

These are my travel logs from my study leave trip to Scotland. It was a fantastic trip and I am thankful for the opportunity provided to me by Park United and Plains Presbyterian Churches.

Day 1

Weather - It was the perfect Scottish day with a high of 64 degrees and a little sunshine.

University of Edinburgh - It was founded in 1583, only twenty years after the Scottish Reformation. We walked around part of the campus. It is spread out across a section of Edinburgh. I was able to get a day pass at the library and found some great books on Scottish Reformation history which I studied in the morning and evening at the library.

In the afternoon, the three of us found lunch at a small bakery on the Royal Mile. They made a haggis pasty but I decided on the cheese and onion instead. I love my Scottish heritage but I draw the line at haggis.

St. Giles Cathedral - It is magnificent. John Knox was the pastor of this church during the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. I could envision Kathy and Carol playing on this organ while I preached in the pulpit. A man can dream. The stain glass windows are a marvel. There is so much history compacted into such a small area. I found out the times for Sunday worship to which I am looking forward.

Edinburgh Castle - We witnessed the changing of the guard which apparently is a rare occasion due to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland meeting this week. We saw the Destiny Stone which was just returned after being placed under the Coronation Chair at King Charles' coronation. The Destiny Stone is a symbol of the Scottish monarchy. We also saw the Scottish Crown Jewels. The broad sword was massive. We visited the grand hall where the kings and queens of Scotland held court. We also paid our respects at the National War Memorial.

It was a packed day with lots of walking up hills. Gazing upon the green countryside and rolling hills, it is no wonder our Presbyterian ancestors found Western PA to be like home. There are a lot more sheep though.

Please feel free to pass this along to other church members. You are constantly in my thoughts and prayers. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

Day 2

Weather - A high of 60. Cloudy with some drizzle in the evening.

Study time - I went to the university library in the morning only to find that visitors are allowed a day pass only once per term. I was able to persuade the reception clerk to allow me in though. I continued my studies on the Scottish Reformation and its effects on education. I found a wonderful text published in 1897 which discussed the reformer George Wishart who was burned at the stake for promoting the reading of the

Scriptures in English. The embers of Wishart's martyrdom is said to have been the spark which resulted in the flames of reform in Scotland. Wishart was so affable, mild, faithful and well-loved that his friends stormed St. Andrews castle and put the corrupt and responsible Cardinal Beaton to the sword. John Knox had been present as the chaplain at the castle and witnessed Beaton's execution. For his participation, Knox was sent to the French galleys for over a year until his release could be procured by his supporters which led him to go to Scotland to learn under the great reformer John Calvin. During my last reformation tour in 2006, I had visited the academy where Knox ministered to the English-speaking exiles in Geneva. It has been a treat to put the pieces together and I thank my faithful churches for supporting my study.

John Knox House - I visited John Knox's residence when he was the pastor of St. Giles church. The house is a museum of artifacts and history of the Scottish Reformation. They had several 1st editions published works of John Knox and even a Geneva Bible. The Geneva Bible was produced in Geneva by Knox and other English-speaking exiles while in Geneva and brought back to Scotland. It preceded the King James Bible by 51 years and was the first English translation to use numbered verses.

Knox's house brought "home" Knox's domestic life as husband, father and pastor; a model of Presbyterian clergy life still held nearly five hundred years later. I even got a chance to sit at Knox's desk in his study and imagine myself back in the early days of our reform ancestry.

The Kirk of Canonsgate - This is the Presbyterian Church where the royal family attends when staying at Holyrood Palace. The front pew is reserved for the royal family which I found appropriate since nobody usually sits in the front pews anyway. It is a beautiful small church not much bigger than Plains and Park which creates an intimate feeling with the Lord and the family of God. Queen Elizabeth had a strong faith and had met with the Rev. Billy Graham on his first British Crusade.

There is so much more that I will report on when I return. I am constantly thinking of all of you and praying for the faith of our community and for all our brethren across the world.

Day 3

Weather - A high of 60. Cloudy with some drizzle in the evening.

