

The Web Torch



May 2018

www.riccartonparishchurch.co.uk

The Minister's Message

A Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends,

At one of our recent services we were thinking of Jesus as *The Good Shepherd*. He tells us in John 10:27, "My sheep listen to my voice: I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish..." I was reminded of this by a story I read recently:

On January 28, 1945, as World War II was groaning to a close, 121 elite Army Rangers liberated over 500 POWs, mostly Americans, from a Japanese prisoner of war camp near Cabanatuan in the Philippines.

The prisoners, many of whom were survivors of the infamous Bataan death march, were in awful condition, physically and emotionally. Before the Rangers arrived, the primary Japanese guard unit had left the camp because of Japan's massive retreat from the Philippines. The new situation was precarious. Japanese troops were still around and in the camp, but they kept their distance from the prisoners. The men of Cabanatuan didn't quite know what to make of their new freedom - if freedom was in fact what it was. And then, without warning, the American Rangers swept upon the camp in furious force.

But one of one of the most interesting facets of the story was the reaction of many of the prisoners. They were so defeated, diseased, and familiar with deceit that many needed to be convinced they were actually free. Was it a trick? A trap? Was this real? One prisoner, Captain Bert Bank, struggling with blindness caused by a vitamin deficiency, couldn't clearly make out his would-be rescuers.

He refused to budge. Finally, a soldier walked up to him, tugged his arm, and said, "What's wrong with you? Don't you want to be free?" Bank, from Alabama, recognized the familiar southern accent of his questioner. A smile formed on his lips, and he willingly and thankfully began his journey to freedom.

Finally, well away from what had been, for years, the site of an ongoing, horrific assault on their humanity, the newly freed prisoners began their march home. In the description of one prisoner, contrasting it with the Bataan nightmare years earlier, "It was a long, slow, steady march ...but this was a life march, a march of freedom."

To me that gives a powerful picture of what is happening to many people today. Through his death and resurrection Jesus offers us a new freedom from sin and from death. He holds out to us the security of knowing that we are forgiven and the promise of eternal life. He calls us to follow him. Yet so often we can be like Captain Bert Bank and refuse to budge. "What's wrong with you? Don't you want to be free?" Even when we have made a commitment to follow Jesus we don't always trust his voice, we don't always really believe that what he wants is best for us.

At the end of May we will be celebrating Pentecost, where we remember the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on that group of uncertain followers who weren't sure of the way ahead. They were empowered to live the life to which Jesus called them. They learned to discern his voice even more clearly. Life wasn't always easy for them, but they knew they were in his hands.

May we each grasp that truth more clearly this Pentecost as we become more familiar with his voice and learn to walk in his ways.

Colin A. Strong

"Grasping the Nettle"

"Grasping the Nettle" annual dinner and talk will take place in Motherwell on Wed 16th May. Guest Speaker this year is Prof John Lennox who has debated with some of society's foremost atheists. Prof. Lennox has been a committed Christian for many years. He is Emeritus Professor of Mathematics at the University of Oxford and a Fellow in Mathematics and Philosophy of Science at Green Templeton College, Oxford. "Grasping the Nettle" is about combating the commonly held position that Science and Religion are in conflict, we have outgrown the need for God, and that all questions of importance can only be answered by science (www.graspingthenettle.org/).

Keswick Ayrshire 25th-27th May The Park Hotel 7.30 – 9.30 p.m. Hearing – Becoming – Serving. More details <https://keswickayrshire.com/>

Congregational Board

Congregational Board met on Monday 23rd April and most of the major topics discussed are to be found elsewhere in Torch . Dates for diary Biscuit and Blether will resume on Thursday 3rd.. May 1.30-3.30 and run till Guild resumes in September. McMillan Coffee Morning Friday 28th September 10-12 in Church Hall

Date of next Board Meeting 18th June in Church 7.30pm

E McCallum

Attempts to Get More People Interested in the Future of Riccarton Church

There are a number of ongoing attempts to get more people interested in the future of our church. Two of these are what we have called 'Parables for the Club' (6.30-8pm on the 2nd Sunday of each month at Riccarton bowling club, Craigie Avenue) and 'Parables for the Pub' (6.30-8pm on the 4th Sunday of each month in Riccarton Inn).

