

 **Fort William Free Church**

High Street, Fort William, Inverness-shire

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Dear Congregation,

Time is flying by and it seems ages since the communion weekend at the beginning of October. I want to say how much I enjoyed being with you and that I was encouraged by many aspects of the congregation. I found a warm fellowship ready to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with whatever gifts God has given them. This newsletter is an example, as is the hospitality being offered week by week. I observed people who are willing to take responsibility and make appropriate changes to congregational life. (e.g. change of evening service time). I also observed a profound humility that comes from a deep awareness of our brokenness before God. This is good-because it means that we are ready to serve and empathise with other broken people. Jesus said "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (**Mark 2:17 NIV**) Our calling is not to help people feel secure in their self-righteous pride but to minister to those who are broken in spirit. I think Fort William congregation can do that.

With regard to the future, the Kirk Session will be meeting shortly to discuss the way ahead. Numerically and financially the congregation is fragile which means getting permission to call a minister will be difficult. Presbytery is obliged (by church law) to consider linkage with Kilmallie because of the proximity and for a long time the Presbytery has spoken about team working in Lochaber. This may be the best route, but it is early days and many conversations will need to happen beforehand. As interim moderator, apart from organising supply, I will be investigating what opportunities there are to secure long-term ministry in the congregation and what changes need to happen to make the congregation a centre for Kingdom growth under God. In the meantime, can I suggest that an "all hands on deck approach" is required. This is not a time for shrinking violets or for people to hold back on commitment. Precisely the opposite is the case. If your leaders look for volunteers to get something done, be at the front of the queue!

May God bless your endeavours.

Your Interim Moderator,

Rev. Gordon Martin

**November Church Services****Sunday 5th November**

Morning service 11.00am conducted by visiting speaker Rev. Gerald Kaye

Evening Service 5.30pm with Rev. Gerald Kay

Sunday 12th November

Morning service 11.00am conducted by visiting speaker Mr. Alan Pettit

Evening service 5.30pm with Mr. Alan Pettit

Sunday 19th November

Morning service 11.00am conducted by visiting speaker Mr. Iain MacRitchie

Evening service 5.30pm with Mr. Iain MacRitchie

Sunday 26th November

Morning service 11.00am conducted by visiting speaker Mr. Justin Cummings

Evening service 5.30pm with Mr. Justin Cummings

Wednesday Bible Study/Prayer MeetingMeetings are at 7.30pm, currently conducted by Mr. Donald MacDonald or visiting speakers when available.

My Beloved

“As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste” ~ Song of Solomon 2:3 (KJV)

This verse is, to me, one of the loveliest verses in the Scriptures. It is a precious description of the Saviour, and tells us the wonderful effect upon poor sinners of having close fellowship with Him.

The Song of Solomon is indeed about the relationship between Christ Jesus and His church. He is the Heavenly Bridegroom, the bride being His people.

In verse 3, the bride is speaking and compares her Beloved to an apple tree. We can imagine the beauty and sweetness of such a tree, and we can be brought to know the beauty and sweetness of our Lord for ourselves if we put our trust in Him. The bride tells us that she sat down under His shadow with great delight, and surely this is a wonderful thought, especially for any of us who are going through difficult and trying experiences. Think of sitting underneath a large, shady tree if we are weary and feeling the heat. What a spot to rest and be refreshed! And so it is, when we are really struggling in life – we can come to Him and be greatly strengthened and helped. “Sitting down under His shadow” implies sitting, or keeping, close to Jesus, and this we do when we wait upon Him in prayer, and read and consider His word.

The bride concludes this verse by telling us that “His fruit was sweet to my taste.” Here, the “fruit” is referring to the countless blessings bestowed on His people by the Saviour – pardon of sins, grace to live according to His teaching, all the “exceeding great and precious promises”, and so much more that He lavishes upon them.

May we all come to know Him as “my Beloved”, and taste for ourselves the sweetness of His loving kindness to His people.

~ *Anon*

“He leadeth me.” Psalm 23:2 (KJV)

The Shepherd knows what pastures are best for his sheep, and they must not question nor doubt, but trustingly follow Him. Perhaps He sees that the best pastures for some of us are to be found in the midst of opposition or of earthly trials. If He leads you there, you may be sure they are green for you, and you will grow and be made strong by feeding there. Perhaps He sees that the best waters for you to walk beside will be raging waves of trouble and sorrow. If this should be the case, He will make them still waters for you, and you must go and lie down beside them, and let them have all their blessed influences upon you.

