

Burnside Blairbeth Church

Contact



No 164

September 2023

Dear Friends



Romans played a huge role in the formation of the western world as we now know it. Given the territorial reach of the Roman empire and the lengthy legacy of the empire that's hardly a surprising statement. However, its not just the Roman Empire that was pivotal in the formation of the western world as we know it, but the New Testament epistle of Romans has also had a longstanding influence.

In the fourth century a professor of rhetoric in Milan, who was discontented with his hedonistic lifestyle, sensed that he was being told to open the Bible and read the first passage he came to. He duly read from Romans –

“ ...not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.” (Rom 13:13-14).

The reader was St Augustine who became a follower of Jesus. He didn't just influence the church – his thoughts on the shape of society, just war and many other areas still shape much of our thinking today.

Over a millennium later a young German Augustinian monk was wrestling with his sense of sin and God's wrath. He was sent to the University of Wittenberg to lecture on the Epistle to the Romans. His discovery from Romans 1:17 that *The righteous will live by faith* prompted Martin Luther to launch what we now label the Reformation – the reforms didn't just affect the church but shaped European societies for centuries afterwards.

In the twentieth century, in the aftermath of World War 1, a Swiss pastor called Karl Barth found in Romans an affirmation of the unique revelation of God in Jesus Christ. This resulting commentary challenged the idea of religion as a way of humans reaching out to God and recalled Protestantism back to a biblical basis. This was described as “like a bombshell on the playground of the theologians.”

I hope you see how Paul’s letter to the Romans has been formative to the world as we now know it. Even though we live in a secular society, the way that society is shaped, can still be attributed to this Epistle. It has changed lives and continues to shape society.

Most of Paul’s letters were written to churches he had founded and visited but, at the time he wrote it, he had never even managed to visit the recipients of this letter. As we read, we can see that Paul hoped that situation would change sooner rather than later, and one of the major purposes of the letter was to prepare the way for a future visit. He wanted to transform a strategic local congregation into a world-conscious, mission-minded church with a clear understanding of the Good News of Jesus. Given the importance of Rome at the time it is unsurprising that Paul concentrated so much effort, through this letter, on the congregation there. In doing so he provided a great statement of the gospel which has been described as his magnum opus.

The letter itself can roughly be divided into two sections. Chapters 1-11 give a doctrinal outline of the gospel of salvation, while chapters 12-16 give a practical outline of what that looks like in the lives of believers. A few years ago, we spent time looking at the opening 5 chapters of Romans, so over the next few weeks we will learn together from Romans 6-11. As we do so, it’s worth remembering the impact this letter has made on the lives of millions of people ever since it was written. Let us pray that God would similarly turn our lives and our church upside down. This is not so that we can boast of some sort of

doctrinal expertise in this book, but rather that God would use us as He has used people in the past to point to the Amazing Grace offered through Jesus Christ.

Your friend and minister,

William

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Jonathan Lyall – Minister in Training

We welcomed Jonathan Lyall to our Church as a Minister in Training recently and he has written a short biography here to introduce himself a bit more.

“I live in Uddingston and have done for the past 20 years. I was born in Dumbarton and lived there for 9 years before moving to Keith in the Northeast of Scotland where I spent 10 years.

I am married to Emma, and we have three children between us, Nancy age 11 and Mark and Sarah twins aged 7.

My home church is Viewpark Parish and during my training I have been on placement in Motherwell & Craigneuk, Moodiesburn and a summer placement working with the chaplain in Barlinnie. I have just completed my studies which were done online at Highland Theological College, and I am looking forward to probation here at Burnside Blairbeth. I have been really encouraged during my first couple of weeks by the warm welcome I have received from everyone, and I am looking forward to seeing what God has in store for us all in the months ahead.

With three young children most of my spare time is taken up by family. When I do get some time to myself, I enjoy most sports, although it

tends to be watching rather than playing these days, reading, and walking.

