



Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's Church

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Dear Friends,

"I blame God for this disaster therefore I'm not going to believe in Him" is not exactly a model of clarity of thought is it? Yet a great deal of thought today is muddled and confused. People no longer sit and discuss reasons or arguments but just tend to follow the flow as they hear it on TV, radio or magazine. I'm always desperately tempted to respond to the modern claim that, "there is no absolute right or wrong" with the rejoinder "Are you absolutely sure of that?" just to see how many fall flat on their faces. A piece of graffiti seen on a wall at a University stated boldly "THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH" to which some more perceptive wit had added – "except this one". Very often the stupidity and nonsensical nature of arguments floats right by the glazed eyesight of modern man or woman.

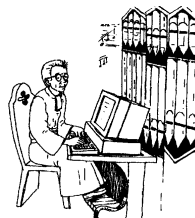
That's enough philosophy for one day however we hope you will stretch your mind around opportunities we have opened up for people to share real thoughts and ideas with each other in the short video series "Christianity Explored" that we will be running this year. Would you like to be part of one of them?

If the expansion of Christianity in the early centuries had anything at its core it was people debating and discussing. The longest speech in the Acts of the Apostles comes from the mouth of Stephen who confounded the international Jewish intelligentsia of his day with the power of his arguments. Paul's missionary travels in Acts are replete with times of arguing or reasoning where he

was prepared to go to enormous lengths to get people to use their minds and think about what he was saying. Now no-one is saying that Christianity is just an intellectual matter but what we are saying is that it is arguably believable and readily accessible to the mind and heart that is prepared to be open and it is this that "Christianity Explored" tries to unpack. I hope you will leave the TV or magazines behind and branch out into the real world of thought about Christianity and join in exploring the faith that many people seem so vague about today. Get in touch with me or Milton Cashman. If you'd like to make a quick start what about Wednesday 9th February at 7.30 p.m. at the Manse.

Yours Sincerely, Leslie Steele

Multi-Media System



Further to the article in the December newsletter, a new account has been opened for the purchase of a multi-media system for the church.

For a church the size of St Paul's, we will require a 10 foot screen, a very powerful projector and a computer to run the whole system. In addition to this, we would plan to upgrade our sound system which is also in urgent need of attention. Another useful aspect of this system is that it is not fixed and can be moved into the halls or wherever the church needs to use it.

In total, we need to raise £5,000 to put this in place, which would help the ongoing development of the congregation's worship

If you wish to contribute towards these items, please speak to David Leckey (Treasurer) or Robbie Noble (who can tell you more about the system).

World Day of Prayer

The Service for the World Day of Prayer will be held in the Small Hall of Old Parish and St. Paul's Church on **Friday 4th March at 7.30 p.m.**

We hope to welcome members of all the churches in the town on this occasion, and trust that there will be a good number from St. Paul's too. All are welcome.

The Service this year comes from Poland, and is entitled "Let Our Light Shine".

New Elder



On January 23rd, Irene Glenfield was ordained as an Elder in Old Parish and St. Paul's Church. It has been the practice lately to introduce new Elders to the readers of the Newsletter, so here is a little background information.

Irene was born in Glasgow, and brought up in Cambuslang. After a Business Studies Course at College, she moved down to Spalding in Lincolnshire, to take up a job with Geest. You may hear it rumoured that she worked in a factory counting bananas, but in fact she trained there as a Management Accountant. After 6 years, she moved to South Shields, after marriage in 1991 to a certain Dr. Glenfield.

The family moved to Galashiels in 1994 when Dr. Glenfield was appointed to a position at the Health Centre here. Irene is now a full time Mum caring for Stephen (11), Peter (8) and Sarah (6) who are all at St. Peter's School. Irene will add her duties and responsibilities as Elder to the many other ways in which she serves the congregation of St. Paul's already – as Sunday School Teacher of the pre-school group, as a regular cook at Lunch Club and as a member of Music Makers – and the Tuesday Morning Bible Study Group.

