

Pentecost Power

BRISTO BAPTIST MAGAZINE

MAY / JUNE 2008



GREETINGS FROM PRAGUE



Time flies. When I look back, it is difficult to believe that it has been nine and a half months since that Sunday service when Yulia and I were saying ‘good-bye’ to Bristo...

Few weeks in our home-town in Russia, several months in Prague, many new friends, countless big and small events – it would be hard to describe all

that has happened to us in this busy and interesting period of time.

Well, if this time is hard to describe, what did I want to say when I began writing this letter? I guess I just wanted to say ‘hello’ to our dear friends in Edinburgh. Thanks to Jim, who came to teach at the seminary a few times and letters that we often receive, we keep updated and feel that we are still not too far away...

We remember you all, love you, and often pray about all of you, our dear church.

May God bless you richly.

In Christ,

Tima and Yulia

Service Times

Sunday

Morning Celebration (including Junior Church) 11.00 a.m.
Evening Celebration (including Encounter for 14-18s) 6.30 p.m.

Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday

Cell Groups(contact hosts/leaders) 7.30 p.m.

Monday

Prayer Meeting 10.00 a.m.
Badminton Club 6.30 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.

Tuesday

Home from Home 1.00 p.m.

Friday

IT Youth Club 7.45 p.m.

Saturday

Morning of Prayer 9.30 a.m.

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Sunday 29 June

for publication on

Sunday 13 July

Theme:

*'Transformational
Suffering'*

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FROM THE EDITOR

In our cell group we were looking at the story of John the Baptist, preparing the way for Jesus. He who baptised with only water spoke of Jesus as one who would baptise people with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Water baptism symbolises washing away our sins so that we are clean in God's sight. But there is more to baptism than that. The Holy Spirit brings power — power to do as Jesus did, power to heal and transform, power to overcome suffering and the things of this world. Fire consumes, burns up the things in us that are not like God.



The feast of Pentecost has just passed. A feast when we celebrated the first occasion that the Holy Spirit came in power and with fire to all God's people, instead of just a few like Moses and Elisha. Two thousand years later the power of the Holy Spirit has not changed. Let Him come and fill you!

Robert Mill

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

Pentecostal power. I have to tell you that the way I see things continues to change. It's because of the transformational journey that God takes us all along. Including me.

Pentecostal power is the engine that drives my faith. Always has been. Just the way I see things now is different.

When I first became a Christian, it was because the power of God had burst into my life. I met the living Jesus in a very powerful way. And it changed me, how I thought and how I behaved. God was very real to me. I saw things happen. I realised and saw demonstrated the presence and power of God.

Now, God is still very real to me. But I've



Rev. J. Purves

discovered more about God from the Bible, experience, and come to better understand myself and others. God doesn't always take me along the path that I'd have chosen. His agenda is clear and so is His vision. I, on the other hand, have mixed motives and blurred vision at time. Sometimes I'm in synch with God. But other times, even though I love Him and treasure His love, I lose the place a little.

So I've come to see Pentecostal power in a deeper way. Yes, I treasure the healings,

God's agenda is clear and so is His vision.

FROM THE PASTOR

the deliverances, the fillings of the Spirit, the sense of His glory present. I value speaking in tongues. I delight in answered prayer. But more and more, I see that Pentecostal power is not just about 'spiritual fireworks'. It's really about a deep, deep work.

When the Holy Spirit is poured out, there will often be signs and wonders, because there is 'ignition' when the presence of heaven comes to earth. The power of God and the powers of this age don't fit perfectly. So there are sparks flying and trauma experienced when heaven and earth meet.

But God's not in the entertainment business. He's into doing a deep, deep work. What He does with each of us is to lead us into a

transformational journey. His real agenda is to change us. Transform us. To give us more of the heart and attitude of Jesus. And this isn't easy for any of us. There is both joy and sorrow. Laughter and tears. Comfort and sorrow. Deep, deep transformation.

But remember this. When all is said and done, the power that is at work in you is Pentecostal power. The power that raised Jesus from the dead. The same power that will strengthen you to walk the Jesus way. So look for it. Ask for it. Cry out to be baptised in the Holy Spirit. And then to be filled over and over again.

And grow to be deeper. Deeper into Jesus.

