

Church Matters

West Kilbride Parish Church Magazine

Issue No. 14 April-May 2012



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I would appreciate articles for the next issue of Church Matters to be emailed to Florence Fulton at fmf@sky.com (**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE**) by **13th May** or, if you do not have access to email, to be handed in to Ruth in the church office by **10th May** *Deirdre Murray, Editor.*

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Why did Jesus die?

For those who profess to believe in God, the majority I'm sure would hope that God was loving, merciful and forgiving. However, Easter is sometimes a puzzle to them because they don't understand why God, if he is loving and forgiving, has to go through all that nasty business with Jesus on the cross. I mean, was all that necessary?

But not to understand why Jesus had to die on the cross is not to understand the love or the forgiveness of God. You see, the fact that Jesus came into the world at all was because we needed a Saviour and we needing saving! All throughout the Bible - from the fall in Genesis with Adam and Eve, to the Israelites disobedience in the desert after the Exodus, to the exile in Babylon - the point is made that people have turned away from God.

And we are no different. As Paul writes in his letter to the Romans '...all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God'. (Romans 3:23) We are all in the same boat. Now, because the Bible also makes it clear that God is righteous and just - God cannot just overlook our disobedience and sin as if it doesn't matter. Which leaves a quandary. Here we are as people who cannot come into God's presence because of our sin ... and yet God desires us to be with Him, because He is a loving and compassionate God.

So what does God do in this situation? He pays the price for our sin Himself by, in love, sending Jesus. And through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross - the perfect sacrifice - our sin is atoned for and God's justice is satisfied. As the hymn writer says - the cross is the place where God's
'love and mercy meet' (O Church Arise). That is why it is a 'Wondrous Cross'!

But of course, that is not the end of the story. Because of course if you look at the cross in any Church in our denomination, you will note that the cross is empty! Because death could not hold Jesus - but he defeated it. And this means new life for us!

This Easter, may we marvel at a God who loved us so much that he gave up his only Son, that by believing in Him, we might not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16).

That is real love. Not a God who ignores sin - but a God who deals with sin giving up His only Son.

Let's survey the wondrous cross this Easter - marvel at the depth of the love of God for us - and let us rejoice in the new life that Jesus has bought for every person who believes in Him!

Yours in Christ,
James

Church Register

Deaths

Mr Ian Wilson - 2 Overton Court, Died 6th February 2012
Mr George Moran - 13 Jack's View, Died 15th February 2012

New Members

By Transfer:
Mrs Margaret Harris from Muckairn Parish Church

By Resolution of the Kirk Session:
Ms Lynne Bailey
Dr Margaret Strick

Editorial

We have been blessed by mild weather, lovely spring flowers and the promise of a lovely summer ahead (I hope!). As April starts we have the Easter celebrations to look forward to and I love Holy Week. This year James is planning to have something on in the church every day of that week. I love the walk up Law Hill on Easter Sunday morning with the short service at the top followed by the triumphal shout of "JESUS IS ALIVE!" so loud that the whole village can hear it! Please join us if you can. A lovely breakfast of rolls and sausage awaits us in the Bill Penny Hall when we get back.

Yummmm!

On the 12th April we look forward to a choir of children from Africa giving us a concert. This will be the first year that they will have sung in our church, but not the first time they will have been to Ayrshire. Please make sure you put this date in your diary and come along to give them encouragement.

Christian Aid Week is in May and there will be a Soup Lunch on the 13th and a Coffee Morning on the 19th, both in our church. Please support this very worthwhile cause and bring a friend.

The majority of you will know that we held a very successful 'C in the Park' last year and the good news is that we will be holding another 'C in the Park' this summer. We also intend to have a week of activities and fun for primary children from 25th – 29th June. We are calling this 'On Your Marks'. You'll read more about these in the next issue.

Please pray for all the work of the church as we reach out to the local community.

Thank you to all our contributors this month. We have another interesting magazine for this two month issue and the next one will be a three month issue, June – August so, if you have anything you need to communicate over the summer, please make sure you get it to us in plenty of time.