The topics discussed among church members and customers of the club / pub so far have been the following:-

You know the Psalm but I know the Shepherd. (April, 2016)

Pentecost: sharing experiences of being moved by the Holy Spirit. (May, 2016)

The most important day of your life. (June, 2016)

Does God exist? Did Jesus ever exist? If not, what is the alternative? (August, 2016)

Talking to God. Is He listening? What's your experience? (September, 2016)

Christ is the answer! Yes, but what is the question? (October, 2016)

If you want to walk on water, you have to get out of the boat. (November, 2016)

What does Christmas mean to you? What should it mean? (December, 2016)

What does New Year mean to you? What should it mean? An examination of New Year resolutions. (January, 2017)

Christianity and Humanism: similarities and differences. (February, 2017)

Is religion a cause of, or a cure for, the world's problems? (March, 2017)

"I don't believe in God, but I miss Him". [Quote from Julian Barnes, contemporary writer]. (April, 2017)

Grace. Is it someone's name? Is it something which some people say before a meal? What is it? What's so amazing about grace? (May, 2017)

Forgiveness or revenge. Which is sweeter? (June, 2017)

Which is better? To believe in God and then to die and discover there is no God, or, not to believe in God and to die and then to discover there is a God. (July, 2017)

Happy are those who mourn. Can this really be true? (Part of one of the beatitudes: (August, 2017)

There are never any atheist on a sinking ship! What does this mean? (September, 2017)

"It was said, 'Love your friends and hate your enemies. But I say, 'Love your enemies'! Really? Is that possible?" (October, 2017)

Where is God when it hurts? (Title of a book by Philip Yancey). (November, 2017)

Life is like a coin. You can spend it any way you like. But you can only spend it once. (December, 2017)

Healing involves moving away from darkness and towards a brighter light. (January, 2018)

Prayer: does it make any difference? Is God listening? (February, 2018)

Has the universe an intelligent designer, or, is everything just due to chance? (March, 2018)

God is love (1st John 4 vs 8 & 16). Or, is He more than that? (April, 2018)

We want you to be there whether you're a Christian, a regular or infrequent church attender, a relative, friend or neighbour of a church member, or someone who never goes to church at all.

Our church has no future without you and others from the local community involved. If you are too shy to simply turn up yourself, someone will arrange to meet you. Just phone or e-mail or speak to someone you know.

John Jamieson (tel. 534065;
e-mail - johnhjamieson@tiscali.co.uk)

Thursday Get-together

The Church hall will be open from 1.30 till 3.30 on Thursday afternoons starting on 3rd May. This is not a formal meeting, simply an opportunity to meet old friends and new (I hope) for a blether and company and a cup of tea or coffee. There will also be postage stamps to trim if you feel like it (scissors provided) ! They will then be sent to Crossreach to be sold to raise funds.

I am looking forward to seeing you all again and hope others will join us. If you need any information please give me a ring.

Ann Gilmour 520541

80th Birthday

Belated congratulations to Shona Hamilton who celebrated her 80th birthday on the 17th April. Well done Shona.



Boys Brigade

2nd Kilmarnock Company

BB meeting times

Anchor Section Primary 1,2 & 3 Monday
1800 - 1900 Church Hall

Junior Section Primary 4,5 &6 Monday
1900 - 2030 Church Hall

Company Section Primary 7 onwards
Monday 1915 - 2100 Church / Hall



Please contact the Company Captain if you know of anyone with boys of this age group who may be interested in joining.

Our coffee morning for company funds took place on Saturday 5th May so this is printed too early to tell what we raised. Hopefully it was bumper amount!! Thanks anyway to those who donated in any way.

Also too early to tell how we fared at the Junior Section International Team Games, the results are not out yet. Thanks to Andrea Dunachie for being our guest judge.

Parents and friends night is on Friday 18th May at 1900 in the church hall. Our Inspecting Officer is Russell Wylie. Please come along and see what we do and also see the boys receiving their awards. Please come early as the hall is always full for this event.

Our Annual holiday weekend is to Barcaple, near Kirkcudbright. This is an Abernethy Trust Christian Adventure Centre which we have been using for a few years now. We

leave on Friday 15th June and return on Sunday 17th June. Both company section and Junior Section boys will attend.

The Anchor Boys are having a fun day out to Dumfries House on Saturday 26th May as they can't come to the holiday weekend.

Hopefully the weather will be kind to us for both of the above.

Once all that's done it will be summer holidays until August and a well earned rest for everybody.

Stuart McKelvie (Company Captain)



Once again you will receive a Christian Aid envelope in the Torch to assist with the ongoing work of this Church Charity. Please give as generously as you can and return envelopes to Church by end of May. If you have difficulty returning them please contact Eleanor (521816) or your elder and we will endeavour to help.

