

*Govan and Linthouse
Parish Church
Magazine*

**IF YOU HAVE
THE POWER TO
MAKE SOMEONE
HAPPY, DO IT.
THE WORLD
NEEDS MORE
OF THAT.**

September

2015

Insights

I wonder if it is possible to write a blog about not writing blogs. For those of you who don't know (and there can't be many of you) blog is a truncation of the word weblog, which is an internet site which gives information and/or news. It seems that everybody I know has their own blog, although it is only this week that I have realised that I am way behind the curve in this matter. Certainly, all the ministers I know seem to have one, and they regularly post their thoughts on a wide range of topics, their recipes and the coffee mornings they are baking for, the charities they are currently supporting, the books they are engaged in reading (both spiritual and recreational) and a host of other interesting posts related to their lives.

You mustn't think that I am against this process – I am not. I have never really been convinced by the distant minister or missionary, their eyes firmly fixed on the spiritual horizon. I have worked in churches where some of the previous ministers were totally unapproachable by any member of the congregation. It was as though they came from another planet, and never, ever, did any shopping – how did they eat, oh, wait a minute, they were men, and they always had wives who dealt with such mundane things. It left them free to pursue a higher calling.

But the world is a changed place. Anything that makes us better known, anything that makes us real people living beside those who called us, can only be an advantage as far as I am concerned. That view of the church, that authoritarian view is gone forever, consigned to the same archive that said that ministers and priests only drank tea from fine china cups, and the whole house had to be cleaned before you could send for the doctor.

So, approachability, I firmly believe in that. But it is also true to say that approachability can place strains on other people as well as yourself, on family members, for example. The daughter of one Southside minister was in the same class as one of my children at school. She told us that she felt her life was lived in a goldfish bowl, probably a teenage exaggeration, but nonetheless disturbing to think that she felt as exposed as that. Another minister's son (from the same class) had a party when his parents were on holiday and the revellers drank cider in the front garden. By the following day, the entire parish knew. It is not necessarily true that ministers' children are any more observed than other children within the parish, but they often feel that they are. A blog would only intensify that feeling.

The other factor is that blogs are usually on a theme, a monthly or weekly theme, and the level of information I have to communicate doesn't readily sit with a theme. Do we do property this month, or leave it because, let's face it; we could do property every month? Do we do prayer, or areas of social concern? And, should we pick one of these themes, then you would have to ask the question, how personal is it anyway? After seven years of hearing me preach and speak, you probably know what I think on most topics anyway, or you could make an educated guess.

On the other hand, although you have been hearing me, I have not always heard you. You get far less chances to speak than I do.

That's it, everyone in the congregation should start their own blog. Blessings on you and those you love - with or without a blog.

Moyna.

Property Matters.

As you will all be aware, we have moved to Linthouse Church for the time being, while the roof at Govan Cross is being stripped. At present we would hope to be back at the Cross by Christmas, although all the inner workings of the church: plasterwork, timbers, stonework, etc. will have to remain open to the air for at least a year as part of the rot treatment.

We are very grateful to Carol and George for their work at Linthouse and to the Mackinnon family, for facilitating that move.

While on holiday I finished reading a trilogy of books by an author called Ralph Glasser. He was brought up in 1930's Gorbals and holds nothing back in his first book called 'Growing up in the Gorbals.' He describes the squalor people lived in, the hardships people endured, but he is also very philosophical about it. His second book is called *A Gorbals boy at Oxford*, a reference to the fact that despite his upbringing he won a scholarship to Oxford University. In that book he recalls that someone asked him how he could have lived in such a place and he answers that 'that's just the way it was, we didn't think about it.' The third book in the trilogy is called 'Gorbals voices, siren songs.' He describes in that book how he managed the two worlds he came to inhabit, the deprivation of the Gorbals and the world of luxury his fellow students came from. He goes on to talk about how he tried to leave his Jewish faith behind post war thinking that it would be a barrier to success. He comes to the conclusion that he could never leave it behind because that was his identity, and it was the identity of his social and family circles as he grew up.

