

# The Challenge



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# The Challenge

Autumn 2017

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# A View from the Manse



Dear Friends,

There is a lovely French tale written by author Jean Giono called “**The Man Who Planted Trees**” (French title *L’homme qui plantait des arbres*). The story is told through the eyes of a young man hiking through Provence in France in 1913. He has run out of water and the only well in the area is dried up. A local Shepherd, Elzéard Bouffier, takes him to, what seems like, a hidden spring in the midst of a barren landscape.

After losing his wife and child, the Shepherd now lives alone. His desire is to singlehandedly re-forest this desolate area in the foothills of the Alps. As he walks through the ruins, he pushes his pole into the ground and drops an acorn into the hole. The young hiker now continues his journey home, but only to be called up to fight in the First World War.

It is now 1920 and our young hiker has returned from war suffering from depression. He returns to Provence in the hope of being refreshed and restored. As he returns to the foothills of the Alps he notices that young saplings have now taken root, and new streams are flowing through what was once a desolate region. The narrator makes a full recovery and continues to visit Elzéard Bouffier over the next four decades.

It is 1945 and the valley of Provence is now vibrant with life and colour, children smiling and laughing. Thousands of people have now moved into the area. New life, new dreams & new hope fill the valley. The town authorities are convinced that the rapid growth of the forest was due to a bizarre phenomenon of nature and place a protection order over the area. Apart from the narrator of the story, all are totally oblivious to Bouffier’s hard toil over the decades.

Although the story is fictional, I found myself feeling so sorry for Bouffier. In the story he received no accolades, no praise, and no “well done!” from the people. His life would not have been regarded as a success. Nobody in that new town would ever have known who to thank for their happiness. In the world’s eyes, unknown Bouffier died in sadness, aloneness and failure. He wasn’t powerful or successful.

Many in society want to live powerful and successful lives. If they haven’t been successful in life, then they feel like failures. The skills that Bouffier acquired over the years, his passion, his drive and vision, could have made him a very successful man.

How encouraging to think that God doesn’t ask us to be powerful and successful. No, God desires that we would be faithful and fruitful. To be fruitful is more important than being successful.

*“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.” - (John 15:8)*

*And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply...” (Genesis 1:28)*

It is possible to be busy, forever running around in circles, trying to juggle everything in life, and have little to show for it at the end of the day. Even a church can be busy with events, programmes and meetings, yet show little fruit. A life of fruitfulness begins with our relationship with Christ, who said, *“Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” - (John 15:5)*

Your Friend & Minister

*Rev Scott Cameron*

# Church Diary



## SEPTEMBER

- 1st **Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse  
3rd **Family Service** at 10.30am  
**Praise Night** at 7.15pm (Hayocks Hall)  
4th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
6th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
8th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse  
10th **Communion Service** at 10.30am  
11th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
12th **Coffee Morning** at 10.30am (Church Hall)  
13th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
15th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm with Mr Brian Murray (High Kirk)  
17th **Morning Service** at 10.30am (Speaker: Mr Brian Murray)  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)  
18th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
20th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Discipleship Training Day** (Stirling Baptist Church) from 10am - 4pm  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
21st **Sammy's Walk** (Isle of Cumbrae)  
22nd **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse  
24th **Morning Service** at 10.30am (Followed by Congregational Lunch in the Church Hall).  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)  
25th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
26th **Path of Renewal Group** at 7pm (High Kirk)  
27th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
29th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse

### **Path of Renewal for Ministers:**

13th-15th September (Gartmore House)

**Sure 24 Week:** 17th - 24th September

## OCTOBER

- 1st **Harvest Service** at 10.30am (Baptism of Rebecca Baird)  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)  
**Praise Night** at 7.15pm (Hayocks Hall)  
2nd **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
4th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
5th **The Guild** at 1.30pm (church hall)  
6th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse  
8th **Morning Service** at 10.30am  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)  
9th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
10th **Coffee Morning** at 10.30am (Church Hall)  
11th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
13th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse  
15th **Morning Service** at 10.30am  
16th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
18th **Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
19th **The Guild** at 1.30pm (Church Hall)  
20th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
22nd **Morning Service** at 10.30am  
(Speaker: Rev Norman Cruickshank)  
23rd **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)  
24th **Word Alive** at 2.30pm (The Manse)  
25th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Discipleship Training Day** (Stirling Baptist Church) from 10am - 4pm  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)  
27th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse  
(Suresh Vemulipalli visiting from India)  
29th **Morning Service** at 10.30am  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)  
31st **Path of Renewal Group** at 7pm (High Kirk)

# NOVEMBER

- 1st **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)
- 2nd **The Guild** at 1.30pm (Church Hall)
- 3rd **Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse
- 5th **Family Service** at 10.30am  
**Worship Service** at 3pm (Bonnie Leslie Court)  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)  
**Praise Night** at 7.15pm (Hayocks Hall)
- 6th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)
- 7th **Word Alive** at 2.30pm in the Manse
- 8th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)
- 10th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse
- 12th **Remembrance Service** at 10am (High Kirk)  
**Morning Service** at 10.30am  
**Town Remembrance Service** at 1.30pm  
(War Memorial)  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)
- 13th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)
- 14th **Coffee Morning** at 10.30am (Church Hall)  
**Word Alive** at 2.30pm in the Manse
- 15th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)
- 16th **The Guild** at 1.30pm (Church Hall)
- 17th **Wedding** - Angela McLellan & Darren Reid  
**Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse
- 19th **Morning Service** at 10.30am (Led by the Guild)  
**New Horizons** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)
- 20th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)
- 21st **Word Alive** at 2.30pm in the Manse  
**Kirk Session** at 7pm (High Kirk)
- 22nd **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)
- 24th **Prayer Time** at 6.30pm (High Kirk)  
**Revival Fellowship** at 7.30pm in the Manse
- 26th **Morning Service** at 10.30am  
**Christmas Cracker** at 5pm (Hayocks Hall)
- 27th **Discipleship Group** at 4pm (Church Hall)
- 28th **Word Alive** at 2.30pm in the Manse  
**Path of Renewal Group** at 7pm (High Kirk)
- 29th **Rainbow Club** at 10am (Church Hall)  
**Prayer Group** at 6pm (High Kirk)  
**Girls Brigade** at 6pm (Church Hall)

