

# Avoch Linked with Fortrose and Rosemarkie Church of Scotland

Quarterly Newsletter Issue 5 September 2020

**'And God saw that it was good.' Genesis 1**

On Christmas Eve 1968, the first manned spacecraft to the moon entered lunar orbit. Around a billion people back on earth tuned in to the live broadcast and the memorable words of astronaut Jim Lovell, 'The vast loneliness is awe-inspiring and it makes you realise just what you have there back on earth.' The crew finished the broadcast by taking turns to read the opening 10 verses of the Book of Genesis: *'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and the darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.....and God saw that it was good.'*

It was on the fourth orbit that the crew became the first human souls to see and capture the image of earth – now known as Earthrise (right) - a marbled blue and white bauble contrasting sharply with the black background and the bleakness of the moon's arid surface.

Successive astronauts, and crews at the International Space Station, have commented on the beauty and preciousness of earth but also its fragility and precariousness. They also point out that from space, national boundaries vanish, conflicts that divide seem small. What they see, instead, is our inter-connectedness, our interdependence. From that distance our need to protect the planet becomes obvious and urgent.

At the moment, we are preoccupied by a microscopic parasite, said to be significantly smaller than a grain of salt. It, too, is reminding us of our inter-connectedness and interdependence and leaving us pondering the extent to which the pandemic is linked to human destabilisation of the environment and damage to ecosystems. But climate change observers remind us, that as challenging as the pandemic may be, the much bigger challenge lies ahead, captured perfectly below by KAL.



## Season of Creation

**Season of Creation**, running from 1 September to 4 October annually, is a worldwide Christian renewal of our relationship with our Creator and all creation through 'celebration, conversion and commitment'.

In Scotland it involves the 450 strong Eco-congregation movement which links churches of all denominations and none under a common vision of a Scotland that cares for God's creation now and forever. Its mission includes prayer, worship, conversation and action, desiring to live justly in a transformed world - a theme picked up elsewhere in this newsletter.



Thanks to Kevin KAL Kallaugher, The Economist, [Kaltoons.com](http://Kaltoons.com)





# From the Minister's Study

## Finding God in a Pandemic

In this time of pandemic, we have been reflecting on bible passages that deal with the times when life does not go smoothly. We chose situations in the Old Testament when life was difficult - the series was called “Finding God in the depths and in the Cave.”

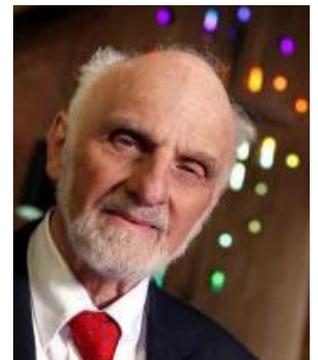
The experiences of two characters in the Old Testament - David and then Elijah – were instructive in terms of people who faced circumstances beyond their control. Both, for different reasons, found themselves not just in the depths but “in the cave”! David, when he had to flee from Saul and disappear out of sight for fear of his life; and Elijah, when he had to flee from Jezebel at a time when

his life was under threat. The triggers for these events were slightly different. David was at a stage in life where his capacities were being recognised but not fully developed – but he was seen as a threat to the monarchy. Elijah, at the height of his powers had to flee after a confrontation with the prophets of Baal where God had vindicated the prophets in a spectacular and unusual manner. However, the aftermath of this brought Elijah to the point of exhaustion and a sense of worthlessness where he temporarily was about to give up on life altogether.

As we probed the Old Testament, we discovered that there were Psalms written by David, that were associated with his time in the cave – namely Psalms 57 (a *miktam* of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave) and Psalm 142 (a *maskil* of David, when he was in the cave - a prayer). Elijah had also experienced another crisis when, in a time of drought, he had to go off into the wilderness and had to learn to trust God in very difficult circumstances.

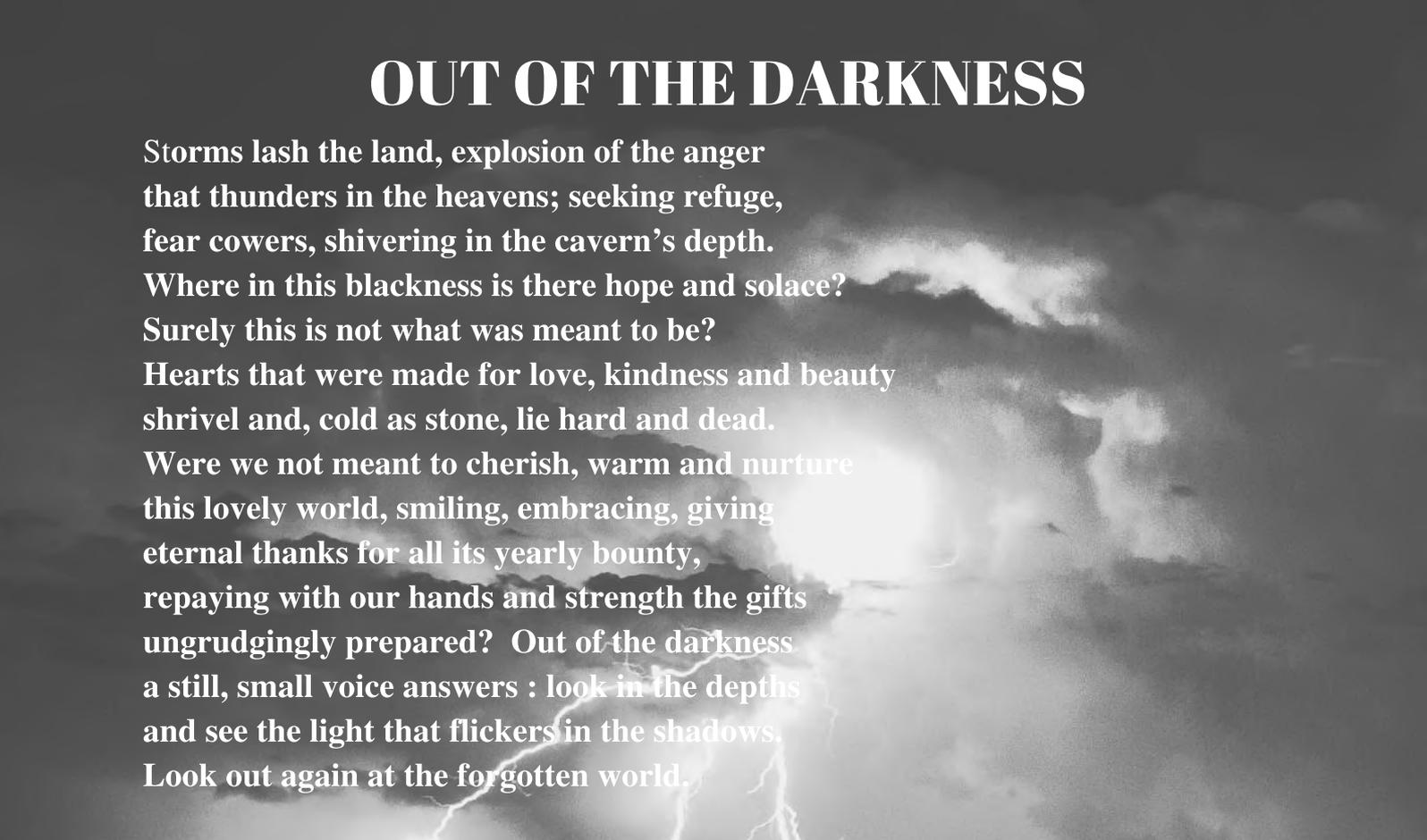
The series began and ended with two other Psalms. In Psalm 42, we find these sentiments: “My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’” And it continues, “‘Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?’” The psalmist is wrestling with deep realities that are not easy to address. In responding to such situations we heard a song of “lament” that had a verse on covid-19 specifically written for the pandemic (by one of my former students). She helpfully put Rosemarkie Bay as the picture for the ‘Youtube clip’ to connect it to our situation - see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjABWDBkdt8> This person had conducted a research project on “lament” which showed that Christians in Europe have a tendency to be cautious about showing, expressing and sharing negative feelings. This reluctance is reflected in the kind of songs that they sing.

