

Blackbraes and Shieldhill
Parish Church
linked with
Muiravonside Parish Church
Summer 2017



www.bsandm-church.org.uk

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Registered Charity

Blackbraes and Shieldhill SC 002512

Muiravonside SC 007571



Locum Minister's letter



Dear Friends

Summer suns are glowing over land and sea (CH4 - 225)

“Summer, June summer, with the green back on the earth and the whole world unlocked and seething – like winter, it came suddenly and one knew it in bed, almost before waking up; with cuckoos and pigeons hollowing the woods since day-light and the chipping of blue tits in the pear blossom... Outdoors, one scarcely knew what had happened or remembered any other time. There had never been rain, or frost, or cloud. It had always been like this. The heat from the ground climbed up one's legs and smote one under the chin...”

It would be nice if we might be in for a summer like the one Laurie Lee describes in ‘Cider with Rosie’. Conditioned by the long summer holidays of our childhood, there is still an expectation of sunlight, of rest, and of more relaxing times. The reality for many people is different. For those who work, looking longingly out of windows to the sunshine and imagining the breezes; for others, the concern that it gets too hot. The reality more often than not is horizontal rain and haar-draped mornings and we fear the sun might never shine again, or at least not on consecutive days!

In our churches things don't grind to a halt and there are always matters needing attention, but certainly the number of meetings drops and there is a chance to refresh the spirits and recharge the batteries. It is also a time to do some planning ahead for the remainder of the year. It is good to come up with ideas and vision in the midst of the busy ‘church year’ but it is often in the summer weeks when some of the pressure is off that the more creative ideas bubble to the surface. During this period of vacancy, it is also a time when questions like “What would the church be like if...?” arise.

This summer why don't we all dream dreams about our churches? What needs to be done? Where might we be able to offer help? Who are the people who have the gifts, skills and vision to take our church on the next stage of its adventure of faith? This summer, let our imagination run riot, listen to what the Spirit of God may be whispering to us about the way ahead for our church.

Thank you for your support!

Love from Philip



Baptism

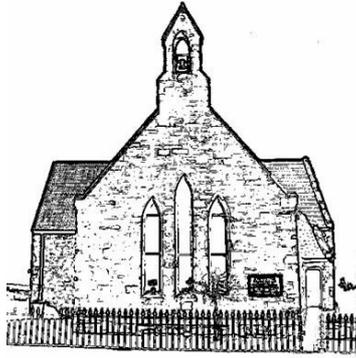
'Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name, welcomes me.'

Blackbraes and Shieldhill Parish

Sylvie Elizabeth MacGowan
Infant daughter of Peter and Tracey MacGowan
on 4 June 2017

Funerals

'The Lord will protect you as you come and go, both now and forevermore'.



Blackbraes and Shieldhill Parish

John Tait

Helen Gray

Margaret Jenkins

John Deans

Ann Moore

Cathie Campbell

Hannah Gardiner

Alexander 'Eckford' Bryce

Funerals

'The Lord will protect you as you come and go, both now and forevermore'.



Muiravonside Parish

Nicola Denholm

Peter Gilchrist

Katherine Kelso

Margaret Cockburn

Marion 'Maisie' Robertson

Henry Wallace

Graham Duncan

“Tales From a Shieldhill Garden.”



One of the new songs that was added to the Muiravonside Choral Society's repertoire this spring was Michael Marra's song "Hermless". In one of the verses the subject of the song says that:

" Ma feet might be big but the insects are safe
They'll never get stood on by me".

Although my feet are not very big, I manage to stand on my fair share of creepy crawlies, in particular, these big snails when I have cause to go into the garden after dark. I first met these big snails when visiting my sister in South Yorkshire. They could always be seen on a small piece of waste ground that was between a field, the Scout Hut and the pavement, never in her garden. I am not sure if they eat growing plants as I usually find them clinging to a pot or climbing up the wall of the greenhouse.

Someone that I was talking to assured me that these snails were edible. I am afraid that I have not tried to test this theory but, as I first saw them in the Vale of York, I am not aware of the top restaurants in that area harvesting these snails for the table.

These big snails do not appear to have any predators as they progress quite sedately from flowerbed to flowerbed. I try to deal with the slug family organically ie by placing barriers around plants such as eggshells, coffee grounds, sheep wool pellets and jaggy gravel. I have tried sticking copper rings around pots and this also meets with some success and I place beer traps near to lettuce and hostas. I have not to date caught any of these snails in beer traps although I catch the occasional beetle and once caught a mouse. I am not even sure that they feed on growing plants as the main culprits seem to be little black or fawn coloured slugs.

