

NO.170

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

GRAPEVINE



DUNDEE WEST CHURCH

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Pastoral Letter

There is to be a conference on the Westminster Confession of Faith organised by the Theological Forum of the Church of Scotland. For the Church of Scotland the Westminster Confession of Faith agreed in 1647 is a subordinate statement of faith. Subordinate to the Bible and the Apostle's Creed.

Presbyterian history has always been characterised by disagreement over doctrine and religious practice. It's as if people have to focus on what they believe, not how they behave. To me this seems very strange when Jesus was totally clear in asking people to follow him, to believe in him, not to accept a creed or statement of faith. That's why I think we see St. Paul use the phrase "*Jesus is Lord*" as the simplest statement of faith.

Also, we note that the word "*disciple*" is used more than 250 times in the New Testament, but the word "*Christian*" only 3 times. And, the Great Commission as it is called speaks of making disciples, not Christians. Being a disciple is all about following and trusting the one we follow. Brian McLaren speaks of being a disciple as follows: -

"To become a disciple of a rabbi meant entering a rigorous programme of transformation, learning a new way of life, a new set of values, a new set of skills."

Listening to the teaching of Jesus, taking it to heart and practicing it is essential to being a disciple. Paul himself refers often to being "*In Christ*". This is when Christ is our Lord and his way shapes our lives through prayer and practice.

This itself is not something people are recommended to do on their own. Following Christ with others, sharing the challenges of the journey with those who listen and understand is essential. In short, both Christ and Church matter if we are to be understood, find belonging and follow the way of life.

GORDON

The Guild

It seems no time at all since the Guild session started back in September. We have had lots of interesting speakers and events to keep us busy and here we are almost at the last scheduled meeting of session!

In actual fact, however the work of the Guild never really stops. There is lots going on at national level and as well as Dundee hosting the Annual Gathering in the Caird Hall in September once more, in April there will be a Resource Day to let branches know of the new topic for the coming year and what ideas and practical resources are available for use at meetings. In addition, in May staff from the Guild Office in Edinburgh are to hold a Roadshow in Meadowside St Paul's Church Hall to highlight the work of the Guild and what it means to be a member. They are hoping that the event will attract new members. In the afternoon of the same day we will hold the Dundee Rally to which anyone is invited (more information later).

In Dundee West we still have our AGM to come on Tuesday 12 March. The business of the meeting runs on a fairly well run cog and will not take long. So, afterwards we are having an evening of "In House" entertainment from our own members and friends of our Guild, including Akira Oda on flute, Ron Frew on piano, Alison Almond with some poems and stories, and some more surprises. We would like to invite all our friends from the congregation and beyond for this event. To make the most of the good acoustics of the church we will hold the meeting in the sanctuary. Please do come along and support those giving their time and talents. 7.30pm start with tea/coffee and treats after.

On 7 April after the morning service, we will also be holding a Soup and Pudding Sunday, with all proceeds going to the Guild Projects (details in the last Grapevine). Tickets £5 or pay on the day. We know that soup and pudding events have become quite popular and hope you will put this date in your diaries.

Our legendary Strawberry Fair will be in June and there will be more details nearer the time.

What Can You Do

It is no surprise for you to be reminded that it is now over three years that our congregation has been without a minister. During that time, we have been superbly led by Gordon Sharp, Jack Laidlaw (our Interim Moderator), the Worship Group and members of the congregation, and we have all benefited from different styles of worship and ideas and lesser known hymns to keep our spiritual interest and give us much to think about in our day-to-day lives.

However, most of us have also been conscious that there have been more empty pews on a Sunday morning of late. Over the winter months this is almost inevitable through drier, cold weather, health bugs, but it is important that we continue to keep together and work together if we want to remain a viable congregation, one attractive to someone willing to become our minister. Would you like to play a small part in sustaining the work and life of Dundee West? Are there any little tasks that you might be willing to do? Volunteers for the Welcome Rota before Service, Coffee Duty, Delivering the Grapevine, Delivering Flowers, or indeed donating or arranging flowers for morning worship, are always needed.