## **Guild Week:**

19th - 26th November

# What's On At The Guild?



## **AUTUMN / WINTER 2017**

Oct 5

**Opening Meeting** – Mr Brian Murray  
Theme: "Go in Love"

Oct 18

**APC Rally**, 2.00 pm - Beith Parish Church

Oct 19

**"Messy Guild"** with Mrs Mary Ford

Nov 2

**Project** — All Friends Together B

Nov 16

**Open Meeting** with **Prof June Andrews** -  
"Go in Love with People Affected by Dementia"

Nov 19 – 26

**Guild Week**

Nov 23

**Ayrshire Presbyteries Big Sing**—  
2.00pm The Laigh Kirk, Kilmarnock

Dec 1

**Carols and Alternativity**— Largs: Clark  
Memorial

Dec 7

**Christmas Party**

**WE ARE BOLD  
WE ARE STRONG  
WE ARE THE GUILD**

# High Kirk News

## A Visit From South Korea

Dr Sang In Lee from South Korea studied with our Minister at Aberdeen University in the mid-90s, where Sang In completed his doctorate in New Testament studies under the late Professor Howard Marshall. After graduating he returned to Seoul in South Korea where he lectured in Mission at the Torch Trinity Graduate School of Theology. After assisting in one of Seoul's largest churches, he has recently been involved in church planting where he now pastors a church with a passion for Prayer & Mission. We were therefore delighted that Sang In was able to take seven of his young church members to Scotland where they had a desire to pray for our church and nation. They made a special visit to our Revival Fellowship night in the Manse, and also visited the Western Isles. We continue to remember them with much affection in our prayers. Next year our Minister has been invited to minister at Dr Sang In Lee's church in Seoul, and a number of other affiliated churches in the city. Please remember Scott in your prayers as he prepares for this visit.

## The Church Wall

We are delighted to see the completion to the boundary wall of the Church (which faces onto Glebe Street). Please continue in prayer as we look to God for the next phase, which will involve our church refurbishment, and especially in the raising of funds for this project. We are so grateful to those who have already begun to give financial support. God bless you!

## Summer Mission

The Fun Day, this year, was held in the Church Hall due to the weather. However, we still had a great number of young families and people from the town. The children enjoyed the games, crafts, bouncy castles and face painting. On Sunday, we had the Summer Mission Buffet Lunch with Ardeer and Livingstone Church. The young people from the three Churches were a great help at the Polar Explorers' Kid's Club. From the High Kirk we had John, Daniel, Bethany, Rebecca, Hannah and Gemma. We also had more adult helpers this year. Janet Robertson and Cathie Wilson joined the team with Antonia, Lorraine, Betty, Blanche, Angela and Margaret at the Kid's Club.

In the kitchen we had Anne, Morag, Liz, Moyra, Karen and Maureen Sutherland. Not forgetting all the helpers at the Fun Day. One of the most popular games this year was the 'Snowball' fights, which were enjoyed by children and adults alike. There were two Youth Nights in Ardeer Church which the young people organised. On the Thursday night, they had a 'Question Time' with the two ministers Rev Scott Cameron and Rev Dave Sutherland and an Elder, Sandy Hershaw and the young person was John Wilson. They all answered questions from the young people about the Church, our Christian faith and traditions. We also had a 'Messy Church' on the Saturday in Livingstone Church, which was very well attended. There was a good turn out at the 'Prayer Walk' on Sunday afternoon and Ardeer Church provided a lovely afternoon tea.

## New Horizons

Starts again on Sunday 17th September at 5pm. We always begin the evening with food and fellowship. The young children have toys to play with and there are Wii's, an X-Box and football table for the older children. Every week we watch a short bible story DVD and this is followed up with crafts. We now have a number of young families who come regularly. This year, we are hoping to introduce some singing with the help of our talented young people, John, Hannah, Bethany and Daniel. In the main hall, we have Antonia, Lorraine, Lesley and Raymond who help with the story, crafts and games. We also have David and Ross on the door. The food is prepared and served by Helen, Cathie, Helen and Margaret. We thank the Lord for this team of people but continue to pray for more helpers. If you can help in any way, please contact Margaret Durham on 601322.

## Sunday Nights

Praise Nights are being planned for the first Sunday of the month in the Hayocks Community Hall starting at 7.15pm on Sunday 3rd September, 1st October, 5th November, 4th February, 4th March, 6th May and 3rd June.



PRAISE

## **Path of Renewal**

The Path of Renewal Group meet on the last Tuesday in various venues (High Kirk, Church Hall, Costa, members' homes, etc). The group have been invited to attend a Discipleship Training Event in Stirling Baptist Church on Wednesday 30th August, 20th September and 25th October. The Minister will also be attending a Conference at Gartmore House, near Aberfoyle, from 13th-15th September.

## **Foodbank**

This is a joint project with the other churches in the town. The Foodbank at St John's Church is now open one day a week on Wednesdays from 4-5pm. It is an outlet of the North Ayrshire Foodbank which is run by Mr Craig Crosswaithe at the Nazarene Church, Glasgow Street, Ardrossan. Volunteers work on a rota basis. Please continue to pray for this ministry.

