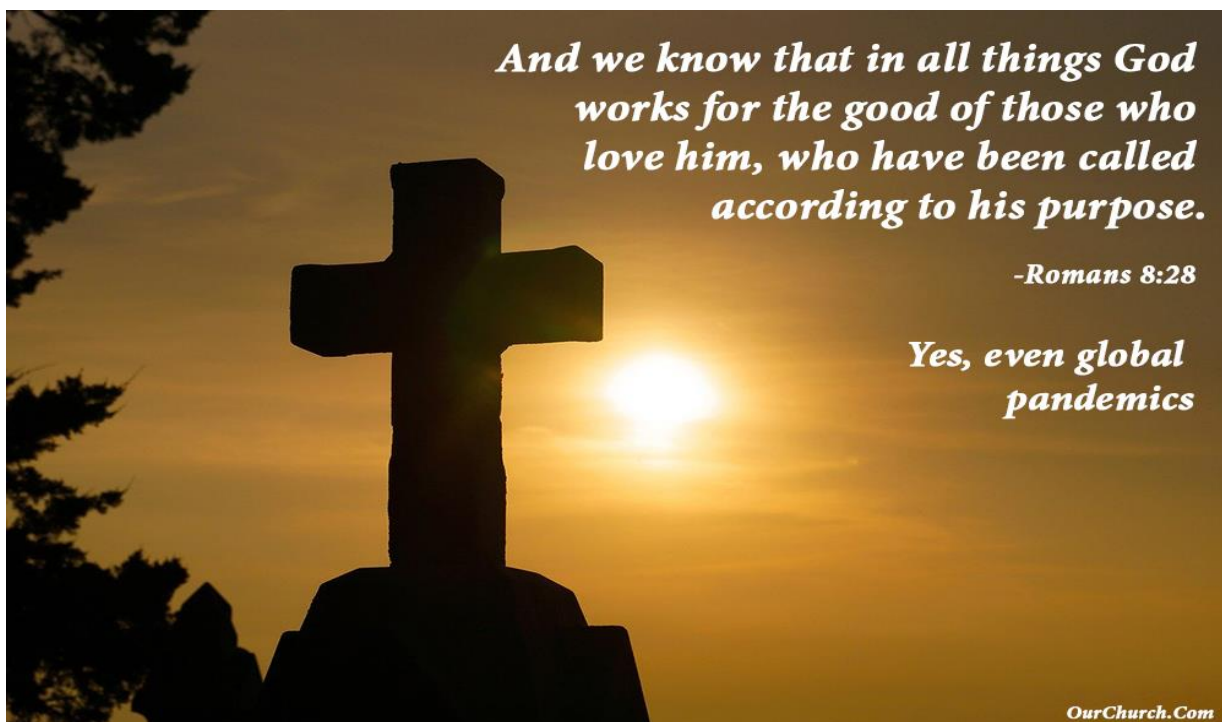


Cornerstone



And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

-Romans 8:28

Yes, even global pandemics

OurChurch.Com

Welcome to the second Issue of Cornerstone produced during the time of the current pandemic. It is good to note that the worst of the virus transmission seems to be over. While it will be some time before we get back to normality, things are improving and our plans for a limited form of church service are covered in the *Minister's message* on **P2**. His current Sunday morning videos have been very well received by the congregation and I have the feeling that members other congregations may be listening in.

I thoroughly enjoyed Alistair Macrae's recent video on Samuel so much that I asked him to produce a printed version which you can now enjoy on **p3 and P4**. This is followed on **P5**, by an article on "Feeding the Needy" a project which has received national recognition. This superb and original effort is accompanied by "A Prayer for the Pandemic" on **p6**

I don't know how he does it but on **P7** Harry Webster reports on yet another piece of really interesting Cadzow history and for our "Snippets" on **P8**, I am indebted to the efforts of Elizabeth Batty and Patricia Steel. On **p9**, I have compiled a short picture Quiz. While these photographs show scenes which are even before my time, they made me feel very nostalgic!

