

SCOPE

september09



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Minister's Letter

Hello again,

Let me say from the outset, I need to be careful with this message. I know not everyone has had a good summer – weather-wise! For many it has been quite the reverse. While it may be quite clear in Psalm 97 (v11) that the sun shines on the righteous, the fact remains I'm not sure this past summer is really an ideal basis to apply that verse too literally. Plus, as was pointed out to me on my return home from holiday, 'the de'el aye looks efter his ain'! Moreover, Jesus himself says that God sends the rain on the just and the unjust.

The fact remains the Cathcart family didn't just have a visit to Ardnamurchan over the holidays – we had something of a spiritual experience – at least, I did at any rate.

We went to Sanna Sands on the 7th of August - the furthest west sandy beach on the British mainland. All kinds of mundane and not so mundane things came together to make the day simply amazing. None of them were particularly spiritual.

The family drove over some great hold-on-to-your-tummy hills to get there. (In the Cathcart family, that's a small hill on a road that makes your head bounce off the car's ceiling – a good one is where we all scream. And there are several good ones in Ardnamurchan!) Rebekah made a really good sand castle; Hannah laid out some fantastic shells round the moat; the incoming tide filled the moat

spectacularly; Ross, Joshua and I jumped off a big rock in the bay into the sea. We saw all these tiny little fish in the water, then bigger ones and then a really big one – at least 10 centimetres! We all played with the (American) football. On the way off the beach, we saw a toad. Ross put Gavin De Graw on the CD player. Jackie spotted a herd of more than sixty wild deer drinking at a mountain stream. Every turn on the road took us to another 'postcard' scene of mountainous beauty that was more stunning than the previous postcard scene. And on all of this, for the whole day, the sun shone all day long – beautifully so!

At the end of the day, I found myself writing down a whole lot of 'thank you's' to God before I even realised what exactly I was doing. I was back in Penicuik before I even thought of writing this opening letter to Scope – I didn't initially write of the day with this letter in mind. I initially wrote down my feelings because I didn't want to 'loose' the day. I wrote because I had to. I wrote because that truly special day took me in my thoughts naturally to the One who I needed to thank for that wonderful day. I know you can never 'pause' time like some good scene in a film on your DVD at home. But the day was so funny, so sunny, so phenomenal, so perfect I needed to record it in some way so I could remember (hopefully always

(cont'd p4)

Minister's Letter (cont'd)

remember) just how great the day had been.

My innate Scottish cultural humility and my need to be not thought of as being swelt-heided means I don't ever think of myself as an example of Christianity in the way Paul says copy me as I copy Jesus. Few people in this country think as Paul did. However, I now realise I was living some verses from I Thessalonians, chapter 5 without knowing it:

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you... 23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it... 28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Being Calvinistic, I always felt, rather than knew, that the call to give thanks in all circumstances was a negative situation. When things go wrong you must still worship God. A bit like Paul in a Macedonian jail singing praise to God – as Ian White's song says, "in each circumstance that I find myself I will praise the Lord."

But I also realise now, it's when things go really, really unspeakably well that we most often leave God out of the

situation. I didn't this time. I feel sure I should and could have waxed lyrical about many other days and haven't been sufficiently close to God to react as I should – this time I was.

Much of my holiday reading was round the New Atheists (Richard Dawkins etc) and their critics. My head is, and was, full of the arguments for and counter-arguments against God existing. It strikes me that nothing I've written above would count as proof. Dawkins' would scientifically explain away all my wonder and enjoyment. The over worked imagination of a professional faith-head. Yet I realise it is in thanking God more and more that we adopt the real place to understand this world and our place within it. I hesitate to say this; because there are loads of times when copying me would hinder your walk with God but not this time. Copy me in finding the joy in each day and give the glory to God for those wonderful days when everything seems so right. Certainly, pray, too, that we can do the same on the road marked for suffering as well. The point is whoever you are and where ever you are; married or single; sunny or rain-drenched; God is there to be found. But finding him is really just the start. It's about giving Him all the glory and thanking Him always.

Yours in Him
Ian Cathcart

News from Kirk Session

We held one short meeting over the summer so there's not a great deal to report.

The elders will be having their weekend away on 2nd – 4th October, this was postponed from June. Steve Goss from Freedom in Christ will be leading us

The quote for the improvements to the Overhead system is being considered and minor alterations have been requested. This should hopefully be resolved at our meeting in September

Ian was granted a donation from the Church of £600 towards his cost for the trip to Comfort Rwanda. Session felt that we should be supporting Ian for this Outreach. Permission was given to hold a Car Boot Sale in aid of peoples' costs (held Saturday 22nd – raised approx £200).

