

Weekly Newsletter No 36 - Sunday 22 November 2020

The Gremlin was fixed (we thought)!



The computer Gremlin which infected the sound on the live-streamed service from Bellie Church a couple of weeks ago has been found and fixed. However, it moved to Speymouth! Just when we thought everything was fine, the laptop wouldn't project! Seoras, - banging it on the table is not recommended as a cure! Hopefully though it'll be fixed for this week.

None the less, the Worship Services in the churches are going well. Those who attend the services, enjoy the 'masked' friendly atmosphere of being together in God's 'thin' place. We realise there are others who would love to join us and attend church but for varying reasons, can't do so at this time. That's perfectly understandable, so we shall continue with the live-streaming and the message in the Newsletter. Also, please don't lie awake at night worrying that you are missing the message from Hamish, the Theological Coo. You'll find him on the church Facebook page.

Help needed.

We do need a bit of help though. Up till now it has been Elders who have welcomed people to the churches and checked the details of 'phone numbers and seating. It would be great if some others could help do this so we 'spread the load' so to speak. If you can help, and it's not difficult, get in touch with me or any Elder and we can organise some form of rota. We need three people for each of the churches.



THANK YOU

And while we are on the subject of people helping – during the lock-down and since, some folk have been working really hard to keep things ticking along. John Steel (and Sandra) has done a magnificent job of repainting the interior of Bellie Church Hall. This has taken some time but the results are stunning.



Also Neil Brown (and Denise) tackled the overgrown bits of the garden at Bellie Church. This involved some really hard work not just cutting back the vegetation but digging out roots and stubble.

Several others have contributed in their own ways but a huge 'Thank you' is due to both John and Neil.
Thank you guys.

Faith (a word from Seoras)

“For now, we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”



No matter how hard we try, we cannot know all there is about our God. We cannot ever feel totally intimate with Him. We cannot ever hear His voice totally clearly. And if we do not understand this ... we can feel frustrated in our relationship with God.

Our world is broken and flawed, just as we are also. There is a dark veil that hangs between us and God that is called the fall. We shouldn't expect to see things clearly this side of heaven. Until that great door opens at the end of life and we step into God's presence, we will have to deal with the dark glass sight of life on earth.



In the gospels we have the disciples, who literally were standing beside Jesus ... get rebuked and told “ye of little faith”. What chance do we have if the ones who walked with Jesus for years were given that in

their report card?

From a worldly point of view, we're in trouble. We only have flickering and weak faith. We fail and sin even after we've found forgiveness and freedom. But that is why it's so important that we see this from a gospel point of view. The gospel which tells us that God will use the little faith we have for enormous good. Because it's not about us being strong and powerful and charismatic. It is about us bringing the small, humble faith we have to the Lord. And the Holy Spirit will take that, and do amazing things in the lives and situations around us.



At one point in Matthews gospel, the disciples come to Jesus feeling defeated. They were unable to cast out an unclean spirit despite all they tried. It says this from chapter 17 “Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, ‘Why couldn't we drive it out?’ He replied, ‘Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.’”

Faith as small as a mustard seed can move mountains.

A couple of weeks ago we thought and prayed about ‘thin places’ – the idea that through faithful prayer and open hearts and sincere worship and Spirit filled living we could wear down that veil between heaven and earth. That we could create spaces in our lives where we feel close to God, and see Him moving more than elsewhere.

What I would like to add to that message this week is this: we do not need to feel like giants in the faith. All it takes is a moment of prayer with a heart full of just the smallest of faith, and our amazing and wonderful God will move mountains.

God bless,
Seòras

33 sleeps to go!



Christmas is certainly going to be different this year but one thing is certain. It will be the same as every other year. It's the time when we celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Jesus. Here's a bit of information for you – Jesus is the Greek version of the Hebrew name Joshua. Jesus was probably known to his pals as *Joshua Bar-Joseph* – (I wonder if his address was – '*The Carpentry, Main Street, Nazareth?*') At Thursday night's Kirk Session, a tentative plan for Christmas Worship was devised but we shall have to wait until nearer Christmas before we can finalise these arrangements. Once that's done, we'll let you know.

There were quite a few bags for the Reverse Advent Calendar last week – brilliant. Please remember you don't have to give a lot – give what you can. The cars will be at the front of the churches this week again so just pop the bags into the boot, and 'Thank You'.

More Birthdays this week.

We know there are a couple of birthdays this week but the celebrations will be muted (can't wait for these vaccines to come on-line!)

So until the vaccines get us back to normal -



Don't forget to pray

Please remember that this Sunday (22 November) as with every Sunday for the past few months, Christians across the country – and further afield – will join together in prayer at 7pm in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and you are invited to join them.

As with previous weeks during lockdown and the phased easing of restrictions, 14 Christian churches and organisations across the country, including the Church of Scotland, have co-signed a letter calling for prayer.

Scottish Christians have continued to answer the call to pray at the same time each week, and Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, has been taking part alongside them



🎵 Oh Flower of Scotland...

An Opportunity.

A friend of mine has just been awarded two tickets for the England v Scotland football match at Wembley Stadium in June 2021. These tickets are for the whole 'hospitality' package including lunch and a VIP seat. The tickets would normally cost several hundred pounds. Unfortunately, the game falls on the same day as his much COVID-postponed wedding so he is now looking for someone to take his place.



It's at Ness Bank Church, Inverness at 2.30pm. The bride's name is Moira, she is 23, 5' 4" tall, weighs about 8 stone and described as 'a bit of a looker'.

If you are interested, please contact me and I shall pass on your details.

En-ger-land!

Have faith

Over the last few months, we have all tried to keep the faith to combat the virus. Most of us have stuck to the advice and rules most of the time although some of us may, at times, bent or even broken some of the rules. It hasn't been easy but there appears to be a light in the distance. The vaccines are starting to come on stream and it looks like a brighter future.

Please continue to keep in touch with those who may be living alone – a phone call, meeting for a coffee – just something to look forward to. Please don't drop your guard, keep washing hands, wearing masks, keeping your distance and all will eventually be well – as Seoras says, just have faith and God will lead us through this period.

What a party we're going to have when it's over.

Blessings to everyone.



Bye!

