

Summer Tron Times

Newsletter | St George's Tron Church Glasgow | June 2012

Standing on Promises

Dear Friends

Perhaps one of the most consistent messages we have been learning from the Lord recently in our regular studies of Scripture together is the marvellous faithfulness of God's promises in the face of the manifest (and multiple) flaws of his people.

Bob's preaching in 2 Samuel has highlighted the persevering grace of God to build a dynasty out of the house of David according to his covenant promise to 'establish the throne of his kingdom forever' (2 Sam 7:13), despite David's sin and its calamitous consequences within his own household. We have seen the remarkable faithfulness of God through Paul, in his provision and preparation of men like Timothy to guard the health of churches, many of which had scorned and rejected the apostle in his very hour of need, ashamed of his gospel and his stand of faith. And in the story of Jacob perhaps above all, we have surely been touched by the wonderful condescension of the LORD, the God of Abraham and Isaac, whose presence followed this man wherever he went, richly providing for him and surrounding him with his divine protection despite all the dysfunctional mess of his covenant family's life—because God had promised that it would be so.

'Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and ... I will not leave you until I have done what I promised to you.' (Gen 28:15).

There can surely be no greater encouragement for the spiritual progeny of Jacob, (the offspring of Abraham through faith in Christ Jesus) than to know that 'the God of Jacob is our fortress', and that therefore we too are people who can stand just as confidently on the promises of God, despite all our flaws, our failings and our all-too-frequent foolishness.

As a fellowship we have been living through days of real testing of late, and we may be sure that many trials still lie ahead of us. Our hearts have been sad as we have had to part from our former denomination, and although we have known an almost unprecedented level of congregational unity, for which we thank God, there have been those who have left us at this time, and however few, each one has been painful. Yet, as a congregation we have covenanted together not only to profess Jesus Christ, but to confess him as Lord of his church, and therefore not only to believe the word of God, but to act upon its commands conscientiously. As J I Packer has put it 'Captivity of conscience to the Word of God, that

is, to the absolutes of God's authoritative teaching in the Bible, is integral to authentic Christianity.' And so, in seeking to stand with the authentic Christian church throughout the world, we have sought to 'walk with the Lord, in the light of his word', not away from him on the trajectory the Church of Scotland has set for itself.

It has been hard, and it will remain hard, to be seen by some of our Christian friends as having gone 'beyond the pale'. But let us not forget that the call to true discipleship has always been the call to 'go to him, outside the camp, and bear the reproach he endured' (Heb 13:13). We can obey, because we trust him. And it is truly a wonderful comfort to know that when God calls his people to follow where he leads, to trust and obey his sure word, then however flawed they may be, and whatever folly they may create for themselves, he will never abandon those who are his. Not ever.

'The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them' (Psa 34:7). That is a promise! The angels of God met a worn and weary Jacob on his way back to Canaan after fleeing Laban; so today 'are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?' (Heb 1:14). The promises of God to his people are sure and certain. They may be ancient, but they are not forgotten, not a single one of them. They are still powerful, and they belong to all who are his, for his is an everlasting covenant. Indeed, far from diminishing since the days of the great saints of old, our hope rests on even better promises, a better hope through which we draw near not only to angels, but to God himself, through our Lord Jesus Christ who is 'able to save to the uttermost (that is, at all times and completely) those who draw near to God through him' (Heb 7:25; cf 7:19; 8:6).

We need to be reminded of these 'precious and very great promises' of

God all the time, as Peter says in his second letter, but especially in times of testing. The next months for us as a fellowship are naturally going to be difficult, and it will be easy to be fearful and lose heart. Some of us, especially those in leadership, will experience wounding criticism, and there will be those who malign us all publicly. We also face uncertainty about the long term use of our building which will be a big worry for some; we shall do all that we can reasonably do to remain there, for the sake of the gospel in our city, but in the end we have to entrust it all into the hands of the Lord. And we can, for he knows the way that we take, and when he has tried us, we shall come forth as gold. (Job 23:10)

When God calls his people to follow where he leads ... he will never abandon (them).