Deirdre Murray

Diary Dates for April 2012

1 Apr	10:30 AM	Palm Sunday Service and Sunday School
1 Apr	02:00 PM	Afternoon Service Headrigg Gardens
1 Apr	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall
2 Apr	07:30 PM	Evening Service (Holy Week)
3 Apr	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
3 Apr	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
3 Apr	07:30 PM	Evening Service (Holy Week)
4 Apr	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
4 Apr	07:30 PM	Evening Service (Holy Week)
5 Apr	07:30 PM	Maundy Thursday – Communion Service
6 Apr	07:30 PM	Good Friday Service
8 Apr	08:30 AM	Sunrise Celebration on Law Hill (leaving Church at 7.45am followed by Breakfast at Church)
8 Apr	10:30 AM	Easter Sunday Service
8 Apr	02:00 PM	Afternoon Service Headrigg Gardens
10 Apr	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
10 Apr	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
11 Apr	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
11 Apr	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
12 Apr	(TBC)	African Children's Choir
15 Apr	10:30 AM	Church Service and Sunday School
15 Apr	06:30 PM	Evening Service
17 Apr	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
17 Apr	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
17 Apr	07:30 PM	Kirk Session Meeting – Lower Hall
18 Apr	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
18 Apr	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
22 Apr	10:30 AM	Church Service and Sunday School
22 Apr	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall
24 Apr	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
24 Apr	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
25 Apr	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
25 Apr	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
29 Apr	10:30 AM	Church Service and Sunday School
29 Apr	06:30 PM	Evening Service
29 Apr	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall

Diary Dates for May 2012

1 May	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
1 May	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
2 May	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
2 May	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
6 May	10:30 AM	Church Service and Sunday School
6 May	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall
8 May	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
8 May	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
9 May	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
9 May	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
13 May	10:30 AM	Communion Service and Sunday School
13 May	02:00 PM	Communion Service Headrigg Gardens
13 May	06:30 PM	Evening Service
13 May	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall
15 May	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
15 May	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
16 May	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
16 May	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
19 May	10:00 AM	Christian Aid Coffee Morning – Bill Penny Hall
20 May	10:30 AM	Church Service and Sunday School
20 May	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall
22 May	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
22 May	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
22 May	07:30 PM	Team Leaders' Meetings – Lower Hall
23 May	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
23 May	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study
26 May	(TBC)	Elders' Conference
27 May	10:30 AM	Church Service–Pentecost and Sunday School
27 May	06:30 PM	Evening Service
27 May	07:30 PM	Youth Fellowship – Bill Penny Hall
29 May	09:30 AM	Women Who Pray – Prayer Room
29 May	10:00 AM	Rendezvous – Lower Hall
30 May	10:00 AM	Vestry Hour
30 May	07:15 PM	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

LETTER FROM HELEN SCOTT, OUR MISSIONARY PARTNER.

Dear Friends,

It was good to be able to visit many of you, but it is also good to be back.

I am now back in harness and getting back into the routine of things. We now have two headmistresses who have been working together since September 2011. They seem to be working well together although neither of our bosses has been to spell out to each of them what their role is. I am fitting in where I am needed or wanted. I have filled up my timetable so am doing a lot of teaching – great! Seven of our senior teachers are on transfer – one has already left – so the students are understandably as to who will be teaching them. There was a mini riot about this last term and I feel that I should do as much teaching as possible as this is a real concern. Staff and students both use me as a sounding board for their complaints as I think they are confused as to who in the office is dealing with what, so they come and report to me and then I pass the information to the right person. Have I only been back three weeks!!!

Our new head is Mrs. Chirambo quite young and easy to approach, though she has had no experience as a head. Please pray for her and Mrs Nyirenda as they work together. Pray too that I will have the wisdom I need as I do quite a bit of ‘conversation-counselling’.

It is raining heavily each day so the crops are getting the water they need. That also means plenty of mud to come! Fertilizer is a problem this year with very few being able to afford the high prices. Most will be growing organic food though not by choice!!! A lady came to see me today, obviously ill and as she went I was concerned that she would be able to make it back to her bed without collapsing, but she had made the journey to my house just to ask about fertilizer.

There is a serious lack of fuel – I haven't seen a petrol pump working since I arrived – just long lines of vehicles waiting at fuel stations. I do see fuel being poured out of plastic containers into vehicles under a tree or such place. The problem with the black market fuel is that the price is astronomical and some add water (or something) to it and then the engine seizes up, so it is a risk. Taxis are fewer – it means longer waits for one to turn up. As transport gets more difficult then prices go up or goods become scarce. The country feels a bit fragile, but folks are trying to carry on as best they can.

