

CrossLink

**Issue 12
Summer 2017**



The First Word



One of the results of Adam's rebellion against God in Eden is the experience of fear. When the universe was created by God, it was a place defined by, among other things, perfect happiness – all was very good (Genesis 1:31) – there was total harmony in Adam and Eve's relationship with God, the creation, between themselves and within themselves. But after sin broke in all this was lost – as we see when, on hearing the approaching footsteps of the Lord in the garden (Genesis 3:8) Adam and Eve hurried in fear to hide themselves from him. They were terrified

(Genesis 3:10). Disharmony and disjointedness in all of Adam's relationships quickly followed (Genesis 3:14-19).

Living in this fallen environment, being descendants of Adam and Eve (Acts 17:26), and inheriting the same sinful fallen nature from Adam (Romans 5:12), we too share in the sad realities (including fear) that have come along with sin. Every day on the news we are confronted with reports and images that have the potential if not the effect of creating fear. Terrorist attacks, residential tower block fires, forest fires, murders, rapes, child abuse, accidents, diseases, and death all underscore the fact that we are fallen humans who live in a fallen world. While we are shocked and grieve over what we see, we ought to be thankful that we are spared from enduring much of what we see on the news, but at the same time recognise that we too will inevitably face circumstances in our lives that we cannot control or change – ultimately death itself.

So how can we face life in the present and the future? Psalm 91 is a passage of the Bible filled with tremendous reasons for not being afraid – the personality, purpose, promises and protection of God. If we are trusting ourselves to him, we are safe, no matter what happens. Do you know the calming confidence God brings through his word? Are you able, no matter what is happening, to 'be still and know that' he 'is God'? God will always act for his people, and has a glorious redemptive purpose that includes the whole cosmos. One day God will recreate this fallen, fear filled universe, and will bring into it all those, and only those, who have a personal redemptive relationship with him in this life.

No sooner had sin and lostness come along through Adam when God announced to Satan that one would be born – a descendant of Adam and Eve (Luke 3:23-38) – who would crush Satan's head (which would bruise this descendant's heel in the process) and that he would create disharmony with and opposition to Satan into the hearts of certain people (Genesis 3:15). Put

in different words, God was going to bring into this fallen world a conqueror who would undo all the otherwise irreparable destruction brought about by Satan and Adam's sin. This descendant of Adam is of course the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. His conquest at the cross over Satan, Sin, and death will ultimately one day extend as far as the whole creation, resulting in the recreation of what will become new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells. Have a read of the following passages in the Bible, and on reflecting upon this prospect, ask yourself if you will be there. The only way to guarantee being there is by completely committing yourself to God through trusting in his Son, the crowned conqueror Jesus – turning to him for forgiveness and turning away from sin (faith and repentance – e.g. Isaiah 45:22, 55:6-7), and trusting and following him the rest of your life. God grant it will be so for us.
Isaiah 65:17-25; Acts 3:17-26; Romans 8:18-39; 1 Corinthians 15: 21-28; 2 Peter 3; Revelation 21-22.

Rev Calum Iain Macleod

Note From The Editors

Hi there,

It has been some time since our last edition. We can only apologise and hope that you will enjoy having us back on your coffee tables!

Many thanks to all those who have helped to get this edition out and around the district of Lochs. From those who submitted pieces, named or anonymously, to those who helped hand it out around the villages.

Although this is produced by the church, it is for anyone and everyone. If you have something you would like submitted for a future issue, or you even have a query about the Christian faith, feel free to contact us.

As much as we hope you enjoy this issue of CrossLink, there is no substitute to reading the Bible yourself and coming out to Church to worship a Risen Saviour. In a world that is hurting, especially in light of recent events in Manchester and London, we have the answer and He is preached every Sunday. Come and join with us.

The Editors.

What's New?

In the past couple of years since our last edition, there have been a number of changes in the church. Here we will share some of these with you, just in case you haven't noticed them!

Times of services

Our Sunday services are at 11am and 6pm, both in English and both in the Church.

Worksheets in Church

Don't worry if you see some of the younger children scribbling and drawing in Church—they are completing worksheets that will help them to understand what the service is about.

Gaelic Service

Although Sunday Gaelic services are no more, we now have a monthly Gaelic service, taken by a visiting minister. These services are on the first Monday of the month at 7pm in the Church Hall.

Sunday School times

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, Sunday School now runs from 12.30pm to 1.30pm in the Church, after the morning service.