## **CHANA**

No, it's not a newly-created state in Africa, nor is it a word in "tongues". CHANA stands for Churches Homeless Action North Ayrshire. It is a recently-formed group of representatives of various churches in the area and the aim is to provide whatever kind of help might be needed with the problem of homelessness. As far as can be ascertained, there is not a problem with "rough-sleepers" in our area, i.e. people are not sleeping on the streets. However, a fairly large number do not have their own tenancies. Some are accommodated in one of the two hostels which are run by North Ayrshire Council and some have been allocated their own tenancies but lack the resources to turn them into comfortable homes.

The causes of homelessness are many and varied and, at some stage in the future, action of a more "political" nature, or perhaps a befriending service, may be organised by the group. For now, however, the main help offered consists of providing items such as toiletries and cleaning materials (there is a list of required goods in a basket in the Church Hall). Donations may be made there, or left alongside the contributions for the Crisis Bags. Moves are also being made to support the Syrian refugee families, who have been allocated houses in the area.

The group is working closely with the Council's Housing Department to ensure that assistance is given wherever it is most needed. Meetings take place every six weeks in the High Kirk Hall.

## **Sure 24 Week (Kenya) 17th - 24th September**

Sammy's School Sponsored Walk is on Thursday 21st September. Members of the congregation are invited to come on the walk round Cumbrae. Sponsor sheets will be available at the Beadle's Pew. Donations received from our Congregational lunch on Sunday 24th September will also go to Sammy's School. A number of our organisations during Sure 24 Week hope to host various events to raise funds.

## **Harvest Thanksgiving**

This year we continue to support Mary's Meals through our Harvest Thanksgiving donations. Boxes will be available for distribution to the congregation on Harvest Sunday - Sunday 1st October. Boxes can then be returned on Sunday 19th November.



## **Christmas Cracker - Sunday 26th November**

The Christmas Cracker will be in the Hayocks Hall on Sunday 26th November. We will have Christmas Dinner and there will be crafts for the children. This event will run from 5pm - 7pm.



A playground  
where no-one plays

Dear friend,

Recently – among the hills of Tigray, northern Ethiopia – I had a conversation I won't forget. "I don't want to live in this poverty forever," says the young boy before me. He sounds a little puzzled at my question. "I want to be able to help other people – maybe I can even become a doctor one day," he adds quietly.

These are the reasons Dawit, 15, gives me for him leaving home at 5am, and walking three hours to school. He's eaten a small breakfast – but won't eat again until he arrives home at 7pm. Fourteen hours without food, six of them walking; this is what Dawit does every school day so that he might learn.

We finish talking with him and his head teacher – who tells us that every child in this school goes without food all day long – and step out into the playground.

The children have left class for what I was about to call 'a lunch break'. When I look around, I see a playground in which no-one plays, during a lunch break in which no-one eats. This is a school waiting for Mary's Meals.

It sits in the area that suffered the devastating famine of the 1980s, prompting the Live Aid concerts. Today, the people suffer this latest drought without global attention.



Dawit, 15

Thankfully, the children at this school will soon be the first in Ethiopia to receive Mary's Meals. The local community is ready and eager to volunteer, as soon as we tell them we can begin. With your support, we hope to begin feeding here in the next few months – so that, please God, in future this playground will look and sound the way a playground should.

On behalf of the 1,230,171 children already receiving Mary's Meals, and those who will soon be joining them, thank you for sharing our belief that every child should have enough to eat and an education.

**Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow**  
Founder and Chief Executive

# Prayer for beginners

## (part 2)

### “Praying For The World”

One of the sides of prayer that we're often most comfortable thinking about is that of prayer for other people. The traditional name for this is **INTERCESSION** and it's a vital part of our life as Christians. In the Lord's Prayer we pray for the world first, and only then for our own needs; this isn't a bad pattern to keep to in all of our prayers.

#### What happens when we pray?

The short answer is that we don't really know! We know that prayer isn't meant to be some kind of magic we work on God to make him do what we want. At the same time, Jesus told us several times that we should be persistent and disciplined in praying, to keep going when prayers don't seem to be answered.

Perhaps the best way that I've found to see it is that prayer is how God somehow allows us to share in his work in the world. When we can't affect a situation in any other way, we can still share in what God is doing through others. When we have the opportunity to help someone or to make a difference ourselves, then we seek God's help and strength to do so, trusting that his work through us will somehow lead to more than we would achieve by our own efforts alone.

Often this has as much to do with allowing God to shape our thoughts as it does with 'getting our prayers right' in the first place. St Paul in his letter to the Romans says that God the Holy Spirit actually prays to God the Father from within us.

When we don't know what to pray (or even what to think) about a situation, God can take over and include us in his conversation with himself! Prayer for others can be a wonderful but challenging experience if we listen to ourselves and to God as we pray.

#### How can we pray?

It's good to be specific in your prayer, and to stick at it. It might help to have a list of people and situations that you'll pray for, and refer to it regularly. If there are many things on your prayer list, don't try to rush through them all every time. Part of this prayer is to concentrate on what you're bringing to mind and to God, and rushing through things tends to feel a bit like a shopping list!



It's probably better to spread things over a few days or a week – though there may be a few people or situations you'll want to pray for every day.

There are other parts to prayer, but one way or another it's good to let yourself be still for a few minutes. First ask the Holy Spirit to help you to pray. You might read a bit of the Bible to help yourself to come closer to God. Then just use your list or whatever else is on your mind to ask God to do what's right and best in each situation – even if what's best isn't actually what you yourself would want.