I hear you have continued to have gales. When it rains here I just thank God that it is warm rain I am enjoying - am I being selfish? Praying for you all.

Yours in Christ,
Helen

FREEWILL OFFERING ENVELOPES

Whilst every effort is being made to update the list of members who use the envelopes for their offering, I am aware that mistakes have been made again this year. For any inconvenience or upset that has been caused I am really very sorry. Please contact me if you did not receive envelopes and should have, or got them and did not want them for whatever reason. If you have moved or changed your name, please let me know so that I can update the records and hopefully get it right next year. I understand that distress has been caused by sending sets to addresses where someone has died, and again I am really sorry. Please contact me about anything to do with the envelopes at all and I will do my best to sort it out. If you don't tell me I won't knowI need your help.

Elaine Roscoe
1 Ardneil Avenue,
KA23 9LL

BB SUCCESS

I am delighted to inform you that 8 boys from the Company Section, under the instruction of our minister represented West Kilbride in the North Ayrshire Battalion Scripture knowledge competition. The result was announced last evening at the Battalion activity meeting and I am delighted to tell you that the West Kilbride boys were presented with the trophy for being the top score from across the 15 companies in North Ayrshire. This trophy will look very nice beside the Christian faith trophy, which was won by the Junior Section boys earlier in the session.

I thought it was appropriate to inform you of what I believe has been West Kilbride Boys Brigade most successful week on the sporting front for as long as can be remembered. Also to publicly thank the huge number of volunteers who have inspired the boys of our village to experience success at local, district and national level.

Local - our three Junior section football teams under the stewardship of Dr Murray, Dr Monaghan, Mr Parker, Mr Gibb, as well as countless parental supporters, witnessed the completion of the North Ayrshire Battalion football league last Saturday. This resulted in the West Kilbride teams collecting the gold, silver and bronze medals for finishing first, second and third in the league.

District - last night, three of our gymnastic teams competed in the Paisley and District gymnastics competition under the direction of Mr Bell and Mrs Monaghan. In the senior event, West Kilbride collected the gold and bronze medals with 1st Neilston collecting the silver medals, meanwhile in the under 14 competition, West Kilbride collected the gold medals.

National - last week, a West Kilbride team in the national table tennis championship claimed a victory over 1st Falkirk to reach the Scottish semi-finals. This is the furthest that any team from our village company has managed to get, many thanks to Mr Gillespie for organising our teams for the national championships.

All of your continued support for the Boys Brigade is very much appreciated and it is wonderful to see so many opportunities and successes being claimed by the boys. It is hoped that you will soon be able to see the photographs of these teams, complete in their new uniforms /strips, on our Facebook page.

A Jack

Junior Church

Each Sunday we have an average of 10 children attending Junior Church in the Bill Penny Hall starting about 11a.m. after the children's address in Church.

There are two groups; one for Primary 1-3 and the other for Primary 4-7.

We would love to have more young people join with us and would be happy for any young person to come along at 11a.m. whether they were at church or not.

The children are usually collected when the church service is finished at about 11.45 a.m.

The younger group is led by Jill Byers, the older one by Helen Ferguson.

We try to provide a happy, enjoyable time for our young people but we really desire that they will get to know the Bible for themselves and we study from both the Old and New Testaments often learning about the people who lived in Bible times and the lessons they can teach us.

We also play games, do crafts, drama etc. and share each other's news.

We had a Christmas party at the end of last year with children from 0-12years old and recently a group of us went to Fairlie Parish Church where we joined with the children there and from some of the churches in Largs for workshops by "Fischy Music" a group from Edinburgh who teach the children music with actions. This proved very popular with the younger ones and we sometimes sing along at junior church with the CD or DVD which we were given by the group.

We very much value the congregation's interest and prayers for us and do trust that more young people will come along and challenge us to continually provide teaching that will be encouraging and thought provoking.

Jesus' visit to West Kilbride

If Jesus came to West Kilbride and walked along the Main Street, where do you think you'd find him hanging out?

Coffee morning in the church hall, down at the Cherry Orchard, or visiting the minister, or the priest, or the school?

