
ST. MARGARET'S PARISH NEWS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

No. 467

VIEW FROM THE MANSE



Ask a panel of preachers for their vote on the greatest sermon in history, and I'm guessing you'll get a fairly uniform response. The vast majority will point to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Some might vote for Paul's address on Mars Hill. A few could lobby for Jonathan Edwards "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." A handful of modern aficionados might suggest M.L. King's "I Have a Dream" speech. But if I had a ballot, I'd cast it for a lesser known sermon; it doesn't even have a title.

My nomination for the greatest sermon in history goes to Jonah's message to the Ninevites in Jonah 3:4. No one would print it in a book of "best sermons." They couldn't. Because the entire speech is only five words in Hebrew, eight words in English: *"Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned."*

How can that be a great sermon? Easy, look at the results. This little eight-word sermon had an unprecedented effect on its hearers and sparked a revival that spanned all social classes from peasants to kings. It may have impacted the largest number of people in the shortest time in history; the sermon caused somewhere between 120,000 and 600,000 people to radically repent in under 40 days. It saved an entire civilization from extinction. On a word-for-word basis, in comparison to any other speech, its the most economical. Fewer words, greater results. It's the greatest sermon in history.

The most remarkable thing about the speech isn't the preacher but his disposition. All the laws of great preaching say that the preacher must prepare through deep prayer and diligent study. Jonah did neither. He thumbed his nose at God and ran in the opposite direction. When compelled to preach, he did so reluctantly, hoping that no one would respond. When they did, he was so distraught, he climbed a hillside and contemplated suicide. This is one pathetic prophet.

The book of Jonah isn't actually about *Jonah*. It's about *God*. God's greatness and grace are found in every chapter, scene, verse and sentence. God, in His grace, wants the Ninevites to turn to Him. In His grace, He calls Jonah to preach to them. To make sure this happens, God summons wind, waves, sailors, lots, and a big fish to do His bidding. He gives Jonah a second chance to obey and the Ninevites and a renewed chance to live for Him. After their response, He supplies Jonah with a vine, a worm, and a wind to personally demonstrate His grace. God is the star of the book; Jonah's only the supporting actor (and not a very good actor, at that).

I believe good preparation and diligent study are essential for every sermon. But that's only the beginning. The real power comes from God, and the depth of people's response is triggered by God. Jonah 3:4 was the greatest sermon in history because God prepared the people to hear it, spoke to their hearts while they heard it, and directed their response when it was over.

What does the book of Jonah have to say to us? I believe that we are reluctant evangelists – in our heart of hearts we do not have God-like passion for lost souls – but God does. Let us ask him to reveal us his heart, trust in his power and be fearless in proclaiming the Gospel.

Your Brother in Christ,
Iain.

Church Diary

20 September	10a.m.	Communion Service
	7.00p.m	Communion Service
4th October	10a.m.	Harvest Thanksgiving Service

Baptism

28 February Mason Robert Donald son of Sarah Jane and Graeme

Deaths

December	Helen Campbell, 49 Gillie Court Nancy Forbes, Abbotsford Care Home Kate Wallace, 9 Dalcross Way
January	George Broadbent, 32a Campbell Street
February	John Bell, 3 Earn Grove Margaret Kerr, 3 Scotland Drive Robert Winchester, 3 Standingstone Walk
March	James Galloway, 27 Thimblehall Crescent Elizabeth Brown, 2a Couston Street Catherine Watson, 29 Victoria Street Jean Reddie, 91 Headwell Avenue
April	Ina Grant, 18 Fodbank View Hazel Hamilton, 16 Charles Street Moirra Stevenson, 22 Beath View Amelia Jewell, 49 Fodbank View
May	Jimmy Stothart, 36 Thimlehall Avenue Margaret Hynd, 66 Henryson Road Georgina McCord, 1 Beath View Colin Martin, 11 Fodbank View Charles McMillan, c/o 157 Halbeath Road
June	Helen Robertson, 56 Malcolm Street
July	James Donnelly, Beeches House William Kinell, 56 Preston Street Masie McLaren, c/o 49 Garvock Terrace Jean Shand, 76 McBeath Road Pamela Hunter, 51 Halbeath Road
August	Ann Stirling, 20 Clyde Street David Robertson, 39 Woodmill Crescent Robert Johnston, 7 Wedderburn Crescent

THE GUILD

The Guild starts the new session 2009/10 on Sunday 13th September with a Dedication service in the Church at 10 a.m. The following meetings will be on Monday evenings at 7.15p.m. in the Rita Elder Hall to which everyone will be made very welcome.

