

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 2009 / Jan 2010

- Minister:* Rev. Leslie Steele, Woodlea, Abbotsview Drive, Galashiels TD1 3SL
☎ (01896) 752320 ✉ leslie@oldparishandstpauls.org.uk
- Session Clerk:* Colin Hanley, 24 Netherbank, Galashiels TD1 3DH
☎ (01896) 759402 ✉ colinhanley66@googlegmail.com
- Board Clerk:* Lynn Beswick, Roxburgh House, 16 Melrose Road, Galashiels TD1 2AY
☎ (01896) 756942 ✉ lynn_beswick@hotmail.com
- Treasurer:* Marjorie McKendrick, 1 Hayward Drive, Galashiels TD1 3JB
☎ (01896) 752540
- 'Newshound':* Jim Tennant, 43 Kilnknowe Place, Galashiels TD1 1RH
☎ (01896) 751003 ✉ jim10ant@btinternet.com

LETTER FROM LESLIE

Dear Friends,

In the American Declaration of Independence we find these words – “We hold these truths to be self-evident” - and then follow statements about equality, human rights and issues of government that are not our concern here, but I want to pick up on the phrase “self-evident truths” and what people might agree upon without much ado.

For example, is the world a peaceable place? I think people would say self-evidently not. Do people die? No contest. Do people desire life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Absolutely. So how is it that self-evidently what we want and the world we live in are not in harmony? That's the truth, isn't it?

Into that truth which everybody knows comes Christmas. C.S. Lewis has a wonderful illustration of the world of Narnia under the spell of the white witch in which he describes the land as “always winter and never Christmas”. What a wonderful description and what a dismal place, what a weary world. When the spell over Narnia is broken not only does Father Christmas appear but we hear that Aslan, the King, is around. At first it is only rumour, but the rumour spreads and signs start to appear, the ice begins to melt, the frost begins to drip, spring is in the air.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Christmas Services 2009

- December 18th 6.30 p.m.*
Boys' Brigade Carol Service
- December 20th 11.00 a.m.*
Christmas Sunday Family Service
- December 20th 6.30 p.m.*
Seasonal Evening Service
- December 24th 11.15 for 11.30 p.m.*
Candlelight Evening Service
- December 25th 10.30 a.m.*
Christmas Day Family Service



LETTER FROM LESLIE (CONTINUED)

The Christian gospel is like that, and is a matter of faith, faith which the Bible describes as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1 KJV) and the writer goes on to say that it is through faith that “we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God” (Heb 11:3). Now no-one was ever in a position to self-evidently validate these things, but does that mean we doubt them - bearing in mind that doubt is as much a faith as belief? Faith looks for evidence, signs and rumours of truth, and that is where we come to Christmas, for that is what it is about: it gives a taste of better things, it holds out a world of gladness and warmth, of satisfaction and peace; it gives a glimpse of how we would like things to be, and it also hints that there is “someone about” whose presence is the reality of which all the nice dreams of life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, or joy, fulfilment, wonder and anything else that we consider great and aspirational are but the shadows.

Christmas is about the birth of a Saviour, one through whose presence in this world and in particular through his death and resurrection the power of evil is broken and a gateway into new life is opened. No wonder the prophet in the Old Testament prophesied that “the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light” and also that “of the increase of his government there will be no end”. The conclusion of things still awaits its consummation, but Jesus is alive, He is about, and He is coming. Jesus said to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life: whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” *

Is it a self-evident truth that you are obeying Him, are you self-evidently on Christ's side? Have you made it obvious?

With Christmas Blessings,
Leslie Steele.

P.S. * for Martha's answer to Jesus' question see John 11:26

Flower Rota 2010



The Flower Rota for next year has just been prepared and there are a number of dates still available to be filled.

If you would like to put flowers into the Church on 7th February, 30th May, 11th July, 25th July, 15th August, or 12th September, then please give me a 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 - Tel. 755316

Deaths

15th November: **Patricia Young**, 105 Hawthorn Road, Galashiels

16th November: **Jacobina Lees**, Riverside Home, Selkirk (formerly Parkview, Abbotsford Road)

16th November: **Diane Reid**, 24 Beech Avenue, Galashiels

16th November: **Maud Coward**, Galahill House, Barr Road, Galashiels



We extend our sincere sympathy and prayers to the bereaved families



Boys' Brigade

1st Galashiels Boys' Brigade intend to hold a Christmas Carol Service on **Friday 18th December 2009, commencing at 6.30pm**. This is an opportunity for the boys to celebrate the birth of Christ and a chance for you to come along and share in the last night of the Boys' Brigade before the Christmas break.

A warm welcome is extended to all parents, relatives and friends to attend the service. Tea, Coffee and Mince Pies will be served up after the service.

On behalf of the Company, may I wish you and your family a Very Happy Christmas and a Good New Year.