You don't need elegant words, or even any words at all – bringing together your focussed concern for others and your trust in God (however weak that feels!) is what matters.

#### Ideas for prayer

Start with what matters most to you, whether people, parts of the world or any kind of issue. The more it matters to you, the easier it'll be to keep praying.

Then use the news! Whether you read a paper, watch TV news or listen to the radio, take a note (at least mentally!) of anything you'd like to pray for.

You could even get into the habit, if it's quiet when the news is on, of praying as you read, listen or watch. It may affect the way you think about the world.

The High Kirk prayer Circle (e mail) lists a few people who've asked for the church's public prayers.

Most Christian charities and mission agencies are happy to provide monthly or quarterly prayer lists, to let you know about some of the areas in which they work, and to help to focus your prayers. Contact any you already support by giving, and ask to receive these if you don't already.

### **A couple of warnings and an encouragement!**

First, don't be surprised if the answers that come to your prayers aren't always the answers you would like.

God does answer prayer, but not always with a straightforward 'yes'. Sometimes his answer can be the gift of strength to accept a different situation from the one we would have chosen.

Second, look out. If you're praying for a person or a situation, God may challenge you to do something else about it. Be ready to find that you're meant to be part of the answer to your own prayer!

Lastly, do talk to others! We all keep learning, and advice from how someone else has found they can pray may be very useful.

*(Taken from Rev'd Nick Watson's [parishwindow.co.uk](http://parishwindow.co.uk))*



## **WHAT JESUS THINKS ABOUT THE CHURCH**

**24th October - 28th November**

Most people have an opinion about the church and are not slow to express it when the opportunity arises. But no one's words or opinions can match the authority, the challenge and the encouragement of those spoken by Jesus himself, the head of the whole Church.

The local church has also come in for comment and some of these would include, 'It's too dead' 'It's too old fashioned,' 'It's too liberal,' 'it's too modern,' 'it's too charismatic.' 'it's unfriendly,' to name but a few. Of course one must distinguish between the comments of an outsider and that of a true believer.

Our new studies in Word Alive are based on the last book of the New Testament in Revelation where the writer records in chapters 2 and 3 what Jesus thinks about the church or more specifically a tiny group of seven churches in the Roman Province of Asia. (today's Turkey)

As we consider each of these churches we learn what Jesus thought of each congregation and as we conclude our studies hopefully it will be possible to construct a composite picture of the sort of church our Lord would like to see today.

Join us as together we discover in these letters what Jesus thought of each church. We will find key issues which when pieced together will build a pattern of the church in every age. What a challenge...are you up for it?

Our Tuesday afternoons together may well find us greatly challenged by the warnings and encouraged by the blessings. Most importantly we will have a clearer understanding of what kind of church Jesus wants on the earth today.

Please make every effort to join us each Tuesday in the Manse at 2.30pm.

**Norman Cruickshank**

# 500th Anniversary

By Stephen Nichols

It was October 31, 1517, to be exact. In order to consider this date, we need to travel to Germany, and we need to consider an Augustinian monk.

This monk has already had extensive training. He was originally going to be a lawyer, and he made his way through academic circles. He received law degrees. Then he abandoned law as a career, and he entered the monastery. He made his way through the universities again, adding degrees in theology and biblical studies. And, in the midst of all of this studying, God was continually bringing to our monk's mind some ideas—ideas that had been obscured by the church; ideas that were not preached from the pulpits; ideas that, sadly, had fallen by the wayside. These ideas were very simply what we now consider the solas of the Reformation.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves a bit. Our monk, Martin Luther, wasn't quite there in 1517. He recognized that something was wrong—drastically wrong—with the church. And so he began to write out theses for a disputation. A thesis—the plural form being theses—is simply a statement put forward for discussion. He was looking for a debate. He wanted a good, solid debate with the best minds of the church, so that as the church thought about its task and mission, it could be biblically faithful.

So, Luther formulated ninety-five theses for debate, and on October 31, 1517, he nailed them to the church door in Wittenberg. He had no idea what was going to come of this.

A copy of these ninety-five theses made their way to Pope Leo X. When Leo received them, he said, "All the ramblings of a drunkard German. He will think differently when he sobers up."

Needless to say, the pope highly underestimated this monk.

He also highly underestimated the power of the ideas in these ninety-five theses.



What came of the theses was not simply a debate; nor did Pope Leo's statement prove true—that this German monk simply needed to "sober up." What came of the theses was the Reformation.

What we need to remember about Luther is that his story didn't end with the posting of the ninety-five theses. A few years later, in 1521, he was still locked in debate with the Roman Catholic Church. He was continuing to present what would eventually be the ideas that form the precious foundation of the Reformation. These are the solas we hold dear today: sola Scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solus Christus, and soli Deo gloria.

But Luther not only lives through the 1520s. He lives even into the 1540s. Luther got old. And a lot of his early years caught up with him. In his old age, he suffered greatly. We see that this theologian was not just a bold and brave monk. He wasn't just the initial spark for this Protestant church—the church of which we're a part. Rather, we also see him as an aged man. And when we see him as an aged man, we see him resting in the gospel. His great dying words were simply, "We are beggars, this is true." But we are beggars who have found food, and by God's grace, Luther helped show us the way.



### Update from Sam Gordon

Hi, a hearty welcome to my Autumn 2017 newsletter! It's great to be back in touch as your fellowship in prayer is what helps keep me going, week in, week out. Thank you! A visit to Israel is on the cards later this month and then one to Kenya in October. That will involve Bible ministry in/around Nairobi with a trip planned up to the northeastern island of Lamu as well as a maximum security prison near Mount Kenya - for all the travel and preaching, I really do NEED your prayers. As on previous visits, I'm there under the banner of Trans World Radio. Keep in touch, dear friends. Until then, be blessed and encouraged ... Lois joins me in sending to you our warmest greetings.



