

Crown Terrace Methodist Church



June 2013

A Message for Whitsuntide

Dear Friends,

Imagine that you were one of those disciples locked up in the Upper Room in Jerusalem hiding away for fear of the crowds (John 20:19-23). Then suddenly, almost as if he had never gone away, Jesus appears and speaks words of peace to you, and breathing on you whispers, "Receive the Holy Spirit." What change I am sure would come over you: your fears would vanish; your soul would be at peace. Strengthened, you would be able to face the world once more.

The word translated "spirit" (Hebrew *ruach*, Greek *pneuma*) can also mean "wind" or "breath". In effect it is the very nub and substance of what it means to live. So when Jesus breathed on his disciples what he was doing was conveying "life" to them, his life, the life of God, the life of the Spirit. For Henry Scougal, former Professor of Moral Philosophy at King's College, Aberdeen:

true religion is a union of the soul with God, a real participation of the divine nature, the very image of God drawn upon the soul. In the apostle's words, it is "Christ formed within you." Briefly, I know not how the nature of religion can be more fully expressed than by calling it a divine life. (*The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, p.4)

It is extremely telling to speak of the difference the life of God, vis-à-vis, the work of the Holy Spirit, can make in our lives. That is not to denigrate the Old Scots saying, 'It is better felt than telt'. But words can sometimes convey something of the meaning.

Sarah Edwards, wife of the “Augustine of America” Jonathan Edwards, a contemporary of John Wesley, had a powerful experience of the Holy Spirit which her husband attempted to relate:

[her] soul remained in a kind of heavenly Elysium, and did as it were swim in the rays of Christ’s love, like a little mote swimming in the beams of the sun, or streams of his light that come in at a window; and [her] heart was swallowed up in a kind of glow of Christ’s love, coming down from Christ’s heart in heaven, as a constant stream of sweet light. (*WJE* 4:332)

The Puritan preacher Thomas Goodwin used terms of acceptance and assurance to describe the work of the Holy Spirit:

He pictures a man walking along a road with his little boy, holding hands – father and son, son and father. The little boy knows that this man is his father, and that his father loves him. But suddenly the father stops, picks up the boy, lifts him up into his arms, embraces him and kisses him and fondles him. Then he puts him down again, and they continue walking... The father's action has not changed the relationship... but oh, the difference in the enjoyment! (Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Sons of God*, p.280)

Charles Wesley used perhaps more ecstatic terms to describe such an experience:

His love is manna to my taste,
His love is music to my ear;
I feel His love, and hold Him fast,
In ecstasies too strong to bear;
I smell the odour of His name,

And all wrapped up in love I am.
(From the hymn ‘Happy the soul whom God delights’)

Samuel Wesley during his last illness expressed his sense of “acceptance with God” to his son John in these well-known words, “‘The inward witness, son, the inward witness,’ said he to me, ‘that is the proof, the strongest proof, of Christianity.’” (*LJW* 2:135). John Wesley later described this as “an inward impression of the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God” (*WJW* 1:287).

Tom Smail explains this addresses the whole human personality:

When the Holy Spirit reveals God’s fatherhood on the level of our spirit in this way, then it ceases to be dead doctrine that can win at best intellectual assent, but penetrates to the hidden springs of our personality, not merely with emotional warmth but with life-transforming vitality, so that we do not simply know a truth but enter into a conscious relationship with the one whom that truth proclaims. (*The Forgotten Father*, p.41)

In a graphic illustration he was evidently fond of, C.H. Spurgeon described a friend who took up a bottle by the sea-shore, filled it full with sea-water, corked it down, then threw back it into the sea:

“Now,” he said, “there it is, there is the sea in the bottle, and there is the bottle in the sea.” It is full to fullness, and then, in a still greater fullness. There is my soul with God in it, and my soul in God; the fullness of God in me as much as I can hold, and then myself in the fullness of God. (*MTP* 12:593)

Jesus Christ has ascended to the right hand of God the Father and has sat down, his work for our redemption complete, and the Holy Spirit has been sent down from heaven. For what purpose? Evidently that we might know with a knowledge which addresses the mind, warms the heart, and moves the will, the love of God poured into our hearts, the life of God pulsating in our souls like a perennial fountain springing up into eternal life; in order that we, to quote the apostle, “might be filled into all the fullness of God”. Here are waters to swim in.

We could ask ourselves at this point: do we desire to move out into all that God desires for us? Are we willing to take the plunge? In Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* (IV.iii.218-24), Brutus says:

There is a tide in the affairs of men.
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

Let us not fail to “take the current when it serves”. Rather, may we prove more and more in our daily lives that “God is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus”. For as Hudson Taylor of Barnsley, the famous missionary to China, once said, “it depends not on the size of the vessel but on the unfailling supply of the stream” (*Unfailing Springs*, p.7).