It is a fascinating insight into how a man searched for what is the answer to many of life's complex questions and I would recommend you read it if you can. Glasser went on to advise many third world countries on the importance of tradition and keeping community identity sacred. In his third book he recalls his early days in the Synagogue and how there would be old men who craved a different future thinking that the future

would bring something much better for Jews, natural I suppose given the persecution of the day culminating in the holocaust. Later in life he would go back to the Synagogue having rediscovered his heritage and he says he saw old men with the same dreams as the ones he had encountered in childhood, but he realised they had spent so much time dreaming of a better future they had missed the present. And when a better future did come they missed that too because they were stuck.

As I read this I wondered if this is an attitude we see too? Living in the present is the only way we can live yet we spend so much time in the past or the future that we fail to allow the past to inform the present, or we fail to see the future when it does come. It's imperative that we hold fast to our traditions and don't lose them because they make us who we are. It's also important that we dream of a better future because for many people we encounter the past has not been good and the present is a day to day struggle. But we can't lose sight of the here and now because to do so demeans the past and takes us off on tangents as we wonder what the future might hold. Any debates we have can't be conducted on the basis that 'this is the way we always did it', neither can they be conducted in a dream of 'this is the way we would like it done in the future'. We must live in the real world of now with its joys and its pains. And as we strive to provide a different future for our church and community we need to allow the past to inform but not dictate us. Our identity is important to us and that identity is one which changes as the years pass. Govan is no longer an industrial town but that is our heritage. Christians have worshiped here for centuries and we rightly celebrate that fact. But what we do now, who we are now, will inform how people live in the present for years to come. Imagine what people will be saying about us in 50 or 100 years time. I hope they can look back and say that we made a huge difference to their present because in our present we worked hard to stay on track, that we spent time thinking of the traditions that endure and allowed these to help us shape the future. Sometimes the present can be a difficult place to live, but it's the only time we have so let us use it wisely, not getting caught up in specifics but holding the past and the future together and leaving a legacy future generations will celebrate.

Paul

Hi Folks,

Just thought I would send you a wee update on how things are going for me. As many of you will be aware I am part of the Work place chaplaincy for Rolls Royce in East Kilbride and have been for four and half years. This has been a very enjoyable time and during that time I have had the privilege of working and dealing with many different issues and have built some very strong relationships along the way, however, things in life always change and we have to roll with the punches. The site in East Kilbride is moving to Inchinnan and

unfortunately this has resulted in redundancies for a lot and a transfer for others. The changes will be completed by the end of the year and the East Kilbride site will be no more, I feel this is the time to hand over the reins to someone else and start a new chapter elsewhere. I have requested with work place chaplaincy to be placed in retail somewhere in the west of Scotland, to date I don't have any more information on this but am hoping that during the Autumn I will know more. In the meantime I will help to support the new chaplain to settle in to the new site with Rolls Royce. I will be sorry to leave Rolls Royce as the job came with a car!!! (If only).

In the mean time keep your information coming about anyone who needs a visit and anyone who is in hospital or housebound, we would rather have the information four times than not at all.

Take care of yourselves and remember don't do anything I wouldn't do, like dancing on the chance!!!

All the best

Andrew

Dear friends,

I would like to begin by thanking all of you for your best wishes and generosity to Hanna and me as we got married in July. It was very encouraging to us to know that we were in your thoughts and prayers as we celebrated our special day.

Our wedding was beautiful – as was my gorgeous bride. After it being wet all morning the sun came out for us in the afternoon. We danced to some ceilidh music and shared a meal with close friends and family.

It was lovely to return to our wider family here at Govan and Linthouse Parish Church to share our joy with you. We were very touched by the generous gift from the congregation.

As I type these words I am looking forward to the 'Walk 500 miles' trip to Millport. When this article gets to you, I am sure all who could make it will have had a good day and will have recovered from all the sore legs!

And if any of you think that it was me who was hiding in the ice cream shop then think again!!!

