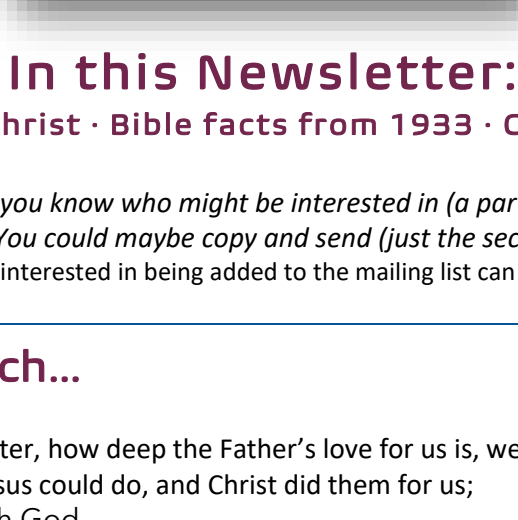


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In this Newsletter:

Freedom in Christ · Bible Facts from 1933 · Cancer & faith

Is there anyone you know who might be interested in (a part of) this monthly newsletter? You could maybe copy and send (just the section) to them. Anyone interested in being added to the mailing list can email us.

To the church...

As we reflect on Easter, how deep the Father's love for us is, we consider some of these things only Jesus could do, and Christ did them for us;
#1 Reconciled with God
"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." - 2 Corinthians 5:19
#2 Freedom from sin
"We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin." - Romans 6:6
#3 Death defeated
"Where, o death, is your victory? Where, o death, is your sting?" 1 Cor 5:55
#4 Forgiven and cleansed
"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace"-Ephesians 1:17
#5 A new life
"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." - Galatians 2:20

These are just five, what about -restoring the human race and creation back from darkness and corruption, -adoption as His child, -our brokenness healed by His brokenness, -setting us apart as holy, -brought in a new covenant, -sealed a place for us in heaven? Greater love has no one than He who laid down his life for us.

'Come on and celebrate. His gift of love, we will celebrate. The Son of God who loved us and gave us life. We'll shout Your praise, O King. You give us joy nothing else can bring. We'll give to You our offering, in celebration praise. Come on and celebrate, celebrate, celebrate and sing. Celebrate and sing to our King.' 1984 Kingsway Thankyou Music—Patricia Morgan

'In my experience, there is nothing more transformative, nothing more redemptive, nothing more able to turn a life around than the gospel of Jesus Christ.'

Dr John Sentamu (the UK's first black archbishop, retired)

Freedom in Christ

An interview with Rev Richard Moffat, minister of Dyke and Edinkillie

We had hardly sat down, not even ordered a coffee yet, and Richard was already off at a near 60 miles an hour, talking about being free in Christ. In his eyes, in his words, you could see the reality of that freedom of acceptance, significance and assurance that all is well when we find our identity in Jesus. I have not met many Christians in which that freedom is so clearly on display. Richard explains: 'In Christ there is a new nature, as Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:17, and therefore, we can overcome all challenges we face in our daily walk. Most Christians don't find that freedom, but rather struggle with trying to please God instead of believing and applying what He says. Do we believe that when James says resist the devil, that he will actually flee from you? [James 4:7] The truth is God's love is unconditional, when He looks at us, He does not see us as sinners saved by grace but as saints redeemed in Christ. We need to adapt our mindset to this truth.'

Recently, the Freedom in Christ course has deeply impacted Richard, it has brought the truth of Jesus and words of Scripture down from his head to his heart, and real transformation is happening. In the course he has learned that over the years, our temperaments have been shaped by our experiences and have formed mental strongholds. Paul tells us in Romans 12: 2 that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and so we need to uncover these strongholds and lies which we believe in and replace them with the truth of God's Word. Our success in continuing to walk in freedom and grow in maturity depends on the extent to which we continue to renew our minds and train ourselves to distinguish good from evil. Richard quotes (by heart) Colossians 2:10; 'in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.' He says; 'It is finished on the cross. You are no longer under debt, you are free.'

Find out more about the ten week Freedom in Christ course here:

<https://www.ficm.org.uk/discipleship-course>

Richard had been impacted as a teenager by Reverend David Torrance, especially on summer mission in Girvan North. One day Richard attended that church as a representative of the Mission Team in a red, white and blue striped t-shirt, and did not feel welcomed by the church. Seven young people out of that youth ministry became ministers. Richard then studied under David's brother, JB Torrance. In 1980 he moved to Canada and for 15 years was in various accounting positions. One night, whilst on vacation, he had a conversation with God, and determined he was to answer the call God had given him many years ago to go into ministry. In the morning when he told his wife, Margie, she said 'Thank God.' He says 'We saw God move and do things I would have never thought, healing people in wonderful ways.' In 2013 he became the minister...in Girvan North. 'God has a wonderful sense of humour.'

