



# Connect

September 2016



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## Defriending Gossip, Slander and Discourteous Talk

I've just returned from a wonderful break in Tiree, where I not only enjoyed the quiet and natural isolation that the island brings but also was blessed by the absence of wifi and 4G signal. 10 days without Twitter and Facebook was a real blessing and on returning to it saw afresh the good and bad influence it can be.

I was delighted to post pictures of Tiree and later in the week photos of our daughter's graduation. Many liked, others shared some retweeted and soon hundreds of people were sharing our joy. At the same time I was reading endless posts and shared stories concerning Clinton and Trump, Terrassa May, Nicola Sturgeon and lots about the "Named Person Bill".

If sharing photos of holidays and family occasions were the good then many of the comments, articles and statements by Christian people on the present political situation had to be the bad and the ugly. As Christians we have a perspective to share on the political life that is inspired by belonging to the Kingdom of God, as children of a heavenly Father, redeemed by the Son and being renewed daily by the Spirit's presence in us. However it would appear we have lot to learn about sharing our Kingdom perspective in a Christian way!

My current role within the Baptist Union of Scotland allows me the privilege of the occasional face to face conversation with our Scottish Parliamentarians. I am also occasionally asked to write to them letters and speak through words on the page. At times that means disagreeing with their policy and direction. It is a challenging responsibility and one that I receive great support in. I know I have failed to speak at times when I should have and, on other occasions, have spoken in a way that failed to demonstrate the way of Christ.

On my return from the peace of Tiree, I have become increasingly disturbed by the vitriolic language and ungracious comments being used by Christians, Christian leaders and Christian organisations,

**Rev Alan Donaldson**

*General Director*

*Baptist Union of Scotland*



particularly on Social Media in the way they speak of and into our Public Life. There are many Christians and some Christian organisations that are quietly speaking to governments and policy makers, affirming them, praying for them, suggesting amendments to policy; and whose life is made significantly harder by Christians and Christian organisations who fail to speak knowledgably, peaceably, gently, graciously, conciliatory, humbly and courteously (Titus 3). I personally would rather we be ignored completely in the public sphere and retain our godly character when we speak than speak, verbally or in

written form, in a style that is arrogant, offensive, laced with anger, defensiveness or vitriol. The church's fear of loss of identity in society must not lead us to gossip, slander, spin, half-truths or argumentative speech in relation to public life.

Titus 3 is a key to understanding how we should speak. The context of the chapter, according to the late John Stott, is that of our doctrine and duty in the world. In speaking of those in authority and engaging with their policies, we are commanded, in v 2, "to slander no-one, to be peaceable and considerate and to show true humility to everyone, because, at one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved by all kinds of passion and pleasures."

In the public sphere, can I encourage you to look with care at what you are saying, sharing, liking or retweeting and the tone in which it is being said. Can I even ask you to pause and think about the behaviour of the organisations that you support, including our Union, that say they represent us and look at how they speak on our behalf asking if it is Christ-like. Maybe together we can learn to speak more graciously, maybe we can correct one another in love when we get it wrong. As supporters of organisations, maybe we can in the future write and say how saddened we were at the poor manner in which good points were presented, until together we learn how to speak well in public life.

Titus 3 reminds us that our identity is in Christ. Our value and our worth, both individually and as a community, is secure in Him. No matter what is happening around us, or what others say about us, nothing in this world can withhold the love of our heavenly Father for His Church. Secure in Him, we can engage in public life and "live peaceably, considerately showing true humility to everyone."



## Workplace Chaplaincy Introduction Day

Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland aims to meet people where they are - in the setting of their daily working lives. A chaplain's main purpose is Christian service, simply because people matter irrespective of their status or position. A chaplain is available to ALL staff.

Could you be involved in this rapidly expanding area of Christian service?