We found that the biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann (right) had similar concerns: “We fail to yield our feelings to God, because we are afraid to express them. We smother them with praise, or smiles, or quoting positive passages of Scripture. And yet the more we press them down, the more they fester inside of us, waiting to come out in inappropriate moments. Healing requires the wound to be given air.” Doubtless, Brueggemann would approve of Resound Worship’s song – “There’s a Time for Tears!” - see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IL5YjPIH9s> He contrasted the experience of modern Christians (who exhibit these characteristics) with the attitude of the psalmist whose responses to God are “filled with anger and rawness ... Real prayer is being open about the negatives and yielding them to God ... they are never yielded unless they be fully expressed ...” We found that the psalmist (in Psalm 42) concludes as he comes to terms with the depths, “Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.”



We concluded by looking at Psalm 139 where the psalmist asks the question, “Where can I go from your Spirit?” His response to his own question is this: “If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.” We came to the realisation that even in the depths, even in a pandemic, the real issue is not about “Finding God” – but recognising that “God can find us” whatever our circumstances and is able to hold us fast.

# OUT OF THE DARKNESS



Storms lash the land, explosion of the anger  
that thunders in the heavens; seeking refuge,  
fear cowers, shivering in the cavern's depth.  
Where in this blackness is there hope and solace?  
Surely this is not what was meant to be?  
Hearts that were made for love, kindness and beauty  
shrivel and, cold as stone, lie hard and dead.  
Were we not meant to cherish, warm and nurture  
this lovely world, smiling, embracing, giving  
eternal thanks for all its yearly bounty,  
repaying with our hands and strength the gifts  
ungrudgingly prepared? Out of the darkness  
a still, small voice answers : look in the depths  
and see the light that flickers in the shadows.  
Look out again at the forgotten world.



Flowers and fruits shed their bright summer beauty,  
seeds for next spring sink in the waiting earth.  
There in deep dark, Creation's miracle  
works once again , preparing the next harvest.  
There, at the rainbow's end, the sunshine treasure  
glows through the rainclouds, love's eternal promise  
renewed once more.

Sheena Munro, August 2020

## Autumn 2020

During the Autumn, we will be looking at the theme **“God’s People - Identity Forged under Pressure”** as we consider the different ways in which the nature of the church is expressed and the resources of faith that encourage Christians as they “suffer grief in all kinds of trials ...”

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## Heather Moore

20th July 1942 to 1st May 2020



*In these difficult times when we can't gather for funerals and pay our respects to those who have passed on, I am very pleased to be given the opportunity to have a tribute to Heather published in the Church Newsletter. Heather and I were married for fifty-seven years and were blessed with two fine children. Allan our youngest spent several days composing a tribute to his Mum which he read at the graveside with only the close family, minister and funeral directors staff present. He wrote it with the family in mind, but I feel it captures his Mum's personality perfectly, I could not do better.*

### **Bob Moore**

Our voices are weak and inadequate words will surely fail and falter. But emotions remain rich with images so vivid and all the memories of you, which are now such treasures, will never cease to sustain your sweet voice forever and ever dear wife, Mum, Gran and cherished friend, Heather.

Our hearts sink further as only close family attend - churchyard restrictions in difficult times. But we must be brave and try to be strong as we reflect on your sweet grace and soul so kind, your warm loving nature that touched so many - all those that will still commemorate you in services to come.

Born Heather Robertson on July 20th 1942 in Nairn to Adam and Hilda who worked in Cawdor Estate. Raised in Little Rosefield Cottage on the north side of Cawdor, nurtured by loving parents with elder brother Jack and Sandy to follow. With trees sheltering your pram in the fresh open air, we see you smiling up at the leaves and listening to birds in the late afternoon sun.

From Rosefield as a baby to Balintore as a bairn. Your mischievous smile shines bright with your close neighbours, playing sketchy in the yard and skipping through the woods by the burn, imaginary games in the stick shed - never bored and always content even when rain threatened. Dutifully collecting eggs from the coop and filling tattie sacks with pine cones to comfort and warm those who gather at home in winter.

On to Cawdor's Meadowbank Cottage in 1957 and teenage years at school in Nairn, cycling down roads in tree dappled shade - smiling with fresh breeze in your hair. And onto Gollanfield to catch the bus to Inverness for your first job at J Arthur Dixons and work for the Health Service but returning in the evening with tennis racquet in hand - smiling again in the village you loved. So supportive of your mother in bed - bereft after the passing of your dear Dad.

Waiting for the bus at Shorkans Brae for country dances at the weekend with Marjory and close friends where you met Robert, the minister's son. Girlfriend became fiancée then loving wife and lifelong companion. Married aged 20 in Cawdor Church - so happy to welcome Bobby into your home with Mum. Joyful and content as family extended - Karen, daughter, your first bairn was born.

Then south to Corstorphine in Edinburgh to be with your husband during nautical training and to support his career at sea. Also to help brother Sandy as an apprentice in the city with continued strong bond with your Mum close by. Happy with family, Allan was born - now two bairns to care of your own. But you missed dear friends, the hens and the trees - and the comforts of a more gentle Highland air.

Soon a return north to settle in Balloch, nestled amongst the moors of Culloden. Homemaker of Karallan a modern new house - a strong mother and gardener whilst Bobby was at sea. Silver birch saplings, vegetables and strawberries with fresh roses to scent the air and walks with the bairns in Poggles wood - happy games and more cones to gather. Work for Colonel Murray, Snapes Post Office, Pink Paraffin and travelling promotions and, of course, always content to be close to your Mum - Morayston layby and old friends never far.

Long walks at Alturlie and singing to start the blue Anglia for drives by the Ness. Raspberry picking and then paddling in the river next to Clava Cairns.

Holidays to Plockton and Orkney of the long shadows. Collecting groatie buckies with sand on our feet - most memorable photos on Warebeth beach. And singing “We are the champions, all of us Moores” whilst reeling and laughing in each other’s arms. Happy to go home but then once again longing - getting ready for Bobby’s voyage with Welcome Home on the gramophone.

Then a move north to Orkney for a job opportunity that allowed Bobby to stay home. Your passion for painting and art rekindled - your memories of childhood to endure the harsh winters. Bluebell woods and great washes - and the warmth of Cawdor in fine brush strokes. HDM exhibits in the Pier Arts Centre with many red stickers to adorn someone else’s home. Dramatic standing stones in charcoal and pencil - and sheep with wee lambs never too far from the flock. Inks for rosy cheeked faces with curly locked bunches - picture book stories for the grandchildren to come.

As secretary for Orkney Health Council you gave loyal service to the Balfour Hospital. Both Sunday school teacher and charity worker - Multiple Sclerosis and Meals on Wheels helper. Assembling close friends through hard work and your sports - all familiar values from good Orcadian folk. Now more squash than tennis - but always still watching with Wimbledon under covers on TV. And, as your bairns left home for university, your Mum returned north to join family once more. Happy days with care and support - done for the day but content at the table with Scrabble and tea.

With retirement, a move to the south and a return to the warmth of the Morayshire coast with familiar views across the Firth to greet you in the morning and night. Smoke clouds above Morayston and the twinkling of Balloch’s village lights. Homemaker once more with new house in Avoch - designed with purpose and for friendships to grow. With shrubs and bird feeders to welcome the robins - and bluebells to line paths to dear neighbours. Spare bedrooms for families and with shortbread for friends and congregation - a true home and all that you ever wanted.

Hannah and Adam, then Connor and Katie - grandchildren and more bairns to hold in your arms. Time flies through baby-sitting and children growing so fast - but always with kind smiles and natural devotion. Stories and games to entertain and play -

pencil and paper with bright colours and girls names starting with K. Baking and candle-making and all sorts of crafts - bags with wee houses and bright tartan hearts. And as the grandchildren grow older more mischief and questions - and news of boyfriends and girlfriends. But always reassurances - with warm heart and hot water bottles to comfort you in bed.