It is so nice to be part of the family of the church to share days like this together. It has been a real privilege for me to preach at two baptismal services over the summer – to help welcome new members to the family of Christ's church.

We are a family – we are the people of God. I pray that you will all be richly blessed with grace and peace.

Christopher

Exit, Stage Left

I want to thank everyone for their support during my years as Session Clerk. I originally took on the job for a year, because the previous Clerk was too ill to continue. That was over 27 years ago. I'm on my fourth Minister, and the number of assistants, students and Elders who have come and gone during that time is too big to count.

Now I need a wee rest, and then a change. I'll still be around, doing the rest of my duties as an Elder, while I wait to see what God has lined up for me.

Elsbeth Millen has kindly agreed to become our Clerk for a year or so, and Marion MacKinnon will be our Minutes Secretary. Since Elsbeth does not have email, you can either phone her or contact her via the Church office. Just don't overwhelm the poor soul.

Once again, thanks to you all.

Elsie Donald

BAPTISMS

2nd August 2015 - Harry Alexander Tweedle

9th August 2015 - Lexi Jade McCrimmon

WEDDINGS

11th July 2015 – Richard Duncan & Stephanie Di Placido

14th August 2015 – Tracey McGilvary & Paul Ferguson

SATURDAY TEAROOM

The Saturday tearoom will be back up and running as of 22nd August.

The Guild

It's now the beginning of August and hopefully I will go on holiday in the next couple of days. It's now time to look ahead to the new session of the Guild. Before that I will bring everyone up to date. The last few meetings of the Guild took place in May and on our final night we had the A.G.M. and Cream Tea. The A.G.M. was to look at our finances and to allocate the funds and elect committee and office bearers. I am so pleased the committee remains intact and we can look forward to a rosy future.

Last month the committee met in Linthouse to discuss our plans for the next session. It was a worthwhile meeting, we have now completed the first part of our programme and have high hopes for the next session.

We hope to have our usual Guild service, bring and buys, theatre visits and many of our welcomed friends who support us year after year.

The Guild's first meeting will be on Monday 12th October and I give a very warm welcome to all, men and women to join us at 7.30pm in Linthouse building. Do come and see how the Guild works, you will be very welcome.

A massive thank you all who continue to support the Guild.

With Every Blessing

Elspeth

President

God's Gang

We hope everyone has enjoyed the glorious summer!

Since the last magazine article we have been busy at God's Gang. Firstly, we enjoyed a trip to Wellsfield Activity Centre near Falkirk. The sun shone and the children had a great time running around and playing on the slides and carts. Hopefully we will have another visit there soon.

Secondly, it was the presentation of attendance awards and puppet show. Thanks go to Christopher for presenting the prizes and for his kind words. The puppet show 'Jesus meets Zacchaeus', performed by Moyna, was excellent and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. The children danced and help serve the party food. They love to help and take part in the service.

As I type this, school is about to start back after the summer break. We pray for all children and teachers as they start a new year at school. Abbie Thomson is very excited about starting P1 this year.

God's Gang will officially start on Sunday 23rd August. Our first lesson is 'Putting God first'.

We are looking forward to the new session and hope to see everyone back after the summer break.

Karen Stevely

Dear God,

Thank you for our students. As they begin this school year, help them to use their talents and gift you've given them to do their very best.

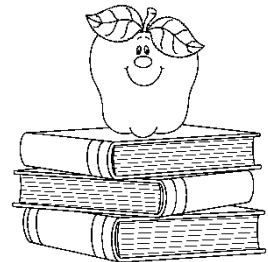
May they listen to their teachers with respect and open-minds. Help them to be honest and to always see the truth. Help them to be kind to everyone at school, and to serve others as they would like to be served.

Help them to make good friends and be a good friend to someone in need. Lastly, help them to remember that You're always with them and that You'll never leave their side.

May they love You and follow You with all their hearts, soul and strength.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

HAVE A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR!





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Head Teacher
Julia Haugh-Reid

21st May 2015

To The congregation of Govan and Linthouse Parish Church

I can't thank you enough for your very kind donation of £153.97 to Hazelwood.

