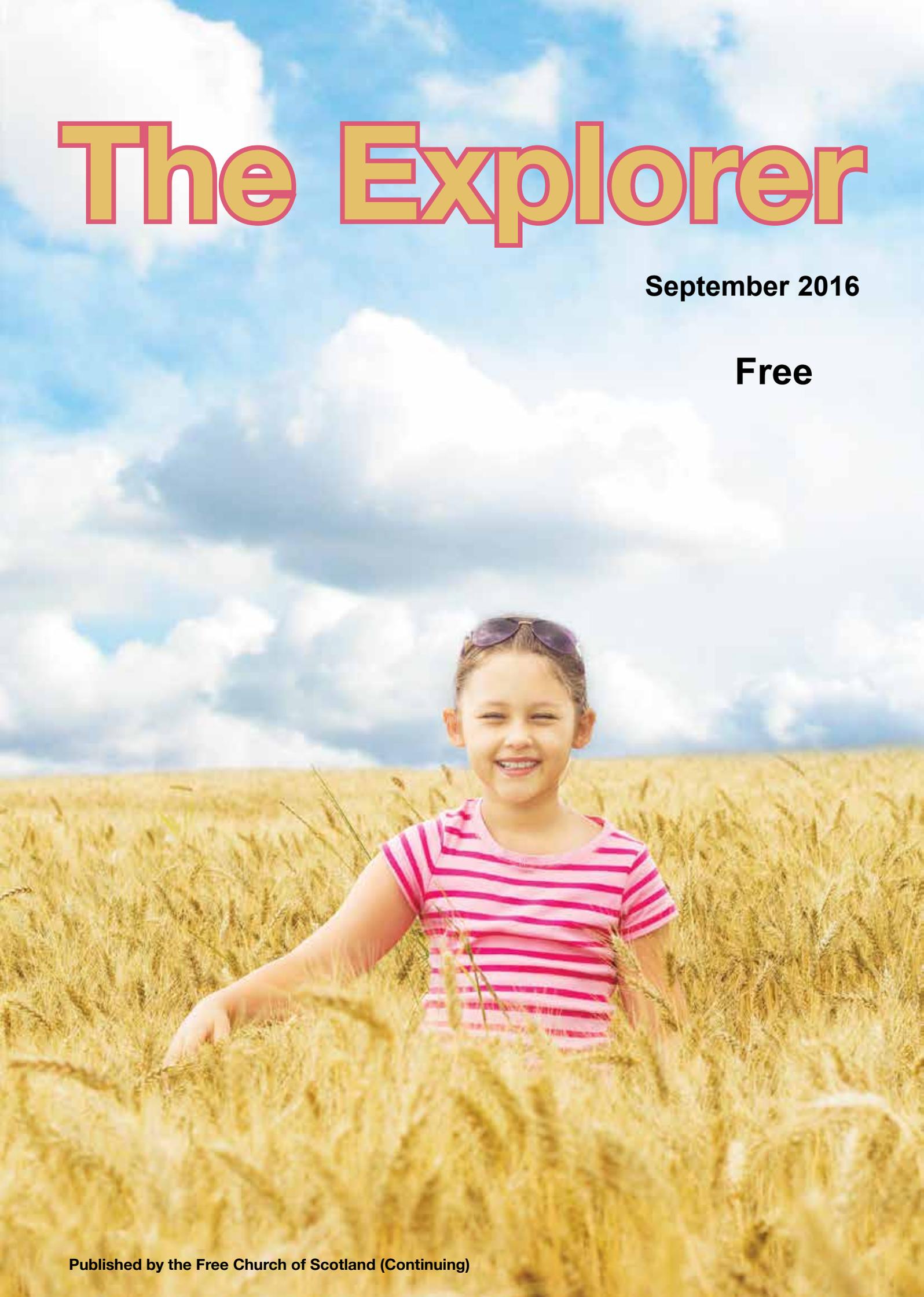


The Explorer

September 2016

Free



Subscription Details

The Explorer is published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) and is supplied free with the Witness magazine which is published monthly. The subscription rates for 2016 are:

U.K. £27.50

Europe (Airmail) £30.00

Overseas (Airmail) £35.00

Congregations ordering the Witness are encouraged to make bulk orders at the reduced rate of £24 per subscription per year. The Explorer, being free, may be ordered separately for Sabbath Schools.

Subscriptions and orders should be sent to:

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Puzzles

Young folk are encouraged to complete the various puzzles in the magazine and send them in to:

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Younger readers who find the questions too hard may like to do a drawing based on one of the articles and send it to the same address.

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Printed by:

DM DESIGN & PRINT

25 Loch Lann Road

Inverness

IV2 2HB

Design and layout: M A N Macleod

Picture cover : Adobe Stock images

Picture page 3: iclipart

Picture pages 4-5: google images

Picture page 6: gmiimages

Picture page 8: per Rev A Allan

[Unattributed articles ought not to be considered the work of the Editor.]

