

Autumn Tron Times

Newsletter | St George's Tron Church Glasgow | October 2011

*From Edward Lobb, Director of Cornhill Scotland
and one of our Honorary Associate Ministers*

Trusting the Lord in difficult times

Dear Friends,

I hope it will be helpful for all who belong to St George's Tron if I write a little from my own perspective about the Church of Scotland's present turmoil and how it affects our own church. Though not at present a parish minister I am still very much concerned (through the preaching ministry of the Tron and the training ministry of Cornhill) with the current church ministry scene in Scotland.

In the last few years deep divisions in the Church of Scotland have painfully come to light, as indeed they have in nearly all the older mainline denominations in the western world. The presenting issue concerns homosexual activity and whether it should ever be countenanced in the lives of those who profess to follow Christ. But the underlying issue concerns the authority of the bible and the very nature of the gospel. Is the Christian gospel really a call to repentance and faith, or not? Is the bible's clear teaching about the sinfulness of homosexual activity to be obeyed — or can it be cast aside so as to bring the church into line with secular society?

I am thankful — I think we're all thankful — that SGT is firm and clear on this question. We want

unambiguously to uphold the bible's teaching and authority. We lovingly hold out the gospel's invitation to people who are caught up in homosexual practice; but we point out that coming to Christ involves repentance and change. All of us have to change when we come to Christ: dishonesty, idolatry, adultery and much more have to be left behind, as well as homosexual activity.

But SGT's clear stance on this question brings us into conflict with others in the C of S; and, more specifically, into conflict with the decisions of the General Assembly in May of this year. And because the General Assembly has made its position so clear, our Minister and Kirk Session (elders) have felt that the only course open to us, if we are to honour the Lord and the bible, is to part company with the C of S, because we can no longer be a congregation in fellowship with this denomination. Inevitably, this decision brings real sadness to those whose faith has been long nurtured in the C of S. Many members of our own church have belonged to a church in this denomination for decades. As a lifelong Anglican myself, I know what it feels like to belong in a deep sense to one of the older denominations of Christendom.

But — and this point needs to be strongly emphasised — when a denomination deserts the fundamental doctrines and ethical standards of the bible, the allegiance of true Christians is to the Lord, the bible, the universal church and the local congregation. The New Testament knows nothing of ‘denominations’. The church in the New Testament is the worldwide fellowship of Christians and the local congregations, nothing less and nothing more. Denominations can be a great help, extending true fellowship in faith between congregations, pooling resources to aid and abet one another’s ministries for good. But if a denomination adopts teachings and views that are contrary to the teaching of the bible, the true Christian’s allegiance simply cannot be to the denomination; it belongs unequivocally to the worldwide church and to the local congregation.

Let me try to draw out some of the implications of all this for our own congregation.

First, it’s important that we remain united. Inevitably, some in our church will deeply grieve over the Church of Scotland (rather as Jesus wept over Jerusalem) and may feel they don’t want to leave it — at least not yet. And Christians who feel like this may feel a tension and difficulty between themselves and others (including our united eldership) who believe that there must be a more immediate parting of the ways. But we must stick together as a united congregation at all costs! It’s the devil’s work to divide Christians. It’s sobering to see from the Apostle Paul’s letters how the young New Testament congregations were often tempted to split into factions. For example, Paul says to the Philippian church (Philippians 1:27) ‘only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.’ He also says just

a few verses later, ‘complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind’ (Philippians 2:2). A church that has ‘one mind’ of course will have a great variety of characters and personalities amongst its members (that’s certainly true of SGT!), but amidst the variety of characters there will be a fundamental willingness to work together, to evangelise and pray together, to meet regularly together and to build up the work of the gospel together: many personalities, but a united purpose, a united mind and a united vision to uphold the honour of the Lord Jesus and to extend His kingdom.

“The Lord is sovereign over the church. We are going through difficult times. But we can trust Him not only to bring us through them, but to bring honour to His name and gospel by means of them.”

