

Free Church of Scotland

Leith

Elder Memorial

2010 Newsletter
July – August



Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV)

The View from Viewcraig

I was originally tempted to give this piece the title “Musings from the Manse,” but thought that Colin may have something to say about that! Having said that, the opportunity to do a six week placement with Colin as part of my Free Church College training has been fantastic. If there’s one thing I’ve learnt from being with Colin it’s the importance of alliteration, so here’s the placement divided into three Ps.

Preaching

I’ve spent the last few weeks preaching on the *Supremacy of Christ in Colossians 1 and 2*. This has been of great help to me in two ways: (1) Having the opportunity to preach regularly and thematically on part of Scripture (2) Getting regular feedback from Colin regarding my preaching. It’s very easy to think you know everything especially as an idealistic, twenty three year old student, but throughout these weeks Colin’s been continually stressing the importance of (a) Stating, (b) Illustrating, and (c) Applying in Preaching which I’d never really focused on before. If there’s anything I’d like to take away from the placement regarding preaching it would be that.

Pastoring

Over these weeks I’ve also had the opportunity to take part in various aspects of what being a Pastor is and quickly realised that being a minister is not a one day a week job! Some of the things I’ve been able to do have been helping at the Light Lunch and Drop In, visiting members of the congregation, going to the Registrars to see the legal side to conducting baptisms, weddings and funerals, being present at the Deacon’s Court and Presbytery, going to a Pastors’ Prayer Lunch, and a trip to the Mission Week at St Peter’s (Dundee). It’s become more and more clear having been involved in this pastoral work about the importance of community in the Church – that Church is not about us meeting together in a building a few days a week, but rather it’s about us being real people in a real world seeking to spread a passion for Christ. This is definitely something I hope to take away with me for the future.

Personal

Finally, I’d like to close on a personal note. The thing which I’ve enjoyed most about this placement has been getting to know the congregation both those who are able to attend Church Sunday after Sunday and those who are no longer able to get out the same. In saying this, I’d like to thank the entire congregation for all your support, encouragement and prayers over these weeks. Furthermore I’d like to say how grateful I am to Charlie, Jim and Donald for their presenting for me – especially when I may have picked awkward metres or requested unusual tunes for them. I’d also like to thank the elders for all their support. Finally I’ll close by thanking Colin for putting up with me on a daily basis and for his patience in having to deal with a John Piper quoting/U2 Loving/Spiky haired sidekick! Also thanks to Jessie for cooking many a

meal for me and for her encouragement throughout so much of the placement (apart from when it came to my trying to knit!!) And thanks David, Rebekah and Lydia for helping me to feel like part of the family.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the end of September – if I survive the wilds of the Scottish Highlands that is!!

Hugh

Communions

We celebrated the Lord's Supper in the congregation on Sunday 9th May with preparatory services on the preceding Friday and Saturday. Iver Martin from Stornoway took the services on Saturday and Sunday and Charlie took the Friday night service.

We are thankful to the Lord for three new members by profession of faith - Mrs Sandra Cuniffe, Mr Billy Philipps and Mr Geoff Mitchell. May the Lord who began a good work in them continue it until the day of Christ (Phil 1. 6).

Our next Communions are on the 8th August in the evening with preparatory services taken on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. All services will be taken by Colin.

Please make the conversion of people to Christ and the making of disciples of Christ a matter of serious prayer. It is the Lord alone who can open the heart (Acts 16. 14) and the Lord alone who gives the spiritual growth (1 Cor 3. 6) so let's give him no rest until he lets us know that there are no more to be saved!!

Light Lunch and Drop In

These have both been going really well. We are thankful for all the help that we get from people who can come once in a while and those who help every week. As we work together I'm reminded of Paul's picture of the church as a body, each part doing what it can for the overall good of the body (1 Cor 12. 12-31). It's been good to have Alasdair and Hugh at both ventures every week, engaging with people and building relationships with them.

