

scope

february 10



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Minister's Letter

At last – a snow-free greeting to you all and a happy new year!!

It was nice to start with but, let's be honest, it kind of lost its appeal after about a week. I liked the snow; I slid on the snow; I laughed in the snow.

As did, I know, many of you. Nonetheless, the white deluge we got over the Christmas season and well into the New Year ultimately reinforced that sort of 'limbo land' feel that can often descend onto that week between Christmas Day and Hogmanay.

Each day feels curiously similar to the one before. The normal routine is gone and seems to be replaced by an uncertain round of children's board games and TV reruns of The Great Escape or The Sound of Music. In short, it can be a never-never land that's neither one thing or another and so it all becomes very disorientating.

The disorientation carries on into our society in a spiritual fashion. We hear of stories in the press and on TV news programmes that a nurse offered to pray for a patient and was sacked; a British Airways employee is told to hide the cross round her neck or be sacked; various police forces round the country stopping open-air preaching of the Christian gospel for fear of offending other groups in society.

trypraying.

We can often lose sight of truths that the Bible teaches and truths that are indeed still manifest in our society if one cares to look. 20 million people in Britain pray. In a country with the Christian heritage that we have that might seem to be simply stating a blindingly obvious fact. However, it is worth keeping in mind. Especially when, as folks say, folk have their 'backs against the wall.' 13 million pray at least once a month and 9 million pray everyday.

Yet we live in a society where those facts seem at odds with what is coming off the headlines. Clearly, 9 million praying people aren't all Christians, which in this particular case isn't the point. The point is that people in our country still pray in significant numbers – while not necessarily having any church connection. They may have Mrs. Mack (from Take the High Road) and Dot Cotton (from Eastenders) served up to them on TV as what Christians supposedly look like and yet they still take prayer seriously.

One in three people actually believe that God will answer their prayers. That's disorientating because clearly this country does not have a population that behaves as if books by Richard Dawkins, Christopher

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Minister's Letter (cont'd)

Hitchens and their like are correct. Actually it's quite the reverse. The majority of people are neutral on religion or bruised by past experiences of church – but certainly not card carrying atheists. They are open to God even if they are unsure about church.

Nonetheless if Richard Dawkins even writes a shopping list the Guardian newspaper will print it; if Dawkins visits some far off place Channel 4 turns it into a two hour TV documentary. If we focus on the message in the media then we can easily forget we live in a country where a third of the population believe in prayer. Spiritually, we can feel as if we're in this limbo land where it feels we need to be careful about something that actually loads of people do and would be open to the offer if we made it – have you tried praying about it?

Isn't that a natural place to begin in reaching out to folks in Penicuik. The big evangelistic event has its place but real evangelism isn't restricted to the big speaker coming to town. On-going, natural interaction with folk we know is by far the most productive evangelism for the kingdom.

We are simply going on the basis of what the Bible clearly shows – God responds to a seeking heart. Plainly, if we have 20 million people only praying that they'll win the lottery we

need to be wary of saying God will always answer our prayers. Yet doesn't the Bible show that people find God in the toughest places when their barriers come down and they are simply open to listening out for Him.

If that's the case we need to be prepared for those times when we are given opportunities by God. We need to ask have you tried praying about it? And then hand them the booklet.

Do you recall the advert some years ago for the American Express credit card – Don't leave home without it was the tag line put at the end of every TV slot. Some sports personality or soap opera star would hold up a credit card and say the recurring phrase. We all in the congregation need to apply it to the booklet trypraying. It's clearly meant to be in a pocket or a handbag. Its size means it's meant to be portable. Before God I say to you clearly DON'T GO HOME AND PUT ON A SHELF – KEEP IT ON YOU. Just do as the advert says - don't leave home without it.

David Hill was here in January and hopefully you heard him (24th January 2010 sermon on the website if you missed it). Let's get behind this initiative for the sake of the gospel.

Yours in Him
Ian Cathcart

Notes from Kirk Session

Session continues to read the Commitment Sheets at each meeting and will begin a review process whereby we discuss one sheet per meeting to ensure that the commitment we made is being followed and implemented. The following is the first sheet we will be discussing and it would be good to hear from members of the congregation any thoughts about what this Commitment 'looks like' to you. Please e-mail me on jemaclean@talktalk.net or phone on 677714.