Maybe you'd find him in the Tavern or the Kings (seems a good name).

After all, he seemed to spend quite a bit of time eating and drinking, breaking a few rules and getting into trouble from the religion scholars of his day.

Maybe he's already here right enough, not with flowing robe and beard and all that stuff.

But in the hands and eyes and voice and feet of someone very near?

Remember.....

You're his hands,

You're his feet,

You're his eyes,

You're his ears,

You're his caring smile,

You're his outstretched arms -

Understanding, not condemning

Stopping to listen, rather than rushing by.

So tell me, when do you think they last saw him in the town?

Was it 2 minutes, 2 hours, 2 days or maybe 2 years ago?

Did anyone notice?

Hope they'll see him shortly.

David Murdoch

From an idea by ABSM

Monthly Prayer Diary – April 2012

- Sun 1st “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” John 12 v 13
- Mon 2nd We pray for the residents living in Corse Terrace & Corsehill Drive
- Tue 3rd Our Minister James, Anna his wife and their son John
- Wed 4th Count Your Blessings We are invited to wait at the foot of the Cross, to stand with the women there and weep with all who are crucified by the powers of the world. When we weep, we respond in love. When we respond in love we respond in the name of Jesus. When we respond in the name of Jesus new life and hope is possible, even through death
- Thu 5th We also stand alongside mothers and fathers who are praying for their prodigal children to come home
- Fri 6th “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.” (1 John 3 v 16)
- Sat 7th Our Church Family. May we be, One in Christ
- Sun 8th “He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.” (Matthew 28 v 6)
- Mon 9th We pray for residents living in Craufurd Ave & Crosbie Drive
- Tue 10th All we know who are unwell, awaiting test results or undergoing treatment
- Wed 11th We pray for all who have lost loved ones, Lord, please be their comfort
- Thu 12th Prayer from a resident in South Beach House. ‘Help me to remember those who might be easy to forget, those who go unnoticed and unloved. Let me take time to see, to smile, to touch, to hug, to hold a hand or just sit quietly and be there to ease the loneliness, and be a comforting reminder that you, Lord, care.’
- Fri 13th Our GP Surgery, local hospitals and Care Homes
- Sat 14th The Ardrossan Presbytery and local congregations facing change
- Sun 15th “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24 v 32)
- Mon 16th The residents living in Cubrieshaw Drive & Cubrieshaw Park

- Tue 17th Preparations being made for our first children's summer club, 'ON YOUR MARKS' & also plans for 'C in the Park 2012'
- Wed 18th Our local schools. We remember pupils preparing for their exams
- Thu 19th We pray for the whole Middle East region and also Afghanistan, all who are caught up in conflict
- Fri 20th We remember Helen Scott in Malawi and all we know who have been called to serve God in other lands
- Sat 21st We pray for World Leaders and all who are in authority over us.
- Sun 22nd "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." (John 20 v 21)
- Mon 23rd Residents living in Cubrieshaw Street & Cumbrae Place
- Tue 24th The Team Leaders and all our Elders. We give thanks for their hard work & pray for all the plans and preparations being made for the furtherance of Your Kingdom in West Kilbride
- Wed 25th We pray protection over our village
- Thu 26th We pray for young people we see around the village. Lord, please protect them and keep them from all harm and danger
- Fri 27th The Persecuted Church & all whose lives are in danger because they confess Jesus Christ as Lord
- Sat 28th Rt Rev David Arnott, Moderator of the Church of Scotland. We pray for the preparations being made for the General Assembly next month
- Sun 29th "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20 v 29)
- Mon 30th The residents living in Drummilling Avenue & Drummilling Drive

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus"