For those interested, or involved in workplace chaplaincy:

**Thursday 6th October 2016, 10am to 4pm**

**Palmerston Place Church, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh EH12 5AA**

**The day will include:**

- The role and structure of **Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland**
- What is workplace chaplaincy?
- Essential chaplaincy skills and how to use them
- Opportunities and pitfalls
- Planning for success
- An introduction to further training

**For further details or to book a place contact:**

**Catriona Parkinson**

**[info@wpcscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@wpcscotland.co.uk)**

## What's it like to have a Step-Out Team come to your Church to help Summer Mission Activities?

To set the context, Dumfries Baptist Church is, God willing, intending to build a new community church on a 4-acre site in an area of Dumfries that does not currently have a church. Alongside fundraising for this exciting project we are also seeking ways to get to know and encourage our future neighbours/community.

To this end we had the loan of a large Marquee in which we ran various events in order to attract all ages. Any mission if it is going to be a positive experience for all involves planning, promoting, organising and monitoring to ensure any issues are addressed as they arise. The Step-Out Team (SOT) members gave of their time and we valued their support, they became a focal point for all that took place. The benefits of having a Team at DBC were numerous.

The Team clearly enjoyed being with us. This year our youth joined, together with the SOT eagerly volunteering for the children's work and the camaraderie and commitment shown by all of them was hugely encouraging – I believe they discovered new things about themselves. Finally working together as a church changes the dynamic – new people get involved; longstanding members find a new focus and this 'can do' attitude transfers to other ministries throughout the rest of the year.

If you accept a SOT, be prepared to be challenged!

**Rev David White, Associate Pastor, Dumfries Baptist Church.**

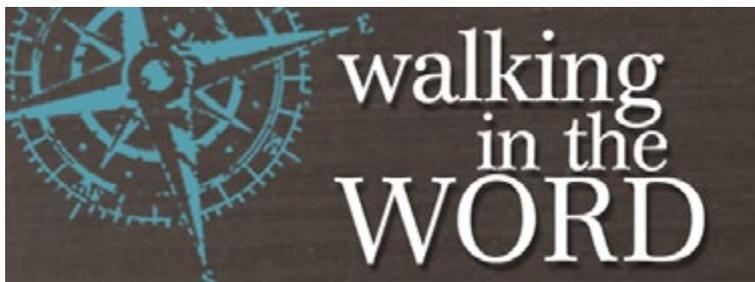
### Step Out - has been Stepping Out onto an Island!

This year there were 30 young people signed up for Step Out, serving 10 of our Baptist churches. It provided an opportunity for some of our more experienced step outers to lead during some of these weeks as well as the churches leading their own teams.

An exciting first for Step out this year, was venturing on to an island for the first time partnering with the church in Tiree. They spent a week on the island working with members of Tiree Baptist Church to hold a Holiday Bible Club at their premises in Baugh. The evenings saw the team engage with young people for games and laughs as well as more serious moments. While much of the team's time was taken up with preparing for the clubs, there was still time take in the beauty of the island.

Ruth Kelso, who led the Tiree team said that it was 'an absolute privilege and pleasure for us, as a small team from 'the mainland', to share with the Tiree church in the running of their holiday club this summer. (For me, there was also a feeling of 'pride' watching our 3 young people lead so well and be so appreciated and encouraged for doing so). What an encouragement to see so many enthusiastic children and young people come along to have fun, praise God and learn more about him. (And to see new contacts made and old ones strengthened). The hospitality we experienced from the church folks was amazing...we felt like part of the family. It was a week of laughter, love and good times (with a lot of sunshine and a few midgies).'





## **A FAMILY JOURNEY FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION**

A devotional book written for families with teenagers in mind but useful for any age or stage in life.

It covers every book in the Bible giving an overview of each book and selected passages for reading and exploring in order to grasp the whole story of the Bible.

There are questions for discussion or reflection, activities, memory verses and points for prayer. Carolyn is married to Alan, minister of Castlehill Baptist Church.

Available from Amazon, Faith mission books shops, GLO Bookshop or directly from the Author, Carolyn Wells, who is available to come and do a complete book review at any church group. Contact detail below.