~ *H.W. Smith*



IN PRAYER

Prayer is a very personal communication with God, each of us praying for things close to, and on our hearts, please continue to pray for our own Church, the sick and bereaved, those in our local community and our Christian brothers and sisters who risk their lives whilst spreading the Gospel in unsafe places worldwide.

1 John 5:14-15 (KJV)

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

¹⁵ And if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

~

“Almighty God, help me in these fleeting days that I may not use my time to consider and hesitate, but to be positive in my desires and pursue them. Grant that I may have the strength to hold each day precious, and live it more than consistently. *Amen.*”

THANK YOU

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Alec Stewart who was our interim moderator when Rev. Gordon Mair retired, it was a great comfort to the congregation at such an uncertain time to have his help in arranging visiting speakers. Please keep Alec and his family in your prayers.

CHURCH MANSE

Now that Rev. Mair has vacated the church manse, we will be preparing the property to accommodate visiting speakers and, God willing, for the arrival of our new minister. We would be most grateful for any donations of furniture in good useable condition that may be surplus to your requirements. If anyone can spare an hour or two to help redecorate etc. this would be most welcome too. Please contact Roddy or Alice Munro.

BLYTHSWOOD CARE

Our local Blythswood charity shop in Caol Shopping Centre welcomes donations from individuals and businesses. Blythswood Care combines the Christian message with practical help for those in need at home and abroad, regardless of their political or religious beliefs or ethnic origins. The Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2017 is accepting boxes at the Caol shop until 6th November, information leaflets on what can be donated are available from the shop. Please support this very worthwhile charity.

Contact: 01397 701516 ~ Opening hours: 10.00am – 4.00pm (6 days)

DONATION

Fort William Free Church recently received a very generous donation from the “Beter-Uit-reizen” (Better Off Travel) Christian Foundation in the Netherlands. This is a Christian travel organisation which runs several holiday parks in Europe where they hold Sunday Christian services, offerings are collected during these services and the money collected is distributed by the foundation to non-profit charities. Arenda Hasnoot is a board member of the foundation and every year she can give a donation to a charity and this year she nominated our church to receive this most welcome gift. Arenda and her family are frequent visitors to the church when she visits Fort William during the summer months. We would like to thank Arenda and the foundation for this kind donation which is a great blessing to the church.



Thought for the Day

When you lie down at night,
compose your spirits as if you were
not to awake till the heavens be no
more. And when you awake in the
morning, consider that new day as
your last, and live accordingly.
Surely that night cometh, of which
you will never see the morning, or
that morning of which you will
never see the night; but which of
your mornings or nights will be
such, you know not.

~ *Thomas Boston*

TICK TOCK

Tick tock, tick tock,
Steadily onwards,
Ticks the old clock,
Marking the seconds,
Minutes and days,
Timing the world
And it's changing ways.

Tick tock, morning and night,
Tick tock, darkness and light,
Onwards and onwards,
Good times and bad,
Sharing the happy,
Comfort and sad.

Tick tock,
Is all it can say,
Steadily onwards,
Day after day,
Watching and waiting,
Working so well,
What of the future,
Time only will tell.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Fort William Free Church now has its own YouTube Channel. There you will find uploaded videos of our recent sermons. Please visit the channel, subscribe and tell your friends about it. CD copies of any uploaded sermons are available on request.

CD'S

Sunday morning and evening services are recorded and put on CD, copies can be taken free of charge from the wall rack/noticeboard in the entrance vestibule, please feel free to keep them or pass them on once you have listened to them. Further copies of any sermons are available on request.

TEA AND BISCUITS

We would greatly appreciate any donations of tea and small packets of biscuits for Sunday after service fellowship with visitors to the church, please see Alice who can tell you what may be needed.

ONLINE

Many of us now have the benefit of being online, if you would like to recommend any online Christian websites which may be of interest to others please send your recommendations to the Church email address.