Every blessing,
John

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



BIRTHS

To Steven & Terri Taylor, a son, Seth Ronnie on 16th April,
a brother for Halie.

To Stanley & Treasure Mmerife, a daughter, Emmanuella
Chisom, on May 24th, a sister for Beulah.

Thanks be to God for their safe arrivals



BAPTISMS

Both on May 19th
Hannah, daughter of Jiorji & Sylvia Trabudravu
Kinga, daughter of Krystof & Paulina Samp

CONGRATULATIONS

To Joe & Helen Smith who celebrated their 70th. Wedding
Anniversary on April 20th.

Synod

On our retirement course some years ago, we were advised to keep taking up new activities. My new activity for 2012 was to attend the Synod of the Methodist Church in Scotland for the first time. In fact I went to Dundee and Inverness in 2012 and to Stirling in April 2013.

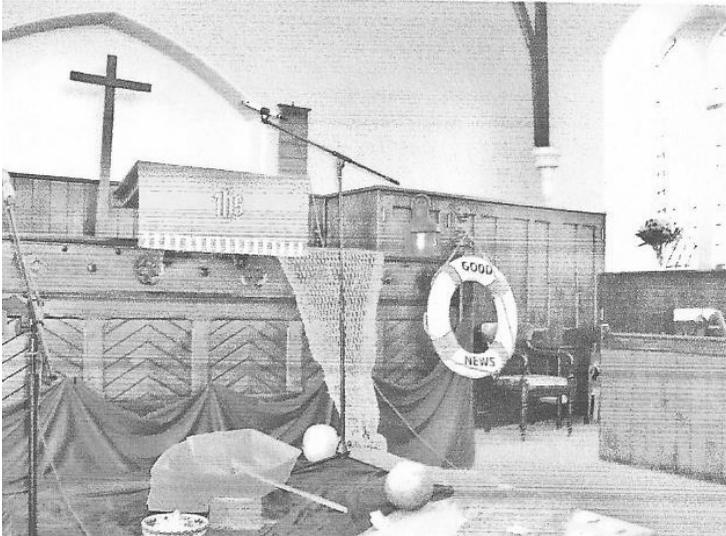
Methodists are spread over a wide area of Scotland, a big country by U.K. standards, and travel by road or rail takes a long time. Fewer attended the Inverness Synod than those held at Dundee and Stirling. Having said that, the chat with other reps en-route was great. Chat is a very important aspect of Synod. Over meals and coffee breaks I heard about mentoring initiatives, the amalgamation of the Edinburgh congregations and the problems of the Angus, Dundee and Perth circuit where there is one minister for Dundee, Perth, Blairgowrie, Montrose and Arbroath.

At the Synods we were addressed by talented experts available in our district, Sally Robertson, Heather Wareing, Hilary Canto, Bob Kelley and Gary Williams. Hilary has already provided publicity material for the W.F. Lunches and Gary is available to do a workshop on poverty. There's a lot of innovative outreach in progress as we heard from Vicky Hambly and her work with the children of naval families at Helensburgh. The principle of a single circuit for Scotland has been approved, but the only firm decision was that it was to be explored further by Superintendent Ministers and lay people. In the face of so much uncertainty, I think there is a need to "feed the roots" i.e. strengthen and support individual congregations or groups of congregations who wish to work together. At Synod, I would have liked to have heard more debate and observations from congregations rather than, as at Inverness, breaking up into groups for discussion which is wasteful of limited time. It saddens me that problems arose when there was not a clear remit and plans were not thought through. Following my visits, I am now more aware of the strengths of the Methodist Church as a "Connexional Church", but, as a member of a congregation in Aberdeen, I feel more attention needs to be paid to the challenges facing congregations remote from the Central belt.

M.D.C
May 2013

Spring Circuit Rally of Methodist Women

This took place at Banff on Wednesday, 10th April. After a very pleasant journey on a sunny spring day we entered the Church to see this scene



A small boat, scallop shells, welcoming harbour lights and a life buoy with the words "Good News" gave us some idea of the programme to follow.

After a brief welcome several people shared their thoughts and impressions. All related to the sea and harbour and what that meant for them. There was a poem in Doric which was followed by a moving, graphic account of a storm at sea and the long struggle the seamen had as they tried to reach the safety of the harbour. Their boat was tossed by stormy winds and lashed by cruel waves as they sought to bring it under control.

