

Old Parish and St. Paul's Church of Scotland, Galashiels
Old Parish and St. Paul's Church of Scotland, Galashiels, is a Charity registered in Scotland, No: SC010389

Newsletter ♦ Dec 08 ~ Jan 09

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LETTER FROM LESLIE

Dear Friends,

“What kind of a year have you had?” was the question the Rev I.M. Jolly often used to start his talks with, and you could be sure that Rikki Fulton's character had had the most mind-bending year that was certainly not dull.

Well this year has made its mark as being memorable, though we will have to wait a good while into the future to see just how we will remember it. Our government as well as others has been taking various actions with a view to stabilising the future on the economic front, though as anyone - even government ministers - will tell you, they still can't see exactly how things are going to work out because there are so many variables which are out of the control of governments. And that's just the financial sector: what about global warming, food production, population growth, terrorist outbreaks, etc.? There is no crystal ball that will allow us to read our diaries in advance of time.

Do you know what the coming year is going to hold for you personally? No? Neither do I. Do you want to think about it, or does it make you rather scared? The older I get the more I become aware of the shortness of human life and of the comparatively brief time I have left on this earth. No, I am not hinting at a dark secret about my health, but just about the facts that the average age for men is 79 years and sometime I will die. Dear reader, so will you.

The Bible tells us “It is appointed unto us once to die and then the judgement”. There is no quiet oblivion. If you believe there is, you will have become an accomplished liar and cheat, having done everything in this life for your own benefit (or maybe you have!). And there is no reincarnation either – if you believe there is, I hope you've cancelled the turkey this Christmas in case you inadvertently gobble Grandma down, and that wouldn't be good karma, would it?

Well, enough of the funnies. Christmas time is about the future, and it is good news: as the Angels said, “Peace, Goodwill toward men”. Christians are always indomitable optimists because they know that whatever the earth throws at them the future far from being *Orange* is Christ's. There will be a general resurrection of everyone, good and bad; and there will be a judgement before Him from which no-one will escape and justice will be done, perfect justice which everyone will acknowledge. When you know that, nothing can keep you down: if you don't know it, every burden becomes a back-breaking one.

What kind of year are you going to have in 2009? The great truth of which I have spoken is the truth of which Christmas is the forerunner? I have sometimes closed services with a benediction that concludes “...until the Day breaks and the shadows flee away”, which comes from the Song of Solomon. The Day is the Day of the Lord, spoken with a Capital, for it signifies the final and most important day of all, that day when “the Judge of all the Earth will do right” (Gen. 18:35). That day when who Christ is and what he has done will cease, for faith will have passed into sight. Apart from that faith each new day can be fearful and troubling, but I would spare you that. I wish you and your family a season and life of joy in Christ. Christ is born. Christ is risen. Christ is Lord. Amen and Amen. May your year be lived under that truth.

Yours in Him,
Leslie Steele.

Deaths

20th November: **Jean Turner**, Larchbank Street, Galashiels

25th November: **Dr. John Bishop Borthwick**, Gala Nursing Home, Kirk Brae, Galashiels

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



Dr John Borthwick. The Church lost a good and faithful friend in our senior elder, Dr. John Bishop Borthwick, on 25th November. Jake, as he was affectionately known, came to Gala in 1950 along with his mother. They took up residence in the house directly opposite the Church in Scott Street when he became a Consultant at Peel Hospital, where he was to stay until his retirement. Jake was born in Edinburgh in 1912 and lived in the Comely Bank Area at Stockbridge. He attended Daniel Stewart's College where as well as his academic astuteness his prowess as a rugby player emerged. He was to go on to play Rugby for Scotland in 1938, and in all the matches he played, Scotland won. It was as a result of a rugby accident that he lost the sight in one eye, but that didn't stop him in the furtherance of his career in medicine. He went to Edinburgh University and subsequently worked in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, as well as having a small practice in the Comely Bank area. He worked there through the war years and afterwards was called up to service in the Royal Army Medical Core and spent time in Nigeria, during which period there was a severe outbreak of polio. He received an M.B.E. in recognition of his service there. On returning home Consultant posts were difficult to find in Edinburgh, and it was then that he came down to the Borders and to his post at Peel Hospital. He was to become a much respected and loved doctor, and found himself happily ensconced in the Borders community. He was a keen rugby supporter, but also interested in sports of any kind, enjoying his golf and curling, and latterly was a keen football follower on the TV.

Jovial and gregarious in nature, he made friends easily, yet was private and reserved about his own achievements. As a person Jake was known as a conscientious and caring doctor, and we knew him as a man of faith, a loyal and supportive member and elder of the Church here. He was in every sense in the words of Chaucer "a very gentil parfit knight". We remember him with pleasure and thanksgiving to God.

Hugh Bain's Personal Recollection of "Dr Jake"

It was a great privilege as a new elder to be placed in the Door Duty Group led by Dr. Borthwick, as he was addressed then: I wouldn't have dared be so bold as to call him Jake, but that soon changed! He made it so easy to blend in and to pick up the various duties with gentle and pawky humour. As Session Clerk it was a relief to know that when the Church required to be opened Jake was there and acted as security for anyone on the premises during working times.

In another field it was fascinating to sit in front of the Netherdale stand back row, which included such St Paul's luminaries as Jim Barker and Peter Henry, and we callow youths in front could depend on the former internationalist to keep us right on the referee's decisions, which had always gone against Gala, especially if the opposition was a certain Edinburgh College! The Sunday discussions on all things rugby were also interesting because Jake always saw both sides.