Our meetings are –

September 13	Dedication Service
September 14	Get together
September 28	Crossreach – project
October 12	Healing Rooms
October 26	World Mission Council – Project

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY GUILD FUNDRAISER

Monday, 9th November 2009
BRUCE DAVIES,
Guitarist and Songwriter

Please keep this evening free
to support the Guild with their fundraiser

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Fellowship meets on Wednesday afternoons at 2.00p.m. in the Rita Elder Hall. All ladies and their friends will be made very welcome.

Our meetings are :

October 7	Rev Elizabeth Fisk St Ninian's Church
October 21	Mrs Audrey Lawrence The Moonwalk
November 4	Rev Alistair Jessamine Dunfermline Abbey
November 18	Mr Allan Prentice The Auld Alliance Cycle Ride – Edinburgh – Paris

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Session 2009/10 begins on Monday 21 September 2009 at 6.45p.m. in the Main Hall.

Further dates for October are :

Monday 5 October at 6.45p.m. in Main Hall
Monday 19 October at 6.45p.m. in Main Hall

We look forward to meeting old and new members

SWINGNASTICS

Swingnastics begins the new Session on Wednesday 9th September at 10a.m. when we look forward meeting our members once again. We would welcome also any ladies who would wish to join us. Please come along to see what we do which is light exercise to music followed by a cuppa and a chat.

WORLD MISSION

The Committee propose to have their usual Tea/Coffee morning for Erskine War Veterans and War Wounded after the Church Service on Sunday 8th November – Remembrance Sunday

September Issue

The Warm Heart of Africa

Thomas Baldwin joins a group of children from the Church of Scotland on a groundbreaking trip to Malawi.

A Moral Framework

Jackie Macadam meets Julia Ogilvy, award-winning businesswoman, Church of Scotland elder and author.

Cathedral of Green

Colin MacDonald reflects on the links between golf and spirituality.

A Rural Life Celebration

Bryan Kerr on the Scotland's Churches stand at the Royal Highland Show.

Missing Malawian Millions

Una Bartley explains the background to Christian Aid's tax campaign for Africa.

The Chalmers Connection

John R Hume visits the rural parish church of Kilmany in Fife.

A Wise Monk

Ron Ferguson reflects on the life of Father Joe and the importance of genuine listening.

A Source of Inspiration

The Moderator reflects on conflict, climate and Calvin.

Crisy-hypo

The Very Rev Dr James Simpson looks at two forms of hypocrisy.

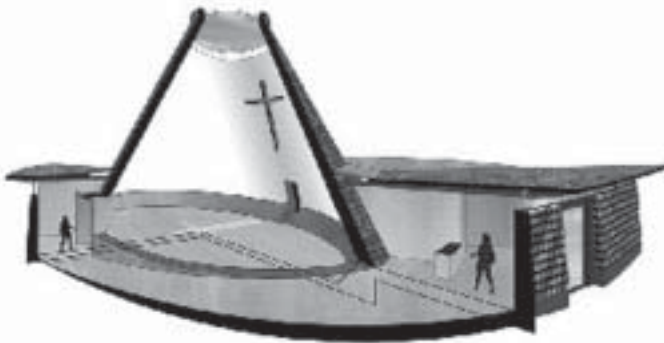
Plus –

Another winning Parable for Today, Irvine and Kilmarnock Presbytery, and four-page supplement on the work of the Mission and Discipleship Council - all for just £1.60



New Church is Pure Rubbish

The first images of a Church of Scotland church made from beer cans, tyres and shipping containers have been released.



Designed by architect Lee Ivet, the proposed new building for Colston Milton Parish Church, in the north of Glasgow, is part of a larger community campus to be owned and built by the people of Milton.

The sanctuary will be constructed in large part from old car tyres, while other parts of the building will be made from straw bales and old shipping containers.

Last year the congregation decided their future lay in a more environmentally-friendly building, as their current place of worship has a massive carbon footprint and an astronomical heating bill of £8,000-a-year.

Members wanted an ecologically-sound new-build church, but were told this would cost millions of pounds. So they now hope to make it themselves with the help of their local community.

The church received a £43,000 grant from the Scottish government's Climate Challenge Fund to carry out a feasibility study, and these images show their dream and that of their community could soon become a reality.

Already members of the community have collected almost half a tonne of beer and soft drinks cans. Because of the volume of cans being brought to the manse, Reverend Christopher Rowe has had to create a collection point next to the church.

Mr Rowe said: "The response from the people of Milton has been fantastic. People of all ages have been helping collect old cans from the woods and bringing them in from home. These cans alone have cut nearly 10 tonnes of CO₂ from Milton's carbon footprint.