None of these things is easy. But it is when things are tough that our faith is put to the test and we discover if we really do believe and trust the promises of God, if we really are standing on the promises, as the old hymn says, not just mouthing them empty. So, let us encourage one another, and build one another up by reminding ourselves regularly of the great and precious promises that are ours in Christ in all circumstances. Let me leave you with just a few on which we may stand together as a fellowship:

'... do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.... But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. **Fear not, therefore;** you are of more value than many sparrows. So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven.' (Matt. 10:28-32). That's a promise!

'do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For ... your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. **Fear not, little flock,** for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' (Luke 12:28-32). That's a promise!

'You did not choose me, but I chose you ... **that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide.**' (John 15:16) 'Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, **knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.**' (1Cor. 15:58). That's a promise!

Friends, we are not alone. The Church of Jesus Christ around the world stands with us in our time of need, and together with them we also are standing: standing on the promises of God.

**Standing on promises, words that can't fail,
when in the storms of doubt, dark fears assail,
my hope is anchored fast, within the veil;
sure in his living word, I'll always prevail!
Promises old, promises true
Sealed by the Saviour for me!
Touched by his grace, forever I'll be
Standing secure in God's promise to me.**

Yours in the security of our promising Saviour,



William J U Philip



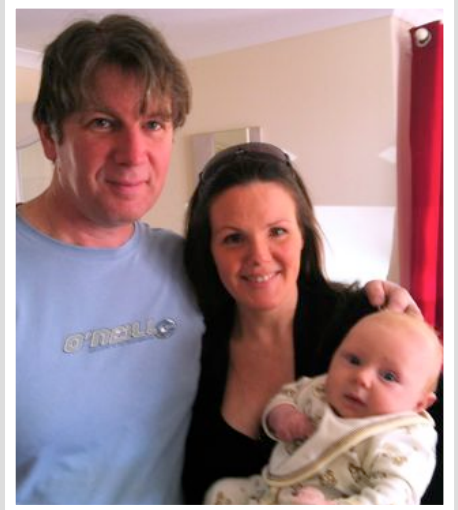
Home news

compiled by Ruth Hodgson

Do you ever read the plasma screens on the outside of the church? Does anybody? And do they take any notice? Well, someone from Russia did and he has been coming to the **Christianity Explored** course meeting with about eighteen others from a variety of countries which has been such an encouragement to **Duncan Porter** and those working with him. Another encouraging outreach has been **mainly music** which meets every second Friday morning and is run by **Karen Campbell** and a team of helpers. The line-up of buggies in the Wynd is impressive as mums/carers and their pre-school children meet for music, refreshments,

chat, mutual support and the opportunity to find help and strength in God.

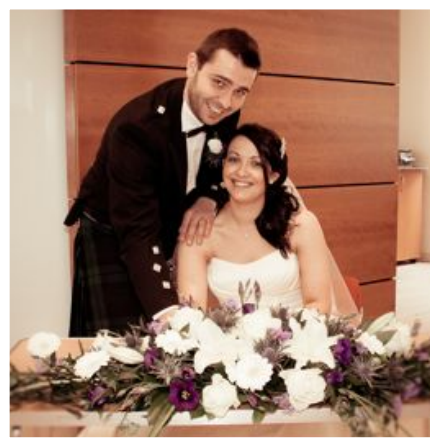
We warmly congratulate **Kenny** and **Sharon Stephen** on the birth of Caleb in March. We also look forward to several weddings over the summer: **Derek McPhail** and **Elizabeth Muirhead** on 30 June (in Inverness), **Deborah Goodfellow** and **Iain Goodart** on 21 July, **Naomi Hull** and **Andy Baxter** on 2 August (in Ireland), **Dyenaba Diop** and **Louis Cowan** on 11 August, **Gillian Gray** and **Robert Hamilton** on 25 August, **Seonaid Taylor** and **Tom Donaldson** on 1 September, and **Lynn Clark** and **Stephen Ballingall** on 20 October.