Skipper's tales



SKIPPER AND THE BIG COLLAR

A few weeks ago Skipper was injured. He had a very nasty cut on his face which became infected. Do you know what an infection is? Well, it is when you have an open cut and it gets dirty and germs get in. It gets very sore and makes you feel ill. Skipper was obviously ill; he was hiding away and shivering, but unfortunately because he is a dog, he couldn't tell us how his face got hurt or how bad he felt.

We took him to the vet, who is the doggy doctor. They are very clever people because their patients can't tell them anything so they have to use their training and learning to find out what's wrong and treat it without any help from the patient!

Skipper was very good at the vet; he seemed to realise that the nice lady was there to help him and of course when she gave him an injection, she also gave him a treat at the same time. Skipper is, pretty well, anyone's friend for a treat. He got ointment, but, of course, he had to stop scratching his face and that was a problem, as we couldn't really explain this to him. As soon as he got a chance and thought we weren't looking his leg was up at his face scratching away. Soon the wound was all dirty and bleeding again.

I wonder what you would have tried to get him to stop scratching? Well, first of all we taped a sock to his leg, but that didn't work for long as he kept pulling it off with his teeth. Then we went to the pet shop and bought a big collar that looks a bit like a lampshade, which stopped him from getting to the sore bit.

As you can imagine, Skipper was not too pleased with this idea and did everything he could to get the new collar off. Thankfully after a few days he gave up trying to remove the collar. Maybe he got tired trying or perhaps in his own doggy way he understood this was only there to help him get better. Maybe he noticed that the ointment was working and that his face was not as itchy. It all took a couple of weeks but he is now back to his old self and enjoying his usual walks and generally having fun with summer visitors.

When we get ill, of course, we go to the doctor and we can tell him what is wrong with us, which helps him to find out what is wrong and treat us. I am sure most of you will have been to the doctor at some time. Maybe you got medicine you didn't like the taste of or even a bandage which you had to wear!

The Bible has a lot to say about healing and there are many stories of Jesus healing people when he was on earth. He healed people who were lame and even blind. His power to heal people was proof that he really was who he claimed to be. The miracles were evidence that he was the Son of God. He is still able to heal those who are unwell and that is why we pray for people who are sick.

Most important of all he is the great healer of our souls. He is the only one who can cure the disease of sin which we all suffer from. This is a disease which we must not ignore because "the wages of sin is death". What a mercy that there is a Saviour who can save us!

However, just like Skipper, we have to obey him if we are going to be healed by him. We want to be saved in our way and, like Skipper when he was taking off the socks, we think we know better than the Lord. We have got to learn that we will never be healed until the Lord comes into our lives, changing us from the inside and by the power of his Spirit healing our souls.



From The Editor

Dear Friends

Do you ever help with cutting the grass in the garden? Perhaps you saw people cutting their grass during the summer. If there are any farmers or crofters near where you stay they will be busy getting their hay dried before the winter comes.

In Psalm 103 the Psalmist compares our lives to grass and flowers. Like them we grow up and for a while we are here full of life but all too quickly we fade away or are cut down. The flowers that were so full of colour during the summer are fading away and soon there will be no sign of them. The wind, says the Psalmist, comes and blows over it and when you look at where it was growing it is gone. The Bible tells us this doesn't happen by chance. The Lord who gave us life in the first place has appointed the day when our lives will come to an end. He knows when we will be cut down and fade away.

When the grass is being cut everything in the path of the mower is removed. Some of the grass will be quite long but other bits will be much shorter, newer growth. It makes no difference; they are all cut away. We are just like that. Some people live for many years but others, like the short blades of grass, are only here for a very little while. We don't know how long we will be left in this world and that is why it is so important that we have repented of our sin and come to trust in Christ.

Sometimes when grass is being cut people make a mistake. How many times has a flower been cut when it should have been left? The mower or the strimmer has come too close and the flower is cut away. Maybe the person who was cutting the grass didn't notice how close he was to the flowers until it was too late. Perhaps they didn't know that the flowers were not meant to be cut away. The Lord never makes this kind of mistake. No one is left too long or taken away too soon. The next time you hear a lawnmower or notice the autumn colours coming stop and think about Psalm 103 and its message.

