

SPOTLIGHT



St Ninian's Craigmalen Parish Church of Scotland, Linlithgow Newsletter

September 2008

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Charity Number SC011348

www.stninianscraigmalen.org.uk

FROM THE MINISTER

Read Isaiah chapter 28 verses 14 to 18, Mathew 7 verses 24 to 29, and Luke chapter 6 verses 46 to 49.

All of us are familiar with the hymn *The Wise Man Built His House Upon a Rock* based on the parables in Matthew or Luke. In his book, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*, Kenneth Bailey writes that our familiarity with the hymn has led most Western Christians to see the parables upon which this hymn is based as simply children's stories. However, when we look at it through Middle Eastern eyes and read it in conjunction with the above passage from Isaiah, Bailey writes the parable is dynamite.

In Israel and Palestine, people build houses in the summer. The ground is mostly clay, and brick hard, so it takes a great deal of effort to dig the foundations. Builders in the Middle East know that you have to dig down to the rock to provide a good foundation for a house, and sometimes this may be as much as ten feet. If a builder simply digs foundations into the clay, while it is hard in summer, the foundations will fail when the winter rains come. This is why builders in the Middle East will insist that a foundation is dug "down to the rock". Therefore, it is easy to see from where Jesus took the images in the parables.

In the reading from Isaiah, God promises an errant Israel that he will provide a "tested stone", and a "sure foundation" for the people. Isaiah had no confidence that the kings of Israel of the time would provide the people with the foundation they needed. By the time of Jesus, pious Jews at Qumran claimed this promise for themselves and their aim was to have a council of twelve men and three priests who knew the Law and had an impeccable record of good works as their foundation. Other Jews regarded the foundation as the stone in the Temple upon which the High Priest placed a pan of burning charcoal and incense within the "Holy of Holies". For the Jews of Jesus' day, this spot was the most sacred place in the world. Into this, Jesus offered a third understanding of the promise of Isaiah. To hear and do his words, was to build on the foundation that Isaiah promised. Jesus was pointing to himself as the foundation stone, and saying the promise was not fulfilled either in the Qumran Council, or even the Second temple, but that the new foundation was found in him and his words.

This is a bold claim, and you can see why Bailey calls this parable dynamite. The foundation of authentic human life is not in the councils of men, nor in the veneration of buildings or political and ecclesiastical institutions. Instead, the foundation of authentic human life is in hearing and doing the words of Jesus Christ and building a life where he is the foundation. In doing so, Jesus does not promise protection from trials human life brings, but he promises the foundation of lives built on his word and example will stand through the trials life brings.

This is a précis and adaption of part of the text of "The Parable of the Two Builders" found in
Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes.
By Kenneth E Bailey.

SPCK: London, 2008

Richard

September 2008

PARI SH REGI STER

BAPTISM:

10th.Aug: Kieran, infant son of Vicki And John Drummond

MARRIAGE:

**9th.Aug: Marie-Bernard Edwige Guigand to Lindsay Mathers
Butchart**

DEATH:

**3rd.Aug: William (Bill) Dalglish Bennie, Glenholm, 27 Highfield
Avenue**

SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER & NOVEMBER:

| | | |
|--|---------|---|
| 7 th .September | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 14 th .September | 9:45am | Early Morning Family Service |
| | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 21 st .September | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 28 th .September | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 5 th .October | 11:00am | Morning Service Harvest Thanksgiving |
| 12 th .October | 9:45am | Early Morning Family Service |
| | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 19 th .October | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 26 th .October | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| | 6:30pm | Evening Service |
| The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated at both services. | | |
| 2 nd .November | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 9 th .November | 9:45am | Early Morning Family Service |
| | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 16 th .November | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 23 rd .November | 11:00am | Morning Service |
| 30 th .November | 11:00am | Morning Service |

EARLY SERVICE

As noted in the list of services the early service recommences on Sunday 14th.September at 9:45am. Tea/Coffee etc. will be available in the Longcroft Hall after the service, all proceeds to C.H.A.S.