Kenny and Sharon Stephen
with son Caleb born 11 March



Phil and Emma Copeland
23 March St George's Tron Church



Oli and Julie Coltman
20 April St George's Tron Church



Tom and Mary Slimming
27 April St George's Tron Church

Many of our students and other young people will be at camps or missions during the summer and we thank God that over the years these have been life-changing experiences for so many. **Esther McLeod** will be leading a camp at Lendrickmuir as will **Mark** and **Karen Campbell**. Some are going further afield: **Sarah Mason** with Edinburgh CU and Latin Link to Cuba, **Stephen Birss** with Glasgow CU to Malawi, and **Agnes Brough**, **Phil Copeland** and **Stephen Ballingall** to a Christian school in Zambia where they will be training school staff to teach the Bible and where Phil and Stephen may have opportunity to preach in local churches.

The **Servants of the Word Conference** organised by Cornhill Scotland and held in our church has just finished and it was a pleasure as ever to have **Dick Lucas**, **Alistair Begg** and **Tim Keller** participating. We were delighted earlier in

the term to have a visit from **Isaac** and **Gloria Shaw** of Delhi Bible Institute. Isaac reminded us challengingly that 'in most of the world today becoming a Christian was a sure ticket to persecution,' and that assassination attempts on Christians in India were not unusual.

Joan Clark of Eaglesham, our oldest member went to be with the Lord last month after a fall which meant her being in hospital latterly. We remember her family and those close to her. We also remember the family of **Isabel Tait** another older member who died recently. We grieve, too, with **Maja Dykstra** whose father has died in South Africa.

Scott Thomson is settling well in Canniesburn and is able to be brought to our Wednesday service and to go to a local church in Milngavie on Sundays. A real encouragement for both him and **Marion**. **Nan Baillie** in Gartnavel Royal is still far from well, **Annie Robertson** is

now home and is making progress: **Dorothy Begg** has been in residential care since having a stroke some months ago but has been back in church without the aid of a wheelchair and is hoping to return home this month; **Margaret Brown** is back in hospital but is quite upbeat about the help she is getting from physio staff; **Robina Moar** and **Betty Forsyth** have both recently had surgery and are recovering well; **Helen Lobb**, **Edward's** mother, has been most unwell and has recently moved in to a residential care home: **Kenny Sewell** is making a slow recovery after surgery on his shoulder.

The tourist season is well under way and people from all over the world make their way into our church. We are so grateful that many are happy to listen not only to the history of the building but also to what we believe of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Helping Glasgow on the road to recovery

Terry McCutcheon shares the Tron's recovery work and its partners in the city centre

THE TRON

'When you're working with those in recovery it's good to remember whatever you do it's never in vain. 1 Corinthians 15 says "be steadfast, immovable". We never give up when people relapse.

We have a number of groups throughout the week for those with drug and alcohol dependency. On Monday the group goes through Bible basics, Christianity Explored or Mark's gospel. On

Wednesday we have 'Road to Recovery' where we have a bowl of soup and catch up. For these guys even sitting around a table is an experience. Practical advice about coping with addiction helps me break down barriers for the boys to hear spiritual advice. A lot have had bad experience of church in the past, and know only a God of fear.

Guys come into the church building but there are those I meet through the City Mission. I am at the mission all day on Thursday at the Young Men's Club.

Friday is about getting the boys out. We've been to Celtic Park, St Mirren, but not Ibrox, yet. We did ask Ibrox if we could come, and they said they would toss a coin. But they couldn't find a coin.

I find when I share in groups I always preach to myself first. It's always great for me to go back to the foundations all the time — we have a tendency to forget.'

"We never give up when people relapse".

GLASGOW CITY MISSION

20 Crimea St 0141 221 2630

<http://www.glasgowcitymission.com/>

Volunteer here!

Glasgow City Mission has been a beacon of hope for the homeless and vulnerable for nearly two centuries. GCM was one of the first charities in the world to provide evening literacy classes for adults in the 1830s. They also provided evening Chimney Sweep Schools for children who had to work during the day instead of going to school.