One other area to consider is our Café. Changes of students and some other volunteers no longer able to help, means there are days when there are barely enough pairs of hands to cope.

Can you help? Don't be afraid or shy of offering your help. Everyone has a talent to share and there is so much fun in working together and making new friends.

Thanks

Jean Dorward and Elizabeth Blair would like to thank our church family for the kindness and support shown, and the many cards received following the recent loss of our brother, and for your attendance at the service. We are, indeed, blessed with such good friends.

Lydia Dorward has received a card thanking her for thinking of Womankind during a difficult time and making her donation. The donation will help to continue the work to end discrimination and violence against women around the world. (See last Grapevine for more details).

Christian Aid Tay Bridge Cross 2019

The Tay Bridge Cross will be held on Saturday 11 May

Sponsor Forms will be available from Alison Almond from Sunday 31 March until Sunday 28 April.

Consider joining the walkers and contributing to this worthwhile cause.

Communion

Communion will be celebrated on Sunday 21 April (Easter Sunday) with the service being conducted by Rev Jack Laidlaw. There will be the usual Easter hymns, some with trumpet accompaniment.

The following elders are on duty:

Ross Paton

Eliza Will

Isobel Anderson

Val Ewan

Gordon Sharp

Bill Garland

Sheila Maclachlan

Jean Dorward

Alison Almond

Adrian Milne

Donald Orrock (Choir)

Look Forward in Faith!

The morning service on June 10th included the words of the well-known hymn:

“Look forward in faith, all time is in God’s hand.
Walk humbly with him and trust his future plan...”

Since we sang this hymn much has happened in the life of the congregation.

A vacancy committee has been elected to guide us in the quest for a new minister.

A congregational meeting was held in tandem with the above and approved the Financial statement for the year 2017. We look forward to the future with confidence.

The congregation has worked hard since the way going of Andrew into retirement, and it would seem appropriate to record our thanks to Jack Laidlaw, the most patient and kindly of Interim Moderators, whose wise counsel has brought us to this important time in the life of Dundee West Church.

With regard to the service of June 10th, this was delightfully crafted by Donald Orrock’s address and choice of praise which can be more fully read in this Grapevine, alongside Elizabeth Blair’s “Thought for the Day,” entitled, “One Journey, Many Roads,” making this a rather special morning service, enjoyed and commented on by so many of those present, a fit subject of publication!

Take Time

**Take time to think
It is the source of power**

**Take time to read
It is the fountain of wisdom**

**Take time to play
It is the secret of perpetual youth**

**Take time to be quiet
It is the opportunity to see God**

**Take time to be aware
It is the opportunity to help others**

**Take time to love and be loved
It is God's greatest gift**

**Take time to laugh
It is the music of the soul**

**Take time to be friendly
It is the road to happiness**

**Take time to dream
It is what the future is made of**

**Take time to pray
It is the greatest power on Earth**

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

U A S G I D E A U O H L A S
G L E U M A S E M R S P G G
S E D S A O H E I S S R E H
J H A M H R S A B P H O S S
E A S L G R V A R I A V A C
R N U A I P I G A S E E G H
E S M S J C J E A S S R E I
M G A P D M I C A H A B N J
I N J U D G E S E H I S E S
A I D A N I E L A H B P S H
H K A P T I E N J K J G I I
I S E P G N O P I G S S S I
E L S U R J E D H A I A S I
N R G D L J R U T H R H R H

Judges : Jonah : Genesis : Ruth : Psalms
Proverbs : Kings : Samuel : Micah
Daniel : Jeremiah : Isaiah

