



April 2024

# Outlook

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For links to evening reflections and online services visit the DBC website at [www.dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk)

In Acts 4:19-20 it says; '*Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."*'

Peter and John were bold and spoke about the truth found in Jesus and the Gospel Good News. This included the healing of the lame (Acts 3), challenging and speaking God's truth into the culture of their day including those that crucified Jesus (4:8-11) and proclaiming that '*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men and women by which we must be saved*' (4:12).

The religious leaders and authorities of the day were not happy with what was being taught and done in the name of Jesus so they had Peter and John seized and questioned (4:13-15). The outcome of all this was that Peter and John were told to stop what they were teaching and doing in the name of Jesus (4:16-18). This is when Peter and John replied.

On April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 the Scottish Government's Hate Crime and Public Order Act came into law (this includes hate speech). Hatred of any kind including hate speech is not something that a Christian can participate in or condone. I am sure that most of those who put together and campaigned for this law did so with the best intentions and to seek to help others.

However, when it comes to hatred, especially hate speech, it is not at all clear how this law will define and draw a clear

and fair distinction between hate speech and someone who just, strongly and passionately, but respectfully, disagrees with the view and position of someone else. How do you prove beyond reasonable doubt that someone has set out to break this law? I'm not seeking to make a political point here! I'm highlighting a very big danger that has also been highlighted by respected lawyers, judges and the police within Scotland. Is it just me, or did you get the irony too, of such a law being passed on April Fools Day?

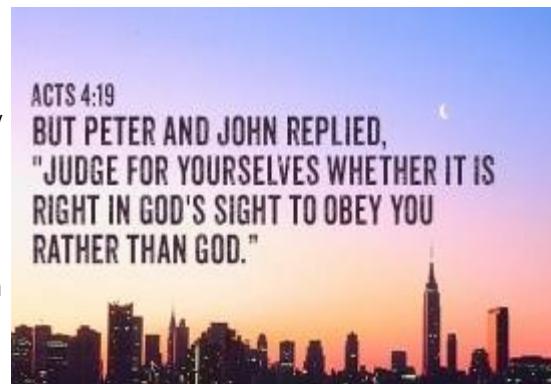
What implications does this law have for our freedom of speech? Relationships? Families? Work places? Education

system? NHS? Local communities? For local churches and their ministries and gospel proclamation? Now it would be entirely wrong to be sensationalist about all this and to get it all out of perspective!

However, we would do well to recognise the inherent dangers within this law, which will undoubtedly press in on our freedom of speech.

Let's make sure that we never act or speak with hatred. Let's live, act and speak with integrity. Let's teach, hold to and be faithful to God's truth revealed in the Bible. Let's disagree with others graciously, and above all, love others, even our enemies! Let's follow the example of Peter and John... "*Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard*".

Alistair Purss, Lead Pastor



# Family News

## Congratulations...

... to Josh and Sarah Stocks (nee Derby) on the birth of their first child John Henry Stocks. Born on Sunday 24th March. First grandchild for Janet Derby.



## Congratulations...

... to Val and Ian Penn who recently celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. They were presented with flowers at the Maundy Thursday Friendship Hour/Encore Service.



# A morning with Sharon Garlough-Brown Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May: 10.30-12.30 @The GLO Bookshop Motherwell



The Ladies Book Group have enjoyed reading 'Sensible Shoes' and 'Two Steps Forward' by Sharon Garlough-Brown, and a few of us are planning a trip to Motherwell to an event with the author as part of the GLO Bookshop 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. Sharon will be sharing some encouragements from her own life and situation over two morning sessions with time to meet and chat at the end.  
The first session will be from 10.30

to 11.15 am followed by a 30 mins break. The second session will be from 11.45 - 12.30pm. Tea & Coffee will be served as you arrive from 9.30am. If you are interested in attending, tickets can be booked via Eventbrite for £5. We are hoping to share lifts from Dumfries. So, nearer the time, please contact Debbie Paterson or Jane Rafferty for more information.  
Jane: 07787 545460

Christiana and John Samuel need an outdoor storage box or small shed to store a petrol lawn mower with its fuel. If you can help please contact the church office.