Glasgow of the early 21st century may be very different from Glasgow of the 1830s but many people still have the acute needs that GCM responds to with Christian love and care.

In 1826 David Naismith began the mission to look after the physical, emotional and spiritual need of his fellow Glaswegians, and so began a movement that would spread to the rest of the UK and eventually around the world.

Glasgow has two sites — the main adult work in Crimea Steet and a Child and Family centre in Govan which was started in 1986 as a response to local unemployment and subsequent deprivation.

Today around 150 people come to the Mission 5 nights a week to receive food, friendship and hear about the transforming gospel.

Joe Campbell now works at the mission, read more on p7



"Loving is always giving"

1. People can get involved with **Chanan**, and **Glasgow City Mission**,
2. **Support the Tron's work** through prayer and financial gifts.

2 Practical Ways to Give in Love

CHANAN

162 St Vincent Lane

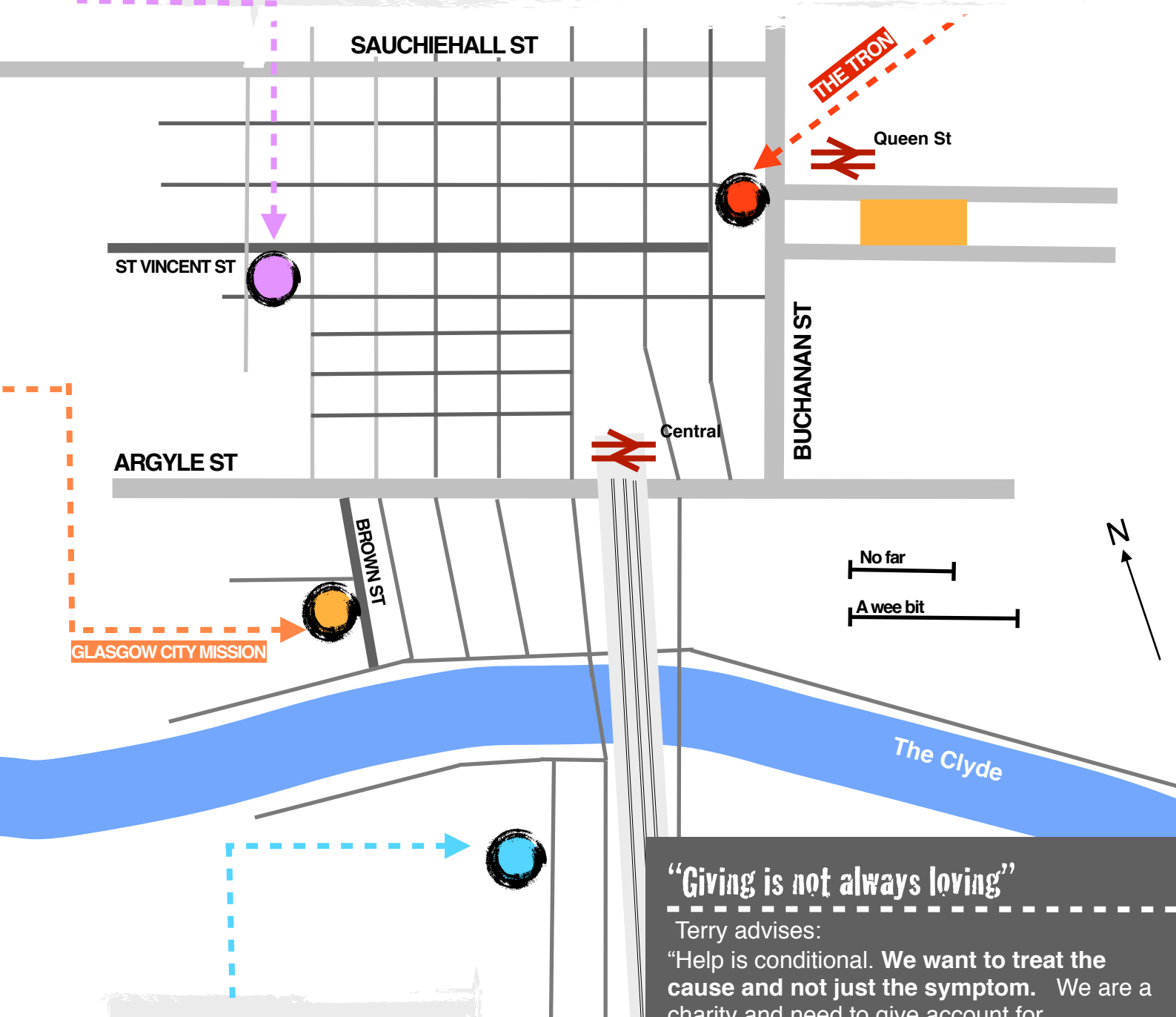
0141 243 2336

<http://www.chananglasgow.org.uk/>

Volunteer here!



Run by church members Hugh and Maggs McKenna (pictured) Chanan offers support groups and studies for those on the street or in prison and for families in need. Chanan (Glasgow) was founded in 2009 to fight the menace of homelessness, poverty, neglect, family breakdown and alcohol and drug abuse. Hugh and Maggs McKenna and a team of volunteers show love, compassion and support to rebuild broken lives. Barlinnie prisoners find through Chanan bible studies that there is a freedom to be experienced despite prison walls. Mums are helped by parenting classes and are helped to meetings with outside agencies while the children enjoy activities run by staff and volunteers. All are given the opportunity to find real lasting help in God through a Christianity Explored course.



GLASGOW CITY MISSION

HAMISH ALLAN CENTRE

180 Centre Street

0141 287 1800

A good place to send people looking for housing.

"Giving is not always loving"

Terry advises:

"Help is conditional. **We want to treat the cause and not just the symptom.** We are a charity and need to give account for everything with receipt so can't hand stuff out. **Never give people money**, but give food if you want. We want to help but don't want to be scammed because we are gullible or soft hearted"



