

Church Matters

West Kilbride Parish Church Magazine
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Invermoriston

Contents

Page

- 3 Minister's Letter
- 5 Editorial
- 6 October Dates for Your Diary
- 7 November Dates for your Diary
- 8 October Prayer Diary
- 10 November Prayer Diary
- 12 Some Things We Keep
- 14 Women Who Pray
- 15 The Black Feather
- 16 Church Library
- 17 The Shortened Cross / Church Register
- 18 In Christ We Have: WRI Coffee Morning
- 19 *Letter from Heidi Nicklin*

I would appreciate articles for the next issue of Church Matters to be emailed to me at brianseamill@aol.com by 13th November or, if you do not have access to email, to be handed in to Jo in the church office by 11th November.
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MINISTER'S LETTER

I'm sure we are often loathe to admit it, but there are many things as humans that we do not know and many more that we do not understand. Simply watch an episode of 'Eggheads' or 'Pointless' or 'University Challenge' (if you're really brainy!) and quickly we begin to realise how little we know about so many things.

As I write this, it has been reported in the news that there has been a discovery made at CERN (the world's leading scientific research centre) in Geneva that there may be particles that travel faster than the speed of light - which, if true, throws the whole theory of Special Relativity into doubt. Not that the majority of us (least of all myself) actually understand how this discovery was made - or even what the theory of Special Relativity is - or quite what the implications of all this would be.

No matter how hard we try, our brains can't grasp these things. And so we are forced to accept them 'by faith' - believing that the scientists who have looked into these things know better than us and therefore should know. We trust they have done their utmost to make sure that their research is trustworthy.

From a Christian perspective, if we cannot even understand the things that God has created - how can we expect to understand the ways of God? And yet often that is what we try to do. And sometimes, in our arrogance, we believe that we could do better.

You see, there are many things in our world that we do not understand: Why do some people suffer whilst others prosper? Why do so many innocent starve, whilst other have plenty? And in the case of the latter - how do they feel if they pray 'Give us today our daily bread' from the Lord's Prayer, and yet their prayer seems to go unheard?

And even within the Bible, there are difficult questions. Why, in the Old Testament, do many 'innocent' people seem to be killed with God's blessing?

There are no easy answers to these questions - and the myriad other questions that may spring to mind. But let's not presume that we know better than God. You see, it would be easy for us to think that if we were God, we would make sure everyone received their daily bread. And that we would make sure that no-one was killed because we would be more compassionate than God.

But in all reality, who are we to question the mind of God? Despite knowing that there are those in our world who die of starvation and despite knowing that there are people who seem to needlessly die in the Bible - we also know that the Bible says that 'God is gracious and compassionate' (Psalm 103), that he is loving (1 John 5) and that God takes 'no pleasure in the death of anyone' (Ezekiel 18:32). And so simply we have to hold our questions in one hand in tension with what we know about God in the other. We may not be able to square them - but has that not got more to do with our ignorance than assuming inconsistency in the character of God? Maybe in the same way that we have faith in our scientists - we should have faith in Almighty God.

Albert Einstein, who of course came up with the theory of Special Relativity, once said:

'If God has created the world, his primary worry was certainly not to make its understanding easy for us'.

And of course, this is even more true when we think of the moral problems of the world.

Two verses to reflect on.

Firstly, Ecclesiastes 5:2: 'God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few'.

Secondly, Deuteronomy 29: 29 'The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may follow all the words of this law'.

Of course it is important that we grapple with difficult issues such as the ones highlighted above. But rather than thinking we know better, is it not best that we let God be God - put our faith in Him, and leave it at that?

Your friend and minister,
James

Editorial

In the last magazine I forgot to mention that it was a year since the first one, ten magazines had been printed and lots of articles contributed in the year. The Communications Team has decided that Church Matters will now be printed two monthly which is why this edition is for October and November. Please continue to contribute articles and news. We still require a few volunteers in certain areas to distribute the magazine so, if you can help, please contact the church office.