## Thank You...

... Ian and Val Penn wish to thank all those who sent cards and good wishes on the celebration of their Diamond Wedding on March 28th.

Everyone is invited to come to the monthly gathering where we bring the nation of Israel before the Lord in prayer. It is usually on the first Monday of each month. (This month's meeting was delayed due to the Bank holiday last Monday.)

## Prayer for Israel



Monday 8th April @ 3pm

Prayer for Israel group will meet again on Monday 6th May.

## Easter Family Fun Day



A few of the 280 families and children who enjoyed a morning of free, fun activities on Saturday 23rd March



## Joy's visit to Nepal in March

"It's really for me? Wow! I didn't think I'd ever have such a good resource."



This was the reaction of a Nepali teacher when she was given one of the three tablets donated by DBC and Georgetown Primary School. Indira had seen how the apps on the tablet could help students understand and practice reading with phonic sounds but didn't expect to have one to use in her class.

Thank you so much for enabling us to show love and encouragement to teachers like Indira.



It was such a privilege to reconnect with teachers like Indira, neighbours and the church community on my recent visit to Nepal.

Another highlight was visiting the New Life rehabilitation centre in

Tansen. Pun Narayan established the centre in 2013, when he realised that some of the patients in the mission hospital had no safe place to go when they were discharged. You can read more about the vision and journey of New Life centre at <http://tansennewliferehab.com/>. The centre has grown and currently cares for 11 clients mainly with psychiatric illnesses. Pun is now retired and spends much of his time with the clients, although finding staff willing to work long term in the centre is proving difficult. The centre is seeking to become self-sufficient and economically viable by growing crops and keeping animals on their land.



Unfortunately, the land on which one of the buildings is situated was undermined by the construction of a road and part of the building collapsed. Several architects and engineers in Nepal have given possible solutions but most suggest it would be wise to wait until after the next monsoon (July and August) in case there is any further movement in the land. Many of you will be aware that money has been raised and donated at DBC for the centre for which they are most grateful. However, they ask that we keep



these funds until plans for the reconstruction of the building are finalised.

With limited resources and little local support, the centre faces many challenges yet is clearly providing a much-needed home, love and hope for these vulnerable folk on the very margins of society. Please pray for Pun and others



involved, for wisdom to make right decisions and for encouragement to keep going. Pray too that we, as a church and as individuals, might know if and how we could continue to give practical support in the future.

With thanks.

Joy Ransom

# The Love of God

**God is Love** (1 John 4:8). It's not surprising then that the primary Christian obligations are centred upon love: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... soul... and mind... and... You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39). And Jesus added a new special commandment for His disciples: "... that you love one another as I have loved you..." (John 13:34) - a love clearly beyond the second great commandment above.

You may never have thought about it this way before, but whereas faith is a gift of God Ephesians 2:8), to love is actually a commandment. The nature of Godly love is expounded in depth in 1 John 3 & 4 and in 1 Corinthians 13, and these passages make one thing very clear: Godly love is not cheap. Indeed it is a very costly commodity, as we may learn by experience.

In this age of instant gratification we buy on credit what we cannot afford. We abhor long learning curves. When faced with a problem or crisis, we want it fixed NOW - a natural desire which may be reflected in our prayers. We know Jesus healed instantly, and when we or someone close is ill, that is exactly what we want.

But Godly love is for the long haul. Miracles were for the important but temporary purpose of giving accreditation to His identity as the Son of God, and for the accreditation of his apostles. Of course God can still perform miracles and he never forsakes us, but his greater purpose is that we learn to love as he loves.

God has been loving, saving, blessing, healing, nurturing and teaching mankind faithfully for millennia - ever since the creation of man. He has been a loving Father

towards mankind, and even a loving, faithful husband to unfaithful Israel.

