

Fort William Free Church

High Street, Fort William, Inverness-shire, PH33 6EE

Newsletter ~ May/June 2018

Issue 4



Dear Friends,

Welcome to our fourth newsletter. As we look forward to longer days and hopefully warmer weather, we are reminded of Gods wonderful blessings in the beauty of the magnificent mountains surrounding our town, in the gardens brimming with beautiful flowers, butterflies & bees, the breathtaking sunsets and the bright welcoming sunrises. All these marvelous sights are gifts which He has provided for us. Summer is also a popular time of year for weddings, the special celebration of the covenant of marriage, the joining together of a man and a woman in Holy matrimony, in the sight of God, what a blessing indeed. So, this month you will see a distinct theme in our newsletter.... LOVE! And none more so than the love of God, for that love transcends all others.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (KJV)

Chapter 13 ~ "The way of love."

4. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;
6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;
7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things;
8. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

God's Love

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

~ 1John 4:7 (KJV)

Upcoming Services

Services at 11.00am & 5.30pm

Sunday 6th May

Conducted by visiting speaker
Rev. Douglas MacKeddie.

Sunday 13th May

Conducted by visiting speaker
Mr. D. J. Stewart.

Sunday 20th May

Conducted by visiting speaker
Rev. Bill McCully.

Sunday 27th May

Conducted by our interim
moderator Rev. Gordon Martin

June supply speakers have yet to be confirmed and will be listed on the church website when the list becomes available. Any changes to the above speakers will also be announced on the website.

Wednesday Bible Study

The bible study meetings will be announced in church intimations, whilst we are in vacancy these meetings will no longer be held weekly.

A Morning Contemplation

When I awake, I am still with Thee. ~ **Psalm 139:18 (KJV)**

With his first waking conscience, he can set himself to take a serious, manly view of the day before him. He ought to know pretty well on what lines his difficulty is likely to come, whether in being irritable, or domineering, or sharp in his bargains, or self-absorbed, or whatever it be; and now, in this quiet hour, he can take a good, full look at his enemy, and make up his mind to beat him. It is a good time, too, for giving his thoughts a range quite beyond himself, - beyond even his own moral struggles, - a good time, there in the stillness, for going into the realm of other lives. His wife, - what needs has she for help, for sympathy, that he can meet? His children, - how can he make the day sweeter to them? This acquaintance, who is having a hard time; this friend, who dropped a word to you yesterday that you hardly noticed in your hurry, but that comes up to you now, revealing in him some finer trait, some deeper hunger, than you had guessed before, - now you can think these things over.

~ **G. S. Merriman**

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Psalm 143:8 (KJV)

If Only I Were One of His Sheep

A young girl in bed in sickness was anxious to be saved. A friend sent her a scripture text card. Slowly she read it: "And I give unto them eternal life; (i.e. My sheep) and they shall never perish," ~ **John 10:28 (KJV)** As she sank back on her pillow she said, "If only I were one of His sheep I should be happy." However, as the card was turned over on the bedcover, another text was read: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" ~ **1 Timothy 1:15 (KJV)** "Oh", she said, as this glorious verse enlightened her soul, "if I am not a sheep I am a sinner and Jesus Christ came to save sinners." There she trusted Him, rejoicing in glad tidings.

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Oh to get Christ as the Lamb and not meet Him as the lion at last.

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(The above two writings are from the diary of the late Rev. William Grant of Halkirk)



In Prayer

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

~ **John 15:13 (KJV)**

My Father, as I pause this day to think of the brave men and women who have given their lives for the sake of others, may I be thankful for them. May I remember that noble deeds and kind words are never lost, but that self may block the way to justice. O Father, make war to cease! And lead us to victories that are won through peace.

~ **Amen**

Morning Prayer

I commit myself to Thee, Lord, today and every day, and ask that Thou wilt keep me near that I may never stray.

Remind me, Lord, that I am Thine, that Thou art ever there to guide me in the storm of life. O Jesus, hear my prayer.

~ **Anon.**

Presbytery Oversight Visit

The report by the Presbytery team has been published and is available to anyone in the congregation. Please ask Donald or Roddy and they will be happy to give you a copy. There were many positives in the report, not least the acknowledgement that our congregation is warm and welcoming, care for one another, love God's word and have a seriousness of purpose about worship. The report also highlighted issues which will be discussed in due course and the congregation will be kept up to date when information pertaining to any changes is made available.

The Manse

Thank you to everyone for their generosity and hard work in preparing the manse for visitors. Thanks also to Victor Smith of Langan & Smith for supplying and fitting nine double glazing window units and to Kenny Campbell for repairing the ridge tiles on the leaking roof, we sincerely appreciate the excellent workmanship and the very reasonable costs from both contractors.