Slugs and snails do have predators. Ground beetles eat slugs and frogs and toads eat some as well. There are quite a number of frogs in the garden pond and toads are sometimes found in my compost heap. Leopard slugs eat other slugs and some snails and slugs just eat dead vegetation. Crows are also supposed to eat slugs and they certainly

ate all the pond snails that were in the garden pond. For days there were broken snail shells on the edge of the pond until all the snails were gone. Song Thrushes make short work of snails; they smash them open on a stone. There have not been any thrushes in my garden for some time although I have seen the odd one in surrounding woodland.

Song Thrushes are red listed which means that they are a serious conservation concern. I counted the thrush family winter visitors over three winters, between 2010 and 2013/14. Once in that time I found a flock of Fieldfares feeding on the lower end of the Gardrum Moss and, in the same winter of 2012, there was a mixed flock of Fieldfares and Red Wings on the bushes that are near the point where The Union Canal enters the tunnel at Glen Village. I haven't seen any number of this family in more recent years. The RSPB website has a list of species that are of a conservation concern. The red listed ones are in great danger of disappearing altogether.

The presence of big snails is most probably a result of global warming as warming air helps some creatures to move north whilst making it difficult to make survival tricky for others. Of course there are other factors such as habitat loss and difficult weather that affects the winter visitors that come here from overseas may affect Fieldfares and Redwings. These birds come from northern lands and have to cross the North Atlantic or perhaps the North Sea. I have no doubt that slug pellets that contain metaldehyde do kill slugs. When the weather is very wet, the slugs may not die but become little poisonous creatures. They will kill any hedgehog or frog that happens to eat them.

Isaiah ch45 v18 says He who created the heavens, he is God: he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited –

In the beginning, God created the heavens and then fashioned the earth. Light and darkness and day and night came next and then plants. Once the earth was clothed in vegetation, creatures flew in the air and inhabited the land. There was provision and space for

everything.

We have a beautiful land. It is our job to care for it so that it can be lived in and enjoyed by following generations.

Rena

Tea, coffee and a chat are always available in the hall after services. Please stay if you can.



RSPB BIG Garden Birdwatch

Many people in both churches took part in the RSPB's Garden Birdwatch that was at the end of January.

3,000,000 birds were counted across the UK. 626,000 were counted across Scotland.

More than 35,000 people took part.

- 1 House Sparrow
- 2 Starling
- 3 Chaffinch
- 4 Blackbird
- 5 Blue Tit
- 6 Woodpigeon
- 7 Great tit
- 8 Robin
- 9 Goldfinch
- 10 Coal tit

Rena



BIG
Garden
Birdwatch

Everything you need to know
to do the Big Garden Birdwatch
28-30 January 2017



South Africa Link



News from South Africa – June 2017

Dear Friends,

Well Christmas came and went and so did Easter and Pentecost. This is being written on the eve of Trinity Sunday. All of this testifies to how busy life continues to be.

The year began late as a result of the Fees Must Fall campaign. There were no significant protests and things remain apparently peaceful despite ongoing negotiations between students and university authorities. This led to a delay in the opening of the Faculty of Theology's Centenary Year until March 13. A well attended opening service was held during which Graham presented the Vice Chancellor and Principal, Prof Cheryl de la Rey with a copy of the Centenary book he had edited. This was followed by the opening of the reinstated original university gates at the front of the Theology building. That afternoon a symposium was held at which Graham was presented with a Festschrift in honour of his academic achievements to which over sixty colleagues in South Africa and around the world had contributed.

Since then the Faculty has hosted several memorial lectures as well as a conference on 'Deconstructing the Past' where the partner churches involved in the faculty presented their histories under apartheid. Our Faculty was a base for the promotion of the theological justification of apartheid though it also produced a number of opponents of the evil regime. Graham presented a paper on the complicity of South African Presbyterianism with apartheid.

This was the day after graduation where two of his students received doctoral degrees and the highlight was the award of an honorary doctorate to Prof Jurgen Moltmann, the world's leading Reformed theologian. Moltmann is 89 years old and was a great hit with the students.