Away News compiled by Ruth Hodason

This new role also means frequent visits to several churches in Latin America — a role needing much stamina, alertness, and ready understanding.

Kenny McLeod is settling into Levice, Slovakia where he presently has three part-time teaching jobs and is hoping to start an English class in a local cafe which would possibly give him opportunity for evangelistic outreach. He was delighted when he heard that **Csaba** and **Darina Tolnei's** church is not now relocating them to another part of the country.

David and **Julie Rowbory** with **Rebekah** and **Elizabeth** enjoyed a good relaxing break at their mission personnel retreat. Several colleagues have now moved on or have gone on home assignment at the end of the school year and they miss them greatly. New personnel are arriving however and the girls are making new friends. They were pleased to have a visit

a few weeks ago from **Illya Kachalla** who worshipped with us here for some time before returning to Nigeria. We continue to pray for their protection in that volatile part of Nigeria.

Imran and **Nagina Gill** working with OM in the Northern Province of Pakistan long for effective ways of reaching out to the people there with the gospel. Imran took part in two conferences in Murree and Karachi to better equip Christian pastors and to encourage and support them.

Carol Whipp, working in Wolverhampton with Neighbours Worldwide takes every opportunity, including sitting beside someone on the bus, to speak with local women and is able to meet some of them regularly to read and study the Bible together. Carol's mother in Australia has now moved into residential care which is partly a relief but also a continuing concern for Carol.

Once upon a time a missionary packed up and (usually) sailed to another country, stayed there for four years, then packed up and sailed home again for a year's furlough (home assignment in today's parlance). A more likely scenario today is that of one of our mission partners whose recent schedule included flights to, and meetings in, Singapore, Hong Kong, Cheng Du, Xining, Beijing, Bangkok, Kwai River, and Ho Chi Minh City in four WEEKS! It sounds much more exciting but in reality must be pretty exhausting.

