

Aviemore Preachers Gathering feedback 6/7th Nov. 2023

“How has God used the Preacher’s Gatherings to benefit you?”

William Heenan, (St Columba’s, Stornoway)

My sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude for providing the opportunity for me to attend so many of the Preachers’ Gatherings. (Circumstances prevented me attending them all.)

Each Preachers’ Gathering has provided spiritual, physical & emotional refreshment. They have provided friendship, fellowship, opportunity to share in a ‘safe’ environment & pray for each other.

The gatherings have provided much needed practical resources, which have helped me “feed the sheep & lambs.” God has called me to care for in St Columba’s in Lewis.

The gatherings have also helped me to focus on the ‘positives’ and blessings God has given, and to view the ‘negatives’ the energy exaggerates in their proper perspectives.

I’m grateful to God for you all – Nigel, Derek, and Peter – for the blessing of the Preachers’ Gatherings.

May God bless you all in the next chapter of your ministries. Every Blessing, William.

Harrison Sumit, (Carstairs Parish Church)

1. Fellowship and Believers
2. The booklets and the rest of the material
3. Rest for two days and spending time with God and his people
4. Encouragement to preach the gospel
5. Encouragement I am not the only one left but there are many
6. Worship and Devotions
7. Future contacts and the Preachers’ Picnic idea
8. Spend time with my wife which is rare
9. Learn that power lies in the Word

Alec Stewart, (Maryburgh & Killearnan Free Church)

I am truly thankful to God for the blessings I have received through these Preachers' Gatherings. These gatherings have not only been a great blessing to me but also to my wife Florica. Thank you for all the hard work you and your team have put into this. But all of the conferences I have been to I can truly say these have been the most helpful and encouraging.

I have benefitted greatly from the teaching and the resources I have received from these gatherings. Ministry is a hard and lonely place and to be able to share with brothers and sisters and to be prayed over is uplifting. I have also appreciated being in meeting with people who love Jesus and learning from them as they have opened my eyes to things I have not thought of before; and it is wonderful to make new friends. I am also very thankful for your emphasis on reading the Word of God, something I need to give more attention to and seek to do well.

Be encouraged, The Lord has used these gatherings to bless many.

The Lord bless you and your family and may the Lord encourage you in all that you seek to do for Him.

Rob Nicholson, (Culloden Balloch Baptist Church)

This was my first visit to a preachers' gathering after being told about it recently. It has been a wonderful time of refreshing and fellowship with the company of folks from all over the country. To see the eyes and hear the stories of others involved in the ministry of the Word. To encourage and get alongside those whose groups we wouldn't normally get alongside has been wonderful. We have more in common in love, in grace as we present God's Word to our folks.

I would express my sincere thanks for this hospitality and gift to those served by this valuable ministry. May God bless you all and there is a place of commanded blessing!

Thank you and God Bless the work.

Iain Morrison, (Inverness Baptist Church)

The preachers' gatherings have inspired me and moulded my focus to keep ploughing in the field, sourcing the seed of the 'Word.'

The humble persona from Nigel and Derek, and Mr White together with their helpers has been of great significance as stepping stones in my ministry over the last few years.

Thanks be to God for you all.

Gordy Mackay, (Perth Baptist Church)

A huge thanks for all that you have done to make the preachers' gatherings possible and so helpful!

For me, a couple of things come to mind about how God has used the PG's for me:

- 1) Firstly, I have really appreciated the chance to enjoy fellowship with ministers from different denominations/streams - this has been very enriching.
- 2) Secondly, the studies have deepened my confidence in the scriptures and equipped/inspired me to preach them in a way that honours God and makes them relevant to the listeners.

Sincere thanks again for your faithfulness and may the Lord bless you richly in this new stage of your life and ministry.

Matt Alexander, (Wick Baptist Church)

I have only been to two gatherings in Aviemore, 1 May 2022 and November 2023, but from there I have benefitted enormously in the following ways:

"Great teaching from Derek Newton that has given me confidence to approach and preach on books of the Bible on subjects I may otherwise have avoided."

"Great fellowship with fellow labourers with God's harvest field and the opportunity to listen to and pray for one another."

"The opportunity to come away for a little while for rest and be refreshed."

“Practical ideas of how to encourage other local ministers and members of my congregation to engage with the Word in a deeper way.” Thank you!