Favourite holidays were always at home with visiting family and those you held so close. Always supportive, kind-hearted and caring - a loving mother and granny beyond compare. Thanks for nurturing us and keeping us true - the importance of home and far more simple virtues. You cherished your family and gave so much - always empathising and never complaining.

And, finally, so brave and accepting - you managed your illness with great dignity and compassion. A blessing to get home - with radiance and serenity you made your quiet farewells.

Died Heather Moore, on the 1st of May 2020 peacefully at home in Avoch. We see you walking through the bluebell woods - reunited and in the arms of Hilda and Adam once more. And home with Jack and Sandy - surrounded by precious friends who can smile with you again.

**Rest in peace dear wife, Mum, Granny and cherished friend, Heather.**

**We will never forget you - your kind and loving voice will always remain:**

**Wrap up warm, love you pet - look after the bairns and take special care.**



Bluebell Woods - Heather Moore

# Remembering my good friend, Glad



Glad and Rita

Glad and I first met about six years ago and quickly became firm friends. We could talk about anything. We had our shared routines too. We'd sit beside each other at Rosemarkie Church, we'd visit the Episcopal Church charity shop on a Saturday morning and then go up to the Coffee and Craic at the Town Hall. Every Thursday, we'd take the bus out to the Fourways Club in Cromarty. Then there was the Friendship Group once a fortnight back here in Fortrose. Tuesday was Soup Day at Glad's when family and friends would gather for a bowl of soup and a blether. Somehow the soup pan never ran dry no matter how many turned up!

Glad was the youngest of 15, born in April 1942 at the farm of Easter Strath, Killen. She was only 12 when her mother passed away but, despite her young age, she took on a role of caring and looking after people which she did for the rest of her life. In 1972, she moved to the farmhouse at Mid Blairfold Farm along with her father, her two brothers John Boy and Dai and her son Ronnie. She nursed her father and brothers through ill-health and in their final years.

Glad's brother Gordon told me how delighted they'd be at tattie picking time when Glad would be sure to arrive with a huge tea urn and a basketful of pieces. That's just how she was. If anyone arrived at mealtime, they'd be fed. At other times it would be a cup of tea and scones or pancakes. She was just so caring and kind.

She loved children. She was a Sunday School teacher up at Killen. The children would be told to line up and each given a pan drop so they'd sit quiet and listen! She would babysit for her many nieces and nephews and their children in turn. "She was like a mother to me," they'd often say.

Gordon said Glad was the Who's Who person for the MacIvers. If anyone wanted to know anything about anyone in the extended MacIver family - where they lived, when their birthdays were, how to get in touch - it was always, "Ask Glad, she'll know." And she did!

When she moved to Rodger Court in 2006, she continued to look after people. She held spare keys for many neighbours, she would get their shopping if needed, just look out for them. She would go for a wee walk and return home hours later having stopped to speak to so many people. The family could never get her on the phone - she was never in!

Glad passed away suddenly but peacefully on 3 July. Gordon in his eulogy said, *Glad had her own battles with ill health over the years but never complained. She made new friends out of every situation. Glad didn't always have much but she was happy and content with her lot. She liked things plain and simple, no fuss or added extras and hated to be the centre of attention. If you met her in the street or knocked on her door, whether known or stranger, regardless of reason, everyone was treated with the same warm and friendly manner. It didn't matter who you were or what your background was, nobody was turned away.*

A truer word was never said. I miss her so much.

**Rita Ferguson**



# It's a Small World

(continued)

Following on from the feature on Floranne Reid in the last newsletter, Dannie Reid, Avoch's oldest man, now resident in Kilmarnock, got in touch. Floranne and her late husband Alex met at Dannie's marriage to Kay, a Gaelic speaker from Lewis. Dannie and Alex were first cousins while Floranne and Kay were in nurse training together.

Dannie continued, "Kay's cousin Murdo Macrae, a well known Free Church Minister, was due to officiate but he was otherwise engaged. The Harris Tweed industry was at a very low ebb at the time due to tariffs imposed in the States. Murdo travelled to America at his own expense and was granted an interview with the President, during which he persuaded him to abolish the tariff. The tweed trade subsequently went from strength to strength."

Even although the current President's mother is from Lewis, a similar scenario is difficult to imagine in the modern era!

Dannie had a further anecdote that gave a little insight to parish life 70+ years ago.

"When the Air Training Corps was created during the war, my brother Sandy and I became founder members of the Fortrose flight. The commanding officer was Dr MacLeod, the Rector of Fortrose Academy and he appointed Sandy as his Flight Sergeant.

About a year later, Sandy began an honours degree maths course at Aberdeen University and I was selected to replace him. The idea was mooted that we should try to get use of the Church of Scotland hall in Avoch for one or two nights a week recreation such as table tennis and an appointment was made to discuss the matter with Mr Mackenzie, the Minister. I would add that I had recently volunteered to train as an RAF navigator and had been accepted, following a searching interview and medical examination. This always led, in the case of ATC members, to the issue by the RAF of a distinctive white flash which was inserted in your forage cap.

I wore my ATC uniform going to the manse and sat opposite Mr Mackenzie in his study with my cap on my knee. He said he was sympathetic to the idea of allowing the use of the hall. He then spotted the white flash and enquired about it. After my explanation, he

said, "That's a very dangerous branch of the Forces, Dannie. Have you ever given any thought to the hereafter?"

I had just turned 18 at the time and, to be honest, I cannot recall my answer - I suppose I mumbled something or other.



Dannie on VJ Day 1945

We were subsequently granted the use of the hall free and spent many enjoyable evenings there.

In due course, I joined the RAF and had a lengthy period of training, including 6 months in Toronto, Canada under the Empire Air Training Scheme. I graduated as a navigator, following which I returned to the UK to become part of a Lancaster bomber crew of 7 based at Scampton. Bearing in mind the tragic loss of so many aircrew, I am in no doubt that Mr Mackenzie, as a minister, was fully entitled to broach the question of the hereafter. However, I am very thankful to report that I survived and turned 96 years of age in January this year."



Dannie and Kay celebrating Dannie's 96th birthday in January

**Thanks to Jane Patience and Douglas Simpson for this follow up.**

## **A Thought.....**

Back in 1930, Dannie would have been a young school boy. Some older residents in Avoch back then would memories back to the 1840s or earlier. They could never have imagined the world that Dannie and Kay now live in - along with the rest of us!

Looking ahead, some of the children who just started school at Avoch Primary in August may still be alive in the 22nd century. Our national and international commitment to Creation Care in the next few decades will determine the kind of world they inherit.....

# “I will not abandon you”

**Hebrews 13:5b “.....because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’**

I have a picture on my lounge wall which shows a sailing ship under reduced sail in a hard gale and flying the code flags B, C, N. There is also a small boat in the right foreground.

In the mid 1930s, my father admired the picture when he saw it hanging in the home of a retired shipmaster in Stromness, Orkney. He asked what the signal meant and learned it was code for “I will not abandon you”. Later Captain Flett gifted the picture to my mother and father, probably as a wedding present. In due time the picture migrated to my wall.



I believe the picture depicts the French steel barque “Loire” which, in October 1913, was involved in the dramatic rescue of the crew of the British full rigged ship “Dalgonar” in the South Pacific.

The “Dalgonar” with a crew of thirty on board had sailed in ballast from Callao (Lima) Peru to Taltal Chile to load a cargo of nitrate. During the passage she experienced severe weather, “was blowing a very hard gale with a terrific high sea and heavy rain squalls every half hour.”

The severe weather caused the shingle ballast to shift and the ship to take on a seventy-degree list. When the “Loire” arrived on the scene her master reported he saw, “A ship lying completely on its port side with its three masts shorn off at deck level. I steered astern and as I passed astern, I saw it was the “Dalgonar”, out of Liverpool. From time to time the keel emerged from the water as the waters surged.”