For the last three 'truncated' years he has been minister at Dyke & Edinkillie (near Brodie and Forres). As we are going through big changes as a church, he ponders, 'Does the Gospel still have pride of place in the church? No matter what might happen to our buildings and structures, they are no more than the places where we have met the Lord Jesus Christ. We can let go of these places, but not of Him. One teacher said on the course "What really matters is who we are in Jesus Christ and who Jesus Christ is in us. So we must hold everything loosely – except Jesus." In other words what matters is that we all need to do what God has called us to. We need to renew fellowship and commitment to one another, and we all need to abide in Him and as we do so, fruit will come. Each member needs to ask themselves; do I believe He gave me freedom? What am I doing with it?'

Richard says to us all, in the same way he finishes a service after a benediction: 'Remember that you are loved, and the best is yet to come.'

For more info on busting strongholds in our lives, do connect with Richard on RMoffat@churchofscotland.org.uk

Gardens An Easter poem

by Anne Smith <ask her for more: smithanneg@tiscali.co.uk>

Alone in the garden God's heart broken
freewill abused verdict spoken

Beauty spoiled fellowship gone
yet love remains comes through His Son

Alone in a garden knows death is near
full of anguish gripped by fear

Free will versus duty heart breaking, lost
submission comes but at a cost

Alone on the dark cross perfection marred
communion broken access barred

In this desolate place no garden lies
yet promise made of Paradise

Broken weak defeated a body hanging
with no glory a powerless king

Stronger than all powers defeating sin
forgiveness brings God's kingdom in

Alone in a garden with aching heart
an empty tomb love torn apart

Unfulfilled promise hope at an end
death of a dream loss of a friend

Then there in that garden a name is said
and life returns she thought was dead

Joy instead of sorrow hope for despair
faith flows back in her Lord is there

Wonderful Bible facts (from 1933)

Did you know?

* The Bible was written over about 1600 years by writers up to about 1600 miles apart.

* Writers include kings, cupbearers, shepherds, even fishermen.

* It takes 70 hours and 40 minutes to read through the Bible 'at pulpit rate.'

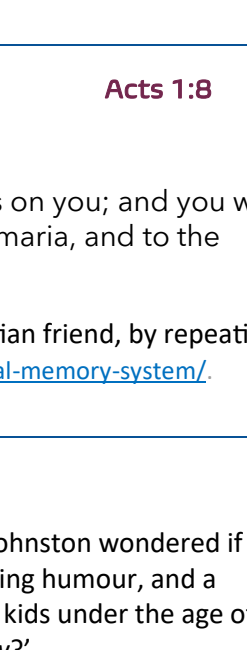
* Is there any other book like the Bible that would boast 1770 direct quotations from God –like 'Thus says the Lord'?

* As Leviticus depicts one month, Numbers encompasses 38 years.

* Palestine has been the *nerve centre*, since Abraham, *the truth centre* since Christ, *It will be the storm centre* according to Revelation, and then the *peace centre*, after which it will culminate in the *glory centre* when God is All in All.

* *Best Bible use? Read it through, pray it in, work it out, note it down, pass it on.*

SOURCE: 1000 Wonderful things about the Bible. H.Y. Pickering, 1933.



Coming up in 2022

The Streetpastors Commissioning service is planned at Culduthel Christian Centre on the Sunday evening of Sunday May 8th.

Solas equips people for outreach. This Thu eve on April 7th they'll be joined by J. Warner Wallace for a webinar on atheism, evidence and God at 7pm. Also for non-Christian friends. Join in on <https://www.solas-cpc.org/webinars/> Please pray for the audience all over the world who will hear this message.

Care for the Family; 2022 will be full of all kinds of events around setting boundaries for toddlers, to faith values for kids, to date nights for couples, to bereavement ,and so much more; [careforfamily/events-online/](https://www.careforfamily.org.uk/events-online/).

The Light inside

A girl from a non-Christian family in Inverness has become a Christian. She has moved away but was proving in March to catch up with old friends, family and teachers. She was being very popular as people were really delighted to see her. Many commented on the change in her and the way she looks so different, so confident, the way she carries herself. One even said that 'she has a light inside her now!' What a beautiful description of what it looks like to someone who doesn't know Jesus, looking at her, seeing Jesus in her but not really understanding...the only way they could describe what they were seeing was 'the light'! So powerful, what a witness and what a privilege for this school to see first-hand the difference that a relationship with Jesus makes as He transforms lives.
From the blog andjoy.wordpress.com

INSPIRE interviews 2022

'Inspire' is a series of online interviews, on various evenings and various topics to challenge and inspire us beyond the walls of our churches.