Godly love is not soppy, sentimental or over-indulgent. It is strong, brave and resilient, enduring over time. It involves risk. It involves service. Sometimes it involves pain and suffering.

Consider which requires more love, and more reliance upon the Holy Spirit to sustain that love: the ability to instantaneously zap a sick person back to health, or to nurse them for weeks or even years through their sickness or incapacity.

The marriage vows many of us committed to include the words: "for better or worse; in sickness and in health". The wedding ceremony presumes that even human love will need to be very resilient to the varying circumstances of life, and "until death us do part" implies the long haul too. Even grief is a price we pay for love.

Godly love will cost us, and we will need God's Holy Spirit to inspire and sustain it. In fact personal sacrifice is implicit in love, and Christian love and faith are predicated upon an understanding of, and gratitude for, the God who gave Himself in love for us, in the greatest sacrifice of all.

Richard Whiting

God is  
Love

-1 John 4:16

# Keeping in Touch



**Email** If you have given the DBC office consent to use your email address, we will keep you updated by email. If you are reading this and not getting emails from the DBC office, then please email: [office@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk) and we will make sure you get a Data Consent Form to complete and return.



**Telephone** Please phone the DBC office if you have any requests for help, prayer or just for a chat! The church office is staffed 9am – 1pm Mon – Friday. Tel: 01387 268926

## DBC website

The past sermons and video messages recorded for Sundays and Wednesdays are available from the Dumfries Baptist Church website

<https://www.dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk/resources.html#sermons>

## Morning Worship on Sundays

is at 10.30 in the Auditorium and also

available on the church YouTube channel at [DBCC Gillbrae](#).



**Discoverers** meet each Sunday (in term time) during the morning service.

**Evening Worship** is at 6.30pm in the Auditorium.

**Wednesday 9pm Short evening reflections** are available at [DBCC Gillbrae](#).

The DBC Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/Dumfriesbaptistchurch/> You don't need to be a Facebook user to access this page online.

Links to the evening reflection and other messages are regularly posted on the DBC Facebook page.

## Alpha Mini Series

**“Alpha is a way to explore what we hunger after - meaning and intimacy and relationship... In a very non-pressed, non-judgemental environment.”**

- Bear Grylls  
host of “Man vs Wild”.



Alpha



You are invited to an Alpha Mini Series (3 Sessions) with a soup & sandwich lunch on Thursdays May 9th, 16th, 23rd. 12 noon - 1.30 pm

Alpha is a chance to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment.

Ask some of life's big questions: Is there more to life than this? - 9th May

Who is Jesus? - 16th May      Why did Jesus die? - 23rd May

*A sign-up sheet is on the welcome table or contact the office or contact Eoghan if you want more information 07926731592*

## What happens at DBCC?

The local community continue to use the Church Centre more and more for their activities and meetings. We now have fewer commercial bookings from the likes of the Council and the NHS and this reinforces our belief that God wants the community, our neighbours to be the beneficiaries from the Centre and our hospitality.



The Cornerstone café is extremely busy at times to the point that we can struggle to seat everyone. The staff and volunteers work very hard to keep the place running and to keep everyone happy. Please pray for the regular volunteers who contribute so much we would really struggle without them. We are so thankful for their faithfulness.

A few of our volunteers are needing to slow down or step back from the duties and we would really benefit from new folk stepping up to help. We would love to see new volunteers so the burden would be less on the current helpers.

If you feel you could help for a few regular hours a week, during the day, in the evenings or even weekends, there are always lots of tasks to do, or even if you could help on an ad hoc basis, please talk to us in the Church office.

Remember the centre is our outreach to the community, we love to see the fellowship coming into the centre, reaching out and connecting with our neighbours.

God Bless

Philip Proctor, Manager

# Mission Quiz

How much do you know about the mission organisations supported by DBC?

Our Mission leaflet, with the full, updated list, is available from the church foyer.