The quotations come from the book “*Hard Down! Hard Down!*” *The life and times of Captain John Isbester from Shetland*. John Isbester was the master of the “Dalgonar” and the book was written by his great grandson, Captain Jack Isbester.

The “Loire” stood by the casualty for four days before the weather moderated and they were able to launch their whaler and rescue the twenty-six survivors. The master and three of the crew had lost their lives while trying to launch a lifeboat. When the ship returned to Europe the rescuers were feted: one of the honours they received was a silver medal for gallantry presented by King George V.

My father used this event to illustrate a sermon. He also wrote an article which was published in the *The Expository Times*. Prisoners of war who received the publication wrote to my father after the war and expressed appreciation for his words which they had found encouraging.

For myself, throughout my life, the picture has been a constant source of encouragement and reassurance. In Deuteronomy 31:6 we read “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

The Israelites must have been apprehensive as they were about to enter the Promised Land, an uncertain future under a new leader, much as we are in our time, facing an uncertain future, a restructuring of the National Church, a review of the Presbytery Plan and, not least, the new normal that which will emerge from the Covid 19 pandemic.

I am reassured when I look at the picture on my lounge wall which reminds me that we have a saviour who is ever faithful.

**Bob Moore**

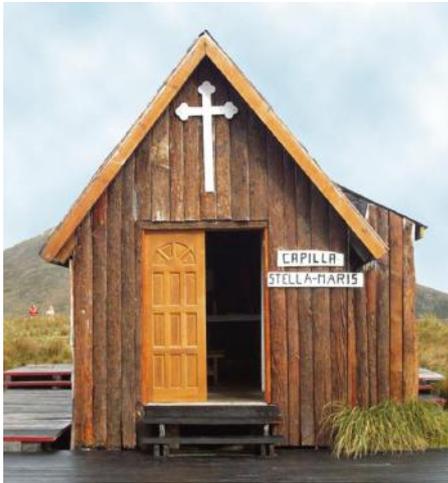
# Unto the Uttermost Part of the Earth (Acts 1:8)

*Inspired by Ethel Urquhart's fascinating article on the churches visited on her world cruises, readers may be interested in what might be (but no guarantees!) the most northern and southern crosses in the world.*

In the north, just south of 80 degrees north on the north west corner of Spitsbergen stands a solitary cross close to a headland and encased in rocks. From a distance it bears a striking resemblance to the images we have of Calvary, minus the thieves' crosses. The story behind the cross is that at some point in the nineteenth century a number of trappers had gone ashore in this remote area, around 100 miles north of Ny Aalesund, the most northerly village in the world, during the late summer. The winter ice closed in much earlier than they had anticipated, trapping the ship. They were unprepared for spending the whole winter there and, thinking that death was inevitable, they erected the cross. Shortly after this the ice partially melted, a passageway appeared and they sailed to safety!



In the south the most southerly land is Cape Horn just north of 56 degrees south. Edinburgh, incidentally, is as far north of the Equator as Cape Horn is south. Across the 500 mile Drake Passage, below 60 degrees south, lies Antarctica. Cape Horn is situated on an island, Isla Hornos, on which there is a tiny chapel, Capilla Stella Maris (Chapel of Our Lady, Star of the Sea). Engraved on the chapel is a cross. At the tip of the island is an aluminium sculpture which at first looks a bit like a cross but is actually the outstretched wings of an albatross in silhouette. It is a monument to all the sailors who lost their lives rounding the Horn.



Cape Horn belongs to Chile so the poem carved on it is in Spanish. The English translation is:  
*I am the albatross that waits for you at the end of the earth  
I am the forgotten soul of the dead sailors who crossed Cape Horn from all the seas of the world  
But they did not die in the furious waves.  
Today they fly in my wings to eternity in the last trough of the Antarctic winds*

The voyage from Ushuaia in Tierra Del Fuego (which describes itself as 'The end of the world.....the beginning of everything!) through the Beagle Channel passes the wreck of ship *Logos* which ran aground in 1988 in atrocious weather conditions, but fortunately without loss of life although the ship was unsalvageable. She was the first ship of OM (Operation Mobilisation) Ship Ministry, and in her seventeen years with them had been visited by 6.5 million people in 408 ports in 108 counties selling Christian literature. She was succeeded by *Logos II* and subsequently by the current ship *Logos Hope*. Since the ship ministry commenced 151 countries have been visited and the ships, which carry around 5,000 titles, have had 47 million visitors.



It is good to know that to the furthest north and the furthest south, and all round the world, can be found Christian outreach and the Christian Cross.

**Jack Kernahan**

*"Far round the world Thy children sing their song. From North and South their voices sweetly blend."*

## From The Bookshelves .....



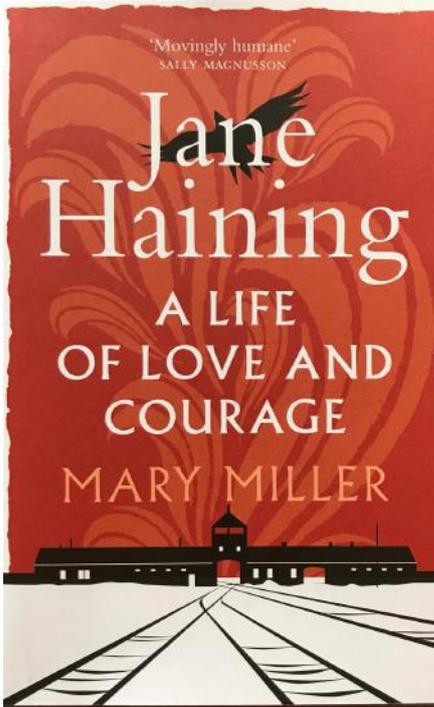
It was on a visit to Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem a few years ago that I first heard of Jane Haining, who died at Auschwitz and is the only Scot recognised as Righteous Among the Nations for her work with Jewish children in Budapest. Mary Miller's absorbing biography filled in the rest of the story for me.

Jane was brought up on a farm near Dunscore, Dumfries-shire. This part of the book is really well done, describing family life, farm life, church life in the United Free Church and school life at Dunscore Primary and Dumfries Academy where Jane was the dux medallist for her year.

Commercial College in Glasgow followed and work at J & P Coats of threads fame in Paisley where she became private secretary to the owner. She also found time to complete a Diploma in Domestic Science at night school.

The great turning point in her life came when she heard the chair of the Jewish Mission Committee discuss his missionary work at a meeting in Glasgow. It led to her appointment as Matron of the Mission School in Budapest. What struck me was how every part of her life up to that point prepared her for what she described to a friend was to be her 'lifework'.

Information about her time in Budapest is patchy but what is on record that from as early as 1940, Jane Haining refused Church of Scotland requests for her to return to Scotland. Mary Miller does well to piece together events in Budapest and what shines through is Jane Haining's willingness to sacrifice everything for the girls in her care – which led to her death in Auschwitz on 27 January 1944. She was 47 years old.



It was humbling when our guide spoke about Jane Haining at Yad Vashem. But it is even more humbling when you read the book.

One of the positives of the lockdown - for me at least - was Radio Scotland's decision to move the Sunday morning service from 6.30am to 7.30am when I had a better chance of being awake!

Back in April one of the services came from Edinburgh and featured modern updates of psalms from *Psalms Redux* by Carla A. Grossch-Miller. I ordered the book immediately.