Lois and I also celebrated the occasion of our 46th wedding anniversary in early June. How time flies! We had a few days beside Lake Lucerne to celebrate the goodness of God to us. For better or worse, it was a washout in that it rained non-stop three days in a row! Our first and last days were beautiful but the rest were disappointing, to say the least. Even in situations like that, God's hand is on the tiller. I'm so thankful to God for her and for her faithfulness in praying for me down the years (cf. Proverbs 31:10-12).



Well, there's a first time for everything - and that's what happened here in Portsoy, on the Moray coastline! A couple of enthusiastic guys - Jim and John - felt it would be a good idea to host 3 afternoons in a local hotel with coffee, scones and me as a guest speaker! I did three illustrated talks on the items of furniture in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle - the table of showbread, the lampstand and the golden altar of incense. All talks are on the Truth for Today website! Great idea, it was. Blessed, we were!



And here's another first ...! I'm writing these reflections at 37,000 feet on my way home from Ecuador and, at the same time, taking full advantage of onboard WiFi ... that's something we never thought possible even a few years back!

This was my 12th visit to Ecuador in the space of 25 years and it just gets better and better!

There are lots more photos on the Gallery page of the Truth for Today website.

As most of you will know from previous updates, this year's Keswick in Wales Convention was my last one as a committee member, having handed over the chairman's baton last year! However, with a few hours of 'spare' time on my hand, the Lord had other ideas about my future involvement in world mission (something very close to my heart). Out of the blue I received an invitation to become a trustee of Pioneers, based here in Bawtry. After prayer and consultation with my Accountability Board I accepted their invitation and look forward to serving the Lord with them from the beginning of next year. Check out their website at [www.pioneers-uk.org](http://www.pioneers-uk.org) and you'll be thrilled with the scope of their global ministry. I'd be grateful for your prayers as I undertake this new role.



And ... FINALLY ... that was me a couple of weeks back - I had a problem with 'something that shouldn't have been there' in my lower right eyelid. 15/20 minutes, some cream and a couple of injections later, the ophthalmic surgeon had successfully removed the offending growth along with a bit of tissue for biopsy. In his words, he was convinced there was 'nothing sinister' - for me, that was a huge relief. I'm scheduled to see him again shortly. The week after this happened I was speaking in NW Wales at a church family camp linked with Holbrooks Evangelical Church (Coventry) - and the theme for one of my talks from 1 Peter 1:1-12, was: How to smile through suffering! Whatever happens, we know, Father knows best!

*Sam*

# KESWICK IN AYRSHIRE 2018

**25-28 MAY 2018**

**VENUE –**

**Park Hotel, Kilmarnock**

**SPEAKER –**

**Simon Manchester**

**From Sydney, Australia.**

Next year sees the launch of Keswick Ayrshire.  
Book now by contacting the Keswick Ministries:

T: 017687 80075

E: [info@keswickministries.org](mailto:info@keswickministries.org)

## THE KESWICK CONVENTION 2018

### Dates and speakers:

Week 1 - 14–20 July: Christopher Ash

Week 2 - 21–27 July: Chris Wright

Week 3 - 28 July –3 Aug: David Cook

### SENT: Serving God's Mission

God is a sending God. He sent his Son to a broken, lost, rebellious world, not to condemn it, but that it might be saved (John 3:17). And he has sent his people - all of us, wherever we are - into that same world to make disciples of all nations. But he has not just commissioned us. He has empowered us by his Spirit to be his messengers and agents. In 2018, all three weeks have at their heart the theme of Sent: Serving God's Mission. We pray for God's refreshing and a renewed sense of his empowering, encouraging and equipping as we listen to His Word.



# Great Christian Hymn-Writers

## ANNA LAETITIA WARING (1823 - 1910)

For many years we have shared of some hymn writers who have written hymns that have lasted and been a real blessing to many.

The above hymn writer is the last in our present series. I have enjoyed writing about hymns and trust you have found them a challenge and encouragement as together we seek to follow our Lord Jesus Christ.

My choice for this final article is the hymn.... **'In Heavenly Love Abiding'**.

It was written by Anna Waring who was raised as a Quaker in South Wales but later joined the Anglican Church. In later life she took on a busy ministry of visiting prisoners in jail. She was known and loved for her gentle and cheerful spirit and she was a gifted writer and produced many poems. This quote is typical.....

'I ask Thee for a thankful love, through constant watching, to meet the glad with joyful smiles, and to wipe the weeping eyes, and a heart at leisure from itself, to soothe and sympathise'

Anna mastered Hebrew as a young girl to be able to study Old Testament poetry and daily read the original Hebrew Psalter. She wrote many hymns and none more popular than 'In Heavenly Love abiding'.

She died unmarried in Bristol on 10th May 1910. One of her own hymns was sung at her funeral service. ie Father I know that all my life is portioned out for me and the changes that are sure to come I do not fear to see.

Perhaps Ephesians 2 v 4 - 6 expresses the teaching of her hymn 'In heavenly Love Abiding' which reminds us that our citizenship is in heaven with Christ and that only with Christ are we safe and secure and are kept for eternity.

***In heavenly love abiding,  
no change my heart shall fear  
and safe in such confiding,  
for nothing changes here;  
the storm may roar without me,  
my heart may low be laid;  
but God is round about me,  
and can I be dismayed?***

The other verses continue on this great theme.