Study time - I went to the university library in the morning only to find that visitors are allowed a day pass only once per term. I was able to persuade the reception clerk to allow me in though. I continued my studies on the Scottish Reformation and its effects on education. I found a wonderful text published in 1897 which discussed the reformer George Wishart who was burned at the stake for promoting the reading of the Scriptures in English. The embers of Wishart's martyrdom is said to have been the spark which resulted in the flames of reform in Scotland. Wishart was so affable, mild, faithful and well-loved that his friends stormed St. Andrews castle and put the corrupt and responsible Cardinal Beaton to the sword. John Knox had been present as the chaplain at the castle and witnessed Beaton's execution. For his participation, Knox was

sent to the French galleys for over a year until his release could be procured by his supporters which led him to go to Scotland to learn under the great reformer John Calvin. During my last reformation tour in 2006, I had visited the academy where Knox ministered to the English-speaking exiles in Geneva. It has been a treat to put the pieces together and I thank my faithful churches for supporting my study.

John Knox House - I visited John Knox's residence when he was the pastor of St. Giles church. The house is a museum of artifacts and history of the Scottish Reformation. They had several 1st editions published works of John Knox and even a Geneva Bible. The Geneva Bible was produced in Geneva by Knox and other English-speaking exiles while in Geneva and brought back to Scotland. It preceded the King James Bible by 51 years and was the first English translation to use numbered verses.

Knox's house brought "home" Knox's domestic life as husband, father and pastor, a model of Presbyterian clergy life still held nearly five hundred years later. I even got a chance to sit at Knox's desk in his study and imagine myself back in the early days of our reform ancestry.

The Kirk of Canonsgate - This is the Presbyterian Church where the royal family attends when staying at Holyrood Palace. The front pew is reserved for the royal family which I found appropriate since nobody usually sits in the front pews anyway. It is a beautiful small church not much bigger than Plains and Park which creates an intimate feeling with the Lord and the family of God. Queen Elizabeth had a strong faith and had met with the Rev. Billy Graham on his first British Crusade.

There is so much more that I will report on when I return. I am constantly thinking of all of you and praying for the faith of our community and for all our brethren across the world.

Day 4

Weather - Drizzle in the morning and cloudy all day in the high 50's, a lot like Seattle and Pittsburgh in May.

Sunday Worship - We got up early to attend a communion service at St. Giles listed for 9:30am only to find the church entrance sectioned off by police. They were only allowing people with passes into the service because it was a special service commemorating the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and extra security was needed for the attendance of the Royal Lord Commissioner. The Royal Lord Commissioner is the King's representative at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In the rest of Britain, the reigning monarch serves as the Sovereign Governor of the Church of England, but since the Church of Scotland is Presbyterian which only recognizes Christ as King and Head of the church, the monarchy is allowed to send a representative to the General Assembly. The Royal Lord Commissioner has the same vote and authority as any other commissioner at General Assembly representing the democratic principles of Presbyterianism.

We weren't allowed into the service but we received a treat in watching the reception of the Lord Commissioner by a youth bagpipe and brass band. They played God Save

the King which is the British National Anthem but we in America learned as My Country, Tis of Thee. I guess it was the American rebel in me that I quietly sang the words of my American youth.

After the presentation, we decided to have some coffee and wait for the regular service at 11. It was a wonderful way to spend a morning on a drizzly Scottish Sunday.

At the 11 o'clock service, we gathered together with the other congregants. St. Giles is a typical cathedral formed in a cross so the communion table is in the center with the pastor and pulpit on one side and the choir and organ on the opposite side. The congregation is seated on the other two opposite sides of the communion table. With the grand columns, there isn't a single view of everything but the common table and raised pulpit which signifies the Presbyterian and Reformed centrality of the Word and Communion in the service.

The organ played at the beginning of the service and the choir processed in. It was truly awe inspiring as the music and voices resonated throughout the cathedral. The service was very similar to our tradition services with the prayer of confession, Declaration of Forgiveness, Gloria Patti, the Apostle's Creed, two lectionary readings, sermon, communion, prayers of intercession and singing by choir and congregation. For communion, they serve by the congregation coming forward, eating the bread and drinking real wine either from individual cups or from a large chalice. Being your typical germ-a-phobe, I chose the individual cups. The service was a meaningful and reflective time as we celebrated Jesus' Ascension. On the back wall of the sanctuary is a large depiction of the Ascension in the stain glass window which I had a perfect view of as the pastor preached.

The rest of the day was exploring some last sites and monuments on our final day in Edinburgh. St. Andrew's (which he looked more Roman than Galilean), Sir Walter Scott with his beloved deer hound Maida, King George IV (Son of the King George we rebelled from) and William Pitt II (son of our namesake of Pittsburgh).