Hospitality

While we are still in vacancy, we rely heavily upon visiting speakers (some of whom travel long distances) to conduct our Sunday services, if anyone could provide hospitality by way of a bed for the night and/or meals, please let us know.

Trinitarian Bible Society

The Trinitarian Bible Society was founded in 1831 with the principal aim of promoting the Glory of God and the increase of His Kingdom through the circulation of Protestant or uncorrupted versions of the Word of God. Today, they still carry forward that vision, which is so well expressed in their motto, "The Word of God Among All Nations". They aim to publish and distribute the Holy Scriptures throughout the world in many languages and to promote Bible translations which are accurate and trustworthy, conforming to the Hebrew Masoretic Text of the Old Testament, and the Greek Textus Receptus of the New Testament, upon which texts the EAV is based. If you would like to know more about their work, please visit their website www.tbsbibles.org

Household Items List

Thank you to everyone who was able to donate household items requested for the manse.



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Church Website

Please see the website to be kept up to date with new announcements. You can also view the bi-monthly newsletters in colour and download or print them too. Printing your own copy may result in some sections of the newsletter being in various font types, this is due to an Adobe issue with converting the original newsletter file to a pdf for the website. Should you encounter any problems with printing your own copies, please see Guy MacDonald who will be able to supply you with an original copy.

YouTube Channel

A reminder that most Sunday sermons are uploaded to the church YouTube channel, should you wish to listen to them search Fort William Free Church on the YouTube home page. You do not need to have a YouTube account to view our channel but if you wish to subscribe to receive notification of uploads you can make an account and subscribe.

The Holy Spirit

...but be filled with the Spirit ~ **Ephesians 5:18 (KJV)**

As it was with Christ Himself, so it is with His members. He was conceived by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, sealed by the Spirit. He was led into the wilderness by the Spirit, and by the Spirit He was raised from the dead; even so the members of Christ answer unto Christ Himself. All is by the Spirit; we are conceived by the Spirit, the same Spirit by way of union, and then unction follows after; when we are knit to Christ by the Spirit, then it works the same in us as it did in Him.

It is not enough to know by the Word that there is strength and righteousness in Christ, but the Spirit must open the eyes of the soul to see, else we shall only have a natural knowledge of supernatural things. It is necessary to have a supernatural light to see supernatural things, so as to change the soul, and therefore the Spirit only works faith to see Christ is mine. Further, only the Spirit can lead the conscience to rest because He is greater than the conscience and can answer all inward objections and quibbles of flesh and blood; unless therefore the Holy Ghost does effectually apply what Christ has done, the conscience will not be satisfied.

There are three main parts of our salvation; first, a true knowledge of our misery; and secondly, the knowledge of our deliverance; and then thirdly, a life conformable to the Word. The Holy Ghost only can work these; He only convinces of sin, and where He truly convinces of sin, there also of righteousness, and then of judgement, and leads us by faith to heaven.

Those that care not for the Word are strangers to the Spirit, and those that care not for the Spirit never make a right use of the Word. The Word is nothing without the Spirit. It is animated and quickened by the Spirit. The Spirit and the Word are like veins and arteries in the body, that give quickening and life to the whole body, and therefore, where the Word is most revealed there is most of the Spirit, but where Christ is not opened in the Gospel, there the Spirit is not at all visible in His saving power.

As the Spirit is necessary to work faith at first, so is He necessary also to every act of faith, for faith cannot act upon occasion but by the Spirit; and therefore we should not attempt to do, or suffer anything rashly, but beg the Spirit of God and wait for His assistance, because according to the increase of our troubles must our faith be increased. The life of a Christian commences by the Spirit's working faith at first but is promoted upon all occasions by His animating our graces already received. Faith stirs up all other graces and holds every grace to the Word, and so long as faith continues active we keep all other graces in exercise.

~ Richard Sibbes



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Love Toward God

When the love of Christ is manifested to us, and our love again to Christ is quickened by the Spirit, this causes an admiration in the soul, when it considers what wonderful love is in Christ, and the Spirit witnesses that this love of Christ is set upon us; from hence it begins to admire, "How is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world? What is the reason Thou so lovest me, and not others?" When the soul has been with God on the mount and is turned from earthly things, then it sees nothing but love and mercy. Such grace constrains us to do all things out of love to God and goodwill to men.