We aim to give our young people as many life experiences as we can during their time at school. As you can imagine there is an ongoing expense to enable us to do this. It is due to the generosity of those like yourselves that we are able to achieve our goals.

Thank you once again on behalf of all the pupils and staff at Hazelwood.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Haugh-Reid".

Julia Haugh-Reid
Head Teacher

Glasgow-Proud Host City of the 2014 Commonwealth Games

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ACTION AID AND MARYS MEALS

September is nearly here and most of you, like me are still waiting for the summer to begin, but I suppose having two good summers in a row would not be Scottish.....

Hope most of you enjoyed a wee break away somewhere.

We are also getting used to worshipping in our Linthouse building while the renovation goes on at Govan cross, at this time we can benefit from the blessing of having three buildings. I am still struggling to find people as we are all in different seats now, maybe we can get to know someone who normally sits at the opposite side at Govan, see, there is a silver lining if we just look for it.

We have received another letter and photo from action aid, which I will pin on the wall, hope you get to read it, it's nice to see what our support is achieving.

I was out for a day trip with my son and family when we got lost, driving down some very narrow country roads, he decided to turn into this small side road to turn, when I saw at once a wee hut, I recognized it right away, yes it was the original and still main centre of Marys meals...so funny..So we know all our donations are going to the right people.

Thank you all so much for your great support and God bless.

Thanks Rose

Forth Coming Event In Aid Of Church Funds

The Flute Phonics group who have played for several concerts for our Church have agreed to come along to play another concert for us on Sunday 29th November. All monies raised will be halved between the Flute Phonics and our Church Funds. Tickets will be priced at £5 and will include tea or coffee and of course home baking.

Thanks again, Jean McFarlane.



34th GLASGOW GIRLS' BRIGADE

Hopefully everyone will have had a nice break over the summer although we could have done with better weather!

Congratulations to one of our Brigaders, Jennifer Rankine, who has had a very exciting summer having been picked to represent Scotland by the SLGA in the European Young Masters in Switzerland. This is a major achievement at her age. Jennifer who is 14, plays at Haggs Castle Golf Course and has won many trophies over the year's one being the Renfrewshire County Junior Championship last year.

The Girls' Brigade starts back on Wednesday 2nd September, 2015 in the Church hall at Govan Cross. We look forward to seeing some familiar faces and hopefully some new members.

Sandra MacDonald

RENOVATION FUND

Thank you very much to the people who continue to support the Renovation Fund. The fund is standing at approximately £17,200.

By the time you get this magazine over 50 people will have been at Cumbrae, Millport to do the 'Walk 500 miles' sponsored walk and hopefully this total will benefit considerably.

Church Flowers

There are still quite a few empty spaces on the Flower Calendar to place flowers in our Church for Sunday Worship. If you have a Special Day you would like to remember and would care to add your name to the calendar please let me know. If any of our Church Organisations would care to take a space on the flower calendar that would be great. Many thanks to the faithful who give so generously towards the cost of the flowers – you all know who are.

Jean McFarlane

Sunday Tea Rota

As usual during the summer months the rota kind of goes off kilter so if anybody would care to help us out on a Sunday feel free to speak to some of the ladies on duty or myself.

Thank you Jean McFarlane

Ceramic Poppy

A huge thank you to everyone who bought or helped sell the tickets for the Ceramic Poppy, we raised a total of £1007 for church funds and the winner was John Smith of the Govan Somme Association.

Members Deaths

Mrs J Baird – Glen Lovit Care Home – February 2015

Mrs Thomson – Skipness Drive – March 2015

Mrs Addy Taylor – Florence House – June 2015

Mrs Moira Yarwood – Whitehills – June 2015

Ms Cathie Sutherland – Hunter Hill Care Home – July 2015

Our condolences go out to the family and friends of our members who we have sadly lost.

Dear friends, we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who visited, prayed, phoned, sent cards, and sent flowers, when my dear wife Moira was very ill.