Murdo A N Macleod

"Class is dismissed," said the teacher. Abby Walker gathered her stuff. Once she was out the door, she raced off to her home which was on the outskirts of the town, her light brown hair, which was in a ponytail, flapped behind her. She was medium height with brown eyes. Today, her aunt was coming. She could not wait for her aunt to meet her horse, Sugar. It had been extremely hot that day, even though that was not unusual in Arizona. Abby wondered if there would be a thunderstorm. She hoped her aunt's plane would not be delayed by the storm. As she neared her street she could hear her younger twin brothers playing in the back yard. She skipped through the front yard which her mom kept nice and neat and up the steps to the porch and through the front door. Inside, her mom was preparing dinner. "Hello, Abby," said her mom. "How was your day?" "Hi, Mommy," Abby replied. "It was fine." "Your snack is on the table," her mom said. "Thanks," said Abby.

Abby took her crackers and headed towards the stable. In the stable there were three horses whose names were Sugar, Cinnamon and Nutmeg. Abby saddled Sugar, took her outside and trotted down the trail. After exercising Sugar, Abby combed Sugar and cleaned out her stall. "I can't wait to show you to Aunt Linda," said Abby to Sugar. A car came into the driveway. "Maybe Daddy has brought Aunt Linda!" thought Abby. She raced over to his car. Her dad was alone, but Abby was still happy to see him. "Hello, Daddy!" "Hello, Abby!" her dad said, giving her a hug. "Come in now so we can eat a bit earlier. Daddy needs to get to the airport," her mom called hurriedly. Thunder rumbled in the distance. A storm was coming. "Those clouds look ominous." Abby helped her mom finish cooking the dinner. They brought it to the table. The dining room table faced a forest. A large bolt of lightning streaked the sky followed by a boom of thunder. They all sat down and their dad prayed. As they ate, the storm grew fierce. Giant drops of rain pelted on the windows. Thunder followed lightning in rapid succession. One bluish streak seemed to land in the middle of the forest. "I hope Aunt Linda's plane can make it through," said Abby. Suddenly Abby saw smoke coming from the forest. Her brothers saw it too. "Look, Daddy!" the twins shouted. "A fire!" "Look at THAT!" Abby exclaimed. "Wow!" A

massive cloud of smoke was over the woods. "Look! Fire engines!" Both twins were jumping up and down. "Benjamin, calm down!" Mommy exclaimed. "And if you keep moving you'll knock something ov-... ahhh!" In their excitement, Benjamin and Alexander managed to knock over a full jug of water which splashed their mom's face and drowned Abby's plate of spaghetti. "Oh, come on!" said Abby in frustration. "You had to do that!" "I'm going to make sure all the animals are safe," said their dad. "Abby, Benjamin and Alexander, help your mom clean up this mess." Besides three horses, Abby's family had some chickens.

A few minutes later, when they were almost done cleaning up, their dad sprinted

into the house.

"Abby, did you close Sugar's stall and the stable door?" he asked.

"I don't know..." she whispered in horror.

"Well, you must not have secured them. I'm sorry. Sugar's gone," he said.

"Oh no!" gasped Abby. Then suddenly she thought, "What if Sugar goes into the woods?"

"I'll go tell the firefighters. You all stay with your mom and pray," commanded her dad.

Abby's heart sank. Their dad went outside and drove away in the car.

"Let's pray," said their mom. They prayed that

The Stable Door

This story was written by Mary Schweitzer, who is 12 years old and worships in Gateshead Presbyterian Church

the fire would go out and that Sugar and everyone else would be safe. Then their mom exclaimed, "Oh, no!" We completely forgot about Aunt Linda!" "What if her plane was delayed because of the storm?" Abby suggested. "Well, it will be a relief if it was," said her mom. They walked outside. The storm clouds and the smoke billows dwindled together. It was hard to see much else in the dark. "I'll take the twins inside and get them ready for bed," said her mom. Abby stared at the forest until her eyes hurt. They blurred with tears. It seemed as if only seconds had passed when she heard her mom calling to her. "Abby, time to get ready for bed." Abby slowly got ready for bed as if in a dream. She wondered about Sugar. She prayed to the Lord again that Sugar would be fine and went to bed.

~*~

Suddenly, Abby woke up in the night. She sat up groggily in bed and looked at her alarm clock; it was just past one o'clock. She then realized that there were people talking downstairs. "How was your trip?" Abby heard her mom ask. "It was a frightful storm." "I am so sorry that we couldn't pick you up," her dad said. "A lightning bolt struck a tree and set the forest on fire. And then we discovered that Abby's horse had run away. But, praise God, we found her." "Whoohoo! You found Sugar!" Abby shouted as she raced down the stairs and threw her arms around her dad. "Yes, she's outside," her dad said. Abby then turned to greet Aunt Linda. "It's so good to see you!" they both said as they hugged each other. "I can't wait for you to meet Sugar. And tomorrow we could go riding, or is it already today?" said Abby hardly able to contain her excitement. Her aunt was good at riding. "Yes, and this time we'll remember to close the stall and stable door!" her Aunt Linda added with a smile. "Yes," replied Abby. "Sugar running away was a big scare and I don't want that to happen again. I am so thankful that the Lord answered our prayers." The next morning there was also good news that no one was hurt by the fire and that the fire had not done too much damage. Aunt Linda saddled Cinnamon and Abby saddled Sugar. Abby's heart was full of joy. The sun shone on their faces as they led the horses out into the yard. Abby passed her reins to Aunt Linda and closed the stable door. It was a lesson she would not forget.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES - CHAPTER 8

B I B L E S T U D Y P A G E



FOUR VERY DIFFERENT MEN

The last article ended with the death of faithful Stephen. He was taken home to be with the Lord but the work continued, the work of the Lord building his church.