Philippians 2 v 5

Monthly Prayer Diary – May 2012

- Tue 1st Our Parish Church – “Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain.” (Psalm 127 v 1)
- Wed 2nd Our Minister James, Anna and their son John
- Thu 3rd Local Elections being held today
- Fri 4th World Leaders. We pray for all who are in authority over us
- Sat 5th All who are caught up in Human Trafficking and for organisations campaigning to raise awareness
- Sun 6th Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God in every part with praise, that my whole being may proclaim Thy being and Thy ways.
- Mon 7th Residents living in Drummilling Road & Farlands View
- Tue 8th We pray for family life. We give thanks for when things are going well and we pray for families we know who are struggling, for whatever reason
- Wed 9th We pray for our local schools and remember especially pupils taking their exams
- Thu 10th Our GP Surgery, local hospitals and Care Homes
- Fri 11th All who are struggling with debt or the fear of unemployment. We pray for young people trying to find their first job
- Sat 12th The Persecuted Church and all who are in prison because of their faith in the Lord Jesus
- Sun 13th Praise in the common things of life, its goings out and in; praise in each duty and each deed, however small and mean. Christian Aid Week begins today
- Mon 14th The residents living in Farmfield Terrace & Faulds Wynd
- Tue 15th Charities & Aid Agencies, we pray for the financial support they need
- Wed 16th All we know who are unwell, undergoing treatment or waiting for test results. We pray that all will have the care and support they need
- Thu 17th Preparations for ‘On Your Marks’ and C in the Park

- Fri 18th Carol and Graeme, our Session Clerks & all our Elders
- Sat 19th The General Assembly opens today. We pray for all the commissioners who will be attending throughout the coming week. Lord, may Your will be done
- Sun 20th Fill every part of me with praise: let all my being speak of Thee and of Thy love, O Lord, poor though I be and weak
- Mon 21st The residents living in Fullerton Drive & Gateside Street
- Tue 22nd All we know who depressed or downhearted, Lord we pray for strength for today and hope for tomorrow
- Wed 23rd Lord, You have promised to comfort all who mourn. Through every storm may Your love be the anchor.
- Thu 24th Our young people in the Church. We pray for every family represented. We pray for leaders and teachers, may they feel encouraged by our support
- Fri 25th We pray for local businesses within our village, may they prosper for the benefit of the whole community
- Sat 26th We pray for troubled areas of the world, for all who are caught up in war, for all who have suffered because of natural disasters. We pray for all who seek to comfort them
- Sun 27th So shall no part of day or night from sacredness be free; but all my life, in every step, be fellowship with thee.
- Mon 28th The residents living in Glenbryde Road, remembering all at Youth With A Mission & Glenside Crescent
- Tue 29th Rendezvous. We pray for good times of fellowship and ask a blessing on the ladies who serve there
- Wed 30th We pray for Helen Scott and Bishop Elias Taban in Africa, and we remember all who have been called to serve you in other lands
- Thu 31st Let us take time today to look around us and give thanks.

“For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

So great is his love for those who fear him;”

Guild

By the time you are reading this we will have had our closing lunch. It's been a good session with around 30 or so members attending. There's always room for new members though!

On 17th January Norman McGillvary gave us a very enjoyable slide show which he called "96 not out" then on the 24th January we enjoyed a Burns afternoon with Ruth Gregory and Gordon McKeller providing entertainment.

We had Kate Aspinall at our meeting on the 31st January telling us about the project 'Interfaith Support'. This was about the work going on in the Middle East.

Margaret McBride came along on the 7th February to tell us of the wonderful work of 'Mary's Meals' feeding so many children in Africa and beyond and we welcomed Mrs J Cruickshank to our meeting on the 14th February. She gave us a very interesting talk she named "In Retrospect".

At our meeting on the 21st February one of our members told us of her favourite memories and we watched the DVD of the annual meeting in Dundee that two members attended.

On the 28th February we enjoyed having one of our former members, Elizabeth Rhodes, show us some lovely slides of coastal Norway that she and her husband, John, had taken on holiday.

On 6th March we were thanking God for His creation, which was our Guild topic. Quite a few of our members shared with us.

As I write this there are two more meetings to be held. Mrs Jane Austin from Ardrossan on the 13th and the 20th is our AGM and Bring and Buy sale for Erskine Hospital. The Guild would like to thank the ladies who bake each Tuesday for Rendezvous and who leave us some for our tea at the Guild. Thanks to you all.

May Paton.

Some Thoughts on Church Membership

What does it mean to be a member of the church?

Is it the same as being a member at the golf club? Is it the same as being a member of the gym (60% of gym members don't go!)? Why should I bother at all? I thought it might be useful to put together some thoughts about church membership and what it means. For those who are thinking about membership, it will help explain more fully what membership is about. For those who have been members for a while, it is a gentle reminder to us all as to what our commitment should be. Here are the four questions that will be asked of a prospective member:

Question 1:

Believing in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
and confessing Jesus Christ
as your Saviour and Lord,
do you promise to join regularly
with your fellow Christians
in worship on the Lord's day?