The main speaker was the Rev. Lily Twist. Her topic was "Beyond the Harbour Wall". Along with the programme we had been given a bookmark. On one side it had scallop shells but on the reverse there was the text "To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for To be certain of the things we cannot see". It is said the folk who know the rigours of the sea often have a deep faith and we were given a glimpse of that. The whole afternoon gave us much ground for thought.

After the main part of the meeting, the back portion of the church was cleared and tables were set in a very short time It appeared that it was all hands on deck. We were treated to an abundance delicious sandwiches and cakes as we enjoyed the opportunity of having fellowship with the others around.

It was a most enjoyable afternoon and the congregation of the Banff church are to be congratulated on making it so successful, and thanked for all the effort they had put in.

Our Mission:

To make the love of God in Christ known in Aberdeen and beyond through word and action

Our Vision

praise

Our worship will use the best forms and content to declare the greatness of our God in our daily lives.

hope

We will bring the hope of Jesus Christ to our hopeless world, including the streets and suburbs of Aberdeen, and will not be ashamed to use both actions and words.

care

We will provide opportunities for care for all our members, offering spiritual food, practical support and personal prayer, both through groups and individuals.



The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed ... Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

Matthew 13: 31-32

To help us achieve Our Vision four teams were set up in 2008:

The Worship Team – to give direction to our corporate worship

The Evangelism Team – to coordinate our outreach to the streets and suburbs of Aberdeen

The Learning and Caring Team – to help us all to be disciples, by identifying training needs and overseeing pastoral issues

The Social Responsibility Team – to be aware of service opportunities that could be filled by groups or members in our congregation

We are currently looking at how these can be revitalized.

A Famous Family Connection

Helen Smith and her late husband Douglas were heavily involved in Crown Terrace Methodist Church for many years, Helen is now unable to attend services. This article about a relation is written by her daughter.

Some time ago I started to research my side of our family tree. With the help of my parents (Douglas and Helen Smith), I got off to a good start. As you can imagine, Smith is not the easiest name to research!

On looking into my Mother's side she told me about her Uncle Alfie, her mother's brother, who was married to a May Sybil Leslie. Both were scientists and met during the First World War.

Whilst Sybil was at the University of Leeds she proved to be an exceptional student. She graduated with first class honours, and for her further research she was awarded an MSc in Physical Chemistry from the University of Leeds.

In 1910 she obtained a scholarship that allowed her to study under Marie Curie in Paris. She was one of the youngest students to study there, being only 23 years old; it was also rare for a female to be studying at that level. She stayed for several years in Paris and published papers in French on radioactive thorium. She continued her research on thorium and actinium on her return to Britain. During WW1 she worked as a research chemist in a factory in North Wales, and later was in charge of the laboratory. I think this may be where she met my Uncle Alfie.

My Mother always wished she had a photo of Sybil, so I set myself to find one. There was certainly plenty of information about her when I looked on the computer! Amazing Google! On the University of Leeds site I looked into the archives and yes, they had a photo of her in amongst some personal effects donated to the university. On receiving the disk with the photo I promptly added it to the Family Tree.

About two months ago I received out of the blue an email from a lady called Natalie in Paris. She asked if she could copy my photo of Sybil for a book she is writing about Madame Curie and her students. She told me she worked for the Curie Museum, and they had letters that Sybil and her professor had written to Madame Curie asking about her placement there. Would I like copies of these? I was delighted to get them; to see my Great-Aunt's handwriting was amazing. The recent television programme about Madame Curie gave me an insight into where Sybil lived and worked.

Unfortunately Alfie and Sybil didn't have any children, possibly because of her exposure to radioactive materials over the years. She was a fascinating lady to read about, and I would have been proud to meet her.

I look forward to reading Natalie's book, and hope to learn more about Sybil.

By Eleanor Lumsdaine

[May 2013]

Psalm 23 for the Cyber-Age

The Lord is my programmer, I shall not crash.
He installed His software on the hard disk of my heart,
all of His commands are user-friendly.
His directory guides me to the right choices for His Name's sake.
Even though I scroll through the problems of life,
I will fear no bugs, for He is my backup.
His password protects me.
He prepares a menu before me in the presence of my enemies.
His help is only a keystroke away.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life,
and my file will be merged with His and saved forever. Amen

Prayers for morning

Thankfulness for awakening to a new day
Awake, thou that sleepest.
May I remember
that I was born into the Father's creation,
and rejoice
that I have been renewed into it again today.
May I respect this earth,
which is God's footstool:
may I take today no more than I need, and give back all that I
should.