Session had received a quote for some essential electrical work in the Church which is going ahead.

The Church received a letter of thanks from Celebrate Recovery for the donation of a laptop computer and funding for a new projector bulb.

We will be meeting again in September, please continue to pray that God will be at the heart of our every decision. Please also pray for the weekend away that the time spent with Steve Goss will bear much fruit.

Yours in Christ
Joyce MacLean
Session Clerk

Memorial Service - Eddie Dobson

As you are already aware Eddie Dobson sadly passed away shortly before the summer holidays. There will be a memorial service on Sunday 6th September at 4pm in the church to celebrate his life.

The Scout Flag

In 1957 to celebrate the Jubilee year of Scouting, a special church parade was held to the South Church, where the original Troop Colour was laid up. It hung at the front of the church for many years, but was not replaced after the renovations for dry rot. Since we no longer have a Scout troop associated with South Church and the flag was not in good condition, it has been returned to the care of the local Scout troop.

Maurice Dower

Thank You!

Ash and Leigh Wood would like to express their sincere thanks and gratitude to everyone who prayed for their daughter, Niamh, recently. As you will have seen from the last couple weeks in Church she has made a full recovery! Thank you all, and praise God for faithfulness and love.

Summer Mission

The Mission & Discipleship Council is trying to connect with as many people as possible who participated in Summer Missions from 1934 to the present-day iMPACT teams. We'd like to invite them to the HUGE iMPACT event in Perth in November, and to find stories and photographs through the decades. If you have current contact details of any team leaders and their members, or have interesting information or photos, then please let Rev Andy Campbell know on 07966 286 517, acampbell@cofscotland.org.uk or at the Mission and Discipleship Office, Arran House, Arran Road, Perth PH1 3DZ..

Keswick 2009 – Faith that Works

The challenge of Keswick this year – Do Christians offer an attractive example of faith that works? Over three weeks in July the convention explored the challenge of living in a fallen world, the disturbing demands of James, the ancient wisdom of Proverbs and the radical model of Jesus' own life. We were at week three where the evening celebrations focussed on Hebrews 11 – Heroes of Faith - men and women whose faith is characterised by endurance. They were not perfect heroes, they doubted and they sinned but they are authentic, productive and effective examples for us and encourage us to make every effort to grow not just in head knowledge but faith that has hands, feet and heart too.

The tent was filled to capacity every night with every age group represented, making a mockery of pronouncements that the church is in terminal decline in the UK. The worship was led by Stuart Townend, ably assisted by Lou Fellingham and her colleagues from Phatfish. Throughout the week there were productions from Saltmine Theatre, concerts from Phatfish, an audience with Stuart Townend as well as Bible readings and seminars exploring aspects of a faith that works.

We were challenged not only to hear the word but to do it and that “doing it” is not just down to us; God is at work in us “to will and to act according to His good purpose”. We came away blessed, refreshed, invigorated and responding to God's invitation to become authentic productive and living examples of a faith that works.

Robert & Ellen Walley

For Your Information –

Keswick 2010.

Week 1: 17-23 July

Week 2: 24-30 July

Week 3: 31 July- 6 August.

Thank You and An Update

Paul Hayes

Dear Brothers and Sisters

The last of the 37 Radiotherapy treatments was on Thursday 3rd July. So the first year of treatment is over very successfully with huge blessings and next to no side effects.

The operation under local anaesthetic in February prior to the treatment went very well and was also an experience of wonderful care and a privilege to see another aspect of our healthcare system. Given that it was necessary it was a privilege to witness it.

Thank you everyone at South Kirk and all connected in any way for your loving support expressed in so many ways including prayer from so many and the lovely prayer of all the available eldership on two occasions. It has been so important and I am quite sure has been a big factor in how well it has gone.

I am now into the two years of ongoing three monthly hormone injections and three monthly clinic visits with a blood test to get before each visit.

Mo and I had days down at York and Sir Walter Scott's home at Abbotsford in the two days off during the treatment. When we saw that the BBC Antiques Road Show programme was on at Abbotsford on my last day managed to get an early treatment slot and had a day out incorporating a visit to see the action. It was good to see well known TV faces in action at close quarters and see many fascinating objects including a huge picture of Donaldson's school from the west looking towards the Edinburgh landmarks.

Given that it was necessary it has been a privilege to experience the care and dedication of the team and you certainly get to know the team! You also get the chance if you drive the same route there and back every day to get to know 'the knowledge' of all the road names and junctions for that part of Edinburgh.