Question 2:

Do you promise to be faithful in reading the Bible,
and in prayer?

Question 3:

Do you promise
to give a fitting proportion
of your time, talents and money
for the Church's work in the world?

Question 4:

Do you promise,
depending on the grace of God,
to profess your loyalty to Jesus Christ,
to serve him in your daily work,
and to walk in his ways all the days of your life?

First Things

From these vows then, what is it that defines a member of the church?
The primary requirement is that you must believe.

Profession of faith has always been an integral part of church membership.

In the Bible, Romans 10: 9 says that: 'If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.' So as a member, you must be able to articulate what the Christian faith is about and know Jesus as your personal Saviour and Lord. That is not to say that we have it all entirely sorted out - faith is an ongoing process, and we all continue to learn more about God - but the basics must be there so that you can take the first vow of church membership in good conscience.

And the expectation is that we will continue to follow Jesus in our everyday life.

The secondary requirements in church membership are that:

- You will come to church regularly.
- You read the Bible and pray.
- You give a proportion of your time, talents and money to the Church's work.

Here are some thoughts on these secondary requirements:

Why should I come to church regularly?

There are at least 3 reasons why it is important to come to church regularly.

Firstly, as Christians, it is important that we set aside time to worship God and to spend time with other Christians. (Hebrews 10:25)

Secondly, it is in the church that we can learn and grow in our faith.

Thirdly, in the church, you find a family and a place to belong. When you are struggling, they will help you to keep going. And when they are struggling, they ask that you will do the same for them. In the church, we are accountable to one another.

Why should I read the Bible and Pray?

If we want to grow in our faith, and grow in the knowledge of who God is and what he has done, it makes sense that we spend time seeking God in prayer and by reading the Bible.

Why do we give time, talents and money?

Because we put our time, talents and money where our heart is - we give back to God, because He has given to us.

James McNay

MARCH /APRIL 2012 PROPERTY REPORT

As we go to press, the architect, appointed by Session, is well under way with the production of detailed drawings and information for our proposed refurbishment of the buildings.

The initial sketches for this have been on display in the Lower Hall for some considerable time accompanied by “suggestion boxes” for use by the congregation. Whilst these have not exactly been overflowing, any comments have been passed to the architect for consideration.

The instruction to the architect followed approval, by Presbytery and Session, for the expenditure of professional fees for detailed design works of Phase 1, (to Planning and Building Warrant stage) and Phase 2 of our proposals (to Planning stage.) Phase 1, as a reminder, is for the remodeling of the Sanctuary, Lower Halls and side access from the lane. Phase 2 is for the eventual removal and replacement of the Bill Penny Hall.

Following receipt of these Local Authority approvals, Session will then have further decisions to make. N.A.C. Planners and Historic Scotland have approved the relocation of stained glass windows from Overton to W.K.P.C. as well as the incorporation of a new window to commemorate the union of the churches. This work will be incorporated in the project currently being planned.

At this point and as a means of further encouragement, it may be helpful to recall the content of Rev. Jim Stewart’s talks during the church conference a few weeks ago. For those who attended, it was a privilege to hear Jim highlighting some of the reasons for us even to have considered a project such as ours and actually reminding us that we really have no personal choice in the matter if we genuinely have a desire to assist in the expansion of God’s work, not only for our benefit but importantly, for future generations.

One of the practical reasons that we are in the position we now find ourselves, is that various sections of the property have

reached a stage when they will only be a source of future on-going and repetitive expenditure, not only for this membership but for those in the future. That is surely not a legacy to be considered. The Property Team is of the opinion that we have a duty to address this and through the union of the churches and subsequent identification of proposed works, now have the opportunity of sending a message to those who care to listen by assisting and encouraging in what ever way we can, both individually and collectively.

Further suggestion of the timing being correct to continue with our works comes from the various professionals of different disciplines who have carried out surveys relating to not only the proposed alterations, but also from the most recent Quinquennial Report. Upgrades and repairs to areas and services throughout the property, (not all visible), have been noted as “urgent” in some cases and, as noted during the last Congregational meeting and at numerous Session meetings, must be addressed, whether these be incorporated within the alterations or separately. The time for “a lick of paint here and there” is long since gone!