Praise God for such wonderful hymns. Next time we sing this hymn (normally to the lovely tune Repton) let's carefully take in the words of the heavenly love of which this hymn teaches us.

Yours in praise

**Norman Cruickshank**



## Highland Theological College News

2015 was a landmark year for HTC with the opening of our HTC-Glasgow base. For many years HTC's distance learning students in the Central Belt had expressed interest in having somewhere to meet, discuss theology, exchange library books, etc. Several reasons delayed this from happening but in 2015 God opened a way for us. The tremendous help, support and encouragement of the United Free Church of Scotland enabled HTC to set up classrooms and a small library in the top floor of their offices in Newton Place. HTC-Glasgow was born!

The arrangement with the UF Church was short-term and draws to a close this summer. We have been busy identifying alternative premises and have now secured an arrangement with the Wynd Centre in Paisley.

The Wynd Centre offers bigger accommodation, enabling us to increase from two classrooms to three. There is also space available to create two small offices and a library/study area. Based in a large church building with superb facilities, there are numerous congregation and community activities throughout the week.

The Wynd Centre is only two minutes' walk from the train station in the centre of Paisley, which is only 11 minutes' train journey from Glasgow Central Station - so from the heart of Glasgow you can be there in under quarter of an hour. HTC-Paisley here we come!!

Please join with us in praying for this venture and, if you are able, please consider giving a donation. Thank you!

### Give thanks for:

- The growing number of students in the Central Belt
- The wonderful help granted us by the UF Church, enabling us to 'get started'
- The willingness of the UF Church to clear their attic rooms, renovate and redecorate to provide bright, airy classroom spaces
- The support and help of John, Helena and others
- The positive learning environment for the students
- Sufficient books to create a new library
- Pamela, our HTC-Glasgow administrator
- The offer of accommodation by the Wynd Centre

### Please pray for:

- Vision of the architect and tradesmen in planning the layout
- Granting of the building warrant and planning application
- Efficient renovation works, completed to a good standard and in time for the new academic session
- That the project proceeds on time and within budget
- That we receive donations and grants to cover the costs, currently estimated at over £48,000
- Safe transportation of furniture, books etc from the UF offices to the Wynd Centre
- Set-up of the IT and video-conference equipment
- Applications from students wishing to study at HTC-Paisley
- That God is honoured in all we do

### New Academic Session

Places are still available on all our courses for the new session starting in Autumn 2017. We are especially excited to have an on-campus Access class this year. This course is for anyone who wants to study the Christian faith, either simply for interest or as an entry route to studying Theology at degree level.

Apply now! See our website or contact [htcadmissions@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:htcadmissions@uhi.ac.uk) for more details.

# How bold are we in our prayer life?

How bold are we in our prayer life? It is said that the cry of that great Scottish reformer, John Knox, was 'Lord, give me Scotland, or I die.' Does anyone pray like that nowadays? Could we pray such a prayer? Should we pray such a prayer?

While reflecting recently on the words of Psalm 2:8, it gradually dawned on me that such a prayer is not only appropriate but very much in line with the thrust of that verse where the Lord sets before the king both an invitation and a related promise: 'Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.'

Psalm 2 is often regarded today as one of the Royal Psalms, written in the first place probably with the Davidic king in mind, but later interpreted most fully with reference to the ideal Messianic King. In v 8 the Lord, who is the Creator of the ends of the earth, invites the newly crowned King to pray a massively expansive prayer that reaches as far as it possibly could – to 'the ends of the earth.' And as the Lord issues that invitation to prayer, at the very same time he promises that that ask will be answered in full measure with nothing held back.

The New Testament (e.g., in Acts 13:33) teaches us that this Psalm finds its fulfilment in the coronation of Jesus Christ in the heavenly Zion after his death, resurrection and ascension. In that place of victory, Jesus continues to ask the Father for the nations and one after another they are given to him to conquer with his gospel of amazing grace and love.

But, it doesn't stop there. I believe that we 'anointed ones' who are now 'in Christ' share in His royal and priestly ministry of intercession, as the Lord encourages us also to 'ask' him for the nations. The particular burden on your heart may be for Scotland, or it may be for any of the other nations or people groups of this world. And before we even ask, we have the promise that that prayer will be answered. To what degree that may be so in our life time is not for us to know, but we can certainly lay hold of the promise, and pray with urgency, with faith, with perseverance and with expectancy. For this is how it will be at last:  
'Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.'  
'Lord, give me the nation of .....

*Rev Hector Morrison, Principal  
Highland Theological College*

# A Puritan Prayer



## THE VALLEY OF VISION

LORD,  
HIGH AND HOLY, MEEK AND LOWLY,  
Thou hast brought me to the valley of vision,  
where I live in the depths but see thee in  
the heights;  
hemmed in by mountains of sin I behold  
thy glory.  
Let me learn by paradox  
that the way down is the way up,  
that to be low is to be high,  
that the broken heart is the healed heart,  
that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit,  
that the repenting soul  
is the victorious soul,  
that to have nothing  
is to possess all,  
that to bear the cross  
is to wear the crown,  
that to give is to receive,  
that the valley is the place of vision.  
Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from  
deepest wells,  
and the deeper the wells the brighter thy  
stars shine;  
Let me find thy light in my darkness,  
thy life in my death,  
thy joy in my sorrow,  
thy grace in my sin,  
thy riches in my poverty  
thy glory in my valley.  
In Jesus precious Name, Amen.

*Edited by Arthur Bennett. The Valley of Vision.  
The Banner of Truth Trust.*



# MAX LUCADO®

*Life Lessons*

## ROMANS 6 vv 1-23

### Situation

Since Christ's righteousness brought us into a favoured relationship with God, we should live by God's standards.