Having such a good hospital as the Western General close by has been a great blessing. Here is one of the pictures they were able to help me get. I have got some really good illustrative material on measurement uncertainty which has over the recent years become one of my specialities. But it is not everyone

who can illustrate a talk with the hard edge of what it has to mean with the accuracy and freedom from systematic error in such important medical treatment,

Thanks again and we hope you have a lovely late summer and good start back to school for family together with a lovely autumn.

Love, Mo and Paul



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

Sunday 6th September	Morning Service - Who is my neighbour? - Luke 10: 25-37	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 6th September	Memorial Service for Eddie Dobson	South Church	4.00pm
Sunday 6th September	Evening Service & Communion - 2 Thessalonians 1: 1-12	South Church	7.00pm
Thursday 10th September	Kirk Session Meeting	South Church	7.15pm
Saturday 12th September	Bethany Walk for Homelessness		
Sunday 13th September	Morning service - Where is my neighbour? - Acts 27: 1- Acts 28:16	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 13th September	Traditional Service	South Church	3.00pm
Sunday 13th September	Evening Service - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12	South Church	7.00pm
Tuesday 15th September	Comfort Rwanda Trip - Depart		
Sunday 20th September	Morning Service - Going to work with My Neighbour. Matthew 13:47-58 - led by Joyce Maclean	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 20th September	Evening service - 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 - led by Rosie Townsley	South Church	7.00pm
Sunday 27th September	Morning Service - Having Leisure time with my neighbours. Matthew 9:1-17 - led by Jackie Ringan	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 27th September	Praise Service	South Church	7.00pm
Monday 28th September	Comfort Rwanda Trip - Return		

**Deadline for articles
for next issue of Scope:
Monday 21st September 2009**

Dear Friends

Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciated all your support for my Edinburgh Marathon run for Comfort Rwanda!

Thanks to every ones prayers to help me be strong enough for the run, and for the overwhelming kindness and generosity that you have shown for this worthy cause, I have managed to raise just over £1400 to help the people of Rwanda! Fantastic!

As you were aware I had many trials and injuries in training before the Marathon but now I would like to share with you my amazing water story! I woke up on the Friday morning before the race, not really aware of having had a dream, but with a very, very clear knowledge that they were going to run out of water at the Marathon! I expressed my fears to a few people who thought I was daft and said that the organisers were well aware it was going to be hot (and it was very hot!) and they would have more than enough supplies to go round.

I still was convinced that there was going to be a shortage and had resigned myself to lugging two bottles of water round the course with me which would add to my burden but if that was what I had to do (and pray

about it too of course!) then so be it! At this point on Friday it had been planned that my husband Ricky and youngest daughter Steph would come and cheer me on at the finish area as my eldest girl, Kimmy was scheduled to be going to a conference all weekend, leaving Edinburgh at about 4.30pm on Friday, so couldn't make it. At 4pm Kimmy got a call saying that the conference was to be postponed as many of those who were to attend had phoned up sick and couldn't go. Kimmy then called me to say that she was able to come to see me at the Marathon after all! What a relief I felt, answered prayer! I tentatively asked if she could possibly go out to Longniddry which was about the 15 mile mark and she said that was where she had wanted to go and Steph was going too! Phew!

Marathon day came, sweltering heat, 22 degrees Celsius, but I was well covered and sun screened up, determined not to get burnt or dehydrated or hit "THE WALL" (thanks to Bethany & Becky). The atmosphere was amazing and it would have been easy to get carried away and go too fast but that wee voice in my head kept pulling me back and telling me to go steady.

I made it to 15 miles and Kimmy and Steph were there but I didn't quite need my next bottle of water yet so

continued up to Gosford House and on the route back noticed that the water stations had indeed run out of water and energy gels! I was so overwhelmed that my dream was true, I ran on and met the girls again at 19 miles and collected my next drinks bottle, which lasted me every step of the way to the finish line! I finished in 4 hours 10 mins feeling great!

News reports the next day said that water and energy gels had been stolen from water stations between 15 and 21 miles and there was a severe lack of water, 20 people were taken to hospital with heat exhaustion and about 100 people were treated by the roadside! I was so protected and provided for that day, I had complete faith that God was with me every step of the way.

Linda Dowling

Coffee Mornings Outreach To Women

Earlier this year I attended a public poetry and prose reading evening where I was one of the readers. One of the poems I had chosen to read was about the deliverance from sin through Jesus Christ. What a spiritual battle I suffered while waiting for my turn to read amongst an audience of approximately 30 or more. In my head was an argument between taking the easy way and just read the "safe" stuff or read the salty stuff! I discussed it with the Author of my faith and I believe he showed me a vision of the people in the room being trapped within flames of fire. The Lord stood opposite me on my left and asked me "Did you tell them about me?" I went ahead and salted the fire.

