

First in a series of four special issues, written by women about women

Heather Smith *reflects on* Colossians 3:1-11 and Luke 12:13-21

**W**hat holds you back? The most likely answer is fear – fear of failure, or fear of what other people think, perhaps. In both cases, the emotion is the same.

The rich man in the reading from Luke wants to store up plenty so he can relax and enjoy life. Perhaps that doesn't sound much like fear, but if pressed he might admit that deep down he thinks that if he doesn't hoard, he could end up in need. What looks like greed and self-centredness is actually deep-seated fear. Jesus points out his foolishness. We can never know how long we have left on earth and we might just find that all the work we do to try to alleviate our fears is wasted.

A better way is to change our focus. Instead of working feverishly to find "security", which only fuels fear, we should work to become spiritually rich. As Paul suggests, we should seek those things that are above. "But that takes courage," you might object, "that I don't have." But notice that Paul doesn't say, "Work on your courage." When people find that fear prevents them from doing something they really want or need to do, psychologists sometimes suggest that they act as if they are courageous. To our surprise we find we are. If we ignore the fear and behave as courageous people, one action at a time, our lives will be infinitely richer, as we find the path that God intends for us. 😊

# Freedom from fear



Eternal God, teach us how to think like you, leaving fear behind and focusing on the exciting opportunities that life offers to further your kingdom. Amen.

## Women in Christianity

by Georgina Byrne

If we read the history of the Church as the story of theological disputes, liturgical and doctrinal development, monasticism and the Mass, then we will see it heavily populated with men. This is unsurprising; over the course of two thousand years, bishops, monarchs and university teachers have been overwhelmingly male.

We might try to spot women in their company – writers like Catherine of Siena, or social champions like Mary Sumner – but they are rare.

Since the beginning of Christianity, millions of women have taught the faith to others, offered hospitality, visited those who are sick and cared for those who are poor. The spread of the Gospel is due in very large part to women we cannot see – women who were not considered significant or notable. To acknowledge their constant presence is to remind ourselves that the growth of the Church is due to so much more than the actions of its leaders. 😊

## Mary Sumner

*Mary Sumner, founder of the Mothers' Union, is commemorated on Friday. Lisa Tuffer looks at her life and legacy.*

Mary was born in 1828 into a middle-class family, to a mother who took her faith seriously and held mothers' meetings. Mary married an Anglican clergyman, and started leading meetings herself. In 1876, when her own daughter gave birth, inspired by her memories of how difficult she had found motherhood, she set up a group bringing

together mothers of all social classes for mutual support in bringing up their children in the Christian faith. In 1885 she was invited to speak at a congress in Portsmouth, and women took her ideas back to their own parishes. The movement soon spread to other dioceses; by 1892 there were sixty thousand members in twenty-eight dioceses. The Mothers' Union expanded into the British Empire and beyond, and now there are some four million members in eighty-four countries. Mary's organisation is a powerful worldwide influencer around gender equality, poverty and community transformation. [www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org) 😊

“ Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tyre? ”

Corrie ten Boom (1892-1983), Dutch watchmaker who gave refuge to many Jews during World War II



## Church of Scotland: Orphir and Stenness Parish

**Interim Moderator:** Rev June Freeth 721449

**Locum Minister** Rev Martin Prentice    **Session Clerk:** Nicol 811242

### Kirk Information

There is a loop system. Adjust hearing aids to benefit.

**A warm invitation is extended to everyone to meet in the hall at the back of the church, after the service, for a cup of tea.**

### Intimations

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August – 2.30pm – 3pm.** St Peter's, Stromness. All welcome along.

**Thursday – 10am – 12noon** Community Café in the kirk hall

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August – Communion**

### **Reading:**

Luke 12:13-21

### **Hymns**

458 At the Name of Jesus

251 I, the Lord of sea and sky

685 For everyone born, a place at the table

97 O god, you search me and you know me

622 We sing a love that sets all people free

### **“A Firemist and a Planet”**

*(Tune: Hymn 739 'Aurelia')*

A firemist and a planet,  
a crystal and a cell,  
a starfish and a saurian,  
and caves where ancients dwelt;  
the sense of law and beauty,  
a face turned from the sod  
- some call it evolution,  
and others call it God.

Haze on the far horizon,  
the infinite tender sky,  
the ripe, rich tints of [wheat]fields,  
and wild geese sailing high;

and over high and low-land,  
the charm of golden rod  
- some people call it autumn,  
and others call it God.

Like tides on crescent sea-beach,  
when moon's so new and thin,  
into our hearts high yearnings  
come welling, surging in,  
come from the mystic ocean  
whose rim not foot has trod  
- some people call it longing,  
and others call it God. (William H  
Garruth)

### **Doxology Hymn 786**

May the God of peace go with us, as we travel from this place

May the love of Jesus keep us firm in hope and full of grace.