We've decided that there will be no lunch or drop in for the month of July. Please do let people know this.

Sunday School

On 20 June the last Sunday school classes for the session were held, followed at the close of the service by each of the 20 children present receiving a book, and in return their singing together - very tunefully - the modern version of Psalm 23 and a rendering of John 3:16. The teachers during the year – Gordon Murray and Christina Macritchie, with back-up provided by John Scoales, Alexandra Macritchie and Rebekah Macleod, were warmly thanked. We hope that they experience the joy that the Apostle John talks about when he says: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth”, a joy that they share with parents, ministers and indeed all those in the congregation who pray for and love all the children who are part of it.

The Session has recently been discussing with all involved in the Sunday school the desire of various parents to have teaching provision during the holidays as well as during the school session. As a result it has been decided to have *Children Together* during the various school holiday periods. The usual teaching programme, divided into two classes according to age, will not take place, but there will be an organized teaching activity for all the children together. In fairness to the Sunday school teachers, who would like and who deserve to have opportunities to share in the regular morning worship of the congregation, the *Children Together* programme will be conducted by other volunteers. We are grateful that the summer is being covered by Alexandra Macritchie, Rebecca Macleod and Dale Mackay, with Faith McIntosh helping out on one occasion.

The new session will begin on 22 August. The junior class will be taken during the year by Faith McIntosh and Fiona Graham (juggling their work shifts and student placements), while the senior class will be taken by Christina Macritchie. The calendar for the regular Sunday school classes and the *Children Together* activities will be distributed to all the parents shortly before the new session begins. After many years service, John Scoales has given up his duties as Sunday School superintendent, having stepped down from teaching a year ago. For the time being John MacPherson will act as Sunday school superintendent, but he is confident that with such a willing and competent team of helpers, his task will be supremely light.

Do pray for everyone involved. Encourage them. Parents, bring your children along regularly and invite their friends too. Our city is full of children who, spiritually speaking, to quote God’s words to Jonah, “don’t know their right hand from their left.” In the Bible we have the best of good news for all of them. Let’s do all we can to help them know it.

John Macpherson

Treasurer's Report

Mark.12.42 “a poor widow came and dropped in two small copper coins.” Jesus then said to his disciples “I tell you the truth this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions.”

When we give our money, God does not look at the amount but the attitude behind our giving. He loves the cheerful giver. 2 Cor.9.7 “You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.” Recently when I was given the money to bank there were a few coppers included. My mind went to the poor widow. In the past coppers were put in the drawer until we could make up a £1. But it is good to remember that even the coppers can be useful.

Each week we produce a bulletin and they cost 6p each. Or take the invites for the Light Lunch. 3p can pay for 4 invitations. So even a small donation can help towards our on-going expenses. Remember the widow she was recommended for donating two small copper coins because it cost her to give. This was all she had. Perhaps you feel that you can only contribute a small amount. That does not matter what matters is that you have the same attitude as the widow. What matters is the Lord's assessment of our giving. God can use a small gift for a great purpose. Remember the five loaves and two fishes. For Jesus, the value of a gift is not the amount given, but the cost to the giver. Others gave what they could spare, but the poor widow spared nothing.

We still have £10,300 in our general expenses account. £10,700 in the Fabric account (Clunie Fund) and £1,900 in the Light Lunch account. However our total funds have decreased by £2,500 since the beginning of the year.

We give thanks to all those who contributed towards Rahmat. The final total that came is was £243.00. Since our commitment was £500.00 this meant that we used our general fund to meet our target. We have promised one more instalment of £500.00 next year.

For the next quarter the thanksgiving collection will be for International Missions (IMB). Now that the new financial system is in place the IMB need to raise £150,000 this year. Please use the envelopes provided to prayerfully give money towards this target.

The session is looking forward to plan activities for next year and all these will need our prayerful and practical support. It is important to ask God to bless our gifts and that He will use them as He pleases. So give in a way that pleases the LORD.