I am not sure what the future may hold with so much uncertainty around the whole church just now, but God has already taken me further than I could ever have imagined on this journey, so I am sure he has something good planned. For now, it is just a case of keeping putting one foot in front of the other.

I am looking forward to spending time with you all and getting to know you a bit better as we worship God and walk together.”

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Back to School

Our cover for this copy reflects the “Back to School” theme.

We are fortunate to have a lot of young people in our congregation at various ages and stages, and this time of year can be a significant time for them. Some will be starting their school journey at Primary 1 , others will be transferring to S1 at High School or moving up to the next year in Primary or Secondary classes. We have a number of teachers in our midst and this is an important time for them as well as they take on new students, pick up with former classes or start something completely different in their school lives.

Please pray for all our young people and their families and teachers as they embark on this next phase of their lives.

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Financial Report

Income

Offerings – Offerings totalled £151,935 – 5.9% more than last year but 13.1% below plan.

There are 2 reasons for the increase –

- Local Mission Fund which has increased to £38,566 from £28,949 (33.2%/£9,617)
- Missionary Partners Fund which has increase to £17,280 from £14,655 (17.9%/£2,625)

It is important that the Local Mission Fund and Missionary Partners Fund are self-sufficient.

Offerings to the General Fund continue to be below last year – 3.8%/£3,814. As this trend continues, we need to be mindful of the longer-term implications with regards to our cost base and the priority of these.

Other Income

£11,737 vs £18,199 last year

- Great news that we received £800 from South Lanarkshire Council to go towards our Fun Friday events. The council decided at the last minute to release some funds and Andy and Jen did an amazing job in turning the application around in a week and securing the grant – well done!
- Rental income now at £3,290 and continues to help with the overall income base.
- Main reason for being down vs last year is that there was a £5,000 legacy received.

Expenditure

Overall, it totals £99,878 vs £94,053 (6.2%/£5,825) and helpfully just below plan (1.6%/£1,674).

We see the impact of the M&M contributions being significantly less than last year when comparing our National CoS costs vs last year - £70,544 vs £84,268.

Costs around heating and maintaining our buildings (excl. fabric fund) are in line with expectations. Underlying costs do increase and these all

add up – annual alarm costs for our buildings are up ~10% year on year – this equates to about £300 but it all adds up.

Fund Position

- The General Fund has a deficit of £11,917 vs last year of £11,820 and assuming the trend continues, we will have a deficit of around £20,000 this year.
- Deficit in Local Mission Fund has increased from £1,705 at end of May to £3,336 at end of July but significantly better than £9,337 this time last year. Please continue to pray for the work that is carried out and supported by this fund.
- Missionary Partner Fund has a surplus of £1,095 which is positive as it is important that we are able to support the work highlighted by our partners.

Overall, the deficit continues to increase month on month – albeit at a lower level than last year - £14,158 vs £24,672.

We will be having a Pledge Day on Sunday 26th November and most likely a Gift Day although final confirmation of this will follow in due course. I will communicate this clearly in October and November.

Andrew Telfer
Treasurer

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Kirk Session – August meeting

We have included key points but if there is anything else that you would like to speak to us about, please email us:

E: sessionclerk@burnsideblairbeth.church

Matters Arising

- We hope to have a meeting for ourselves and others in our local areas, with a CAP (Christians Against Poverty) representative, to find out whether this is something we can be taking forward or not.
- There was reflection on some of the events of the summer – There were around 55 children and young people at our Holiday Club, this included some new children which was really encouraging, and it was also great to see so many young leaders get involved.
- We had two Fun Fridays, with the event in August being particularly well attended. We had received funding which allowed us to buy lunch in, as well as have some new activities. The young people of Switch had enjoyed some activities over the summer including a trip to Ayr beach and the cinema.

Worship and Prayer

It was noted that some of the time on a Sunday evening would be used to gather for prayer together, the first one being 3rd September. We also have a Welcome breakfast on the morning of 3rd September, which everyone is warmly invited along to.

