

“Sacred Space” - it’s everywhere!

Over this last year I have been able to take advantage of the study leave scheme for Ministers and through this have been able to take the lid off the topic of ‘Sacred space’.

At present I still have a bit of writing up to do but from my experiences and reflections so far I have been able to reflect on three aspects of this topic:

- The place that is a sacred space.
- The practices that we engage in sacred spaces.
- The personal journey that we are on in such sacred spaces.

On the first of these topics, the place or physical space, I took off to the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona where some years ago I experienced an epiphany, a moment of something beyond and above myself. My studies therefore began by focusing on the purpose built places where we might encounter the divine – churches and sanctuaries - and I’m sure that each of us will have our own ‘special buildings’ where we have had a moment of encounter of some kind.

A week later I found myself at a retreat centre called the Bield in Perthshire. Imagine my surprise when the leader of the centre, on hearing that I had been at the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona the previous week, intimated that they had their very own Sagrada Familia on the estate!

“Meet me at 4 o’clock and I’ll take you there”, he said. To my surprise and delight we ventured into the woods until we came across a clearing. There we stood and my eyes rose heavenwards: all around me the strong pillar-like tree trunks rising up to the glorious canopy of leaves and, beyond it, the piercing blue sky. It was just like the cathedral in Barcelona!

WOW!!! It’s the only word to describe the magnificence of both places – one of human construction, the other divine.

Wonderfully, in both places, an encounter with the Creator took place as I paused to ponder.



Just a few weeks ago someone in conversation reminded me of the summer a few years ago when we sent back postcards to the church of the places we had visited over the summer months – “Might we do that again sometime?” they asked.

Why not - but perhaps this year we could capture an image where we have paused to ponder – where we have had a ‘WOW’ moment - a moment that connected us to the Creator.

And if you can’t find a postcard that captures the scene, given the wonders of technology, it may be easier for some folks to send a photo from phone or camera – send it to office@qpcweb.org and we’ll unfold these wonders over the summer.

Happy encountering
David

Christian Aid Coffee Morning

Lesley MacKenzie, a member of the Community Ministry Team and our link with Christian Aid, says a big “Thank you” to everyone who came along and to all her helpers. Queensferry Parish Church held its annual Coffee Morning and Plant Sale as part of Christian Aid Week on Saturday 16th May. The wonderful total of £1,567 was raised. The money raised will bring practical help to women struggling to feed a family on their own. A huge thank you if you manned the stalls or kitchen on the day, provided items for the Tombola, Bazaar, Cake and Candy, Books, Toys or plants or attended the event. This year we added more games to the ‘Kid’s Zone’. As well as Face Painting and a Lucky Dip, prize games of skittles, knock over the cans and a magnetic fishing game were part of the fun for youngsters. We hope to have even more activities for children next year. It was a most enjoyable morning with a happy atmosphere. Thank you everyone.



St Margaret’s Church

We, like the congregation of St Margaret’s, were saddened to hear the news of the sudden retirement on health grounds of Father Tony MacDonald after over 25 years as a priest. Our thoughts and prayers are with Father Tony and the congregation during what will be seasons of transition.

Focus on the Finance Support Team

We have a space in our team – could you fill the space?

Last magazine, the Discipleship Team suggested that if they disbanded, much of the church's life would continue. Well, we can't say that for the Finance Team. Can you imagine, electricity and gas cut off; no cleaning, no maintenance, no Nomad team in the High School, no minister! Whatever you think about money, it does make the world go round and at QPC we need to receive money, account for it accurately and then pay it out to the right people in the right amounts.

But more than this, the Finance Team has to look ahead – can we cut costs, can we find new ways of increasing our income, are we taking advantage of all the schemes to support charities like ours?

