

# Word For The Week

## 13 March 2020

### Preaching Dates

#### **Saturday 14 March 2020**

**Charles Sommerville** (pm - 2pm & 3.30pm)  
at Bible Prophecy Conference, Barnards  
Court Mission, Greenock

#### **Sunday 15 March 2020**

**Ian Barr** (am) at Crookston Baptist  
Community Church

**Andrew Chalkley** (am) at  
Campbeltown Community Church

**Gordon Dickey** (am) at  
Hawick Baptist Church

**Richard MacPhee** (am) at  
Uddingston Baptist Church

**Phill March** (am) at  
Clydebank Central Methodist Church

**Brian McCarthy** (am) at  
Inverkeithing Baptist Church

**Charles Sommerville** (am) at  
Cumbernauld Baptist Church

**Hugh Tannock** (am) at  
Alexandria Baptist Church

**Aubrey Jamieson** (pm) at Fishermen's  
Mission Nightcap Service, St Columba's  
Parish Church Lerwick.

**Phill March** (pm) at  
Shettleston Baptist Church Glasgow

**Charles Sommerville** (pm) at  
Dawson Mission, Falkirk

**Hugh Tannock** (pm) at  
Drumchapel Baptist Church.

**George Thomson** (am + pm) at  
Alloa Baptist Church

#### **Monday 16 March 2020**

**Hazel Brooks** (pm) at  
South Wishaw Parish Church

#### **Wednesday 18 March 2020**

**Charles Sommerville** (pm) at  
Dykehead Mission, Shotts



### **“Live At Peace With One Another”**

**By Richard MacPhee**

***“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at  
peace with everyone.” Romans 12:18***

It has been a dream of mine to study theology formally. Accordingly, I recently began a divinity degree through the University of London. The initial modules are mandatory. One of these is an Introduction to Islam. To be honest I don't want to study Islam, but I'm told it's common in Divinity degrees. In Islam, I have been struck by the divisions between Sunni and Shi'ia Muslims and how similar they are to issues that divide Christians. Issues of who makes policy in religion divides Presbyterians from Episcopalians as much as Sunni's and Shi'ites. Leadership issues have separated Catholics and Protestants as well as the different sections of Islam.

Disagreement is inevitable. Remembering that Jesus disciples featured tax collecting Matthew in a small group with Simon the Zealot. Simon probably regarded Matthew as a traitorous Roman sympathiser and Matthew probably regarded Levi as a terrorist. Jesus didn't shy away from division for an easy life.

The world appears to be fragmenting further into remain/leave, yes/no, pro-life/pro choice to name a few camps. Sadly, we live in a culture which is attempting to polarise nuanced issues into black and white tribes. Social media echo chambers have raised minority “hot-takes” to ludicrous prominence.

As Baptists we have a set of non-negotiables. Our articles of faith. Rightly there is no debate around these. These will be vigorously but lovingly defended. That isn't too difficult in theory and I have seen the practicalities of this rarely cause too much difficulty. But smaller, more trivial decisions; wall colours, pews vs chairs etc have caused more pains than they warrant, and that is just us Baptists. To symbolise the Christianity, I live near cross-roads that features 4 different Christian churches on each corner of that crossroad. The world sees the church as hopelessly divided. I worry sometimes they are correct.

Many churches are trying to combat this by working in co-operation locally to deal with social issues and to work on evangelistic projects. A step in the right direction. The Christian church must continue follow our Lord and His disciple's example and model co-operation, tolerance, and love. When it comes to those areas outside our core beliefs, compromise and ‘agreeing to disagree’ are signs of maturity. Wounds need to be healed and divisions need to be mended. This will only come with our Lord's loving leadership example of not shying away from disagreement.