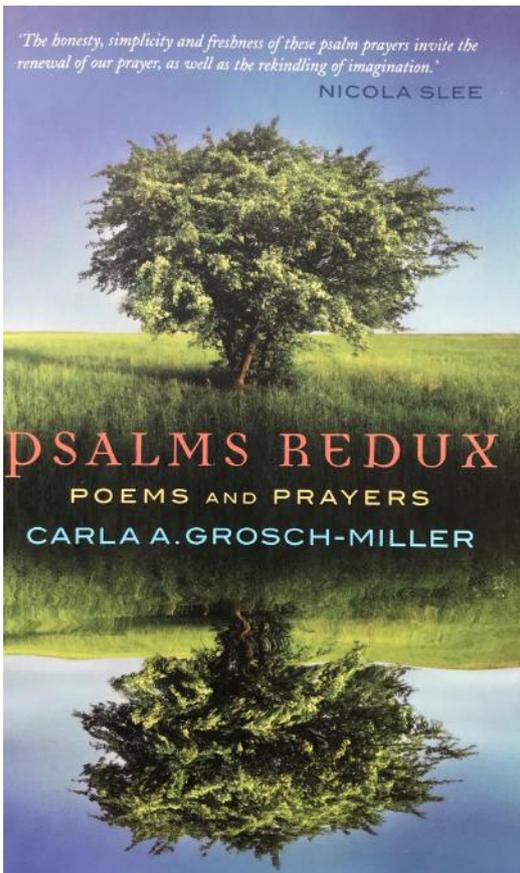
I found these reworkings of psalms really spoke to me through striking and memorable phrasing and images. During lockdown many of them resonated with the different feelings experienced. Its a book I keep close as I know it's one I'm going to enjoy delving into. Here's a taste from Psalm 47:

Examine my heart,  
and remove all that prevents compassion:  
arrogance, fear, greed

Enlighten my understanding,  
and give me all that makes for discernment:  
wisdom, patience, kindness.....

Even as You know us,  
make Yourself known through us. Amen

**Margaret MacSween**



# A Life-Changing Experience on Iona

*Long standing resident of Fortrose, Christian MacLean, shares her involvement with, and commitment to, The Iona Community.*



I first visited Iona aged 9, on a glorious summer day. I loved the island then, but it was in my early 20's that I first encountered the Iona Community, as a guest at the Abbey. That first visit was life-changing (as it is for so many people): the pattern of community life with such a wide variety of people, the worship, and the open and lively discussions about faith and how we live it out in our everyday lives, all made a huge impression.

Since then the Community has been a major part of my journey, challenging and inspiring, but also offering support, laughter and a place to explore my faith. I've recently finished two years as Co-Leader of the Iona community, working from the Community's Glasgow office. But I've been closely involved since my early visits, initially volunteering at youth camps on Iona, becoming a full Member in the 1980's, working on Iona for 3 years as the first Warden of the MacLeod Centre, our centre for young people and families, and serving on various committees.



Many people have heard of the Community through John Bell's "Thought for the day" on Radio 4, or because they know that it was founded by George MacLeod in 1938 when he moved from Govan to start rebuilding both the ruined monastic buildings of the Abbey and community life.

Today we are an ecumenical Christian community working together for peace and social justice, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship. There are around 300 Members in the UK and elsewhere, along with 1000 Associate Members and thousands of people worldwide who share the Community's vision. Members are bound together by a rule of daily prayer, action for a more just and

peaceful world, and a commitment to meeting each other, mainly in local groups (and we're fortunate locally to have a number of other Members and Associates). The Community normally welcomes thousands of guests and day visitors a year to its three centres on Iona and Mull to share in daily worship in the Abbey Church and in community life: we also run a bookshop and a small publishing house, programmes for adults and young people on the mainland, and a worship group.

In our daily prayer we ask that Iona may "continue still to be a sanctuary and a light". In a world of so much darkness and fear, the need for places and groups where all are welcome, and of light (inspiration and hope) have never been more needed. We continue as a group of very ordinary people who seek to "follow the light we have, while praying for more light" (George MacLeod) [www.iona.org.uk](http://www.iona.org.uk)

## 10 'Must Know' Bible Stories?

Five years ago, St Columba's Church in Aberdeen, and seven local primary schools, started working together to create a Religious and Moral Education (RME) resource in line with the Scottish curriculum. And, so, the 10 Must Know Bible Stories (10 MKBS) resource was born. It was well received by teachers and pupils. The Scottish Bible Society (SBS) became involved adding high quality images and a website to allow access to the free resource available across the country. During lockdown, some of the resources were adapted for 'home school', a fact no doubt appreciated by many teachers, parents and carers as well as the pupils. **An interesting aspect of this enterprise is how a local initiative developed in to a national resource.**

Here's a question, though. If you were in charge, which 10 Bible stories (5 from the Old Testament and 5 from the New Testament) would you regard as 'must know' for primary aged children? You can compare your answer with 10MKBS choices by checking the second last page of the newsletter



## What if we treated our Bible in the same way as we use our mobile phone?

*We would carry them around all the time.*

*We might be seen flipping through it several times a day. And in public too!*

*We'd share txts with others.*

*If we mislaid it, we make it an urgent priority to find it. If we left it behind, we'd go back home to get it.*

*We'd have it with us when travelling, we'd use it to receive messages, we'd use it in emergencies....*

*We'd consider it an important gift to give our children, nephews, nieces.....*

*Most of all we'd never have to worry about being disconnected from our Bible because of an unpaid bill.*

*Indeed, the bill has been already paid!*

## Tennessee 10 Commandments

Some good folks in Tennessee have trouble with all those "shalts" and "shalt nots" in the Ten Commandments – just not used to talking in them terms. So, some folks got together and translated the 'King James' into 'Jackson County' language and posted The Hillbillies' 10 Commandments on Cross Trails Church in Gainesboro. **Read on:**

- 1) Just one God
- 2) Honor your Ma & Pa
- 3) No tellin' tales or gossipin'
- 4) Git yourself to Sunday meetin'
- 5) Put nothin' before God
- 6) No foolin' around with another
- 7) No killin'
- 8) Watch yer mouth
- 9) Don't take what ain't yers
- 10) Don't be hankerin' for you buddy's stuff



Now that's kinda plain an' simple, don't ya think?

Y'all have a nice day now!

**William Mather**

## Favourite Hymn

I am a great fan of Graham Kendrick's modern hymns. But I chose this hymn because, if I close my eyes, it takes me back all those years to my early life with family at Christmas and Hogmanay. A warmth comes over me and in my own mind as I hear - and see - my late father Sandy, mother Jean Hossack, family and neighbours belting out All People That On Earth Do Dwell Sing To The Lord With Cheerful Voice - 'The Old Hundredth' as my father called it.

I believe there could be a more modern version but the words I love are the older version which evokes wonderful memories of the hymn being sung with great gusto by family and friends at Christmas and New Year ceilidhs - God bless them all.

**Billy Hossack**

All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice:  
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,  
come ye before him and rejoice.

The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;  
without our aid he did us make:  
we are his folk, he doth us feed,  
and for his sheep he doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise,  
approach with joy his courts unto;  
praise, laud, and bless his Name always,  
for it is seemly so to do.

For why? the Lord our God is good,  
his mercy is for ever sure;  
his truth at all times firmly stood,  
and shall from age to age endure.

**Now, maybe you're 'belting it out' too - Billy certainly will be!**

**Hope itself is like a star - not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity; only discovered in the night of adversity.**

**C. H. Spurgeon**

# Creation Care



Do you remember this? “Earlier on today, apparently a woman phoned the BBC and said she’d heard there was a hurricane on the way. Well, if you’re watching, don’t worry there isn’t.” The words of Michael Fish, BBC weather forecaster at lunchtime on Thursday 15th October 1987. That night the biggest storm since 1703 hit the south-east of England. Fifteen million trees were blown down. Damage was extensive. Eighteen people lost their lives.

There was outrage, captured in *The Daily Mail* headline on the Saturday, **WHY WEREN’T WE WARNED?**

By the Sunday, the media had surrounded the Met Office Director General’s house and, on the Monday, *The Sun* published the results of a reader poll which claimed 55% of the public wanted the Met Office boss sacked. A press conference was called for the Monday afternoon.

As it turned out, that Monday is now remembered as Black Monday, the day the stock market crashed. And by the afternoon, very few reporters were still interested in the previous week’s storm. Michael Fish wasn’t sacked. Instead, he became something of a celebrity and in high demand as an after-dinner speaker. The weather forecast, and aftermath, became part of the sequence used in the 2012 London Olympic Games Opening Ceremony.

