



No.145. 10th March



Sunday 12th February 2023

Rev Scott Kirkland

Bible passage: 1 Peter 1:22 - 2:3

Hi,

Hope this finds you well and keeping warm - some chilly days this week.

I was reminded of how grateful we are for the heating in the halls these days - nice and comfortable on Wednesdays for the Pulse Prayer meeting. And the meeting is warm in nature too - really good time, midweek, to share news and updates for prayer for those at Maxwell, and the ministry of the church...and to pray for the national and international situation too. No shortage of things to give thanks for and lots we can bring our requests about too. Get along if you can.

MB

## From the Manse

Dear Congregation,

Anita and I studied in Westminster Theological Seminary. The seminary was based in the city of Philadelphia, USA. I loved my studies there and it is where I fell in love and married my classmate!



I became intrigued by this city. Of course there was the Art Museum steps where Sylvester Stallone, aka "Rocky Balboa", performed that iconic muscle pumping routine to the great music "Gonna Fly Now" (and which of course I replicated). However, I was hooked by the city's name, "Philadelphia."

When the Europeans landed for the first time on the East Coast of what we call "America", the Dutch, Swedish and Finish battled it out for territory. The local Indians usually lost out. Finally, the British won the day in the middle of the 17th century.

**William Penn** (of **Pennsylvania** fame – another great name), instead of claiming the the territory outright decided to purchase the land from the Indian Lenape tribe who had originally settled there. In response to the tortured history of the area he named the key settlement "Philadelphia". It means "brotherly love" in Greek. "Philos" meaning "love" and "adelphos" meaning "brother". It is a great story. It is still promoted as "the city of brotherly love".

However, despite the promotional advertising, like all major cities in the USA there are districts of Philadelphia where the colour of your skin will determine how much brotherly love you receive. As a man from Scotland and blissfully free from such dangers I was staggered that someone who did not know me

might harm me, simply because of my blotchy pink/white complexion.

Using my bashed-up car to drop a black class-mate home one day in a district we would not normally venture into, Anita and I suddenly became aware of our vulnerability when driving back out the neighbourhood. He had cautioned us that if stopping at red lights we should keep a good distance back from the car in front so we could drive around it if necessary. We were not to stop if someone tried to “flag us down”. While we were sitting first in the line at a red light, the car behind nudged us as it came to a stop. He was oblivious to this as he ate a Macdonalds and argued with his female passenger. We did not get out to see if there was any damage. The whole scene was set for an absence of love. The lights changed and we gladly made our escape.

**This Sunday in worship we shall read in 1st Peter 1.22: *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply from the heart.* “Love for your brothers” is a translation of that Greek word, “Philadelphian”.**

Despite William Penn’s (admirable) ambition, that kind of brotherly love that is sincere and from a deep place in the heart, is not a natural human trait. We may just see an approximation of it in a biological family, but outside that? Outside the biological family we may just see something of it for a beautiful person, or someone who we identify with closely (like Season ticket holders at Ibrox).

But what of these people Peter writes to? They are spread across a vast area and variety of communities in Turkey. The church had massive diversity; slaves and masters, male and female, one skin colour or another, one ethnic background or another, one religious origin or another and so on. “Philadelphian” in that kind of mix?

The existence of any kind of deep hearted brotherly/sisterly love is a product of at least two key ingredients. The second is a new birth (more of that on Sunday). But the first according to Peter here in verse twenty two is the purifying effect of *obeying the truth*. Or, in other words, an obedience to what is heard as Gospel. This obedience creates a purifying effect.

In a tense debate about non-Jews becoming Christians in Acts 15.9, Peter says, “*He (the Lord) purified their hearts by faith*”. The Gospel comes with a command to repent and believe in Jesus and as we do, there is a real effect within hearts. Though not mentioned explicitly at 1 Peter 1.22, this purifying faith is a result of the work of God the Holy Spirit. It is included in his general statement at the start of the letter (1.2) “*through the sanctifying work of the Spirit*”

“Brotherly love” becomes a reality because purified from sin Christians are given a (supernatural) new affection – love – and firstly towards Christ’s church! Christians are enabled by that life changing grace of the gospel to show genuine family love for God’s children. However, it is not a foregone conclusion (don’t we know that in church!) because on the back of that reality, Peter then commands this love be exercised; love one another deeply from the heart.

The word love Peter uses here is not “Philadelphian-love”, but that self-giving, sacrificial love (agape). It is possible for Christ’s true church to have brotherly (and sisterly) love. But that flows firstly from that obedience to the Gospel, it is enabled by the power of the Spirit, and it takes our determination to love one another deeply from the heart – despite the church being filled with a whole range of differences and even at times disagreements!

**What will it take for you (us) to become a “Philadelphian type of church”?**

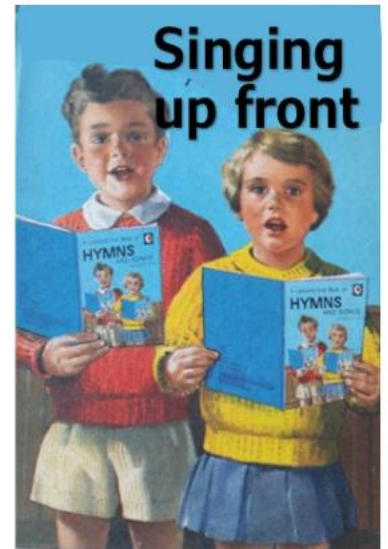
Warmest regards

Scott



## Ladybird Book of Maxwell

Those singing up front were delighted to be given fancy new song books to sing from...anything that meant they couldn't do actions during the Hizkidz songs was more than welcome.