Other Ministries

From **Euan** and **Helen Dodds'** current newsletter it is hard to believe they have been in Holyrood Church, Edinburgh for only four months. A concern for them was Helen's job back here in the west but the travelling seems to be going well and both sets of grandparents are able to care for Anna. Many things are still in the planning stage but already Christianity Explored is happening in a local cafe and several new contacts have been coming to the church.

Coatbridge Free Church where **Ivor MacDonald** now ministers is a small company of people but there have been some encouragements and, along with other like-minded ministers Ivor is hoping to reach out into the wider area with the gospel. A week's summer mission is planned beginning 30th July and a Christianity Explored course has begun with some new people coming along.

Ivor's family hope to move south from Skye during the summer.

Jonathan Keefe and his congregation in Robroyston are looking forward to the completion of their new church building, and hope to plan some outreach events at the end of July if it is finished on time.

Junction 12 (J12) is a project in the east end of Glasgow headed up by **Libby Lobban** and aimed at 10 - 18 year olds in the Carntyne, Cranhill and Riddrie areas. Over the last year more than one hundred young people have attended SU urban camps and weekends away and quite a number have become Christians. Libby looks forward to **Gordon McKie** joining her as a co-worker in August.

We give thanks to God for his goodness to **David Robertson** of St Peter's Dundee who has made such an amazing recovery and has just gone back to work.

His clear testimony to God's grace and mercy on a recent Sunday morning Radio Scotland interview was such a powerful witness.

Heading further north we are pleased to hear news of Trinity Church, Aberdeen which continues to meet in a hotel. **Peter Dickson** is currently on sabbatical and **David Gibson** is in charge. They have had some encouraging growth in the congregation. In Inverness the new Highland International Church has been inaugurated and **James Torrens** is expected to be appointed as minister. James will move north with his family at the end of the school term. **Pete Humphris** is working with him.

John and **Susan Rushton** have just retired and we are pleased to hear that they are beginning to settle into their new house in Stirling.

SPOT LIGHT on

... Joe Campbell

From volunteer to new career cooking and caring come together in an exciting new role at Glasgow City Mission.

Many of us know Joe Campbell for his fine culinary skills. Those of us who have been to Release the Word or weekends away can certainly testify to that. And can I add his fajitas are my own personal favourite.

But Joe has another stronger burning passion; reaching out to the vulnerable in our city. And this calling has taken him into an exciting new role with Glasgow City Mission, having previously had a similar position in the voluntary sector and begun his career working as a cook on oilrigs in the north sea.

Joe said, 'This is my first role working with a Christian organisation and while only a few weeks in I can see the huge difference this can make to turning peoples lives around.'

Joe works with young men in the City Mission drop-in centre in Crimea Street just off the Broomielaw.

'No two days are the same. In a drop-in centre there is always something that needs to be done whether that is doing the laundry for some of the homeless guys I work with, getting food supplies in for the kitchen, helping with office administration work or cooking lunches and evening meals.'

Those fine kitchen skills are still being put to good use. The drop-in centre holds a weekly bible study and prayer time each evening and Joe has been

sharing God's word with the group several times a week.

Talking about this Joe said, 'I'll be honest and say this is one of the things that made me most nervous about this new calling. I had never shared the word to a room full of people before and found the thought more than a little daunting. God has given me the grace to do this though and already I have felt his leading in finding the right passages of scripture and words to speak.'

“The current economic downturn is taking its toll and people are finding themselves homeless for all sorts of different reasons.”

Demand for support from the City Mission is increasing and there is a need for more volunteers to help the already 130-strong volunteering team.

'The current economic downturn is taking its toll and people are finding themselves homeless for all sorts of different reasons. We need to provide a service that supports people at their daily point of need, which then in turn gives us the platform to share the gospel. To do this we need more volunteers and there is a whole range of opportunities for people to serve. It

could be helping to make tea or coffee, van driving, helping with washing up and laundry or just being there to chat with those who come in.'

From speaking to Joe I was struck by the extent of the social need in our city and the huge and unique mission field on the very doorstep of our church.

