out twice. Was Paul being insincere or speaking out of both sides of his mouth? Was he maneuvering behind the scenes to get his way behind others’ backs? Paul addresses these questions in 2 Corinthians 1:12–14. He is proud that his behaviour among the Corinthians has been transparent at all times. His actions were not the machinations of what he calls “fleshly wisdom” (2 Cor. 1:12). He cancelled his visits, not to gain an advantage for himself or save face, but because he did not want to shame or rebuke the Corinthians again. Therefore, he delayed coming back to Corinth in the hope that, when he did come, he could bring joy rather than recrimination and reproof (2 Cor. 1:23–24).

Though Paul’s integrity had been questioned, he knew that because of his history of transparency with them, they would continue to trust him. “We have behaved in the world with frankness and godly sincerity,” he reminds them (2 Cor. 1:12). Because they have seen him in action, they know he says what he means without vacillating (2 Cor. 1:17–20). This makes him sure they “will understand until the end” (2 Cor. 1:1–13), once they know all the factors he has had to consider. His proof of their trust is that even without knowing everything, Paul tells them, “You have already understood us in part” (2 Cor. 1:13).

In our work today, are we transparent enough so that people have a reason to trust us? On a daily basis, every person, company, and organisation faces temptations to hide the truth. Are we obscuring our motivations in order to falsely gain trust from a customer or a rival? Are we making decisions in secret as a way of avoiding accountability or hiding factors others would object to? Are we pretending to support co-workers in their presence, but speaking derisively behind their backs? Paul’s example shows us that these actions are wrong. Moreover, whatever brief advantage we might gain from them is more than lost in the long term because our co-workers learn not to trust us. And if our co-workers cannot trust us, can God?

This doesn’t mean, of course, that we always reveal all the information we have. There are confidences, personal and organisational, that cannot be broken. Not everyone needs to be privy to all information. At times the honest answer may be, “I can’t answer that question because I have a duty of privacy to someone else.” But we shouldn’t use confidentiality as an excuse to prevaricate, to gain an edge on others, or to portray ourselves in a falsely positive light. If and when questions surface about our motives, a solid track record of openness and reliability will be the best antidote for misplaced doubts.

Transparency is so important to Paul’s work with the Corinthians that he returns to the theme throughout the letter. “We refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God’s word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves” (2 Cor. 4:2). “We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you” (2 Cor. 6:11).”

[Commentary courtesy of Theologyofwork.org (using NRSV)]



Quinquennial Meeting

The recent quinquennial meeting was well attended and sought to encourage dialogue regarding several issues. We thank the committee for their time, diligent assessment and advice. After the report by the presbytery has been published, a meeting will be arranged to give our congregation an opportunity to discuss their findings and recommendations.

Church Manse

We would gratefully welcome any donations of good condition secondhand household items for the Manse. The items we still require are listed below, this list will also be on the vestibule hall noticeboard where you can check what has already been donated.

6 x Lamp bases
Pyrex bowls/ovenware
6 x Pillows (preferably new)
4 x Single, 2 x double, 2 x king-size fitted sheets
King-size quilt (preferably new)
2 x King-size quilt cover set
King-size mattress
2 x bedside cabinets
Small dressing table & stool
2 x single bed bases only
Small sideboard
Study desk & chair

Congratulations

The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Numbers 6:24-26 (KJV)

We congratulate Bunnar and Kathleen MacGillivray on the birth of their first grandchild Esther, born on the 27th December 2017. May God's love shine through you both, so your grand-daughter will know the love of our Lord. God Bless you Esther.

The Book of Esther

Kathleen is delighted that her baby grand-daughter has been named Esther, especially as the Book of Esther is a favourite of Kathleen's.

The Book of Esther contains many important messages and although it never mentions God by name, we know that God's hand was upon Esther and Mordecai and that God's timing is always best even if we don't see it at the time. The book teaches us that God sometimes does things without revealing them by words; that pride will always come before a fall; that if we please God we can find favour even among our enemies; that God's timing is always perfect; and most importantly if we devise evil for others, it can readily come back on us.

Children Are a Gift from God

Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

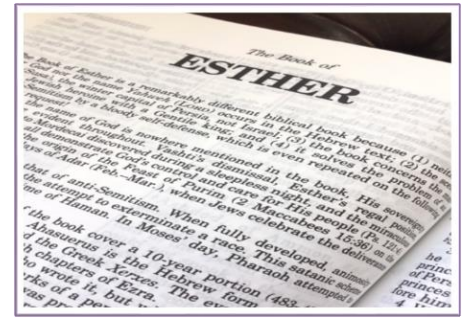
Proverbs 17:6 (KJV)

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

3 John 1:4 (KJV)

And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

Isaiah 54:13 (KJV)



The Book of Proverbs

Many of our homes today have "inspirational" quotes hanging on the wall, it's a trend that has become very popular over the past few years, but most people won't realise that many of these quotes are in fact thousands of years old and inspired by the Book of Proverbs written by King Solomon and other wise men. Far from being a fashionable trend, The Book of Proverbs is a collection of wise words written to guide and instruct us in many situations and relationships. Honesty, integrity, kindness, patience, humility, transparency and a willingness to forgive are just some of the many subjects written about, ultimately the core message in the Book of Proverbs is that true wisdom is based on our relationship with God, we cannot have true wisdom without first having a living relationship with our LORD.

Do you have a favourite Proverb?