It was a special time in Edinburgh and I wish you all were here to experience it with me. Thank you for supporting me in this once in a lifetime experience. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Next stop: St. Andrews

Day 5

Weather - Cloudy around 50 in Edinburgh and 61 with some sunshine in St. Andrews

We left for St. Andrews this morning. Riding the train is always a thrill to me especially because the trains are so efficient and quick. We were able to gaze upon the beautiful Scottish countryside as we zoomed along. Plenty of sheep and cows. There are fields of bright yellow flowers which are lovely.

The train doesn't travel to St. Andrews so we had to pick up a car in Cupar (pronounced Cooper) which is a small town 10 miles from St. Andrews. I rented their economy car which is a two door Ford Fiesta. It barely carried the three of us and our luggage but it is

a lot of fun. It reminds me of my first car, a 66' VW Beetle. It too was a small two door with a manual transmission. Michelle and Karah were closing their eyes as we drove on the opposite side of the road. The car rental shop gave me a yellow band for my left wrist to remind me which side of the road to drive upon. It isn't too hard as long as I remember that the driver is closest to the center of the lane. The hardest part is shifting with my left hand.

We explored St. Andrews which is a quaint college town. I will explore the campus tomorrow and find the library which is spread out along the Eastern side of the town. I had to get some change for the parking meter because their parking app won't register an American number. It was all good though as we had lunch and then explored the ruins of St. Andrews Cathedral and Castle. The castle was the home of Cardinal Beaton, the Archbishop of St. Andrews. Beaton executed the much-loved reformer George Wishart and in retaliation, the Protestant reformers seized the castle and killed Beaton. A French fleet recaptured the castle at the behest of the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots. John Knox was taken and sent to serve in the galleys. In a fervor the Protestants later tore down the castle and many of the stones are incorporated into the local structures. Scots don't like to waste anything. The cathedra took a lot longer to fall into ruin and was as much a result of the elements and neglect as a need for lead and building materials during rough times. It must have been a magnificent structure and dates back to the 12th century. It was where the relics of St. Andrews bones were said to have been buried. For centuries Scots and Christians from across Christendom traveled on pilgrimages to this sight. Now it is mostly golfers that pilgrimage to St. Andrews. The university is the oldest in Scotland and one of the oldest continuous universities in the world dating back to the 14th century. Now, that is old.

Lodging is quite expensive and difficult to procure because of the attraction of the golf course so we are staying outside of St. Andrews in the countryside. I will get to drive again. Oh boy! Keep your eyes closed Michelle and Karah!

Day 6

Weather - A beautiful sunny day with a high of 62.

I rose early to explore the campus of the University of St. Andrews. Like Oxford, St. Andrews is dispersed around the town. I found St. Mary's College which is the school of Divinity and theology. It was so serene on the grounds as I envisioned some of my favorite scholars like NT Wright teaching graduate students and researching in King James Library. The term had ended last week so unfortunately the library was closed.

I went to explore more of the campus. I guess I looked lost because an elderly man on the street asked me if I needed help. His Scottish accent was very thick so I understood about one in every five words. He explained how he has lived in St. Andrews his whole life and that its original name was actually Welsh in origin. He of course figured out that I was a "Yank" and told me a story about a girl and American basketball. Also, he mentioned something about the White House. I smiled and nodded as if I understood. He was able though to direct me to where Patrick Hamilton, an early Reformer and

professor was burned at the stake. I found the spot in front of St. Salvatore's Chapel. The spot is marked with a P. H. made in bricks in the cobblestone sidewalk. Tradition has it that Professor Hamilton caused the spot so that if a student stands on the spot of his death, they will fail their exams. Being a Tuesday, the chapel was closed so I found a bench outside the nave and had my morning devotions. The Scripture was 2 Corinthians 1:1-11 where Paul talks about being comforted in his struggles and that Christ is our constant companion in times of trouble. Sitting in such an idyllic place, I reflected upon the peace of God which has been such a comfort in my own life and always sees us through as Christians.

I eventually made my way to Holy Trinity Church. It too was closed but taped music was piped outside for those passing by. The bulletin board said that a California choir from Pomona college would be singing on Saturday and the Duke University choir on Sunday. As I sat and thanked God for the many blessings I have received as your pastor. I also thanked God for carrying us through COVID and asked that we continue to follow in the paths of His goodness and love.

