



ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH

FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER

18th January, 2021

Sunday Sermon Luke 1: 26 - 33

Under the intriguing, out-of-season title, Continuous Christmas, John focused on another aspect of the importance of the truth of the person of Christ – as expressed in the Virgin Birth and Incarnation - and its significance for the Christian. Unlikely though it might seem, it lies at the heart of the Christian faith and, without it, we would have nothing of substance to put our faith in. Christ was God manifest in human flesh.

Looking closely at these verses in Luke reminds us that Jesus was born without a human father. He was uniquely the “Seed of the woman” reversing the curse inherited from Adam, the original male seed and fulfilling the promise that, from the woman, One would be born who would crush Satan’s head.

By being ‘born of a virgin’ Jesus broke the flow of generational sinful nature in humanity. He was made flesh, and dwelt among us, but without sin. He was God manifest in the flesh.

And, why? As the Incarnate Son of God, born of Mary, Jesus came to be the **propitiation** for our sin – he came to put things right. As the sinless one he could **mediate**, for there is ‘*one mediator...the man Christ Jesus*’. He was the means of effecting **reconciliation**, enabling us to be **adopted** as children of God. And, coming “*out of the ivory palaces into this world of woe*”, Jesus is the **revelation** of God.

This is the unique Jesus we believe in. What a wonderful truth on which to build our hope of eternal life.

Suspension of Sunday Meetings

When introducing his sermon last week, John outlined three reasons why it has been decided to suspend the ‘in-person’ services on Sundays.

As responsible believers it is only right that we comply with national guidelines affecting everyone. There is no prohibition of gospel preaching or Christian witness for we are free to pursue – quite effectively – other means of doing so. And, with the building located in such a prominent and public position, it would not help our testimony to be seen to disregard the concern for the wellbeing of others and protecting the NHS.

The challenge for us now is how to be effective church in the present circumstances ready to “*give a reason for the hope that is within us*”.

However, yesterday’s attempt to stream the service using Zoom is a welcome means to overcome this restriction, as are the other Zoom gatherings during the week.

Pray for:

- The Elders as they meet today to consider practical arrangements in the light of spiritual principles.
- Jack Harvey who tested Covid positive at the Care Home and has been very unwell; and for Christine at this time of additional stress.
- Gordon Craig who has tested positive for Covid and has to isolate, along with his mother, Margaret.

- Many of our older folk who are finding isolation and its accompaniments quite debilitating. And, for younger ones with the challenge of additional demands and restrictions.
- Mission of the Month: Platform 67 in their networking.
- Gordon and Janice Thomson as they continue harvesting personal contacts and making good use of the internet to exercise mission. The next one is on Monday 25th January at 7 30pm on Facebook.
- Local agencies, such as Scripture Union and city-based outreach activities as they cope with the restrictions and effects of Covid.
- Jim McKellar with Helen's funeral on Tuesday this week at 11 30 am. The link for the service is: <https://www.westreamitstreams.co.uk/mckellarh>
- Each other as we carry burdens, contribute to the fellowship and witness of the church, and face challenging situations, yet proving the Lord's faithfulness in it all.

Scripture shows that, in addition to being a constant '*refuge and strength*', the Lord is concerned about the positive effects of the process through which we are passing and the eternal outcomes that are generated from it, knowing that "*he who has begun a good work in you will continue to work it until that Day*". .

Encouragement

It has been encouraging to see so many gather on Zoom this last week, especially the Tuesday Night Prayer meeting and the Bible Study with over 30 present in each. While Zoom is strange, it does lend itself to making participation easier for those attending and a real blessing to others listening.

Gems from Genesis

Margaret Stewart shares the following from Thursday's Bible Study:

The Lord promises (3: 15);

The Lord provides (22: 8);

The Lord plans (50: 20);

- sentiments echoed in the chorus:

"The great Creator became my Saviour".

Thank you, Margaret.

Finally,

At the beginning of a new year my mind goes back to the 'The Hand of God' message spoken by King George VI and cherished in many a wartime home. It quoted Minnie Louise Haskins, an American poetess, who wrote – "*I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown!' And he replied: 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light and safer than a known way'*".

In 1 Peter 5: 6 we are urged to "*humble ourselves under God's mighty hand that he may lift us up in due time*". And, in John 10: 28, 29, Jesus assures us of the safety and security of God's hand in that no one can snatch us from His or His Father's hand.

With that assurance, may we humble ourselves and put our hands into the mighty and secure Hand of God, resting in the confidence that He will take us safely through the coming year no matter how dark the circumstances.

David Jack