The Kirk Session

For information William advised that he was seeking to put together a support group to support Jonathan in his placement with us.

Safeguarding

Once again in the report, the importance of Safeguarding was highlighted to Elders.

Strategy

The Elders took some time in groups to review the strategy paper and vision statement that had previously been adopted. It was a chance to reflect on changes that could be made, as well as areas we feel are working well. Currently, there is a strategy group being put in place to help support Kate, Andy, and all of us, in this work.

Presbytery Mission Plan

William explained that the Glasgow plan had been accepted with 17 amendments. Our request for review had been send to the Principal Clerk and we await their response.

Finance

We discussed issues relating to the Gift and Pledge day, and more information about this will be available soon.

Property

William advised that the General Trustees were progressing with the sale of Blairbeth and photographs of the building had been taken, ready for marketing.

Correspondence

It was noted that Cllr Robert Brown had sent an email to local organisations inviting representatives to attend a planning group meeting to discuss plans for the celebration of the 900th Anniversary of the Royal Burgh of Rutherglen. William was attending.

Leigh Galloway and Gary Wylie

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Youth and Children's Work

Kingscross 1, Isle of Arran

As the school holidays kicked off, a large number of our young people and I went away to Arran for KX1 an SU Holiday in Kingscross. For some of them it was their first time at KX1 for others this was their 2nd or 3rd time. We had a fantastic time worshipping together, learning about the story of The Bible and taking part in lots of activities.

The weather fluctuated between sun and rain, however the campers were kept dry and warm in the new cabins built by SU. After an action packed 5 days we got the ferry home, tired, blessed and knowing Jesus better. The young folk are already asking about next year!

Summer Trips

Switch joined up with young people from Stonelaw and Flemington Hallside Church for two summer trips before the holidays finished. We began with a day at the beach in Ayr, the young people played games on the beach, explored the shops and finished the day with a chippy.

The Second outing was a trip to Vue Cinema in Hamilton. The young people filled two different screenings, Meg 2 and The Haunted Mansion armed with lots of snacks from Asda! We finished the trip with a McDonalds before getting the train home.

It was great for the young people to spend so much time with other Christians and feel part of an extended Christian community.

Andy McArthur
Youth and Children's Worker

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Magnitude at Lendrick Muir

Magnitude is a Christian Festival for young people that takes place each summer at Lendrick Muir near Kinross. 1,100 young people attended the 5 day festival this July. I was privileged to be there representing the Scottish Bible Society and we were able to give out 1000 free copies of our new publication "*Fieldguide to the Bible*" which helps young people understand and engage with the Bible.

Naomi Wylie was also at the event, here is what she said about being at Magnitude...

"I really enjoyed the worship, the band was amazing, and the song choice was good with a mix of well-known songs and songs I've never heard before, which was great. I also liked how there

was no judgement, people went at their own pace in their faith, while also being encouraged to go deeper in their faith and in their relationship with God. It was good to have different options throughout the day including different opportunities to either learn more about God or even just have the chance to hang out with friends if you wanted to. I loved meeting new people and getting a chance to talk and become friends with different Christians from all over Scotland, who I will continue to be friends with."

If you think the Church in Scotland is dying then be encouraged. Being at Magnitude was a fantastic reminder that God is still at work! Being in a Big Top with thousands of young people and their leaders reminds us that Jesus promised "...I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not be strong enough to destroy it." (Matthew 16:18 NIV)

Jen Robertson

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Summer Holiday Club

Jen Robertson describes the Holiday Club run this Summer.

In the last full week of the school holidays we welcomed over 50 children from P1 – P7 to our holiday club with Stonelaw Church. Everyone enjoyed two very full days of activities with lots of opportunities to get to know Jesus better.

Ross and Andrew from the Reachout Trust planned the whole event carefully, and we are blessed as congregations in Rutherglen and Cambuslang to have the trust to work within our children's and youth ministry.

