

### Preaching Dates

**30 September 2018**

**David Andrew** (am) at Helensburgh Baptist Church

**Ian Barr** (am) at Vale of Leven Baptist Church, Alexandria

**Hazel Brooks** (am) at Carluke Baptist Church

**Irene Campbell** (am) at Uddingston Baptist Church

**Phill March** (am) at Langdale Church Dunstable

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

**Aubrey Jamieson** (pm) at Newbiggin-on-Lune Methodist Church, Cumbria.

**Jim McNulty** (am + pm) at Islay Baptist Church

**Charles Sommerville** (am + pm) at Shettleston Baptist Church



**“Did I hear correctly?”**

**By Stan Paliwoda**

The Bible is unique in that it is the one book that people will turn to at different points in their life to revisit passages and sense once again the feelings which they had when their eyes first stumbled over a certain passage. The Bible experience lasts a lifetime and we come to know the Lord through revisiting it. It inspires and it gives us hope. I have a personal story to tell. It is Psalm 23, perhaps the shortest of the psalms and my personal recollection of the difficulties that it presented at a very early age.

I remember primary school when I had many questions that went unanswered. Why should I not want the Lord as my Shepherd? Yes, it means I shall not go wanting but these are not the words actually used. After going unheeded, I tried this question on my mother who I always remember standing by the Hoover washing machine. In our house, the bedclothes were never long on the bed before re-entering the washing machine. Anyhow, I interrupted my mother to ask why we would not want the Lord as our Shepherd? Whether frustrated at the amount of work before her or the depth of my questioning, I was told to go outside and play. This meant I could not ask about the Lord leading me by still waters or anointing me or the path of righteousness. No, I was not keen on walking through the valley of the shadow of death and how would a rod and staff comfort me? What were they anyway? Why was God anointing me with oil over my head? Why was my cup running over? So many questions!

I tend to wrestle with problems and like to achieve closure of some kind before I feel comfortable and can move on with a good conscience to something else. Psalm 23 set me a few challenges which were answered only over a lifetime and by reviewing what the different versions of the Bible had to say. The imagery is indeed challenging. We are known, loved and valued by God who wants to be our shepherd gently leading us not forcing, coercing or threatening but very gently leading us. We will not want for anything if we trust in the Lord also echoes Jeremiah. It is in later life when we assume all sorts of adult responsibilities that we start to appreciate and realise the beauty of the peaceful still waters and being gently led not driven. To live in the presence of the eternal God who continually watches over us, is a powerful message of love and of hope at all stages of life.