Just before this, Graham paid a short visit to Scotland to officiate at the funeral of our longtime friend, Barbara Ross who died tragically on her way to Abu Dhabi to join husband Dave. One positive result of the trip was that he met up with some Youth Fellowship friends of the 1970s whom he hadn't seen since.

Graham has continued with his research on South African Presbyterianism as well as teaching in the Faculty and at St Augustine's College. He has been commissioned by the church to oversee the production of a history of Presbyterianism in South Africa for the twentieth anniversary of the 1999 union which brought the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa into being. Work for the Council on Higher Education continues and the major task of the year is his Convenership of the Specialist Committee on Religious Studies and Theology at the National Research Foundation. Last week he was called out at 24 hours notice to attend a NRF workshop and to present a paper on the work of specialist committees.

With a change of personnel in the Ministry Committee Graham has been asked to develop an academic module for Presbyterian Formation along with colleague, Zwai Mthyoblie, our minister at St Andrew's, Pretoria. Four ministers will teach the module which will include: history of the denomination (Graham), church law (Zwai), spirituality (Ministry Secretary, Pat Baxter) and mission (Jerry Pillay).

As always, Sandra provides the stability at home which allows for all these things to happen. She is constantly offering hospitality as well as continuing with her language editing work for students. Then there is her work with Violet Mashao at Mamelodi, helping with the orphaned children's feeding project.

This past weekend, Graham was asked by the Moderator of the General Assembly to represent him at an Associations' spiritual imbizo (consultative gathering), the first of its kind. Our women's, men's and youth associations have sadly been in conflict since the union in 1999 and it has been a lengthy painful journey to bring them to this stage where they can even meet together for worship. It was a wonderful occasion at which Graham preached and celebrated

communion before leaving at midnight as the revival service began. The eve of Pentecost spirit was clearly present and we hope and pray that this is the beginning of a process that will lead to the full union of the associations. Many of Graham's Fedsem students were present which added to the joy of the imbizo.

It is clear that both of our nations are experiencing troubled times at present. The recent Manchester bombing was yet another example of the fundamentalism, of whatever kind, that is a violent lethal and destructive force in our societies and throughout the world. Our prayer is for a world characterised by peace, justice and the care of the environment which supports and maintains us on our journey towards the kingdom of God.

Lots of Love!

Graham & Sandra



The new doctors with their promoters and Prof Moltmann (in front row in red gown)



Graham with Dr Wonke Buqa and Dr Philip Musoni



Graham with two student members of the Men's Christian Guild, Celani Mbhele and Nkululeko Nojoko, at the spiritual *imbizo*



Christian Aid Week 2017



At the start of Christian Aid Week in May we held a lunch after the service which was well supported and very successful. Many donations were received and a number of gift aid forms were also completed. In addition to these donations, a number of people returned their small Christian Aid money boxes to be counted. As a result of all this generosity, a total of £500 was raised for the work of Christian Aid on behalf of Shieldhill and California. Thanks are due to everyone who helped in any way to achieve this amount.

Marion Zacks



Guild Session 2017 -2018



This session marks the third and final year of the strategy “Be Bold Be Strong”, the annual theme being “Go in Love”. Meeting, worshipping and working together, love gives us a sense of belonging within the Church Guild group itself but also as part of belonging in the local and national organisation. Different concerns and different personalities within all groups are blended in love into one fellowship.

The first Guild meeting of the session is on Wednesday 4 October 2017 at 7.30pm in Shieldhill Church Hall. Please join us- a warm welcome awaits.

“Lord we thank you for the privilege of meeting together. Help us to make real our love in Christ showing genuine love and concern for all.”



Lorna Coulter



A prayer for God's constant presence by Nick Fawcett

I trust in you, O Lord I say, "You are my God".

My times are in your hand

Psalm 31

Every hour, every minute
every day I give to you,
for I know you're with me in it,
reaching out to bless anew
Take the present and tomorrow,
take my laughter and my tears ;
whether I know joy or sorrow
buoyant hopes or nagging fears.
All I'm facing, all I'm feeling
Lord I place into your hands,
for in you is inner healing-
one who cares who understands .
Though I'm weak and hesitating,
you are there to help and guide
.Always Lord I find you waiting ,
ever present by my side.

