

### Preaching Dates

#### 16 November 2017

**Aubrey Jamieson** pm at Shetland Museum  
– Memorial Service for helicopter winch man  
William Deacon

**James MacKenzie** am at  
Aberdeen Christian Fellowship

**Alastair Crockett** am at  
Cupar Baptist Church

**Chris Townsend** am at  
Strathendrick Baptist Church

**Gordon Dickey** am at  
Galashiels Baptist Church

**Jonathan Groves** am at  
Woodmansterne Baptist Church, Surrey,

**Glen Cartwright** am at  
Fusion, Newton Mearns Baptist Church

**Hugh Tannock** am at  
Johnstone Baptist Church

**Aubrey Jamieson** pm at Fishermen's  
Mission Nightcap Service, Ebenezer Hall,  
Lerwick.

**James Ewen** pm at Bo'ness Baptist Church

**Matthew Payne** pm at baptismal service,  
Lossiemouth Baptist Church

**Jim McNulty** am + pm at  
Islay Baptist Church.

#### 22 November

**Jonathan Groves** pm at Midweek Meeting,  
Pound Lane Free Church, Cambridgeshire,



### “Reading God’s Word”

By Marie Cameron

As I look back over the years I realise that my attitude towards the Bible has changed quite a lot. It always was the authoritative word of God and that’s how I still regard it but nevertheless a lot has changed for me in my reading of it and my expectations of it.

When I was young, a fair description of my attitude to the Bible was that I used it as a phrase book of a foreign language. I wanted to remember the key verses that I could hang on to and then use in arguments and discussions about my faith. In daily devotions I felt I should go away with one verse or phrase that summed up what God was saying to me that day and I’ve used various reading notes over the years and found some much more helpful than others. One of the results was that I’ve developed favourite passages and books and verses that I return to a lot and there are huge chunks that I skim over and feel puzzled about and generally avoid.

Instead of grasping what I want or need from the Bible, now I think more about getting the overall message inside me and allowing it to change my thoughts and views about God and life and what it means to belong to Him.

Recently I’ve been reading my way through Jeremiah and in the past I would have picked out the helpful pictures of the yoke and the potter and the amazing truth that God appoints us in the womb. This time my overall impression is one of horror at the fierceness of the content and the force of the language. There are frequent references to adultery, prostitution, animals in heat, famine, slaughter, disaster and destruction on all sides. Making a word cloud of some chapters would be dark and desolate! This has led my thoughts in two directions. Firstly, when I see television news of Syria and other scenes of conflict, I think it’s an accurate visual presentation of the words in Jeremiah in all their stark horror and it’s repulsive and dreadful. It’s like watching the scenes that Jeremiah presented being played out in our world today; seeing young children wounded and terrified and abandoned, buildings destroyed and men firing bullets randomly and bombing schools and hospitals mercilessly.

I found myself asking the Lord why His word was so dark and doom-laden and did He have to spell it out so starkly and at such length. It was hard to connect this with the good news of the Gospel, and then I realised this was a picture of all that Jesus bore in Himself on the cross. The weight of sin, its depth and depravity and destructive force was what Jesus experienced on the cross. He actually became sin for us. He entered into its horror and violence and fierceness and took it right into Himself and down to the grave.

Jeremiah hasn’t left me feeling bright and joyful but much more thankful to the Lord for what He has done for me. I see a bit more that the truth of this life is not a choice between good and bad, but facing the reality of both and knowing God has overcome evil at the cross. I don’t need to skim over the horrors of some passages but see in them the extent of God’s loving power for His world.