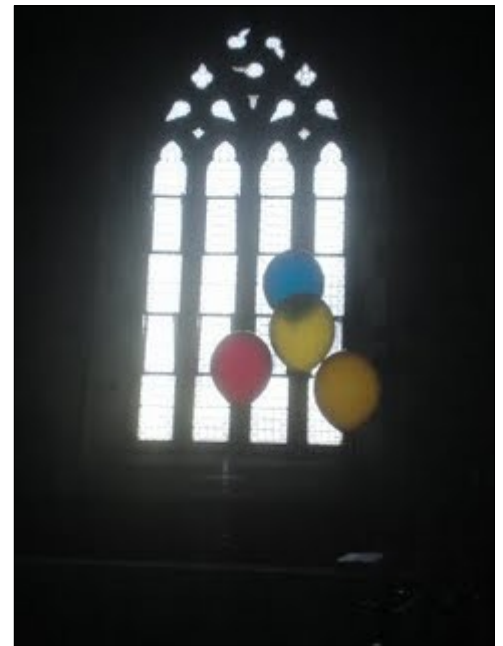
Robbie Noble

National Children's Assembly - Iona 2009

On the 10th of October 96 children made the crossing to Iona for the 3rd National Children's Assembly (NCA). This year's assembly was to be a little different from the previous 2 years as it was an international event. In total we had 23 children from other countries and 14 from Africa alone, which was great, and I would like to thank all the people who donated clothes: they were put to good use!

The theme of the event of "One – One God, One Baptism, One Faith" looked at how much we have in common as Christians even though we come from a wide variety of cultures. Over the weekend the children took part in a number of activities like the mad beach Olympics and the pilgrimage walk around the island, where they learnt about the events and people that brought the gospel to Scotland. They also took part in various workshops such as arts and crafts, music (led by Fischy Music) and puppets, and on the last night the work that they had done was joined together to make the evening service in the Abbey. This service was led by the young leaders and the children, and was a very moving act of worship.

After the weekend of the Assembly the children and leaders left Iona with a different outlook on the church - that it's not just your local congregation with maybe only a few children but it is in all the different countries, and we are all brothers and sisters together in Christ. We also left the people on the island changed as they saw children can also teach us about God and be used in his work along with us. Next year's Assembly has already been set for October 2010 back on Iona, and I for one can't wait!



Anne Bain

Stamp Recycling 2009

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

This year's World Mission Stamp Appeal is to raise money to support an outreach programme among the Roma people organised by our partner church in the Czech Republic. Since 2003, as part of their outreach programme for the Roma, they have run projects for children and young people (pre-school education and a drop-in centre); for parents (evening classes and social events); and for older people (a home care service). They want to strengthen and develop these outreach resources.

You can help by collecting and placing your used stamps in the box in the porch. All we ask is that you **cut** stamps from envelopes/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!

Do you think January is a dull month?

Well there is at least one bright date on the calendar for January 2010!

On Sunday 17 January the Under Ground Church (UGC) will be selling bacon rolls and flat sausage rolls (& a veggie option) along with the teas & coffees after the morning service. So please support us and cheer yourself up! Money raised will go toward the UGC weekend away in March.

The young people of the UGC would like to thank everyone for the support received at their Cake and Candy Stall in November. The sale of our tray-bakes combined with contributions from the Congregation realised the sum of £180.92. Your support is greatly appreciated!

In Brief ...

Fridge

The Lunch Club has replaced the old fridge in the kitchen with a fridge/freezer and the existing model is surplus to requirement. If you want to look at the old model, it is currently situated in the Large Hall, and any offer of around £50 would be most gratefully received.

Barnabas Trust / Suffering Church

Members are invited to sign a petition - promoted by the Barnabas Trust - in support of the abolition of the death sentence for apostasy enshrined in Islamic Law. See Rev. Milton Cashman for further details.

Church Premises Security

In light of one or two security issues over the past few months, would all users of the Church premises please note that all doors must be secured before leaving the building. If you are the last person to leave, please take a few minutes to go round and physically check **all** the exits. The main door to the Church is particularly vulnerable to being left un-bolted because it *looks* closed – please never assume that everything is completely secure until you have actually checked, thank you!

Treasurer's Report - October 2009

The figures for January to October are summarised below:

Target Budgeted Income (January - October)	£62262
Income from offerings to date (January-October)	£37580
Gift Aided offerings Tax recovered to date	£6006
Income from use of premises to date	£5888
Investment income from funds to date	£1091
Total income	£50565
Shortfall (£62262 - £50565)	£11697
Legacies to date (less 10% to Charity Fund)	£40500

Marjorie McKendrick, Treasurer

Gift Aid/Gift Day



Did you know that by making your regular offering through Standing Order can be of great help to us as a Congregation?

Yes, by doing this tax can be reclaimed through Gift Aid! Please give this prayerful consideration and ask Irene Glenfield for the necessary form if you would like to contribute in this way. Also, if anyone still has a Gift Day Envelope to hand in please do so as soon as possible, thank you!