In His love,

Jim

The power of God and the powers of this age don't fit perfectly. So there are sparks flying and trauma experienced when heaven and earth meet.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

It's now May, and I've nearly finished last year's accounts. I have all the numbers, I just need to transfer the figures into the new accounts format ready for their external inspection. I'd like to present a summary of the figures.

This year in some respects we did very well. Offerings and income increased, but ... so did our expenditure.

In last year's budget we were prepared, with all the essential building and repair work, for a considerable shortfall ... and this was realized. What is more interesting is how the monthly running costs have risen. I'll summarise ...

Our **total income** last year was £49406. This works out at an income of £4117 a month.

Our **essential expenditure** is:

	Annual	Monthly
Staff	29556	2463
Energy	9002	750
Insurance	3098	258
Council Tax	2814	234
BU Subs	2500	208
Telephone	800	67
<u>Total spend</u>	<u>47770</u>	<u>3981</u>

Each year we agree to tithe 10% of our income

Tithe 4940

Essential + Tithe **52710**

TREASURER'S REPORT cont.

What this tells us is that we cannot afford to meet our minimum commitments from our annual income. And this does not represent our total expenditure for the year. We need to spend money on sundries, Sunday School materials, stationery etc. We are also committed this year to at least £10000 of essential repairs and fire safety work. The cost of Gas and Electricity is a real problem for us. We use less, because we no longer have to heat the sanctuary, but the cost of energy has gone up over 50% in the last year with more rises to come.

Please prayerfully consider your stewardship to the church. We can meet our commitments from our reserves, but not indefinitely.

Paul Watson

THE WAY FORWARD

As many of you know, a special church meeting was held on Saturday 3rd May chaired by Catherine Killin of Scottish Churches Housing Action to discuss options for the way forward in the use of our suite of buildings. The meeting was attended by 28 people of the fellowship who asked many intelligent questions.

Since then, the deacons have met and have decided to set up a group of people to assist Catherine Killin in exploring further what options might be available to us and discovering what we can potentially do with our building and what we cannot do. The composition of this group, to be known as the *Bristo Development Exploration Group*, is as follows:

Catherine Killin (S.C.H.A.), **Andrea Mill** and **Barbara Toal** (representing the deacons), **Daniel Onifade**, **Linda Allison**, **Sam Kawamura** and **Ryan Gladwin** (representing the rest of the fellowship).

Please pray for this group of people over coming months as they explore options that might be available and acceptable to us and the neighbourhood.

The Deacons

OBITUARIES

Since the last issue of the Magazine we have been saddened by the deaths of three of our former members — a former pastor and two former deacons. Obituaries follow. — Ed..

REV. WILLIAM (BILL) PORCH

We were saddened to learn of the death of Bill Porch, a former pastor of Bristo, on Saturday 26 April 2008. It was very sudden, while he was having a cup of tea in the nursing home where he and his wife, Nora, lived.

I first met Bill in the 1960s when he was minister at the West Baptist Church, Dunfermline. I was then a member of Christian Endeavour in Pathhead, Kirkcaldy and we went “on deputation” to other societies and churches throughout Fife. Imagine my delight on my first visit to Bristo, the evening service on 24 December 1982, to find that Bill was the minister. So our acquaintance was renewed and a few months later I became a member of this church.

Bill was called to the pastorate of Bristo after a period of service (1969-1974) with BMS in Jamaica followed by a year in Maysville, Kentucky during which he studied for his M Th degree. His induction to Bristo took place on 8 February 1976 and was conducted by Rev Donald McCallum of Adelaide Place, Glasgow. Both men had grown up in Stenhouse Baptist Church, and Mr McCallum had also inducted him at the West Church in 1963. So for Bill his call to Bristo was a homecoming in more ways than one.

In the church magazine for that month, issued the previous week, Bill set out his thoughts in his first pastoral letter.

“As I look forward to joining you in the Lord’s work at Bristo it gives me great pleasure to return to Edinburgh, the place not only of my physical birth, but also the place where my spiritual pilgrimage began.

OBITUARIES cont.

It appeared an uneventful occasion as a young lad quietly and reverently surrendered his life to Christ one Sunday night in Stenhouse Baptist Church, but no single event has influenced my life more. Perhaps, if I could have foreseen the consequences, I might have been more fearful.”

Reflecting on what it means to be a Christian, he concluded

“As I join you in the ministry at Bristo, I rededicate myself to this personal Christ, Jesus, and I pray that you will all join me in confirming faith in Christ personally, and in proclaiming this message widely.”