Finance team remit:

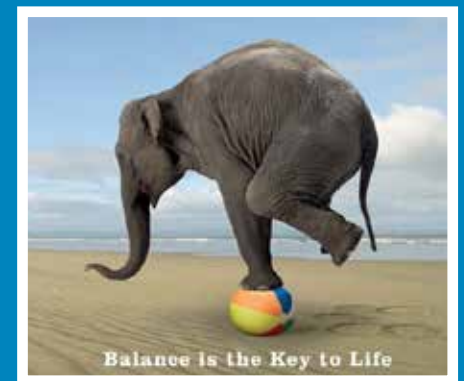
- Keep accurate financial records
- Provide management information to the Board
- Look for opportunities to increase income and reduce costs, always in line with the aims of QPC
- Promote Regular giving by the congregation
- Promote Gift Aid



We are one of the Support Teams so we aim to support the Ministry Teams in what they want to do to grow wider, deeper and closer.

Our biggest challenge is to keep everything in balance.

Everyone can help us - by seriously thinking and praying. All we have comes from God. How much do I feel able to give back to God for his work here in Queensferry, in Scotland and elsewhere? In the Bible Paul says "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income...." 1 Corinthians 16, verse 2. Should our offering consist of what's left over after everything else has been paid? Or should we consider our offerings first and then make a regular commitment? If everyone gives regularly, it makes a huge difference. The Board is then able to plan ahead and support our Ministry Teams and our vision. All of which leads on to this thought...



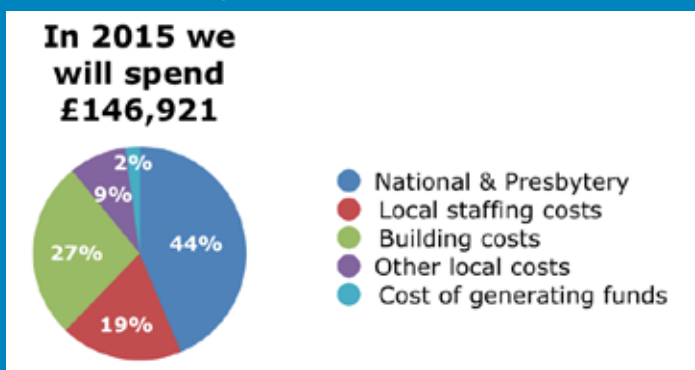
Sunday Morning Reminder

Use this handy checklist before you leave the house
Keys? Check; rain jacket? Check; children? Check; offering? Eh? Offering! What for? Church offering! Oh you mean money?

Well yes, actually.

While many of us continue to support the church financially like we did last year, our weekly offerings for the first five months of this year are DOWN. Yes, we are giving less than we gave in 2014! So what's happening? With all the rush to get out the door on a Sunday morning, maybe some of us are forgetting our offering. Yes, that's what the plates in the vestibule are for (and the blue bags which are passed round at the second service!) And, in 2015, we'll need £146,921 to cover all our costs. Two-thirds of that needs to come from our offerings while the rest comes mostly from Gift Aid and rentals from the use of our halls. That's nearly

Where the Money Goes



£1,900 per week from us. But if we split that up between all of our members and if we remember to bring our offering every week, then that is quite achievable - as it was last year.

As a congregation we have to pay for our minister and help smaller congregations who can't support themselves. We pay for our staff. We give to the Church's mission and social work in Scotland and abroad. We pay to maintain our building and to heat it and light it. We are doing as much as we can to support our local Children & Youth Programme, while keeping our own local costs as low as possible. Finally, we need to fund our church office to keep everything running smoothly.

So, please remember to bring your offering to church each week. "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income...." 1 Corinthians 16, verse 2.

The Board and Session thank all who give generously to maintain the work of the church. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU.

Getting to know you – Allan Stewart

Our roving reporter, Annette Carrie, reports on her interview with Allan Stewart...

Allan has lived in Queensferry since moving with his parents in 1936 to the bungalow in Ashburnham Road, now in the High School grounds. This had been a former Fever Hospital - two small wards and a mortuary in a shed in the back yard!

