

Message from the Leadership

There are times when we might feel that it is difficult to see any light at the end of the tunnel. When all we see is darkness.

This must have been how the followers of Jesus felt on the Friday evening after Jesus had been crucified. They had just witnessed the public humiliation of their leader. It seemed to be the end of all their hopes. Not only that: they had failed him. One of his followers had denied him and one had betrayed him. They were dejected and fearful of what might happen to them.

But Sunday was coming and that would change everything. The message of the angels to the women on the Sunday morning as expressed in the words of a song was -

“Don't look for the living in the place of the dead ,
and don't let your sorrow erase what he said,
and don't be discouraged now the darkness has fled
don't look for the living in the place of the dead.”

Jesus was alive, and as the followers of Jesus came to terms with this truth their despair gave way to hope. This meant that Jesus was victorious. He had gained the victory over sin, death and Satan. Sin, because the ransom price had been paid, death because God had raised him from the dead, and Satan because he no longer has a hold over those who trust in Jesus and his death for them.

For the first followers of Jesus the despair of Friday gave way to the joy of that first Easter Sunday.

Today we can give thanks that

“the price has been paid” and that “we can enter in to all that Jesus died to make our own.”

The proof we have of this, is that God raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus is alive!

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Please remember the following people in your prayers –

Housebound/Illness

Mrs Margaret Grant

Mrs Mary MacDonald

Mrs Effie MacIver

Mrs Christine MacRae

Mr Kenny Mackenzie

Mr David Morgan

Mrs Vina Campbell

Residential Homes

Mrs Mary McCulloch – Aden House

Mrs Anna MacLeod – Ballifeary

Miss Nan MacDonald – Ballifeary

Mrs Johan Macleman – Kingsmills Home

Mrs Margaret MacAulay - Highview

Mr Alasdair & Mrs Barbara Morrison, Isobel

Fraser Home

Mrs Ishbel Graham - Kingsmills Home

CONDOLENCES

Mr Ronald (Ronnie) Lamont passed away in Cameron House on the 1st of February 2019. The funeral service, conducted by Rev Douglas MacKeddie, took place in the Free North Church on 8th February. Please remember in your prayers his widow, Christine, son Ian and the wider family

(Elsewhere in the newsletter are some words written by Ronnie and read out at his funeral)

CONGRATULATIONS

Our warmest congratulations are extended to Neil and Rebekah Holmes on the birth of their son, Brodie Colin on 22 February, and congratulations to Colin and Jessie MacLeod as they welcome their new grandson.

KIRK SESSION NEWS

Communion

The April Communion will take place (DV) in the congregation on Sunday 14th of April when it is hoped that Rev Alasdair Macleod, Interim Moderator will take the services. There will be a preparatory service on the Saturday evening at 7.30pm in the hall.

If you would like to make a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for the first time and sit at the Lord's Table, please speak to one of the Elders who will be happy to discuss this with you.

DEACONS' COURT NEWS

Church Officer post

The Deacons' Court have agreed to proceed with a Church Officer post. This post will cover various janitorial duties such as cleaning, checking the facilities, putting bins out for collection and minor DIY repairs as required. The duties will also include opening up the church for public events such as weddings, funerals and open door events, with the post-holder ideally being able to provide a warm welcome to the church to visitors on these occasions.

The tasks of the post-holder will take an estimated 14-16 hours per week and the post-holder will be expected to be flexible in their availability to carry out the duties. It may be possible for the post to be filled by more than 1 person and/or for duties to be shared as appropriate.

The post would be paid at a rate of £9 per hour which is the Scottish Living Wage.

If you would like a full job specification or just like more details on the post please speak to me.

Regards
Brian Cameron
Clerk to the Deacons Court

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Tear Fund Lunch

On Sunday 24th March we will have our annual Tear Fund Lunch. All are welcome and the lunch gives us the opportunity for fellowship and to contribute to the work of Tear Fund as they support Christians who are suffering in many parts of the world. Contributions should be put in an envelope marked Tear Fund.

Congregational Fellowships

Our next fellowship will be on Sunday 31st March when we look forward to hearing from Robin Gray who is in his third and final year at ETS.

On 28 April we hope to have Bogi Kozma, a CWI missionary working in Budapest. She has an inspiring testimony and a beautiful singing voice.

Home Groups

Our final two meetings of this session will be on 24th April and 15th May as we come to the end of our study of the life of Abraham.

Vacancy

As we hear prospective candidates and consider them as preachers, pastors, leaders etc. do convey your feelings to members of the vacancy committee.

Preaching Supply

<u>March</u> 17 th 24 th 31 st	Murdo MacLeod (Nairn) Innes MacSween Robin Gray (Student)
<u>April</u> 7 th 14 th 21 st 28th	Ian Hamilton Alasdair MacLeod (Smithton) (Communion) Andrew MacLeod (Tain Assistant) Martin Cunningham (Ullapool Elder)

<p><u>May</u> 5th 13th 20th 27th</p>	<p>Ian Hamilton Garry Brotherston (Bishopriggs) TBC TBC</p>
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OTHER NEWS

Mission

Operation Mobilisation Mission 'Zeal for Jezreel' 9th -16th March.