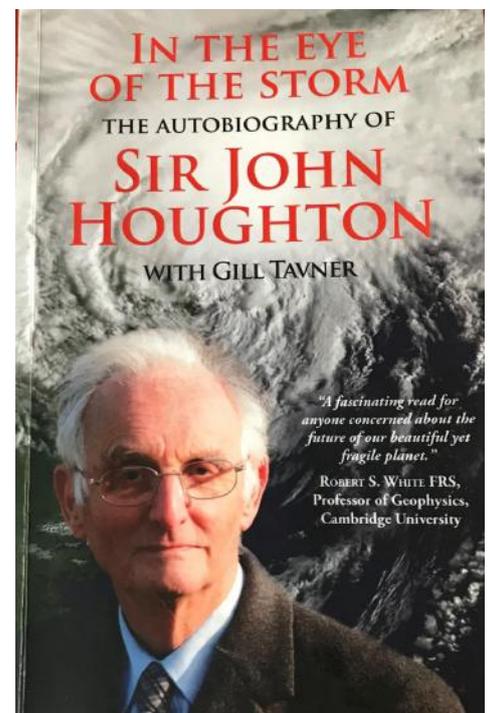
Nor did the Met Office Director General, John Houghton, lose his job. In fact, he went on to be recognised as one of the UK’s foremost scientists and a leading expert on climate change, co-chairing the Science Working Group of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) from 1988 – 2002. In 2007, he received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the IPCC group alongside the former Vice-President of the United States, Al Gore. Sir John Houghton, as he became along the way, was also a man of deep Christian faith. He died, aged 88, in April of this year of suspected Covid-19.

Asked by *The Church Times* in 2013 what the most important decision he ever made, Sir John, who was, prior to his time in the Met Office, professor of atmospheric physics at Oxford University, said simply, ‘*It was to accept Jesus as my Saviour and Lord.*’ And to those who queried how his scientific knowledge and expertise could sit so comfortably alongside his deep Christian faith, he would reply, ‘*because they belong together.*’

In his autobiography, *In the Eye of the Storm*, he puts it this way: ‘*As humans we have two eyes to view the world; their combined binocular vision brings depth not available to either eye on its own. Similarly, as I have sought to put my science and faith alongside each other, the combination of my material eye and my spiritual eye has brought, and continues to bring, richness beyond my imagination.*’ p264

For decades, John Houghton brought that binocular vision to climate change and our responsibility to others on the planet. ‘*As the oceans get warmer, the water will expand, the sea level will likely rise by the best part of a metre by the end of the century. Ten million live in Bangladesh below the one metre contour, farming the fertile mud there. Where are they to go?*’ ***The Church Times* November 2013**

And he had a stark warning: ‘*Even if we turned off all carbon emissions tomorrow, the climate will continue to warm. We can’t turn the clocks back when we’ve found out we don’t like it – we really have to get on with it now. It’s very urgent.*’



So what did Sir John Houghton see as our Christian responsibility?

1. Looking after the earth is a God-given responsibility. Not to look after the earth is to sin.
2. Christians need to re-emphasise that the doctrines of creation, incarnation and resurrection belong together. The spiritual is not to be seen as separate from the material. A thoroughgoing theology of the environment needs to be developed.
3. Our stewardship of the earth, as Christians, is to be pursued in dependence on, and in partnership with, God.
4. The application of science and technology is an important component of stewardship. Humility is an essential ingredient in the pursuit and application of science and technology – and in the exercise of stewardship.
5. All of this provides an enormous opportunity for the church, which has too long ignored the earth and the environment. It has neglected the importance of creation and its place in the overall Christian message.

So what to do? Sean Lock, the comedian once quipped that putting out bottles and cans for recycling can feel like someone turning up at the scene of a devastating earthquake with a dustpan and brush, saying, "It's ok everyone, I'll sort it out." Sir John acknowledged that but pointed out that each individual action - small as it might be - all builds towards a much bigger collective response that **does** make a difference.

He suggested the following as 'easy steps' to sustainable lifestyles:

- Recycle everything you can
- Use a green energy supplier
- Maximise home insulation
- Limit the miles we drive – use public transport where possible
- Drive electric or hybrid vehicles
- Fly only when necessary
- Buy locally to reduce transportation costs



But his main plea was for the wealthier nations to take the issue seriously and accept that the moral imperative rests with us. It is not just that per capita emissions tend to reflect GDP but wealthier nations are better placed to deal with the effects of climate change: more money, more knowledge, better infrastructures. He abhorred the terrible injustice that it is the poorer people of the world, those with very low emissions indeed, who will suffer the worst effects of changing climate, for example: frequent and intense heat waves, droughts and destructive floods.

That said, Sir John's autobiography ends with three positives. Firstly, he believed that many in the scientific community across different nations and cultures are working together to a common purpose. Secondly, the necessary technology already exists to achieve satisfactory solutions. Thirdly, and critically, he believed that being good stewards of creation is a God-given task and God has provided the means to achieve it. We just have to get on with it!

Towards the end of *The Church Times* interview he was asked if he was given a free choice what would it be? His response was, '*I'd choose to be locked in a church with someone with whom I could pray freely but who could also play ecstatically a Bach Toccata and Fugue on the church organ.*'

And what would he pray for? '*For God's kingdom to come – fast!*' A quite remarkable man.

***'The Rich must live more simply so the Poor may simply live.'* Gandhi**



## Climate Change and Food Security

Martin Luther King Jr. famously said *'Before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you've depended on more than half the world.'*

Initial uncertainties and fears related to Covid 19 sent shivers through the country, not least in the matter of our food supplies. Newspapers reported a rush of buying and panic and there was plenty of local talk about food shortages in shops. And yet, food shortages are part of life for millions of the world's poor farmers who struggle to feed their families off small areas of land. When food crops fail, the spectre of famine appears and people may have to resort to foraging for seeds, berries or whatever they can find in their local surroundings. The most food foraging we have to do in our society is going up and down the supermarket aisles, picking items off the shelves and putting them into our trolley, often without even noticing where they were produced or thinking about who may have produced them for us.

In Malawi, the African country with which our two congregations have had a longstanding link, I've become all too aware of what's been happening in recent times with small farmers as climate change becomes more and more apparent. To start off the staple maize crop, water in the form of heavy rain is needed and fertilizer must be applied at the same time to the hand-hoed ridges of red tropical soil. But now the rains that determined sowing times have become unreliable. When the big clouds gather and the rains come at the end of the dry season, farmers sow their seeds to begin the growing cycle. These days the rains may come then stop for a critical time while the seeds are germinating, so that plants are damaged for want of moisture before they've even got properly growing. At the opposite extreme, torrential rains can wash away precious fertilizer. For a poor farmer, the cost of replacing it may be well beyond his or her means. Climate change has introduced an unpredictability that may result in poor or failed harvests.

It's a fact that some of the food that was being cleared off the shelves here at home during the panic buying phase had been produced for us in a range of countries now being troubled by erratic rainfall patterns linked

to climate change. It's also worth remembering that to produce the food grown for us, as a cash crop, requires land that will not then be available to the local population for growing food crops. Our consumer driven lifestyle throughout the developed world has much to answer for, not least in its damaging impact on Earth's climate patterns. Responding to crisis food situations when they occur, by generously giving cash aid can't be the only way for creating a more equitable world society. Small individual change to our living patterns here, when applied on a large scale, can contribute towards improving the lot of others in distant places who help supply our food. As Christians we are more than aware of our responsibility to be fair towards others in this our shared, God-given planetary home. **Douglas Willis**



## The Beauties of Nature *sung to the tune of My Favourite Things*

Beautiful broom and glorious gorse  
rambling red roses, sweet smelling of course.  
wonderful woodbine entwining the trees.  
beauties of nature our senses do please.

Sounds of the garden, the humming of bees  
extracting the pollen from fragrant sweet peas.  
birdsong resounds from above and below.  
lambs bleat in fields, where the cows and calves low.