Sermon Audio

All Sunday services and Prayer Meetings can now be heard online, as well as on CD. Only a few days after being delivered, they are available online. Just type in 'Sermon Audio' into a search engine online, visit the site and enter 'Lochs Free Church'.



Criomagan

Bha duine ainmeil ann an Ameireagaidh anns an naoidheamh linn deug - fear à Virginia air an robh Stonewall Jackson. Rugadh e ann an 1824 agus rinn e ainm dha fhèin mar fhear-teagaisg shaighdearan òga agus mar sheanailear san arm. Sheas e agus shabaid e air taobh nan stàitean bho dheas aig àm a' chogaidh shìobhalta an Ameireagaidh eadar 1861 agus 1865. Bha e ainmeil mar fhear air nach robh eagail sam bith air blàr-catha agus is tric a chanadh e gun robh e cho sàbhailte an teis meadhan batail 's a bha e na shìneadh san leabaidh aige fhèin san dachaigh. Bha adhbhar math aige airson a' bheachd a bha seo - a thuilleadh air a bhith na sheanalair treun, b' e Crìosdaidh a bh' ann dheth. Bha e a' creidsinn gu tur ann an Crìosd agus gun cumadh esan sàbhailte e ge bith càite an robh e agus am biodh an tìm aige air talamh an àirde. Bha facail nan salm air leth fìor dha:

"Do dhol a-mach, 's do theachd a-steach

Coimheadaidh Dia a-ghnàth;

On aimsir seo a-nis a th' ann

'S o sin a-mach gu bràth".

Abair cofhurtachd dhàsan agus dha duine sam bith againne a chuireas ar n-earbsa ann an Dia. Ge bith dè an cunnart no dè an cruaidh-chàs anns am bi duine againn, ma chreideas sinn ann an Dia cumaidh esan sàbhailte sinn.

Mus robh an cogadh sìobhalta sna stàitean aonaichte seachad, chaidh losgadh air Stonewall Jackson le mearachd, leis na daoine air an taobh aige fhèin. Chaill e a ghàirdean agus ri linn sin, fhuair e bàs. Nuair a chuala an seanalair ainmeil eile aig an àm, Raibeart E Lee, gun robh Jackson air a ghàirdean a chall, thuirt esan "tha Jackson air a ghàirdean chli a chall ach tha mise air mo ghàirdean cheart a chall".

Anns na mionaidean mu dheireadh aig Jackson mus do bhàsaich e, tha coltach gun do labhair e na facail dheireannach, "Rachamaid a-nis tarsainn na h-aibhne agus gabhaidh sinn fasgadh bho sgàil na craoibhe".

Dè tha cho fìor ann am bàs a' Chrìosdaidh ach na facail sin - a' siubhal tarsainn air an abhainn eadar an saoghal seo agus an ath fhear, gus fasgadh a ghabhail cuide ri Crìosd, craobh na beatha, ann an Nèamh. Nach math nam b' e sin na facail a bhiodh sinn uile a' ràdh aig deireadh ar cùrsa.

Testimony: Kay Macleod



My name is Kay Macleod, I'm married to Calum Iain and we have four children – Ellis, Samuel, Mark and Beth.

I find it hard to say when it was that I was converted. I would have to go back to my childhood. I am the second of three siblings. We were

brought up to go to church on Sunday – morning and evening. The Sunday morning services were in Gaelic and although we couldn't understand it we still had to attend. On Sunday nights, my sister, brother and I would be catechised – shorter catechism and mother's catechism. That may seem pretty horrific to some, and I confess that at the time I did not enjoy it. But I look back on those times with great fondness. What I learnt there seemed to be ingrained into the very fibre of my being. I would never forget these lessons I learnt at my mother's knee. Needless to say, I never slept well on a Sunday night, my conscience being stirred and an awareness that I stood before a holy God.

I wish I could then say I remembered my creator in the days of my youth, and was converted. Sadly not – the world seemed to me a very attractive place and as I grew older I entered into its so-called delights. I have to say though, that even being well out of the way of God, I felt as if he was hunting me down, and would not let my conscience be silenced (praise be to him!).

Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, and a time of

Testimony: Kay Macleod

trouble came in my young 17-year-old life. My mother became very ill with depression and it rocked my previously very secure world. It was a dark time and I was scared. But in the midst of it all I felt that God was there, somewhere, calling me to him so that he could be my comfort. I remember reading one night 'as a mother comforts her children, so will I comfort you'. Peace flooded my soul. Thankfully, after a year, my mother became well again.