On the more routine, (unfortunately), side of things, we have carried out repairs to different roof areas, blocked drainage and electrics and will continue to address these types of matters, whilst attempting to avoid any excessive expenditure on areas which could be subject to future alteration.

W. McFarland.

Pledge Day

The pledge day at the Church Conference was the start of funding the refurbishment of the Church.

The amount raised from the Sale of St Andrews Manse goes a long way towards the cost. However, it is anticipated that without leaving the general fund short for the running of the Church, we would require to raise a substantial amount of money.

There is a small team looking to find Grants for the work involved.

The pledges at the time of writing this are £18,347 with a further £3,500 to be claimed from the Inland Revenue in the form of Gift Aid.

While the pledge day itself was during the Conference, this does not mean that no more pledges can be made, in fact it is hoped that as time progresses and planning permission is given that the pledges will roll in.

The pledges have taken many forms, some people have pledged over a period of time, others have given a cheque and pledged further contributions, some have set up standing orders, and others pledged to start giving or give a cheque when planning permission has been given.

If you feel that you can give something to the refurbishment, please see either John Coy, or myself.

Nan Brownlee

CONGRATULATIONS CONGRATULATIONS CONGRATULATIONS

Happy birthday to Isabel Frame, Drummilling Road, who will celebrate her 60th birthday on 17th April. As well as being a member of our church family, Isabel is a weel kent face and friendly voice at the surgery where she has worked as a receptionist for over 30 years. Now that she has reached this milestone in her life she is going to be retiring. She will certainly be missed. Many blessings, Isabel, we wish you a lovely birthday and a long and happy retirement!

Brian and Deirdre Murray are looking forward to celebrating their 20th Wedding Anniversary on 22nd May. Deirdre is Isabel Frame' older sister so a double celebration is on order!

Tearfund

Once again I would like to thank very much all those who have been collecting their small change for our little boxes. It's amazing how this money adds up to a very worthwhile sum.

In January we were able to send £98.76 plus a very generous cheque for £75 making a total of £173.76. In February we sent another £95.72

In her letter of thanks for our generosity, Lynne Paterson, the director of Tearfund, writes that the money will help in places like Afghanistan where, largely due to years of war, there is poverty, insecurity, trauma and poor education causing many mental health problems for which there is a desperate lack of help. In a study of 300 children in Kabul, 90% believed they would die in war, 67% had seen dead body parts and 80% were frightened, sad and unable to cope mentally. As a result Tearfund's partner in Afghanistan is working with them to improve the lives of thousands of people through their Primary Mental Health Project providing psychiatric training for doctors and community health workers. They are also educating mullahs and traditional healers.

Bruce Clark, Tearfund's Country Representative for Afghanistan has said that their health support programme has become a national leader in the field which has attracted local government officials, the Pakistan and Iranian consuls, as well as 6 TV crews recognising our partner for excellent work.

It's great to think that our small change collections can help with such a worthwhile project.

Audrey Brown.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The start of the New Year saw the Men's Fellowship return to the Bill Penny Hall for its recreational evenings, having in the early part of this session had to make do with the Lower Hall and its fitted carpet, which did not exactly lend itself to a game of any skill, and was more suited to a "game for a laugh"!

However, looking back we did in fact enjoy many a good fun night. Back "home" in January we returned to a more serious atmosphere as we got our competitions under way. Also that month we hosted another visit from our friends from Beith church and had a very enjoyable night in which we fared rather well at the carpet bowls. Also,

on that occasion, we again had a darts competition, and that member who won last year, and maintains he never played in his youth (?) and – (don't tell anyone) - lives close to the church, ran up another massive score to win it again!!

In February, we were then able to have a guest speaker, John Steele from Ardrossan, who updated us with an enthralling talk revealing how, after a continued and prolonged research, he was able to lay bare the true facts of the sinking of the HMS Dasher aircraft carrier, between Ardrossan and Arran, during the last war, in which 379 men perished and only 23 accorded an official funeral.

Time this year, only allowed us to run a singles competition which was won (don't know how) by yours truly, who somehow for once got the better of Jim Fitzsimmons in the final.