Doors opened at 9.30am and our day was full of games, crafts, baking, nerf wars, parachute games, indoor archery, potted sports, lunch and snacks. By the end at 4.30pm we were tired but happy!

We reflected on Jesus clearing the Temple, Jesus and the Rich Young Man, The Good Samaritan, and The Story of Two Sons.

It was great to work in partnership with Stonelaw Church and to have a big number of young leaders from various churches in the community.

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Burnside Blairbeth Guild

“New Wine, New Wineskins”

Summer is almost over and as Autumn approaches we look forward to a new session of the Guild. The members of the committee have been working hard to prepare a varied and interesting syllabus with something to suit all tastes. We meet in the sanctuary at 2pm on alternate Mondays starting on **2nd October** when we will welcome local folk group 'Colum.'

On 16th October Rev. Neil Watson will expand on this year's theme 'New Wine, New Wineskins' . Do come along and join us ladies and gentlemen on any Guild afternoon if some topic should take your fancy. The syllabus will be available soon. You can always be sure of a warm welcome and of course a cuppa and a chat with friends old and new.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in our afternoon tea party '*Palm Court at the Grand Hotel*'. We enjoyed delicious food, wonderful entertainment and a great deal of fun and laughter.

The grand sum of £440 was donated and sent to the Kilbryde Hospice who have sent a letter of appreciation and thanks.

Dates for your Diary

- 9th September - Guild Conference (livestream)
- 17th September - Guild Sunday
- 2nd October - Colum
- 16th October - Rev. Neil Watson
- 25th November - Christmas fayre



Christian Aid

Save the date – the Rutherglen Christian Aid committee will be holding a **coffee morning** on

Saturday 28th October at Rutherglen West & Wardlawhill Church. We look forward to welcoming you there.

Marjory Maclean

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Foodbank News

New collaboration with Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

After extensive preparation with several training sessions, a Question and Answer session and lots of new paperwork we are now three weeks into having a CAB Adviser present at each of our sessions at Rutherglen and Cambuslang and Whitlawburn.

There have been some teething problems as was to be expected: We're still figuring out how many people we can refer so that they can deal with them in the time contracted. We have been delighted, however, that a number of our customers who went to speak to the Adviser have already been helped, so that is a really promising start and we're looking forward to building on this success.

New Volunteer roles

We would like to offer some new volunteering roles. For all of these training will be given, and resources are available.

1. **Church Ambassador:** Be available to give talks and presentations in churches and church groups
2. **School Ambassador:** Be available to give talks and presentations in schools and Youth Organisations

3. **Admin:** Updating the information booklet with useful contacts – making sure that the contact details and other information are still correct

Food Drive and Big Sort

We had a successful Food Drive in Tesco at the end of June. Thank you to everyone who helped. We're now looking ahead to the next Food Drive in Morrisons on Friday 29 and Saturday 30 September, with the Big Sort on Tuesday 3 October.

From the Trussell Trust: Guarantee our Essentials Campaign

The Trussell Trust alongside the Joseph Rowntree Foundation have researched how much money a person needs per week to cover all essentials (i.e. £120) and have found that the basic rate of Universal Credit falls well short of that (£85 for a single person). They have therefore decided to concentrate all their campaigning on this one issue, calling it the *Guarantee our Essentials Campaign*.

They are asking the UK Government for a long-term commitment that benefit rates will always be enough to afford the essentials, and to enshrine in law the principle that at a minimum, Universal Credit should protect people from going without essentials.

If you would like to support this campaign there are some simple things you can do:

- Write to the candidates for the upcoming election and ask them to support the campaign
- Go to hustings and pose the question whether candidates will support the call for guaranteeing the essentials
- Write to the Reformer with information about the campaign – this lets people know about it and gets them

talking, and hopefully it will grab the candidates' attention, too

For further information please contact *Katharina Nimmo* -
manager@rutherglencambuslang.foodbank.org.uk>

Missionary Partners

Satish and Bhumika Chettri, India

We are very grateful for your prayers and for all that Burnside Blairbeth Church has been to us.