Central to Bill’s ministry was prayer, as the following sentences from subsequent letters testify.

“What man cannot do by himself can be accomplished with God’s help through prayer. Many of life’s mysterious ways are made clear when we kneel down to pray”

“Fix your eyes upon Jesus and pray that others might find the same vision.”

Bill was ably supported by his wife, Nora, and daughter, Elizabeth, particularly in music. It is perhaps appropriate that the first baptism of his ministry with us, on Easter Sunday 1976, was Elizabeth’s. Their farewell service was on 4 February 1984 when Bill took up the pastorate of Kirby Muxloe Free Church. He “retired” from there ten years later, becoming pastor again of the West Church, Dunfermline where he served until 2000.

I remember Bill Porch as a caring pastor, who put Christ at the centre of his preaching, and prayer the cornerstone of his ministry. Our sympathy and prayers are with Nora, Elizabeth, his son, Craig, and family in their loss.

Christine Lumsden

OBITUARIES (cont.)**MELVYN CLARKE**

Mel Clarke died on 8 April 2008 after a short but terminal illness. His passing is a great loss although, because of his protracted suffering over many years from rheumatoid arthritis, there is thankfulness that his time of pain and exhaustion has been foreshortened.

Mel was a man who belonged to Jesus Christ. He sought, with intentionality, integrity and real commitment, to live his life as a disciple of Jesus Christ who immersed himself in service to the Lord's cause. Mel was always an astute and perceptive man. He had great ideals, but was not unrealistically idealistic. He knew that the church is a group of sinners who have met the Saviour of the world. And like His Saviour, he loved the church as the precious Bride of Christ deeply.

Mel's faithfulness and service to the cause of the Lord, through supporting and operating within the ministries of the church, was exemplary. He demonstrated, in countless ways, generosity, love, reconciling forgiveness, humility and service. He always put the cause of Christ to the fore. A shy man, he did not seek position or recognition, but with incredible mental skills and a real knowledge and skill in handiwork which was only limited by the onset of chronic arthritis, it was inevitable that a man of such humility and servant spirit should come to prominence in Christian ministry. He was a deacon, treasurer and managed the large properties at Bristo. And he executed these ministries in an exemplary manner.

Mel loved his family. He loved the church. And he loved to see the

OBITUARIES (cont.)

power of salvation at work. Mel had a real heart for seeing others come to Christ. He delighted when people were converted and was deeply committed to the work of mission, both at home and abroad. He was also a man who knew the power of the Holy Spirit, and this truth shone through in his prayers and deep devotional insight. Mel showed great spiritual insight and many benefited from it.

At Bristo, we give thanks to God our Father for the life and service of this man of God. We delight to know that he is now in the presence of the Saviour whom he knew, loved and served with such utter dedication, joy, peace and righteousness.

Our prayers are with Janice, Alison and Helen and the family at this time of their loss.

Jim Purves

MR JOHN LEITH

We have also been saddened to learn of the loss of John Leith. John died on Monday 21 April 2008 and our former minister Rev. Bill Porch was actually getting ready to attend his thanksgiving service when he himself died (see separate obituary above). John served Bristo as Sunday School leader, deacon and treasurer. He also played the tuba and the organ in worship services. We extend our sympathy to his wife Janice and their three daughters, Jennifer, Juliet and Fay, to his grandchildren Gemma, Kyle and Clara and to his sisters Christine and Catherine.

Robert Mill

CHURCH GARDEN

Douglas and Isobel Wilson have told us that they wish to give up caring for the church garden due to personal and health reasons. They have been doing this service for God for a long time and as a fellowship we thank them very much for all they have done over the years. This means that there is now a vacancy for someone, or some people, to take over the job, which is less onerous than it used to be as most of the garden is now hard landscaping. There are still areas that need to be mowed and weeded, however, and bushes pruned occasionally. If anyone in the fellowship has experience of looking after plants and feels led to take on this task, please contact the pastor or anyone on the Church Property Group (Craig Smith, Robert Mill, Stuart Rendle and Brian Wilson) as soon as possible. Thank you.