The Guild



We all much enjoyed the Guild Trip to Madeira on January 5th – no – not an actual trip! We were all taken there by courtesy of Miss Ella Dodds beautiful slides. It was a most enjoyable afternoon, and we are most indebted to her for her skilful presentation. By the time this Newsletter reaches you, we will have had our afternoon considering the Guild Discussion Topic for this year "Include me In".

It is hard to believe that we only have three meetings remaining for this Session – February 16th, March 2nd and March 16th. However there is still time to join us on any of these afternoons in the Small Hall at 2.15 p.m. You would be most welcome.

Baptisms

Jan 9th Murray James Scott (19-9-04.) 69 Honeylees Drive.

Jan 16th Ciaran John Corcoran (21-7-2004) 5 St Andrew Street.

Deaths

Nov Peter Mercer, 90 Forest Gardens.

Dec 30th Helen Hendrie, 11 Kingsknowes Village.

Jan 19th Alick Donaldson, 6 Hill Street.

Jan 22nd Helen Romanes, 3 Balmoral Road.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the bereaved families and friends.

Christian Aid

I would like to thank all of you who donated money to last month's church tsunami appeal. At the time of writing I do not have the total amount collected but I will let you know next month. However, I had a letter from Christian Aid on the 28th December telling me they had made immediate payments of £250,000 from its emergency fund, thus enabling partners in India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia to provide shelter and rations for more than 50,000 families. The letter says that:

- £15 will buy a hot meal for 125 people in emergency feeding centres
- £25 will provide basic shelter, food parcels and household items for 2 families for 2 weeks
- £50 will supply tarpaulins to provide basic shelter for 10 families.
- £100 will pay for emergency food parcels to feed 60 families for a month
- £250 will provide essential emergency shelter and food for 20 families or 100 people.

The work of course goes on and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

I wonder how many of you watched the Vicar of Dibley at Hogmanay. Love or loathe her, there was a very important message in the programme. It was Geraldine's birthday and try as they might, her friends could not find the perfect gift for her. In the end she made them look on the internet about the plight of Africa and thus paved the way for her congregation to become involved in the **MakepovertyHistory*** campaign. She felt that was the best birthday present that they could have given her. This campaign calls on Tony Blair to change the rules and practices of unjust trade, cancel poor countries' debt and deliver more and better aid. The UK government will have a unique role in 2005, as it hosts the G8 summit of world leaders and holds presidency of the European Union. Urgent action from the prime minister could improve the lives of millions of poor people around the world who live **on less than 60 pence a day**. The government is already showing signs of delivering greater debt relief and more aid. This is good news but without trade justice for the world's poor, poverty will remain at the scandalous levels it is today.

Can I encourage you to be part of this "MakepovertyHistory" campaign. Christian Aid has joined with Comic Relief, Oxfam, Cafod and a host of celebrities and other organisations. You too can be part of this exciting campaign by filling in your details on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church or speak to me.

Please, please help to make poverty a thing of the past.

Angela Miller

* Also mentioned in the December Newsletter

News from members in distant places!

Two members of our congregation are working with young people in two different congregations – one in England and one in Scotland. Both send news of their activities as fuel for prayer. They would both stress how dependent they are on the prayers of others in this vital work.

Anne Bain

As many of you will know, Anne moved to Keith in January to take up an appointment with the Church of Scotland Congregation there with special responsibility for Youth matters. She writes:

"Well I'm just finishing my second week here in Keith. So far things are going well and I am starting to settle in to the church. Everyone has been very encouraging and that's really confirmed that this is where God wants me to be. At the moment I'm concentrating on the Sunday School and the weekly Friday clubs that the church run. In the next few weeks I'll be taking over the coordination of both of these groups."

Thank you for all your support please pray that God would show me the way he wants the activities to go in the church and that I would build good relationships with the adults and children in the church."

