



Galashiels Old Parish and St. Paul's Church

Newsletter ♦ April 2007

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LETTER FROM LESLIE

Dear Friends,

The Sermon

I want to tell you a story - a true story. A young girl got married and started out on what she hoped would be a wonderful life with her husband. Sometimes marriages go sour, but this one went sour almost from the outset, for within the first weeks he was out clubbing and flirting with other girls almost as though he had never got married, and she was at home miserable... Within a very short time he expressed his lack of love for his young wife and she ended up in depression and desperation, and it was not long before the minister who had married them was visiting her in hospital after an overdose, a suicidal cry for help. Life seemed broken with no future to look forward to.

As a coping mechanism for the pain of her divorce she decided that she would leave her hometown and find some job that would make her busy, fill her evenings and keep her occupied - anything to take her mind off the tragic situation of her early life. She started doing a nursing course, did well and completed her training.

For years the minister who married her never heard from her but eventually when she visited home from time to time she would be seen in Church.

Once on a visit to the city where she nursed, the minister was in a Christian bookshop when the assistant remarked that somebody from his town had been in a few times looking for a Bible. The minister was curious, and on asking about the person he soon realised it was his nurse of erstwhile acquaintance - and sure enough the next time he saw her she confirmed it.

She said that when she came to Church she found that his sermon seemed to have an uncanny knack of dealing with the questions and issues that were buzzing around in her head at the time, such that she wondered how he knew so much about her, and this experience made her want to find out more about this strange book and this strange business of preaching that seemed to speak to her. It was the first step in her journey to profess faith in Christ and join the Church.

I know this story because I know the woman - the young minister was me.

People sometimes think that the preaching of the Bible is just an ordinary mundane thing like a talk at the rotary or an after-dinner speech, but those who are open to God know differently, and those who preach it know it too. Pray for the preaching and pray for the hearing, God turns the water of human words into wine for the soul. We hope to see you this Easter and beyond - who knows what God will say to you?

With every blessing this Eastertide,

Yours Sincerely, Leslie Steele.

P.S. The young woman remarried some years later to a lovely guy she met at Bible College and they now have three children and live in Edinburgh.



DEATHS

16th March: Isabella Watson Hume,
16 Glebe Place, Galashiels

22nd March: Gordon Finlayson,
6 Roger Quin Gardens, Galashiels

22nd March: Alan Affleck ,
2 Kingsknowes Gardens, Galashiels

Correction from March Newsletter:

10th February: Miss Marion Gall
14 Ashley Road, Polmont

We lost two of our members this past month in Mrs Isa Hume and Mr Gordon Finlayson.

Isa Hume, a native of Gala and long-standing member of our Church, was born and brought up in Gala working in a number of places, including Lipton's the Grocers, the Co-op, and the Wool Shop. Married

to Jackie, who had a barber's business, they had three daughters: Lorna, Maureen and Lynn. Isa was vigorous and active right into her eighties, even visiting Lynn in Australia when she was 84, but during the last spell of her life suffered a decline of health which saw her pass away in the BGH after a stroke.

Gordon Finlayson, like Isa, a native of Gala, was a bricklayer, working with Parks and Murray and Burrell, but who spent most of his working life since 1963 in telecommunications, first with the GPO and then with what became BT. Although he had to retire early through ill health, he still enjoyed much that he could do and enjoyed the companionship of friends, especially as a keen follower of rugby - never missing an international at Murrayfield. He is survived by Janet and his two daughters, Jane and Louise.

We remember both families in our prayers as they grieve the loss of dear family members.

EASTER 2007 EVENTS

PALM SUNDAY - April 1st

- ◆ Music Makers & Sunday School singing in Tesco foyer from 2.30 pm till 3.30 pm.

ALL WEEK – Easter Labyrinth

- ◆ Monday 2nd, Tuesday 3rd, Thursday 5th & Friday 6th – 5.00 pm till 7.00 pm.
- ◆ Wednesday – 2.00 pm till 7.00 pm.

MAUNDY THURSDAY - April 5th

- ◆ United Communion Service at St John's, Langlee, at **7.30 pm**.