Second, it’s important that we value SGT, and that we see how precious is the work that is being carried out here. Old friends of mine sometimes ask me what the church that I now belong to is like. I usually say something like this: ‘I feel that it’s a real privilege to belong to SGT. There is a vigour and enthusiasm and unity in the fellowship which is rare. There is a developed sense of the importance of worldwide mission (with links all over the globe) and a great enthusiasm for launching, and maintaining, new evangelistic and training ministries. Clear and penetrating teaching and preaching of the bible lie at the centre of the church’s activities. The administration of the church is carried out with great care and skill. There is a wonderful growth of young staff members and ministry apprentices who are being prepared for a lifetime of active service. The church is led by committed and prayerful elders, and an outstanding senior minister who has vision not only for SGT but for the

growth of excellent gospel ministry throughout Scotland’. Of course our church is far from being perfect; but the life and work of this city-centre congregation is precious and rare. It owes much of its strength not only to its present leadership but to more than fifty years of vigorous and faithful bible preaching and teaching. There are not many churches like it. Let’s value it, and let’s often thank God for raising it up and blessing it so richly.

Third, in this stressful time let us redouble our commitment to loving one another in the congregation. Paul says ‘Love one another with brotherly affection’ (Romans 12:10) and ‘Above all....put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony’. (Colossians 3:14). Growing love within a congregation will be seen in a number of ways: it will stifle our tendency to grumble, because we will realise that grumbling and gossiping and speaking ill of others behind their backs damages our shared life. It will spur us on to pray: to pray for wisdom and strength for our leaders, and for joyful enthusiasm to characterise all our activities. It will help us to respect our leaders, and in Paul’s words in 1 Thessalonians 5:13, ‘to esteem them very highly in love because of their work’. In other words, we will allow our leaders to lead, and we will accept and support their decisions even if privately we have reservations about them. And we will learn to support others more actively, more thoughtfully, more truly from our hearts. Let’s particularly give our minister extra helpings of love and support at this difficult time: in ‘normal’ times the work of a parish minister is very demanding, but in times like these the burden can be almost unbearable. Let’s think carefully how we can make Willie’s load easier to bear, not harder!

Finally, let’s take the long view of God’s purposes. One of the great joys of the bible is that it shows us how God’s will for the church cannot be thwarted. As the old hymn put it, ‘God is working his purpose out as year succeeds to year’.

He is, of course, rather more patient than we tend to be! But He is sovereign, and therefore is to be trusted. Turmoils in the church may last for a time, but He leads His people through them. So we must encourage one another to be patient. Our present troubles may not be resolved within a few months or even a few years. But the Lord God is committed to His people, and will sustain us.

When I was a parish minister in England, I had a delightful curate (assistant minister) working with me for several years, and he and I had to face and work through one or two sharp difficulties that our parish threw at us. I would look at him at these difficult times and say to him with a grin, 'Here's a question for you, Simon! Who is in charge of this universe?' He always gave

the right answer! It was a comfort to both of us.

The Lord is sovereign over the church. We are going through difficult times. But we can trust Him not only to bring us through them, but to bring honour to His name and gospel by means of them.

With loving good wishes,

Edward Lobb

Cornhill Scotland

The end of the summer means back to school for our Cornhill and Pastors' Training Course students.

There are sixteen new students starting Cornhill while another fourteen are returning for their second year of study. New full time students from the Tron include **Derek McPhail** and **Naomi Hull**. Our new Epaphras Trust apprentices are **Jennifer Keogh**, **Jonnie Miscampbell** and **Andrew Rooney**. Apprentices returning for their second year are **Andy Baxter**, **Phil Copeland** and **Oli Ward**.

This autumn sees the launch of the Pastors' Training Course, an exciting new training initiative run by Cornhill Scotland. The course provides a fresh and flexible approach to theological education for those moving towards senior pastoral roles. Five students have enrolled on the three year training programme which includes theological study as part of 'on the job' training so participants are immersed in the realities of regular preaching and pastoral responsibilities. Our own **Rupert Hunt-Taylor** and **Terry McCutcheon** are taking the course.

Andy Gemmill who started full-time in September is running the course as well as teaching at Cornhill.