### Observation

Christians are not slaves to sin but can overcome by the power of God.

### Inspiration

Think of it this way. Sin put you in prison. Sin locked you behind the bars of guilt and shame and deception and fear. Sin did nothing but shackle you to the wall of misery. Then Jesus came and paid your bail. He served your time; He satisfied the penalty and set you free. Christ died, and when you cast your lot with Him, your old self died too.

The only way to be set free from the prison of sin is to serve its penalty. In this case the penalty is death. Someone has to die, either you or a heaven-sent substitute. You cannot leave prison unless there is a death. But that death has occurred at Calvary. And when Jesus died, you died to sin's claim on your life. You are free...

Christ has taken your place. There is no need for you to remain in the cell. Ever heard of a discharged prisoner who wanted to stay? Nor have I. When the doors open, prisoners leave. The thought of a person preferring jail over freedom doesn't compute. Once the penalty is paid, why live under bondage? You are discharged from the penitentiary of sin. Why, in heaven's name, would you ever want to set foot in that prison again?

Paul reminds us: "Our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin" (Romans 6:6, 7).

He is not saying that it is impossible for believers to sin; he's saying it is stupid for believers to sin. "It's not the literal impossibility . . . but the moral incongruity" of the saved returning to sin.

What does the prison have that you desire? Do you miss the guilt? Are you homesick for dishonesty? Do you have fond memories of being lied to and forgotten? Was life better when you were dejected and rejected? Do you have a longing to once again see a sinner in the mirror?

It makes no sense to go back to prison.

*(From In the Grip of Grace by Max Lucado)*

### Application

Select a habit that you'd like to kick, a habit that hurts your life. Pray for help. Write down three steps you can take to remove that habit from your life. Do it today—enjoy your new life.

### Exploration

**Freedom**—Psalm 68:19–21; John 8:32; 1 Corinthians 8:9–13; Galatians 5:1.

# BOOK REVIEW



# ACROSTIC

## LOVE LETTERS TO THE WORLD

Author - Noel Davidson

I discovered this book “by accident”. My wife, Helen, had bought it and I had not paid it much attention. She then started to read out some extracts and I realised that I knew a number of the people, to whom reference was being made. It then dawned on me that this was the story of what I had known as “The Postal Sunday School”. Many years ago, I had actually been directly involved as a marker of lessons. For reasons outlined in the book, there has been a change of name to “The Postal Bible School” and the book was written in 2008, to mark the 50th anniversary of the organisation’s inception.

It is a heart-warming story of God’s leading and His provision. Everything started with a lady called Wendy Gray sending one Sunday School lesson by post to one young girl in the Republic of Ireland. The lesson was duly completed and returned - and no one had any conception of what this would lead to.

By 2008, there were thousands of lessons being sent out and completed in countries all around the world. At times, this project has entailed hard work and costly sacrifice but it has all been worth it. Many young people have come to faith in Christ and entire families have become aware of the Scriptures and the God who inspired them. Through the years, there has been an on-going recognition of the need to keep the material relevant and to consider such matters as the availability and preference for different translations of the Bible. Another issue has been the need to stay abreast of and utilise the many changes in technology.

If you are tempted to doubt whether God leads and uses ordinary people, like you and me, to serve His purposes on the Earth, then do read this book. It will persuade you that one small and apparently insignificant step, even when taken in a (seemingly!) obscure part of the world, can lead to a worldwide impact being made for the Kingdom of God. You might even be challenged to take your own small step!

David Wilson

Paul from the West Kilbride Praise Group regularly joins us for our monthly Praise Nights at the Hayocks Community Hall. Recently he has written a small book of acrostics. Here is a taster:-

### **From Paul...**

*“Acrostics mean a lot to me because they are a memorable way of reflecting on a significant point. They are quite hard to write, especially if you want them to rhyme, but I think they’re worth it.”*

Several of these acrostics can now be read in Paul’s (Harry Hunter) book - ‘**Horrible ‘Ooligans.**

### **Saints**

**S**ometimes ordinary people do  
**A**bsolutely extraordinary things;  
**I**t’s quite possible the person in the pew  
**N**earby will suddenly soar on eagle’s wings  
**T**aking God’s calling to pastures new,  
**S**urpassing their wildest imaginings.

### **Thin Places**

**T**ime pauses and  
**H**eaven touches earth  
**I**n special places where  
**N**earness to God suddenly happens.

**P**resent meets eternity,  
**L**ight dazzles  
**A**nd we encounter the living God.  
**C**ity or country, garden or wildness:  
**E**veryone finds their oasis, a  
**S**till point of calm and sanctuary.

# Obituaries

## In Loving Memory

### **MAMIE HARVEY**

Mamie McKirdy was born at Montfode Farm in Ardrossan and grew up with her siblings - Lizzie, Martha, Willie, Cissie & John. With their father being a ploughman, this meant a lot of moving around various farms. By the time her parents had retired from farming, sisters Lizzie and Martha had married and the remainder of the family moved to Boglemart Street.

While working at ICI, she would attend the Ardeer Halls in her spare time, most likely for the dancing. Here she met Chris Harvey who was serving in the Royal Marines. Chris & Mamie were then married by the Rev Geddes Ritchie at the High Kirk on the 21st of December 1944.

Many will remember Mamie from her time working at Morrison's Bakehouse where she received her gold watch for her 30 year service. Latterly she worked for Ivy & Ann Finnie in their family run bakery in Kilwinning. She was a hard worker, and as her mother would say, "she would just get her knickledabbers rolled up and would put some elbow grease into it!" Many will remember her beautiful wedding and celebration cakes, her excellent knitting, sewing and dressmaking skills.

