

**St. Margaret's Community Church of  
Scotland**

**Dunfermline**

**Iain Greenshields, Tel: 07427477575**

**Email: [revimaclg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:revimaclg@hotmail.co.uk)**

## **24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 Newsletter**

Dear All,

I had two uncle Anguses [Angi?] when growing up. My mum's younger brother and my dad's younger brother. One was a doctor and the other a crofter/weaver/seaman. I remember one particular evening out in a boat fishing with them both just outside Port of Ness bay, near to the Butt of Lewis – where the Minch meets the Atlantic.

The swell and current became quite powerful. One uncle was distinctly uneasy and the other in full control – guess which was which? How do you think I felt? Completely at ease because I trusted that my uncle [the seaman] knew what he was doing and I had no fear. Having said that, if I had been ill, I would have trusted my other uncle absolutely!

Competence brings assurance – the assurance of knowing that an expert is in control of a given situation. I want therefore for us to think for a moment about the competence of God. Faith surely means that we know we can trust God with our present, our souls and our destiny. Why? Because he is all wise, all powerful and he knows what he is doing!

Is that how you feel about God – without a doubt? I wonder! I wonder if so many of the personal problems we have in life are there because we do not really, deep down, believe in the absolute competence of God? He tells us he is in control, knows what he is doing, but do we trust him?

Why is it so difficult for us to trust God? My doctor uncle lacked trust because he did not know my seaman uncle well – but I did and had been out with him often enough to know that he knew what he was doing. One other thing: My trust was that of a child – childlikeness, as Jesus put it. My faith was not just in his competence but in him – in knowing that he would do nothing to harm me because he loved me.

Is it difficult for us to trust God because we find it so hard to yield the control of our lives to another person – to God himself? Is that the issue for some of us?

Is it difficult for us to trust God because at some point in our lives, someone whom we should have been able to trust let us down very badly? Recovery of trust for us is very hard!

Is it difficult for us to trust God because we so seldom see in those who have power and leadership any evidence of competence that convinces us that people with power can be trusted?

We have to step back for a moment and remember that God is like no other. Comparisons are futile because the Lord is of another reality. He is flawless, perfect, all-powerful, undiluted love, and eternally the same in his unchangingness.

But there is more than that. He gave us a view of himself in a human person when he, through Jesus Christ, became one of us. Take time to read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and expose yourself to the complete competence and perfect reliability and love of God in human form – open your life up to him and everything will change.

**Iain**

## **Intimations**

We are moving to the point where returning to church for services will be possible – all this is of course dependent on everything continuing to get better. The one thing that we will never want to do is to expose anyone in our church to risk – so watch this space.

No Zoom mid-week service this week.

Facebook thought for each day as usual.

Zoom Service on Sunday at 10.45 for 11.00am.

## **Cherokee Rite of Passage**

His father takes him into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone.

He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the rays of the morning sun shine through it."

He cannot cry out for help to anyone.

Once he survives the night, he is a MAN.

He cannot tell the other boys of this experience, because each lad must come into manhood on his own.

The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human might do him harm. The wind blew the grass and earth, and shook his stump, but he sat stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could become a man!

Finally, after a horrific night the sun appeared and he removed his blindfold.

It was then that he discovered his father sitting on the stump next to him.

He had been at watch the entire night, protecting his son from harm.

I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess – Martin Luther

When you have nothing left but God, then you become aware that God is enough - Maude Royden.

To trust God means to demand nothing – D. Larry Crabb

When we trust God, we're secure, regardless of the circumstances that surround us – Anon

You cannot live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you – John Wooden

How unutterably sweet is the knowledge that our heavenly Father knows us completely. No talebearer can inform on us, no enemy can make an accusation stick; nor forgotten skeleton can come tumbling out of some hidden closet to abash us and expose our past; no unsuspected weakness in our characters can come to light to turn God away from us, since He knew us utterly before we knew Him and called us to Himself in the full knowledge of everything that was against us – A. W. Tozer.