My trouble had passed and I carried on in the world as before. But maybe not as before. Because I now knew that God is surely a very present help in times of trouble. I didn't find it easy to part with my old life though. Another two uneasy years passed. Then when I was 19 I felt I couldn't go on like before. It was like I had come to a crossroads and God was saying to me 'choose this day who you will serve'. I daren't put it off any longer. I sought the Lord. There was no Damascus Road moment. It took over a year of seeking him before I felt any peace. I went to church one night and heard the words I had heard many times before 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved'. All I can say is that I understood it. For the past year I had felt like one trying to figure out some great maths problem which I could not understand. And then it clicked! I believed = I was saved!

When I look back on the work of God in my life it had to have started in my childhood, and I pray that I would give to our children the same heritage I received.

Kay Macleod, Crossbost



This feature will look at some questions that people might have about Christians, what they worship and why they do certain things in their lives. We continue with...

Why Do Bad Things Happen?

When asked 'If God is all powerful and loving, why do bad things happen?', Voddie Baucham said that he refused to answer the question until it was rephrased. He said the question should be - "How on earth can a holy and righteous God know what I did and thought and said yesterday and not kill me in my sleep last night?". Voddie continues: "...until we ask the question that way, then we won't understand the issue. Until you ask the question that way, you believe the problem is out there....When you ask it the other way, you believe in the supremacy of man. You flip the question around and you believe in the supremacy of Christ."

"The simple answer is sin. Sin has infected and affected every area in our lives. However, difficulties arise when we try to deal with the "bad things" in our life. Of course, some "bad things" in our life are self-inflicted, but more often than not they aren't. Therefore, maybe the question shouldn't be: "Why do bad things happen?" but "Where do I go when bad things happen?" If sin is the cause of our problems, then help can only be found in Jesus Christ; but Jesus doesn't ask us to sort out all the bad things before we come to Him; we are just to come to Him. For, Jesus says to us: "Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)." "

Rev Murdo Campbell

"Bad things happening can be a function of the grace of God. Bad things happening reveal that this world and man within it are not what we originally were or are meant to be. In that sense bad things can be good things if we learn this from them."

Donald Mackay

"We sometimes wonder why God allows the kind of pain and suffering that seems to rise above all reason. Six hundred years before Christ, the Jewish prophet Habakkuk wondered the same thing. He struggled to understand how a good God could appear to look the other way while the groaning of Jerusalem's oppressed weak and poor went unanswered. His doubts deepened when the Lord answered his prayers by telling him that he was going to call in the cruel armies of Babylon to bring the "holy city" to its senses. But Habakkuk didn't lose his faith. After being honest enough to express his doubts and questions to God, he learned there is a time to surrender in silence before a God who can restore trust to those who wait on Him (2:20)—even when we don't understand. In that place of quiet, after pouring out our doubts and complaints to God, we can learn what it means to quietly rest in the One who has in so many ways already shown Himself inexpressibly good and faithful (Hab. 3:17-19)."

Mart DeHann

"God never uses anyone greatly until he treats them deeply."

A W Tozer

"Sometimes God allows what He hates to accomplish what He loves."

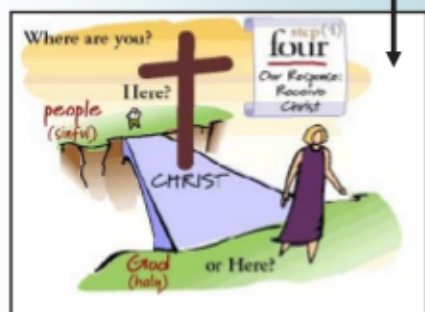
Joni Erecksen Tada

What Does It Mean?

We continue in this edition with our 'What Does It Mean?' feature, where we take a look at a word or phrase frequently used in Christian circles and explain it. Here, we look at **sin**.

"The essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man"

John Stott



"God meant man to live a... theonomous existence, under the law of God. But man wants to be autonomous (auto—nomos). He wants to be his own law and so he throws off God's law by not only defying it, but rejecting it in principle. Sin, then, is persistent, constant violation of the law of God in our own personal lives."

"A Faith To Live By" by Prof Donald Macleod

"Sometimes the devil allows people to live a life free of trouble because he doesn't want them turning to God. Their sin is like a jail cell, except it is all nice and comfy and there doesn't seem to be any need to leave. The door is wide open. Until one day, time runs out, and the cell door slams shut, and suddenly it's too late."