GOOD FRIDAY - April 6th

- ◆ United service in Old Parish & St Paul's at **7.30 pm**.

EASTER SATURDAY - April 7th

- ◆ "Easter Cracked" - an event for all Primary School-aged children from 10.00 am till 1.30 pm

EASTER DAY - April 8th

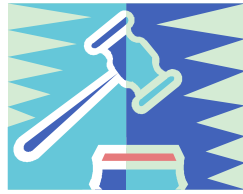
- ◆ 9.30 am – Breakfast & Communion.
- ◆ 11.00 am – Easter Family Service.
- ◆ 7.30 pm – "Resurrection 07" with the Exile Choir and Orchestra at the Highland Hall, Ingliston; free tickets available from www.resurrection07.com or see Anne Noble.

OTHER EVENTS

- ◆ **Old Gala Club** are holding an exhibition of artefacts from various churches, including our own Communion Silver, which runs from 31st March in Old Gala House.
- ◆ **The Annual Quiz** will take place on Saturday 21st April, with a new separate section for children this year - look out for details in the church intimations and on posters.
- ◆ **The presentation of prizes and Golf Dinner** (for last year's outing) will be held on Monday 30th April, Kingsknowes Hotel, at 7.00 for 7.30 pm.
- ◆ **Christian Aid Week, 13th – 19th May:** Christian Aid's campaign this year is "Cut the Carbon". We have seen the results of climate change on our television screens. We must act now (see <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/climatechange/index.htm>). We need help with the annual house-to-house collection. If you can spare a couple of hours to issue and collect envelopes, or rattle a can in the supermarket, then **please** speak to Angela Miller on 755316.

STATED ANNUAL MEETING

The stated Annual Meeting was held on 20th March and heard the reports of the annual accounts for last year and a resumé of the property work carried out in 2006.



The accounts showed that the reserve funds had to be cashed in to enable the church to remain on a stable financial footing. This obviously leaves less to fall back on in future years - a worrying situation considering that great expense is expected in having to replace the Church heating boilers.

In presenting the budget for 2007 the Treasurer painted a grave picture, highlighting that if there was no increase in giving and no fund-raising projects undertaken, a deficit of £10,000 would be expected by the end of the financial year. A message from the Treasurer is printed on the back page.

On the property front the expected estimate of the cost of boiler replacement had not yet been received from the heating consultant. As a result information about this issue, which will be a major item to be considered by the incoming Congregational Board during the year, could not be given to the meeting.

Two new members were elected to the Board for the next three years, Phyllis Hancock and Marjorie McKendrick. This still leaves two vacancies: **as the Board has powers to co-opt members, anyone willing to take up a place please speak to the Clerk, Hugh Bain, or the Minister!**

The meeting also acknowledged the hard work carried out by numerous volunteers throughout the Church, with special reference to the great contribution made by the late George McCann to Old Parish & St. Paul's and the wider church.

FUND RAISING

The Congregational Board have decided to hold two fund raising events again this year to help us with our current financial challenges. We will be holding a "Gift Day" in May, with the donation envelopes being delivered with the May Newsletter.

We are also planning a "Christmas Fayre" on Saturday 17th November from 10 am to midday in the Church Hall. Please support these events as much as possible.

STRICTLY COME PRAYING

Wow! This event was held on Sunday 18 March at the Inchyra Grange Hotel, Polmont. Two leaders along with six young people from Old Parish & St. Paul's went along, to be absolutely overwhelmed by the commitment and inspiring leadership demonstrated to them BY OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE.

Working under the headline verse "*When a believing person prays great things happen*" (James 5:16) there was a choice of 5 prayer workshops for the young people (leaders were packed off elsewhere!), 11 interactive prayer stations, a fantastic (loud) praise band, free food and some very powerful testimonies.

The whole event ran so smoothly, with an estimated 450 young people, as well as 50-60 "oldies". The fact that sticks in my mind is that two different speakers underlined the point that every revival in our country has begun with children and young people! With the evidence of what we witnessed at this event: watch this space!