I would appreciate comments on what you like about your magazine and if there is anything you don't like. Constructive criticism can be good!

It seems no time since the summer holidays and now autumn is here, although the forecast is for an Indian summer in October. I do hope so! By the time of the next issue we'll be into winter with advent and all the Christmas preparations in hand. This can be a very busy time for everyone but we must make a priority of coming to church. ***“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another...”*** Hebrews 10:25. If you haven't come to church for a while, why not make a commitment to start coming again? You will be blessed and others will be blessed by your presence. If you can't manage to the morning service there will be two, more contemporary, evening services starting in October. Please check the Diary Dates for these. If you are housebound or unable to come to church because of illness you can request a copy of the CD of the service that is made each week or you can listen to the sermon on the church webpage. Please make use of these facilities.

May I also encourage you to come to the Wednesday evening prayer meeting and Bible study at 7.15pm and, if you are a female, to the ladies prayer meeting on a Tuesday morning at 9.30am, both in the Prayer Room.

The items donated to Mary's Meals Backpack Appeal have now been uplifted, very gratefully, and we are now accepting items for the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal and tins of food, especially meat and fish, for Glasgow City Mission. Thank you for your generous hearts. May God bless you, He loves a cheerful giver!

Deirdre Murray.

October dates for your diary

Sunday 2nd	10.30am Morning Worship 2.00pm Age Concern service at Headrigg Gardens
Tuesday 4 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm Guild Musical Afternoon - WKPC Choir
Wednesday 5 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 9th	10.30am Thanksgiving Service
Monday 10 th	7.00pm Alpha Course continues
Tuesday 11 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm No Guild meeting – Age Concern concert 7.30pm Kirk Session meeting in Lower Hall
Wednesday 13 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 16th	10.30am Morning worship 6.30pm Evening Service
Monday 17 th	7.00pm Alpha course continues
Tuesday 18 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm Guild – Speaker from Geilsland School
Wednesday 19 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 23rd	10.30am Morning worship
Monday 24 th	7.00pm Alpha course continues 7.15pm Men's Fellowship speaker J. Steele
Tuesday 25 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.00pm Guild Project - “New Hunger”
Wednesday 26 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 30th	10.30am Morning worship 6.30pm Evening Service
Monday 31 st	7.00pm Alpha course continues

November dates for your diary

Tuesday 1 st	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm Guild Favourite Hymns and readings; special offering day for Guild funds
Sunday 6th	10.30am Communion Service 2.00pm Afternoon Communion at Headrigg Gardens
Tuesday 8 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm Guild speaker – Heidi Nicklin on Pakistan
Wednesday 9 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 13th	10.30am Morning Worship with act of Remembrance 6.30pm Evening Service.
Monday 14 th	7.00pm Alpha Course continues 7.15pm Men's Fellowship speaker J. Rhodes
Tuesday 15 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm Guild speaker Rev J. McNay on Guild theme
Wednesday 16 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 20th	10.30am Morning worship
Monday 21 st	7.00pm Alpha course continues
Tuesday 22 nd	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.30pm Guild – Speaker Maggie Broadley on the Barony Project. Men's Fellowship are guests.
Wednesday 23 rd	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 27th	10.30am Morning worship – Advent Sunday 6.30pm Evening Service
Monday 28 th	7.00pm Alpha course continues
Tuesday 29 th	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 2.00pm Guild speaker – G. Smart of Wildlife Trust 7.30pm Team Leaders' meeting
Wednesday 30 th	7.15pm Church prayer meeting and Bible Study
Sunday 4th Dec.	10.30am Morning worship