To those who attended her funeral service whether at Linthouse Church or Craigton Crematorium, we again thank you so very much.

The sum raised for Accord Hospice from the door collections at the church and crematorium totalled £1321.25

Alistair Yarwood and family

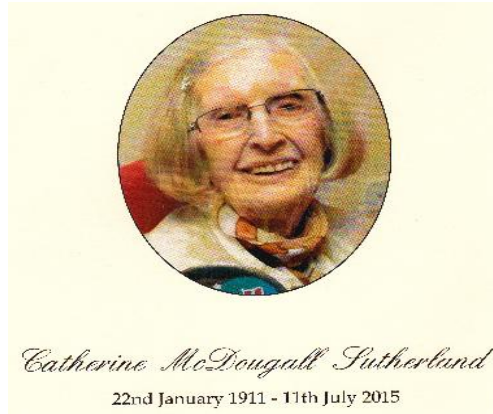
I didn't know Moira for very long or as well as a lot of you did but I know she was a lovely woman with a very kind heart, she always sent in wee poems for the magazine that she'd written which was a delight for me as I'm always looking for more things to add to brighten it up and her poems certainly did that. Alistair has sent me in this one and I am delighted to be able to include it in the magazine, she always saw the bright side of life, I'll miss her additions to the magazine and to our wee e-mail chats.

Gillian

A Perfect Day

*If you treat each day as your last on earth
It's amazing what you will see
The grass so green, the sky so blue
The splendour of a tree
The graceful sight of a bird in flight
The kiss from a gentle breeze
Glistening dew on a new born rose
What can compare with these?*

*The postman's cheery whistle
As he trundles up the path
A friendly wave from a neighbour
Or a joke that makes you laugh
The noises from the schoolyard
As the children have their play
A bright red sky at sunset
Completes the perfect day.*



Cathie was born to a family of two boys and five girls. She was the third child of Alexander and Catherine Sutherland. She was brought up in the west end of Glasgow, overlooking the Art Galleries.

Her father died suddenly at the age of 39 whilst on holiday in Port Bannatyne on the Isle of Bute. The family then moved to Mossbank.

In 1935 she began working in the newly opened Physical Therapy Centre, the Buckingham Clinic in Great Western Road, Glasgow firstly as a receptionist and later trained as a masseuse and dietician.

She was employed by James Sneddon and thereafter by his sons and only retired in her mid 80's, a total working life of 71 years.

Cathie and her sister Etna looked after their mother until she was 83 and then Cathie looked after Etna when she became ill until it was physically impossible for her to manage at home.

For the whole of her life Cathie was a member and faithful attender of St. Columba's Church, Copland Road (the Gaelic Church) which after a number of unions now forms part of Govan and Linthouse Parish Church.

At the age of 94, Cathie moved from Mossbank, where she had a large garden, to Kelburne Court, Paisley.

At 101 she moved to Hunterhill Nursing Home where she was cared for after a long life of caring for others.

Cathie has one remaining sister, Sheena, who visited her every week at Hunterhill Nursing Home and my thoughts go out to her and Cathie's extended family at this time.

Over the years I have visited Cathie regularly and found her such a lovely lady. I used to love talking to her about times gone by and she was always interested in church life.

We do celebrate her long and happy life.

I will miss her.

Sandra MacDonald, Church Elder

In my last church, because of the Asylum Centre we operated, one of the things which happened, quite regularly, was the deputation that would be waiting for me when I finished the morning service.

'We need to go to Sunday market,' someone would say, and then five or six guys would pile into my car (which was way too small for so many passengers) and we would head off to Blochairn, or Moodiesburn, or somewhere where there happened to be a car boot sale, or stalls set up in a former warehouse. Inevitably, we would buy nails, loose nails of varying lengths, drill bits, varnish, and sealant. Most of the guys were pretty practical, they were certainly resourceful, but we went through gallons of varnish and sealant. I became something of an expert on varnish and wood sealant, very reluctantly I assure you. But the idea of sealant, of closing in vulnerable joints to protect them from water, damp, air or airborne spores, all of that makes perfect sense in both a physical and a spiritual sense.