He has had a lifelong affinity with the church. Even at the age of five, he remembers "playing at Kirks" with his young friends, when he, as minister, would mount the stone steps outside his house to lead the lads below in "prayer" and "hymn singing"! Later, as a teenager, he taught in Sunday School. He became a member of the old Parish Church in 1940, prior to being called up for war service and enlisting in the RAF.



His RAF war service took him to England, Wales, North Africa and Canada - a country for which he developed a great affection. He learned to fly Tiger Moths, and was on schedule for training in Pensacola in Florida to fly Catalina flying boats, but developed scarlet fever and thereafter was deemed unfit for Air Crew duties. Many of his fellow airmen lost their lives. Had changed military circumstances not been kind to him, Allan often ponders on what might have been his own fate.

There are few who can match Allan's service to the church in Queensferry. After his return from the war, he set up the Boy's Brigade and was Captain for a number of years before his job with the Distiller's Company took him travelling throughout Scotland and away from home. He was invited to become a church elder, but only agreed on the condition that he would not have to wear a frock coat and a top hat on communion Sunday, as was the practice in those days. How dress standards have fallen - thankfully! His conditions were met and he remained an elder for forty years. He was Sunday School Superintendent, member of the church drama group and Men's Club and even, on occasion, led services. He was also the first editor of the church magazine. It was his beloved late wife, Shonnie, who suggested the name "Contact" for the magazine, seeing it as a link between the church, its members and the wider community.

Allan's faith is very important to him. "I could not be at home on a Sunday without going to church", he says, "It's just part of my life." He is a great believer in the power of prayer. He is convinced that, having come through the war relatively unscathed, "someone up there was looking after me".

Allan Stewart is a remarkable man. His friendly and genial manner, his dapper appearance, his open-mindedness and his keen interest in current events all belie his 95 years. Although life for him is quieter these days, he still regularly visits old friends, many now in care homes. He's been known to go the length of Leith to buy the best fish. Like the proverbial "hot cakes", his home-made pineapple loaves fly off the cake and candy stall at coffee mornings, and he greatly enjoys the outings and holidays organised for him with ex work colleagues. But more than anything, he rejoices in his family of 18 (consisting of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren) - for him, the greatest blessing of all.

Kidz Corner

Looking for some summer reading material?

Need a fresh look into your Bible? Then why not try reading this!!

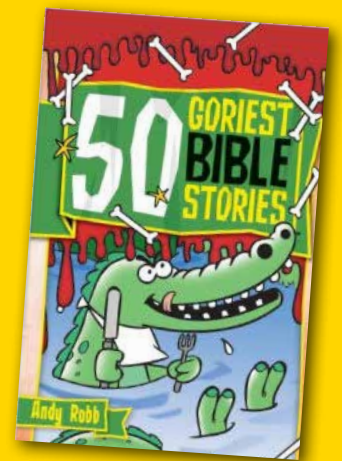
50 Goriest Bible Stories

Andy Robb

"A sword plunged to the heart into a super-fat king's blubber, a bloke getting killed by lightning, coldblooded murder, tons of people drowning, scary skin diseases, famines, earthquakes.... loads of gross and gory things happened in Bible times! Here are 50 of the goriest."

An excellent, well written, colourful and delightfully gross insight into the Bible!! It's a book definitely worth a read. The only frustrating part is that the cliff-hangers leave you wanting more....

5* review. £5.99 at Christian book retailers. Other titles in the series are also available.



Off to camp?

Then we wish you a very happy holiday.



Perhaps you'd like to write to Kidz Corner with a review when you come back.

We'd love to hear all the exciting things you've been doing this summer.

Something to do at home?

Then come along to Polar Explorers 10th – 14th August, 10am to 12.30pm at QPC, aka the 'North Pole'.

An exciting race to the poles for primary aged children.

