



## May 2022 Newsletter



### WELCOME

### LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship—11.00am

Evening Worship—6.30pm

### PRAYER MEETING

Thursday—7.30pm

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#### CONTACT DETAILS

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## NEWS & EVENTS

### INDUCTION OF REV. KENNETH STEWART

On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April, Stornoway Reformed Presbyterian Church marked a new chapter in their history with the induction of a new minister, Rev Kenneth Stewart.

The induction service was held at Stornoway Town Hall, where we were glad to welcome visitors from the RP Church on the mainland, along with visitors from a variety of churches here on the island. Five years ago, Rev Kenneth Stewart preached at the induction service of our former minister, Rev Stephen McCollum, as he became minister of Stornoway RP Church. As providence would have it, the roles were reversed, as Rev McCollum preached at Rev Stewart's induction service, having himself recently accepted a call to Airdrie RP Church.

Rev. McCollum preached from 1 Peter 5:4 on the Chief Shepherd and the rewards that accompany a faithful ministry. Afterwards, Rev Donald Macdonald gave a brief narrative of events surrounding the vacancy in Stornoway, the call to Rev Stewart and the eventual acceptance of the call. Rev McCollum then put the vows to Rev Stewart who affirmed his acceptance of the vows and was installed as minister of the congregation. Having received the right hand of fellowship from members of presbytery and the elders of the congregation, the service was closed with the singing of Psalm 23.

Following the conclusion of the service, presentations were made by MD Maclean to Rev Stewart, Bill Lucas to Alexander Stewart and Katie Macdonald to Anna Stewart. Mr Stewart stated that MD Maclean had served as an office bearer in 3 different congregations with him, including Toronto, Canada, Kenneth Street, Stornoway and now Stornoway RP Church.

Following the service, a reception was held upstairs at the County Hotel. It was over 20 years ago that Mr Stewart concluded his previous ministry here in Stornoway, before spending over 20 years ministering in Glasgow. Mr Stewart remarked that when he left Stornoway all these years ago, he felt that he may well be back again one day to minister again in Stornoway.

At that point, Iain Gillies, elder in Glasgow RP Church, gave a warm speech where he thanked Mr Stewart for his faithful ministry in Glasgow. DR Macdonald, Stornoway RP elder, then spoke on behalf of the Stornoway congregation. He stated that he has known and followed Mr Stewart's ministry since he was a student in Stornoway over 30 years ago. The evening was closed with the singing of Psalm 133.

We remember the Glasgow congregation and pray that the Lord would provide them with a faithful minister to fill their vacancy. We are thankful for the provision of a new minister here in Stornoway. We look to the Lord, not any man, and our prayer is that the Lord would bless, equip and uphold Mr Stewart throughout his ministry here in Stornoway.



*Rev. Kenneth Stewart and Kirk Session*

The economic collapse and the resulting civil unrest within Sri Lanka is being widely reported. Prices have escalated, while the value of the country's currency has plummeted. The Sri Lankan Rupee is presently the world's worst-performing currency.

For many, basic household staples are either unavailable or simply unaffordable. The nation's largest supplier of fuel has increased prices by 65%.

The Government's ban on chemical fertilisers has unsurprisingly resulted in decreasing crop yields and an increasing dependency upon unaffordable imports.

The economic collapse has an impact upon different aspects of the work of the Mission. Poorer families are struggling to provide basic meals and are unable to afford to travel.

It also means that the completion of Rev. Partheepan's new home (the manse currently being constructed in Vavuniya) is hindered, as the projected budget is now inadequate.

A fuller report will be provided in the May *Witness* magazine (D.V.).

Please pray today for Rev. Parthee and the work of the Mission.



*Rev Partheepan*



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## IS IT UNSPIRITUAL TO BE DISCOURAGED?

From time to time over the centuries some Christians have taught, sometimes with tragic consequences, that a truly spiritual person never gets discouraged. To be cast down is, by definition, to be “unspiritual.” Unless we are well-grounded in Scripture, it is very easy for us to be overwhelmed, confused, and even more discouraged by such teaching.