All the Cornhill and Pastors' Training Course students would value our prayers as they embark on these new chapters of training.

Terry McCutcheon is known to many of us as a man never to do anything by half. And this is clearer than ever as Terry goes full-time in his role here at the Tron while embarking on three years of study on the Pastors' Training Course ... not to mention the fact he is due to tie the knot to his new fiancée Charlene Choudry on December 3rd.

Terry was just back from attending the wedding of a former addict he has worked with when we caught up with him. He was thrilled to see someone whose life had been transformed after coming to Christ at the start of the year. A life lifted from drug addiction, marrying his partner who has also been recently converted, is testimony to how the Lord is blessing Terry's special ministry.

And Terry asks for our prayers as he looks ahead to the next few months.

'As I go full-time with the Road to Recovery it is a massive opportunity to provide more support to those on the programme, as well as reaching out to others not currently in our group. We will be doing more bible studies, meeting for lunch a couple of days of the week and organising day trips every couple of weeks. Bonding time is a crucial part of this ministry. The big thing for me is not

getting people free from substances but free from sin, and I truly appreciate the prayerful support I get from so many in the congregation', he commented.

Terry is also picking up his books again and beginning three years of study on the Pastors' Training Programme where he will combine theological study with his church ministry which includes some preaching. He asks for our prayers in planning and preparing all these activities.

And if Terry hasn't enough on his plate, he is also planning a wedding! Looking forward to married life Terry said, 'The thing I'm most looking forward to about being married is the opportunity to serve the Lord together as a team. A lot of the guys I'm working with are lonely and lack family support, especially at Christmastime. Charlene and I will be able to do so much more as a couple to support them during this difficult time by organising Christmas dinner and having them round for New Year.'

So Terry was his usual chipper self as he looked forward to the busy year ahead. This was demonstrated more than ever by his final comment about his ensuing wedding: 'And if you see Charlene around the Church just remind her how fortunate she is to be marrying me.'



Terry and fiancée Charlene

A Pastor in Training

by Andrew McIntyre

Wish you were here...

Tron Times received these postcards from summer mission teams

Hello from camp Sankanac in the USA!
Am currently sitting by the pool as the girls have free time, enjoying the sun a lot. Its been a pretty tiring week keeping up with 8 year olds who never run out of energy... but I have been really enjoying working with them as we do drama, archery, creek stomping and more! My favourite part of the week by far is the camp-out where as a cabin we make smores then stay the night on the grass in our sleeping bags. It's such a great way to enjoy God's creation! My prayer for the girls this week is that they will just really get to know their creator in a personal way, even at their young age. And thank you for your prayers, God is so good! Lots of love, Sarah



Dear friends, having a fantastic time here living it up big style at Lendrick Muir. We have 63 young people from p6-s4 who are full of life and appear to be loving the experience of SU camp! I have been brave enough to try all the activities - flying through the air on the high ropes, whizzing along the bungee run and sliding around the adventure playground, gaining energy from the mountains of scrummy food we've been eating. We have been looking at the life of Paul as part of our daily teaching programme and pray that the young people may discover how the reality of Jesus changed this man's life! Must dash - time for tea! Looking forward to being back among you and sharing more stories. Ask Katie Piggot about our camping experience! Love, Rona



The past weeks in Romania have been amazing - the weather, the food, the people, the children! The last camp ended with 'Dumnezeu miluieste', 'Pe curând' (God Bless, See you soon) and a lot of hugs! I really enjoyed this camp and getting to know the children was just amazing! This third camp, which I am on the way to now, is with about 10 gypsy ladies who come from a village of about 8000 gypsies with 5000 of them being Christian, and 300 new believers being baptised in the river just 2 months ago! How awesome is that - only God can do that, and I hope to go to their church on Sunday which will be an amazing experience! Love, Joanne



Hi Tron Times!

Having a great time on mission in Taiwan, working in a local church here reaching out to Taiwanese people at work. They are very keen to meet a foreigner and so, despite the language difficulties I have had some great chances to meet people and talk to them about being a Christian. Please pray for this work, particularly as we try to share the gospel with Taiwanese men. God bless and see you soon!