Editor

Main Articles in this Issue

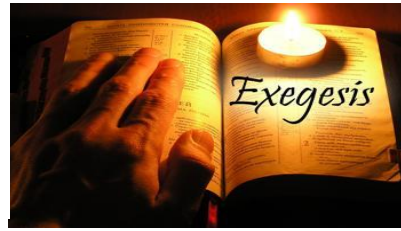
- P2** Minister's message
- P3,P4** Does God Speak to Us?
- P5** Feeding the Needy
- P6** A Prayer for the Pandemic
- P7** From the Archives
- P8** Snippets
- P9** Picture Quiz
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Exegeting the Congregation

A message from our Minister

When I was studying preaching back in the early 90's I remember learning exegesis, which is the study of scripture in the original languages of Greek and Hebrew, followed up with a rigorous exercise of the historical-critical method of interpretation. So many lessons, so much to learn!



One of the most important lessons was understanding that preaching takes place within a living congregation and that you had to know what was going on in the lives of your parishioners and parish. A good sermon is uniquely crafted with a particular people, and often, a particular person, in mind. Pastoral care issues, raised quietly during the week, often become grist for the preaching mill as the minister is charged with the responsibility of developing a good hermeneutical bridge between the life and message of the scripture and the needs and interests of the congregation. One feeds the other and both grow together.

You can see the challenge I'm facing! It's hard to imagine that we have not been together as a congregation since the 15th of March. It seems an eternity and, while I have certainly grown in my ability to develop an online service, it has become increasingly difficult to tailor my preaching to the needs of a single parish. Perhaps this is a good thing, as the message is now cast well beyond the bounds of our little church, but I am preaching to an invisible and largely silent congregation. I talk to a camera each week and then knit the other bits of the service together, literally cutting and pasting things together like a craft project, very much a trial and error process!

So, to reconnect I'm going to be sending out a survey to ask for your input on ways to gather in the coming months. Have a think about whether you'd like to meet (via Zoom) for "coffee at the manse," a book reading club, a bible study, a repeat of last year's HeartEdge lessons, or anything else of interest. If there is a particular subject or a question that I might address in a sermon, let me know and I'll do my best to respond.

John

Minister's Blog

For those interested to go a bit deeper with my Sunday sermons I've started a new blog with further reflections on the subjects I address in my preaching. Have a look at

www.revjohncarswell.wordpress.com

It's Church, but not as we know it

A small group of members has been meeting (over Zoom) in recent months to discuss how we might re-open the church for public worship. Needless to say, it's a real palaver! Look for a letter to the congregation distributed via email, social media and, for those who lack internet access, to your front door, soon. Details will be available on our church website and Facebook, plus a short video induction to let you know what to expect when you come. It will be church, but not as we know it.



Does God Speak to Us ?

Alistair Macrae

When John, our minister, asked me a few weeks ago to prepare a sermon based on my favourite Old Testament Bible story, I had no hesitation in choosing the story of Eli and Samuel. I first heard it as a child in primary school, and I loved it then, and love it still. Samuel was to grow up and become a great prophet, bringing the Word of God to the people, but I'm not going to look at Samuel the prophet or Samuel the man, but at Samuel the little child, at Samuel, the listening servant.

His mother, Hannah, prayed fervently to God that she might be blessed with a child, and her prayers were answered when Samuel was born to her. In her gratitude she gave Samuel back to God that he might serve Him, for she recognised that our children are given to us by God, and so he stayed in the house of the Lord at Shiloh with Eli, the priest, and his priestly family. One night, when it is supposed Samuel was about 12 years old, he woke up hearing a voice calling to him, saying "Samuel, Samuel", and thinking it must be Eli, he went to him, but it had not been Eli, who told him to go back to bed. This happened three times, and on the fourth occasion, Eli realised it was God who was calling to Samuel, and he said to Samuel that when he heard the voice again, he should answer, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening". The Lord again called Samuel, and this time Samuel answered as Eli had told him, saying, "Speak, for your servant is listening", and God told Samuel that he would punish Eli and his sons for their misdeeds, for their unfaithfulness to Him, for the sons exploited their position as priests and followed their own lusts, and Eli turned a blind eye to their behaviour which was unworthy of their priestly position.

