



INVERNESS FREE NORTH CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

March 2018

Musings from the Manse

Dear friends,

As I write this piece, severe weather has hit parts of the country necessitating amber and red warnings being issued. These warnings are a sign of the seriousness of the danger that the weather poses.

In particular, when the weather closes in on our mountains the danger to life is a very real threat. In a recent article, it was recorded that a skier suffered multiple injuries after falling 200m (656ft) through a cornice in whiteout conditions on Aonach Beag in Lochaber. Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team said it carried out its "most difficult and technical rescue" in the past year. This involved two members of Lochaber MRT and Nevis Range ski centre's ski patrol being lowered to the man. Conditions during the rescue, which involved a total of 22 members of Lochaber MRT, were described as being "very challenging" with strong winds and limited visibility. Inverness Coastguard helicopter flew rescue team members and also equipment to the scene to help in what Lochaber MRT called an "exceptional effort" to save the skier.

Reading this, I was impressed with the amount of manpower and effort put into saving just one man who got into difficulties on that mountain. It also would have had major cost implications as well, given the number of personnel involved and the need to use the coastguard helicopter. We are so thankful for and indebted to our emergency services who do a sterling job.

It made me think of the greatest search and rescue mission in all human history where the Son of God came all the way from Glory to rescue sinners like us who have gotten ourselves into real difficulty and danger. Jesus singlehandedly, and at great cost to himself and to the Father, rescues us from danger and saves us from death by the cross of Calvary where after 3 long hours of darkness and agony he cries out 'It is finished' (Jn 19. 30). There, the mission was accomplished. There, sinners were saved. There, we go to when we realise our

danger of eternal death and cry out, 'Lord, rescue me'. No MRT, no helicopters, no ski patrol; just Jesus to take us to safety forever.

Your friend and Pastor
Colin
Rev Colin MacLeod

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Please remember the following people in your prayers –

Housebound

Mrs Anna Cameron
Mrs Margaret Grant
Mrs Mary MacDonald
Mrs Effie MacIver
Mrs Christine MacRae

Residential Homes

Mrs Mary McCulloch – Aden House
Mrs Anna MacLeod – Ballifeary
Miss Nan MacDonald - Ballifeary
Mrs Joan Macleman – Fairfield Home
Mrs Margaret MacAulay - Highview
Mrs Joan Lamont - Highview
Mr Alasdair & Mrs Barbara Morrison, Isobel Fraser Home
Mrs Ishbel Graham - Kingsmills Home

KIRK SESSION NEWS

Communion

We were delighted to have Gerry and Fiona Dolan join us at the February communion. We pray God's blessing on them both as they settle in to the congregation and become involved in the work and witness of the church.

Colin

DEACONS' COURT NEWS

Spring Cleaning

On behalf of the Deacons' Court Archie and I would like to express our thanks to all who came along on the two Tuesday spring cleaning days. We were delighted with all the cleaning and tidying up that was achieved and for the opportunity to enjoy time together over lunch.

Archie and Iain

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

R2R

The group continues to meet weekly in the Free North Fellowship area at 7.30pm on a Thursday night, access by the side door on Church Lane. We are making our way through the 12 Steps of Recovery using Life Recovery Bibles with a specific and particular emphasis on faith in Christ as the key to and the road to recovery. If you have a dependency issue with alcohol/drugs or perhaps think you might do, but are not sure, why don't you speak to someone in confidence on 07918 775368, or come along to the Thursday meeting.

Colin

Kidzone

Owing to Darren and Nicola unexpectedly returning to Workington at the beginning of the year, Kidzone went into abeyance for a few weeks to give time to pray and reflect on the way forward for the group. After a very brief period, Kidzone started back again on Thursday 22nd February and is now supported by a small group comprising of Jonathan, Kathana, Robbie, Fiona and Gerry. Should you wish to offer support then please do speak to one of the group or to Colin.

We do also wish Darren and Nicola every blessing as they settle back down in Workington and as they finalise the plans for their marriage on the 31st March.

Colin

GGG

GGG, or 'Guys Gearing for Growth', continues to meet at the Manse on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. We meet for about an hour and a half and have been working through John's Gospel, looking at issues which are touched on through various passages in this book. *The God who created us*, *The God who wants to rescue us* and *The God we were made for* are amongst the topics we've been discussing over the last few months. We also discuss topical questions that people, in general, might have, such as *Are Science and Christianity enemies or friends*, *Why do we suffer?*, and *Do I need to go to church to be a Christian?* Please do pray for this group, that friendships will be built and maintained, questions answered and faith encouraged. If you are a guy, you are welcome to come along as well!