Golden sunshine, gentle rain  
helps to grow the grain.  
imbibe all these wonders created with care  
and keep them for folk to share.

Osprey hovers above the cool water  
competing for fish with a purposeful otter  
the osprey dives first and comes up with a prize  
but certainly finds it too hard to arise

and so he drops it back into the water  
oh rapturous joy it is seized by the otter  
who carries it off for his family to share  
the osprey hovers once more in the air

Such a lovely world we have here  
management is clear  
resources are precious, we must do our best  
to nurture and guard it for all the rest

**Maggie Wynton August '20**

# Sowing Seed in Nigeria *James MacDonell, serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators*

The rainy season is coming to an end in northwest Nigeria and almost everyone is involved in some kind of farming activity. For many this is the “hungry period” - last year’s food stuffs have been exhausted and savings have already been spent on seed and fertiliser. From October onwards the rains become more infrequent and for the next few months people will be busy harvesting their maize, corn, rice, sorghum, beans, yams and other crops. I’m sometimes asked why I don’t farm. I like to answer that I do farm. Not in a field with a hoe, but rather in an office with paper and pen (actually, mostly a laptop computer)! I am involved in planting seed that will, I trust, produce transformation in the lives of individuals and communities.

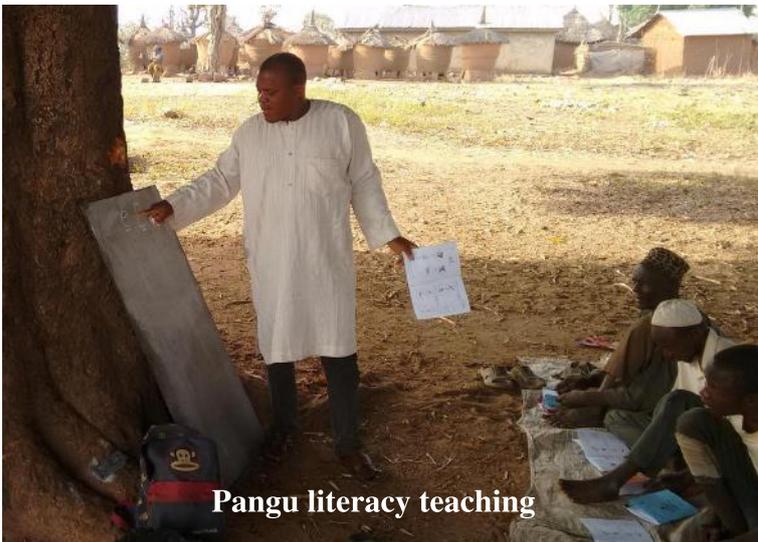


This is a very different context from Fortrose where I grew up and attended Avoch Primary School and Fortrose Academy. It was towards the end of my time in Fortrose that I came to personal faith in Jesus Christ as my saviour. I went to Edinburgh University where I studied Linguistics (mainly because it sounded interesting!) and I got involved with a Bible-centred church where God started to challenge me to serve him overseas. After some further study and a couple of IT jobs, I was accepted as a member of Wycliffe Bible Translators in 2002. After my initial training, I arrived in Nigeria in January 2003. Nigeria has around 500 different indigenous languages (the largest number in Africa) and the majority of these have never been written down. Each of these languages has been given by God and deserves to be protected and nurtured.

I have been privileged to work in the Pangu language of Niger State, helping to analyse the grammar and system of sounds of the language, develop a writing system and start a mother tongue literacy programme. Over the years, staff of the Pangu Language Project have taught classes in different areas, trained others to be teachers and developed reading materials. Writers’ workshops and literacy competitions have been held in order to encourage indigenous authors and motivate people to use their literacy skill

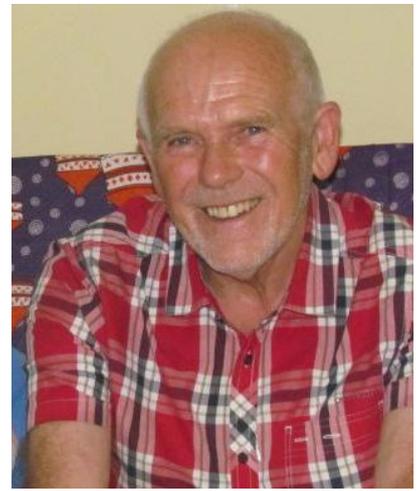
Although there are very few Pangu Christians, Bible translation work has been going on for some years. I am not a translator but I oversee this work, along with the literacy aspect of the project. In 2017 the Gospel of Luke and the Epistle of James in Pangu were published as a single volume. Since then many other New Testament books have been drafted. A few village churches are using some liturgy in Pangu and the translated Scriptures for Bible readings. Although most Pangu people have some fluency in the regional language, spiritual truth will be understood more clearly and have greater impact when presented in the heart language.

Over the years, the soil that the Pangu project has been cultivating has often seemed hard and not very fertile. We would love to see more enthusiasm and community involvement in both the literacy and translation work. But we trust God that, in his timing, the seed sown will reap a harvest. My prayer is that the language and culture of this minority people group will be preserved and cherished and that all Pangu speakers will have greater access to knowledge and education through becoming literate in their language. I also pray that Pangu Christians will mature in their faith, and others will be brought to salvation, through hearing God’s message to them in the language they understand best.



# Nature Notes - Douglas Willis

For many people, and most especially for visitors, autumn in Scotland means one thing. It's the thing that changes the subdued colours of Highland hills into a wall carpet of purple: HEATHER. Its other name of ling seems to have largely dropped out of use but I actually prefer its scientific name of Calluna. There was a time when every tourist car in the Highlands in autumn had a bunch of heather stuck into in radiator grill. Red grouse feed unsuspectingly on the shoots of heather till the 12th of August when the guns are out and a once beautifully plumaged bird is reduced to a heap of disarranged feathers waiting to be retrieved by a gun dog. But to return to the visual... There's no doubting the impact of a heather-covered hill on a sunny autumn day, when the sheer spread of colour can be quite stunning.



Flowers certainly have the power to impress, a fact not missed on Jesus when he said: 'Consider the lilies, how they grow...' He wasn't, of course, using heather but rather the flowers growing all around the place where he was standing at the time. In trying to illustrate a key point, he considered the beauty of his Father's handiwork to be beyond the finest garment that even Solomon might wear. The flowers at the feet of the listeners gathered around him provided an immediate visual aid. But what were the flowers Jesus was using to illustrate his point?

The fact is that the term 'lily' has often been used to describe things other than the big white lilies frequently shown on church stained glass windows. I recall my wife's granny in Avoch over half a century ago referring to some white narcissi as 'lilies' and it was exactly the same in the place of my upbringing in the North-east. The botany of the Bible is an interesting subject area and I'm not sure that there's a definitive answer. Many people think the flower referred to by Jesus was probably the beautiful crown anemone (right) which grows widely in fields and olive groves in the Holy Land, producing a stunningly crimson flower with a contrasting black centre.



Whatever the precise facts, Jesus used a beautiful botanical illustration for what he wanted to teach his listeners about matters of faith and assurance.

## Fortrose and Rosemarkie Finances

As most of the congregation's income now comes through bank standing orders and transfers the lack of services in Church has not caused any problems for our finances. In the seven months to 31 July 2020 income was £21,537, which includes the gift aid tax repayment for the full twelve months ended 5 April 2020, and expenses were £16,430, so there was an excess of receipts over payments of £5,107. It must be remembered that in 2020 we are benefitting from having to make a relatively low Ministries and Mission contribution due to the reduction in our income a few years ago. The excess of income this year helps to restore reserves which were being used during these years.

Grateful thanks to everyone for continuing their support for the Church in these difficult times.

**Jack Kernahan**  
Congregational Treasurer

# For the Young.....and the Young at Heart



There's a story told of an old man who bred and sold horses all his working life. But there came a day, one October, when he decided to retire. He wanted to gift his remaining 17 horses to his three sons according to how much time they'd spent helping him. So, the first son was to get half the horses. The second son one third. The third son one ninth. But when he did the sums, they didn't work out too well. There would be bits of horses lying all over his yard and that would never do.