Charlie Douglas – Treasurer

Christian Witness for Israel *and* Dumisani Theological Institute

On Sunday 23rd May Mike Moore preached at our evening service and also gave a power-point presentation at an after-church fellowship.

“Jews”, so the saying goes, “are the same as everyone else, *only more so*.” Is the world caught up in New Age mysticism? The Jews more so, because Judaism fails to satisfy their deepest needs.

Nick Stead, who worked with the London City Mission for 24 years, recently joined CWI. He had spent five years reaching out to Jews and New Agers so his experience in this specialised area is enabling CWI to have a ministry to Jewish New Agers.

Is everyone religious? The Jews more so. Watch the black-garbed Hasidim fervently reciting their prayers, and see a people zealous for God but without knowledge. Hasidic, or Ultra-orthodox, Jews are the most difficult to reach with the gospel because their traditions teach them it is an act of treachery for a Jew to believe in Jesus.

Last August, at a conference in Aberystwyth, I discovered the town was full of Orthodox families on holiday. I sought to try to break down barriers by being friendly and kind. However this proved more difficult than I thought. A breakthrough came on day two of the conference. Two young Hasidic Jews on mountain bikes skidded to a halt millimetres from me. And for the next few minutes we chatted amiably, revealing that it was possible to break through after all.

Early the next morning, on the sea front, I saw an Orthodox man who had just completed ritually immersing himself in the sea. I greeted him in Hebrew and asked why he had to immerse himself before saying his morning prayers. He had no idea; all he knew was that when he came out of the water he was ‘a new man’. After wishing several other men *Boker Tov* (Good Morning) and speaking to them briefly, it became apparent that because they were away from their home area, they were much more relaxed and it was possible to get to know them. This August Mike and his wife, Jenny, plan to return to Aberystwyth to try and make further contacts.

Please remember these exciting new projects in your prayers.

John Ross who is presently on deputation from South Africa spoke at our after-church fellowship on Sun. 6th June. He reminded us that it was **Billy** and **Elizabeth Graham** who started up the work, just over 30 years ago, of what was originally the Dimbaza Reformed Bible School. It was the then WFMA that helped with funding for the purchase of the building which is now called the Dumisani Theological Institute in King Williams Town, Eastern Cape.

Students come from various church and racial backgrounds. They are also of diverse ages. Both grandfathers and grandmothers come to study! Why? So they can be more useful in their churches.

The present buildings are now inadequate. There is a firm of Christian architects that have provided ideas about future developments. We have been asked to pray for wisdom as to how these should precede.

Staffing. We were asked to pray about the staffing situation, as **Norman** and **Angela Reid** will be retiring next year and **John** and **Elizabeth** in 2012.

Also please pray especially for Victor Nkatha. He has been given a two-year contract due to money raised from the Sunday school project promoted by Irene Howat. Help will be needed however to keep Victor who is the first Xhosa speaking minister to be employed by Dumisani. He helps with Sunday School training and also basic ministry studies.

John then spoke about the work his wife, **Elizabeth** was involved in. She marked correspondence courses. Many of the people taking these are in prison. Pray for them. She also helped in the coffee/bookshop and this facility has enabled her to get to know the students.

Daphne Douglas

Southern Mission Support Group

You'll all remember that the Mission Support Group (drawn from the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow) chooses a small missionary project to publicise and provide some financial help for each year. Last year it was the extension of the nursery provision in Colegio San Andres in Lima, and we were able to send just under £5,000.