Over the centuries, sermon writers have deployed many images to indicate that the faithful in church need to seal themselves against the prevailing culture. Mostly, they have been wrong, like King Cnut famously trying to hold back the tide, churches are more likely to adapt to cultural changes, to accommodate them, rather than successfully hold them back.

But I remember someone writing that if you throw a sponge into a lake, it will absorb all the water, clean and dirty, eddying and slow – whereas, if you dip a sponge in oil, and then put it in the water it will absorb very little moisture.

The unfortunate thing is, that you have a sponge full of oil, which is unusable, like many of the forms of faith and church which, flint-like, try to resist the current of the times. That is not to say that the church shouldn't be a voice against the tide of popular opinion - we most assuredly should. But we need to choose our ground, and mount intelligent and compassionate discussion, instead, as has so often happened, instead of a knee-jerk reaction to every wave of change.

It is here, among other epistles, in Ephesians, that the image of the sealant appears, and may indeed be a metaphor used by St Paul in teaching in his time at Ephesus. He was a maker of tents and sails for boats, and must have frequently used grease or oils to protect joints or surfaces from the damage of rain or sea-water.

'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the Day of Redemption'

And, immediately, we are into another space, something much more than the practicalities of protecting yourself from cultural influences which may damage your faith and disrupt it. This is not about not having a pint or not going to a night-club with your friends. It is not about not having alcohol in the church hall. It is about an experience of profound change in your make up and conduct – a change of understanding about yourself and your relationship to others.

‘Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the Day of Redemption’.

All bitterness, anger, wrath, clamour and blasphemy, must be removed, and instead be replaced with kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiveness – the hardest of them all, forgiveness, as God in Christ, forgave you.

In another text, one written perhaps fifty years before the epistles of the New Testament, and having some influence upon their understanding, the author talks about the role of the Holy Spirit in the formation of faith.

The Holy Spirit, he writes, will flee from deceit, from mistrust, from foolishness and from unrighteousness.

It is also said, in this same text, that it was the Holy Spirit who enabled us to understand what is pleasing to God, who fine-tunes our consciences, and this was a constant theme of St Paul as we are reminded in Philipians-

*Do not be conformed to this world,
but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that you may prove what is the will of God,
what is good and acceptable and perfect."*

But St Paul understood this metaphor more deeply than most. In the letter we know as Second Corinthians, he goes on to say;

*But the one who gives us security with you in Christ and who anointed us is
God;
he has also put his seal upon us
and given the Spirit in our hearts as a first instalment."
(II Corinthians 1:22)*

*Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the
Spirit as a deposit,
guaranteeing what is to come.
(II Corinthians 5:5.)*

In these verses, the sealant Paul talks about is no longer protective only, but also carries the authority of the seal. It is God who is sealing us, for that Day of Redemption, as we said.

I watched, as maybe some of you did, the film 'A song for Jenny' a re-enactment of the days after the 7/7 London bombings for the family of Jenny Nicolson. The newspapers of the time ran with the headlines that her mother, an Anglican minister said she wasn't able to forgive the perpetrators, and she gave up her job as a parish priest.

I am certainly not judging her, and I respect her honesty. I doubt if I would have been able to forgive in her circumstances - her beautiful, vivacious daughter. But it will not surprise me if, in the end, she comes to a point of forgiveness because we cannot, by and of ourselves, make ourselves into people acceptable to God. It is not for us to perform that task. It happens in spite of us.

The profound change in us is nothing other than the work of the Spirit and, when it occurs, there is nothing prosaic or ordinary about it, but the work of God, the eternal work of God, dressing us in the new, renewing us in grace, turning the world upon its axis and making beauty and goodness out of darkness.

Let us Pray.