Or go now to the organisations' websites for more information.

(Answers on back page)

1. Which Scottish-based organisation has these short videos on their website: Where is God in a world of chaos?, What is the meaning of life?, Why does God seem so far away?, Are all religions the same?, Why do we find death so unnatural? There are many others to watch and share with friends.

2. Open Doors serves persecuted Christians and churches worldwide by supplying Bibles, leadership training, literacy programmes, livelihood support and advocacy services. According to their World Watch List 2024, which are the 3 most dangerous countries in which to be a Christian?

3. Through the Baptist Missionary Society and Joy Ransom, Dumfries Baptist Church supports the EQUIP Programme which improves school education in which country?

4. Every year, Dave Moss organises a cycling challenge at Drumlanrig and lots of DBC folk help on the day. It raises funds for a development agency which partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries. Which charity is it?

5. Which organisation places Bibles and New Testaments in Dumfries schools, care homes, hotels and B&Bs? More local volunteers are wanted!

6. Which wildlife conservation organisation, which runs field study/environmental centres in Portugal, France, the Czech Republic, Kenya, India and Canada, celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year?

# Contacts

Lead Pastor	Alistair Purss	01387 263032 <a href="mailto:alistair.purss@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk">alistair.purss@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk</a>
Pastor	Eoghan Paterson	07926 731592 <a href="mailto:eoghan@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk">eoghan@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk</a>
Church Magazine	Karen Miller	01387 710155
Church Office	Mon-Fri 9am-1pm	01387 268926 <a href="mailto:office@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk">office@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk</a>
Discoverers	Jane Rafferty	01387 268066
Elevate	Janet Derby	01387 268934
Encore	David White	07476379865
Friendship Hour	Chris Dewhurst	07473545994
Global Partnership Group	Barbara Mearns	01387 710031
Girlzone	Sharon Rossi	07739130934
Impact	Alison McKendrick	07752553703
Prayer Ministry	Eleanor Moss	01387 263994
Secretary	Lesley Mackay	01387 247456 <a href="mailto:secretary@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk">secretary@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk</a>
Toddler Groups	Heather McCombe (Mrs)	01387 253416
Treasurer	Ian Penn	01387 263242 <a href="mailto:pennnithsdale@upanet.com">pennnithsdale@upanet.com</a>
DBC Youth Team	Alistair Wallace	07851145918 <a href="mailto:youth@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk">youth@dumfriesbaptistchurch.org.uk</a>

## Treasurer's Report

### Total Monthly Income

January 2024	£36,511
February 2024	£26,071

These figures represent the first 67% of financial year 2023/24 with income 80% budget and expenditure 62% of budget. The total income was £226,958 (£5674 / week against a budget figure of £5400/week). Expenditure during this same period amounted to £173,627 (£4451 / week against a budget figure of £5400/week) . The income includes £10,472 for the “food parcel” ministry, which includes a grant, and expenditure of £8714 for this work, a great example of outreach to the community.

We continue to notice the effects of increasing costs for many items but particularly gas, electricity and water rates. The Operating Company is particularly affected by rising food and staffing costs. We are also beginning to see some maintenance and replacement costs for the building being processed.

If you already give regularly, or are considering doing so, and you pay income tax (as the vast majority of us do) you can “gift-aid” your offering which effectively means the church can claim an additional 25p for every £1 you give at no additional cost to you. In the first half of the financial year over £21,700 of our offerings were **not** subject to Gift Aid. Please prayerfully consider whether you can Gift-Aid your giving. You can continue to give weekly, monthly or directly through your bank. Please contact me if you want further information regarding Gift-Aid.

Ian Penn - Treasurer (01387 263242)

### Quiz Answers

- 1 Solas Centre for Public Christianity [www.solas-cpc.org](http://www.solas-cpc.org)
- 2 North Korea, Somalia, Libya
- 3 Nepal
- 4 Tearfund
- 5 Good News for Everyone
- 6 A Rocha