PHILIP AND SIMON (Verses 1-13)

Saul's persecution scattered believers but this in turn led to the seed of the Word also being scattered (v4). Philip's master had visited Samaria before; you can read about this in John 4. Now the Lord used Philip to continue the work there. The devil had done his best to scatter but the Lord was able to use the scattering to gather more of his sheep. And not in Jerusalem, the obvious place but in Samaria. This fulfilled what the Lord had said on that first visit about the hour coming when "true worshippers" would worship "the Father in spirit and in truth". (John 4:23)

One infamous person who said he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ was Simon, a magician. He was duly baptised on professing his faith and became a member of the church but events would soon show he was not a converted man.

PETER AND SIMON (Verses 14-25)

The Presbytery in Jerusalem sent Peter and John down to Samaria to examine the work there. They prayed that the Lord would give the church there further gifts from the Holy Spirit. This happened and Simon was impressed. He wanted to buy this power the Apostles had. This is where the word 'simony' comes from. It means trying to buy a position in the church by using money or by some other influence, to by-pass God who alone can give gifts. Peter was not impressed and saw this as clear evidence that Simon had never been converted. (vv 21-23) Peter warned Simon to repent but Simon showed further evidence that he had no faith when he refused to pray for himself and was more concerned about the consequences of his sin than the sin itself. (v24)

PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH (Verses 26-40)

The Lord in his sovereign purpose sends Philip away from preaching to hundreds in the towns and villages, to preach to one man in the desert! Philip obeyed without hesitation: he would rather have the approval of God than the praise of men. Philip having been taught by the Spirit was able to help a man who had difficulty understanding the Word of God. (v 31) This is what a true minister does; he "feeds the church of God". (Acts 20:28)

As we listen to Philip we see that the main subject of our preaching must be the Lord Jesus Christ. (vv 32-35) The Gospel is first and foremost about Christ and then about sinners. We must not reverse that order: Christ's glory comes first! Wonderfully this Eunuch believed Philip's message and was baptised because, of course, he had not been baptised before. He was very different from Simon! We read that he "went on his way rejoicing" because he had met not only Philip but Christ. Very probably you have met and heard many ministers but have you met the Lord Jesus Christ? Which of these men are you most like? Are you like Simon or are you like the Eunuch?

PUZZLE PAGE

Bible Animals, Birds & Fish

Jonah prayed inside one of these

Draw them in the boxes

Pharaoh was dreaming about this animal

Daniel was surrounded by these



Satan disguised himself as this animal



This bird was sent out of the Ark

David killed this animal

The prodigal son fed these



Jesus rode into Jerusalem on this animal

One of the 10 plagues

This bird is mentioned in Psalm 84



June entries
1st Prize:- George Kenneth Macdonald, Stornoway
Runners Up:-
Manchester:- Marion Fox
Partick:- Kenny MacKinnon, Mairi MacKinnon
Snizort:- Angus Nicolson
Stornoway:- Lily Craig, Sarah Craig, Thomas Craig, Lydia Macdonald, Peter Macdonald, Susanna Macdonald.

Name _____
 Age _____
 Congregation _____
 Address _____



Outing to Ayr

On the 11th of June members and adherents from the Partick, Shettleston, Knightswood and Ayr congregations went to Eglinton Country Park, Ayr, for their annual joint congregational outing.

Several gathered outside The Community Church, Broomhill, Glasgow, to catch the bus that took them quickly and safely to Ayr, while the remainder made their own way to the venue. Singing several Psalms as we travelled we quickly arrived at our destination.

Although the weather was cool, and we had some light rain on occasions, our spirits were not down. Upon arrival and getting settled in, the large company sat down in the hall and had their packed lunch. Following lunch and a time of fellowship most ventured out into the park to take part in football and races. For the young and energetic traditional races were staged, including several flat races for boys, girls and adults and wheel barrow races. Afterwards all returned to the hall and tucked into more refreshments.

To bring the day to a close Partick's minister Mr. Allan read from Matthew 27 and focused on verse 51, "the veil of the temple."

We are thankful to the LORD for pleasant weather and for all we were able to enjoy on the day.