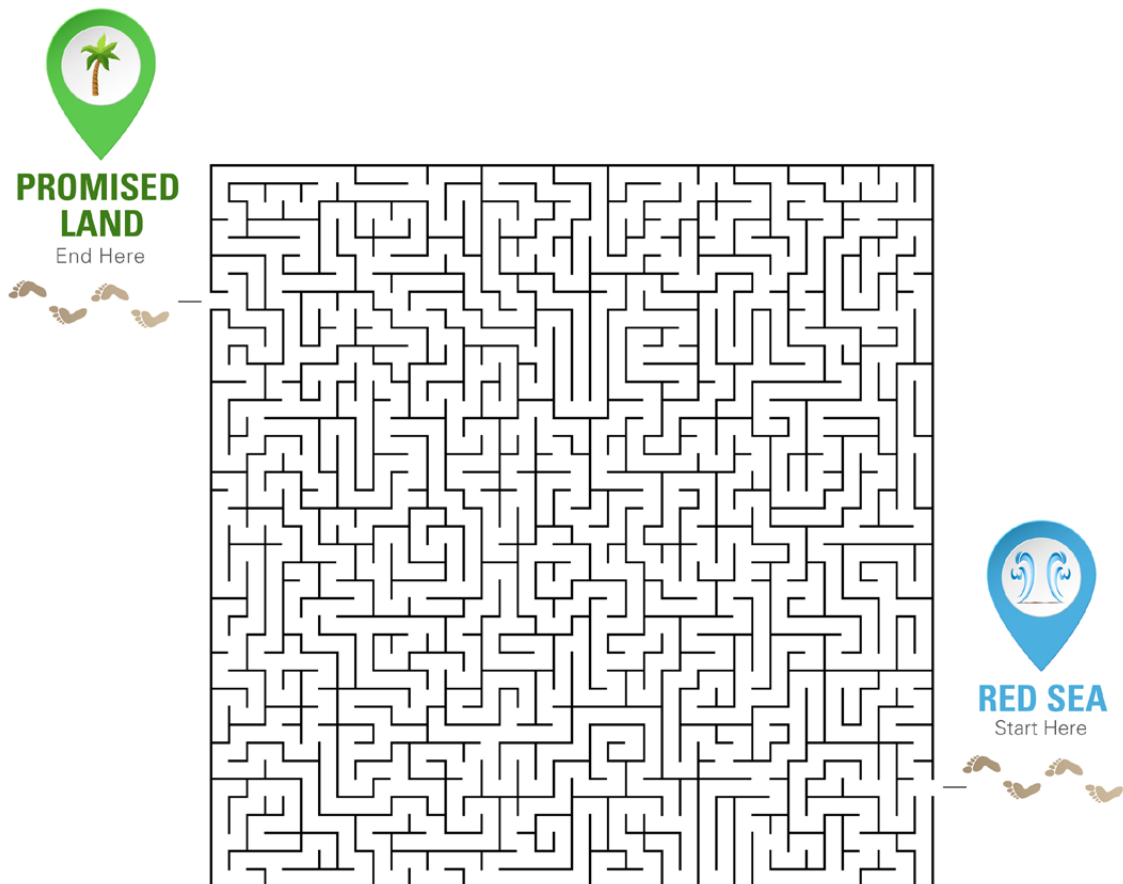
Lord, place your seal upon us, and mark it with a ring. Let us know that we belong to you for all eternity, and change us in conformity with your best hopes for us, that we will live according to faith, in kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiveness. Amen

A-maze-ing Bible Journeys

#1 MOSES

Moses led the Hebrews through the desert for 40 years! They started at the Red Sea and finally took the Promised Land and Jericho four decades later. They were learning to become a-maze-ing people! See if you can get Moses from the Red Sea to the Promised Land.

Exodus



Exodus 14:29-31 But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.



MOSES - EXODUS 14:21-31

Moses leads the Israelites across the Red Sea as it is parted and brought them the Ten Commandments.

Find the Phrase

The answer to the last 'find the phrase' quiz was:

I alone know the plans I have for you – Jeremiah 29: 11

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If you have any feedback on the site we would be delighted to hear from you.