It was such a lovely morning, I sat and read from Sir Walter Scott's history of the Scottish Reformation. His eloquence is inspirational as he relays the courage of the early reformers and how they triumphed to bring the gospel into the hands of the common Scot.

Later in the afternoon, we traveled to Dundee. It was a Scottish center of industry in the 19th century much like Pittsburgh. We visited the RRS Discovery which explored Antarctica in 1901. The ship was built in Dundee. The famous explorer Earnest Shackleton served as third lieutenant on the exploration. The harsh conditions and climate challenged even the strongest of men. The museum and ship was quite interesting and informative. We finished the day with fish and chips from a little downtown shop. They served packets of Heinz ketchup and tartar sauce which reminded me of Pittsburgh. What a wonderful and delicious way to end the day. Of course, I still had to drive back to St. Andrews. I must have improved in my Scottish driving skills because Michelle and Karah kept their eyes open this time. Driving on the opposite side is fun but can be harrowing.

None of this would have been possible except by your support. Thank you one and all.

Day 7

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. - Genesis 2:1

Day 7 was a travel day returning back to Glasgow by train. By the time we got to our hotel, we were exhausted and were feeling the effects of the last thirteen days so we crashed and prepared for our last full day in Scotland.

Day 8

Weather - Sunny and a high of 68. Thank goodness my phone registers in Fahrenheit because I cannot make head nor tails of Celsius.

I began the day at the University of Glasgow. It is Scotland's largest and second oldest university. The gothic architecture is quite impressive. Its most famous teacher was Adam Smith, the founder and author of modern capitalism. Although many of his principles were rewritten and misrepresented by economists at the University of Chicago, his principles still guide many today.

I was able to get a day pass at the library and found some wonderful resources on the Scottish Reformation and education. This was like striking gold and related directly to my goal of study during this trip. The Reformation had a dramatic effect upon education. With its goal of having a school in every parish, the Scottish Reformation formed what was effectively the first public school program across Scotland. Within a hundred years, boys and girls alike were learning to read and write, rich and poor, urban and rural. The Sessions of the local kirk were responsible for the maintenance of teaching standards and correct teaching of doctrine within the schools. They even fined families for not sending their children to school.

Lay readers were licensed in order to read the Scriptures out loud and lead prayer every weekday and twice on Sundays. Even when if a parish was without a minister to give the sermon, the laity learned and heard the word of God in their own language. This was a drastic difference from before the Reformation when the Mass was completely in Latin and many in the priesthood were illiterate. Before the Reformation, Grammar school referred to those who had elevated to begin reading and conversing in Latin while Elementarians were those priests who could only converse in their native tongue. The priests learning at the university were given the honorary title "Sir" as knights of the pope. A priest was typically addressed as "Mr." and only those priests in certain religious orders were referred to as "Father." This was eradicated after the reformation and the title Reverend was used for ministers of the Word in the Church of Scotland.

I found those around the university the easiest to converse with, while the average person usually had a thick Scottish accent. When I would ask an individual to repeat what they had said, they would become quieter which made it even harder to understand. I am not sure why this is but I reminded myself that I was a visitor and not to be a "loud and bossy" Yank. The people are quite friendly and Glasgow is a diverse city with cultures from around the world represented.

I visited the Glasgow Cathedral which is the oldest cathedral in Scotland and the oldest structure in Glasgow. It was built in the 12th century upon the resting place of St. Mungo from which Glasgo got its name. Don't ask me how Glasgow and Mungo are the same but "when in Rome." St. Mungo died around 620 A.D. His grave was a place of pilgrimage and the reason the cathedral was built. After the Reformation, the cathedral became a local Presbyterian church of the Church of Scotland and holds weekly services in the Reformed structure. The cathedral is magnificent and I got to walk

underneath where the tomb of St. Mungo was kept. I took many pictures which I look forward to sharing with all of you.

We finished our final full day in Scotland by having dinner in the West end. I had Pizza; Karah had Spaghetti, and Michelle had a Caesar salad, Italian food in a restaurant named Old Salty's, very Scottish. Lol. After dinner we experienced the subway back to the center of Glasgow where we were staying. The rail cars were smaller than any subway I have been in before but it was quick and a lot of fun.

Tomorrow we will be traveling back to the U.S. As fun as Scotland was, it will be nice to get back home. I am looking forward to sharing my findings and adventures with all of you. Thank you for this opportunity.

Pastor Jon signing off and see you on Sunday for Pentecost.