Why did I like this story so much? On first hearing it, I was impressed by the fact that God would speak to Samuel, although he was only a child, and that He called him by his name. Surely then, God might know me too and know my name as He knew Samuel's, and that God might want a relationship with me, although still only a child. I have wondered since why God chose to speak to Eli through Samuel, rather than trying once again to communicate directly with Eli. Perhaps God's message is likely to be more effective through the mouth of an innocent child, for does Jesus not say that unless you become as a little child, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. The story also reinforces that God does not give up on us. It took four attempts until Samuel responded to Him. When God calls us He perseveres and waits patiently for us to respond. God wants us for His own.

But the story also tells us that God communicates to us through words, and this is evident throughout the Bible. God revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh through His words. Remember too later in the Old Testament that when the prophet Elijah went to meet the Lord, first of all there came a great wind, but God was not in the wind, and then there came an earthquake followed by a fire, but God was in neither of these, and finally, there came a still small voice, and when Elijah heard it he knew it was God, and God set him work to do. Of course the greatest example of God communicating through words is in the person of Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh, who dwelt among us full of grace and truth, and who in His risen glory remains with us still. Yes, through Jesus the Word of God is ever present, and Jesus himself said, "Heaven and Earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away".

But words are of no effect if no-one is listening. They are of no effect if no-one hears them, and understands them, and acts upon them. On the Mount of the Transfiguration in the presence of Peter, James and John, when Jesus divine nature was revealed, God said, "This is my Son, my beloved, listen to Him". And Jesus often finished a story or parable by saying, "Those who have ears, let them hear". Time and again we are told to listen to God's words.

In the present pandemic, many are saying, "Where is God? Why is He silent?" Friends, I do not believe God is silent at this time of crisis, when you consider what we have learned from it. Our time in lockdown separated from friends and family, has made us value these relationships all the more, and we have longed for them to be restored to us. The pandemic has highlighted the social inequalities in our society, as well as the true value of those who serve in the caring professions, and the lack of pollution in our skies due to the reduction in air travel has made us appreciate God's creation all the more, and the need to look after it, and to eliminate environmental catastrophes.

And the pandemic has made us examine ourselves as a Church, why it is important to us, and to examine how we do Church and how effective we are. The Church has been given an opportunity to re-examine itself, for unless we do so we may risk God's condemnation just as his judgment was visited on Eli, and on his sons who had become corrupt and self-seeking. Have our religious traditions and our buildings become more important to us than our love of God? Have our religious institutions become moribund, and no longer serve God's purpose? Why have people of faith abandoned institutionalised religion and seek inspiration and fulfilment elsewhere? Perhaps these are some of the questions we need to be asking. God's word may sometimes be hard for us to bear if He wants to challenge and to change us. Listening to God's words, listening for God's message, is even more important in today's secular society which may be likened to Israel before the time of Samuel when all people did what was right in their own eyes rather than following the Word of the Lord. Surely God at this time is wanting us to make His world a better place,

In our own congregation in our relationships with each other, listening has its place. Those of us who are elders know how important it is to listen in our pastoral role. When we visit those in our districts it is not for us to dominate the conversation, but rather to listen, for we serve God as much in the listening as in the doing. Like Samuel, let us be listening servants.

God's words are of value, as we need spiritual nourishment as well as food to nourish our bodies, if we are to be a whole person, to be fully alive. God's words can come to us to us at times of prayer, in moments of meditation, when reading the Bible, and in circumstances when we least expect them as was the case with Samuel.

Friends, are you listening? Are you listening to God calling you by your name as assuredly He is? We who have ears, let us hear, and then we will know what God has prepared for each and every one of us from the foundation of the world.

And to God be the glory. AMEN

Alistair Macrae

Feeding the Needy During the Pandemic

A note for the VASLan Board

The note below was passed to members of the VASLan Board last month and I felt sure that our readers would be heartened by the ambitious venture described. “Mr T” gave a presentation at our last VASLan Board meeting. Ed.