Colin

Congregational Meeting

This meeting has been set by the Kirk Session for Wednesday 7th March at 7.30pm. After our usual prayer round tables, the congregation will be asked to approve a request to apply to the General Assembly for permission to call an Assistant. This will be Chris Davidson who is currently our Church Planter in Merkinch. In order to continue paying for Chris, we need to go down this route. Chris will continue to devote 100% of his time to the church plant in Merkinch. If there are any questions, these can be asked on the night and hopefully be answered satisfactorily.

Colin

Tear Fund Lunch

Our annual Congregational Lunch to support the work of Tear Fund will be held on Sunday 18th March. This is an opportunity to enjoy a light lunch together and contribute to the work of Tear Fund as it supports Christians in the Developing World. You will be able to sign up nearer the time.

Sandy

Bible Alive

The work in schools has continued this term as we have gone in to three schools over seven weeks to tell the Bible stories and tell the Big Story of the Bible. We have seen around 130 pupils and they have entered in to the experience with enthusiasm. Thanks to those who have been praying.

Sandy

Newsletter

The next newsletter will be out in June.

Dates for the Diary

Unless otherwise stated, Colin will be taking both services every Sunday

March

Sunday 4 th	Colin taking both services
Tuesday 6 th	GGG meets on first Tuesday of the month in the Manse at 7.30pm
Wednesday 7 th	Tumbletots meets weekly in the Hall from 10am to 11.30am Prayer round tables and Congregational meeting in the hall at 7.30pm
Thursday 8 th	Road to Recovery meets weekly in the Fellowship area at 7.30pm Kidzone meets weekly in the hall from 6pm to 7pm

Friday 9 th	Release International Meeting in Smithton at 7.30pm
Saturday 10 th	Likely Dads meets on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month in the hall from 10.30am to 12 noon
Sunday 11 th	Isobel Fraser Home service second Sunday of month at 3pm
Tuesday 13 th	Congregational lunch and devotional in the hall from 12.30pm
Wednesday 14 th	Home groups meet at 7.30pm
Sunday 18 th	TEAR Fund lunch after the morning service
Tuesday 20 th	Cameron House service third Sunday of month at 3pm
	Tuesday @ Dobbies at 10.30am
	Kirk Session at 7pm with prayer time at 6.30pm
Wednesday 21 st	Faith Mission Rally in Greyfriars Free Church at 7.30pm.
	No mid-week meeting in the Free North
Sunday 25 th	Congregational Fellowship at 8pm in the hall. Donnie Macleod speaking
	Daylight saving time begins
Monday 26 th	Presbytery meets at 7pm in Greyfriars
Wednesday 28 th	AGM in the Hall at 7.30pm

April

Sunday 1 st	Easter service at 11am
Wednesday 4 th	Tumbletots on holiday – 4 and 11 April. Resumes 18 April
	Prayer round tables at 7.30pm in the hall
Thursday 5 th	Kidzone every week from 6pm to 7pm
	Road to Recovery every week at 7.30pm
Sunday 8 th	Adam taking the evening service
	Isobel Fraser service at 3pm
Tuesday 10 th	Lunch and devotional in the hall at 12.30pm
Saturday 14 th	Likely Dads from 10.30am to 12noon
Sunday 15 th	Cameron House service at 3pm
	Coffee @ Dobbies at 10.30am
Tuesday 17 th	Deacons' Court meets at 7pm with time for prayer at 6.30pm
Wednesday 18 th	Home groups meet at 7.30pm
Friday 20 th	Communion preparation service at 7.30pm in the hall
Saturday 21 st	Communion preparation service at 7.30pm in the hall taken by Rev John Marker (Thurso Free Church)

Sunday 22 nd	Rev John Marker taking 11am Communion service, 6.30pm service and Congregational Fellowship in the hall afterwards
Monday 23 rd	Presbytery in Greyfriars at 7pm
Saturday 28 th	Likely Dads Acclaim Concert in the church at 7.30pm