Andy Baxter



Having a great time in Arran! Rain, mud, midges with 100 teenagers under canvas ... what could be better?! A new venture this year has been some discipleship classes. We hoped a dozen would come, but 28 young people came for extra bible study. Fantastic. In the evenings we have been looking at a whole lot of passages about grace – the penny dropped with one young lad; "All these talks have been about forgiveness haven't they!"
Duncan

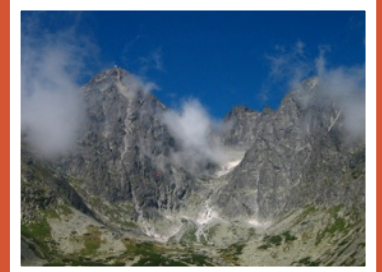


Hello!

We are having a great time here at KINMYLIES! IT'S VERY EXCITING! Young people coming to the holiday club to hear the gospel. There is a wee team of people going out to the community. Pray for Friday as they are going into city centre to hand out gospel tracts. A lot of teenagers coming in the afternoons. Pray for four guys who have not heard about Jesus before. We are looking at why Jesus came in Luke's gospel!
Blessings, Jordan, Chris, Scott + Phil



Dear Tron Times,
We are having a lovely time in Levice, Slovakia, and we really value your prayers and support. This week we have already met the mayor of Levice and been on TV, both of which were unexpected! Today we had our English class in the morning which was really well attended and the bible English section provoked some interesting questions. This afternoon we were ceilidh dancing in the park which was fun but exhausting as none of us are used to dancing in the sun! This evening we had an event at Kontakt cafe, an activity run by the church. We sang Scottish songs, did more dances and Zsofie and I gave our testimonies. The whole trip has been so exciting as we have met so many people and have been able to share the gospel in so many different ways. Please pray for Csaba and his team at Kontakt as they have a fantastic opportunity to share the gospel with many young people and families in Levice. Please pray that those who have started coming to Kontakt this summer would come to know Christ and those that are



postcards collected and presented by Caroline Dodds

Home news

compiled by Ruth Hodgson

George Square in the centre of our city is no stranger to big events and large crowds, but in late August the crowds were megal! The attraction was the filming of a scene from *World War Z* and the presence of its star, Brad Pitt, who arrived with wife and six children and huge entourage. With part of the Square transformed into Philadelphia and all the accompanying razzamatazz of a film set, the city was buzzing for days. Lots of visitors came into the church and we not only had the opportunity to give out a special tract to all the 'extras', but we also gave Brad and each of his family a Christian book.

It is always a pleasure over the summer months to welcome so many visitors to our church both during the week and to our Sunday services. Now, of course, students we already know have returned and each week we welcome many newcomers. A free lunch for students in the first few weeks was a great attraction and we trust all feel welcome and will make friends quickly. We hope too that those of our own church families who have just started as students — **Sarah Mason** (Edinburgh Uni) and **Ross Grant** (Glasgow Caley) will settle and make good friends.

We said goodbye last month to **Steven** and **Yvonne Bamford** who have gone to live and work in Bristol. We shall



Owen and Peigi Piper with Gus



Lachlan Campbell with big brother Owen

miss them greatly. Also, **Lesley Nichol** has temporarily left us to study at Redcliffe Bible College in Gloucester.

We have grieved with **Chrissie Macleod** whose husband Alan died in June after a fairly long illness. At the end of August our dear brother **Joey Aitchison** went to be with the Lord quite suddenly, and we uphold his wife **Liz** in her shock and sadness. It was a shock, too, when **Robin Brough**, our beloved pastoral assistant, was admitted to hospital for surgery and subsequent treatment, and we pray for **Agnes** and the family at this time. Others have been unwell including **Margaret Brown**, **Joyce Miller**, **Catherine Kirkwood** and **Ben Lee** but we are encouraged to see **Nan Baillie**, **Dorothy Begg** and **Leonard Aldebert** managing back to church.

