

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

Dunfermline

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4thSeptember 2020 Newsletter

The iconic song by Simon and Garfunkel from the Bridge over Troubled Waters album, Sound of Silence, begins, "Hello darkness my old friend...."

I have been thinking a great deal recently about the nature of the world in which we live and the Bible has a great deal to say, in describing our world, as darkness.

In 2 Samuel 22 King David in verse 29 says to the Lord, "O Lord, you are my light; yes Lord, you light up my darkness." David recognised that there is a darkness in each one of us – ignorance of God and what is right. We make poor decisions and we treat people badly. The darkness is what the Bible refers to as sin – whereas God is pure light.

Sadly, for all of us, there are parts of us that can be described as darkness, which for us are indeed "old friends" – ways of being, doing, thinking and feeling that are wrong but we have become too accustomed to them and don't see any need to change.

The light of God's holiness shines into that darkness, exposing it for what it is and urges us to change – to ask the Spirit's help to turn our lives around and change. What darkness is there in you and me, that for us has become an old friend? What are we going to do about it?

In Psalm 85 verse 5 the Psalmist says this - The "gods" know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about

in **darkness**. The "gods" of today are of course the idols in which people put their trust rather than the true and living God. The idols of celebrity, money, sex, power, materialism etc – what are they? How are they described? They cause people to walk about in darkness. Far from being influenced and driven by these things, the focus of our life should be on Christ because He describes Himself as the Light of the World. We should not be stepping back into darkness but stepping away from it as we follow Jesus.

Isaiah 9 verse 2 when speaking about the future and the coming of the Messiah said this, "The people walking in **darkness** have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep **darkness** a light has dawned." The coming of Jesus transforms the destiny and the outlook of those who leave the darkness and come to the light. Have we seen Jesus as a great light? The light of hope? The light that opens up a new way – the way into the Kingdom of God?

In Isaiah 42 verse 16 God makes a promise to those who step out of the darkness, "I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the **darkness** into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them." To change the direction of our lives can be a fearful thought but the One who calls us promises never to forsake us.

Finally, these words of Jesus from John's Gospel - he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in **darkness** but will have the light of life.'

Iain

Intimations

We did it at last! After 6 months some of us returned to a church service – 27 brave souls. It was very good to be back in Church, and so we will continue. Could you please let Irene know if you are coming so we can plan out the church – the number is 01383 731947.

The Church Service will be at 11am.

The Zoom service will continue for those who wish – a good number attended Zoom this week. The minister will hold the Zoom Service from 10.00am [beginning at 10.15]. Once we get the hang of things we will try to hold the two services together!!!

Facebook will continue everyday of the week and we are working our way through Genesis and looking at the life of Abraham. There will be a Facebook Service pre-recorded every Sunday.

There will be no midweek Zoom service for the next two Wednesdays as the Minister will be on Study leave till the 5th of September and a week's annual leave the following week – he will, though, take both Sunday Services.

This could be used to show the value of paying attention and truly listening – whether to God or other people.

Intelligence Test

How's your aging intelligence? Take the following test here and determine if you are losing it or are still "with it." OK, relax, clear your mind and.... begin.

What do you put in a toaster?

The answer is "bread." If you said "toast," then give up now and go do

something else. Try not to hurt yourself. If you said, "bread," go to Question 2.

Say "silk" five times. Now spell "silk."
What do cows drink?

Answer: Cows drink water. If you said "milk," please do not attempt the next question. Your brain is obviously over stressed and may even overheat. It may be that you need to content yourself with reading something more appropriate such as "Children's World." If you said, "water" then proceed to Question 3.

If a red house is made from red bricks and a blue house is made from blue bricks and a pink house is made from pink bricks and a black house is made from black bricks, what is a greenhouse made from?

Answer: Greenhouses are made from glass. If you said "green bricks," what are you still doing here reading these questions?? If you said "glass," then go on to Question 4.

Without using a calculator - You are driving a bus from London to Milford Haven in Wales.

In London, 17 people get on the bus. In Reading, six people get off the bus and nine people get on.

In Swindon, two people get off and four get on.

In Cardiff, 11 people get off and 16 people get on.

In Swansea, three people get off and five people get on.

In Carmathen, six people get off and three get on.

You then arrive at Milford Haven.

What was the name of the bus driver?

Answer: Oh, for crying out loud! Don't you remember? It was YOU!