

## Old Parish and St. Paul's Church of Scotland, Galashiels Newsletter ♦ November 2007

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### LETTER FROM LESLIE

Dear Friends,

Does it really matter? Does *what* matter? Does anything matter? “Do *you* matter?”

You have probably heard of the term “post-modern” trailed at some time or other: it is meant to describe the present day culture of the Western society in which we live. It is a bit confusing because politicians often want to speak of the modern world and of modernising it, so what do we mean when we speak of post-modern? Some divide the 20<sup>th</sup> Century into modernism and post-modernism, whilst others see them as really two aspects of the same movement such that when you hear politicians using the ‘modern’ word, bear in mind they could be thinking in a very post-modern way.

At any rate what is it that characterises present day thought in our culture? I’m very wary of giving a definition, but some things can be said about its character. First of all, it is very unhappy with tradition: that’s why anything that smacks of it (and the Church is obviously one) is not considered worthwhile. It is deeply sceptical of truth claims, being very insistent that there are no such things as absolute truths: note the piece of graffiti on the University wall which stated “There is no absolute truth”, but underneath someone had cheekily added “except this one”. It is very tolerant even of its own inconsistency, for it’s happy to accept that everything may have a place as long as it’s not given *the* place. It is indiscriminating and also unsure about the future, and there can be quite a degree of pessimism about it.

But let’s come back to what matters. Students who return forms to the University Chaplaincy department at Heriot-Watt University overwhelmingly (80-90%) tick the box that says “none” when asked about their religion. In a questionnaire to students (not just Heriot-Watt ones) who were asked what were the things that really mattered to them, they replied “finding meaning and purpose in life” and “forming good relationships”: I would venture to say that both are related.

The Church is the community of people for whom these two questions are at the heart. Sometimes it can seem as though it holds on to its traditions as though they were the answer, traditions of style and patterns of life, but that is merely tangential: at its heart is a God who answers those questions of life and in whose people the answers become evident. Not all at once, and in some more than others, but nevertheless a truth appears in people. People find something that makes them different. It has been said that God doesn’t always answer our questions but He answers *us* and at the end of the day that is really *what* matters...

P.S. If anyone wants to discuss any of the issues that make post-modern life so puzzling or troublesome I would be happy to hear from you. Why not drop me an email (very much part of present day life now) and we can share some thoughts. Check out the Church website!

With every blessing, Leslie.

### Missionary Visit

On December 2nd we will be having a visit from Cathie Aberdour, who has been working in Brazil amongst the Amazonian Apurina People translating the Bible into their language. The Guild heard from Cathie earlier in the year but it will be good to have a longer opportunity to meet with her and engage with the work of the Wycliffe Bible Society when she returns next month. Make a note of the date and come along!



## Deaths

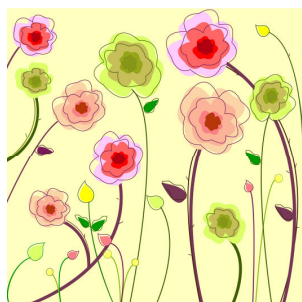
During the Minister's absence the following funerals were conducted by Rev. John Riddell:

3<sup>rd</sup> October: **William Harper**, 10 Woodstock Road, Galashiels

12<sup>th</sup> October: **Robert Shillinglaw**, 41 Greenbank Street, Galashiels

*We extend our sincere sympathy and prayers to the bereaved families.*

## Flower Rota 2008



The Flower Rota for next year has just been prepared, and it seems there are a number of dates still available to be filled. If you would like to put flowers into the church on 27th April, 13th & 27th July, 20th August or 14th September, then please

give me a ring on 01896-755316. You don't have to be an expert in flower arranging! You would simply place the blooms into the vases at the front of the church and then deliver to the recipients. Can I urge you to consider donating flowers and then taking them either to the sick, elderly or housebound? This ministry means a lot to so many people. The flower calendar receives no funding apart from the generosity of folks who faithfully donate regularly each year, but sadly as donations diminish, the fund is rapidly drying up.