Thanks in anticipation as you always come up trumps

Eleanor

Church Register

Baptism

Andrew Thomas Mihail McKenzie son of Scott and Ina. On 18th March 2018

Thank You Letters

From Elaine Cassells

I wish to thank most sincerely all the friends of Riccarton Church, neighbours and friends for all their care and support following the death of my Dad, Bill Roxburgh. Thanks also to Jim Barnes for conducting the funeral. All the cards and flowers were very much appreciated. Dad had a long and happy life and will be greatly missed.



From Rose Forbes

Thank you for the prayers, good wishes, cards, flowers and visits after my recent heart surgery. It is greatly appreciated and lovely to be remembered. Hoping to be back at church soon.

From Cliff, Colin, Laura, Anna & Zoe Strong

Thank you to the congregation for your kindness at our time of bereavement – the church flowers, cards, emails and other messages from so many members. We have been overwhelmed by your love and support.

From Matt & Sheena Robertson

Thank you for the lovely flowers received from church recently. They were very much appreciated.

From Betty Connor

Thank you for the lovely flowers from church recently. Nice to be remembered.

From Jim Wilson

Thank you for the lovely church flowers I received recently. Thanks also to Nan Barlow for delivering them.

From Shona Hamilton

Thanks to all in church who sent cards and good wishes for my 80th birthday. Also for the lovely church flowers received. Very much appreciated.

From Jean Gass

Thank you so much for the lovely Easter card and present from the Sunday School. Also for the beautiful flowers on the occasion of my 94th birthday. It was so kind of Jane and Ann to visit. Much appreciation to all.

From Margaret Williamson

Many thanks for a nice surprise on my return from hospital. The beautiful bouquet from Riccarton Church really cheered me up. God Bless.

From May Ferris

Thank you to the Sunday School and Caring Group for the card and Easter egg I received. It was a lovely surprise.

Craft Evenings

A group of ladies meet in the Church Hall on Wednesday evenings from 7pm till 9pm. We do sewing, cross stitch, patchwork, crochet and knitting as well as lots of talking and laughs!! If you are interested in joining us you will be made very welcome. If you would like to know more please give me a ring.

Ann Gilmour 520541

Duty Group for Offering

MAY

Convener Group 3-Lorna McColgan
Nan Barlow Eleanor McCallum Bill McCready

JUNE

Convener Group 4 - Ann Dempster
Ann Gilmour Beth McGhee Davina Condron
Elizabeth Kerr

Welcome Teams

MAY

Eleanor McCallum Bill McCready Rose Thomson
G Kirkpatrick A Cairns

JUNE

Ann Dempster Ann Gilmour Davina Condron
Beth McGhee Elizabeth Kerr Graham Kirkpatrick
Alan Cairns

Tea Rota

MAY

6/13 Myrtle McCready Jan Miller Rose Thomson
20/27 Edith Jamieson Liz Wilson Margaret Fulton

JUNE

3/10 Marion Linton Ann Baird Margaret McCluskey
17/24 Beth McGhee Jackie Wallace Lorna McColgan

Flower Rota

A THOUGHT

May your neighbours respect you, trouble neglect you, the angels protect you, and heaven accept you.

MAY

6th

Mabel Easton

13th

Eleanor McCallum

20th

Lorna Smith

27th

Netta Pearson

JUNE

3rd

Elsa Rodgers

Flower Transport

MAY

6th

Jane Ferguson

13th

Scott McKenzie

20th

Elspeth MacTaggart

27th

Ann Gilmour

JUNE

3rd

Alex Barlow

Creche Rota

MAY

6 th	Laura Strong	Andrea Dunachie
13 th	Edith Jamieson	Margaret McCluskey
20 th	Davina Condron	Elizabeth Kerr
27 th	Beth McGhee	Elsbeth Bennion

JUNE

3 rd	Laura Strong	Andrea Dunachie
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Sound System

MAY

6 th	Denham Kirkpatrick	13 th	Jim Robson
20 th	Bill McCready	27 th	Eleanor McCallum

JUNE

3 rd	Denham Kirkpatrick	10 th	Jim Robson
17 th	Bill McCready	24 th	Eleanor McCallum

From the Editor

Material for Summer Torch should be given to Mrs Betty Robson, 8 Bressay Place NOT LATER THAN Sunday 20th May
Betty Robson (Editor) 01563 532248