Now, he was a thrawn old man and, once he made a plan, he wasn't for changing it. So he sulked and sulked for days. One morning as he sat on a wall looking at the horses, he saw a cloud of dust heading his way. As it drew closer he could make out a horse and rider. A few minutes later a young woman on a large white horse was beside him. 'Could I have a drink of water for my horse and for myself?' she asked. The old man nodded and pointed to the water pump. Once they were both refreshed, the woman turned and said, 'You seem sad, old man. What's wrong?' The old man explained his plan and his frustration that it wouldn't work.

'Maybe I can help?' she offered.

'How?' replied the old man doubtfully.

'Well, what if I gifted you my horse? Do your sums now.'

The old man took out a piece of paper and a pencil from his pocket and started on the sums. It took a while.

When he finished, he was so happy he nearly smiled. 'It works up perfectly,' he said, not quite believing it. 'How can I ever thank you?'

The young woman looked at him and said, 'Can I ask you to add up the number of horses you are going to give to each son?'

Out came the paper and pencil again. The minutes ticked on as the old man, checked and re-checked. 'It comes to 17,' he said clearly baffled.

'Correct. Now maybe you can gift my horse back to me and then we'll both be happy.'

This time the old man *did* smile. 'Of course, of course,' he said handing over the reins of the white horse, 'but tell me where are you headed?'

The young woman leapt back on to her horse, rubbed his neck and said, 'I'm heading home to my family to celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving and the bounty God has given us to share. Things always work better when we share, don't you think, my friend?' And she was off. The old man watched her until she was just a dust cloud in the distance. For the first time, in a long time, he felt blessed.

***A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed***

***Proverbs 11:25***

## Acrostics

An acrostic poem is a poem where, if you take the first letter of each line, a word or phrase is spelled out. Each line can be a standalone or the lines can flow in to each other. The format was used in some of the Psalms and Proverbs in the Old Testament.

Here's an example adapted from the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development:

**C**reating God, you have given us a vision of  
**R**esources conserved  
**E**arth tended  
**A**tmosphere cleansed  
**T**rees planted  
**I**njustice ended  
**O**ceans teeming  
**N**ations at peace

**C**reator, Redeemer, Sustainer  
**A**lert nations, enthused churches  
**R**ecieve our commitment to Your purpose  
**E**arth and heaven will then sing of your glory

Got the idea? For the next newsletter in December, try any of the following:

**Advent**  
**Bethlehem**  
**Christmas**  
**Rejoice**  
**Angels**  
**Praise God**

or a word / phrase of your own choice.

## Where are they now?

It was good to meet up with two former F & R Sunday School and Oasis Youth Club members, home for a few days last month - Ruth and Robin Nelson, children of Alastair and the late Linda Nelson. Ruth and Simon Forrest were married by Rev Sam Torrens in Rosemarkie Church in 2014. Ruth now lives in Fife and works as a doctor at the Sick Kids Hospital in Edinburgh. Brother Robin and fiancée Hannah Craib met at the Central Church in Edinburgh. Robin is an investment manager in Edinburgh. Missing is brother, Tom, a business planner in the oil industry in Texas.



**Back** - Simon and Ruth

**Front** - Hannah and Robin holding Simon's and Ruth's children, Lachlan 4, Angus 2 and Douglas 5 months.

## How many books of the Bible can you find in this little story?

Why did Omar, king of the Phezraiters act so daft by singing a full ukekele song for the entertainment of his esteemed guest Lord Muju, declaring, "This is my way of gaining pleasure and seeking solace and is indeed the greatest formal achievement of a desert king since the invention of Formica half a millennium ago - but it usually irritates the rest of my family. However, they can't complain because their voices were made numb erstwhile by my court magician whose name is Aia Hoho."

"I'm a Canaanite," replied Muju and my people are infamous for their dreadful singing voices so now all the people of Cana hum since they chose a quieter and a most sedate way to express their joys and lamentations. My son Ehod Aniel and daughter Jojo Shuaness both hum but my wife is a descendent of the Raj (a mesmeric people) and is more fragrant and hums rather less. She brews an amazing pot of tea."

"How can one compete with such a remarkable family?" laughed Omar. "The diversity of your genes is truly wondrous."

"Thank you, my friend," replied Muju. "I hope, terribly, that you will do me the honour of a visit to meet them in person."

"I will indeed, Muju but I know not where you dwell."

"Very true, my liege. So, on this map I'll write X, o dusty King, and you'll find my abode with ease."

**Prize for the first person - of any age - to get them all..... Tel Douglas Simpson 620433 but only if you are at 20+.....**

### 10MKBS (see page 11)

- 1) Creation
- 2) 10 Commandments
- 3) David and Goliath
- 4) Noah's Ark
- 5) Daniel in the Lions' Den
- 6) Birth of Jesus
- 7) Death and Resurrection of Jesus
- 8) The Prodigal Son
- 9) The Good Samaritan
- 10) Feeding the 5000

**Do you agree?**



Some of the near 12,000 war graves at Tyne Cot Military Cemetery

## **Remember, remember.....**

No, not 5th November (though it was obligatory to do so until 1859!). The thoughts of many people in November turn to remember those who served in the military and those who died in warfare. The date and time of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month – Armistice in 1918 when it was agreed that hostilities would end between the belligerent nations of the First World War. Joy and sorrow combined on that day for obvious reasons. In 1914, thousands of young men especially had flocked to join the Armed Forces not realising of course that what they thought would be a short distraction in their lives would cost so many of them exactly that. The last British veterans of that conflict died in 2009 and from the Second World War, there is an ever-decreasing number of participants though there are many whose memories are still very vivid of the years 1939- 45.

There had been so many wars & conflicts before this so why remember especially the two world wars of the 20th century? Probably because they were exactly that – world wars. Hardly any place on earth was left untouched - the lives of so many were blighted not just during but after. Lives were scarred because of what people had witnessed. The book *The Silent Weaver* tells of the life of Angus MacPhee from South Uist; it's a fascinating, poignant read of how he retreated into a silent, private world for 50 years at Craig Dunain Hospital. We are now much more aware of what is recognised as post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD.

Personally, each November 11th/Remembrance Sunday, my thoughts turn to my Grandfather and my Great-Uncle. The latter, like so many, left home in 1914 to join up but my Great-Grandmother did not leave it at that and personally sought out someone in authority to tell them he was under age. He remained back home until old enough to be sent abroad to fight in the Machine Gun Corps & was taken prisoner-of-war, returning home on Hogmany 1918. The army became his life and he eventually left it in 1948. My Grandfather served in the RAF at Evanton during World War Two though I was totally unaware of where he had been based until I got my teaching job at Fortrose. In the early 1980s, he asked to come and stay with me one summer and only then did I hear of his time at Evanton. Their memories naturally are precious.

In my time as a History teacher at the Academy, we took pupils over to France & Belgium. It's not until you see some of the physical evidence of the world wars that you can begin to take in the enormity of its impact on youngsters who read about in a classroom. The cemeteries so well maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission range in size from a handful of graves to thousands. Entering Tyne Cot Military Cemetery tends to take away your breath – the graves of just under 12,000 casualties lie before you. Can there be more potent advocates of peace than this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war? The experience of being at the Menin Gate in Ypres at 8pm for two minutes listening to the buglers sounding the Last Post really had its impact on the young folks. Even during the current pandemic, this has continued; it started in 1928 with only World War Two stopping it.

Should we continue to remember the sacrifices of war and conflict? Personally, I believe so. Only in one year since 1945 have no British service personnel died, viz. 1968. If we were to give one minute of silence for the British & Commonwealth casualties of the First World War alone, we would remain standing continuously for approximately 21 months; for all the casualties of both sides of that war would have us standing in silence for over 19 years. Two minutes out of a year does not seem too much to give each November.

**Keith Lorraine**

**Deadline for next newsletter contributions: Friday 6th November. Thank you!**

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