DOOR DUTY ROTA

| September 2008 | October 2008 | November 2008 |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Mrs J Torrance | Mr A Stewart | Mr D McEwan |
| Mr A Scott | Miss L Murray | Mrs P McEwan |
| Mrs J Scott | Mr L Peden | Mr I Morris |
| Mr W Robertson | Mr L Howlett | Mr R Laing |
| Mr G Sommerville | Mrs S McFadyen | Mr J MacFadyen |

FLOWER ROTA

| September 2008 | | October 2008 | | November 2008 | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| 7 | E. Stewart | 5 | R. Johnstone | 2 | F. Hunter |
| 14 | M. Cunningham | 12 | H. Aitken | 9 | C. Coutts |
| 21 | B. Findlater | 19 | M. Brown | 16 | G. Bathgate |
| 28 | C. Millar | 26 | C. Wylie | 23 | B. Bruce |
| | | | | 30 | J. Torrance |

CAR ROTA

| | September 2008 | October 2008 | November 2008 |
|---------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Route A | B. Laing | D. Steven | B. Pringle |
| Route B | E. Stewart | D. Clark | A & J Scott |

KIRK SESSION & CONGREGATIONAL BOARD:

The Kirk Session will meet in the Longcroft Hall on the 16th.September at 7:30pm.

The Congregational Board will meet in the Longcroft Hall on the 14th.
October at 7:30pm.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UP-DATE:

Sunday School will resume after the Summer Break on Sunday 7th.September at 10:40am in the Longcroft Hall.

SPECTRUM:

Members of Spectrum are reminded of the rehearsals which will be held at 7:45pm in the Sheilds Room of the Longcroft Halls on Wednesday 3rd. and 17th.September.

GUILD:

Would all Guild committee members please note that there will be a Committee meeting on Monday 8th.September at 7:30pm in the Committee Room of the Longcroft Halls.

The Guild Dedication Service will be held on Monday 22nd.September at 7:30pm in St. Ninian's Craigmailen Parish Church. This will be a joint service with St. Michael's Guild. All interested are welcome.

The first meeting of the Guild will be held on Monday 29th. September at 7:30pm in the Longcroft Hall when the speaker will be Joan Murrie on her adventures as a Textile Artist. For further information contact Fiona Hunter on 844846.

YOUNG WOMAN'S GROUP:

The Young Women's Group resumes on Wednesday 17th September with a Fun Night.The group meets on alternate Wednesdays in the Longcroft Hall at 8pm. You would be most welcome if you would like to join us. For further information please contact Sionagh Smith (01506 202103) or I sobel Lockhart (01506 844507) for more details.

SONGS OF PRAISE SERVICE.

The BBC will record "Songs of Praise" services at St Michael's Parish Church in Linlithgow on Monday 29 September and Tuesday 30 September 2008, starting at 7.00 pm and finishing at 10.00 pm, and the director has invited members of the congregation of St Ninian's Craigmailen Church to take part in the service. If you want to take part, please sign the sheets at the main door of the church by 21 September. Tickets will be available later in the week beginning Monday 22 September and on Sunday 28 September. Entrance to the recordings will be by ticket only, and only those who have asked for tickets can be given them. In addition, if you sign up for the services you must be committed to attend both nights.

The organisers have said they would like to have a choir on the night. If you would like to sing in the choir, put your name on the list and indicate whether you can sing Soprano, Alto, Tenor or Bass. It is unlikely there will be rehearsals before the recording, therefore, being able to read music is necessary if you want to take part in the choir on both evenings.

Further details will be announced at the Sunday services between now and 21 September.

If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Richard Houston (Tel. 202246) for further details.

3RD. LINLITHGOW BROWNIE PACK:

Brownies start back on Thursday, 4th September at usual time of 5.45 p.m. This session the Brownies will be working towards their Fire Safety Badge and getting organised for our Pack Holiday to Netherurd Garden House in Peebles at the end of November.

Susan Erskine (Brownie Guider) 844890

HALL LETS

Would all organisations please note that details of all Hall lets must now be given to Fiona Hunter on 844846 or email: fionahunter50@yahoo.co.uk. All others should still contact the Clerk to the Congregational Board, Allan Scott on 842602 or email: The.Scotties@btinternet.com if they wish to use the halls.

OCTOBER DEADLINE

Items for the October issue of 'Spotlight' should be submitted to the editor, Sandy Hunter, either by hand, telephone on 844846, or email: alexandertheg57@hotmail.com or sandyh47@yahoo.co.uk no later than **Sunday 21st. September 2008.**

FAIRTRADE STALL:

The stall will again be available in the Longcroft Hall on Sunday 14th. September at the conclusion of the early morning service and running until after the main service. This is a non-profit making venture promoting the sale of such goods within our congregation and town. For further information contact Sarah Woods on 207026 or Pat McEwan on 844383.

FLOWER BOARD AND FLOWER BOX

The Flower Board for 2008 is at the main door of the Church. If you would care to place flowers in the church, perhaps for a special anniversary or for a birthday, could you please write your name and phone number at the appropriate date and someone will be in touch with you nearer the time. If you have any queries speak to Fiona Hunter on 844846. After each service the flowers are given to those who have been ill or are coping with bereavement. They are much appreciated. Cash donations for flowers can be placed in the Flower Box.