These inspiring meditations are taken from a book called "Divine Meditations" by Richard Sibbes who was born in 1577. He was educated at Cambridge and his call by grace came in 1602 when he became a preacher of God's sovereign mercy and redeeming love. All through his life his preaching of the gospel truth was highly valued. In 1633 he was made Vicar of Trinity Church, Cambridge. He died in 1635 and his last two sermons were on John 14:1,2.

A Wedding Long Ago and Far Away

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage." **John 2:1,2 (KJV)**

The months of May and June are popular for celebrating marriages, and so our thoughts turn to the marriage which took place so long ago in Cana of Galilee. I wonder did the couple who were married that day realise who the LORD Jesus truly was, that He was the Messiah sent from GOD? Probably not at first, but it seems likely that by the close of the day, they may at least have had in inkling as to the identity of the One who miraculously helped them.

We are all familiar with the events of that occasion, how the LORD turned the water into wine, thus saving the families of the couple from much embarrassment, when their supply of wine ran out. The presence of Christ Jesus at this ceremony shows us that marriage is honourable in the sight of Christ. It is a sign of the mystical union between Him and His church. We see also the great loving kindness of the LORD, how He had compassion on the families and helped them so wondrously in a time of difficulty.

The first miracle worked by Moses (by the power of GOD) was when he turned the water into blood (Exodus 7:20) and the first miracle performed by the Saviour was when he turned the water into wine. We notice how the servants obeyed His command to fill the pots with water, and it would be good for us if we would likewise obey His commands, for we read that the LORD later said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" ~ **John 14:21(KJV)**

We are told also about the excellent quality of the wine, and the LORD'S people know that whatever He does for them, whatever gifts He gives, are far surpassing earthly treasures. We know also in our own experience that He is able to turn our water into wine spiritually. In place of our own ignorance and worldliness He gives grace and knowledge of Himself, and every lovely and needful thing.

Matthew Henry says, "It is desirable when there is a marriage, to have Jesus Christ present at it, to have His spiritual gracious presence, to have the marriage blessed by Him: the marriage is then honourable indeed."

And we remember in the final book of the Bible that the LORD says, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the LAMB." **Revelation 19:9 (KJV)** How wise it would be for us all to examine ourselves to see whether we are indeed among that blessed number who answer that call, because the gospel invitation is full and free to sinners such as we all are. ~ **Anon.**



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When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glaring sun,
When we stand with Christ on high,
Looking o'er life's history;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe.

When I stand before the throne
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe

E'en on earth, as through glass
Darkly, let Thy glory pass;
Make forgiveness feel so sweet;
Make Thy Spirit's help so meet:
E'en on earth, Lord, make me know
Something of how much I owe.

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This poem is by Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843) He was educated at the University of Edinburgh and went on to serve as minister at St. Peter's Church in Dundee. During a forced absence from his congregation he wrote them many letters which revealed a pastor full of compassion and concern for his flock. These letters are published in a book called "Pastoral Letters". He died age 29 from typhus and was buried in the graveyard beside St. Peters church with an estimated 7000 attending his funeral.



The Battle of Jericho

Joshua 6

B U Z F G R E J T Y O J W S S
 A W B A E D F I O J A D A T E
 H S Y T K J G R U S E G V E I
 A E Y C O C H A B Y H F M P C
 R M S G H P S H O U T U D M A
 L I E R C D C R Z E G M A U K
 G T T P I U T S O L D I E R S
 L N I H R S R S G T L M A T W
 W E L B E L C O B T M T R C R
 E V E D J S I X D A Y S D N G
 N E A R M Y U M W B Y L Z W M
 K S R Q S B A W W K U U A E A
 M B S O I R W A Q X U L H A R
 P R I E S T S V M Q L O F A C
 P V A X S M Q B B S O C J Z H

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ARMY	JERICO	RAHAB	SOLDIERS
BATTLE	JOSHUA	SEVEN TIMES	TRUMPETS
DESTROYED	MARCH	SHOUT	WALLS

Read about the Battle of Jericho in the book of Joshua 6. Joshua's strong faith in God led him to obey, no matter how illogical God's command seemed to be. Joshua also drew from the past, remembering the impossible deeds God had done through Moses.

(Deadline for July/Aug newsletter contributions is 22nd June 2018)

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Quick Quiz

Old testament Trivia Questions

1. What was the name of Adam's third son?
2. Who was the mother of Samuel?
3. What is the last word in the Old Testament?
4. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
5. Who wrote the first five books of the Old Testament?
6. What was the first bird Noah let out of the ark?
7. What was the first plague the Lord sent on Egypt?
8. How did David defeat Goliath?
9. What was the secret of Samson's great strength?
10. Who was Moses' successor after his death?

Answers are in your Bible.

Pray

Rejoice evermore.

Pray without ceasing.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (KJV)