Here are a few suggestions:

Barnabasfund.org | www.youdevotion.com | www.christianconcern.com

FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

We hope you have enjoyed our first newsletter, this will be a bi-monthly publication and will be released on the last Sunday of the preceding month, so the January 2018 issue will be available on Sunday 31st December 2017. If you would like to contribute any news, information or articles please email us or leave your suggestions in the "Newsletter" tray on the vestibule table (any devotional articles can be published anonymously if you wish). If you would prefer to go paperless and receive a digital version by email, please send your request to the church email address and we will send you a copy. The newsletter is also available to view online on our church website <http://www.fortwilliamfreechurch.org/pdf>



Psalm 121 (KJV)

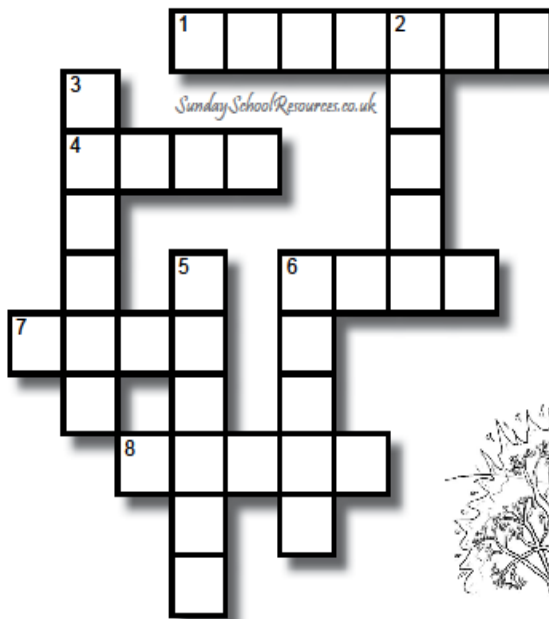
1. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.
2. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.
3. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
4. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.
5. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.
6. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.
7. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.
8. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

~

May God Bless You

Moses & the Burning Bush

Exodus 3



ACROSS

- 1 Moses removed these from his feet (7)
- 4 Moses hid this when God spoke to him (4)
- 6 The type of ground Moses was standing on (4)
- 7 This unexpectedly didn't consume the bush (4)
- 8 What Moses was looking after when he saw the burning bush (5)

DOWN

- 2 What Moses saw in the burning bush (5)
- 3 How Moses felt about seeing God when He spoke to him (6)
- 5 Moses' father-in-law (6)
- 6 The mountain where the burning bush was (5)

Clues: No need to Google, all the answers are in your Bible!

Colour in the drawing of Moses and the burning bush.

Quick Quiz for Kids



- 1. How many apostles did Jesus have?
- 2. Who wrote the book of Acts?
- 3. Where was Paul when he went blind?
- 4. What are the names of the Gospel books?
- 5. What did Jesus heal ten men of?

Bible verses to memorise.

Psalm 136:1 (KJV)

O give thanks unto the Lord;
for he is good: for his mercy
endureth for ever.

Isaiah 43:5 (KJV)

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will
bring thy seed from the east, and
gather thee from the west;

Luke 6:31 (KJV)

And as ye would that men should
do to you, do ye also to them
likewise.

Answers to puzzles in January
newsletter.

Preaching schedule for Fort William Free Church*

<u>Date</u>	<u>11am Service</u>	<u>5:30pm Service</u>
5th Nov.	Rev. Gerald Kaye	Rev. Gerald Kaye
12th Nov.	Alan Pettit	Alan Pettit
19th Nov.	Iain MacRitchie	Iain MacRitchie
26th Nov.	Justin Cummings	Justin Cummings

Date	11am Service	5:30pm Service
3rd Dec.	Rev. Gordon Martin	Rev. Gordon Martin
10th Dec.	Alan Pettit	Alan Pettit
17th Dec.	Justin Cummings	Justin Cummings
24th Dec.	Rev. Andrew Fraser	Rev. Andrew Fraser
31st Dec.	Rev. Andrew Fraser	Rev. Andrew Fraser

Date	11am Service	5:30pm Service
7th Jan. '18	Rev. Bill McCully	Rev. Bill McCully
14th Jan.	Rev. Gerald Kaye	Rev. Gerald Kaye
21st Jan.	Rev. Andrew Fraser	Rev. Andrew Fraser
28th Jan.	Rev. Andrew Fraser	Rev. Andrew Fraser

Date	11am Service	5:30pm Service
4th Feb.	Donald Stewart	Donald Stewart
11th Feb.	Rev. Gordon Martin?	Rev. Gordon Martin?
18th Feb.	Len Cazaly	Len Cazaly
25th Feb.	Rev. Douglas MacKeddie	Rev. Douglas MacKeddie

*Any changes to this schedule will be announced during church intimations and in the next newsletter.