Try this word search for fun

OFFICE BEARERS ON DUTY

Sunday 10 March
Miss F Maclachlan
Miss E Will
R Robertson

Sunday 31 March
J Wilson

Mrs J Goodall
Mrs C Beattie

Sunday 21 April
Mrs S Maclachlan
Mrs P Black

Sunday 17 March
N McGill
Mrs D McGill
Miss W Patterson

Sunday 7 April
Miss C Maclachlan
Mrs L Sharp
Mrs M Milne

Sunday 28 April
Mrs L Ross
J Tough
Mrs C Sim

Sunday 24 March
D Orrock
W Lakie

Mrs C Cross
Sunday 14 April
Mrs E Blair
Mrs A Almond
Mrs P Turner

Sunday 5 May
Miss F Maclachlan
Miss E Will
R Robertson

CHURCH FLOWERS

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sunday 10 March | Mrs L Ross |
| Sunday 17 March | Mrs R McIntosh |
| Sunday 24 March | Mrs M McMillan |
| Sunday 31 March | Mrs P Turner |
| Sunday 7 April | Miss F Sturrock & Mrs I Anderson |
| Sunday 14 April | Miss A Novak |
| Sunday 21 April | Mrs E Young |
| Sunday 28 April | Mrs A Cruickshank |
| Sunday 5 May | Mr B Garland |

FLOWER DELIVERY

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Sunday 10 March | Mrs J Goodall |
| Sunday 17 March | Miss W Patterson |
| Sunday 24 March | Mrs D Taylor |
| Sunday 31 March | Mrs E Blair |
| Sunday 7 April | Mr M Revey |
| Sunday 14 April | Mrs C Beattie |
| Sunday 21 April | Mrs A Almond |
| Sunday 28 April | Mrs J Hutton |
| Sunday 5 May | Mrs J Goodall |

Notes from Presbytery

Heart and Soul – 19 May 2019 – Princess Street Gardens Edinburgh

The Heart and Soul board are asking church choirs to join their Massed Choir to play a part in the closing worship.

<https://www.heartandsoul.org.uk/signup/choir>

They are also looking for bands or individuals who might play at the event and they need to register online and supply a link to a video of a performance at

<https://www.heartandsoul.org.uk/signup/stage>

This year's theme is 'Follow Me; and there is an opportunity for congregations to showcase some of the work in which they are engaged within the community.

<https://www.heartandsoul.org.uk/signup/notice>

A Conversation Tent was developed in 2018 and it's back in 2019! Kezia Dugdale MSP and the Very Revd Dr Lorna Hood OBE will be hosting a conversation on Remembering Srebrenica, plus more is being added to the programme.

Street Pastors

Some of our vulnerable people in Dundee are shy and sometimes unwilling to talk about their faith and going to church. Some have been issued with a card from the Street Pastors which they can show to our members who welcome people at the door, in the church and over coffee after service.

Our congregation is already a welcoming church to all who choose to be with us in whatever capacity.

Neediness

(from Psychology Today)

I'm using some of this article because sometimes "*neediness*" can be crippling. Trying to understand how people can respond is helpful for ourselves and for others.

Have you ever felt needy? What comes to mind when you hear the word? When we're gripped by the terror of neediness, we feel completely out of control. When we bear witness to it, we feel confused and overwhelmed, wondering if any amount of reassurance will ever be enough. How can we understand these moments? More importantly, how can the needy find relief?

Psychologists have made great strides in unpacking this complex state of mind. Investigators discovered that it has an important relationship to depression. The needy often feel hopeless and unhappy. But that's the least surprising finding.

It's not actually need that engenders neediness. It's fear— fear of our own needs for connection and the possibility that they won't ever be met. That's what hurtles us into the abject despair of neediness. Overcoming neediness therefore demands that we disentangle the need from the fear, and there are a number of ways to do this:

- 1) *Breathe*. If you recognize that fear is the problem, not loneliness or a desire for contact, you can escape the suffocating grasp of the neediness by using stress management skills. Go for a run, meditate,—both of these reduce anxiety.

2) *Get connected.* The researchers discovered a healthy version of dependency, one that involves a valuing of relationships. Neediness is all about blindly reaching when you don't even know what you're reaching for. Connectedness is about *effectively* depending on others.

3) *Practice emotional mindfulness.* Rather than acting on what you think you need, sit down and write about the feelings you're having. Are you afraid of being alone? What's it like to simply focus on that without trying to flee it by seeking contact? Instead of trying to get rid of the feeling, try to understand it. Not only does that make it easier for you to recognize and express your needs more clearly, it teaches you how to tolerate them.