Unfortunately for various reasons, this year has seen us struggle to maintain a desirable number of active members, several people declining in health and now unable to attend. However we carry on, and hope to be able to do so next year, when we should benefit from a full programme.

Fred Baxter

God's Gifts

The lame cannot walk, the blind cannot see

But I have an arm they can lean on.

The deaf cannot hear, the dumb cannot talk

But I have a smile you can see.

God gave me sight, made me sound of limb

A song in my heart, they are all just from Him

I'll cheer the lonely and sad, then things won't seem so bad

Life's road is less weary if I can bring joy with a smile and a song.

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpentry shop until he was thirty and then for three years was an itinerant preacher.

When the tide of popular opinion turned against him, his friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He was tried and convicted. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. When he was dead he was laid in a borrowed grave. On the third day he rose to life.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never went to college. He never travelled more than two hundred miles from his the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompanies greatness.

Yet all the armies that ever marched, and all the governments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, have not affected life upon this earth as powerfully as has that One Solitary Life.

The Auld Weedow.

“It’s lonely”, she says, “since I’m left alane,

I seldom see a soul,

They say I’m always moanin’,

But a sair he’rts hard tae thole”.

They tell her tae get oot an’ aboot

Meet folk an’ hae a bit crack

“Aye, that’s aw richt, the goin’ oot,

It’s the empty hoose when we come back”.

She canna knit an’ sew like she did

Her hauns are stiff an’ sair,

Her een are dimmer than they used tae be
She canna read nae mair.
I felt rale vexed, what could I dae
Tae cheer the auld soul up,
I thocht a kent whit micht cheer her up
I'll get her a wee pup.
On second thocts that's nae sae wise
It would need a when o' rins,
The sma'est need some exercise
An' she's no steady on her pins.
But yin day I went tae see her
Whit a change has come aboot
She talked aboot a freen she had
But he had just gone oot.
She telt me "oh sae braw he is
An' he likes a lot o' cuddles, she winked,
No finicky wi his food".
I wis rooted where I stood
Her face wis wreathed in smiles
As she talked on this an' that
But I had got the wrang end o' the stick
She'd got hersel' a cat.

NEWS FROM MAI

This is the latest news from South Sudan and it is such good news! When Bishop Taban visited us last year it was hoped that a surgeon would be able to commence in Goli early this year. However, the surgeon accepted a better paid job in Juba, the capital, but another Congolese surgeon has been found and is being interviewed soon. Let's pray that he is suitable and will take the job.

The following news is taken from the latest email I received.

SOLAR PANELS ARRIVE IN YEI AT LAST!

Thanks to the generosity of MAI supporters, the Hospital in Goli will have a solar installation that will allow routine surgeries to be undertaken as soon as the surgeon is available.

Although the funds were sent last year, the equipment has been delayed. Approval papers had to be obtained from the national government in Juba which took time. They were then held at the Central Equatoria administration for some time before finally being delivered.

Then, transport of the equipment from Kampala - a journey of 400 miles - took from Saturday 10th March until Wednesday 15th due to hold ups at border and custom points! Even though our Partner, EPC, has permission to import necessary items free of duty, customs officials always find "other taxes" which result in lengthy negotiations!

However, the good news is that the items have arrived safely and will be forwarded and installed at Goli soon.



100% PATIENT NUMBERS RISE IN GOLI!

In the last six months of 2011, there were 341 in patients at Goli hospital whereas, for the same six months immediately after the wards were opened, there were 172 inpatients. This is a very encouraging increase of almost 100%. A total of 563 inpatients received care in 2011. Malaria continues to be the major factor for admission.

Although a more modest increase was seen in outpatient numbers which rose to 6,088, a rise of just 6%, there were encouraging developments with the antenatal classes. An average of 27 women attended antenatal classes each month. Though this sounds low to western ears, this is an encouraging start in such a poor and uneducated community.

Intermittent Preventative Therapy (IPT) is a World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendation for all pregnant women in high risk malaria areas. This includes a pregnancy-safe anti-malaria drug with vitamin supplements of iron and folic. If a mother suffers from malaria during pregnancy, it is shown to cause low birth weight, maternal anaemia, miscarriage, still birth and neo-natal death. In South Sudan, only 40% of women receive any form of antenatal care; all women attending Goli's antenatal classes receive the recommended doses of IPT and the 3 month course of vitamin supplements.