

# The Explorer

June 2016

Free



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## Puzzles

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

Miss Anne Macaulay  
30 Mackenzie Place  
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Ross-shire  
IV7 8DY

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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# Skipper's tales



## WHEN SKIPPER MET KATIE!

By the time you are reading this I hope the weather will be pleasant and we will all be looking forward to the summer holidays. However, I am writing this at the end of April and it is snowing and blowing a blizzard! However the wind is not as bad as it was during the winter and the cold is not quite as sharp. In between the snow showers the sun is warm and the sky is blue so we know that spring is here at last. There are also lambs and calves in the fields and the birds are very busy building nests and making a lot of noise, but it is nice musical noise.

Skipper is very confused by the weather at the moment. Just when we get ready to go for a walk in the bright blue sunshine along comes a black cloud and the wind gets up and lo and behold the next thing it is snowing. We are not too keen, as you can imagine, on going out in the snow but Skipper doesn't care at all what the weather is like and doesn't seem to be aware of his coat getting covered in damp snow.

There is one kind of weather he doesn't like and that is the stormy weather, when the wind howls and there are growling noises in the chimneys and you can hear things banging about outside. We had a lot of these storms last winter; you may remember the weather men even gave them names! The last one was the worst; I think it was called storm Katie. Now, lots of lovely people are called Katie but the storm wasn't lovely, not one little bit! It was the strongest storm I can ever remember and the next day there was a note on the gate saying Skipper and I couldn't go into the woods because of storm damage to the trees. We weren't surprised because the storm was so powerful it had even moved our heavy shed, which is full of gardening things, off its foundations.

Just a few weeks later, Skipper and I noticed we could go back into the woods. We could not believe what we saw! So many trees had been uprooted and damaged that almost a quarter of the woodland has disappeared and the planned pruning for the next twenty five years had all been done in one night! As you

can imagine Skipper was totally confused and I think he wondered if we were in the right place. Obviously we can't sit down and explain to him what happened. It wasn't long however before he was jumping and running about as usual, enjoying what was left of the wood, oblivious to the damage. The day we were in the wood, all was calm and still and the birds were singing loudly and happily, busy building nests as if the storm had never happened. I was reminded of the Psalm which tells us:

“The storm is changed into a calm  
at his command and will;  
So that the waves, which raged before,  
now quiet are and still.

Then are they glad, because at rest  
and quiet now they be:  
So to the haven he them brings,  
which they desired to see.”

Do you remember which psalm that is? I'll give you a little clue. It comes just a little bit after psalm 100. This all reminds us that God, the creator of the whole universe, is in complete control of the weather. Skipper doesn't know the Psalms of course but the wood is his haven and he had really desired to see it when we couldn't go there. Now that the storm had passed we could go again. Isn't it good to be reminded of God's goodness whenever we look around us at his creation and all its beauty? Next time you experience a storm remember that God is in control and can calm even the wildest of storms. Remember too that he is able to calm the storms in our hearts and lives if we go to him for help. He is far greater than any storm that can ever come.



## From The Editor

Dear Friends

Today I passed a man putting up a new fence. The fence will help keep his sheep and cows from wandering off to places they shouldn't go. Without the fence to keep them in they might wander onto the road and cause an accident or drift away and get lost. They might not like the fence, because it stops them getting to some nice grass on the other side, but the fence helps keep them safe.

At home and in school there are boundaries and rules which act like a fence. We are not to go beyond these boundaries. At times we may resent them but they are there for our good. Perhaps you can think of some people who broke these rules and ignored the boundaries and ended up in trouble as a result?

The Lord has also given us his rules. They also act like a fence. These rules are summarised for us in the Ten Commandments. Foolishly, at times, we ignore these rules and break through the fence which the Lord in his kindness has constructed for us. If we do we can be quite certain that it will lead to trouble. Like the sheep or cattle who have wandered onto the road we may get seriously hurt. Even if we avoid that we might end up like other sheep and cattle hopelessly lost: far away from where we should be and probably going further and further in the wrong direction.

Sadly we see this too often when young people rebel against their parents and against the Word of God. It is very easy to go off in the wrong direction but not so easy, as the prodigal discovered, to find our way back to safety.

So, if you were thinking of trying to rebel against the boundaries you are in — think again. The fence is there for a reason. In the Bible the Lord is described as a wall around his people. It is important that you are also inside that wall. Not just inside the fence of God's law, keeping the rules as best you can, but also among the true people of God: a real Christian who is surrounded by the Lord and safe for time and eternity.

*Murdo A N Macleod*

# WHO AM I?

I don't mind admitting I was scared. Many people have had to keep an eye on their baby brother but not usually down by a river because his life is in danger! These were terrible times for my people. We were slaves in Egypt and our lives were always hard but Pharaoh had made a new law. He wanted all the baby boys to be put to death. He hoped this would reduce our numbers and force the girls to marry outside of our own people.

