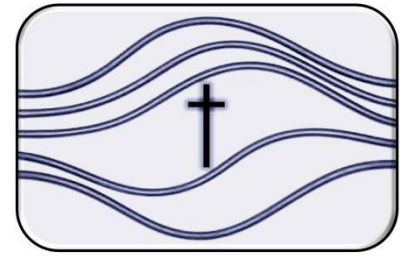




Wick St Fergus Church of Scotland



February 2020

Hallo everyone and welcome to February. I like February. For one thing it is shorter than January and this month is also my birthday. By the time most of you read this I will be on holiday in South Lanarkshire in the town of Blantyre where my Dad lives. Although I grew up in Port Glasgow on the lower Clyde, my family moved to Blantyre in 1979. Just a short walk from my Dad's house brings one to the banks of the Clyde although at Blantyre the Clyde is only a few yards across and can be crossed by a footbridge. On the Blantyre side is also a very important historic monument. I am speaking about the house of David Livingstone.

He was born in 1813 and grew up in a tenement on the banks of the Clyde, a tenement built for workers in the cotton mill next door. He went to work in the mill at the age of ten, working twelve hour days for little pay. He also attended the village school and saved his money so that he could enter college to learn Greek and theology. He then studied at medical school in London and became a qualified surgeon. During this time he was active in the anti-slavery movement. Although slavery had been formally outlawed in the British Empire, local authorities tended to look the other way. Originally hoping to become a missionary in China, he eventually was sent to Africa where he set about freeing slaves as well as opening up the heart of Africa to the West. He set up hospitals as well as preaching the Gospels as soon as he became proficient in local languages.

What is the point of telling you this? The point is that Livingstone was not simply a man of his time but instead he was a visionary who learned from the Gospel of Christ that not only are all people equal, he also learned and lived the truth that the colour of one's skin is merely an accident of birth and that the content of someone's character mattered more. When he eventually died in Africa in 1873, his native bearers as they were called at the time carried his body through hundreds of miles of virgin rainforest to the coast. His heart, however, was buried in Africa and his body was buried in Westminster Abbey. He was a truly great man. He realised that the Gospel has certain implications. One can't merely say that faith is only about accepting certain preapproved ideas about religion. Faith deals with the realities of life and recognises that it is lived out in the here and now and has to be able to speak into the context within which we make our way through life. Faith has to be able to help us live in the here and now and not merely be something that promises pie in the sky when you die. What fundamentalism does is separate faith from life just enough to help one avoid alleviating injustice.

That is one reason why I will have nothing to do with it. However in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, the joiner from Nazareth, we find something completely

different. The Bible speaks of Christ as being so humble that he effectively “emptied himself”, divesting himself of all his divine prerogatives, assuming upon himself human frailty, effectively becoming one of us. He touched lepers, spoke with women, permitting them to touch him. He hung out with prostitutes and spent time with those who were regarded as being on the margins of society because of who they were.

The fundamentalists, however, used their concept of faith in order to marginalize people even further as well as protect their own privilege. Human need was seen as being the result of divine judgement. Their reasoning went like this: if God had so cursed someone for whatever kind of sin then who were they to oppose the will of God. But to all who welcomed Christ found themselves welcomed in turn by him. This is still the case today. At Wick St Fergus we believe that everyone has inherent worth and that no-one has the right to diminish or disrespect that. All are welcome as friends and family. If you want to learn more about this then come and see us. You know where we are.

Revd John Nugent BD(Honours).



Church Register

We are sorry to report the death of the following people:

2nd December 2019 - Robert “Bobby” Macbeth, beloved husband of the late Nettie, dear father to Raymond and Norette, a loving grandfather.

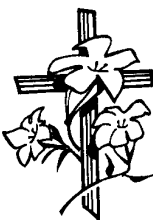
23rd December 2019 - John “Ian” Coghill, beloved husband of Christine and beloved Dad to Grant and a caring grandfather and great-grandfather.

28th December 2019 - Barbara Anderson Plowman nee Coghill, dear wife of the late David Coghill and beloved Mum to James and Donald and a caring grandmother.