Registration required, email: childrenyouth@qpcweb.org to book your place, or visit the church website here: www.qpcweb.org/pages/polar-explorers



Reading the Bible on your Smartphone or Tablet

Mike Ross of the Discipleship Team has this tip for everyone, whether new to daily Bible reading or a regular. The free 'Bible' App by LifeChurch.tv gives you the whole Bible on your iOS or Android device in as many different translations and languages as we could hope for. You can download full Bibles for offline reading; search by word / theme / verse; make notes, highlights and set bookmarks; use one or more of the many different Bible study plans; watch videos and other media; and share your reading and comments with friends. It is really easy to download, customise and use, and is also obviously extremely portable and accessible wherever you happen to be and whenever suits you - with or without access to the Internet.



I use the App to access the NIV (New International Version) on my phone and iPad, and am working through the 'Bible In One Year' plan by Nicky and Pippa Gumble. When I open the App on any device I can see where I am on my reading plan, and with one click I can see the Bible readings for that day and the study notes, and once I have read them, I get a big encouraging message saying "Great job!" The Bible is clear and easy to read, even on smaller screens, and it avoids all the searching for the right page and juggling a Bible, study book and notepad, all of which I have previously associated with Bible study.

I actually now look forward to reading my Bible, and would highly recommend the App to anyone - as, I suspect, would all those using it on the 130 million other devices worldwide!" Why not give it a go? If you want help, just let me know.

Help rebuild shattered lives in Nepal



Derek Hobson, QPC's newly appointed World Mission Representative, has sent in this update.

The recent earthquakes, continuing aftershocks and the ever-present threat of landslides are having a devastating effect on the country of Nepal and on the lives of its people. Many people have lost everything they owned, many are seriously injured and will need long-term care, and many will be living in tents or under tarpaulins for the foreseeable future - even through the monsoon. We need to continue to pray for the country and for all Nepalis. The International Nepal Fellowship (INF) was the first Christian organisation to be allowed into the country in the early 1950s and has gained great respect for seeking to improve the lives of the poorest of the poor in Nepal.

INF is working with Asal Chhimekee (means 'good neighbours'), a project set up by the Christian churches in the town of Pokhara. Together, they are mobilising dozens of volunteers to pack relief parcels and distribute them to the affected people. Thus far, over 65 tonnes of food, nearly 1000 tents, over 2000 mattresses and nearly 5000 blankets have been distributed. So much more needs to be done. Praise the Lord the churches in Pokhara are working together in this initiative. Pray that it will bring real help and blessing to those in need. After showing INF's Earthquake Prayer Appeal presentation in QPC, one member of the church was so moved she sent a donation to INF. A few days later she received a letter which, she says, "was without doubt the BEST thank you letter I have ever received from a charity." If any of the church organisations would like to raise money for Nepal or if any members would like to make a donation, the INF address is: International Nepal Fellowship, The Cottage, 22 Weoley Park Road, Birmingham, B29 6QU

Church Register

Marriages

1st May	Kay Steven and Mark Wright
9th May	Laura Liddell and Scott Gyles
17th May	Loti Skeene and Sachin Popat

Thanksgiving and Blessing

19th April	Duncan John McCormick, Station View
19th April	Emma Ann Brittan, Hallforest Crescent, Kintore

Weekly Worship Services

Sunday	10:00am - 11:00am	Family Service (at 10:25 children leave for learning in their own age groups).
	11:30am - 12:30pm	A more traditional worship service
Thursday	9:30am - 10:00am	A reflective service with a Celtic tradition of responses.

The Youth Fellowship meets every Sunday evening from 7:30pm - 9pm

Deaths

26th January	John Denholm, Scotstoun Park
18th March	Jean Hutchinson, St Margaret's Nursing Home
21st March	Helen Cuthbertson, Castle Green Care Home
18th April	Meg Ravie, Sommerville Gardens
24th April	Moira Wood, Farquhar Terrace
6th May	Tony Berry, Echline Grove
27th May	Nora Turnbull, Sommerville Gardens
29th May	Marion Critchley, Loch Place

Next issue

The next issue of the magazine will be available from 6th September 2015. Any items for inclusion should be given to the editor at magazine@qpcweb.org by 15th August 2015.