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE CHEF AWARDED BY PM

A South Lanarkshire chef who has been cooking and delivering over 5,000 meals for vulnerable people in the community during the pandemic has today received Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s daily Points of Light award.

Tuoyo Ayiku, popularly known as “Mr T”, from Larkhall, runs the ‘Heart In The Community Cafe’, a social enterprise which champions those who are vulnerable in the local community, including a pay-what-you-can box, to help them access healthy and hearty African cuisine. Since lockdown, with the cafe closed, he has transformed his work into a delivery service to reach those in need and brighten the lives of those who have been isolating at home with his African stews, curries, rainbow fried rice and jerk chicken. “Mr T” is also the founder of ‘Heart of Africa UK’ charity, set up in 2015, which facilitates links between the local community in South Lanarkshire and with communities across Africa, funding small projects such as supplying school books for children and supporting women to become Fair Traders and generate their own income.

In a personal letter to Tuoyo, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

"Every day I write to thank someone in our country for their service to others, so today I want to thank you for the thousands of meals you provided to support those isolating at home during the battle against Coronavirus.

"Your tantalising assortment of African stews, curries, rainbow fried rice and jerk chicken has quite rightly made “Mr T” a legend of South Lanarkshire!

"On behalf of all those who have been fortified by your culinary delights, allow me to thank you by naming you as the UK’s 1439th Point of Light."

Reacting to the Prime Minister’s announcement, Tuoyo said:

"First of all Thanks be to God for giving us the opportunity to see today."

A prayer during the time of COVID-19

When human life is disturbed, disrupted, and threatened by the novel coronavirus, we pray to you, God of life. Grant us the compassion, humility and self-discipline to value, care about and protect each life.

We pray to you, God of mercy, for all who have suffered directly and indirectly during this global pandemic. May you sustain, console, and heal them.

We pray to you, God of grace, for all good efforts to rescue life and to maintain people's health. May you strengthen, guide and protect all who have committed to fight against this disease.

We pray to you, God of righteousness, for justice to prevail. May you lead us to combat racism, discrimination, stigmatization and xenophobia with courage in the midst of this health crisis.

We pray to you, God of love, for an early end to the transmission of COVID-19 that is harming all, and for life, health and peace for all, through your mercy, grace and loving care, and through human solidarity, integrity and mutual support. **Amen.**

Rev. Dr Manhong Melissa Lin, China Christian Council

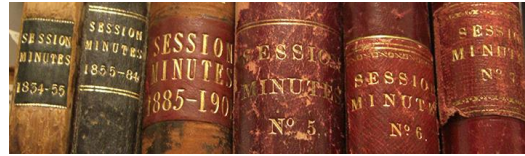


**World Council
of Churches**

#StayAtHome #PrayAtHome

From the Archives

Harry Webster



In the life and work of Cadzow Church there have been many members whose dedication and devotion to their Church and Cadzow has been commendable and outstanding. Not all of them have had or will have their works recorded in the archives of Cadzow, but I have chosen one who is so mentioned although there is not a great deal of information in the archives on his life outside the church.

James Mackie was an elder in the Parish Church of Hamilton when the procedure was instigated to create a new church in Woodside Walk to be called Cadzow which would go some way to meet the spiritual needs of the growing population in that part of Hamilton.

After going through the stage of being a Chapel of Ease, Cadzow was made a Quoad Sacra Parish Church by the Church of Scotland on the 26 February 1879. As well as receiving a parish area, a Kirk Session had to be formed. This was done by three elders from the Parish Church joining with Cadzow's first minister Revd. Michael Johnstone. One of them was James Mackie, the others were James Dunlop and James Rankin. James Mackie was appointed Session Clerk in which post he remained for just over 40 years. He was also appointed, in 1880, as the Clerk and Treasurer of the Committee of Management who, along with the Trustees, dealt with the temporal affairs of Cadzow. Eventually this post was taken over by J. Campbell.

James served under the first five ministers of Cadzow. But it was not long after Revd. T.F. Harkness Graham began his ministry at Cadzow that James Mackie died on the 22 September 1920 .