Angela Miller

## Bob David Bell - Music Ministry

Bob David Bell has been writing and singing his own songs for some time now. Over the last few years, after seeking God's guidance, Bob felt the calling to be used more in this way. This has been confirmed in different ways, particularly in the way that God is using the songs to challenge and bless people. Bob's debut album, "The Hard Road", shows his talents as a singer/songwriter and presents a set of songs that deal with issues of faith and life, with Bob's faith evident in these thought-provoking, melodic songs.

The ministry is two-fold: to other Christians, to encourage, comfort and challenge them in their faith; and to connect in a relevant way with those who are searching. Bob's desire is not to write "nice songs", but rather songs that will be thought-provoking and challenge the listener, encouraging them to move on in their walk with God, or in their search for God.

Bob will be singing in our Church on Saturday 1st December at 7.30 p.m. - do come and listen to him!



## Boys' Brigade

Our Enrolment Service was held in our Church on Sunday 16th September, and was one of the earliest we have had in my time. By holding it just three weeks after the start of the new session it avoided a clash with rugby activities. It also meant that our Chaplain, the Rev. Leslie Steele, could conduct the service before he and Lillias flew off to the States to be with their new grand-daughter. The timing of the service resulted in a large number of the boys attending along with their parents and friends. Two of the Anchor Boys and one boy from the Company Section welcomed everyone as they entered the Church. The Chaplain based the service on the aim of the Boys' Brigade, using the initials B.B. to describe B. for Boring or B. for Brave Boys. One of our Officers, Dr. Glenfield, spoke of his childhood in Northern Ireland and of the bravery of those living there during the troubles. Jim Tennant spoke of two young boys in Egypt who were brave enough to follow the Christian Faith in their own country, whilst our organist for the day, Donald Cameron, spoke of his experiences in the army and of the bravery of those involved. During the service, boys from the Junior Section and Company Section read from the Bible, said prayers and uplifted the offering. At the close of the service members of the Company, their families, and members of the congregation, met in the large hall for refreshments and fellowship.

The new session is now well under way, with all the boys enjoying the various activities each Friday night. We were delighted when the Kirk Session approved the appointment of Stephen Fox and Craig Turnbull as Officers in our Company. Stephen has taken over as Officer in Charge of the Junior Section, with Craig assisting in the same Section. David Nightingale continues as our faithful and dedicated Captain, and is ably supported by his other Officers, Carol Grieve, Robbie Noble, Dr. Rodger Glenfield, and Gordon Smith and his helpers, George Kelly, Louise Wilson and Andrew Grieve.

The Company will be on parade for Remembrance Day on Sunday 11 November.

On Friday 7 December, the Anchor Boys will be attending the local pantomime. It will be a bit special for them this year as the organisers of the pantomime have asked them to come dressed as Cowboys and Indians.

Our annual Boys' Brigade Carol Service will take place in our Church, starting at 6.30 p.m., on Friday 14th December. A warm invitation is extended to all members of the congregation and friends to attend and to join us for tea and mince pies at the close of the service.

Ian Forsyth, President

## Reflections of an overseas aid worker

### I know where I am when ...

- ◆ I filter and boil all the water and milk.
- ◆ I don't flush the used toilet paper but put it in a bucket beside the toilet
- ◆ I know I have slept through an earth tremor because the first thing I do when I get up in the morning is to check the toilet for more cracks.
- ◆ The water, electricity and phone go off at the same time (the jackpot will be if the gas goes as well, but that to my knowledge hasn't happened yet).
- ◆ In the summer the electricity bill is higher than in the winter (work that one out as there is no air conditioning).
- ◆ When it rains I immediately check that I have as much stored water as possible, as rain is usually a precursor for the water to be switched off.
- ◆ I hear the call to prayer five times a day, with the first before sunrise and the last after sunset.
- ◆ 95% of all my shopping is done in the open air. I even bought a skirt one day - imagine trying that on in your local high street.
- ◆ I see families down by the river washing themselves, their clothes, cars and cattle.
- ◆ I carry a copy of my passport and visa at all times.
- ◆ Instead of counting cracked car windscreens, I count intact car windscreens, as there are less of them.
- ◆ Outside a café you may see any of the following: a donkey, car, horse, cow, sheep, or truck.