If you are a woman with a burning desire to reach out the gospel to the lost then please prayerfully consider joining me running coffee mornings where friends, neighbours and acquaintances meet and testimonies are shared on what God has done in our lives. So far God has blessed these meetings.

We all have something of value to share. If you are interested in helping in anyway such as baking, advertising making gifts and especially prayer please contact Valah Russell on 01968 672397, Email: poetryinmotion@tiscali.co.uk. I intend to start with a prayer meeting which will be arranged when I have sufficient interest. Thank you.

Eddie Dobson

Eddie was our neighbour and friend. We used to see Eddie out walking his dog yet there was something about him which made us think that he wasn't happy. We later found out that he had lived alone for many years following the death of his wife around 1985. He wasn't at all keen to engage with us and so for years our relationship never got passed a low mumbled 'hello there'.

Several years ago we decided to invite our neighbours for a Christmas gathering in our home. Eddie didn't come. Later on that year we saw him out on Rullion Road near his house, on a blustery day. Eddie got blown over as he stepped off the pavement. Some lads in a car stopped and offered to drive him home, he brushed aside their offer. We had stopped as well and Sarah offered to walk him home. Eddie said almost bitterly "I've had a terrible year". He refused all other offers of help so the next day, a Sunday morning, Sarah went to see how he was. His son was there and Eddie was obviously going to be OK, Sarah looked at him and said "You're going to have a cracking black eye". Eddie laughed and it was as though at that point, we'd made a connection. He said "You're the people that sent me that invitation at Christmas. That was an English thing to do".

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Sarah assured him of our nationality. We decided to repeat the Christmas gathering the following December. Astonishingly, Eddie came. He was first to arrive and last to leave so we reckoned that he quite enjoyed himself. Now when we saw him out and about we would wave and smile to one another.

We did the same the following Christmas. Again Eddie was first to arrive and last to leave. One week later he sent us a thank you card which had 'the serenity prayer' on the front of it. Knowing that Celebrate Recovery made regular use of this prayer made us think of making a connection. Alistair felt that the thing to do was to invite Eddie along to a CR meeting. Fully expecting him to decline the invitation Eddie took Alistair by surprise when he said yes. So Alistair accompanied Eddie to CR. After the meeting we chatted about what Eddie thought of it. He clearly wasn't sure but he had seen something he liked in the way that people were to one another and in their honesty. So much so that he said he would be back the next week. This carried on for about two months after which Eddie said that he would be happy to continue going along to CR on his own though what happened was that others offered to give him lifts there and back.

At this time Eddie would say that he believed the biblical stories which he even remembered from his Sunday school days nearly eighty years earlier but somehow he couldn't believe that they had any meaning for him today. We prayed that God would let Eddie see himself in his continuous story. Unfortunately a bad experience with an army chaplain during the war had convinced Eddie to be very sceptical of the church. But despite this we had some meaningful conversations and Eddie was clearly more open minded. He even accepted an invitation to come along to South Church one Sunday morning. After that visit it was hard to keep him away from the church!

Also around this time we heard that Ruth and David Aird were starting a 'Christianity Explored' course in their home. We invited Eddie on their behalf and he went along. This was to be the start of a long supportive relationship with that group of Christians which even saw Eddie wanting to be baptised in the baptismal pool of Bruntsfield Evangelical Church. Eddie had become a believer in Jesus and received him as Lord and Saviour. In many ways it was a gentle transformation but nonetheless miraculous. In fact he was now such an enthusiastic believer that he joined

a third group of believers when he joined one of South Church's Wednesday night housegroups.

When Eddie was diagnosed with throat cancer his health went downhill quite rapidly. He was no longer able to enjoy the regular games of golf which had been such a big part of his life. He had several stays in hospital and then was taken into Marie Curie Hospice at the end of June. He died peacefully with his two daughters and two sons nearby. He died believing that he was going to a good place which his heavenly Father had waiting for him.

It was a privilege to have known Eddie; we've only seen a small part of his story. Other Christians in Penicuik have their own stories of how Eddie encouraged them, just by being an old man, near the end of his life, and turning around and seeing glimpses of God. God can transform people even when they've reached their late 80s, nobody's insignificant to Him.

Alistair & Sarah Cowper

Doing Things Straightaway

We can get so familiar with scripture that we need reminders about the often hard reality that is recorded there. When the Angel spoke to Joseph to get up and escape from Herod he rose and fled with Mary and Jesus that night (Matt 2:14). Jesus later gave us similar warnings that no-one should go back into their house when they saw the fulfilment of His words about the desolation of Jerusalem but should fly immediately (Matt 24:17).