Robin Gray (Gardenstown New Church)

Through the preachers gathering God has blessed me in various ways.

- 1) Fellowship:- It has been wonderful to have meaningful fellowship in sharing and prayer with other preachers.
- 2) Refreshment - having time away with my wife in a different setting where we have been so well looked after has given us great refreshment.
- 3) Insight – I have learned a great deal about preaching in general and specific topics through the high-quality teaching here. I have been blessed by the wisdom and insight of others into the Bible at these gatherings.

Drew Barrie (Tullibody: St Serf's C of S)

The preachers gatherings have helped my preaching ; inspiring me to preach on sections of the Bible I might have otherwise overlooked. I think I have preached better because of them.

The fellowship, (especially across denominations) has been encouraging.

I always look forward to coming.

Jonathan Groves (The Kerusso Trust)

1. Opportunity to gain insight and confidence in handling some of the more difficult and potentially obscure books of the Bible.
2. Decreased sense of isolation by sharing openly about struggles and challenges, including realising how many in ministry are dealing with mental health issues.
3. Making new connections for our mission work in Malawi that brings the blessing of a global Kingdom perspective into their churches as well as support for their work .

4. 'Hearing the Word.' I have introduced this into our training curriculum of the 'Learn2Serve' programme in Malawi and look forward to contextualising it in a booklet for the widest possible spreading around church leaders.

Andrew Philip (Crieff Parish Church)

The gatherings have given me the space and security to be open, the reminder of the centrality of Christ in God's Word and the tools to better communicate that with others.

David Scott (Inshes East Church of Scotland)

I have been –

1. Consistently encouraged and refreshed by these gatherings through the teachings and openings of God's Word (the sessions with Derek, Peter, and Nigel) sharing in preparation of the Word and prayer with fellow ministers and by the gift of time and meals in a very comfortable hotel.
2. I have always been challenged and illuminated in terms of my understanding of God's Word (the difficult books we have considered / and encouraged and equipped to be a better preacher.
3. The leading from the front has always put the Lord Jesus and his service at the centre of the gatherings and so my eyes have been regularly drawn to him – grateful, in particular to Nigel and Charles both in the devotion and genuine care for us as we have gathered in that regard.
4. So grateful that Susan could be part of this and we could share this initiative and ministry together. Very grateful for inclusion of spouses.

Chris Greenhalgh (Life Church/Open doors)

Summarised exposition of biblical books bringing much study and commentary together. Technique and practice of questioning the text is a powerful way of accessing the text.

Honest prayer.

Fellowship with ministers from different streams.

Al MacInnes (Dornoch Free Church)

Thank you for these preachers gatherings. They have been a great encouragement to me.

Firstly, the time, preparation, and prayers that is put into the planning of each gathering is very evident.

Secondly, the Bible teaching, emphasis on God's Word and resources made available are invaluable.

Thirdly, the fellowship and new friendships formed with fellow pastors is an ongoing encouragement.

Finally, the generous hospitality is so refreshing and allows the spouse to engage with all of the above.

Thank you!

Rob (Pulteneytown and Thrumster)

To be completely honest, it is challenging to write this, as I am truly in grief. The passages of Mark 10: 42-45 have been laid out and modelled for us at these gatherings. You have washed my feet on so many occasions, but even more wonderfully you have encouraged me to continue on, in faithful likewise fashion, washing other feet. What you have given to me, and so many others, is also shelter in the storm. In this shelter we examine, reexplore and fall in love over and over again with God's words, I can bathe in the Word here, and go away fully steeped. I pray this mission continues and I'm willing to help in some fashion if God should ask me to further the love and care for other "field workers."

Hugh Watt (Muir of Ord)

1. Spirit of humble submission

This demonstrated by Nigel, Charlie, Peter, and Derek.

Humility before God, God's Word and amongst the participants
(encouraged in the groups of 3 and in general conversation.

2. Encouragement to ask questions of God and His Word – to read the word with new eyes – to discover new things, (or old) in even familiar texts.
3. Fellowship – sharing the lives (not successes) of fellow believers.
Honesty and openness – good for me to be open A to hear/pray for others.
4. Refreshment in Aviemore for me and my spouse,

Euan Dodds, (Kilmallie/Ardnamurchan Free)

Thank you

Philemon 1 v 7!