I am flying out with Alex MacKenzie, from Portree, who is a member of Hilton Parish Church. We are working as team in evangelism outreach, based in Haifa and then Kiryat Tivon.

The Valley of Jezreel is the most fertile valley in Israel, stretching from the S.E. to the N.W. with a population of over 300,000 made up of 120 communities, 97 which are Jewish and 23 Muslim. Some Jewish communities are decidedly atheistic, while others are ultra-orthodox . Similarly, the Muslim communities vary from nominal religious belief to ardent Islamic fervour. This presents the most significant challenge in Israel today as there is only one small church of under 15 believers which meet regularly for prayer, fellowship and Bible study!

When we think of our own city of Inverness and the number of Christian churches in a 5 mile radius surely we see the immensity of the task in this valley.

The Valley of Jezreel has a significant biblical and secular history. It is here Gideon chose 300 men to defeat the Midianites. King Saul was was victorious over the Philistines here and much of 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles takes place here. It was here that Ahab introduced Ball worship into Israel's worship along with child sacrifice and here Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel and then ran away in fear of his life to Jezreel.

O.M. are focused on bringing the power of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives through prayer, evangelism and discipleship. New fellowships need to be established in the many Jewish, Arab and Muslim communities.

Prayer Points

Pray that the seed of the Gospel that has been sown will produce a harvest to the glory of God

Yours in Christ,
Alan and Alex.

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UCCF – The Christian Unions

The following is an extract from Emma de Paula’s recent prayer update:

Here are a few of many stories from Something More:

- We prayed for a hardened atheist all week, **G**, who on the last night gave up and admitted that God was God. **He prayed a prayer of repentance and placed his trust in Jesus.**
- One of our CU guests for Something More, Amy, had the privilege of meeting up with **N** during the week. She told Amy that it all seemed real and true and she wanted to start following Jesus. Amy read through some of Mark with her and she gave her life to Jesus. **Please pray for both G and N as they get stuck into a local church and grow in their knowledge, love and trust of Jesus.**
- **R** came to our first lunchbar at Heriot-Watt and then almost every evening event. She has been considering Christianity since coming to last year’s events week. Her flatmate is a part of the CU and took R to church with her on Sunday. Pray for R as she continues to investigate who Jesus is. **Pray that she will see clearly who he is and trust in him!**
- **L** came with a friend from CU to our lunchbar in Gala on Wednesday. She said that she hasn’t been satisfied by finding her identity in her work or the people around her and wants to hear more about how Jesus could define her. She is **keen to read through Uncover**

Mark with the friend who brought her. This is a huge encouragement in Gala particularly! **Pray that she will respond to Jesus in faith as she hears of him.**

- A number of CU students really stepped up to the opportunities the week brought. They were bold in inviting friends and in conversations with others they met during the week. **Give thanks for their zeal and commitment to God's mission.**
- Seven people came to the first evening of our follow up course, **Tell Me Something More**, on Tuesday. Please pray for good discussions about Jesus and what it means to follow him over the next five weeks. Pray for the CU students who are on the team for these evenings and particularly for Bruce and Ally who are overseeing it.

Pease keep praying for God to be at work through the CUs as they share the gospel on their campuses.

RONNIE'S WRITINGS

The following words, written by the late Ronnie Lamont, were read out at his funeral service and are used with permission.

Just a Moment – Please

You are strong and well? That's fine.

You hope to remain so? That's natural.

You may be disappointed? That's possible.

You will die? That's sure.

You'd better start to get ready? That's wisdom.

You want to be right? That's proper.

You don't know the way? Then listen.

The Lord Jesus said:

“I Am the way, the truth and the life.”

John 14:6

“him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.”

John 6:37

“When thus my Righteous Judge shall come
to fetch thy ransomed people home,
shall I among them stand,
shall such a worthless worm as I,
who sometimes am afraid to die,
be found at thy right hand?”

HELPFUL THOUGHTS

A Christian man was once asked, “What do you gain by praying to God so often?” The man replied, “Nothing.....but let me tell you what I lost; anger, hate, ego, pride, greed, depression, insecurity and fear of death. Sometimes, the answer to our prayers is not gaining, but losing; which ultimately is the gain.”

INTERESTING INSIGHTS – ANIMALS IN THE BIBLE

Ants	Diligence	Proverbs 6: v 6
Sparrows	Trust	Psalms 84: V3
Hens	Safety	Matthew 23: V37
Eagle	Confidence	Isaiah 40: v 31
Deer	Surefootedness	Habakkuk: 3 v 19
Sheep	Discipleship	John 10: v 14
Doves	Gentleness	Matthew: 10: v 16
Horses	Obedience	Psalms 32: v 9
Badger	Wisdom	Proverbs 30: v 26
Lion	Courage	Proverbs 30: V 29-30
Raven	Faith	Luke 12: v 24