Christmas Services 2008

December 19th	6.00 p.m.	Boys' Brigade Carol Service
December 21st	11.00 a.m.	Christmas Sunday Family Service
December 21st	6.30 p.m.	Seasonal Evening Service
December 24th	11.15 p.m. for 11.30	Candlelight Evening Service
December 25th	10.30 - 11.15 a.m.	Christmas Day Family Service

New Elder

On Sunday 23rd November our former Treasurer, David Leckey, was ordained an elder and admitted into the Kirk Session of Old Parish & St Paul's.



David, who trained in hotel management, came to Galashiels from Aberdeen to take up a post at Peel Hospital as Assistant Catering Manager. David is now Skills and Learning Executive with Skills Development Scotland. In what spare time he has, David is involved with the Right Angle Theatre Company, which produces the local pantomime, which this year is Mother Goose, taking place in the Volunteer Hall from 10th to 13th December. If you happen to see David around in top hat and tails you'll know he's in pantomime mode as Count de Monie - most appropriate for an ex-Treasurer! He is also involved with the Galashiels Amateur Operatic Society, and - as many people know - he has visited St. Kilda on many occasions, where he dons his catering hat. We welcome David and encourage the congregation to pray for him and support him, as we should all elders in the Church.



We welcome to our Church Family Mr. Donald and Mrs. Jean Gunn, 28 Whytbank Row, Clovenfords.

World Mission Stamp recycling

Collecting used stamps raises several thousands of pounds every year. British first-class and second-class stamps and even international stamps are gathered together and sent to us. We then sell them to collectors. All money raised is used to support the work of a project around the world.



In India, many young girls have dropped out of mainstream education due to financial hardship, gender and caste discrimination.

This year World Mission is collecting for girls' education in India. So please continue to put your used stamps into the box. All we ask is that you **cut** stamps from envelopes or parcels leaving at least a **quarter** of an inch of paper all around, as damaged stamps have no value. Thank you in advance for your valued support.

Angela Miller

Stop Press from Malawi

We have just received a letter from Rev. Hamilton Nasiyaya, the Minister of the Churches in Malawi that we are now linked with. He has been off sick and in hospital for a week, so do pray for him. He is 64 and his wife is 58, and they have nine children and ten grandchildren. Hamilton worked as a teacher in the government for 23 years, but is now in his 20th year of ministry. Having moved round various Presbyteries in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), he is now in Zomba.

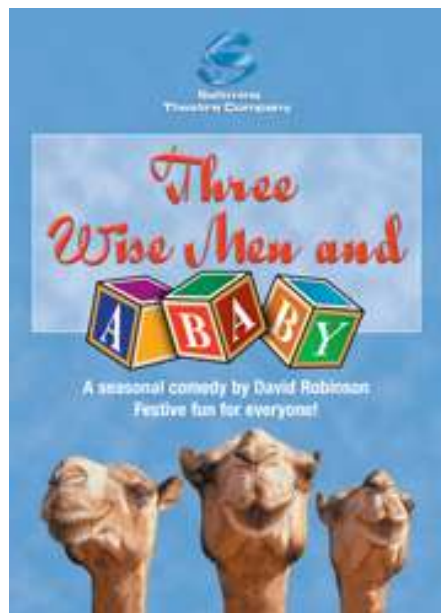
He tells us that Naisi Church has 800 Christians, with 150 Sunday School children, and 80 entering their first class for Baptism or Confirmation. He lets us know that the Church visits Christians in their homes preaching the Word of God and encouraging successful giving. There are four areas where Christians gather on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the afternoon for prayer.

The Women's Guild meet on Thursdays and have a team of Choirs, as well as the Church's main Choir.

Finally, he reports that they are in the process of fund-raising between now and April for a roof for their new Church. Any who would like to communicate with any in the Church there should write in the first place to the Minister at:- Naisi CCAP, Zomba Presbytery, PO Box 70, Zomba, Malawi.

Saltmine Theatre Company presents 'Three Wise Men and a Baby'

By David Robinson



We will be welcoming the Saltmine Theatre Company to the Church on Wednesday 17th December: doors open at 6.30 pm for a 7 pm start. The play is for all the family, with plenty of laughing and carolling along. We are looking forward to being entertained by this professional company!

Credit Card Booking Tel: 01384 454808

Tickets/information from Richard Noble on 01896 752794

Tickets from "Books Plus", 2 Channel Street, Galashiels

Ticket Prices

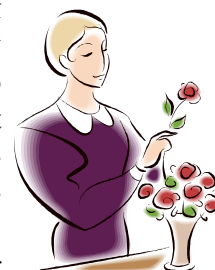
Family £10 Adult £5 Child or Concession £3

Complimentary light refreshments during the interval

Come along and enjoy the fun!

Flower Rota 2009

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, 26th July, 16th August or 4th October then please give me ring on 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.



Angela Miller

Treasurer's Report - October 2008

The figures for January to October are summarised below:

Again we have a surplus this month due in no small part to the £6390 tax we have so far reclaimed on our Gift Aid Offerings scheme.

Targeted Budget Income (January to October)	£53144
Actual Income	£73950
Difference	£20806 'surplus'
Less extraordinary income to date	£16893
Ordinary surplus to date	£3913

- ◆ Please contact Irene Glenfield at Church if you would like to sign up for the Gift Aid Scheme.
- ◆ Remember, you can be paying income tax even though you are not in employment!
- ◆ On average, our offerings this year have increased by only 0.5% relative to last year.