WE THANK GOD FOR –

OUR COMMITMENT TO AND
LOVE FOR EACH OTHER

OUR GENEROSITY AND
COMPASSION

THE VIBRANCY OF OUR FAITH
AND COMMITMENT TO HIM

OUR HEART TO REACH OUT TO
PENICUIK AND BEYOND

THE GOOD PEOPLE WHO HAVE
MINISTERED TO US OVER THE
YEARS

Session is meeting monthly for prayer and has set its next Away Day for 27th March. We have been asked by Presbytery to give our thoughts on a Consultation paper concerning same-sex relationships in the ministry and have set an evening to examine this paper.

The first part of the accounts were discussed and the Annual Business Meeting has been set for Thursday 25th March.

Bill Bruce reported from the Fabric Committee that a substantial amount of work requires to be undertaken in the Church in respect of wiring and the rationalisation of the distribution panel which controls the heating. We also need to consider the probability that the boiler in the hall will need replacing in the not too distant future. Quotes are being obtained for both.

Joyce MacLean

Parish News

Sadly Sandra Lamb lost her long battle with cancer at the beginning of the year. Ian took the service at Mortonhall. Our thoughts and prayers are with John and Simon and the family at this sad time.

Church Website Maintenance

Are you interested in helping to maintain the South Church website? One area of involvement is that of administration of the site and this would require someone who is fairly proficient with computers and in particular, FTP. Another area is that of contributing content to the site and this would suit anyone who is computer literate. If you think you might be interested, please speak to Paul (670483, ptomsa@gmail.com).

We Need Your Help

Sadly it has come to our attention that some of our members on the church roll have passed away and we did not know. If the minister does not take the funeral and we are not told by the family then we need to be made aware, to offer pastoral support and keep the roll up to date.

If someone dies, who lives near you and has or might have had church connections, then please could you let Joyce Maclean or one of the elders know. It's better to be told several times than not at all, when we might send flowers or turn up for a visit.

Thank you,
Mary Darling

Operation Christmas Child

My thanks to all who responded to the shoebox appeal. Over 9000 were collected in Scotland and these were distributed to children in Belarus.

Bill Bruce

Men's Ministry Event

PSK's Men's Ministry Group would like to bring to the attention of all men in Penicuik South an event taking place on 27th February 2010 at Charlotte Chapel, Rose Street, Edinburgh at 7.30 pm. The event is titled:

“FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL TO THE HEIGHTS OF GLORY”

The event will be focused on the testimony of Tony Anthony, the author of the Christian best seller “Taming the Tiger”. To say that his story is powerful, dramatic and compelling would be an understatement. Tony was a World Kung Fu champion and a bodyguard to some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in the world. He travelled the world, gained great wealth and status, yet his life descended into chaos and tragedy to the point where he finally ended up in Nicosia's Central Prison in Cyprus. It was here, when all seemed lost, he was led to Christ and to salvation.

In December, Billy Hudson and Ash Wood attended an introductory / prayer meeting at Charlotte Chapel about the event which is aimed not only at encouraging Christian men in their walk with God, but also bringing non-believers to faith through the powerful testimony of Tony Read. To

this end, the vision of the organisers is to attract 700+ to the event, which they hope will be made up of 350 Christian men each taking a non-Christian friend with them.

The Men's Ministry Group in Penicuik South are committed to supporting this event and would like to take this opportunity to commend this event to all men attending PSK. We also ask that if you wish to attend the event that you would prayerfully consider bringing a non-Christian friend that may be interested in coming along. If there is plenty of interest from men in PSK we would aim to travel to the event together as a group. Though anyone wishing to travel independently is, of course, free to do so. Further information on the event can be obtained from Billy Hudson, Ash Wood or Ken Gordon.

Finally, even if you are unable to attend this event we would ask that you keep it in your prayers and ask for God's blessing and anointing on Tony and the organisers. The potential is there to change the lives of hundreds of men by bringing them to faith in Christ, and thereby potentially transforming the lives of wives, children, families...the scope for God to do a mighty work through this event is incredible. Please pray for its success.