This year we want to encourage Christians in the tribal villages around Lakhnadon and Chhapara in Central India, who want to build simple prayer houses in some of their villages to accommodate the increasing numbers of new Christians. In this connection if you haven't bought and read the annual *From the Frontiers*, have a look at one of the headlines on the front cover, *New Harvest in India*, and read the striking article on pages 20 and 21. Rev Samit Mishra, minister in Chhapara, acknowledges the long years of arduous labour when missionaries from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Australia, sowed the seed of the Gospel with apparently little result. "Recently", he says, "the Chhapara Church has started harvesting the fruit of the missionaries' labour much more rapidly than ever before." If you have the opportunity, ask retired missionaries Donald and Joan MacDonald in Buccleuch or Anne Urquhart in Dundee or Ian and Alina Mackenzie in Glasgow about those early days, and be encouraged along with them by what is happening today.

Mr Ernest Brown, an elder from Belfast and member of the International Missions Board, who has visited India on several occasions, has spoken in several churches in the Glasgow area, and in September will be speaking in various locations in our Presbytery, from Aberdeen to London. As last year, we have decided not to add to the number of missionary meetings in our three Edinburgh churches, but we want to give interested people the opportunity to contribute to this encouraging ministry. In mid-August the Support Group newsletter along with a donation envelope will be made available in the three congregations, and contributions will be gladly received up till Sunday 19 September. If God lays it on your heart to help in this way, be sure that your Christian brothers and sisters in Central India, many of whom are very poor, will be very grateful.

John Macpherson

Men's Meeting

'my faith and my job....as a teacher'.

Gordon Murray took the meeting in May on the above topic. Gordon is a teacher in Peebles High School and spoke about the way that as a teacher of RMPS (Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies) he has almost totally free reign to bring the Gospel message to the children in class when the focus is on Christianity. Gordon spoke of the large amount of pupils that have heard about Christ through the classes that he takes, most of whom would never have heard of him or have never heard of him dying for our sins as the substitute for all who will believe in him.

Gordon told of a weekly prayer meeting that takes place in the school, attended by a small number of pupils and teachers. This is a time for fellowship and support for one another.

Let's keep praying for Gordon as a Christian teacher, and indeed all Christian teachers, that the Lord would use them to show and teach the love of God in Christ and the real meaning of Christ's death on the cross and his cry 'It is finished'.

On another note, Gordon is moving on from Leith Free Church and is joining the APC congregation in Edinburgh with a view to going in for the APC Ministry, so we pray God's blessing on him as he seeks the way and the will of the Lord.

'what the Bible says about....election and human responsibility'

Colin took the meeting in June to hear with the above topic as the focus. Colin showed from the Bible how the doctrine of election is found throughout the Old and New Testaments. (e.g. Deut 7.6; Amos 3. 2; Jn 6. 37; 15. 16; Acts 13. 48; Rom 9. 10-24 et al). Election is the name given to the Bible's teaching that before creation God chose some people to be saved through faith in Christ alone not because of anything in them, about them or done by them, but because of his good pleasure.

At the same time when the Bible refers to those who are not saved, who do not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, it does so in a way that clearly places the responsibility for this with them (Jn 5. 40; Matt 21. 33ff; 22. 3ff; 23. 37 et al).

The difficulty lies in trying to reconcile both views. The answer is that we cannot but we believe both without compromising either. We stress both without diluting or diminishing either.

What then is the purpose of election?

- A reason to praise God (Eph 1. 5-6, 12; 2 Thess 2. 13)
- A comfort to believers. Romans 8. 28 tells us that God works all things together for the good of those who love him and then Paul goes on in v29 to describe those who love the Lord as being those who have been elected. Many people may have worries about whether they are the elect, and Paul says that if we love the Lord that is a sure sign of being elected. And he says that those whom the Lord elects and saves, he will work everything together for their good and they will be glorified in the end.
- To encourage evangelism: contrary to the belief that election discourages evangelism the bible says exactly the opposite!! In Acts 18. 9-10, Paul is in Corinth and the Lord tells him that there are many of His people in the city. Because of that Paul stays there for 18 months! He stayed because Christ told him some of the elect were there and they needed to be found. We don't know who they are so we need to get out with the message of salvation for them to hear and believe in. Similarly, following the amazing chapter on election, Romans 9, Paul then goes on in chapter 10 to encourage preaching and evangelism (Rom 10. 14, 17). This is encouraging evangelism, not discouraging it!!
- To encourage service: Eph 2. 10 and Jn 15. 16 both describe election in terms of for the purpose of serving the Lord by doing good works and producing good fruit, not sitting back.

