

The **st** thomas' **st**ory

for week commencing 30th June



Today's **st**ory

@ 10.30

We meet for **Morning Worship at 10.30**. Continuing our studies in Hebrews, this week's question is "Do I have enough faith?". We look forward hearing David McCarthy's preaching from Hebrews 11: vs 33-40.

For our children, the **Lighthouse Groups** will run as usual during the service. **Creche** (0-3yrs): room is available throughout the service (downstairs); **Sparklers** (3-P2): downstairs in the Crypt; **Spotlight** (P3-P6): lower Lennon Rooms; **Fusion** (P7-S3): upper Lennon Rooms.

As usual, there is a **Prayer Team** available after the service at the seats by the pulpit steps. Please come forward for prayer, either for yourself or for others. Someone will be pleased to pray with you or for you.

Today is Rebecca McMillan's final Sunday with us. She has been our youth worker for the past year. We give thanks for her work, and our love will go with her as she returns to her home in Northern Ireland.

Our Lighthouse Groups during the Summer

During Sunday services in July and August we shall continue to run groups for our children. If you would like to help in this work and allow regular teachers to take a break, speak to Hilary Robinson for up to P6. In particular, Fusion (children in P7 to S3) need helpers; for this group, speak to Jeremy Southam for more details and material suggestions.

Our story this week

Most of our groups have stopped during this holiday season

Saturday 10.00 until 12.00

Gardening Group

We will be meeting on the 6th weather permitting. Please come and join us if you can as we are few in number and there is always lots to do to keep the church grounds welcoming and presentable.

Sunday 7th

Next week we meet for **Morning Worship at 10.30** as usual. Continuing our studies in Hebrews, this week's challenge is for us to "Consider Jesus", and is based upon Hebrews 12: vs 1—3. The service will conclude with the Lord's Supper.



"30th June is the closest Sunday to the anniversary of the pronouncement of the Jerusalem Statement and Declaration at the formation of Gafcon on 29th June 2008. Gafcon supporting dioceses and parishes are asked to make the most of this opportunity to celebrate the unity which the global Gafcon fellowship enjoys in Christ through scripture. It will be a chance to pray for the challenges we face, encourage one another to contend for the truth and support the endeavours of the movement."

The most significant movement within the Anglican Church globally is GAFCON, representing 50 million of the world's 70 million Anglicans. Archbishop Foley Beach, who came over to preach in  last October, has just taken over the role of Chair of the Gafcon Primates Council. Just four weeks ago the council met in Sydney, Australia.

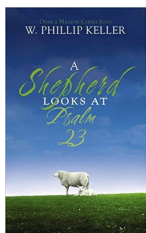
If you would like to hear Archbishop Foley Beach and find out more about the Gafcon movement, take a look at this video <https://www.clayton.tv/schedule/0i0/5433/>

Some suggestions for **HOLIDAY READING**



If you would like to read a Christian book over the summer but are not sure what to read, here are a few recommendations by church members who have benefited from these great authors. If you enjoy browsing in bookshops, Faith Mission (548 Gilmerton Rd, Edinburgh EH17 7JD Tel 664 5814) is the a great place to go – and they have a good cafe!

A SHEPHERD LOOKS AT PSALM 23



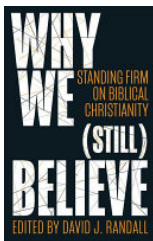
Few Psalms are as well known as Psalm 23. Yet, as with so many of the familiar passages of the Bible, we have a tendency to read them quickly and so miss out on the rich meaning held within them. This book slows us down as it takes time to look at each verse and the depth of meaning held within, in an easy to read, uncomplicated way.

Phillip Keller grew up and lived in East Africa surrounded by native sheep herders whose methods were very similar to those of Middle Eastern herders in King David's time. He was also a shepherd and rancher for about 8 years so he wrote this book based on first-hand knowledge of handling sheep. As a result he draws out much of what would have been obvious to those living at the time this psalm was written, but is lost to those of us living in modern culture.

I found this book very helpful. It gives a glimpse of how much God cares for us, just as a good shepherd cares for his sheep through the seasons of life; the good times and the bad times. It encourages us to be content with our lot, even if, like sheep, we don't understand it – safe in the knowledge that the Good Shepherd is always there by our side to help and to guide us.

A SHEPHERD LOOKS AT PSALM 23 by Phillip Keller

Available from eden.co.uk (and others), and on Kindle



WHY WE (STILL) BELIEVE is not so much a book as a collection of essays by 14 different writers. In today's culture, Christians are perceived by some as people who cling to out-dated beliefs. And Christians are often fearful to stand out from society's values. These essays take subjects like "Why we (still) believe in the Bible", or in a "Good God", or in "Preaching", or in "Marriage", and the writers present logical and coherent cases to encourage us to stand firm on Biblical Christianity.

So why should you read it? First of all, it's an easy holiday read. You can dip in and out, pick a topic that interests you, read the essays in any order that takes your fancy. Each essay is only about 15 pages long, and all are written in a straightforward way that is easily understood. Each one makes an easy and informative read.

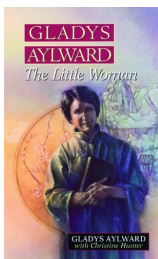
Secondly, the book provides information and arguments which can open many doors to speak about Jesus. The authors demolish the contemporary beliefs that our non-Christian friends might voice if they know we are Christian. The essays give stimulating and robust arguments which increase our confidence to stand up for what we believe.