Although housebound latterly, Mamie remained a cherished member of the High Kirk. Every Christmas her knitted Nativity scene would be on display. We therefore give thanks to God for a wonderful lady.

We also keep Mamie's wider family in our prayers.

### **BILLY GILMOUR**

Billy Gilmour will be remembered affectionately as a wonderful husband and a greatly loved father. His family meant everything to him.

Billy married Margaret Wilson at the High Kirk on the 25th of February 1966, and for 57 wonderful years he was Margaret's rock. They were then thrilled to see the arrival of their children - Janice (who died at 2 1/2 years), followed by Allan and David. David's partner Hazel was also warmly welcomed into the family as one of their own.

He was a devoted member and faithful Elder of the High Kirk for many years. It was an absolute privilege to be his Minister.

Billy often shared precious stories of his Youth Fellowship days and the Badminton Club. I can still picture him at the back of the church with tears through the singing of a special hymn, and his tight squeeze of a handshake when he felt deeply moved during a Service.

Billy was a hard worker all his days. After his apprenticeship as a Fitter at ICI, he went on to become Manager of the Power Plant, and Foreman of the Garage. He had a vast knowledge in mechanics, and loved getting under the various engines, whether it was a car, a train or a fire engine. Although he didn't fly himself, except on simulators, he also loved everything about flight.

In his younger days he played in Junior Football for Winton Rovers and later did a couple of seasons for Largs Thistle. He was an excellent player attracting interest from senior clubs and was very proud when he was selected for the Scotland Junior team. It has to be said that he was an all-round sportsman, an excellent golfer and became a very good bowler winning Ayrshire and Scottish titles with his teams and club.

Billy will always be remembered as an absolute "GENTLE" man! We lift up Margaret, Allan, David & Hazel, and Billy's close friends and church family in prayer.

### **DAVIE GIBB**

We all have loved and cherished friends, but there are those who stand out as real characters. Davie Gibb was one of Stevenston's great characters. He brought a lot of fun and mischief into your day. He was a bubbly character who loved being with people, very sociable and would always see the good in others. He greatly loved his family and appreciated the care he received at Seabank Nursing Home. He also looked forward to getting his weekly CD of the High Kirk church service, and he always appreciated pastoral visits.

As you all know, one of Davie's great passions was the ballroom dancing. It was at the dancing in Ardeer Halls where he met and fell in love with Francis Callaghan. Davie & Francis were married on the 27th of March 1953 at the Ardeer Church. He was a greatly loved dad to Carol & Stewart (now deceased) and to Joe, David & Ian. He also loved being a father-in-law to Aileen and Ann-Marie. And of course, he was on top of the world when he became "Wee Papa Gibb" to his 8 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

Davie will always be remembered as one of Stevenston's great characters. Like King David, who danced before the Lord, we will never forget the dancing feet of Davie Gibb. We therefore continue to remember the family in our prayers!

# Daily Bible Reading



	<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>DECEMBER</b>
1	Psalm 107:16-21	Psalm 119:89-96	Psalm 135:13-21
2	Psalm 107:22-31	Psalm 119:97-104	Psalm 136:1-9
3	Psalm 107:32-43	Psalm 119:105-112	Psalm 136:10-26
4	Psalm 108:1-13	Psalm 119:105	Psalm 137:1-9
5	Psalm 109:1-13	Psalm 119:113-120	Psalm 138:1-8
6	Psalm 109:14-20	Psalm 119:121-128	Psalm 139:1-24
7	Psalm 109:21-31	Psalm 119:129-136	Psalm 139:1-6
8	Psalm 110:1-7	Psalm 119:137-144	Psalm 139:7-12
9	Psalm 111:1-10	Psalm 119:145-152	Psalm 139:7-12
10	Psalm 112:1-10	Psalm 119:153-160	Psalm 139:13-18
11	Psalm 113:1-9	Psalm 119:161-168	Psalm 139:13-18
12	Psalm 114:1-8	Psalm 119:169-176	Psalm 139:13-18
13	Psalm 115:1-8	Psalm 120:1-7	Psalm 139:17-18
14	Psalm 115:9-18	Psalm 121:1-8	Psalm 139:17-18
15	Psalm 116:1-11	Psalm 122:1-9	Psalm 139:19-24
16	Psalm 116:12-19	Psalm 123:1-4	Psalm 139:19-22
17	Psalm 117:1-2	Psalm 124:1-8	Psalm 139:23-24
18	Psalm 118:1-9	Psalm 125:1-5	Psalm 140:1-13
19	Psalm 118:10-18	Psalm 126:1-6	Psalm 141:1-10
20	Psalm 118:19-29	Psalm 126:1-6	Psalm 142:1-7
21	Psalm 119:1-8	Psalm 127:1-5	Psalm 143:1-12
22	Psalm 119:9-16	Psalm 128:1-6	Psalm 144:1-8
23	Psalm 119:17-24	Psalm 129:1-8	Psalm 144:9-15
24	Psalm 119:25-32	Psalm 130:1-8	Psalm 145:1-13
25	Psalm 119:33-40	Psalm 131:1-3	Psalm 145:14-21
26	Psalm 119:41-48	Psalm 132:1-10	Psalm 146:1-10
27	Psalm 119:49-56	Psalm 132:11-18	Psalm 147:1-11
28	Psalm 119:57-64	Psalm 133:1-3	Psalm 147:12-20
29	Psalm 119:65-72	Psalm 134:1-3	Psalm 148:1-14
30	Psalm 119:73-80	Psalm 135:1-12	Psalm 149:1-9
31	Psalm 119:81-88		Psalm 150:1-6