In February, Paul spoke with Michael Harvey about God conversations and the Acorn practice. Find a 21 minute recording [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tLdWt2) Passcode: 16TLdWt2
In March, Christina McCrae shared about the inspiring work of Workplace Chaplaincy Scotland, ask Paul for the recording.

All interviews will be on this [this Zoom link](https://www.zoom.us/j/9191111111), do put them in your diary.

Wednesday April 20, 7.30pm

A chat with **Dez Johnston**, *Alpha Scotland* director and *Boys Brigade* president about his passion for Jesus, young people and people beyond the church walls.

Monday May 9, 7.30pm

Talking to **Robbie Morrison**, Church & Supporter Engagement Team Leader, *Tearfund Scotland* about the charity's determination to end injustice and poverty by partnering with churches in 50 of the world's poorest countries.

June

A conversation with John Grant from the Navigators about how we can learn to disciple others.

The Things He Carried

'A Journey to the Cross: meditations for Lent and Holy Week' by Stephen Cotterell, currently Archbishop of York. Book review by Anne Smith.

This is a small compact book which packs a serious punch 'for all those carrying heavy burdens.' Eight sections consider what Jesus carried to and on the cross in an imaginative, thought provoking and challenging way. Cotterell creates vivid imagery of the reality of Jesus' suffering. This book would have value at any time of the year as well as a brilliant resource for Holy Week. Published in 2008, it is 'more meditative than analytical; more poetry than prose.' Extracts;

'...And with this he carried all the wild and lovely hopes of God. He carried the possibility of a new temple, and a new covenant and a new relationship. And beyond death, and beyond the rest that is beyond death, he saw a new creation, a new heaven and a new earth.... He is carrying something else: something which is very precious; something which needs to be restored; something which he knows can be beautiful; something which can be loved back to life. He carries me. And I am not heavy to him'

Green Matters; God's creation matters

'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it' Ps 24:1

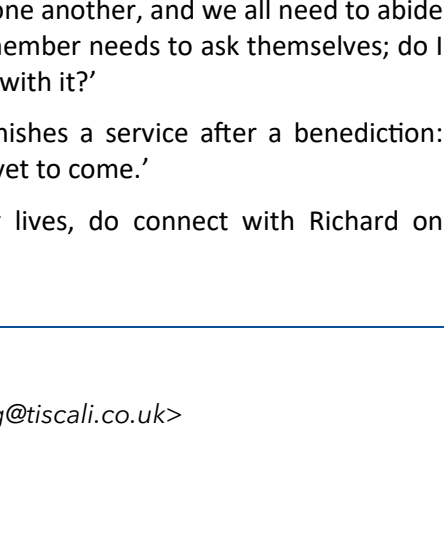
Love Your Clothes April 20 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

a workshop by Zero waste Scotland via Zoom video conference. Register at <https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/event/love-your-clothes/>

32% of Scotland's carbon impact comes from textiles. Find out what we can all do to love our clothes whilst also loving our planet.

Life on the breadline

Old High St Stephen's weekly online prayer group has been using this course, developed from three years of research and engagement with churches and community groups across the UK. They have considered 'housing injustice' -remembering the tragedy of Grenfell Tower in 2017- and 'solidarity with the disadvantaged in our society'. Matthew 25 vs 40 says 'Truly I say to you as you did it to one of the least of my brothers you did it to me'. It is important that we engage with local and national issues, advocating for others in whatever way we can. They highly recommend the material to us all. Find it [here](https://www.breadline.org.uk/).



Verse of the week

memory verse 45

Acts 1:8

Being Christ's disciple; Develop World Vision

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

You can learn to memorize these verses, maybe with a Christian friend, by repeating them frequently. More info: www.navigators.org/resource/topical-memory-system/.