[Carolynwells@ntlworld.com](mailto:Carolynwells@ntlworld.com)

[www.facebook.com/walkingintheword1](https://www.facebook.com/walkingintheword1)

## **September Prayer Link**

### **Sunday 4th**

#### **Rev Dr Andrew MacRae, Former General Secretary BUS**

Please pray for Andrew MacRae who has very serious health issues and is in hospital in Canada at present. Please pray for his wife and family at this difficult time, as well as the medical staff looking after him.

#### **Baptist Union of Great Britain**

Please pray with us during these uncertain times that our churches and leaders will continue to be wholehearted in worship and discipleship. May we always 'hold out the word of life' and be 'Beacons of Hope' in our communities.

#### **Larkhall Baptist Church**

#### **Leith Baptist Church**

#### **Lerwick Baptist Church**

Give thanks for the faithful preaching of the word during our vacancy by our own lay preachers and those from other Churches. Praise God for five baptisms and nine new members. Pray for God's leading to be evident as we continue the search for our next pastor.



**GAZING  
ON GOD'S  
GLORY**

**#BUScot16**

**ROTHES HALLS**

Thursday 27 to Friday 28 October

**GLENROTHES 2016**

**BOOK NOW**

For more information and to register online visit our website:  
[baptistassemblyinScotland.org](http://baptistassemblyinScotland.org)

## Sunday 11th

### Baptist Union of Wales

Please prayer for Action Team Wales as they serve our welsh speaking and bi-lingual churches and also our planning meetings for 2017 Day of Celebration for all Baptists in Wales. We have also recently appointed two new Trustees, Francis and Bill as well as a new Treasurer, Glyndwr. Please do pray for them as they seek to serve our Baptist family in Wales.

### Leslie Baptist Church

### Leven Baptist Church

We praise God for the overwhelming endorsement in calling Amanda Quick to continue serving as Assistant Pastor following her pre-accreditation period which will be completed at the end of this year. Amanda will initially remain with us for a further two years after her accreditation.

Please pray as we continue to seek to build a discipling church seeking to promote balanced Christian lives growing in the up relationship with God, the in relationships with one another, and the out relationships within our wider communities.

### Linwood Baptist Church

## Sunday 18th

### Irish Baptist Networks

Pray that Irish Baptist Networks can encourage more Baptists in Ireland to foster fellowship- beyond our shores

Pray for the visit of Igor Bandura 4-7 November to share something of the challenges our brothers and sisters face in Ukraine.

Pray for us seeking to find a next generation who will commit to advancing the aims of Irish Baptist Networks

### Lochgelly Baptist Church

### Lochgilphead Baptist Church

### Lossiemouth Baptist Church

We at Lossiemouth Baptist Church are praising God for the many blessings our Church is experiencing at

this time both in growth in numbers and in spiritual maturity.

Please pray that the strong bond of Christian unity would prevail as we continue to grow as a fellowship and reach out to our local community.

## Sunday 25th

### Scottish Baptist College

Students return to their studies on 13th September so please pray for those who are starting out on the journey of theological education and preparation for ministry, and those who are continuing courses. We have a new group of learners from Work Place Chaplaincy Scotland who are beginning a course in 'Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care', so please think of them. Our hope is that the year to come will be one of continued growth in faith and wisdom for both teachers and students.

### Maybole Baptist Church

### Milestone Christian Fellowship

Praise God for how God has been working in Milestone, renewing us in unity, adding to our numbers, and continuing to open up new connections with the community outside the church.

Pray that we will be able to build up our ministry to children and families.

### Montrose Baptist Church

Give thanks for the success of our Community Cafe venture in our new church hall, which has been well received by the residents of a neighbouring complex for vulnerable adults, among others.

Pray for the continuing commitment of the fellowship as we seek to recognise and develop the gifts of everyone in the Lord's service and as we welcome those who have recently been worshipping with us.

Keep up with our latest news on our social media channels. Just search **scottishbaptists** and click follow.



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