



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 ♦ May 2009

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LETTER FROM LESLIE

Dear Friends,

I want to speak to those of you who receive this newsletter but for whom the Church is a bit of a distant connection. I don't mean by that that you haven't been to a service of worship for a long time (although for some of you it has been years) but just that, given the opportunity to get to grow in your knowledge and love of Christ and of his people in any ways, it has been difficult to gauge your interest. As a Church we want to find ways of supporting and including you in your professed Christian faith and would be glad to hear any suggestions you might have as to how we might do this better, for - at the end of the day - what we want is to find ways of networking people who are serious about Jesus. That's what the Church is all about. We realise, however, that for some it may be that a parting of the ways must come.

The National Secular Society recently offered a Certificate of Debaptism for those who wished to publicly sever their links with the Church. Most people saw that as a bit silly and unnecessary for if people have severed their links they are hardly likely to be so interested as to want some certificate to prove it. Some people like for cultural reasons to put down Church of Scotland or some such thing if asked to indicate what they are NOT, e.g. Muslim or Hindu: it is more a "what I'm not" rather than a

"what I am" statement.

Now there are numbers of people whose names are on baptismal registers or on Church Rolls but who have not given serious consideration to where they stand. When Martin Luther was called before Johann Eck, the Emperor's spokesman, to state whether he renounced or reaffirmed his views, he asked for time to consider and went away to pray and to consult with friends. Appearing the next day before Eck and holding firmly to what he had come to believe, he stated his position in the now famous words, "Here I stand. I can do no other." He was making a clear declaration of faith and life, one that was to set the course of the rest of his life.

This year in September we will be joining with many other Churches up and down the land in "Back to Church Sunday" - on 27th September - but before then we want you to take up consideration of where you stand with regard to the Church, the Faith, and Jesus Christ. Our prayer is that like Martin Luther you will come to stand up for Jesus and for his Church, and we will be glad to retain you on our Church roll, but most of all it will mean that you have done something most noteworthy in your life this year. Start now: where do you stand and of what can you do no other?

With Every Blessing, Leslie Steele.

Minister's Holidays

The Minister will be on holiday from 11th May to 10th June as he joins Lillias in America following the expected birth of their 6th grandchild to Elizabeth and Bill. Any urgent pastoral matters should be referred to Rev. Jane Howitt of St John's Church (01896-752573) in his absence. The services during his absence will be conducted by Mr. Alex McLellan of "Reason Why" Ministries on 17th May and 7th June, and by Rev. Tom Hogg on 24th and 31st May. Alex, who is featured inside this Newsletter, was the guest speaker at our AGM on March 17th.

Deaths

29th March: **James Jeffrey Mather**, 41 Balmoral Road, Galashiels

5th April: **Alexander Reid McCudden**, 12 Balmoral Avenue, Galashiels

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



Last month we lost Alex McCudden, who died after a spell in hospital and a longer time of debilitating weakness at home. Alex was born and brought up in Selkirk, for which he had an abiding love, although making his home in Gala following his marriage to June in 1955. A blacksmith to trade, he developed his skills in engineering and worked for Herbert, Kemp Blair, and Laidlaw and Fairgrieve. He was ably cared for and loved by his family, and we commend June, Lynn and Shona and their families to God's keeping in their loss of Alex.

We remember, too, one of our senior members, Jimmy Mather, in the loss of his son – also James, though known as Jeff – who died at the end of March. Like Alex, in the textile industry, Jeff worked for Ballantyne in Innerleithen, finishing at Laidlaw and Fairgrieve. We remember his wife Betty and brother Brian, recently returned from South Africa, and all the family in their loss.

Library Corner

Have you had a look recently at our library corner just behind the pulpit?

We have a great selection of books for all ages – many of them by the best modern Christian writers.

Do you enjoy reading about someone you know? If so, why not have a look at “Not Without Cost” by Maureen Murchison, which tells the exciting and inspiring story of Cathie Aberdour, our Wycliffe missionary partner with the Apurina Indians in the Amazon.

Perhaps you have heard of Joni who, when she was 17, broke her neck in a swimming accident. Sounds awful doesn't it? However I don't think I have read a more heart-rending or inspiring story. Joni has written many books, but why not start with the “Start of the Story” by Joni Erickson Tada?

Have you read any Adrian Plass books? He has a wonderful gift of humour as well as being really thought-provoking. Why not try one – they are really enjoyable.

If you fancy something “heavier”, why not try C.S.Lewis or Phillip Yancy to get your teeth into? Both are well worth trying.

Have your children had a look at our library? “Jonah and the Whale” pop-up book would make a lovely bed-time read, while the older kids could try “The Moon Piece”, by Pam Rowe, which is an adventure set in Roman times.

Whether or not these particular books attract you, why not get into the habit of stopping by the library stand to see if there is any book which takes your eye?

If you have any Christian books which you think we would all enjoy please get in touch with Nancy Bain. It does no harm to keep changing the display.

Good Reading!



Carlo Curley Concert



We will be welcoming Carlo Curley, “The Pavarotti of the Organ” to Old Parish & St. Paul's on Friday 19th June at 7.30 pm.

This concert, arranged by the Borders Guild of Organists, will be a rare opportunity to hear our refurbished organ played to its maximum potential. There will also be a camera link to the church screen so that everyone can watch Mr. Curley as he plays. Refreshments will be served during the interval, when there will be an opportunity to speak with the organist and purchase his recordings.