Cancer has caused my faith to soar

When she was diagnosed with stage three bowel cancer, Fi Johnston wondered if her faith would stand the test. She shares her journey of finding humour, and a deeper love for God, in her suffering. She is 32 and has three kids under the age of six. 'Well Fi, I asked myself, *What's your faith going to do now?*'

'Sometimes faith in difficult times isn't feeling the tangible presence of God, it's making the conscious decision to choose God over the situation. To choose not to give in to worry; to choose joy even though that's not the human response; to choose to believe God has something bigger planned. I've found these choices have given me an unexplainable peace and positivity that are not compatible with my situation - but they are so good, and they are leading me deeper and deeper into the crevasses of God's love. I would never have reached that place without cancer. Regardless of the outcome, this is good for me. And I pray it's good for other people too.' *Fi is the wife of Alpha Scotland director Dez Johnston.*
Find the full article on [premierchristianity](https://www.premierchristianity.com/)

Time out with God

'Developing our personal relationship with God is the engine room to developing our faith.' The Navigators have produced two short, simple, inspiring and engaging videos that introduce the life-giving rhythm of spending time with God every day.
Part 1, 7 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaMrXaMv19s>
Part 2, 7 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4NoLQhUeic>

Christian Aid Week 2022 (May 15 – 21)

Christian Aid's mission is to eradicate poverty: Everyone is equal in the sight of God. For over 75 years, this truth has inspired them to stand together in solidarity with our most marginalised global neighbours, of all faiths and none.

Locally, the Inverness Christian Aid Group organises this week of fundraising as well as other events throughout the year. New reps would be welcome to the group if your church does not have one. The familiar red 'door to door' envelopes will be available, as well as a Just Giving webpage for online giving.

There will be a **coffee morning and plant stall at St Stephen's church on Saturday 14th May 10-12**. Plants can be donated by leaving at the hall door on Friday evening.

People are challenged to do a **300,000 steps in May fundraising** challenge, walking in their own time and at their own pace. That's about 4 miles a day.

For more information, dates, advice and help, contact David Crippin, Inverness Christian Aid Group on christianaid.crown@yahoo.co.uk.

Ukraine emergency appeals Financial support

Church of Scotland head office passed on this option:
Donate to RCHA to help local churches in Eastern Europe help refugees.

Royal Bank of Scotland, Church of Scotland Account no 00134859 Sort code 83 06 08 Reference RCHA donation, please gift aid this if possible. More information here: <https://reformatus.hu/english/news/emergency-response-for-ukraine/>

God provides

My seeking friend was really worried; out of a job, unable to pay the rent, due the next day. I prayed for God's provision but did not dare to pray for a miracle. He got one days' work the next day, but the day after it fell through due to a broken down van. As he sat at home, the phone rang and someone offered him five days work. Three weeks later, he had worked for three full weeks. He has now been offered four long term job opportunities. He is amazed with God, and so am I.

Great Big Free Give Away

At Easter God gave His only Son. Has His generosity opened your heart? It might open others too. This spring or summer, why not organise a Give Away? It can range from a single table in the grounds to a fully fledged 'table top coffee and cake listening service everything is free extravaganza'. Paul has a decade of experience with this and has seen many, many moved by this expression of good news. Why not get in touch with Paul and see how he could help.

Gospel goodness

We would love to post more news about your church & parish in this newsletter, please let us know what is happening.

The Youth for Christ band 'the Sense,' in March spent a Week in Kyle of Lochalsh, and a week at Inverness High school, engaging with many dozen teenagers. On a Friday evening they did a concert at *Dalneigh* church hall. The church expected 30 young people but catered for 48. Over 80 non-Christian, lively teens came. The band had spent a lot of time building up relations with teenagers and there was a very warm response to the worship music and the Gospel message. Pray for a warm return from 13Nov to 2nd Dec, when they will be in Wick and Inverness areas. Read their full report on <https://www.andjoy.wordpress.com/>

Andy Bannister from Solas came to Culduthel Christian Centre last Saturday. He challenges us to pray for opportunities to talk about Jesus [see the connection with Acorn; 'Lord, who would you like me to connect with beyond the church, today?'] Solas then wants us to try any of these three questions:
What do you mean by that?
Why do you think that?
Have you ever wondered?

One of our ministers was told by five young families in one week, they would consider coming to that church, if only there was a creche.

NewStart Highland has supplied us with £15 *Mobile E-voucher* top ups on EE, Vodafone and O2. If you know of anyone struggling, do get in touch via Paul (below).

Benefits/council services. The single free helpline number – **0300 303 1362** – will connect callers to Council specialist teams (Mon to Fri from 8am to 6pm).

We thank many for their advice and input into this newsletter.

The Here to Serve editorial team consists of Mission Development Worker Paul Haringman with support from Deborah Macrae (Old High St Stephens), Muriel Babb (the Barn) and Russell Lees (Daviot and Dunlichity).

Contact Paul on 07837903277 or paulharingman.mission@gmail.com.