Monthly Prayer Diary – October 2011

- Sat 1st World Leaders during these turbulent times. May Godly men and women rise to take positions of authority.
- Sun 2nd May His peace be your covering, your heart know His fullness, and by His mighty power may you know victory over every enemy....(may this be our prayer in this coming week as we remember people who are living through very difficult situations).**
- Mon 3rd All whose lives are torn apart by war, terrorism or natural disasters.
- Tues 4th We remember all who are living and dying in the famine torn parts of Africa.
- Wed 5th Organisations such as Tearfund and Christian Aid. We pray for their work in the world.
- Thu 6th Human Trafficking, people bought and sold into slavery.
- Fri 7th The Persecuted Church and all who are in prison or their lives are in danger because of their faith in the Lord Jesus.
- Sat 8th Lord, we have so much to be thankful for. Help us to be good stewards of Your wonderful provision.
- Sun 9th May we be whole in body, soul, and spirit as a result of being in harmony with God's will and purpose for our lives.**
- Mon 10th We remember the continuing Alpha Course. We pray for all who are exploring a closer walk with God.
- Tues 11th Libya, Syria. We pray for the whole Middle East region.
- Wed 12th We pray for charities that are struggling to survive and be effective in the current economic conditions.
- Thur 13th Children in Residential Care and Foster Homes.
- Fri 14th Our minister James, Anna and their son John.
- Sat 15th Y.F. Junior Church, Treasure Seekers and the Crèche. We pray for their leaders also.
- Sun 16th May we know the healing power of His presence, and the restoration of every broken relationship.**
- Mon 17th Our Church Family. Jesus prayed for believers, "that all of them may be one" (John 17 v 21). Lord we pray for unity amongst us.

Tues 18th All we know who are sick and those who care for them.

Wed 19th Lord, we ask for Your comfort for the bereaved and brokenhearted

Thur 20th Our GP Surgery and local hospitals.

Fri 21st Our local schools. We pray for safety and protection of pupils. We pray against adverse peer pressure

Sat 22nd The Ardrossan Presbytery and local congregations who are facing change

Sun 23rd In our weariness may we be refreshed, in our weakness may our strength be renewed, in our heaviness may our hearts sing a new song.

Mon 24th The residents in Headrigg Gardens and our local Care Homes.

Tues 25th All whose lives are caught up in drug and alcohol addiction and also their families.

Wed 26th Our Missionary Partners and all who we know have been called to serve God in other places.

Thur 27th Our Session Clerks Carol and Graeme and all our Elders.

Fri 28th Your leading and guidance for the future for our Church in West Kilbride

Sat 29th Protection over our village against violence and crime.

Sun 30th May His kindness make us kind, His grace make us gracious and His generosity make us generous. (I will bless you... and you will be a blessing. Gen 12 v 2)

Mon 31st Protection over our children during this night of Halloween.

“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you. Psalm 9 v 9, 10.

“The name of Jesus is not so much written as ploughed into the history of the world”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Monthly Prayer Diary – November 2011

- Tues 1st The Rendezvous Café – We give thanks for the ladies who serve there and for good times of fellowship.
- Wed 2nd We give thanks for all the young people who are attending activities within our church. We pray for their protection and that they may all come to know Jesus as their friend.
- Thu 3rd We pray for the leaders of Crèche, Treasure Seekers, Junior Church and YF + Anchor Boys, BBs, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides.
- Fri 4th We give thanks for James our Minister, Anna and their son John. Lord, please guide, protect and bless them.
- Sat 5th We pray for Carol and Graeme, our Session Clerks. Lord, please be to them all they need You to be.
- Sun 6th We give thanks for God's leading and guidance for our Church. 'Hitherto has the Lord helped us.'**
- Mon 7th We continue to remember all who are taking part in the Alpha Course currently being held.
- Tues 8th We remember our Church Elders. We give thanks for all the work that goes on unseen that aids the smooth running of our Church
- Wed 9th The Ardrossan Presbytery. We pray also for local congregations facing change.
- Thu 10th Human Trafficking. People who are bought and sold into slavery.
- Fri 11th Remembrance Day
- Sat 12th Men and women serving in the Armed Forces in these days. We pray for their protection. We also pray for their families at home.
- Sun 13th We give thanks for our Church Family and pray that our love and concern for one another may be a good witness to the whole community**
- Mon 14th All who are unwell or are undergoing treatment, may they feel Your presence ever near.
- Tues 15th All who are grieving, Lord we pray that they will be comforted.
- Wed 16th All who are sad and lonely, may they have hope for a brighter tomorrow
- Thu 17th Our GP Surgery, local hospitals and hospices

