



The Steeple News

Issue 140

February 2005

Dear friends,

We are now in the time of Lent, a time of preparation as we think again of the final days of Jesus' life, as He turns towards Jerusalem, towards the joyful welcome, the trial, the Cross and His death. And then the joy of Easter morning.

But it begins in ashes. And it journeys through darkness. It is a spiritual pilgrimage that we must take one way or the other if we desire that spiritual renewal will come. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we read: "...if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Usually this is quoted in the context of wanting revival or renewal in the church, and the prayer is interpreted as intercessory prayer for others. But a careful reading of the passage will reveal that the prayer that is called for here is not intercessory prayer for others; it is penitential prayer for the community of faith, for US. It is not a call for others to repent; it is a call for US, God's people to repent. It is OUR land that needs healed, it is OUR wicked ways that need to be turned from, WE are the ones who need to seek God's face.

Perhaps, during this season we should stop praying for others as if we were virtuous enough to do so. Perhaps we should take off our righteous robes just long enough in this time to put ashes on our own heads, to come before God with a new humility that is willing to confess, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." Maybe we should be willing to prostrate ourselves before God and plead, "Lord, nothing in my hand I bring; simply to the cross I cling." Then we might be able to hear God in ways we have not heard Him in a long time. And it may be the beginning of a healing for which we have so longed.

O Lord, begin with me. Here. Now.

With every blessing

Brian

The Snowdrops

It seems impossible that new life can appear from the decaying branches and the rotting leaves—new life of such simplicity and loveliness.

Lord of creation,
you can bring to life,
in me,
all that has for long
lay dead and dormant—
my awareness of you,
my love for others,
my ability to trust,
and so much more,
beyond my imagining.



Lord, Heal Our Land

Rev Dr Alistair Petrie

At 7.00 pm

Friday 25th February 2005

In the Lesser Hall

Albert Hall

Dumbarton Road, Stirling

Alistair was born in Scotland, trained for the ministry here and ministered in a number of Scottish parishes. He is now a researcher for a group who make the Transformation Videos on community revival.

All welcome



Sunday 20 February	11.00 am	Morning Worship — Rev Brian Webster
Sunday 27 February	11.00 am	Morning Worship — Rev Brian Webster including Sacrament of Baptism
Sunday 6 March	11.00 am	Sacrament of Communion — Rev Brian Webster
Sunday 13 March	11.00 am	Morning Worship — Rev Brian Webster
Sunday 20 March	11.00 am	Morning Worship — Rev Brian Webster

Lunchtime Lent Services

A service will be held every **Wednesday at 12 noon in the Church Hall** in preparation for Easter. Come and join us for half an hour!

Letter from Zambia 1.0

We are beginning to find our feet here in Mwandia. Half of our job is to look after groups of mainly American Church Volunteers who come to help on the Mission. We accommodate, feed and look after them as well as organizing their programme so that they are productively employed for the duration of their stay. This means ensuring that supplies of materials, patients and labour are readily available.



The other half of our time goes on supporting the school and hospital in areas of need. An area that we have been drawn towards is Kandiana, the Old Folks Home. This is a courtyard of single rooms that are provided as housing for old people who have no families to look after them. Many are social outcasts because they never married. There are a number of blind residents as well. We would like to do something to improve their lot. They have a stand pipe for water about 20m away from the courtyard, so we would like to bring water to a sink for them beside their rooms, so they don't have to lug water in buckets. We also want to improve their bathing facilities and build a shower for them as well. So your contribution will go towards meeting the cost of this project. This project is something Ida and I have been praying about and asking the Lord to help provide to make this possible and through you all he is doing so. Our grateful thanks to Him and you. We have had a good but busy Christmas so are hoping to have a few days away with Mum, Dad and the bairns over the New Year to just be by ourselves. We hope things are well with you and that you had a good Christmas. Ida and I would like to thank you and the Church for your prayer and material support for us in the work here. Please also convey our thanks and love to the congregation as well.

*With every blessing for the coming year
Love
Keith & Ida*

Your Generosity!

Your generosity over the past 6 months has been exceptional!

You have donated:

Harvest Service to WaterAid	£467
Quiz Night for Zambia	£216
Earl Haig Fund	£164
Choir Songs of Praise for Sunday School	£173
St Andrews Night For Church	£124
Christmas Fair	£800
Christmas Family Service for CHAS	£606
Primary School Service for CHAS	£120
Watchnight & Christmas Day Services to Zambia	£190
Tsunami Disaster	£731
Sunday Morning Teas & Coffees	
Sept (Alzheimer's)	£100
December (CHAS)	£60

WaterAid — Thank You!

We received a letter from WaterAid in response to our donations saying,

“Thank you very much for the donation of £467.03 raised by your church. Your support enables WaterAid to continue its vital work helping communities in Africa and Asia to gain access to life’s most basic essentials—safe water, sanitation, facilities and hygiene education. If you would like to know more about WaterAid’s work then visit www.wateraid.org or call 020 7793 4551

Walk and Talk! Saturday 19 March 10 — 12 Noon

Join us for some fresh air and friendship - stretch your legs and enjoy the lovely sights close to Cambusbarron.

We will be walking from the Church Hall to Quarry Road and then through the Quarry to the Ford at Polmaise. We will then go on to Swan’s Water through the village of Chartershall and return via Tinkers’ Loan through the Polmaise Estate woods to Quarry Road and then to the Hall for coffee, tea and bacon rolls!

Every one is welcome — and bring some friends!

Dates For:

Coffee Mornings	Gentlemen’s Lunch
10 March	16 March
14 April	20 April
12 May	18 May
9 June	15 June
14 July	Holiday
11 August	17 August
8 September	21 September
13 October	19 October
10 November	23 November
8 December	14 December