CONCERT:

Bathgate Concert Orchestra will present an evening of musical entertainment in St Ninian's Craigmalen Church on Friday, 7th November 2008 from 7.30 – 9.00 p.m. The concert will also feature "Spectrum" and will be followed by refreshments in the Longcroft Hall. Tickets will be priced at £5 / £4 for concessions and will be available from Jane Gent (843207) from mid September. Proceeds will be shared between the Orchestra and the Church, with the Church's share being put towards the cost of replacing Junior Praise with the new extended version.

COFFEE MORNING

There will be a coffee morning in aid of Christian Aid in the Longcroft Hall on Friday 19th.September from 10:00am until noon. In addition to coffee/tea there will also be a cake and candy stall. Donations to the teas and stall will be most welcome.

ON A LIGHTER NOTE:

The following two observations may ring a bell with those of us who are parents and grandparents.

On his first day at school the boy handed his new teacher a note from his mother. The note read, "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents."

In a different school a little girl having just finished her first week of school said to her mother. "I'm not going back. I'm just wasting my time – I can't read, I can't write and they won't let me talk!"

LIFE & WORK

In the current issue writers from Progressive and Evangelical perspectives discuss the literal truth of the Bible. Plus, the Moderator, the Chief Executive of the Scottish Bible Society, the Minister of St Giles in Edinburgh and the Leader of the Iona Community reveal their favourite versions. Thomas Baldwin profiles the Rev Prof Andrew McGowan, principal of Highland Theological College and one of the Kirk's most prominent evangelicals. The Moderator's reflects on an inter-faith pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Douglas Galbraith gatecrashes another General Assembly to find out What Makes a Good Hymn.

Plus – Presbytery of Gordon, Glasgow Cathedral, Moffat, the rural church, all the regular columnists, news, letters and crosswords – all for just £1.60.

Spare copies are available, for purchase, in the book rack at the main door of the church.

Bob Sloan the Life & Work distributor for our church advises that the publishers have agreed to keep the cover price to £1:60 per month and wish to be notified of the order for our church, for the forthcoming year, by 223rd.November. This being so, it would be appreciated if District elders could notify Bob of any alterations within their districts at the earliest opportunity. It should be noted that if no alterations are timeously notified it will be assumed that the allocation within their district is to remain unaltered.

BUZZ:

Buzz, our group for those attending secondary school, resumes after the holidays on Tuesday 2nd.September at 7:30pm in the Shields Room of the Longcroft Halls. For further information contact Emma Hunter on 844846 or by email to nuttyem92@hotmail.com.

CHATTERBOX

Thinking towards Christmas! - then why not get a sitting with the Chatterbox photographer?

The Chatterbox photographer 'Top Class' will be coming on Friday 26th.September from 3:00 - 6:00pm. The price for a pack of 1 large, 2 medium and 4 small photographs is £22:50. More information can be obtained from Rosina Johnston on 843524.

WHAT DO YOU DO ON A THURSDAY MORNING?

Chatterbox, our Parent and Toddler group, runs on a Thursday morning from 9:30am to Noon. It is open for pre-school children/babies from birth and their minders. Cost of £1:00 included tea/coffee and biscuits for adults and juice and biscuits for children. A time to meet new faces and let the children play. For further information contact Rosina Johnston on 843524 or pop in any Thursday morning.

Worry not if you don't have any children, if you have time on a Thursday to help in any way in the Chatterbox Team then pop in and see what we get up to or contact Rosina as above.

INTERACTION SEPT/OCTOBER 2008

ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN TEACHERS OPEN EVENING, on Thursday 4th September, 4-7pm at the Cairn Hotel, Blackburn Road, BATHGATE - this will be a relaxed forum providing a chance to meet those with shared interest in education and Christian values, listen to an inspiring, thought-provoking address and finish with a buffet supper - cost £15 - book your place with Julie Fermour on 0131-333-4077 and pay cash on the night.

TWO OCCASIONAL SEMINARS ON THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT 2008 "Beauty and Salvation" - The Russian Orthodox Church, Thursday 11th September, 10.30-4pm - Fr Alexander Williams of the Orthodox Community of St Nicholas in Dunblane will introduce the tradition, liturgy and iconography of the R.O. Church in Western Europe. During the course of the day participants will accompany him to the Dunblane Orthodox Church and join in a service there - cost £20.

