

Word For The Week

1 March 2019

Preaching Dates

3 March 2019

David Andrew (am) at Alloa Elim Church

Gordon Dickey (am) at
Longhorsley Free Church

Bill Haining (am) at
Bridge of Don Baptist Church

Douglas Inglis (am - 9am and 11am)
at Newton Mearns Baptist Church

Dawn Martindale (am) at
Kings Covenant Fellowship, Glenrothes

Charles Sommerville (am) at
Kelty Evangelical Church, Fife

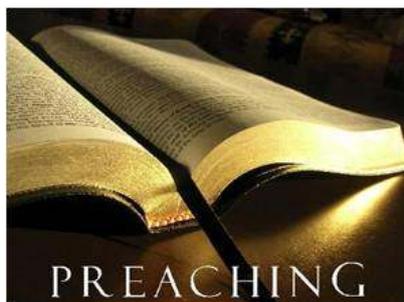
Hugh Tannock (am) at
Drumchapel Baptist Church

Tony Walters (am) at
Fort William Baptist Church

Charles Sommerville (pm) at
Whitburn Christian Fellowship

5 March 2019

Charles Sommerville (pm) at
Broxburn Baptist Ladies Fellowship



"Now and Not Yet"

By Jonathan Groves

Two weeks ago, I was in Malawi with The Kerusso Trust. February is the heart of the rainy season. The countryside is very green. The crops are growing well this year, and everyone is praying for a bumper harvest. Yet it is "the hungry season". Last year's food is largely exhausted, and while the new heads of corn are developing they are not yet ready to gather and eat.

The Bible story of God's salvation is also one of "now and not yet". In Malawi, I visited a remote rural village community in the hills to the west of Blantyre. The village had no clean water supply: the people were drawing water from a polluted river over 400m away. By October, before the rains start, it may have completely dried up. The community had no school within walking distance for the abundant young children, no nearby health clinic for their ailments and no church. Looking at their circumstances, in what sense could I say that for them the Kingdom of God has arrived?

Yet a group of around 200 village men and women, including three local chiefs, gathered at short notice to welcome us. Many of the people were very thin, clearly undernourished. The members of a recently established HIV+ Support Group performed a drama with great communication skill and a measure of good humour. As lightning flashed around the surrounding hills, the assembled crowd listened attentively as the Gospel was proclaimed. Perhaps 70 people then asked to receive Christ. At the end of the meeting, almost everyone affirmed that now or previously, they had given their lives to the Lord Jesus.

The coming of God's Kingdom in all its fullness, when *'there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain'* and when *'to the thirsty [God] will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life'* (Revelation 21:4,7), is still "not yet". Yet I could see that the Kingdom was also "now" among these people. As Jesus said, *"The Kingdom of God is within you"* (Luke 17:20-21). Here were Christian chiefs, asking to be trained and disciplined in the Way of Righteousness. Here were new believers singing and dancing with joy and peace, despite the extreme life-challenges they faced. Our Malawian partners will go soon to disciple the converts and train church and community leaders. A new church family has been born, and now needs only to be planted practically within that remote community.