As a nation we are going through a very hard time NOW as you may be aware of from the news and media. As believers we had never seen such intimidating days. Professing our faith is becoming much harder. We never imagined such days would come but we praise God - the one who is in us is greater than that which is in the world. Believers and our country and leaders need lots of prayers.

Bhumika's father is still battling with kidney problem, having a peritoneal dialysis at home. He is too weak for hospital visits. It's a great challenge for family members to look after a kidney patient. Bhumika takes care of him and one more person does the dialysis three times a day. He has been dedicated to the Lord prayerfully by the whole Church.

Bhumika's Mom is old but she is a bold and prayerful lady. For the last two years it's been a faith testing time for family - physically, emotionally and financially we have been drained, nevertheless we look to the Lord - our help comes from him. God knows how long this will go on. May he grant us grace & strength to carry on.

While Bhumika looks her father, I along with Jerusha and Mona my sister take care of all the ministries. Our grace kids in the home are doing very well. Right now eye flu is going around so most of the Schools are closed now (*from google - a very contagious conjunctivitis which occurs in India*).

Praise God for celebrations on Widows' Day (courageous women's day). We were able to share good news and give away bibles to 55 women, who needed prayer and hope for the future.

I have been teaching about Christian family, raising godly children and how to lead a child to Christ in local churches.

Praise God our third Reapers training concluded - we have trained 38 people and we hope to begin another batch of students soon.

Every week graduated students undertake outreach and share the gospel in a nearby Rehab Centre. I was able to share the gospel with 65 people in Rehab, all from non-believing families. It's painful to see so many people of all ages becoming addicted.

Our Grace kids are growing in faith - we invest much time in teaching, helping and discipling them.

Pray for me and Bhumika and our team as we train, share, coach and help people in many ways to know and grow in faith.

Be assured of our prayers

Satish & Bhumika

From James Fraser, Release International

Sometimes freedom can be dangerous

'Sometimes freedom can be dangerous.' That was the sentiment shared by many of the church leaders I spoke to on a recent trip to Central Asia. Over the last few years, Christians in several countries across this region have experienced a growing sense of freedom. Some of the previous restrictions on church registration have been lifted, pastors are less likely to be harassed by the authorities, and a certain level of respect for evangelicals is emerging in some sections of society.

However, it is important to acknowledge a number of qualifications to this general picture. Firstly, it is not universal. While countries such as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are at the front end of progress, Tajikistan, where it is still illegal for children to attend church, trails further behind, and Turkmenistan remains a highly restricted nation with an autocratic government and an underground church.

Secondly, the growing experience of freedom is relatively new. Several of the church leaders I spoke to shared vivid memories of darker days. Until recently Christian literature was regularly confiscated and destroyed by the authorities. One pastor told me that he had to dig a hole in the ground to bury his Christian books in order to keep them out of sight. Other leaders had been fined or arrested and some had spent considerable time in prison. The church is all too aware that with a change of leader or foreign policy things could quickly return to their former state.

And yet, despite this backdrop of qualification and challenge, the church leaders I spoke to are supremely conscious that their new experience of relative freedom has opened a real window of opportunity. They want to train more pastors, plant more churches, express their faith in more

acts of service, and share the gospel in more strategic, creative and Spirit-guided ways. They know their calling and they see the exciting potential for God's kingdom to grow across all sections of their society.

However, along with their passion and hope the pastors have also sensed that over the last few years of increased freedom the spiritual temperature of the church has cooled. They feel they are not relying on God as much as they used to, that their prayer times are not as urgent, that people are beginning to be distracted by material prosperity, and that contributing to the life of the church isn't such a high priority.

I reflected a lot on these observations during my trip and thought about how it might apply to Christians in the UK. We have so much freedom. The question is - what are we doing with our freedom? Are we taking advantage of our opportunity to express our faith and openly share the love of Christ, or are the benefits of freedom distracting us?