### Global poverty prayer week (12th-18th November)

Tearfund's Global poverty prayer week pulls together thousands of Christians hungry to hear God and keen to be part of a miracle. They've created a special, free DVD for churches to use during the prayer week.

There will be two short meetings on Thursday 15th November in the small hall from 6:00-7:00 pm and later from 9:00 to 10:00 pm, but most of the church home prayer groups and regular weekly meetings have agreed to join with Tearfund supporters throughout the week, so if you want to take part just ask at church!

Are you passionate to see justice roll on like a river? The programme includes a participative prayer film enabling our church to stand as one with the powerful and the poor, innovative event ideas, and step-by-step creative ideas. During the week we're asking you to spend time praying individually and with your Christian friends around five of the many areas in which Tearfund works:

- ◆ Monday – HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Tuesday – climate change
- ◆ Wednesday - disasters
- ◆ Thursday – trade injustice
- ◆ Friday – water and sanitation

Saturday is a chance to get involved in campaigning and send a letter to the UK Secretary of State in time for the major UN summit on climate change happening in December.

Sunday is an opportunity to use Tearfund's special prayer film during our church service.

### Tearfund

We are Christians passionate about the local church bringing justice and transforming lives - overcoming global poverty. So our ten-year vision is to see 50 million people released from material and spiritual poverty through a worldwide network of 100,000 local churches. For further information, please speak to Jim Tennant (Tel: 01896-751003) or email him ([jim10ant@btinternet.com](mailto:jim10ant@btinternet.com)) or go to the Tearfund website and download the resources for your own use!



# tearfund

# Christmas Fair 2007 — Saturday 17th November

10 am – 12 noon

Entry - £1.50

This is your invitation to support this year's annual Christmas Fair. This event is not only a great social occasion when you can meet up with old and new friends, but has now also become a major and very important fundraising event for the Church.

Following the success of last year's freshly baked scones, we will bake some more fresh ones this year! There will also be the usual assortment of stalls, and we urgently require donations for the following:

- ♦ Cake and candy (please label all donations in case of nut allergy)
- ♦ Home produce (jams, preserves, Jim's ginger wine, house plants, etc.)
- ♦ Toys, Books, CDs, DVDs – must be of resale quality – please don't give something which you wouldn't buy yourself!

Other stalls will include; Nancy's crafts, wooden gifts, children's gifts (Sunday School), children's tattoos/nail painting, Christingle making, Fair Trade stall and “Beat the Buzzer”.

The other urgent need is for some volunteers for these stalls or to help in the kitchen. Please speak to either Irene Glenfield, Louise Johnston or Jim Tennant; look out for the posters with more details, coming soon!



Orders for “Life and Work” for 2008 are required by 25th November 2007.

The cost has been kept the same as for this year, at only £1.60 per month. Please give your name, and the annual subscription of £19.20, to David Leckey (Treasurer) before - or at the very latest - by, 25th November. “Life and Work” is the magazine of the Church of Scotland which includes articles of relevance to the Church and its members. The letters page also gives an opportunity for readers to express their views on a range of topics. Everyone is encouraged to consider ordering a copy for next year!



**A date for your diary:**  
**MENMAKERS CONFERENCE**  
**ASSEMBLY HALLS, MOUND PLACE,**  
**EDINBURGH**

Date & Time: 17/11/2007 - 9:30 am

Event Description: A One Day Conference for men packed with challenging teaching, powerful worship, great fellowship and a chance to hang out with guys from across the globe!

Further details at: [www.menmakers.co.uk](http://www.menmakers.co.uk)

## TREASURER'S REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2007

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

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Targeted Budget Income</b> ..... | <b>£57,438</b> |
| <b>Actual Income</b> .....          | <b>£56,466</b> |
| <b>Deficit</b> .....                | <b>£972</b>    |

It is unfortunate that we have moved from our surplus of £739 last month to a deficit of £972 this month – a total of £1,711 less income in September. This month there was a minimal amount of activity in the income side of the accounts.

The financial situation remains serious and the congregation needs to be aware of our circumstances. The Christmas Fair in November is a fund-raising opportunity which is expected to help balance our books. However, it could be dangerous for us to rely on such activities rather than regular giving on an on-going basis.