Submitted by Lorna Coulter

Rendezvous Group

This is just a wee reminder that the Rendezvous Group will be starting up again in September - **Wednesday 13th September** to be precise. This group meets once a month on a Wednesday afternoon from 1.30 to 3.00 p.m. in Shieldhill Church Hall and runs from September to April apart from January when there is no meeting. It is open to anyone who would like to come and enjoy some fellowship and a variety of entertainment, not forgetting tea and cake! All will be made welcome.

Our new session starts on Wed 13th September with an afternoon tea. Details to follow.

M. Zacks

Muiravonside Church Facebook Page

Muiravonside Parish Church now has a Facebook page which gives all the latest news of events and can be viewed at:

<https://www.facebook.com/muiravonsideparishchurch/>





Drew's
view

Hi Everyone - This time, something a little different - another story with fictitious characters. However, as always, the events described could actually happen when God's love is involved.

Today, you will be with me in Paradise

The phone call wasn't unexpected. Nevertheless, the strident electronic ringtone that shattered the silence with its jaunty little tune, which felt so wrong on such a sad day, still made Angela Randall almost jump out of her skin. Heart racing, she felt the all too familiar sinking feeling in her stomach that only this type of call can bring as she reached over and pressed the green button on the phone's handset.

It was the hospital. She had known it would be them. But still, this didn't make it any easier for her, or allay the fear that was now beginning to enshroud her in its vice-like grip and chill her to the core, while the birds sung happily outside on such a warm summer's afternoon.

Eddie, the closest friend and colleague that she had in this world, had been ill for some time. Suddenly though, things had got a lot worse and his condition had deteriorated. Just last night, she had visited him as she had every evening and because he had no next of kin alive, he had given the doctors his permission to contact her if anything happened.

"Could you come in as soon as possible, Miss Randall?" they had asked. After a short silence to compose herself, Angela finally summed up courage and asked them just how long he might have.

"Not long," they replied. "Just a matter of hours. If that. He asked specially for you...I'm so sorry..."

Angela said she would be there straightaway. What the hospital didn't know was that she would have come even if she had to travel to the other side of the world, because just over thirty years ago, on one warm July morning, Eddie Rogers had saved her life.

She remembered that morning as if it was yesterday. She had just turned twenty one, but there were no celebrations for her. Just sadness, with an increasing feeling of hopelessness that things were getting more and more out of control. In her late teens, she had fallen in with some bad company and became involved in activities which

had put her on the radar of the local police. She had received several warnings, then finally as a last resort; a kindly magistrate had offered her a final chance before she would be sent to prison.

A new drop in centre had just been set up by a local charity, but this one was slightly different. It was a Christian organisation which was primarily aimed at providing spiritual support and care to people who had just been released from prison. If they already had a faith, they could meet like minded people who had been through the same experience as them for fellowship and a chance to consolidate their faith.

However, all were welcome, no matter what their faith or background was and even if someone who had recently been released just wanted to drop in for a cup of tea and a chat, or needed help in some way, they would be warmly welcomed. There would be no pressure put upon them about faith or becoming a Christian. They would instead, receive love and support.

The magistrate had told Angela the same thing. She wouldn't be put under any pressure to become a Christian if she didn't want to. No one at any time would force their faith upon her. They only wanted someone who could make a really good cup of tea or coffee and was willing to tidy things up a little and do some cleaning. She was going to be offered this final chance as a form of community service and he urged her to take it.

For once in a way, Angela didn't follow her normal course and rebel. There was something about the magistrate. He was different from the others. Before, she had always been met by indifference and condescendence. She had maybe been unlucky because there are lots of good and caring people, but this was the first time anyone she had met in officialdom had actually cared about her and treated her like a human being, rather than part of an endless stream of people who came before the courts. She knew right away by his demeanour that this was a genuinely kind man. He was trying to help her.

"I've nothing to lose," she thought. "It can't be any worse than things are now." And with that thought echoing through her head, she seized a lifeline that although she didn't know it yet, would save her life.

Ten days later, on a warm and sunny morning, a little apprehensively, she climbed the two sets of stairs in the large city building where the centre was situated and literally stumbled into reception. The woman there greeted her warmly and pointed along the corridor to a blue door with the number "3" on it.

"Eddie's going to show you around. He's a volunteer just like you. Just go straight in. He's expecting you...and...welcome!"

Angela opened the blue door and saw a large, heavy set man sitting behind a desk which was actually too small for him. He had a scar just below his left eye and was intently reading a magazine. Angela guessed he was about ten years older than her. At first he didn't notice her. She hadn't known quite what to expect, but there was one thing that she wasn't prepared for.