This teaching certainly seems logical: if the gospel saves us, it must save us from discouragement! It also appears to be wonderfully spiritual. After all, are we not “more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:37)?



But this is not biblical logic, nor is it true spirituality. The gospel saves us from death, not by removing death, but by helping us to face it in the power of Christ's victory and thus to overcome it. So, too, with sin. And similarly with discouragement. Faith in Christ does not remove all of the causes of discouragement; rather, it enables us to overcome them. We may experience discouragement; but we will not be defeated by it.

Nor is this the biblical spirituality; it is a false “super-spirituality” that ignores or denies the reality of our humanity. We live in frail flesh and blood and in a fallen world which, John says, “lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). There is much to discourage. Jesus felt that. To be free from the possibility of discouragements would be more “spiritual” than Jesus—and therefore not truly spiritual at all.

Psalm 42 and 43 teach us the biblical approach to discouragement: we feel it, we recognize it for what it is, and we analyse the reasons for its presence.



# Children's Corner



Dear Children

If you had to make a list of all the good gifts that God has given you since you were little I'm sure you would have a very long list. I am wondering if you would include in that list a very special gift. What special gift is that? It is the gift of a minister! Now what is so special about a minister? You probably know that a minister is God's servant to bring to us a message from God offering us salvation from sin and eternal life. Is that not precious? Indeed, it is the most precious message we could ever receive.

I once gave a little girl a gift of one of my pendants which she always admired. What was her reaction? She kept thanking me and saying it was so, so precious. That is how we too should react to God's gift of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. In the Gospel of John, chapter 3 and verse 16 we read; 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.' That is not all that is in the verse. Look it up and read what else it says. The Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 15: 'Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.' Then the Apostle Peter says in 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 7: 'Unto you who believe He is precious.' Do you thank God for the indescribable gift of His Son? Is He precious to you?

God sends His ministers to preach to us this good news so we should look on God's servants as precious gifts. In Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 11 the Apostle Paul lists them – apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Apostles and prophets were ministers with particular gifts for the early days of the Christian church but these roles no longer apply to us today.

When we heard that God was taking away our last minister and sending him to another congregation to bring them this good news we felt very sad. But very soon after, God showed us how much He cared for us and He provided us with Mr Stewart, another of His precious servants. Now you make sure you come to church every Lord's Day to hear the message that God has given to him **for you!** Seeing you there will be a great encouragement to your minister. Listen well to what he has to say and anything you don't understand don't be afraid to ask him or to ask any of God's people. They will be more than happy to explain and answer your questions. If God has sent us this precious gift of a minister then one day God will ask us if we valued that gift and made use of it. I pray that God will be pleased with your answer to that question.

The Bible uses many words to describe a minister. He is a preacher, that is he tells you about God and explains God's Word to you. He is also a pastor, that is someone who prays for you and cares about your soul. The minister directs you to the Saviour, the Lord Jesus, and is anxious that you put your trust in Him, knowing that 'none perish who trust in Him.' (Psalm 34, verse 22). A minister is also an ambassador, that is he represents the Lord Jesus in this world. The Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians, chapter 5 and verse 20, calls himself an ambassador for Christ. The Lord Jesus is now in heaven but His ministers are His ambassadors here on earth. When a minister preaches to you and exhorts you from the Scriptures it is as if the Lord Jesus Himself was speaking to you. It is always good to keep that in mind when you are in church.

My prayer for all of you is that not only will you value your new minister but, above all, that you will value God's precious gift of His Son. David, in Psalm 18 and verse 2, makes a list of eight ways to describe God and before each one he puts the little word **MY**. Look it up and think of all these ways of describing God. I pray that you too can use that little word **MY** and so claim Him as your own God and be able to say what David says in verse 1: "I will love you, O Lord, **my** strength."

The Lord bless each one of you.

With my love.

4 Granny M

**Activity:** In the above I have quoted several texts of Scripture. Write them into your Texts notebook and learn them. That is something you can do on the Lord's Day and which will be very beneficial to you.