4) *Make room for your needs.* When we hate or fear our needs it only makes them more intense because we're tempted to hide or disguise them. That not only makes them confusing for others, but harder to satisfy. *How* you express your needs—whether for closeness, reassurance, contact, or love—will change dramatically once you start taking them seriously because you'll have a far better understanding of what they are and where they come from.

When all is said and done, the key to overcoming neediness is to respect your needs for connection instead of fearing them. When you do, the chaos of neediness gives way to the clarity of intimacy. And everyone's happier for it.

The Second Place

A Poem from a friend which is a prayer in itself.

Lord, bless the folk who never really got there,
The people who intended something fine;
The folk who might have lived a little nobler,
The men who always failed to shine;
The people who have tried to keep their temper,
Yet seemed to lose it all the more,
The ones who haven't made their name at business,
Who should be rich, yet always will be poor?
The folk who are not as clever as they might be,
Who aren't as good, and feel their efforts vain?
Lord, bless all these, and Lord, bless me among them,
And give us all the heart to try again.

Bits and Pieces

An unknown author's poetic version of the Beatitudes for the elderly:

Blessed are they who understand my faltering step and palsied hand.
Blessed are they who know my ears today, must strain to catch the thing they say.
Blessed are they who seem to know, that my eyes are dim, and my wits are slow.
Blessed are they with cheery smile, who stop to chat for a little while.
Blessed are they who never say, 'You've told that story twice today'.
Blessed are they who know the ways, to bring back memories of yesterdays.
Blessed are they who make it known, that I'm loved, respected and not alone.

An octogenarian, uncomplaining, wrote:

There is nothing the matter with me,
I'm as healthy as I can be.
I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze
My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I am in.

Answers

Last months quiz answers

Colours

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Black | 2. White | 3. Yellow |
| 4. Orange | 5. Grey | 6. Gold |
| 7. Green | 8. Red | 9. Blue |
| | 10. Silver | |

REGISTER

Deaths

In January, Mrs L Brady

We extend our prayers and sympathy to her family and friends.

The Things That Count

“Through the Year with William Barclay”

Paul was certainly not a handsome man, yet his influence on the Early Church was quite remarkable.

An early 3rd century description of the great apostle is so unflattering, that it must be genuine: “A man of little stature, thin- haired upon the head, crooked in the legs, of good state of body, with eyebrows joining and nose somewhat hooked.” Certainly, as far as good looks are concerned, no one would be attracted to this encourager of the Church.

Strangely enough it would appear that Paul was a poor communicator and certainly no orator. The Corinthians said of him that “his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.” 2 Cor.10:10.

Paul was not alone in this. One of the most crowd-drawing preachers Scotland has ever seen was Thomas Chalmers; and they said of him that, when he preached, he never lifted his head from his manuscript, that he actually followed the line he was reading with his finger as he read, and that he read in a broad Fifeshire accent innocent of any elocutionary attraction.

Paul apparently had none of the gifts – and yet there can have been few preachers in history who were more effective. Where did this effectiveness come from?

“Paul’s effectiveness came from one thing. It came from an unanswerable experience of Jesus Christ.”

Barclay reminds us that polish and elegance can often leave a congregation quite cold; experience and sincerity can never fail to move an audience. You can never bring to anyone else an experience which you have not had yourself.



The Star Of Hope -

A symbol to desperate soldiers more than 160 years ago, the snowdrop retains a place in our heart today. Not known to most of us, but just as the poppy became a memorial to the casualties of the First World War, so the snowdrop was seen as a symbol of the Crimean conflict of sixty years before that.

It was the British troops fighting in the Crimean War who christened the snowdrop ‘the flower of consolation’. The failure to be provided with enough food and warm clothing during the first freezing winter of the conflict left them bitter and demoralised. Then, in early 1855, the bare earth began to come alive with flowers, and the soldiers’ flagging spirits revived.

