

## Galashiels Old Parish and St. Paul's Church Newsletter ♦ September 2007

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### LETTER FROM LESLIE

Isn't it amazing the things you collect? As you may know by now, we have been in the throes of packing things up ready to move into the new manse at "Woodlea", Abbotsview Drive (pictured below). Downsizing from a large Victorian house into a modern though not insubstantial house certainly concentrates the mind. Our shredder has been doing overtime, the tip is a familiar haunt, and charity shops over the town are being well stocked, as well as numerous things going away from the Church Hall over the summer. It's not that we didn't want to get rid of things - it was just that they weren't left behind after certain periods in our lives. Those of you who have flitted more often will probably have a lot less accumulated clutter in your houses than us, and probably those who have lived a continual itinerant life will have the least. We well remember saying goodbye to our Elizabeth as she walked up the airport concourse to the departure gate laden down with a huge backpack and hand luggage leaving to get married and start life in America; when you're on a plane there is only a limited amount of 'stuff' you can take ...

You probably know what I am going to say next, it's about pilgrimage. The Christian life is meant to be about pilgrimage "from here to there", from this life to the next, and the exercise of working out what is needed from what is not is good for the soul. What is not needed is physical clutter, for as Job said, "we came into the world with nothing and we shall depart with nothing" so why amass an amount of things that we are going to leave behind anyway? Travelling light is the order of the day, and it is what Jesus taught his disciples: think of the parables of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich fool, or the story of Levi at the receipt of custom, "lay not up for yourselves treasures on Earth where moth and rust corrupt". Of course this is not just an individual story, it is also one for the Church as a community, because we are always on a journey with God - trying to keep things the way they were is bound to be a false move.

We have two sorts of bags in the house just now – things to go out and things to take with us. A flitting is all about sorting things into those two places and I want to put it to you that that is what our lives as Christians are all about. In our own lives and in the Church's life we have to constantly be thinking, what is it that REALLY needs to go with us into the future, and what is it that doesn't?

Yours in Him, Leslie

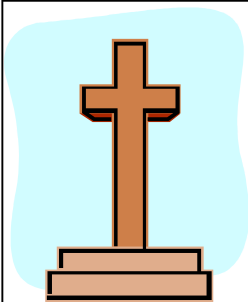
### Services

- ♦ During the week of the flitting the Morning Service on 9<sup>th</sup> September will be taken by Rev. Milton Cashman and the Evening Service by Dr. Donald Cameron
- ♦ During the Minister's absence the services on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October will be conducted by the Rev. John Riddell, recently retired minister of Jedburgh Trinity Church.



## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

### Deaths



**Jean Melrose** (Ormiston), née Nairn, formerly of Bythethorne, Abbotsford Road, died down in Wales near her daughter, Myra, and son-in-law, Alan, though her ashes were interred in Eastlands on

22nd August. Jean was born in Abbot's Place, the eldest and last remaining child of Mary and Clark Nairn. She worked as a shop assistant for most of her working life, with Robert Leishman & Son, in the Co-op, and was manager of Brighter Homes. She married her first husband, Bob Ormiston, in 1940, but after Bob's death she and Jim Melrose married and had 25 years together before Jim died late last year. A warm and welcoming soul, Jean is survived by her only daughter, Myra, and grandchildren Richard, Laura and David.

14th August: **George Black**, 12 Balnakiel Terrace, Galashiels. George was born in Galashiels over 81 years ago and left school to start work in Fraters with the intention of training to be a photographer, but soon moved to electrical work with Aitchisons, which turned out to be his real calling. Apart from a spell of two years in the Army, he was to work as an electrician in a number of places until he retired from Laidlaw and Fairgrieve in Selkirk. George loved his work and he loved his place in the Church where he served as an elder for a number of years until ill-health enforced a stop. Always an encourager and helper ready to put himself about, he is survived by his wife Isobel, after 58 years of marriage, and sons George and Michael and their families.

17th August: **Catherine Redpath**, Cornmill Court. Cathy Carruthers, as she was, was born in Meigle Street 91 years ago, one of four brothers and one sister. When she left school she worked in her brother's stationery shop and Post Office at Gala Park. During the war she worked in the WRVS and it was during the war that she married Billy, starting life in St. John Street and becoming mother to Kenneth and Alisdair. She was an active person, sometimes joining Billy cycling, as well as enjoying badminton and country dancing. She was a regular attender at worship and faithful supporter of the Guild, and will be remembered for her warmth and kindly support of many.

27th August: As the Newsletter was about to go to press we learnt that **J. Douglas Noble**, Riverslea, Abbotsford Ferry, had passed away peacefully at home. A tribute will appear in the October issue.