My parents had brought us up to fear and trust the Lord and their faith was very severely tried when my little brother was born. They tried to hide him at home and amazingly they managed that for three months but you know the noise babies make! My mother made a little basket of bulrushes and after making it watertight she put him inside and left the basket in the reeds by the river bank. She then turned and left. That must have been the hardest thing she had ever had to do. I was very worried but she told me that the Lord would look after our little boy. Well, she was right. He certainly did.

I was watching the basket when I noticed a group of people come down to the river. It was obvious that they were important people. Very important! At the centre of the group surrounded by servants was the princess herself; Pharaoh's daughter. If she was anything like her father this could be very dangerous. My little brother might be thrown into the river there and then.

Thankfully the Lord is in control and able to work in the heart of a princess. As soon as the basket was opened he cried and that seemed to touch her.

Before I knew what was happening I found myself speaking to her and offering to find a nurse who would care for the baby. I've never run faster than I did back home that day. What news I had for mum. Together we took our little boy home and brought him up for Pharaoh's daughter.

If you think that is amazing, even more wonderful things lay ahead. My little brother would become a very famous man. He would grow up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter with all the riches and power that came with that. However he would come to know and follow the Lord and not the false gods of Egypt. Eventually he would leave Egypt behind and after many years and many difficulties he would become the leader of our people. Under his leadership we would leave Egypt and the Lord would do wonderful things in that exodus. You will have heard of the dividing of the sea and of the water which gushed from the rock. I was there by his side during these times. Sadly I wasn't always as helpful or as loyal as I should have been. Nevertheless he was always my little brother and I shall never forget that day sitting by the river bank. Who am I? I think you've guessed!

# PUZZLE PAGE

Write some things that you know about Miriam (or draw a picture)

## Something you may not know about me

God punished me by giving me

- The 1<sup>st</sup> letter is in Samuel and in Lord = \_\_\_\_
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> is in Moses and in Gabriel = \_\_\_\_
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> is in Peter but not in Jethro = \_\_\_\_
- The 4<sup>th</sup> is in Sarah but not in Ephesians = \_\_\_\_
- The 5<sup>th</sup> is in Soul but not in Saul = \_\_\_\_
- The 6<sup>th</sup> is in Saul but not in Paul = \_\_\_\_
- The 7<sup>th</sup> Yoke but not in Knowledge = \_\_\_\_

## Something I said

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## April entries

Anne says that it was very hard to choose a winner this month as all the entries were exceptionally good. Well done to everyone!

- 1st Prize:- Murray MacDonald, Ness**
- Runners Up:-**
- Duthil-Dores:-** Jonathan Brooks
- Lochalsh & Strath:-** Sandy Iain MacInnes, Mina MacInnes
- Ness:-** Hugh MacDonald, Annie MacDonald
- Partick:-** Kenny MacKinnon, Mairi MacKinnon
- Snizort:-** Angus Nicolson
- Stornoway:-** Lily Craig, Sarah Craig, Thomas Craig
- Partick:-** Kenny MacKinnon, Mairi MacKinnon

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

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# IT'S ALMOST CAMP TIME!

## Let's hear from Marion Henderson one of last years junior campers

Camp was a week of fun and a time of reunion with friends! One of the many exciting activities participated in was mountain biking, where we cycled to a green loch! Teams also took part in den building, made with branches, leaves and moss. We took a trip to the Highland Wildlife Park where we saw Polar Bears, Arctic Foxes and Tigers, and an outing to the Osprey Centre where we learnt about the fascinating birds of prey. Other enjoyable activities included archery, ten-pin bowling and swinging across the monkey bars over the pond!

Our topic was John G. Paton, a Scottish missionary who went to the New Hebrides between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Every evening we were given talks on the life and work of Paton, and by the end of the week we had produced fantastic, informative projects.

The week was concluded with a barbecue for both the junior and senior camp, and a last jump in the pond! There were many hugs and goodbyes as we waved off friends and leaders the next morning. Counting the days till camp 2016



## Now let's hear from one of last years Senior camp leaders

The second FCC senior Camp returned to the comfort of the forest lodges in Badaguish. With campers hailing from both France and Spain, as well as our usual local contingent, camp this year had a real international flavour. Talks were focussed on the subject of 'Christian Thinking in a Connected World' and dealt with the reality of maintaining a Christian witness and ethos in the midst of world flooded with social networking, instant messaging and all the accoutrements of modern life in the 21st century.

With an intrepid band of leaders, the group bonded very quickly, and friendships old and new were forged. The camp food was at its usual standard of excellence, with chief Cook Joan Macintosh ably assisted this year by the two Mrs Campbells. A camp 'build off' saw the girls compete with the boys to assemble a flat pack bookcase, with both units being sturdy enough to merit donating to the respite unit for special needs children run by the Speyside Trust in another part of the campsite. After the 'build off', we had the inaugural camp 'bake off' with amazing meals being delivered - a full three courses too! Other activities included midnight walks, zip-wiring, a mountain bike course and more. Overall a great time was enjoyed by young and old - hope to see you all again this year!