Quote from the film "God's Not Dead"

"What's Happening With The Young Today?"

Here is a brief introduction to how the needs of the youth of all ages in our community are being met.

Parent and Toddler

The local Parent and Toddler Group, 'North Lochs Little Toddlers', meets in our Church Hall each Thursday between 2.00pm and 3.30pm during the school term. The group is open to all babies, toddlers and children under 5 and we have a wide range of toys, books and activities in the Hall to cater for all. Juice and snacks are provided, plus tea or coffee and cake for the grown-ups. Everyone welcome!

Creche

Our crèche runs while the Sunday morning service is running. They meet in the Church Hall and all children of pre-school age are always welcome to come along for a time of singing, playing and hanging out!

Sunday School

Sunday School has recently moved its time to 12.30pm to 1.30pm on Sunday afternoons. Children get a chance to have some refreshments after the morning service. Parents can even stay and grab a cuppa! All children in P1 and above are warmly invited to attend.

Youth Fellowship

The Youth Fellowship meets during term time, mostly twice a month. We do a variety of activities, including visiting the YM, having quizzes, hearing testimonies and spending time together. Come along if you are aged P6 and above! We mostly meet on Sunday evenings after the evening service.

Campaigners

Campaigners is a youth organisation for all children of school age (P1-S6) which meets each Monday evening between 6.30pm and 7.45pm in the community hall, Leurbost, during the school term. All our activities revolve around structured evenings, which include Biblical teaching in a friendly, fun and enjoyable environment. Our activities are designed to help our young people to learn new skills, make new friends, enjoy the company of a mixed peer group and learn about the Christian message in an engaging way.

Important Dates And Information For Your Diary

- ☑ Sunday School now takes place between 12.30pm and 1.30pm in the Church Hall, during term-time. Due to the Summer holidays, Sunday School is closed but will start up again on Sunday 20 August.
- ☑ Campaigners will take a break for the holidays and will start up again when the schools return.
- ☑ Mother and Toddler will resume after the summer break.
- ☑ Youth Fellowship will take a break for the holidays and resume in August.
- ☑ The next WFM meeting will be in September, when the AGM will be held. Regular meetings will start again in October. Contact Janet Macsween for further information.
- ☑ Crossbost Communion will take place, God willing, on the weekend of Sunday 24 September 2017.



Weekly & Monthly Meetings

Sunday

Morning Service - Church - 11.00am
Evening Service - Church - 6.00pm
(both services in English)

Monday

Gaelic Service - first Monday of every month - 7pm - Hall

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting - Bilingual - Hall
- 7.30pm

Saturday

Prayer Meeting - Bilingual -
Session Room - 7pm

Contact Details

Minister	Rev Calum Iain Macleod	01851 860 369 calumiain.macleod@btinternet.com
Church Officer	Mr Roddy Alex Macleod	01851 860345
Audio Ministry	Mr Graeme Mackenzie	07795 625669
Newsletter	lochnews@gmail.com	

Final Thought

This is a story I heard at a Communion weekend in Scalpay many years ago and have used it at several Church Youth Camps.

There was an old woman who lived in a small cottage not far from Balmoral Castle in Scotland. When Queen Victoria was living in the castle she was very fond of visiting some of the old people who lived nearby.

One afternoon this old lady was in her cottage alone. She was in a very bad temper because she had quarrelled with her nearest neighbour, and because some of her friends had been gossiping about her. She shut the door, locking herself in, saying to herself, "Aye, I'll keep myself to myself in the future; I won't let them in when they try to get a dish o'tea out o'me." Presently she heard a soft knock at the door. She set her lips and nodded her head.

"Knock away," she whispered. The knock was repeated louder now.

"Knock away till doomsday!" she called out in an angry voice. "I'll no let ye in." The knock wasn't repeated and footsteps outside were heard going away from the house. The old woman nodded and smiled.

"They wont trouble me now for a bit," she assured herself. But she did not smile the next day when she was told that her queen had stood outside her door and had knocked for admission, and she had refused to let her in. The queen never visited her again.

Someone greater than all the kings and queens of earth is knocking at the door of men and women and they won't let Him in. Some day He will knock for the last time. That last time may be nearer than we expect, therefore we ought to "swing the heart's door widely open" and let Him in now.