31st December 2019 - Jamesina “Ina” Ross, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great grand-mother.

11th January 2020 – John Hendry Harrold, husband of Norma and loving father & grandfather.

Flowers for Sunday



DATE	KINDLY DONATED BY	ARRANGER
2 nd Feb	Mrs Julie Steven, Bay View	Donor
9 th Feb	The Moore Family	Mrs Simpson
16 th Feb	Mrs Jacqui Budge, Proudfoot Road	Donor
23 rd Feb	VACANT	
1 st Mar	Mrs K Harper	Donor

Church Duty Rota

Date	BUS	DOOR	USHER/DOOR
2 nd Feb	P Macadie	E Henderson	J Mclennan
9 th Feb	J Mackay	M Thomson	M Foubister
16 th Feb	P Ramsay	G Ramsay	A Sinclair
23 rd Feb	****	R Mappin	G Watt
1 st Mar	J Mclennan	E Henderson	J Coghill

SERMON INFORMATION FROM MINISTER

DATE	READING 1	READING 2	SUBJECT	DAY OF CHURCH CALENDAR
2/2/2020	TBA	-	-	-
9/2/2020	TBA	-	-	-
16/2/2020	Psalm 100	Colossians 1:15-20	Christ – The Touching Place	2 nd before Lent
23/2/2020	Psalm 99	2 Peter 1:16-21	Experiential Knowledge	Last before Lent

A NEW CAITHNESS GROUP: The Compassionate Friends

Our amazing community works well, and we have lots of charities and support groups within our locality. We would like to inform you of a new support group:

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends was founded in 1969 as an organisation of bereaved parents and their families helping each other through their grief. The Caithness Support Group was recently set up for bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings to meet, talk and to support each other. If you have experienced the loss of a child at any age and from any cause, the compassionate friends will offer support, understanding and friendship from others similarly bereaved, and as part of a nationwide network, offers links to the larger community through facebook, support weekends, their website, written resources, a telephone helpline, email and online forums.

The Caithness Compassionate Friends group meet monthly in The Norseman Hotel.

For more information, contact: Pat Butler 07989 690073 patattcf@btinternet.com

THE TINY FROGS

Once upon a time there was a bunch of tiny frogs.... who arranged a climbing competition. The goal was to reach the top of a very high tower. And so a big crowd gathered around the tower to see the race and cheer on all the contestants.

The race began....

But quite honestly no one in the crowd really believed that such tiny frogs would reach the top of the tower. They were saying "It's way too difficult!!, they will never make it to the top," and "Not a chance that they will succeed. The tower is too high!"

The tiny frogs began collapsing. One by one....Except for those who were a bit stronger and kept climbing higher and higher..

The crowd continued to yell, "It is too difficult!!! No one will make it!" More tiny frogs got tired and gave up....

But one continued higher and higher and higher long after all of the others had given up and dropped back down to the bottom and he, after a big effort, actually made it to the top!

All of the other tiny frogs naturally wanted to know how this one frog managed to do it.

One contestant asked the tiny frog how he had found the strength to succeed and reach his goal!

But he didn't hear him, and he shouted the question again but he still didn't hear, so he shouted at the top of his voice, which was really loud for such a tiny frog. But he still couldn't hear him, he was deaf!

How much more could we do if we, like the frog turned a deaf ear to all those who say we can't

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MAGAZINE Distribution

Various distribution districts do not have collectors at present, and at the start of 2020, we have 5 districts without help. If you would be able to assist with the distribution, please contact John Cormack (603774) for further details. Thank You, without your continued support, the church would not function.

DUTY ROTA HELP

Once again, we have found ourselves massively short for helpers for the door, bus and stairs. We have chosen to remove the stairs "helper" and from now, you are asked, if you can collect your own hymn book – as we are seriously short of assistance, we have chosen to "man the door" and greet people there. If you are willing to help, and issue hymn books, please do so, this would be much appreciated by everyone. With thanks – Wick St Fergus Session.

Website: Find us at www.wickstferguschurch.org.uk or find us on facebook.

Items for the March newsletters to be with Michelle by Wed 19th February – Thank you.

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