*We commend the families of all four to God in prayerful remembrance.*

### Welcome

We extend the hand of fellowship to the following new members:

- ◆ **Max Aplin**, 39 Victoria Street
- ◆ **Mrs. Sybil Fowler**, 184 Scott Street



### Race for Life



**Shirley and Ruth Sandison** would like to thank all those who sponsored them for the 'Race for Life' in aid of Cancer Research UK, in July. They raised £814.50 between them and this will be put to good use by the charity.



### Invest in eternity, one prayer at a time

Please pray for Milton and Margaret Cashman's son, John, his wife, Robyn, and daughters, Hannah and Rachel, as they set off to work in Malawi on 1st October. They are going to work for a charity called CURE International ([www.cureinternational.org.uk](http://www.cureinternational.org.uk)), initially for two years.



More details will appear in future Newsletters, but please do pray for:

- ◆ The practical organisation of planning to go (for container packing, giving Hannah and Rachel the best of time and attention, and for John wrapping up things at work at the Children's Hospital in Bristol and at the Royal Hospital in Bath), and for their safe arrival and starting work (for direction in seeking a new church, continued energy and vision for the work God has set before them, and for lasting friendships to help settle in.)
- ◆ Their health and safety at work and home.
- ◆ Their financial provision (selling or renting their current house in Bath and "balancing the books" once in Malawi).



## Attention – all you walkers!

All you keen walkers may be interested in an opportunity to support the work of Bethany Christian Trust with a "Walk for Homelessness" on Saturday 22 September. There is a choice of both a 5-mile and a 10-mile route. The walk is along the beautiful Fife Coastal Path (between Elie and Pittenweem), and you can raise money for homeless people at the same time, enjoy ancient ruins, sea views and wildlife. To find out more call 0131 625 5320, text your name and address to 07971 268955, or email [events@bethanyct.com](mailto:events@bethanyct.com).

Bethany Christian Trust is based in Edinburgh and has been in existence for 21 years. Its aim is to relieve the suffering and meet the long-term needs of homeless and vulnerable people in Edinburgh and throughout Scotland. As an expression of Christianity, Bethany provides a wide ranging framework of care, accommodation, support, and employment training and opportunities to help meet the needs of homeless and vulnerable people, regardless of their background or belief.

### Blythwood Care Shoebox Appeal 2007



Last Christmas, 12 year old Emanuela received a gift box from Blythswwod's Shoebox Appeal. "It was lovely", she says. "It was the first present I have received in my whole life".

Emanuela lives in the poorest districts of Tirana, the capital of one of Europe's poorest countries, Albania. She shares a single room with her parents and three brothers, the youngest still a baby. Her father is mentally ill and unable to support them, so Emanuela does not go to school but stays at home to help her mother sew shoes (*Editor's note - don't miss the irony there!*) They are paid piecemeal, a tiny sum for each pair - it's the only way they can scrape a living. By filling a shoebox, you have brought so much joy to someone like Emanuela.

But there is so much more to be done. With your support, Blythwood can provide basic aid for this family, kitchen utensils, baby clothes, and curtains to divide their tiny home into two rooms. Also, by supporting a literacy programme, we have helped Emanuela and other young people to learn to read and write. This is essential if children like Emanuela are going to escape a life of poverty and exploitation. In east Europe, Africa and India, Blythwood is supporting projects that help disadvantaged children and young people fulfil their potential. By making any kind of donation you can give them the opportunity they deserve.

There will be a supply of Blythwood Care Shoebox Appeal leaflets in the Church from the beginning of September. If you wish to make a donation online, check how to pack the shoebox, or download the checklist and donation form online: you can do so at [www.blythwood.org](http://www.blythwood.org), or also at [www.shoeboxappeal.org](http://www.shoeboxappeal.org).



Flag of Malawi

### Lydia Project

*The following article is based on email correspondence between our Minister, Rev. Leslie Steele, and Rachel Fielder, who is involved in running the Lydia Project in Malawi which receives financial support from Old Parish & St Paul's on a monthly basis.*

“Dear Leslie,

I am excited to keep direct contact with your people. Yes I thought that it must have been St Paul's. We appreciate very much your support. We had a visit from Stanley and Molly Hood from Scotland - they have written an article on some work they visited at Lydia. I will pass on your address to them so that they can copy it to you once it is all done. I think it captures very well some of the activities that you support.

Briefly we have used money from Scotland churches for food relief to the orphans. Throughout the hunger season, we bought tons and tons of flour to distribute to the orphans. We have also bought school related items for the orphans, such as pens and pencils and uniforms for the children going through primary education. We have also bought books for the Library which is at the Lydia secondary school. We have also used the money to pay school fees for orphans. Two orphan boys have even been assisted with tertiary education through this donation. This is just to say briefly that we are thankful to God for the money that you send to this work.