The other seminar is 'The Quaker Way' where they will present their community, its worship and traditions. Cost £20, but if booked together cost £30 - at Scottish Churches House, Dunblane. Ring 01786 823588.

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY - 14TH SEPTEMBER 2008 - resources available from: www.ctbi.org.uk/racialjusticesunday "A banquet for all peoples' Isaiah 25:6-9.

ST MICHAEL'S PARISH CHURCH FLOWER FESTIVAL takes place on 18-20th September - a must for all members of our churches - on 18-19th open 11am-8.30pm, and on 20th September 11am-4.30pm.

CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT next event will take place on Thursday 18th September at 7.15pm in Beancross Restuarant, Polmont - speaker will be Elaine Duncan, Chief Executive of the Scottish Bible Society - tickets £13, includes a two-course meal with coffee can be obtained from Edna Gibb on 01324 486407.

40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF TEARFUND - two special events on Friday 19th September in Renfield St Stephens Church, 206 Bath Street, GLASGOW, and Saturday 20th in Carrubbers Christian Centre, 65 High Street, EDINBURGH. Ring for details:0141-332-3621.

ECUMENICAL BIBLE STUDY COFFEE MORNING will take place on Wednesday 15th October at 11am, at home of Patricia Chapman, Lynville, 18 Friars Way - new people always welcome - come along for coffee and meet the girls, of all ages, and decide on what to study over the forthcoming winter and spring.

ACTS 'MIGRATION CONFERENCE: Scottish Churches and Contemporary Migration' at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High street, EDINBURGH, on Wednesday, 8th October, 9.30am - 4.15pm - no charge for this conference supported by Scottish Government - further details: ring ACTS at 01259-216980 or: racialjustice@acts-scotland.org

ACTS ANNUAL AUTUMN CONFERENCE on Thursday 23rd October, at 121 George Street, EDINBURGH, is for everyone involved in Churches Together groups, Presbytery reps and Presbyterian Guild reps. This year will be based on the theme of Cardinal Kasper's book, 'A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism' and will focus on the questions: How do we read the Bible together? How do we pray together? How do we witness together? Details/and to book: 01259216980.

ACTS CONFERENCE 'Old Age: Wasteland or Harvest Field' an ecumenical exploration of the needs of older people and the gifts they bring to our churches - on Wednesday 29th October, 9.45-3.45pm, in The Gillis Centre, 100 Stratheran Road, EDINBURGH. Please contact: tommoyes@acts-scotland.org before 10th October to book a place and workshops - no charge for this event.

THE KAIROS COURSE - a world mission course via INTERSERVE SCOTLAND - a chance to understand that the Gospel is the Power of God for Salvation as you've never seen it before - an opportunity to see the Gospel at work in other cultures and see the role God has for you - allow God to put you in the hot seat of learning through one of the most exciting mission courses available - if this speaks to you and you would like to join/find out more about a course here in Linlithgow, ring Fiona on 842669 or email:f.duke@blueyonder.co.uk

CHRISTIAN AID FORTH BRIDGE CROSS - on Saturday 20th September, from 2-6pm - this event is in memory of the Founder of the BridgeCross, Rev John Carrie, who died suddenly this year. Wm Ross on 842646, or wandeross@blueyonder.co.uk, will supply sponsor forms, but more important this time are walkers rather than sponsorship - however £5 per adult and a little something extra for family groups would be appreciated.

We often say that we have an Almighty, All Powerful God, and yet when trials come we find it hard to trust Him.

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND

The why and wherefore of a thousand things,
The crosses, the annoyances,
The daily stings.

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND - but I can trust,
And perfect trusting perfect comfort brings.

I CANNOT CLEARLY SEE

Why life to one brings JOY - unlooked for gain,
While to another bitter heartaches come, and pain.

I CANNOT CLEARLY SEE; but I can trust,
And by and by my Father Will Explain.

I CANNOT SEE THE END,

The hidden meaning of each trial sent,
The pattern into which each tangled thread is bent.

I CANNOT SEE THE END; but I can trust
And in His Changeless Love I am content.

I CANNOT GRASP THE WHOLE

of life's great symphony,
Nor find the key to these
strange minor cadences perplexing me.

I CANNOT GRASP THE WHOLE - but I can trust
In Him Whose Ways are Perfect Harmony.

AND KNOWING THEE

when trial and sorrow press,
When nerves are weary and the body weak,

I neither try to think, nor try to pray,
But REST in Thee

With Love that need not speak.

Anon.

"Trust in The Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He Will Make your paths straight" Proverbs 3:6

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