Moira Frew

Last September, Moira left her job as a Plant Buyer in Edinburgh in obedience to God's call to take up Youth Work in Bolton. She has been extremely busy since starting work there, as you will see from the following requests for prayer. She writes:

"Thank you so much to everyone at St. Paul's who has supported me with their gifts, their prayers, their love and their friendship. It means so much to me, and I would love to write to you all individually – but then there would be no time for work! I have become involved in many activities with young people since coming here. Rather than giving you too much detail, perhaps I could summarise my activities and you could pick out something particular to pray for."

- *I work in 2 Church Primary Schools, taking assemblies, involved in an After School Club in one. 26 children are coming to a club A.L.F (About Life and Faith) including Muslim children.*
- *3 non-church Primary Schools*
- *Breakfast Club for pupils from all five Primary schools. Run every school morning in St. Matthew's Church buildings. Gradual build up so not overwhelmed.*
- *Church involvement in a group of four churches: leading all age & Family Services; Sunday School; Basic Christianity course for 8 people on Sunday mornings before Church; Seeker Course for teenagers (7 young people confirmed as a result of this) Cell Group for those interested in the work with young people; Youth Club on Friday nights.*
- *Youth work on a nearby estate in conjunction with Y.M.C.A. These young people are classed as 'unclubbable' so it is hard work!*
- *College course on Monday Evenings – training to be a proper Youth Worker!*
- *DAY OFF! – important – but difficult to be disciplined about!*

With my love and grateful thanks, Moira

PS: I have a new friend – a 15 week old spaniel puppy called Joe who is great fun and good company

Lunch Club



The Lunch club began in January, 2004, so those concerned as helpers and those who enjoy the fellowship and food each week have been remembering with gratitude the past year. Four teams of people work together on a rota basis, being on duty once every month – some are drivers, picking up those who would find difficulty in making their own way there, some help in the kitchen etc. Many people work together to make the whole enterprise successful, so it would not be right to name individuals, except perhaps the four people who take the main responsibility for menus and organising the teams: Lillias Steele, Marion Stirling, Deirdre Virtue and Irene Glenfield.

Those involved had a 'night out' on 31st January at Torwoodlee Golf Club, and our roving cameraman managed to creep up and take a photo of one of the tables just to show what a good evening it was!

Old Parish & St. Paul's Church

Our annual quiz takes place on Saturday 12th February at 7:30 in the large hall. There are three age categories in which teams can enter (there's a prize for every category winner and runner-up):

- Adult team - 4 people, aged 18 and over
- Junior team - 4 people, aged 12 - 17
- Family team - 2 adults, and (any number of) children aged 17 or under

All teams will answer the same set of questions, topics include:

Trivia, sport, abbreviations, spot the country, guess the musical year, bible characters, multiple choice, kids stuff, etc.

Entry is £5 per team, and includes some light refreshments, we do hope you'll come along and join the fun. There's only one rule - nobody is allowed to take the event too seriously! For further information, contact Jim Tennant (tel: 01896 751003) (email: godiswireless@btinternet.com).

TAXI!

From the "New Beginnings" response cards, we have had requests for transport **and** a number of members have expressed an interest in providing transport, if it is required. As of 6th February, if you would like transport to the Sunday morning service, please contact Colin Hanley on tel: 759402, and he will be happy to arrange this for you.

Used Postage Stamps

The pillar box is back in the porch for your used stamps which will go to the World Mission Stamp Centre. This is currently contributing towards the HIV/Aids Project. Can I ask you to cut the stamps from the envelope or parcel leaving at least a quarter of an inch all around. Please do not attempt to steam off or remove the paper from the back of the stamps as damaged stamps have no value. Many thanks for your support.

Angela Miller

New Beginnings

Well it has been three quick months since our church family meal and I am sure that you are wondering if anything has been happening. During the weeks up to Christmas, the planning team have been waiting for the "Response cards" to come back in from the visiting teams. These have still been coming back into us during January, however we have now had a meeting to discuss the details marked on the cards.