In his letter in the October Magazine, the Revd. Harkness Graham wrote. "I regret my short connection with you forbids me to speak from long knowledge of this saintly soul. But to know Mr. Mackie even for a short time was to appreciate to the full the limpid sincerity of his personality. He lived for two things-----the community and the Church. To the very last he was in harness, a fact which prevented us realising how old he was. Mr Mackie came to Cadzow as one of her first members, and he was her first Session – Clerk. In everything he did, Mr Mackie was exact to a degree. He could not attend the last session meeting, but he put into my hands everything in meticulous order, with adequate notes drawn up in his own characteristic handwriting. His interest in Cadzow continued to the very last..... His passing, like his life, was a benediction, and I know the spirit of what he was will remain with us to urge us to quiet faith and steadfast hope."

Again, in his letter in the November Magazine, he refers to James Mackie's funeral on the 22 September. "I was pleased to be assisted at that service by the *Rev. Kenneth McLaren, our old minister, with whom Mr. Mackie was a fast friend, as well as by the Rev. J.L. Tulloch B.D., of the Old Parish. On Sunday 26 September, a memorial service was held for the deceased Mr. Mackie and was well attended by a large and sympathetic congregation."

To show the high esteem in which James Mackie was held in Cadzow, a joint meeting was arranged between the Kirk Session, Trustees and Managers to determine a suitable memorial to Mr. Mackie. It was decided to have a stained-glass window erected in the East Transept where the Mackies sat. Its theme would be "the Ascension" produced by the Stephen Adam, Stainglass Studios, Glasgow. It was unveiled and dedicated on Easter Sunday 16 April 1922.

Editor's Snippets

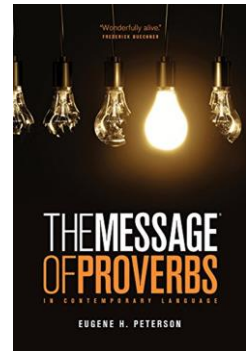
This Section is reserved for items sent by members of our congregation. I am very grateful for their input.

Editor

Proverbs for the People

Many thanks to Elizabeth Batty for sending in this list which she copied from her grandpa's Methodist book dated 1915.

- 1) *A bird may be ensared which cannot be shot.*
- 2) *Better be alone than in bad company.*
- 3) *Count your chickens when hatched, not before.*
- 4) *Empty vessels make the most sound.*
- 5) *Deep rivers run silently, brooks noisily.*
- 6) *Fools tie knots, wise men loose them.*
- 7) *Give a rogue room enough he'll hang himself.*
- 8) *He needs a long spoon who sups with the devil.*
- 9) *In a calm sea every man thinks himself a pilot.*
- 10) *Make hay while the sun shines.*



From Real Church Newsletters

Many thanks to Patricia Steel for sending in these "bloopers"!

Ed.



- 1) *The Fasting and Prayer Conference will include a meal.*
- 2) *Don't let worry kill you off – let the church help.*
- 3) *Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again" giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.*
- 4) *At the evening services tonight the sermon topic will be "What is Hell". Come early and listen to our choir practice.*
- 5) *The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.*
- 6) *Pot-luck supper, prayer and medication to follow.*
- 7) *The Church Warden unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday. :- "I upped my Pledge - Up Yours!"*

A Short Photo Quiz for our More Experienced Hamilton Members!



a) Name this street?



b) What colour was this bus?



c) Name this cross?

Answers

a) Cadzow Street (early 20th Century)

b) Green (mid 20th Century)

c) Top Cross (I love this photograph taken early last Century !) Ed.

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Church Diary

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Funerals

5 May—Jimmy Glass
Avonhaugh Nursing Home

14 May—Jane Mackenzie
Canderavon Care Home

31 May—Cathy Crawford
Abercorn Care Home

1 June—Gordon Shanks
13 Tuphall Road

9 June—Robert Clark
Airdrie

12 June—Iain Thomson
47 North Street, Strathaven

3 July—Frank Wight
18 Martin Court

31 July—William Donkin
36 Houston Street

12 August—Jean Pollock
47 Low Waters Road

14 August—Janet Beaton
61 Chatelherault Crescent

19 August—Nancy Wilson
71 Mill Road