

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

Dunfermline

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How important is the concept of "community" to the Church and where does this idea of Christian Community originate?

It all begins with the Trinity. The unique belief of the Christian Church is that God has revealed himself as "three persons" but "One God." Now, this is mystery of mysteries, but it does explain a great deal to us.

"Then God said, "Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves." Genesis chapter 1. And then in chapter 2 of Genesis he says this, "And the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him.""

Do you notice the use of "our" and not "my" in the Genesis 1 quote? Also, how else could God know that it was not good to be alone unless he is in personal co-equal relationships? Community begins with God and who he is. It is there as the Father and Son and Holy Spirit live in mutual, satisfying relationships of love.

Jesus spoke of the Church as a community – the word he used was his "Body" – the Church is the Body of Christ with every member different but a necessary part of this living organism.

Let us then consider for a moment the image of a Body and ask why it is used. A body has many parts and each depends on the other. Every part of the body is important to its function and health.

There is no such thing as the perfect Body – no matter how much a person may strive to achieve this, it is simply not possible. Indeed, many with the so-called "perfect" bodies end up having to have all kinds of plastic surgery to keep it looking up to scratch – they are engaging in an illusion.

The Christian Body is one of imperfect parts coming together. What holds us together is our relationship to the Head, who is Christ. He supplies the constant flow of love and grace and forgiveness that we need to be able to function – notice, He is the Head, no-one else.

So, the Christian Body/Church is full of imperfect parts. How can this change or improve? How can the Body become more healthy? First of all, the exercise of forgiveness. There is one of the keys. We forgive one another and thus relieve the tension that unforgiveness brings. How do we do that? By realising the extent to which we are forgiven people. Stop and ponder and consider the Cross and its implications for you and then take that section of the Lord's Prayer – "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."

Then there is love. Love is always a command and not a good idea or suggestion when that word is on the lips of Christ! How can you command love? By releasing ourselves from the modern concept of love as principally a feeling or emotion and seeing it instead as a responsibility and a duty. What parent fails to understand this – we love our Children even when it feels impossible to do so and not just when we feel good about them. The Body flourishes in the clear air of love, offered in grace and persistent in its forgiveness. That comes from the Head and flows to every part of the Body.

Iain

Intimations

Angels. We are planning to knit (those of us able and willing to do this) in order that we place them around our community prior to Christmas with a message of Hope. How much this looks like being needed at this time! If you are interested in doing this you can get details either from Irene on 01383731947 or June on 01383 724992.

Services

Daily readings in John's Gospel on Facebook.

No Zoom on Wednesday at 6.45pm

Facebook at 9am on Sunday

Zoom at 9.45am on Sunday

Church Service at 11am on Sunday and the service is livestreamed on YouTube – go to St. Margaret's Church of Scotland Dunfermline.

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly.

One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole until it suddenly stopped making any progress and looked like it was stuck, so the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily, although it had a swollen body and small, shrivelled wings.

The man didn't think anything of it and sat there waiting for the wings to enlarge to support the butterfly. But that didn't happen. The butterfly spent the rest of its life unable to fly, crawling around with tiny wings and a swollen body.

Despite the kind heart of the man, he didn't understand that the restricting cocoon and the struggle needed by the butterfly to get itself through the small opening; were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings. To prepare itself for flying once it was out of the cocoon.

Moral of the story: our struggles in life are designed by our Creator to develop courage and strength. Without struggles, we never grow and never get stronger.

There once was a little boy who had a very bad temper. His father decided to hand him a bag of nails and said that every time the boy lost his temper, he had to hammer a nail into the fence. On the first day, the boy hammered 37 nails into that fence.

The boy gradually began to control his temper over the next few weeks, and the number of nails he was hammering into the fence slowly decreased. He discovered it was easier to control his temper than to hammer those nails into the fence.

Finally, the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father the news and the father suggested that the boy should now pull out a nail every day he kept his temper under control. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence.

"you have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there."