He was crying.

He sensed her presence and with a start, looked up.

"I'm sorry!" Angela blurted out, not quite sure what to say or do. "I can... err...come back later?"

Eddie raised his hands in a dismissive gesture. He was trying to tell her he wanted her to stay. Then he realised she would think he meant that he wanted her to leave, so instead, he motioned her to sit down. Then, with tears still running down his cheeks, he gave her one of the kindest smiles that she had ever seen and said:

"I'm so sorry. These stories still get to me so much, you know. You must be Angela. It's wonderful to have you here." He got up very nimbly for such a large man and said, "Follow me and I'll give you a guided tour!"

And that was how Angela met Eddie Rogers.

Angela was shown round some impressive facilities in an organisation that was obviously very well run. There was a large meeting room for social time as well as some smaller private rooms for groups of two or three, or one to one counselling. Adjacent to the meeting room was a small cafeteria, where Angela would be spending most of her time.

She was introduced to several of the clients while they were walking round and sensed that because Eddie was with her, she was being treated by them like a VIP and with great warmth. They obviously respected him greatly and one even joked,

"Thank goodness! Now we'll get a decent cup of tea. Not like the stuff that Eddie recycles and serves up!"

Now back in Eddie's office, they finalised all the forms that had to be filled in. At one point, Eddie had to go into one of the other rooms to find a missing form. The magazine was still lying there. Intrigued,

Angela had a look. The story was about a woman who had found Jesus and had become a Christian. She outlined in the article how this had happened and the life changing aspects it had brought about. The woman's picture was there and she looked so happy. Angela would later find out that what she actually was reading was a Testimony.

During the journey home, Angela couldn't get Eddie's reaction to the magazine article out of her head. He was one of the toughest looking guys she had ever met. Just how much would it take to make someone like him cry? How much must it mean to him?

She was totally intrigued by this and knew she was going to stay, even if it was to find out more about this remarkable guy. She wondered too if the magazine had more stories like the woman's one and decided she was going to do a bit of investigation about these stories, or "Testimonies" as they seemed to be called.

It has often been asked, "What would happen if...?" and during the next months, Angela would ponder on this question many times. She soon settled at the centre and made so many cups of tea and coffee that she lost count. She had also just casually happened to mention to Eddie she had noticed the magazine on his desk and could she borrow it?

The magazine was full of similar stories of people finding faith and she noticed they had several things in common. The first was that the people looked so happy. Almost radiant. The second was that the events had happened suddenly, but always with life changing consequences.

As time went by, as she became more and more immersed in her work at the centre, Angela gradually lost touch with the circle of friends that had got her into so much trouble. She was also spending most of her free time reading about the Testimonies. One afternoon, she happened to look at the local newspaper and discovered that two of her former friends had been killed in a car accident. The car they were travelling in was being chased by the police when it lost control.

Numbed, Angela came to the conclusion that she probably would have been in the car with them if she hadn't started work at the centre and decided to stay on there after becoming intrigued about a man crying over a magazine article. "What would happen if..." - she had remained with this circle of friends? She realised that although he had no way of knowing it, Eddie had saved her life.

Her three month stay was almost over at the centre. Angela was so settled, she regarded these people as her "family" now and pleaded to stay on. The management was absolutely relieved because she was extremely popular and her request was granted.

About six months later, on one exceptionally fine morning, Angela arrived at the centre and the strangest thing happened. She felt as if she was observing everything through someone else's eyes. She saw the people all going about their tasks. They looked so happy and she felt utter and unconditional love for them. For a few moments she was overwhelmed. She was witnessing something that was the greatest of good.

Angela realised she was seeing them through Jesus' eyes. She was feeling his love not just for these people, but for herself as well. This was what it was all about. She could have such happiness. She could leave behind a life which had been tearing her apart. She spent the rest of the day totally stunned, but experiencing happiness she had never known in her life.

She had to tell Eddie, but didn't want to embarrass him by speaking to him. She thought something similar might happen to what occurred during their first meeting. Instead, she wrote him a note and left it on the desk that was too small for him.