- Fri 18th Headrigg Gardens and our local Care Homes
- Sat 19th People who are experiencing food shortages due to famine and war and poverty.
We pray for the work of Glasgow City Mission.
- Sun 20th We give thanks for the many ways that God leads and guides us. We pray to be ever more obedient to His will**
- Mon 21st Local schools. We pray for Christian Teachers, that they may do their job in such a way that shows the love of God.
- Tues 22nd Troubled areas of the world. We pray for all whose lives have been torn apart. We pray for Peace makers and Peace keepers
- Wed 23rd We pray for all who struggling with debt or the fear of unemployment. We pray for the many young people who have yet to find their first job.
- Thu 24th We pray for our neighbours, especially those who feel vulnerable as winter approaches
- Fri 25th All who are struggling with drug and alcohol addiction, gambling or pornography, and the impact this has on family life.
- Sat 26th The Persecuted Church and all who live in danger because of their faith in the Lord Jesus
- Sun 27th Advent Sunday. We give thanks that God is the same yesterday today and forever and that He has a plan for the future.**
- Mon 28th The Church of Scotland and the Church in Scotland
- Tues 29th World Leaders and all who are in authority over us
- Wed 30th We pray protection over our village against violence and crime.

“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face shine upon us, that Your ways may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations.”

Psalm 67 v 1

Jesus Christ is the meeting place of eternity and time, the joining of deity and humanity, the junction of heaven and earth.

Some Things We Keep

I grew up with practical parents. A mother, God love her, who washed tinfoil after she cooked in it, then reused it. She was the original recycle queen, before they had a name for it... A father who was happier getting old shoes fixed than buying new ones.

Their marriage was good, their dreams focused. Their best friends lived barely a wave away.

I can see them now, Dad in trousers, tee shirt and a hat and Mom in a house dress, lawn mower in one hand, and dish-towel in the other. It was the time for fixing things. A curtain rod, the kitchen radio, screen door, the oven door, the hem in a dress. Things we keep.

It was a way of life and sometimes it made me crazy. All that re-fixing, eating, renewing, I wanted just once to be wasteful. Waste meant affluence. Throwing things away meant you knew there'd always be more.

But then my father died, and on that clear winter's night, in the warmth of the hospital room, I was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn't any more.

Sometimes, what we care about most gets all used up and goes away...never to return. So... while we have it.... it's best we love it... and care for it... and fix it when it's broken..... and heal it when it's sick

This is true ... for friends..... and old cars..... and children with bad report cards..... and dogs with bad hips.... and aging parents..... and grandparents. We keep them because they are worth it, because we are worth it.

Some things we keep. Like a best friend that moved away or a classmate we grew up with.

There are just some things that make life important, like people we know who are special..... and so, we keep them close!

NINE THINGS GOD WON'T ASK ON THAT DAY.

1.... God won't ask what kind of car you drove. He'll ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.

2... God won't ask the square footage of your house, He'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

3.... God won't ask about the clothes you had in your wardrobe, He'll ask how many you helped to clothe.

4... God won't ask what your highest salary was. He'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.

5.... God won't ask what your job title was. He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.

6... God won't ask how many friends you had. He'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.

7.... God won't ask in what neighbourhood you lived, He'll ask how you treated your neighbours.

8... God won't ask about the colour of your skin, He'll ask about the content of your

character.

g.... God won't ask why it took you so long to seek Salvation. He'll lovingly take you to your mansion in heaven, and not to the gates of Hell.

Women Who Pray

You are warmly invited to join women who pray on Tuesday mornings in the Prayer Room from 09.30 – 10.30.
Praying for our Church, our local community and the wider world.

This wee poem was given to me by Joan Connor and was written by her niece to whom she had told the story, so it's all true!