## Why not come to Badaguish Junior Camp?

Come and enjoy the unique atmosphere of a whole week packed with Bible-study, quizzes, team-games, races, brilliant talks, personal projects and our best-kept secret of all - Joan's amazing puddings! Even the dorm inspections are hotly anticipated daily events. With the Junior now thoroughly established, girls and boys, from those starting Primary 7, up to those finishing Secondary 4, are welcome to join in.

With an abundance of activities around the site, we are never short of the best that Scotland's Cairngorm National Park has to offer: mountain-biking, rowing, canoeing, Landmark, High-Ropes, Football, Highland Games and even raft-building are just some of the activities that have been laid on in the past.

Led by Rev Timothy McGlynn, and with Joan Macintosh returning as everyone's favourite cook, its sure to be another unforgettable year at Badaguish!

## Too old for Junior then come to Senior Camp!

Now in its third year the Senior Camp is getting into it's stride. Reflecting the maturity of the campers, the Senior Camp strikes a slightly more civilised pace - but with plenty of fun and activity too. With seniority comes the opportunity to branch out and try some different activities not possible with the larger group of the junior camp. A midnight walk through the woods was a certain hit last year! Evening talks are inspiring, challenging and thought-provoking. With a comfortable and spacious forest lodge, great atmosphere and warm friendships, come and join us at Senior Camp 2016 led this year by Rev James Macinnes.

For more information on either Junior or Senior camp, or booking forms, please contact Greg MacDonald, 01851810037 or [gregmacd@me.com](mailto:gregmacd@me.com). Or see the website for details at [freechurchcontinuing.org](http://freechurchcontinuing.org).

# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES - CHAPTER 6

## THE FIRST DEACONS

Last month we saw some of the difficulties which the disciples faced. Here in chapter 6 we find a new problem but one which the Lord uses as a way of introducing Deacons into the church.



### THE DIFFICULTY (Verse 1)

Some of the poor people in the church did not think they were being treated fairly or equally (v1). The Apostles, knowing that they did not have the time to deal with such routine matters, having the great burden of preaching and leadership, gathered the people together (v2). They explained that they were directed by God to institute the office of 'deacon' or 'servant'. The Apostles must not be distracted from their own duties by becoming involved in other things (v4). There is a lesson there for all of us. We have a tendency to neglect our own responsibilities, especially our spiritual responsibilities, and become distracted by other things which are not so important.

### THE DEACONS (Verses 5-7)

What were the qualifications for those who were to be deacons? Firstly they were to be men, not women (v3), and also they had to have a good reputation for honesty and reliability (v3). This means that they were to be mature men, whose Christian lives and character had been tested over the years. Their lives were to be active and directed by the Spirit. It was also a requirement for office that they be approved and appointed by the elders, or as we would say, the Kirk Session (v3 & v6). Above everything they were to be men of faith (v5) who would depend, not on any gifts or skills they might have but on the Holy Spirit for the wisdom and the strength they needed to carry out their duties effectively (v8).

What did those duties involve? They were to serve the Lord and others by distributing to those in need such things as money or food. Our world has changed but the church must always seek out ways to help those who are in need. Kindness is one of the great characteristics of the Lord and must be one of the things which marks out his people. A Christian who is an unkind miser is a very bad witness and is definitely not living a Christ-like life.

### TROUBLE FOR ONE OF THE DEACONS (Verses 8-15)

One of these first deacons was a man called Stephen. Stephen was a faithful man and we can imagine that he would have taken his duties very seriously, so perhaps it is a bit of a surprise to read of him being persecuted. Like the Apostles he is called before a hostile group of men but for all their efforts they cannot defeat him in argument (vv9-10). Incidentally it is likely that Saul of Tarsus was one of this group as he came from Cilicia and he is mentioned in the horrible events of the next chapter. These wicked men, full of hatred for Stephen and the Lord, bribed or persuaded men to tell lies about him (vv11-14). They also twisted the things which he had said - just as they did with Jesus. They were angry that Stephen did not emphasise the temple and the law of Moses (v13), as they hoped to be saved by attending the temple and keeping the law. They hated what Stephen said about not trusting in any of these things and trusting only in Jesus. When they saw that they could not persuade him to change his mind they had him arrested and put on trial. Next month we shall see what happens at the trial. If we are going to stand on the side of Jesus and be faithful to the Lord we will be tried and tested but we are to look for help where Stephen looked - to the Lord himself. Paul himself went on to learn this lesson and perhaps he learnt it first from this deacon (2 Timothy 4:16-18).