



PORTOBELLO BAPTIST CHURCH

Messenger

August 2007

www.portobellobaptist-church.org.uk

A THOUGHT

God is still on the Phone

A child came home from Sunday School and told his mother that they had learned a new chorus. "God is still on the phone" -- you probably guess that he had got it wrong -- or had he? In a day of advanced communication I have to admit that next to face to face communication I prefer the telephone to things like fax or email. Isn't it great to know that "God is still on the throne, and He will remember His own. Tho' trials may press us and burdens distress us He never will leave us alone. God is still on the throne and He will remember His own. His promise is true, He will not forget you, God is still on the throne." ... and that brings us back to the wee boy. We can communicate with Almighty God, not by phone, but by prayer.

The story is told of a conversation that took place when the first telegraph poles were erected in Shetland. A business man was watching and remarked. "Isn't that amazing. We will be able to send a message to 200mils away and get a reply back within the hour." A Christian man who was standing by said "There is nothing very great about that!" "Well do you know anything faster?" He responded by giving the gist of this verse

ISA 65:24 ***Before they call I will answer;
while they are still speaking I will hear.***

In a special edition of Daily Bread under a heading "Faster than Email" it finished with the statement "Prayer is the Christians open line to heaven" and then quoted a little poem as I want to do.

***"Even while we're asking, God's power and love can bless;
To praying souls He often grants more than they can express."***

More things are achieved by prayer than this world dreams of. Do we believe that?

Alan Berry,
Interim Moderator

THE PULPIT

August	5th	a.m. p.m.	Rev. Robert Gemmell Mr. Jack Spiers
	12th		To be arranged
	19th		Rev. Gordon Craig
	26th		Rev. Alan Berry



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

August	23rd	7 p.m.	Management Committee
	29th	7 p.m.	Quarterly Business Meeting
	Various Dates		Festival Christian events: commencing with Festival Praise in Charlotte Chapel, Sunday 12 August 8.30 p.m. Publicity Material available in the hall for all events.

THANK YOU

Margaret & I would like to thank all our friends at Portobello Baptist Church following the birth of our granddaughter Skye Noelle Sutherland on 6 July 2007. We thank you for your cards, telephone calls, prayers, gifts, personal words of congratulations and your keen interest in the latest addition to the Sutherland clan.



Thank you for sharing in our wonderful experience of becoming grandparents for the first time.

Jim & Margaret Sutherland

TRIBUTE TO MISS BETTY YOUNG

As a Church we pay tribute to Betty Young who died in the Western General Hospital on 16 July 2007.

Betty in coming to live in Portobello joined St. Marks Episcopal Church but for several years attended the Evening Service in this Church. On one such occasion when the Rev George Mitchell was preaching he asked "is that Betty Young?" When I replied "yes, do you know her?" He explained that he had served with her on the Committee of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union and she had stayed at his home. Betty decided to join the Fellowship of this Church and was received into membership by the Rev Robert Gemmell on 23rd July 2006.

When Betty became a member of the Church she became fully involved. She was present at both Services when she could unless she was in Nepal which she visited each year. She shared in the Services and on several occasions devoted the sermon to an account of the political and church situation in Nepal. She gleaned information from all sources and would provide most up-to-date information. The comment when Betty spoke was "could have listened to her twice as long". Her incapacity prevented her from being a Steward but on one of the last Sundays she was present she participated in the Communion Service taking the prayer of thanks for the bread and wine. No task was too menial for her however and she made washing the communion cups her job. Her service for her Master was one thing, the depth of her Christian faith and life was another. She read and studied the Bible diligently. In hospital she asked for her Bible to be brought in and her niece read it to her while she was very ill.

Prayer was of paramount importance to her and she led a prayer group for Nepal on a Wednesday evening. Recently when bemoaning the building problems in the Church, and other concerns, she said "we must keep on praying".

No one could fail to recognise the love and concern she had for the people of Nepal. Betty was small in stature but large in faith and service. The regard in which she was held was evidenced at a party held on 24 May to mark her retiral from 50 years service with the United Mission to Nepal. It was a happy occasion with Nepalese and former colleagues present as well as her sister and some of the Church people -- and she was very happy. Glowing tributes were paid to her work and she related anecdotes of the two months travel to get to Nepal compared to flying time now and of how when the Mission was faced with a problem of the possible destruction of

documents and records Betty saw this as an opportunity from God to continue to serve and so the setting up of the archives took place in New College, Edinburgh. With the completion of this work in the New College Library and transfer of the archives South, Betty's work was done and it has pleased God to take her home to receive the "well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord".

We thank God for our memories of Betty Young, all she accomplished in the short time she was with us, for her example and dedication.

We extend our Christian love and sympathy to her sister and her three nieces.

"Blessed are they who die in the Lord. They rest from their labours and their works follow them".

Jack Spiers

ISAAC WATTS

Isaac Watts faced criticism when he began writing hymns, for it was believed that only psalms should be sung in worship, But the little song writer had inherited spunk from his grandfather and father.

Grandfather Thomas Watts commander of a British warship was attacked once by a tiger in India. Running into the river he turned to see the tiger swimming after him. He faced the creature gripped its head, and forced it underwater until it drowned.

Isaac senior fought a different kind of tiger -persecution. He rejected the State Church of England and joined the British Nonconformists. That was considered treasonous, and he was thrown into Southampton Jail a huge, gloomy place where Dissenters languished in iron shackles.

He emerged from prison in time to marry Sarah Tauton in September 1673 but the new couple was under constant watch. The stress caused Sarah to prematurely give birth to a weak stunted baby, Isaac junior. Within weeks, the senior Watts was in prison again. He found comfort in his pocket bible, but his wife worried endlessly. Every day she crept to the prison, sat on a stone outside, nursed her baby, and wept.

Watts was released at last, a few years passed. One morning young Isaac 'Tittered' during family prayers. His father sternly demanded an explanation 'Because' said the spunky boy, pointing to a bell rope, 'I saw a mouse running up that, and the thought came into my mind:

There was a mouse for want of stairs /ran up a rope to say his prayers' Isaac senior, unimpressed, reached for the rod. The boy fell to his knees begging and crying 'O Father, Father pity take /and I will no more verses make' But he did more verses make.

When sometime later he grumbled about the music in his church, his father told him to write his own songs if he thought he could do better than King David, so he wrote, *Joy to the World, O God our help in ages past, I sing the Mighty Power of God, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* and 600 others.

Jack Spiers