We warmly congratulate **Owen and Peigi Piper** on the birth of **Gus** (in August) and **Karen and Mark Campbell** on the arrival of **Lachlan** (in September). Congratulations also to no fewer than seven couples who have become engaged: **Phil Copeland** and **Emma McKeown**, **Seonaid Taylor** and **Tom Donaldson**,

Louis Cowan and **Dyenaba Diop**, **Derek McPhail** and **Elizabeth Muirhead**, **Terry McCutcheon** and **Charlene Choudry**, **Julie Constable** and **Oli Coltman** and **Clare Sutherland** and **Matthew Casier**.

The summer Thursday evening **Tyndalebox** has now given way to the regular **Release the Word**, with its new streamlined syllabus for students and young workers led by **Rupert Hunt-Taylor** and **Katie Piggot**. Also, the **Ladies Fellowship** summer programme, led by **Jo Skelton-Smith**, has ended and the fortnightly afternoon meetings, to which visitors and new members are always welcome, have resumed. The English language classes and bible studies for Internationals led by **Euan Dodds**, **John and Elspeth Taylor**, **Ailsa Hamilton** and **Gak** have brought together people from China, Korea, Iran, Afghanistan, Hungary, Thailand, Malaysia ... and more! Most came primarily to learn English but we thank God that many have become Christians and are now going on to study God's Word for themselves.

Away News

compiled by Ruth Hodgson

while **Elspeth** and **Catriona** are trying to fit in and make friends in a new and very different school. An escape flight back to Cambodia sometimes seems a very attractive though unrealistic option! **Susan** has not started work yet and is free to set up home and help the family to settle.

Disturbances and riots in Jos, Nigeria have concerned us as we have prayed for **David** and **Julie Rowbory** with **Rebekah** and **Elizabeth**. Frequent power cuts make the routine of living frustrating and irksome. David is now fully involved in his advisory role with the translators.

We were pleased to see **Imran Gill** when he was in Glasgow. Now he is back in Pakistan with **Nagina** and their children, **Michaiah**, **Shemaiah** and **Eliezer** and is leading the OM team who are reaching out with the gospel and much practical help to many who suffered in the floods earlier this year.

Carol Whipp visited us last month and it was good to hear of the encouragements in her Neighbours Worldwide work in Wolverhampton. Longer-term decisions about the care of her mother in Australia are very much on Carol's mind at present.



From living and working in SE Asia to living and working in SE England is a huge seismic shift. **Darren Wall** has just taken over as Finance Manager of OMF and is grappling with all that that entails

SPOTLIGHT on

... Kirsteen Kyle



A Son-Blessed worker

'Kingdom life is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until it was all leavened.' Luke 13:20

For Kirsteen Kyle, life is like a woman taking and hiding crate loads of leaven in tonnes of flour. This is her kingdom work and it produces 1.2 million loaves every week. In God's providence, a Christian is part of the team providing Scotland's daily bread.

'I am a Quality Auditor with Allied Bakeries in north Glasgow, ensuring quality control at every step in the bread-making process. We make eight thousand loaves an hour and supply all the major supermarkets as well as making for Kingsmill, Allinson and Sunblest so it's a major operation.'

Originally from Cumbernauld, Kirsteen came to the Tron in 2002 and is a recognisable member of the Tron's catering teams. On Thursday nights, if she strays from the kitchen, she is usually seen speeding back there when the dozens of happy eaters erupt in applause at the team's work.

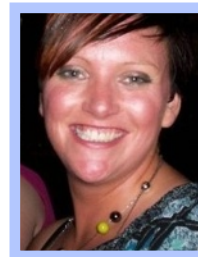
She studied home economics at school and her love of the subject saw her winning a cake decorating competition in 5th year. 'I created an Easter round cake, with a basket-weave effect. It was horrendous,' she notes with typical self-deprecation. But it spurred her on to the "Dough School", now part of the City of Glasgow College.

'I was always interested in this field, as my dad worked in the Fruitmarket supplying to restaurants and cafes.'

She was a familiar face working in the Wesley Owen cafe before moving into the mission of secular work at the bakery.

'Everyone at work knows I'm different. I don't shove it down their throats and they speak to me about it.'

