

Torrance Furbush Retreat 6-8 November 2024

**"CHRIST AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION":
Christian faith in a deeply secular society**

**FULLER INFORMATION ON 2024 RETREAT:
Questions, Topics, Speakers, Background rationale and Format**

Questions

How can we best teach the bible?

What are the chief elements of Christian faith?

What are the chief obstacles to Christian faith?

What is a "person"?

How can we best help people to think seriously about all these issues?

Topics (inter-related)

God in the Old Testament - striking features of Israel's knowledge of their God

Israel's election, as medium for God's revelation to all, meant a perennial struggle with suffering in their history

Christ in the Trinity as the centre of Christian education: the Word that could not become flesh in the people of Israel, any more than in any other people, became flesh in Christ himself, for them and the whole world

The mutuality of preaching and diaconal service

What is truth and is there truth? Are there philosophical answers?

Biblical vision of body-soul, mind-heart, reason-emotion, thought-action-morality

Reforming Scottish Education in a holistic direction: arguments of Scottish Philosophers of the Enlightenment and modern ones of John Macmurray, Michael Polanyi, George Davie

Being "renewed in the spirit of our minds" (Ephesians 4.23) ? What would that be? Developing an "instinct for truth"? How?

How, too, can worship and thought be "transformed by the renewal of our minds [your mind]" (Romans 12.2)?

Speakers:

Colin Graham, Royal Society of Edinburgh Education Committee

Tommy MacNeil, St Martin's CofS, Stornoway, Head of the "Shed" Project

Tom Noble, Didsbury Theological Seminary, Manchester & Kansas USA.

Colin Sinclair, former Head of the Scripture Union and CofS ex-Moderator

Bob Walker, New College Honorary Fellow, M.A. Philosophy, B.D. Theology

Speakers will be addressing the Retreat's Subject on the basis of their own training, work and experience.

Colin Graham has been first to suggest a working title for his talk: "Broadening young minds in a 'specialised' world: interdisciplinary learning in the curriculum".

Background rationale

There are many challenges to Christian faith, notably:

The failure by the church to be what it should be and have a genuine Christ centred view of the gospel

Disastrous ignorance of the bible

Questioning of truth and objective understanding of morality

Fatal self-defeating obsession with looking inwards to the self, instead of outward on others, the world and God which alone can bring freedom and liberation.

Yet, as we shall see there are many encouraging, wonderful developments both in the church and society. There will also be plenty of time for discussion and input from Retreat participants about their own experience.

SOME OF THE TOPICS MAY APPEAR DAUNTING. HOWEVER, WHEN UNFOLDED, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE SURPRISED HOW THEY MAKE SENSE. TOGETHER THEY PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE VISION BEYOND EXPECTATION AND LEAD TO DEEPER FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING

See below

Format

Programme Outline: "Christ and Christian Education: Furbush 6-8 November, 2024

Wednesday 6th November

4pm – Welcome

4.15pm – Session 1 -

6-7pm - Dinner

7.15pm - Session 2 -

8.45pm – Evening prayers

9pm – Free for socialising (Bar open)

Thursday 7th November

8.30am – Breakfast

9.30am – Morning prayers

9.45am – Session 3 -

11.15am – Coffee

11.45am – Session 4 -

1.15pm – Lunch

1.45pm – Optional activities

4.15pm – Session 5 -

6-7pm – Dinner

7.15pm – Session 6 -

8.45pm – Evening prayers

9pm – Free for socialising (Bar open)

Friday 9th November

8.30am – Breakfast

9.30am – Morning prayers

9.45am – Session 7 –

11.15am – Coffee

11.45am – Session 8 - Plenary – questions / discussion, followed by the Eucharist

1.15pm – 2.00pm- Lunch and Depart