"This time last year we were just dreaming and people thought our ideas were a bit mad but we have now shown that it can be done.

"Our new building may be 'pure rubbish' but it is also beautiful, we will be taking unwanted things and using them to create something new and exciting.

"It is a win-win-win situation, the community will gain confidence and skills through this project, the congregation and other local groups will get a new home, and the environment will benefit from lower carbon emissions."

The church will be part of a purpose-built centre for the whole of the local community, and other resources include a childcare facility, an internet café, a large theatre, office space and a games hall. It will be owned by community group LoveMilton, a new development trust set up as part of the project.

It is hoped that building could commence next summer.

From Church of Scotland website news section

Church Humour

When the Lord created us, he gave us a sense of humour and we are, after all, made in His image. The following quotes come from essays on the Bible by young people – I am sure the Lord Smiled.

The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with unsympathetic Genitals. Samson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah. Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the apostles.

Moses died before he ever reached Canada. When Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol. The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he obeyed him.

David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the liar. He fought with the Finklesteins, a race of people who lived in Biblical times. Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

Many times, when I was having a hard time with one of my children, God would always remind me that He was having a harder time with me than I was with them!
(Charlie "Tremendous" Jones)

Sunday School Lesson

"If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?" I asked the children in my Sunday School class.

"NO!" the children all answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the grass, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?"

Again, the answer was, "NO!"

"Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave sweets to all the children, and loved my wife, would that get me into Heaven?" I asked them again.

Again, they all answered, "NO!"

"Well, I continued, "then how can I get into Heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA be dead!"

Sunday Sermon

The minister's Sunday sermon was "*Forgive Your Enemies.*"

He asked, "how many of the congregation have forgiven their enemies?"

About half held up their hands. He then went on to give his sermon, after which he then repeated his question.

All responded, except one elderly lady.

"Mrs. Jones, are you not willing to forgive your enemies?"

"I don't have any," replied the old lady.

"Mrs. Jones, that is very unusual. How old are you?"

"Ninety-three." she replied.

"Mrs. Jones, please come down in front and tell the congregation how a person cannot have an enemy in the world?"

The little sweetheart of a lady tottered down the aisle and declared,

"I don't have an enemy in the world because I outlived them all!"

Everybody, Somebody and Nobody

There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it but **Nobody** did. **Somebody** got angry about this because it was **Everybody's** job. **Everybody** thought **Anybody** could do it but **Nobody** realised that **Everybody** wouldn't do it. It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have done ! *Anon*

FLOWER DISTRIBUTION

Oct 4	Mr & Mrs R Pratt	
Oct 11	Mr & Mrs W. Mckay	
Oct 18	Miss Bicket	Mrs E Potter
Oct 25	Mr & Mrs W Faichney	Mr D Bett
Nov 1	Mrs W Kennedy	Mrs R Wilson
Nov 8	Mrs S McLean	Mr D Clark
Nov 15	Mrs C Hunter	Mrs S Imrie
Nov 22	Mrs M Brown	Mrs A McArthur
Nov 29	Mr & Mrs R Pratt	



TEA & COFFEE ROTA

Oct 4	Mrs Imrie	Mrs Angus	Mrs Hamilton
Oct 11	Mrs Cunningham	Mrs Gillespie	Mrs Robertson
Oct 18	Mrs Kerr	Mrs McIntosh	Mrs Maureen Hynd
Oct 25	Miss Bicket	Mrs Gray	Mrs Pratt
Nov 1	Mrs McCulloch	Mrs Chapman	Mrs Bisset
Nov 8	Mrs Brown	Mrs Bowie	Mrs Stothart
Nov 15	Mrs McArthur	Mrs Welshman	Mrs Evans
	Mrs McCulloch		
Nov 22	Mrs Telfer	Mrs Kennedy	Mrs Angus
Nov 29	Mrs Prentice	Mrs McEwen	Mrs Wilson



NEXT ISSUE

Contributions for the November/December issue will be required by Sunday, 11 October, please.

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Roll Keeper	Mr. Jim Adamson, 8 Garvock Hill. 727719
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The Back Page



Hidden Potential

I picked my way through autumn leaves
 Carpeting the street,
As conkers with their prickly burrs
 Come plopping at my feet.
 Dropping with a sudden thud
 Their shells split open wide,
 Revealing satin linings
 And chestnut sheen inside.
Gazing at these glossy spheres
 Protecting what I see,
I stoop and hold within my hand
 The potential for a tree.

Kathleen Gillum