Your brothers in Christ,
Billy, Ken and Ash

pull it out! **What's On?** pin it up!

Wednesday 3rd February	Women's Group - Trip to Rwanda with Ian Cathcart	West St. Hall	7.30pm
Sunday 7th February	Morning Service - Signed, Sealed & Delivered; From Orphans to Heirs Romans 8; 1-30	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 7th February	Evening Service - 1 Peter 4;12-19 - Communion	South Church	7.00pm
Thursday 11th February	Kirk Session	South Church	7.00pm
Sunday 14th February	Morning Service - Signed, Sealed & Delivered; Hebrews 12; 1-17	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 14th February	Evening Service - Praise Night	South Church	7.00pm
Wednesday 17th February	Women's Group - Mercy Ship with Susie Hope	West St. Hall	2.30pm
Sunday 21st February	Morning Service - Signed, Sealed & Delivered: Luke 15: 11-32	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 21st February	Evening Service - 1 Peter 5:1-5	South Church	7.00pm
Sunday 28th February	Morning Service - Signed, Sealed & Delivered: Luke 15; 11-32	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 28th February	Evening Service - 1 Peter 5:6-14	South Church	7.00pm

**Deadline for articles
for next issue of Scope:
Monday 22nd February 2010**

World Day of Prayer 2010

On Friday, March 5, Christian women of Cameroon, who wrote the service, invite men, women and young people from around the world to share with them in the World Day of Prayer Service which will begin as the sun rises in the Tonga Islands and will continue around the world over the next thirty six hours, until the sun sets over Alaska. People from the Christian communities in over 180 countries have the opportunity to worship and pray on the common theme "Let Everything That Has Breath Praise God"

In Scotland, services are held in locations as diverse as churches, universities and schools, Sunday Schools, Youth groups, hospitals and eventide homes, hostels for the homeless, prisons and shopping centres.

Cameroon is on the west coast of South Africa, just north of the equator. It is divided into many geographical regions with the coastal plain in the south. Cameroon is rich in natural resources and is described as "Africa in miniature" and offers a striking variety of landscapes.

There is an astonishing cultural wealth, with more than 240 ethnic groups each with its own specific culture. It is well known for its styles of music and is therefore well placed

to take up the theme.

"Let Everything That Has Breath Praise God"

The women of Cameroon encourage us to come with great enthusiasm; to bring choirs and people to play instruments; to make music in praise and adoration of God. They remind us that with every breath we take we renew the gift of life and for this we praise God. On March 5, 2010 we will join with people all over the earth and with all creation. Together we will fulfil the call of Psalm 150: "Let everything that has breath praise God."

World Day of Prayer 2010 Penicuik

The World Day of Prayer will take place in Penicuik South Parish Church on Friday, 5th March at 7.30p.m.

As it is the South Kirk's turn to host this Service, members of the congregation are invited to attend if possible to support this annual event.

Thank you.

Sheena Allan
Audrey Roy

Comfort Rwanda - Opportunities to get involved

As we step into a New year, a new decade even, can I encourage you to think and pray about how you can get involved in supporting the work of the charity Comfort Rwanda. Firstly, you might feel called to go out and visit Rwanda. That would be great! There are several trips being organised for 2010 through other churches which you could join in with.

Or you could help to start fundraising for a trip in 2011 which we pray that many folks from Penicuik South will want to take part in.

Secondly, you might wish to consider the Support-a-Pupil/Support-a-School at Gakagati appeal. For just £5 a month you will help ensure that more children get the opportunity to learn, that the school buildings will be finished and the teachers will get paid so they will be able to stay there and keep the school going. It doesn't have to be a huge long term commitment. £5 a month for just one year can make a huge difference to a child in Rwanda.

I feel really passionate about Rwanda since my visit, I can't live my life oblivious to how people in that country have to live anymore. But I don't have to feel powerless to do anything. If I can affect some small change in my life so I can say I'm helping that situation, then I want to show God's love in that way. Let's get as many kids to school as we can in Gakagati!

Jesus said that the poor would always be with us and we know in this unfair world that the needs will always outweigh the means to meet them, but Jesus also said, 'Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:40)

If you are at all interested in supporting any aspect of Comfort Rwandas' work, there are leaflets in the vestibules or come and speak to Ian or myself.