Robert Mill

PRAY FOR THE WORLD'S GYPSY PEOPLES

How can they call on he one they have not believed in? How can they believe in the one Of whom they have not heard? ROMANS 10:14

“Gypsy” is a cover-all term for three language groups — the Rom (Europe), the Dom (Near East and North Africa), and the Lom (Turkey and South Russia). Some of us at Bristo have visited our sister church at Lom in Bulgaria, so have met many Roma Christians, and have been impressed by their trust in the Lord, the warmth of their welcome and their worship of the Lord in song. In the world as a whole there are over 35 million gypsies, divided into at least 37 separate tribes, many of which are totally unreached by the Gospel.

PRAY FOR GYPSIES cont.

We ask you this month to spend time praying for some of these people groups, all of whom suffer from poverty, rejection and exclusion in their countries.

1. The Banjara (or Lambadi) of India are a tribe of over six million people. Like all gypsy peoples they were historically nomadic, traditionally salt traders, but as the population increased and the jungles were cleared, they gradually settled. Today many are poor farmers or daily labourers, living in the rural areas in grass huts. They are a close-knit people, having little relationship with other groups, and are still largely illiterate, as few of their children attend school. Those who are still nomadic or semi-nomadic sell hand-made brooms, repair tools, beg, and entertain as acrobats, musicians and story-tellers. Only about 1% are Christian, the rest being animist or folk Hindu. The Banjara, as tribals, are outside the caste system, and suffer the same oppression and exclusion as the Dalits, or Untouchables

2. The Ghorbati and Nawari of Egypt speak Domari, which has absorbed much Arabic vocabulary, and with other smaller groups comprise 2% of the Egyptian population. Many people mistakenly believe that all gypsy tribes came from Egypt; in fact linguistic evidence suggests that they originated in Persia, and from there moved westwards to Europe, northwards to Russia and southwards to the Middle East. The Ghorbati are still mainly nomadic, living in wagons, though nowadays they are beginning to settle. They follow traditional gypsy occupations, such as peddling, fortune telling, singing and dancing at fairs, and begging. They make extra money by working as day labourers at harvest time. Their religion is folk Islam, and as far as

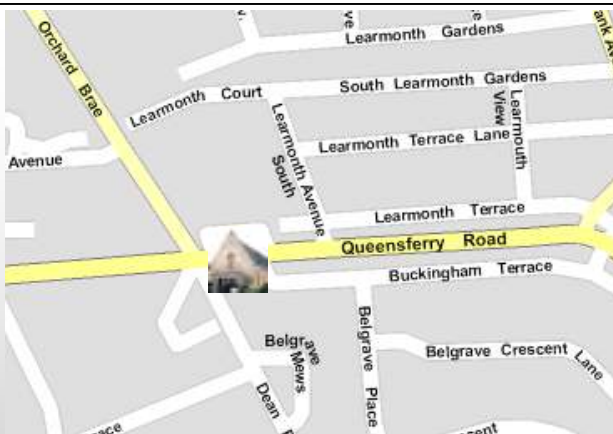
PRAY FOR GYPSIES (CONT.)

is known they receive no Christian outreach.

3. The Bulgarian Roma are estimated at more than 7% of the total population of Bulgaria, but as they have a high birth-rate it could be much greater than this. They suffer from a 90 to 95% unemployment rate, and often live in slum ghettos with limited basic services. Although most children enrol in primary school, there is a huge drop-out rate, and a high proportion of the children end up in secure accommodation for “delinquents”. As a result this group has endemic problems of alcoholism, domestic violence and crime. Like excluded people everywhere, including Britain, they live in a vicious circle from which it is almost impossible to escape. The Roma have never been willing to become assimilated into the common culture, and there is no easy answer to their problems.

Please pray for the gypsies, who are despised and avoided groups in whichever country they reside. Often they are excluded from hearing about the Gospel, as Christian churches are not always welcoming towards people whose way of life is different from, and conflicts with their own. Pray for Indian missionary groups reaching out to the Banjara, for the Coptic Church in Egypt who have the best opportunities to take the Gospel to the Ghorbati, and for churches like our sister church in Lom, who have welcomed the Roma into their small congregation and have planted house churches in Roma villages. Pray that the gypsies will be enabled to escape from the cycle of deprivation they are at present largely trapped in.

LOCATION



Bristo Baptist Church

41 Buckingham Terrace / 1 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 3DJ

'In the last days', God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.'

Acts 2: 17-18 NIV