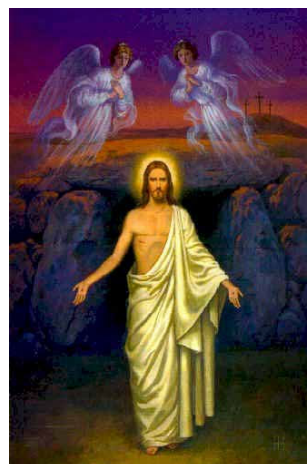
"Old" Jim Tennant

EASTER JOY – MY REDEEMER LIVES

Dying, behold we live (2 Corinthians 6:9)

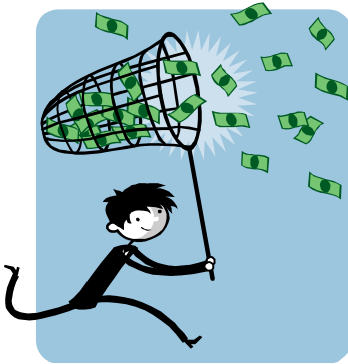
The joy of the Resurrection is something we....must learn to experience, but we can experience it only if we first learn the tragedy of the Cross. To rise again we must die. Die to our hampering selfishness, die to our fears, die to everything which makes the world so narrow, so cold, so poor, so cruel. Die so that our souls may live, may rejoice, may discover the spring of life. If we do this then the resurrection of Christ will have come down to us also....the Resurrection which is joy, the joy of life recovered, the joy of life that no one can take away any more! The joy of a life which is superabundant, which like a stream runs down the hills, carrying with it heaven itself reflected in its sparkling waters....It is not only with our hearts but with the totality of our experience that we know

the risen Christ. We can know him day after day as the Apostles knew him. Not the Christ of the flesh....but the everliving Christ....Christ, once risen, is ever alive, and each of us can know him personally. Unless we know him personally we have not yet learnt what it means to be a Christian.



From the Readings and Meditations of Joyce Huggett

A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER



The Annual Accounts, along with the General Fund Budget for 2007, were presented at the AGM on March 20th. I now bring to the attention of the Congregation the financial needs for the present year.

The Ordinary General Expenditure anticipated is shown under four headings:

- ◆ National Ministry and Mission & Wider Work: £40,050
- ◆ Local Staffing Costs: £4,325
- ◆ Buildings Costs: £26,900
- ◆ Other Local Costs: £5,310

Therefore our budget for 2007 is **£76,585**, meaning we need £6,382 each month to meet all these commitments.

Looking at the period 25/02/07-11/03/07 (4 Sundays) there were 80 people who contributed to the church either by Direct Debit or Free Will Envelopes. It may be of interest to show the breakdown of the amounts:

Number of people	Amount of contribution	% of monthly offering
18	£1 - £10	23
22	£11-£20	28
9	£21-£30	11
10	£31-£40	12
8	£41-£50	10
6	£51-£60	7
3	£71-£80	4
1	£91-£100	1
3	Over £100	4

There are members who contribute through the open plate, and those contributions are not shown in the above figures. It is also recognised that this is a snapshot in time.

Can I therefore encourage members and friends of the congregation to consider increasing their regular giving so that the anticipated shortfall in our budget can be reduced significantly? I would urge you, dear reader, to support the running costs of St Paul's through your offerings. I would ask each member of the congregation to prayerfully consider their level of offerings.

I would particularly like to thank those people who contribute by Gift Aid – whereby the Church can reclaim from the Inland Revenue 28p in every £1 given by tax-paying members. Tax is not only paid on wages/salaries – it can also be paid on bank/building society interest, pensions and dividends.

For more information please contact Zena Forsyth.

David Leckey, Treasurer.

TREASURER'S REPORT – FEBRUARY 2007

Following on from the new format of the Treasurer's Report for the Newsletter as explained in last month's Newsletter, the figures for January and February 2007 are summarised below:

Targeted Budget Income (January and February) £12,764

Actual Monthly Income (January and February) £10,279

Deficit: £2,485

Although showing a shortfall, the figure has only increased by £377 since January – so there is room for optimism that we can turn this deficit into a positive figure.