‘The Times’ correspondent, William Russell, reported at that time “the soil, wherever a flower has the chance of springing up, pours forth multitudes of snowdrops, crocuses and hyacinths, with the young spring flowers forcing their way through the crevices of piles of shot, and peering out from under shells and heavy ordnance”.

One captain included a Crimean snowdrop in a letter home, whilst a Colonel picked and pressed a bunch which he sent to his young daughter. Some soldiers planted snowdrops and crocuses around their tents and huts, and many others dug up bulbs to send home. In May 1856 there was an article in “The Gardners’ Chronicle” with a drawing of them and stated that the Crimean snowdrop had already been introduced in abundance. Collectors began to realise just how much the ‘flower of consolation’ or ‘star of hope’ had come to mean to the troops. By the end of the awful conflict when the soldiers returned, gardens in Britain already had well established beds of flowers from the very bulbs they had send home earlier.

Spring is almost with us and our gardens are beginning to display their early burst of flowers. It gives so much pleasure and hope. Now their sight will be even more meaningful!

Would you hire Jesus as your Leadership Coach and Guide

If you are inclined to answer No, take a few moments to reflect on the Leadership Challenges you might be facing and consider again whether you would hire Jesus as your Personal Leadership Coach, based on his experience and background as a powerful leader.

What were his qualifications and I looked at some of them?

- Ability to establish and communicate clear purpose and direction.
- Recruitment of people to accomplish the task.
- Conflict management.
- Turnover, betrayal and lack of understanding by family members.
- Personal sacrifice in serving the greatest good.

And I am sure there are many more incidents of leadership that Jesus was challenged with.

Jesus promises were:

- Come follow me ~ Matthew 4 v 19
- Come to me all those who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest ~ Matthew 11 vs 28-29
- If you love me, you will obey what I command ~ John 14 vs 15-19

When Jesus called his disciples to follow him, his promise was to make them fishers of men. He knew they could never make this transformational journey on their own and he never asked or wanted them to try.

I accept and find joy in the truth that apart from Jesus I can do nothing alone but can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

WEEKDAYS

| | | | | |
|----------|----------|-------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | 5 March | : 7.30 pm | : | Tayside Organist Society Concert |
| Thursday | 7 March | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Tuesday | 12 March | : 7.30 pm | : | The Guild AGM and Entertainment in the church |
| Thursday | 14 March | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Monday | 18 March | : 7.30 pm | : | Soul Space |
| Thursday | 21 March | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Monday | 25 March | : 7.30 pm | : | P.C.N. |
| Thursday | 28 March | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Saturday | 30 March | : 11am-4pm | : | Vintage Fair |
| Monday | 1 April | : 7.30 pm | : | Soul Space |
| Thursday | 4 April | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Thursday | 11 April | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Monday | 15 April | : 7.30 pm | : | Soul Space |
| Thursday | 18 April | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Thursday | 25 April | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |
| Monday | 29 April | : 7.30 pm | : | P.C.N. |
| Thursday | 2 May | : 4-5.30 pm | : | Finding Faith |

GRAPEVINE

Material for the May/June issue of the Grapevine should be with the Editorial Team no later than Sunday 28 April for publication and uplift by the congregational visitors from Sunday 5th May.

CALENDAR

WORSHIP

| | | | | |
|----------|----------|------------|---|---|
| Sunday | 10 March | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Coffee after service |
| Sunday | 17 March | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Coffee after service |
| Sunday | 24 March | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Coffee after service |
| Sunday | 31 March | : 11.00 am | : | Donald Orrock Coffee after service |
| Sunday | 7 April | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Guild Soup & Pudding after service |
| Sunday | 14 April | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Coffee after service |
| Thursday | 18 April | : 7.00 pm | : | Gordon Sharp Maundy Thursday Service |
| Friday | 19 April | : 7.00 pm | : | Gordon Sharp Good Friday Service |
| Sunday | 21 April | : 11.00 am | : | Rev Jack Laidlaw Easter Sunday Communion Service Coffee after service |
| Sunday | 28 April | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Coffee after service |
| Sunday | 5 May | : 11.00 am | : | Gordon Sharp Coffee after service |