The Risen Lord

And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

Mark 16:3 (KJV)

The love of the women friends of Jesus shines out very brightly in all the story. He had healed and blessed them, and they had followed Him from Galilee, ministering to Him, doing things for Him. They watched by His cross and wept by His grave. They had no hope or thought of His resurrection, but they loved on in their bitter disappointment, and sought to honour His body as it lay in the grave. Their disappointment was the world's hope.

The good news the angel told them quieted their fears, and dried their tears, and they went forth to be the first messengers of the resurrection. It is interesting that Christ's first appearance was to a woman, one who loved most because she had been blessed most.

The appearances of the forty days left all the disciples convicted that their Lord had risen indeed, and now believers all over the world rejoice in a living Saviour.

Anon.

Communion Service on Easter Sunday

.....this do in remembrance of me.

1 Cor.11-24 (KJV)

The Lord's Supper is the most sacred of the ordinances of Christian worship. It is a service of memorial – "This do in remembrance of Me." Jesus showed His humanness in His desire to be remembered. It is one proof of immortality that we cannot bear to think of being forgotten. Jesus wants us to remember Him, however, not merely at His table, or now and then, but all the while. If we keep Him thus ever in memory it will bless our lives in many ways. It will transform us into His likeness; thinking much of others makes us like them. It will keep us from doing wrong or sinful things. Even the picture of a good man makes us ashamed to do things He would disapprove. Remembering Christ keeps our hearts warm with love for Him. We are kept in mind of the sweetness of His love and of all that He has done for us, and we are constrained to love Him. Remembering Christ will make us happy, for we shall never forget that He is our friend and is with us all the days.



Bible Emergency Numbers

Available 24/7, phone service not required.

Upset.....John 14

Weak.....Psalm 18:1-29

Lonely.....Psalm 23

Sinned..... Psalm 51

Worried.....Matthew 8:19-31

Anxious.....Philippians 4:4-9

Unhappy.....Colossians 3:12-17

In dangerPsalm 91

DepressedPsalm 27

Lack of faith.....Exodus 14

Need courage.....Joshua 1

Need direction.....Psalm 73:21-26

Seeking peace.....Matthew 11:25-30

Leaving on a trip.....Psalm 121

Struggling with loss.....Luke 15

Struggling financially.....Psalm 37

Discouraged with work ..Psalm 126

(Cut out and keep or pass along)

About the author of “Footprints”

This much-loved poem was contributed by a member of our congregation and whilst searching online to find the author, there seemed to be some confusion as to who originally penned it. Further research found that Mary Stevenson (Zangare) had written it in 1936 and the following extract from a website dedicated to the poem explains the story behind the journey to prove her rightful authorship.



“Footprints in the Sand has been seen in print by people the world over since the late 1940's. All that time no author has been credited with this immortal work, only 'Author Anonymous' has appeared at the bottom. The web site www.footprints-in-the-sand.com was created to bring to light the story behind 'Footprints in the Sand' and its author Mary Stevenson (Zangare).

For many years handwritten copies were distributed by Mary to those who needed something to give them comfort at a low point in their lives. It was sometime after this that friends of Mary saw it in print and wondered why she wasn't given credit for writing it. An attorney at that time told her that it would be very hard to prove her the author since it had been used by many publishers of religious materials and greeting cards. Mary wrote 'Footprints' in 1936 when she was very young and knew nothing of copyrighting. Discouraged she didn't pursue it any further.

In 1984 while cleaning out the garage to prepare to move from her house, in a small suitcase, among her other poems, she rediscovered a very old handwritten copy that she thought was lost. It was one of the copies Mary had made and dated 1939, just three years after she wrote the original. Later that year the U.S. copyright office awarded her a copyright for 'Footprints in the Sand' 48 years after it was written. It was another 11 years before her handwritten copy was authenticated by a forensic specialist as to its age. Margaret Fishback-Powers and many others have tried to falsely claim authorship, but none can show significant proof such as this.”

Trust in the Lord

Each of us may be sure that if God sends us over rocky paths,
He will provide us with sturdy shoes.
He will never send us on any journey without equipping us well.

Alexander Maclaren

Mary Stevenson

Footprints in The Sand

One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach
with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes
from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets
of footprints in the sand,
One belonging to me and one to
my Lord.

After the last scene of my life
flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in
the sand.
I noticed that at many times along
the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and
saddest times,
there was only one set of
footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked
the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said once I decided to
follow you,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the
saddest and most troublesome
times of my life,
there was only one set of
footprints.
I don't understand why, when I
needed You the most, You would
leave me."

He whispered, "My precious
child, I love you and will never
leave you
Never, ever, during your trials and
testings.
When you saw only one set of
footprints,
It was then that I carried you."

Easter Word Search



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ANGELS
 APOSTLES
 BETRAYAL
 BLOOD
 CALVARY
 CROSS
 CROWN OF THORNS
 CRUCIFIXION
 DARKNESS
 DEATH
 EARTHQUAKE
 EASTER
 GOLGOTHA
 HIGH PRIEST
 JESUS CHRIST
 JOSEPH
 JUDAS ISCARIOT
 KING
 LAMB

MARY
 NAILS
 PASSOVER
 PIECES OF SILVER
 PIERCED
 PILATE
 RESURRECTION
 ROBE
 ROMANS
 SACRIFICE
 SIMON OF CYRENE
 SOLDIERS
 SON OF GOD
 SPEAR
 STONE
 TEMPLE
 THIEVES
 THREE DAYS
 TOMB

Easter Bible Verses

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 11:25

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 14:6

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Matthew 28:6

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

SundaySchoolResources.co.uk

Answers to Jan/Feb. Quick Quiz questions:

1. John
2. Nazareth
3. Matthew
4. Matthew or Luke
5. John the Baptist