And who knows – what you read as you wait in the airport might just give you the confidence to talk about Jesus to that chatty fellow-traveller sitting next to you on the plane!

WHY WE (STILL) BELIEVE. Edited by David Randall

Available from 10ofthose.com (and other sites) and on Kindle

HOLIDAY READING suggestions (cont.)



THE LITTLE WOMAN is an inspirational little book about the faith and determination of Gladys Aylward to take the Gospel to China. She felt compelled to go to China but did not have a straightforward journey getting there.

Initially rejected by a missionary society she worked at various jobs but could not shake off the idea that God wanted her to go so she saved up and bought a one-way ticket to China. This book tells her story; the set backs and the dangers she faced and the encouragements along the way. She was determined to be about the Lord's work no matter what the cost.

She shared her faith with refugees and orphans and got involved in the Chinese resistance during the Sino-Japanese war. She then undertook a perilous journey over the mountains to rescue a hundred orphans from the invading Japanese army. The film "The Inn of the Sixth Happiness" was based on her story.

I found her faith and determination a great encouragement to stand firm in my faith and was reminded of what a faithful and all powerful God we serve.

THE LITTLE WOMAN by Gladys Aylward

Available from eden.co.uk (and others), and on Kindle



IN HIS IMAGE

Sometimes we ask, "What is God's will for my life?" or "What does God want me to do?"

What we should really be asking is "Who should I be?". The Bible has an answer: be like the very image of God.

Genesis 1:26 tells us that God created us in His image. But what does that mean for us?

HOLIDAY READING suggestions (cont.)



In this book Jen Wilkin explores ten attributes of God that Christians are called to reflect. We are called to be holy, loving, just, to name but a few – you will need to read the book to find out more!

She takes a chapter for each attribute and gives a biblical and practical explanation to help us have a greater understanding of what God is like and what it looks like for us to live in the light of that.

This is a very easy book to read but can be challenging and thought provoking. There are many Bible references in each chapter to meditate on and questions to reflect on.

IN HIS IMAGE by Jen Wilkin

Available from icmbooksdirect.co.uk (amongst others) and on Kindle



Enjoying God

We believe in God we love God we serve God but do we ENJOY God as much as we can? Does our head knowledge translate into affection of the heart? Do we feel excited about God everyday and in every situation?

Tim Chester shows us how to relate to each of the three persons of the Trinity and what that looks like in practice. We discover that as we engage more with God and understand how awesome He is, we can enjoy God more and more. Enjoying God is firmly grounded in the Bible and gives plenty of great pastoral advice about how to experience joy through our communion with God. It challenges the reader to be continually thinking about God even in the mundane tasks of life.

Enjoying God by Tim Chester

Available from thegoobbook.co.uk (and others) and on Kindle

Other stories for your information

Summer Conferences

Summer is the time when many Christian organisations hold their conferences.


One such conference is **Keswick Ministries**, whose world-famous conference has been held in Keswick for 140 years. St Thomas' was there at the inauguration, and for many years members of St Thomas' have attended and sometimes volunteered to help.

The Conference itself operates by faith and requires no booking – just turn up and enjoy the talks, seminars and bible readings. It runs for 3 consecutive weeks starting on 13th July. You could plan a day's visit!

However, if you are too busy to attend in person this year, did you know that all the main events are streamed live on the internet? On your computer/tablet/phone enter <https://www.clayton.tv> or just search for "Clayton TV" and then look for the link to Keswick Convention 2019.

Our thanks to Agnes Murray for the flowers in church this week.

Changes to the Website Area for Members

We are editing the members' area of the  website. The plan is simple: only those who have joined the new church will have access to the members' area. If you have any questions about this, have a word with Gavin Hamilton – he's the man with the answers!

Financial Report to 31 May

If you would like to know how our church finances are progressing, Income and Expenditure accounts for the 8 months to 31 May are available on the table at the back of the church

For our prayers this week

"Eternal God and gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ died for our redemption; commissioned His disciples to preach the good news; and sent the indwelling Holy Spirit in every generation to embrace and proclaim salvation in Christ alone: arise, O Lord, and defend your Church; shine the light of your Holy Word upon hearts shadowed by error and strengthen the Anglican Communion throughout the world to proclaim Christ faithfully to the nations, that the captives may be set free, the straying rescued, and the confused restored; and bind your children together in love, unity and courage, that we, with all your saints, may inherit your eternal kingdom, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen."

On Gafcon Sunday it would be appropriate to remember before the Lord the fellow-travellers on the journey we have embarked upon: Westhill Community Church, Aberdeen; St Silas Church, Glasgow; and Harris Anglican Church. May their paths ahead be clear, their fellowships united, and the Word of God declared fearlessly. Pray that all four churches will proclaim Christ faithfully, so that all of us might have a significant impact within our communities and our nation.

staff and contacts

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Items for next Sunday's The STory to Miller Bogie
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Website: saintthomas.org.uk

Twitter: @StThomasEdin

Address: 79 Glasgow Road, Edinburgh EH12 8LJ

Charity No. SC049045

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"The Story" and hymn-books are available in large print.
We also have a hearing loop system installed.