As one of your human family,
may I today remember that I am your child,
and brother or sister to your Son.
Called to share one another's burdens,
I rejoice as one member of human society
and may I ever remember
to play my proper part in it,
ever seeking opportunities to be of service to others.

Beyond the wakening wonder of this world,
beyond the bounds of human society
lies a more abiding reality.
May the Spirit of wisdom
reveal this realm to me.
Throughout this day
may God lead me in all I do.
So may I live. Amen.

Ken MacKinnon, local preacher, Inverness Circuit

As the sun rises O God, we come with open minds and hearts to worship and to praise you. Guide and direct our thinking, our walking and our praying this day. Empower us by your Holy Spirit to see you as we walk around the multicoloured world, not just in the beauty of nature, but in everything we see. Keep before us your commandments of love, so that when this day ends we may sleep content that we have done your will this day. We bring this prayer, as we bring all our prayers, in the name and for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Pat Billsborrow, supernumerary minister, Northwich Circuit

Come with me, Lord, into this day,
in all that I do and think and say.
Be with me in the happy moments:
help me to share the joy of others,
even when I do not feel joyful.
Be with me in the difficult moments:
help me to say the right words
in the right way, even if it is hard for me.
Be with those whom I love:
help me to show love to those whom it is
sometimes hard to love, even if they do not always
show their love to me.
Be with those who no one wants to love:
help me to try to understand the issues
which confront other people, especially
those in poverty of mind, body or spirit.
Be with those facing difficult decisions today:
help me to help them to move on in life,
even when it hurts to leave the past behind.
Lord, thank you. I know in my heart
you want to be with me today.
Help me to find time to pause
and to listen to what you have to say to me.
In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I pray.
Amen.

Robert Mortimer, local preacher, Teddington Circuit

The Green Thing

In the line at the store, the cashier told the older woman that she should bring her own grocery bag because plastic bags weren't good for the environment. The woman apologized to him and explained, We didn't have the green thing back in my day.

The clerk responded, That's our problem today. The former generation did not care enough to save our environment. He was right, that generation didn't have the green thing in its day.

Back then, they returned their milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled. But they didn't have the green thing in that customers day.

In her day, they walked up stairs, because they didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. They walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300 horsepower machine every time they had to go two blocks. But she was right. They didn't have the green thing in her day.

Back then, they washed the baby's diapers because they didn't have the throw-away kind. The dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine burning up 220 volts - wind and solar power really did dry clothes. Kids got hand--me-downs from their brothers or sisters, not always brand new clothing. But the old lady is right, they didn't have the green thing back in her day.

Back then, they had one TV, or radio, in the house - not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief, not a screen the size of Montana. In the kitchen, they blended and stirred by hand because they didn't have electric machines to do everything for you. When they packaged a fragile item to send an the mail, they used wadded up old newspaper to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap.

Back then they didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline, just to cut the lawn. They used a push mower that ran on human power. They exercised by working so they didn't need to go to the health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity. But she's right, they didn't have the green thing back then.

They drank from a fountain when they were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time they had a drink of water. They refilled their writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen and they replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull. But they didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or rode the school bus instead of turning their moms into a 24 hour taxi service. They had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And they didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza joint.

But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful the old folks were just because they didn't have the green thing back then.

Calling Out

Jesus was born in a borrowed manger.
He preached from a borrowed boat.
He entered Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey.
He ate the Last Supper in a borrowed upper room.
He was buried in a borrowed tomb.
Now he asks to borrow the lives of Christians to reach the rest of the world.
If we do not speak, then he is dumb and silent.

Dr Leighton Ford



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE
Sunday June 23	12.45	Bring and share lunch	CTM
Saturday June 29		Circuit Meeting	Findochty
Sunday July 21	12.45	Bring and share lunch	CTM
Saturday July 27	13.30	Farewell to District Chair	Perth Methodist Church
Sunday August 25	11.00	Seth Taylor's Baptism	CTM
Sunday August 25	12.45	Bring and share lunch	CTM
Saturday August 31	14.00	Welcome to District Chair	Perth Methodist Church
Sunday September 1	11.00	Re-commissioning of Pastoral Visitors	CTM
Sunday September 8	11.00	Re-commissioning of Youth Workers	CTM
Sunday September 8	18.30	West Central Aberdeen Churches Ecumenical Service	CTM
Saturday September 14		District Synod	CTM
Tuesday September 24	19.30	Church Council	CTM
Saturday September 28	17.00	Harvest Supper	CTM
Sunday September 29	11.00	Harvest Festival and Back to Church Sunday	CTM