
BOARD BUSINESS

The following matters were discussed and decisions taken as appropriate at the meeting of the Congregational Board on 13th June 2006

The Board accepted the resignation of the Treasurer, Jimmy Brown, owing to health problems.

Approval was given to appoint the architect, Grant Bulloch, to undertake the drawing up of plans for the new kitchen in the Church Centre and to take charge of the proposed work to the manse.

Approval was given to the new Communication and Presentation Group to

- a) investigate security for the technical equipment now in use on the premises,
- b) have the white speakers relocated to the originally designated positions on the white walls above the arches.
- c) investigate and cost the installation of a permanent drop down screen between the pillars on the platform side of the Upper Hall .

It was decided to give support to the Fair Trade Campaign by encouraging the use of FairTrade products on our premises and by having an annual Fair Trade Coffee Morning to promote its products and raise awareness of the issues involved. However it was the view of the Board that there should not be sale of items on the premises on a Sunday.

It was decided to make a start to recycling used office stationery. A container is now in place.

Approval was given for a Funday to be held by Holyrood Abbey on our premises on Saturday 29th July, and a Coffee Morning by Amica on Saturday 4th November.

Thanks were extended to Anne and Sydney Wardrop for agreeing to take on the role of Hall Letting Conveners.

A.C.Guthrie
(Clerk to the Board)

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

JULY 2006

FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

I remember a number of years ago now being in the south of Italy, just north of Brindisi. I was staying with others on an old farm. On this summers evening I was left alone at the farm. As the warm Mediterranean sun disappeared it suddenly got very dark. I lay on one of the flat roofs of the building and just stared up into this amazing canopy of stars. It was an incredible sight. I was in the middle of nowhere, there was little or no light pollution and from one horizon to the other I was just enveloped in stars. The sense of wonder was quite overwhelming. I can still feel that sense of awe even today as I think about it. It was a sight so perfect and so beautiful and so awe inspiring

that it instinctively makes one ask, 'Where does it all come from?'

Maybe you can think of a time when you were overwhelmed by a sense of the wonder of nature - a sunset, a view, a flower? Sometimes when we stand back and look at the perfection and beauty and wonder of the world we live in, we instinctively ask, where does it all come from?

Some scientists of course are atheists, but many others have found their work has led them to believe in a Creator. Sir James Jeans, the famous British astronomer, once said: 'The universe appears to have been designed by a pure Mathematician.' For him, as for many, the order of the earth and the solar system points to a designer.

King David wrote in Psalm 8, verses 3 and 4: 'When I consider

RESPOND!

“God shows His own love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This is Romans 5:8 and is a very succinct statement of what God has done for us in that Christ’s death is an outpouring of God’s love. This fact alone is pretty overwhelming if we really think about what it means. But added to that is ‘while we were yet sinners’, or as verse 10 says ‘yet enemies of God’, He poured His love towards us in Christ’s death. This adds the extra dimension that His love wasn’t to people who loved Him and called out for His help, but to ‘sinners’ and ‘enemies’ who didn’t love Him and called out for His destruction!

To see the full consequences of this in our life we need to be mindful of each of the facets presented to us here

We were sinners and enemies of God, which put us in a position of great peril.

God loved us

Christ did what we could not do for ourselves in reconciling us to God.

This is the Amazing Grace that we sing about, the mercy that transforms us and the example that should show us the way to act towards the rest of the world. While few of us would have true enemies, we can all respond to God’s example of providing to others exactly the thing they most need even when they aren’t our friends and when providing it costs us dearly.

your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?’

There are apparently 400 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy and our sun is 150 trillion miles from the centre of our galaxy. And our galaxy is just one of a cluster of 30 galaxies. Altogether it is estimated

there are over 100 billion galaxies and each galaxy has over 100 billion stars; so with 400 billion we’re big. This verse tells us that the Creator God has set all this in place and holds it in his hand, as you and I would hold a contact lens on our finger.

But this immense and awesome God is not just concerned with things on a huge scale. How do we know that we matter to God,

and that he is mindful of human beings? Well, he also created the small things. He created the molecules, the neutrons, and the protons that make up planet earth. He made the 75,000 miles of blood vessels in the human body that carry blood to over 60 trillion cells. That is part of the biblical picture of God.

Now, opinion polls say that 70-80% of people believe he is there. But that raises a problem, because what really stumps many people is, ‘What is he like and how do we then relate to him?’

This is the big question that the Christian gospel addresses. The word ‘gospel’ means ‘great news’, it is great news about a man called Jesus Christ. In the Bible there is a verse, which says, ‘He [Jesus Christ] is the visible image of the invisible God’ (Colossians. 1:15). According to the Bible this is what God is like. He is like Jesus. It is only in and through Jesus that come into a relationship with our great creator God.

Our only chance of getting to know some celebrity or famous person is not by stalking them or writing to them or even by reading about them, but only by them

contacting us, coming to meet us and speaking with us.

According to the testimony of the Bible this is what the God of the universe has done in Jesus Christ. He has come to us and spoken to us and revealed himself. A few verses further on in Colossians Paul links the person Jesus Christ with that sense of wonder we feel when we see the glory of creation. We are told that all things were created by Christ and for him and that all things hold together in him (Colossians 1;16). He made it; he made everything in it; he made us. He is the one who gives us life and breath. So this is really what God is like, he is like Jesus. He has come, he has lived and died and risen from the dead that people like us might come to know our Creator God.

I pray that over these summer months we might all have the opportunity to sense something of the wonder and greatness of God’s creation, but more than that I pray that we might all come to know, through faith in Jesus Christ, the great Creator himself.

In His Service,

David Court