The next day, Eddie intrigued and surprised her even more. He not only told her that he had hoped against hope that something like this would happen, but added rather enigmatically that he had known that for her, there was still time, unlike him. A few days later, there was a further surprise for Angela. Eddie went on to tell her that he had always been into arts and crafts and when someone who is special to him finds Jesus, he makes them a little enamel picture badge. Rather than taking the person's picture, he draws a portrait of the person's face. Then, after praying for guidance, on the back of the badge, he inscribes a few words from Scripture revealing what God is trying to say to them at this special time.

Rather shyly, he produced a small but very ornate display case with the badge inside. It was absolutely beautiful. He was obviously a very talented artist. The likeness was stunning. Her face depicted on it showed something worth much more to Angela than beauty. It showed hope. When she turned the badge over to see the inscription, it had in very small but legible neat print, five beautiful words from Deuteronomy, Chapter 14, verse 2. It said:

"The Lord has chosen you."

Angela hugged him and wept. Eddie showed her a larger presentation case which contained copies of ten other badges with friends that were special to him. He asked if it would be OK to add a copy of hers. She said, "Of course." Gradually, as she regained her composure she remembered the rather strange thing that Eddie had said about there still being time for her but not for him. She asked him what he meant.

Eddie looked very sad and went on to tell her:

"I don't deserve God's grace. When I was younger, I got into terrible trouble. I stole many things and did so many things that I now regret and I'm deeply ashamed of. I will never see him." He added: "That's why I want to help people not to make the same mistakes I made and save them while there is still time. If I can help someone else to find God, it's so special to me. It is a victory."

Angela thought about this over and over again as she drove home. There was something about it that didn't add up. There was a passage from the Bible she had come across while in childhood, but just couldn't put her finger on it. Then it suddenly came back to her and she looked it up. The three crosses! The other man on a cross who had done wrong in his life but shouted, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King" (Luke 23:42)

The next day, with great excitement, Angela started to tell Eddie about this but he interrupted her and said he knew what she was going to say. He even recited the Scripture from Luke 23, word for word. He went on to tell her:

"I know you mean well and I love you for that, but there's a reason why I told you this." What he said next fascinated her.

He went on to tell her that he believed that everyone has a light which is contained within their soul that is sent from God, especially when there are attributes that are in his image, such as love and compassion. He went on to describe that some people can sense this light which is within these people and can see it, not literally as an actual light - but a sense of goodness. He added that when he was a child, he could see this light within himself until he was in his teens. Then, after he had continually got into trouble time after time, one day, this light extinguished out of existence. It has never been relit by God to this day, although he can still very much see it in others.

"That is why I know I don't deserve God's grace."

Thirty years later these words still played over and over in Angela's mind as she parked the car and then walked along the endless

hospital corridors to the room Eddie was in. She had tried so much over the years to convince him about God's forgiveness. Both of them had remained at the centre which still was as busy as ever. But now, both Eddie and her were employed in an official capacity, attending large Christian events and doing presentations to promote the work of the centre there.

Eddie was propped up a little in bed and actually looked a little better, but Angela knew just how bad things were. They spent half an hour together reminiscing, sometimes laughing, sometimes crying, sometimes just holding hands and sitting in silence. Finally Eddie pointed at the small chest of drawers beside his bed and asked Angela to bring out the presentation case which was inside. Angela knew what it would contain and opened it for Eddie.

The eleven badges were there, including her own. A face which now looked so impossibly young. Eddie told her:

"I'm getting so sleepy now, but I must tell you, I want you to carry on what I have done. If a person you know who is special to you finds Jesus, go to someone who can make them a badge then pray. After that, ask the artist to inscribe on it what God is wanting you to tell this person."

Angela protested that she would never be able to do this as good as him, but he stopped her and added,

"I told you once, such a long time ago that I can see a light within a person that shows the goodness of their soul."

As Angela nodded, he reached out, held her hand and continued,

"You have the brightest light I have ever encountered. It is around you just now and how I wish you could see it. There is no beauty that can describe it."

His eyes closed and because of the medications, sleep took over.

Angela now knew what she had to do. On the drive home, despair turned into hope. She remembered that above all, God is a God of forgiveness. She remembered the passage where Jacob wrestles with God and will not let him go unless he blesses him. (Genesis 32:26) Angela thought, "God is about to get a wrestling match that will make Jacob's one look tame when I do this for Eddie."

All that evening she prayed and prayed. She argued with God. She shouted at God. She pleaded with God. She fought with God. "I will not let you go unless you bless him! I will not let you go unless you

bless him! I WILL NOT LET YOU GO! " She repeated these words, one hundred times, five hundred times, one thousand times. At some point during the early hours, about two in the morning, she drifted into sleep and although her conscious mind wasn't aware of it, her subconscious sensed a deep sense of peace and the words stopped.