Lastly, to everybody, I ask that you continue to keep praying for all the projects that Comfort Rwanda are involved in, changing lives and bringing people comfort.

Linda Dowling

CLAN - Conference Manager

We are really excited to be able to invite applications for this new post with CLAN (New Wine Scotland).

The Conference Manager's post is a new opportunity created within the CLAN team to manage the overall planning and organisation of CLAN Gathering summer conference as well as to give management input to other CLAN conferences and events as required, ensuring the implementation of effective marketing, administration and delivery of high quality events.

We are looking for someone who is seeking the challenge of taking CLAN Gathering and other CLAN events to a new level of impact and effectiveness within Scotland. The post holder will be an experienced and able person who can operate at a senior level of management. We are looking for someone who has a proven track record in event management, PR and marketing and is looking for an opportunity to use these gifts within the Christian environment.

The job description and application form are available at www.new-wine-scotland.org

Thanks

Rick Hayes

God said, 'MOVE'

Thank you to everyone who kindly supported me in my recent move to Penicuik: for all your invaluable prayers, cards, gifts and visits which have truly blessed me more than words can adequately express! After 21 years in a spacious house, it was a massive undertaking that I was only able to accomplish through God's clear leading and provision, moving to a smaller property and managing to sell and buy in the space of just 4 months!

Thank you also to Jennifer Ruddick, who not only prayed but also took over the church prayer diary from November to January and gave us lots of good prayers to pray together!

I must above all testify to God's great faithfulness every step of this journey, and hopefully encourage anyone else who is challenged by Him to do something you can't imagine doing, that when He calls He also equips and enables us to do His will!

Denise Halcrow

"...those who trust in the Lord are protected by his constant love."
Psalm 32:10.

Offering Envelopes - Can you help?

The pink and blue offering envelopes, which we collect in the plates on a Sunday morning, is a good way of reminding us to give regularly, on a weekly basis. If we are away on holiday or unable to come to church, we can still put our money in the envelope and hand it in next time we are at church.

However those of us who count the money, would appreciate not having to open lots of envelopes with the same number. We do mark in a book, the amount of money against the number on the blue envelope, for Gift Aid purposes. It's the total amount given, not the smaller amounts backdated on previous Sundays, which is recorded. So please would you put your missed offerings into one envelope, or two, if possible, to help speed up the counting, which takes place after the morning service.

Thanking you for your help,

Mary Darling
On behalf of the counting teams.

try praying.

Noah's Ark

Man builds working replica of Noah's Ark (exact scale given in Bible) in Schagen, Netherlands

The massive central door in the side of Noah's Ark was opened to the first crowd of curious townsfolk to behold the wonder. Of course, it's only a replica of the biblical Ark, built by Dutch creationist, Johan Huibers, as a testament to his faith in the literal truth of the Bible.

The ark is 150 cubits long, 30 cubits high and 20 cubits wide. That's two-thirds the length of a football field and as high as a three-story house.

Life-size models of giraffes, elephants, lions, crocodiles, zebras, bison and other animals greet visitors as they arrive in the main hold.

A contractor by trade, Huibers built the ark of cedar and pine. Biblical Scholars debate exactly what the wood used by Noah would have been.

Huibers did the work mostly with his own hands, using modern tools and with occasional help from his son, Roy. Construction began in May 2005.

On the uncovered top deck - not quite ready in time for the opening - will come a petting zoo, with baby lambs, chickens, goats and one camel.

Visitors on the first day were stunned. 'It's past comprehension', said Mary Louise Starosciak, who happened to be bicycling by with her husband while on vacation when they saw the ark looming over the local landscape.

'I knew the story of Noah, but I had no idea the boat would have been so big ' There is enough space near the keel for a 50-seat film theatre where kids can watch a video that tells the story of Noah and his ark. Huibers, a Christian man, said he hopes the project will renew interest in Christianity in the Netherlands, where church-going has fallen dramatically in the past 50 years.

Now that I am old and Gray...give me the time to tell This new generation (and their children too) About all your mighty miracles.
Psalm 71:18

Contributed by
Billy Hudson



trypraying.

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