One pastor we met made a wise observation which I think applies to Christians in any given context: *'Freedom is not everything. My prayer is not for persecution to return but for the church to be holy. The church needs to learn how to be faithful in this moment and make the most of it.'*

James Fraser is Release International's Engagement Manager for Scotland. This article is an abridged version of an article that appeared in Release International's Jul-Sept 2023 Voice magazine pp18-19.

Small groups @ Burnside Blairbeth Church

Format	Day and Time	Host	Frequency
Online, with plan for mixed at home & online	Monday 7.30 pm	John Hunter	fortnightly all year round
Online	Tuesday 7.30 pm	John Hunter	fortnightly all year round
In person – Maclean’s house	Tuesday 7.30 pm	John and Marjory Maclean	meets approximately fortnightly
Online	Alternate Mondays at 7.30	Ross and Leigh Galloway	
Church for young people	Sunday evening x1 per month	Andy McArthur and Andy Campbell	

Raising Confident Kids in a Confusing World

On Wednesday 6th September a new house group will be starting, looking at challenges parents are being presented with, specifically around identity in Christ. We will be reading though a book called *Raising Confident Kids in a Confusing World* by Ed Drew and discussing it chapter by chapter. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Carolyn Sampson

E: carolyn.sampson@rocketmail.com.

If you would prefer to read the book on your own, copies will be available in the church library.

Announcements

Tribute to Alastair Slater.

Alastair was born in Portsmouth on 3rd of June 1932. At the aged of five he moved to the west end of Glasgow and attended Hillhead School for both his primary and secondary education. During the early years of the war he was evacuated firstly to a farm and then to Largs where he met and struck up a friendship with Joan Ross. Eventually Alastair and Joan were married in November 1958 in Finnieston Church.

Alastair did his National Service with the Royal Tank Regiment in 1950, then began working with the Admiralty and commenced training as a Quantity Surveyor, eventually qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor.

In 1959 Alastair and Joan moved to Inverness where their daughter Alison was born in 1960, and four years later Joan gave birth to twin sons Ross and Martin. Alastair was promoted in 1965 and so the family relocated to Dumfries. In 1974 the family put down firm roots, again related to Alastair's work situation, when the family took up residence at Rodger Drive, Burnside.

Personal faith was integral and hugely significant in Alastair's life. He was a well-grounded man of principle who lived his life in keeping with the tenets of the faith. He was an Elder of St Columba's Church, Inverness, and also of Maxwellton Church, Dumfries. He was also a member of the Kirk Session at Burnside as well as serving as a member of the Property Committee and being Clerk to the Congregational Board at some stage. In St Columba's, Maxwellton and Burnside Alastair served with distinction and faithfulness, a man who always commanded respect and one who consistently gave of his best which harmonised with his professional life.

Alastair was an astute, erudite man whose speech was always measured and carefully considered. He was a man of fairly quiet disposition who often gave the impression of being somewhat private and reserved, yet he loved fun and mischief and had the ability to laugh at himself. His life was characterised by kindness, love and a generous spirit.

Alastair, entered the glories of Immanuel's Land on 6 July 2023.

Les Queen

The next Issue of Contact

Copy Deadline: Sunday 15 October
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Articles can be e-mailed to the editor - contact@burnsideblairbeth.church

Services are on YouTube – search for:
Burnside Blairbeth Church live stream

- CDs will be available as soon as possible after the Sunday morning services and will be delivered to homes. If you, or someone you know, would like to have a copy delivered, please contact:

Kate Airlie Mob: 07787 558 790 // kate.airlie@burnsideblairbeth.church

- **Contact** magazine is available to view on our website, www.burnsideblairbeth.church, under *What's On/News* tab.

If you would like to view Contact this way rather than have a paper copy delivered please send a message the office:

theoffice@burnsideblairbeth.church

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