

**St. Margaret's Community Church of
Scotland**

Dunfermline

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If you look at the very end of the book of Acts, you read these words:

“For the next two years Paul remained under house arrest. He welcomed all who visited him, proclaiming the Kingdom of God with all boldness and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. He did this unhindered.”

Paul, by this time was in Rome. He was a prisoner because of accusations made against him by the Jewish authorities. He is awaiting trial in Rome.

He is under house arrest, which means he is not allowed to leave where he is staying and has the constant presence of a Roman soldier to ensure this happens.

Paul does not see this as a terrible state of affairs but grasps the opportunity given to him and sends out invitations for people to come and visit him in order that he might share faith with them. The very last line in the book of Acts tells us that despite his imprisonment, the Gospel is not hindered!

We too are living in times of restriction. Does that mean that our ability to witness to Christ is also restricted? I do not think so! The Church is the product of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God is not determined by human restrictions.

The people of God, as I indicated last week, are defined by prayer. Although we cannot reach out physically, we can ask the Holy Spirit to do in people's hearts what we are incapable of doing.

The Holy Spirit, we are told in the book of Acts, was the person that grew the Church despite the adversity the young and early church faced. We live in a world where we have become accustomed to thinking that if we cannot do something, then it cannot be done!

I wonder sometimes, how conversant we are with the four Gospels? Was not Jesus constantly doing things that humanly speaking were impossible? Was not the birth and growth of the Church itself an impossible task when you think about it? It was not Paul or Peter that were responsible primarily for the growth and expansion of the Church – it was the Holy Spirit of God working through them – even, and especially, when they were imprisoned and restricted!

We think that the current restrictions are making it impossible for the Church to operate and grow. As a denominational entity that might be true. The denomination we belong to and we ourselves as a Church in St. Margaret's will emerge from this as something very different from what we were in the past – and thank God for that!

But let me get back to what I said earlier and in last week's letter. The Church is defined by Prayer. Prayer is our breath of life. It is our line of communication and inspiration as we reach out to the Father in the name of Jesus asking for the Promised Holy Spirit to do in and through us what humanly speaking may seem impossible.

Our current situation? I think that we can say, as Luke did at the end of the book of Acts, that we will continue, unhindered, to witness to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Iain

Intimations

Ross Kerr is looking for articles for the Church Magazine – if there is anything you feel would be helpful/informative please contact Ross on 01383 726663, email him on rosskerr@me.com or send it to 75 Scotland Drive, KY12 7TW.

Services

Daily readings in John's Gospel on Facebook.

No Zoom on Wednesday at 6.45pm

Facebook at 9am on Sunday

Zoom at 9.45am on Sunday

Church Service at 11am on Sunday and the service is livestreamed on YouTube – go to St. Margaret's Church of Scotland Dunfermline.

Here are some potential theme songs regarding Biblical characters:

Noah: "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head"

Adam and Eve: "Strangers in Paradise"

Samson: "Hair"

Daniel: "The Lions Sleep Tonight"

Joshua: "Good Vibrations"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: "Great balls of Fire"

The Three Kings: "When You Wish Upon a Star"

Elijah: "Up, Up, and Away"

Methuselah: "Stayin Alive"

When a man abused him, Buddha listened in silence; but when the man finished, Buddha asked him, "Son, if a man declined to accept a present made to him, to whom would it belong?" The man answered, "To him who offered it." "My son," said Buddha, "I decline to accept your abuse, and request you to keep it for yourself."

Two men met recently and struck up a conversation. One was telling the other about some problems he was having with one of his kids.

After a while the other guy said, "You think you have family problems? Get a load of my situation. A few years ago I met a young widow with a grown-up daughter and we got married. Later, my father married my stepdaughter. That made my stepdaughter my stepmother and my father became my stepson.

"Also, my wife became mother-in-law of her father-in-law. Then the daughter of my wife, my stepmother, had a son. This boy was my half-brother because he was my father's son, but he was also the son of my wife's daughter, which made him my wife's grandson. That made me grandfather of my half-brother.

"This was nothing until my wife and I had a son. Now the sister of my son, my mother-in-law, is also the grandmother. This makes my father the brother-in-law of my child, whose stepsister is my father's wife.

"I am my stepmother's brother-in-law, my wife is her own child's aunt, my son is my father's nephew and I am my own grandfather.

Sheesh! You think you have family problems."