1. Great food and accommodation
2. Lovely swim pool
3. Chance to meet old friends and to make new ones (across denominations)
4. Being honest in prayer times – quite unique format
5. Benefitting from the ‘distilled’ study of teachers - and their opening up books which are often closed
6. Chauffeur driven transport home!

Kenneth Ross (New Prestwick Baptist Church)

Honest, authentic fellowship

Encouragement in ministry

Meaningful prayer time -

Also the blessing my wife received meeting other wives.

Stuart Smith (Gairloch and Dundonnell Church of Scotland)

1. Received encouragement to use expository preaching as God's gift and tool for His church.
2. Efficient access to some of the less often read Bible books, making it practical to preach from them within the time constraints of parish ministry.
3. Warm humble prayer filled fellowship with fellow believers across different parts of the church.
4. A local – i.e. Highland – resource.

Andy Fothergill (Retired) (Tain Church of Scotland)

First a big thank you for all the hard work and effort, sacrifice in bringing this gift to us.

Personally, it has been the source of much encouragement, through fellowship, times of sharing – praying – networking.

The resources have been challenging and have encouraged me personally to preach texts, that I otherwise would have put off till sometime never!

Thank you and blessings. Hospitality and accommodation have been a lovely gift!!

Irene Munro (Ferintosh Parish)

God has brought all these people to be an encouragement to me. Friendliness and kindness, humility has been so apparent.

- God has shown me with the clarity of Derek's teaching the biblical truth about the reality of the devil but the greater power of Jesus.
- God has reminded me through Nigel's teaching for preaching to be less casual with use of the text and to be more methodical yet spirited.

- Fellowship of sharing and encouragement in workshop was so vital.

Roman Tanzer (CCE)

Being in a position where I don't preach very often the preachers' gathering encouraged me to say yes to opportunities. They give me a new love for passing on God's Word and give me self-confidence. It is a wonderful privilege to 'look, learn, listen, live' scripture.

I appreciate the fellowship with others. It opens my horizon for other churches in Scotland.

I am very thankful for the opportunities that my wife and I had.

Last but not least I appreciate the idea of passing on God's grace and not taking money for it while providing the high quality of a hotel. Yours prayerful,
Roman

D. Gordon Martin (Urray and Strathconnon Free Church)

Thank you for these preachers' gatherings

They have been my favourite conferences for the following reasons (benefits)

- Word centred. The intense focus on the Bible as opposed to themes (although Spiritual Warfare also great) has been a refreshment to the soul.
- A reminder of why biblical principles preaching.
- An inspiration from meeting godly men and women over different ecclesiastical backgrounds.
- A reminder that we are all in it together.

Thanks again, D. Gordon Martin

Colin Macleod, (Gairloch, Kinlochewe & Torridon Free Church of Scotland)

Preachers' Gatherings have been a welcome time of refreshment spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

Feeding through the Word, fellowship with fellow pastors, and making friends, many all care about on a result also.

A great blessing has been the kind offer of spouses attending also. So often Jessie is the only one who shares in a deep and intimate way, my struggles of ministry and I appreciate being given the time of refreshment also.

David Barrie (Pitlochry Baptist Church)

Confidence – the ‘resources’ to tackle certain ‘difficult’ books of the Bible have been wonderful.

Fellowship – I have so enjoyed opening up my friendship circle with so many from other streams of the church.

Rest – What a treat! 😊 x

Andrew Macleod – (Tain and Fearn Free Church)

I have been twice to PG, and both have been immensely helpful. The style of asking questions is one I have adopted in my sermon prep, and after this week it has been re-emphasised to me. I have met men at previous gatherings (4 years) who are now friends in ministry.

Thank you so much.

Davide Ratti (Dores, Free Church of Scotland Cont.)

- To have a ‘free break’ away from the pressures of ministry.
- To have fellowship with brethren from other denominations who are in the same spiritual battle.
- To receive good material to think and study for preparation of future services and preaching.

Donald Prentice (Burghead)

1. Preparation for a second ministry in?..... retirement

2. An ?..... of Jesus in the scriptures

3. Great?..... with spiritual battles,

with thanks, Donald.

(Sorry, I couldn't make out Donald's writing! Linda)