First of all, we would like to thank you for taking the time to fill the cards in for us, as it has provided us with a lot of information on aspects of the church that members would like us to look at. The first part of the "Response Card" relates to aspects of church life in which members would like to be involved. If you have "ticked" an interest in an activity and you have **not been involved** in it before, someone from that group will now get in touch with you, so for example if you have not been involved with "Musicians" and have "ticked" interest in this group, Nancy will contact you to see how you would like to be involved. This procedure will take place for all of the church activities.

The other side of the "Response card" relates to "suggestions" that members may have for the church to consider. In total, these suggestions filled three pages of A4 paper, so I am sure that you will appreciate that it will take time for it all to be considered by the Kirk Session. The suggestions will be passed on to the committee's within the Kirk Session and they will then discuss your ideas. During the months ahead, we will report back to you in the Newsletter so that you can see the decisions that the Session has made.

In the meanwhile, "Christianity Explored" will

Treasurer's Report

NOVEMBER 2004

Income

Offerings 5 weeks (Weekly average £802.58).....	£4,012.90
Dividends, Bank Interest, etc.....	£3,791.42
Donations.....	£1,474.57
	<u>£9,278.89</u>

Expenditure

Electricity, Gas & Church Telephone.....	£249.16
Insurance for Church & Manse.....	£3,740.05
Repairs - Church.....	£1,198.54
Advertising, Printing, Stationery.....	£256.11
Sunday School Materials.....	£50.00
New Beginnings.....	£1,008.81
Standard Monthly Expenditure.....	£3,905.40
	<u>£10,408.07</u>

STANDARD MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OFFERINGS

Stipend	£2,998.60	1st	£734.86
Mission & Renewal	£802.80	8th	£401.46
Organist	£80.00	15th	£569.75
Cleaners (4wks)	£24.00	22nd	£657.72
		29th	<u>£599.06</u>
		Paid through Bank	£2,962.85
			<u>£1,017.00</u>
	<u>£3,905.40</u>		<u>£3,979.85</u>

OFFERINGS UPDATE

	2004	2003	
Jan-Oct	43wks £32,738.32	£31,148.54	43wks
November	5wks £3,979.85	£3,327.34	4wks
	48wks <u>£36,718.17</u>	<u>£34,478.88</u>	47wks

DECEMBER 2004

Income

Offerings 4 weeks (Weekly average £865.31).....	£3,461.24
Retiring Offerings.....	£181.19
Dividends, Bank Interest, etc.....	£542.67
Donations.....	£1,492.57
From Short Term Loan Account.....	£1,071.65
Transfer from Floodlighting Fund for Repairs.....	£43.36
	<u>£6,792.68</u>

Expenditure

Electricity, Gas & Church Telephone.....	£275.48
Purchase of Photocopier.....	£622.74
Minister's Travel & Telephone.....	£428.69
Advertising, Printing, Stationery.....	£266.24
Sunday School Materials & Mburu Sponsorship....	£497.94
Repairs to Buildings.....	£2,492.66
Annual Dividends/Retiring Offering.....	£74.47
Repayment of Short Term Loan.....	£500.00
Standard Monthly Expenditure.....	£104.00
	<u>£5,262.22</u>

STANDARD MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OFFERINGS

Organist	£80.00	6th	£496.55
Cleaners (4wks)	£24.00	13th	£637.60
		20th	£676.57
		29th	<u>£633.53</u>
			£2,444.24
		Paid through Bank	£1,017.00
	<u>£104.00</u>		<u>£3,461.24</u>

OFFERINGS UPDATE

	2004	2003	
Jan-Nov	48wks £36,718.17	£34,475.88	47wks
December	4wks £3,461.24	£3,713.03	5wks
	52wks <u>£40,179.41</u>	<u>£38,188.91</u>	52wks

become a part of the church weekly activities, so if you would like further information on when groups will meet, please contact the minister on tel: 752320 or Milton Cashman on tel: 752711.