We are planning to organise another Messy Church to begin our Easter celebrations!

This will take place in the afternoon of Sunday 26th March. Further details to follow. If you are able to be involved in any way (serving refreshments, AV, welcoming, manning an activity stations etc) then please speak to me!

Thanks

Pauline



## Giving with Gift Aid?

There is a new page ([here](#)) on our church webpage to highlight how people can give to the work and ministry at Maxwell Mearns Castle.

Less and less people use cash these days and the church needs to move with the times too. The page also highlights the option to use Gift Aid - a great way to add to your contribution.

All the details are on the page including how to get in touch with Ken Taggart, our treasurer, if you have questions. For instance, If you are already donating but are not sure if you have an active and valid Gift Aid declaration enabling the additional tax amount to be claimed by Maxwell, Ken would love to hear from you.



Pray Now is a WhatsApp group for Maxwell members

It sends out occasional requests for prayer. In particular those which might be regarding things more acute or immediate. Speak with Margaret Boyd if you would like to be added to this important ministry at MMCC, or just to find out more.

# 10 Words in the Bible that Everyone Should Understand

(A short series from BibleStudyTools.com - here is the first 2 of the 10.)

The Bible is filled with beautiful language, and these words have the ability to point us to the truth and provide a path to live life to the fullest. Yet there are many words that can be confusing to the average reader. Understanding a little more about these 10 words will undoubtedly unlock deeper meaning as we seek to listen to God's Word.

## 1. Amen

*"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation" (Revelation 3:14).*

Amen may be among the most familiar words from the Bible, but many of us don't know what the word really means. Many of us know the word amen as a closing to a prayer, and there is an important reason why we end prayers with the word amen.

Amen is a Hebrew word that is essentially an affirmation of truth or agreement, meaning something like 'so be it', or 'it is true.' When we end a prayer with the word amen, we are acknowledging that we believe God actively hears our prayers, and that our prayers will be answered by him in his time. Amen is an expression that all those things we just asked for in prayer – all the things we praised God for, all the questions, all the pain and the joy we express in prayer – are founded in the truth of God.

## 2. Selah

*"Salvation belongs to the LORD; your blessing be on your people! Selah" (Psalm 3:8).*

The word Selah is found sprinkled throughout the Psalms, and we are not completely certain exactly what it means. Regardless, it's prominent role in Scripture means that it certainly holds some importance, and is worth our attention.

Since it is found at the end of poetic lines, many commentators think that Selah meant 'to pause' or 'to reflect.' This could have been a request for the reader or listener to pause and think about what has just been said, or it could have been a space for voices to pause and for instruments to play alone.

Ultimately, Selah is a beautiful word that reminds us to pause and reflect on Christ, in whom we find all treasure and knowledge. We can't ever truly hope to understand all that God is, and all that Christ does for us daily. Knowing that, it is fitting that this beautiful word Selah should be, like our faith, just beyond our full understanding.

Jason Soroski

## Album Launch

Christy's album launch is next Saturday. The photo shows her rehearsing with the band in the church.



### GETTING ABOUT MEARN'S

Whether you're walking or wheeling, Newton Mearns is a town centre everyone will enjoy visiting.

#### INFORMATION EVENT!

**DATE:** Thursday 23rd March 2023  
**TIME:** Drop in 3pm - 7pm  
**PLACE:** The Market Place at The Avenue Shopping Centre

Drop in for a chat and get involved by shaping the designs for Newton Mearns Town Centre. We'd like your thoughts on how you move around the town centre; what difficulties you experience; and what your aspirations and ideas for improvement are.

Scan me!

This project is funded by Sustrans.

East Renfrewshire Council

Come along and get involved by shaping the designs for Newton Mearns Town Centre. We'd like your thoughts on how you move around the town centre; what difficulties you experience; and what your aspirations and ideas for improvement are.

You can also see some of the initial ideas about overcoming barriers to getting about Mearns;

The Getting About Mearns masterplan will include proposals for Fairweather Park and Crookfur Park, Key buildings in the town centre and proposals for roads, crossing points and junction improvements.



# The Word One to One app is coming soon!

This great resource is growing and they have developed an app - can you get involved?

Here is the what they are saying...



Last week, we announced that we're launching a new app which, God-willing, will be released by 30th March 2023!

We'd love the app to help as many people as possible discover the joy of exploring what John's Gospel says about Jesus with their friends – and for that to happen, we need your help!

Here are three simple ways you can help us launch it:

## 1. Test the app

Thank you to everyone who has tested the beta version of the app already – we really appreciate your feedback! If you haven't managed to yet, you can still request to download, test and share your feedback about the beta version.

## 2. Pray for us

Please pray for the team who are responsible for developing and delivering the app. We'd really appreciate your prayers for:

God's provision of wisdom and grace throughout the final stages of developing the app

A successful release and for many to hear about this accessible and relational experience

Our Lord, by His grace, to take the app far and wide across the world to make His name known!

## 3. Save and share the date

By God's grace, we plan to launch the app to app stores by 30th March 2023. Could you please set a reminder in your calendar and spend ten minutes telling a few people about it?

We'd especially appreciate it if you could let your friends in hard-to-reach and poorly-resourced places know about it!

Thank you for your interest and for all who have supported us to this stage. We're so excited about all the new possibilities that the app could open up, and we can't wait to see how God uses it to help you and many others share His Word around the world!