'There is such an expansive mission field in the streets surrounding our church here in the city centre. Too many people are still trapped by poverty, addiction and social breakdown and need Christian care that involves practical and compassionate support. People trapped in addictions or poverty struggle to break free from this cycle without help. We can be that first step or helping hand that can start them on a journey of life transformation through the gospel of Christ.'

So just as Joe uses his social and culinary skills to reach the poor of our city we must all think how we can help reach this unique mission field, which is on our very doorstep. As the late John Stott said, 'While facing the realities of poverty, Christians should be motivated by the God-given obligation, "there should be no poor among you".'

in conversation with Andrew McIntyre

ANDY'S BOOK CORNER

"As easy as A.B.C"



Hearing the Spirit by Christopher Ash

The Holy Spirit is the trickiest member of the Trinity to pin down. If we're honest we don't know much about Him and what He gets up to, and we're worried about getting things wrong if we tried to articulate what we believe about Him. At the same time, we don't want to be missing an important part of Christian doctrine. Are we as a church suppressing the Spirit? Should we have less Bible, more Spirit? Will the Holy Spirit make me do weird things in a church service?

This book is a short, readable and very clear look at the Bible's teaching about the Holy Spirit, answering these questions and more. If you want one book to set your thinking straight about the Spirit and to excite you about His work, this is it!

What's it about? Primarily how the Spirit, Christ the Living Word, The Father and the Bible relate to each other. What does it mean to hear God speak and reveal himself?

What did you get out of it? A deeper understanding of the Spirit, why we do what we do in church and how the Bible talks about Him. Also, a great encouragement to pray for the necessary work of the Spirit in our lives.

How long did it take to read? The chapters are pretty short, but take some reflection, you could read it in a week or two.

Do Say: "The Spirit makes the Father known through the Word."

Don't Say: — "We must keep Spirit and Word in balance"

THE APPRENTICE OUR LATEST GRADUATES

Andy Baxter

Going: to work with UCCF in Glasgow as a CU staff worker.



What will you be doing?

Working with the CUs in Strathclyde University and the University of the West of Scotland, encouraging them in their evangelism on campus.

What have you learned from the Apprenticeship?

I've been doing a lot of student work at the Tron, particularly with internationals, so that has prepared me well. I'll use my training at Cornhill loads as a staff worker as well.

Fave story as an apprentice?

Getting engaged! In particular, the excitement and support from the church family at the Tron has made it amazing.

What can we pray? That there would be students in Strathclyde and UWS who come to know Jesus; for me as I build support for my role; for Naomi and my wedding plans!

Oli Ward

Going: to work as an assistant minister with North Parish Church in Stirling.



What will you be doing?

Assisting Calum Jack by preaching, teaching, small group work, and general support around the Church. I'm also intending to do the Pastors' Training Course at Cornhill.

What have you learned from the Apprenticeship? A great deal! How little I knew my Bible; the need to rely on God to use my frail effort; and that the church is full of a variety of characters, all in need of God's grace!

Fave story? Doing evangelism with Euan in the local pub.

What can we pray? That the house would sell quickly, and that we'd find somewhere new to live; that we'd settle quickly as a family; for Katie starting p2 in a new school; for working well with Calum; for future studies and ministry development.

Phil Copeland

Going: to work at ChristChurch Harpendon.



What will you be doing? I'll be joining ChristChurch as their youth minister.

What have you learned from the Apprenticeship? The teaching at Cornhill has been priceless. I have especially cherished the times spent with the young people of the Tron at Tron Youth, Bible Class and activ8. I have gained superb training from Agnes and following a proper pattern of Christian youth work.

Fave story as an apprentice? Andy falling asleep in his first staff meeting.

What can we pray? For the youth of the Tron and ChristChurch, that God would be building up disciples; for the ministry of ChristChurch and that the youth team would get on well; that Emma would settle into church well and find a job.

as told to Caz Dodds



In the next edition we'll catch up with Jonnie, Andrew and Jen (1st years) and introduce next years' intake to you!