This May 31 the Sunday Times featured an extract entitled 'Post Cards from Hell' picking up on a story from the book 'Remember Us' by Ruth Dersken about one of the two halves of the same extended family in Stalinist Russia separated on one night in 7 November 1929. The story of what was endured by the half of the family that was left behind is harrowing. Their success in getting the letters out to the other half of their family in Canada that provides this invaluable archive of the suffering endured in the Gulag.

The beginning of the story contributed by both halves of the family is an extremely stark illustration of the truth of the Lord's words. The two families were German speaking Mennonites living in the Ukraine where they worked

and worshipped. They built up large farms and were prosperous. Stalin had come to power in 1922 and embarked on his policy of collectivisation. He declared war on the rich peasants who he declared 'enemies of the people'. When the brother Franz Barga learned there was a warrant out for his arrest he and his wife Liese and family of four young children fled the very night they knew they were in danger. In a hair raising journey they made it on the last train out to Latvia and then Germany and finally Canada. His sister Maria Regeher and her husband Jasch and family of six children lingered till morning and were caught and sent to the Gulag and to decades of suffering and only a remnant were finally allowed to leave after the Eastern European reforms of 1989.

One day a call will come and we need to pray constantly now that we will hear and respond wisely and in a timely fashion.

'Post Card fro Hell' Sunday Times, May 31, 2009-07-26;
'Remember Us' by Ruth Dersken Siemens, Published by Pandora Press and distributed by BooksFirst 0870 165 8585

Contributed by Paul Hayes

New Home Wanted for Old Scopes

I recently was clearing out a bookshelf and came across a load of old Scopes dating from winter 1992 to summer 2008. There are some missing but the total count was about 133 copies.

It is quite interesting to go through the back issues and see how the style and production of the Scope magazine has changed and developed over the years, but I really no longer have room for them.

If anyone is interested in having these old Scopes I would be glad to pass them on. Please give me a call on 01968 673063 or e-mail me on mack51@talktalk.net and I can deliver them to you.

Caroline McIntosh

Bethany Walk for Homelessness

Our next big fundraising event is our Walk for Homelessness, this year, at the breath-taking setting of Loch Leven, Kinross on Saturday 12 September.

The sponsored walk is through a Scottish National Heritage site and boasts incredible scenery and offers a treasure-trove of wildlife in its natural habitat. The walk is roughly 11.5 miles from Kinross Pier to the mid-point and back. (A 4.5 mile option is available for those who prefer a shorter walk.)

This will be a truly stunning day out that will make a real difference in the lives of others. Please come along to help us raise much-needed funds to help homeless people.

To register for the walk, simply email events@bethanyct.com sending your full name and contact details and whether you require a seat on the coach. You can download an information sheet and sponsor form from Bethany's website. www.bethanychristiantrust.com/events

If you are unable to take part in the Walk this year, you can still support homeless people by donating online through our Justgiving page.

The next time you feel like **GOD** can't use you, just remember...

Noah was a drunk
Abraham was too old
Isaac was a daydreamer
Jacob was a liar
Leah was ugly
Joseph was abused
Moses had a stuttering problem
Gideon was afraid
Samson had long hair and was a womanizer
Rahab was a prostitute
Jeremiah and Timothy were too young
David had an affair and was a murderer
Elijah was suicidal
Isaiah preached naked
Jonah ran from God
Naomi was a widow
Job went bankrupt
Peter denied Christ
The Disciples fell asleep while praying
Martha worried about everything
The Samaritan woman was divorced, more than once
Zaccheus was too small
Paul was too religious
Timothy had an ulcer..AND
Lazarus was dead!
Now! No more excuses!
God can use you to your full potential.

Contributed by Eileen Clark, author unknown.

Let There Be Light

Let there be light, God said, and there was light;
Let there be day, God said, and let there be night;
Let there be Man, God said, let him appear;
Let there be love, God said, Jesus be here.

Let there be life, God said, and there was birth;
Let there be birds, beasts, fish and food in the earth;
Let there be mankind last, husband and wife;
Let my son be their son: Jesus have life.

Let them increase, God said; to them I give
All that I've made this world, to use and to live.
But we are gods, man said, good as his pride;
Let good be ill, let Christ be crucified.

Then there is death, God said, man on his own.
Then there is hell, dark place where man is alone.
Let there be Jesus Christ, way of release;
Son of man, Son of God. He is our peace.

Contributed by Caroline McIntosh, author unknown.

Now! No more excuses!
God can use you to your full potential.

SCOPE

Penicuik South Parish Church
Scottish Charity SCO11871