May

Wednesday 2 nd	Tumbletots every week from 10am to 11.30am Prayer round tables in hall at 7.30pm
Thursday 3 rd	Kidzone every week from 6pm to 7pm Road to Recovery every week from 7.30pm
Tuesday 8 th	Lunch and devotional from 12.30pm
Saturday 12 th	Likely Dads from 10.30am to 12noon
Sunday 13 th	Isobel Fraser service at 3pm
Tuesday 15 th	Coffee @ Dobbies at 10.30am Kirk Session at 7pm with time for prayer at 6.30pm
Wednesday 16 th	Home Groups at 7.30pm
Sunday 20 th	Cameron house service at 3pm
Monday 21 st	General Assembly meets this week
Saturday 26 th	Likely Dads from 10.30am to 12noon

OTHER NEWS

Release International

Chinese Christians are facing the worst repression since the end of the Cultural Revolution, according to Release International's partner Bob Fu, a leading campaigner for religious freedom in China who will be speaking in Smithton on March 9th.

'This is a rare opportunity to hear first-hand from the head of China Aid about what's really going on in China – how new draconian regulations are taking effect, but also what the future holds for Christians there,' says Release CEO Paul Robinson. 'We're delighted that Bob can come to the UK and speak specifically to our supporters. Whether you're interested in China or the broader context of Christian persecution this event is a must. Meeting starts at 7.30pm

'Simple Faith' event – Kingsview Church – Friday, 9 March, 7.30 pm

This Trio, who make their living by travelling extensively at home and abroad sharing the Good News of Calvary, will be at Kingsview Christian Centre for an evening of good Gospel singing and testimony on Friday, 9 March at 7.30 pm. No tickets required just come along to support the Trio.

Update from Megan Gray, Cumbernauld

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Cumbernauld! I hope this finds you well. We continue to praise God for all he is doing in the women of our congregation and community. Our aim is to share life together, talking honestly about struggles and fighting sin by God's grace. It's a slow but steady work but we are seeing signs of encouragement. Please continue to pray that our ladies would seek to invest more time in each other's lives.

Biblical Counselling Course

In my Biblical Counselling course, I've completed my fourth module, "Biblical Interpretation", and am currently near the end of the "Marriage" course. This has been brilliant and so enlightening. I would highly recommend Winston T. Smith's book *MarriageMatters* to anyone who wants a good book about marriage. I'm just back from the Biblical Counselling UK Conference in England. The theme was "Anger" and it was a profitable time. The sessions will be online in a few weeks - Christopher Ash on Anger, Helen Thorne on Domestic Abuse and many more talks on anger-related issues. In the mean time here's a [link](#) to an excellent talk on addiction from BCUK Chief Executive, Rev Dr Steve Midgley of Christ Church, Cambridge, which we watched in our prayer meeting just a few weeks ago.

Sunday School and Little Lambs

Our Sunday School has grown somewhat - it's doubled! This is great and very encouraging; pray that I (and Alexander, the other teacher) would be prepared each week for the differing numbers we get. Pray that I will clearly present the gospel and share Jesus with the children and toddlers. Last year lots of our little lambs moved on to school, so our numbers have been down. Please pray we would be able to reach more mums in the local community.

Christmas

I can happily say that we had a lovely time over Christmas here in Cumbernauld and our events were well attended, even though unfortunately a deep freeze came over the town which made travel difficult. However the Christmas Fayre and the Christmas Carol service were lovely ways to celebrate the the season. Through our events we have made a few new friendships within the community so please pray for these ongoing relationships to deepen and that we would be able to point the lost to our great Saviour.

Friendship services

You may have seen in the Courier recently that the local charity, Friendship Services, is needing volunteers to visit people who are housebound and lonely. They are looking for male visitors in particular to visit elderly housebound men. If you could spare an hour a week or a fortnight to visit someone in their home and help improve their wellbeing, there are leaflets and application forms at the lane door. Alternatively, you can apply via their website at www.friendship-services.com.

HELPFUL THOUGHTS

Suffering is not a philosophical contemplation. Rather, it's experienced in the guts."

"My immaturity argues why MY suffering feels greater than the suffering of others."

"Our modern human freedoms assume suffering is an evil which must be avoided at all costs."

"Christians must look to the Bible to learn to suffer purposefully. We must not lose sight of God's truth although its teaching might be unsettling."

"That God does not exist is an argument for many in making some sense of suffering."

"There can be no kind and loving God if evil and suffering persist - atheism is a plausible response."

"However, atheism has not eradicated suffering."

"We must see suffering through God's eyes. It is an essential part of His plan. Indeed, suffering is essential to Glory!"