The ticket prices are: £10 for Adults, £15 for Families (2 adults with children), and £5 for Students. For tickets and information, please contact Colin Hanley on 01896-759402 or Tom Ratter on 01890-830286.

Bluebell "Bag Packing" Appeal



Greetings from CrossReach! Our team is organizing the annual TESCO Galashiels bag packing to raise awareness of and funds for the Bluebell Campaign on post-natal depression, which affects over 10,000 women in Scotland each year and is still one of the biggest killers of mothers in their first

year of childbirth.

Tesco management at the Galashiels shop have allocated us Saturday 22nd August, 2009, from 10 am to 5 pm.

We are therefore appealing for volunteer bag packers for the day. Each volunteer bag packer will be allocated an hour's slot but are free to do two hours. Any interested volunteers are to register their names with the Community Fundraiser before 15th August, 2009.

Thanks, and God bless!

Norman Chipakupaku
Community Fundraiser (East of Scotland)
CrossReach Church of Scotland Social Care Council
Tel: 0131 657 2000 / Mobile : 07717868061

Wish List

Wish List is the name the Congregational Board have given to the various projects and purchases made on behalf of the Congregation in order to improve and maintain our property here in Old & St Paul's.

Whilst much of what is done is essential maintenance and upkeep, things other than that are perhaps considered to be less essential, even though they are aids to enhance our worship, e.g. the Audio-Visual & Sound System.

Given the present economic climate and the need for discernment, the Board would greatly appreciate your suggestions and ideas in order that we can prioritise any future tasks as custodians of this place of worship.

Is there anything you think needs improved or renewed? If so, then please send your suggestions along with reasons why and how they would benefit the Congregation to the Clerk, either by e-mail, or pop a note in the box provided at the back of the Church.

More importantly: your ongoing prayers for wisdom and unity, as we seek Christ and His Will in all we do, are much appreciated.

Lynn Beswick
lynn_beswick@hotmail.com

Faith Seeking Understanding

Alex McLellan is the Founder and Executive Director of Reason Why, a Scottish Bible teaching and apologetics ministry dedicated to strengthening the belief of Christians and interacting with non-Christians who are interested in matters of faith and understanding.

Born in Edinburgh, Alex completed his BA in *Communications* from [Moody Bible Institute](#) in Chicago before gaining his MA in *Philosophy of Religion* from [Talbot School of Theology](#) in Los Angeles. He worked as an itinerant evangelist/Bible teacher with the [Heralds Trust](#) before starting this apologetics ministry based in Scotland.

Alex is an associate with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM), serves on the Board of the national evangelism ministry, Mission Scotland, and works with the Heralds Trust, Faith Mission Bible College, Carrubbers Christian Centre's Institute of Biblical Studies, Scripture Union, Abernethy Trust, UCCF, Teen Ranch Scotland, Capernwray Hall, and schools and churches in the UK and further afield. Alex and his wife Sheryl have two daughters; the family are currently living in Selkirk and are regular and active participants in the life of Old Parish and St. Paul's.

Everyone has some kind of faith but many lack genuine understanding of what they believe and why. Faith is important in the context of belief but understanding is the key to knowing the truth and developing unshakeable faith. Christianity is built on the fact that it is true, therefore Christians should be equipped to defend the truth claims of the Christian faith and be ready to engage non-Christians, offering a reasonable explanation for the truth of Christianity.



Alex McLellan, [Reason Why](#)

The Bible in 100 Words - Some Bible References

World made; God betrayed.	Genesis; John 1
Ark saved; Abraham obeyed.	Genesis; Romans 4
Isaac misled; Jacob fled.	Genesis; Hosea
Israel's New Name; Joseph's fame.	Genesis; Hosea
Bush Burning; Plagues returning.	Exodus
Passover dedication; Slaves' liberation.	Exodus
Red Sea divided; Commandments guided.	Exodus; Lev.; Numbers
Gold Calf debacle; Moses' Tabernacle.	Exod. 25-40; Hebrews
Wandering sand; Promised Land.	Deuteronomy; Joshua
Judges wild; Laws defiled.	Judges; Ruth
Saul enthroned; Goliath stoned.	1 Samuel
David's coronation; Solomon's foundation.	2 Sam.; 1 Kings; Ps; Sg
Israel scattered; Samaria shattered.	2 Kings; Is; Hosea
Idols built; Judah's guilt.	2 Kings; 2 Chron.; Joel
Jeremiah minded; Zedekiah blinded.	2 Kings; 2 Chron.; Jer.
Exile came; Babylon's shame.	Ezek.; Dan.; Esther
Cyrus crowned; Exiles returned.	Ezra; Nehemiah
Zerubbabel killed; hopes unfulfilled.	Haggai-Zechariah
Prophets warn: Jesus born.	Is 53; Dan. 7; Mal. 4
God walking; love talking.	Gospels; 1 Cor. 13
Christ crucified; hopes died.	Gospels; Romans 1-8
Love rose; conquered foes.	Gospels; 1, 2, 3 John
Satan shamed; Spirit flamed,	Acts; Rom. 12; Gal.-Eph.
New Life waits; Heaven's gates.	1 Cor. 15.; Revelation

Bruce Gardner: developed from "The Bible in Fifty Words" (Anon)

Treasurer's Report - March 2009

The figures for January to March are summarised below:

Targeted Budget Income (January - March)	£18,678
Actual Income (January - March)	£20236
Difference	£1468 surplus

Our figures show a surplus for this month due to a very kind bequest of £5000 from the estate of the late Mrs. Mary Scott.

Marjorie McKendrick, Treasurer