The next project we are doing that will benefit from your support is that we want to make uniforms for the orphan children near our area. These are the same ones who require food aid for a few months when they run out of maize. It is a group of around 80 children. I will give you the exact figure next time I write. What is amazing with this group is that it is led by an orphan boy who is in Standard 7. He is really passionate about the plight of other orphans.

Many greetings, always worried that electricity might switch off before sending it off!”

Rachel

## New Clerks

After 18 years in the Clerks' seats Hugh Bain has resigned, and the batons have been passed on. Hugh became Session Clerk in 1989 after a hiatus following the retiral of George McCann, who had just started training for the Auxiliary Ministry. Hugh served in that capacity while the Church still acted under the old Constitution of an old Parish Church with the Kirk Session being entirely responsible for both the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church; but in 1994 the Congregation moved over to a Model Constitution entailing Congregational representation at Annual General Meetings. Hugh's intention was to serve a year as Clerk to the new Board as well as to the Kirk Session, but his willingness knew no bounds, and he has served both bodies ever since - a total spell of over 18 years! We thank Hugh for all his work over those years, involving not an inconsiderable amount of administrative work, and wish him well in the downing of some - though not all! - tools, for he will continue to look after the Hall bookings and diary, as well as co-ordinating the intimations every Sunday.

Colin Hanley takes over the reins of the Session Clerkship, and Lynn Beswick has assumed the Clerkship of the Congregational Board. Their contact details may be found in the masthead on page 1 of this newsletter.

We thank them both and pray God's blessing upon them in their newly adopted roles!

## Church Heating

Work on the replacement of the Church heating boilers started on Monday 27 August and should be completed in approximately six weeks. The contractors and sub-contractors are operating from the new car park and using the side (Organist's door) for access to the Church. They will be using the area outside this door to store equipment and vehicles, especially from Monday to Friday, and have been given keys for access. Although the main contractors come from Kilmarnock, their workforce is residing in Galashiels throughout the week.

In order to allow them free access it is requested that during the time they are on site, members of the congregation use the halls door for access to the Church. **PLEASE DO NOT USE THE ORGANIST'S DOOR!**

The Church heating is now out of action, but arrangements have been made with the contractors for gas to be supplied to the kitchen and halls during the Lunch Club on Thursdays. The availability of gas will depend on how the work progresses, but updates will be given each Sunday through intimations.

As the work will continue into the autumn, it is anticipated that the interior of the Church could become colder each Sunday. Please be aware of this and wear warm clothing when attending morning services!

Please also remember that the new heating will be like waiting for the summer, the only difference being that I know the improved heating will be coming!

Ian Forsyth, Property Convener

## Manse

The Congregational Board can now confirm that during the summer holidays the Church bought a new manse and sold the existing manse on Barr Road. The new manse, "Woodlea", Abbotsview Drive, is near the King-sknewes Hotel. The building, as you can see from the photograph on the front page, is a 4-bedroom modern house which is in very good condition. The Rev. and Mrs. Steele start moving into the new manse on 4<sup>th</sup> September, and the exchange of ownership for the old manse will take place on 20<sup>th</sup> September. The sale and purchase of both properties were concluded "off the market", with the sale of Barr Road approved by both the Trustees and the lawyers of The Church of Scotland.

At the conclusion of these transactions a surplus of money will be left on deposit with the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh, and these funds are "ring-fenced" for large fabric repairs to our Church or manse in the future. The current replacement of the Church boilers will cost £53,000 and this project will be part-funded from the surplus of money generated from the sale of the manse.

As a Board, we feel that these transactions have been very proper and to the benefit of the Church, and we are sure that the new manse will provide good accommodation for many years to come. Can we express our thanks to the "viewing team", who worked very hard to find our new manse, and to Peter Sandison for arranging a viewing of the new manse, ahead of it coming onto the market.

## TREASURER'S REPORT – JULY 2007

The Treasurer's Report for January to July is summarised below:

<b>Targeted Budget Income</b> .....	<b>£44,674</b>
<b>Actual Income</b> .....	<b>£44,837</b>
<b>Surplus</b> .....	<b>£63</b>

Although the figure to the end of July shows us moving into a 'surplus' position it needs to be pointed out this is mainly due to the income derived from the sale of the shares the church held. This has to be regarded as 'exceptional income' as we can only sell the shares once. If we had not received the £2410 for these shares this month we would, once again, have seen a 'shortfall'.

The financial situation continues to be of concern, and we are now more than halfway through the calendar year.