“My sister had become a Christian the same week and Mum said, “you’re not just doing it because your sister is, are you?” ”



For anyone who has spoken to Kirsteen they will know she is not shy in giving a straight answer. 'People will say, "I was walking past your church the other day," and I reply, "Did you go in?" and it starts a conversation. Rather than standing over them and saying their choice in life is not right, I do my job and that builds up trust.'

'I was born into a Christian family but became a Christian when I was six after a week-long summer mission. My sister had become a Christian the same week and Mum said, "you're not

just doing it because your sister is, are you?" At that age it made a difference but not a major one. I went to summer camps which were very important. It was amazing getting such a grounding.' At age fifteen Kirsteen's mum and dad divorced which affected her deeply.

'It made me much more of a realist, rubbish things happen and either it will make you walk away from the church or cling to it. God gives strength to keep going.'

The following summer she was leading a summer camp for eighty people at Gartmore. Kirsteen has continued to grow in her faith continuing at the Tron with Release the Word.

'After RTW, I moved to a house group. Meeting up is great, being able to go and chat and get strength from discussing how to live your faith at work and hear of others who have struggled with the same things.'

'Work is work and you still have days when you are getting up at 4 am on a Monday morning and you can't be bothered, but you try to be positive. I know what I'm doing and where I'm meant to be, otherwise God would have opened another door.'

in conversation with Kieran Dodds

As easy as ABC

We're an evangelistic church, by both conviction and practice. The building volunteers, lunchtime services, Christmas and Easter outreach, praying for family members, Christianity Explored, and as a body we're unusually blessed by those who give up their free time to do all these things. But what about your working time? Those forty-odd hours a week you spend with non-Christian colleagues, who see you every day living as a Christian, and whom you might have a lot of time to get to know. Isn't this a key area of mission?

Unless you work in the Tron offices (Rupert keeps telling me off for hiding evangelistic leaflets in his desk drawers), there is a huge mission field in your place of work! This book encourages you in that outreach, helping you think theologically about your work and showing you that it isn't as impossible as it might seem to bring the Gospel to work.

Thank God It's Monday by Mark Greene



ANDY'S BOOK CORNER

What's it about? – Ministry in the workplace; working in God's service and sharing the Gospel.

What did you get out of it? – Great encouragement to enjoy work and to be looking for evangelism opportunities.

How long did it take to read? – Not long. Chapters are short and easily digestible.

Who's it for? – Gospel workers (this means you!) in every area of work, wondering about what ministry means there.

Wedding Album



29th July

Andrew & Lesley MacIntyre
Baljaffray Church



16th July

Alasdair & Pamela Walker
St George's Tron Church



30th July

Adam & Christine Gundry
St George's Tron Church



21st July

Mark & Louise Bremner
St Salvator's Church St Andrews

Other Ministries

John and Susan Rushton in Co Cavan and Monaghan are encouraged by the new opportunities given them both to teach the Bible each week in a local primary school and to participate in the Assembly and RI classes (for Protestant pupils) in the secondary school. There are also fourteen teenagers (15 - 17 years) taking an eight-week course of preparation for church membership. John's concern is that this would not be merely maintaining tradition but would lead to a clear understanding of the vows being taken.

Murdo Maclean (Mt Vernon and Carmyle) has an additional ministry as chaplain in Shotts Prison where he has been much encouraged by the response. Other encouragements have been the coming in to membership of a young man and the interest in spiritual things being shown by a man following the death of his wife who had been such a faithful servant of God for many years.

Alex Bedford is a freelance evangelist. Present ministry consists mainly of preaching engagements in a variety of churches and an encouraging Christianity Explored course he is leading in a south Glasgow church. The longer-term plan is less clear and Alex and Catherine are praying that they might know the Lord's leading.

Caz Dodds (UCCF) supports and resources the CUs in the universities of Glasgow. Reaching out with the gospel to the more than fifty thousand students in Glasgow's six universities is an almost overwhelming task, but opportunities abound. Caz seeks to build up and encourage CU leaders who in turn reach out to their peers.