Afterwards we had good chats and discussions and then refreshments.

Colin

Donation Bin

Some of you may have noticed a large red wheelie-bin in the corner of the hall (or maybe you haven't; some of the young folk have- I've seen them getting into it 😊). Well, this is a bin for donations of clothes, books, CD's or whatever for the British Heart Foundation and they will come and empty it when it is filled. So if you have old items that are in good enough order just pop them in the bin and support a very worthwhile cause

Sunday School Outing

This year's Sunday school outing was held on Saturday 5th June at Vogrie Park in Dalkeith. It was a lovely, sunny day and there was a great turnout.

After everyone had arrived the day started off with some fun and games, organised by Christina and Alexandra Macritchie. The kids were having so much fun that most adults couldn't help but join in! After a few more enjoyable games, we all had a very tasty lunch. It was lovely being able to sit in the sun, enjoy food, spend time with friends and just have a great time.

The games continued after lunch but not before we sang Happy Birthday to Christina who was 21 the day before! As we played dodge ball, rounders and different forms of tig, the adults got a bit tired and out of breath even though the kids were keen for more! The day ended with a few words from the minister and people who had been on the trip. All in all it was an excellent day and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Lydia Macleod



Room available

Rebekah and Tim Macdonald's flatmate is moving out in early September so they have a spare room available for someone to use! If you, or anyone you know, are looking

for a room from September to June then email rebekahmacdonald@ymail.com or call 0777 829 4537.

Marriage

On Saturday 29th May at 2pm in the church, Colin conducted the marriage of Murray Calder to Gemma Mitchell. Gemma is the daughter of Geoff Mitchell who was recently married to Claire Laurie. Our prayer for the newly married couple is that the Lord would be with them and in their marriage.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Katie Macleod who passed her finals recently successfully completing an MA (Hons) in Interpreting and Translating from Heriot-Watt University. In September she will be starting work in Spain for a year. We wish her the Lord's blessing in her future.

Great to hear that Stuart Douglas has a job after a long wait. He's working for a company called S.T.I.R Network as an admin assistant.

Birthdays

In the month of August there are a number of birthdays - Finlay Cunniffe will be 13 on the 13th, Kathryn Lawton will be 18 on the 13th, Marissa Smith will be 3 on the 22nd, and Emma Macaulay will be 6 on the 30th. Congratulations to you all.

And Happy Birthday to Petra who was 50 on the 18th!! This photo was taken at the last Ladies' Meeting before the summer break.



Dates for the Diary (please remember these in prayer)

July

Friday 2 nd	No Light lunch for the month of July
Monday 5 th	No Drop in for the month of July
Saturday 3 rd	Breakfast at 9.30 followed by open prayer meeting at 10am
Sunday 4 th	Colin preaching am and Hugh preaching pm
Tuesday 6 th	Men's meeting in the manse at 7.30pm. Juice Bulbeck speaking on 'My faith and my job as a businessman'
Sunday 11 th	Hugh preaching am and Colin pm.
Sunday 18 th	Charlie preaching
Sunday 25 th	John Macpherson preaching

August

Sunday 1 st	John Macpherson preaching
Monday 2 nd	Drop in from 2-4pm in the hall and every Monday after this
Friday 6 th	Light lunch from 12-2pm in the hall and every Friday after this
Saturday 7 th	Communion preparatory service in the hall at 7.30pm. Colin preaching over the weekend.
Sunday 8 th	Preparatory service at 11am and Communion service at 6.30pm
Sunday 22 nd	First day back for Sunday School
Saturday 28 th	Kirk Session at 10am in the Session Room.