One hour later, the ringing phone awoke Angela with a start. It was the hospital. Eddie passed away peacefully in his sleep at 02:05 - just at about the time when Angela fell asleep. She sat for a while, totally numb. Much later, as the first light of day was dawning in the eastern sky, she opened the little presentation case and looked at the badges.

There was something different about them. Right in the centre, there was a new twelfth badge. The face was immediately recognisable. He looked much younger - about the same age when she first met him, but the scar was gone. There was also no pain or suffering etched on his face - but of course, there is no pain or suffering where this drawing was done. Just an expression of joy and absolute surprise. She remembered about the inscription on the back where God is telling you what he is thinking about this person. It simply said:

"Today, you will be with me in Paradise."

Angela held the badge close to her and wept. But this time, they were tears of joy.

Epilogue

Angela continued the work that Eddie had done and when she visits large Christian events and get-togethers promoting the work of the centre, she tells them about the man who cried whenever he read about someone finding Jesus and who could see lights in people. She tells them about the badges as well. There is never a dry eye in the audience when this happens.

The picture badges now cover an entire wall.



Prayer Power

Prayer power is such a wonderful gift.
Reaching out to our Lord and Saviour.
Always there for everyone day or night.
Yielding results that can be spectacular.
Energising and empowering our faith.
Reassurance in troubled times of stress.

Providing comfort when we are down.
Offering valued help and protection.
Welcoming God's love into our lives.
Enriching and nurturing our soul.
Releasing our worries and concerns.

By Drew Robertson

Website

Our magazines are now available on our website :

www.bsandm-church.org.uk.

If anyone would prefer to access them this way, instead of paper format, please let your Church Elder know.

As well as saving paper, and trees, you would receive the magazine in colour. It could also be enlarged if you need to see it in large print.

“A Blast from the Past”

The following excerpt is from “The Penny Trumpet,” dating back to 1861. The following notice is quite funny when examined from a modern perspective.

The Penny Trumpet

The leading Journal of Human Progression & Electro-Biology
And the Authorised Advocate of Women’s Rights and Husbands’ Wrongs

IMPORTANT NOTICE

THE BAZAAR will be Opened on TUESDAY and
WEDNESDAY from Ten Morning till Nine Evening.

All parties on entering the HALL **will pay their
Entrance-Money and all persons found with Money in
their Pockets while leaving**, will be immediately
Apprehended and given into the Custody of the
Nearest Lady Stall-keeper

- Submitted by: Jim Currie

This article has been passed on by Jim Currie's Canadian cousin who follows our website quite regularly.

Cracked Pots

An elderly Chinese woman had two large pots, and each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across her neck.

One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walks from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years, this went on daily with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water.

Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its imperfections and miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream.

"I am ashamed of myself because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house".

The old woman smiled,

"Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house. Each of us has unique flaws. It's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so interesting and rewarding".

This came from Bruce MacNaughton, a Scot. He and his wife, Shirley, are the owners of the Prince Edward Island Preserve Company at New Glasgow, PEI.

He ends his story by saying, "I bid adieu until next time and to all my cracked pot friends, have a great week-end and remember to smell the flowers on your side of the path".

- Submitted by: Jim Currie

Healthy Lifestyle

Fin I sit doon tae hae ma maet
Ye've nae idea fit I get
It's dinna ett this, ye canna hae that
Cos it's a the things that mak ye fat.

Margarine's aa richt butt butter's wrang
Noo I've decided tae ging on tae jam
They're nae affa pleased an said I maun try
Tae hae a bit loaf but jist tak it dry.

I thocht eggs wir healthy, I ett twa or three
Gweed gracious b'here fit a tae dee!
They should'na be fried only be bilt
I'm affa fed up- anither meal spilt.

Cook yer chicken but tak aff the skin
Or there's nae hope you'll nivver be thin
Nae sausages but bubblyjock's fine
Jist think about Christmas the next time you dine.

It's nae aa aboot food, it's rinnin aroon
It helps fit ye've ettin jist tae slide doon:
Ye can ging for a walk or get on yer bike
Ging rennin or sweemin – fitivver ye like

Margaret Boyd

Submitted by Lorna Coulter