THE BLACK FEATHER

My Aunt is not a twitcher, as far as I can see,
And she doesn't show much interest in ornithology,
But clearly there is a link somewhere a fact I truly know, so
listen, hear the story of my Aunt Joan and the Crow.

She spied it through her window so still among the grass,
It's cold grey eyes stared back at her through the kitchen glass.
It didn't move a muscle but its stance just seemed to say "Please
come out and help me 'cos I want to fly away".

Instantly she stepped outside, dog Toby in her wake,

He barked a warning to the bird - no difference did it make.
It stood its ground quite bravely a strange look in it eye,
no flutterings or flappings not one attempt to fly.

Now a crow I'd say is ugly, - its call is quite atrocious,
It's big and black and has a beak that all would call ferocious.
My Aunt Joan witnessed this but saw great beauty too, its
feathers gleaming glossy black, with a polished shiny hue.

She summoned help from neighbours "Please come along and see"
"Best leave the bird alone" - they seemed to all agree
But Aunt Joan was committed, to her it made great sense, to
stroke the bird and comfort it - make it feel less tense.

Listening to her friends' advice but acting from the heart, a
place of safety must be found right from the very start. The
garage was a refuge - a haven from all harm, she took it
there so gently cradled in her arm.

In a scrap of old material kept from times gone by,
She wrapped it up so slowly great sadness in her eye. Fetched
water first and tiny crumbs food must be its goal But nothing
that she offered could help that poor crow's soul.

She tended to its every need and yes for what it is worth,
Improved its last few hours upon our planet earth. But
later, all alone, when no other bird was near - its spirit
soared away to a greater, higher sphere.

Now here's a strange scenario, and reader be not bitter,
If the crow reached Birdie Heaven it would post a note on twitter And
birds who had the internet would fly from far and wide, to sample
loving kindness from my Aunt in West Kilbride.

CHURCH LIBRARY

We are fortunate to have an excellent church library with many
interesting resources for all ages. I love to read and found that it

was very expensive to keep buying books I wanted to read and the public library was limited in its stock of Christian books. Now, I am spoilt for choice!

The books have all been donated so money is saved all round. I have donated quite a few but there are some I keep at home because I read them over again and use them as reference books or because Brian hasn't got round to reading them yet. There are children's books, too, and also some videos and DVDs.

If you haven't seen it, the bookcase is in the Lower Hall so do come and have a browse through it. I have some suggestions.

1. Each time you read one of the books, put a wee note inside to tell others what you thought of the book.
2. If you want to do more, I'd love you to do a book review and send it to me for inclusion in Church Matters.
3. If there is a book you'd like to read that isn't in the library send a request and I'll publish it. Someone may have it, maybe even me!

Deirdre Murray

The Shortened Cross

A pilgrim was making his way to the Promised Land. He was carrying his master's cross, a burden he cheerfully accepted. Becoming weary, the pilgrim paused to rest. As he basked in the sunlight, he watched a woodsman nearby hew a tree in the forest. "Good friend," called the pilgrim, "may I use your axe to shorten my cross? As I journey it grows heavier." "Indeed," cried the woodsman and, without hesitation, he obliged. The pilgrim travelled on making much progress. The cross was shorter now, and his burden lighter.

In no time at all, the Promised Land was in sight. Drawing near, he saw that a deep gulf separated him from the glories beyond. He would use the cross to span the divide.

Though he struggled mightily to span the divide with the cross, it fell short by the very amount he had removed.

Suddenly, with tears streaming down his face, he awoke; it had been a dream. Clutching the cross to his breast the pilgrim pressed on. The cross was just as heavy but its burden was lighter.

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CHURCH REGISTER

Ordination

Mrs Alison Ward of Meadowfoot Road was ordained as an Elder on Sunday 18th September.

New Members

Mr Paul and Mrs Jill Selman, 15 Hillside.

Deaths

Mr James Petrie of Tarbet Avenue.

Mr Brian Winfield of Manse Road.

Please remember family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

In Jesus Christ we have:

A love that can never be fathomed

A life that can never die

A righteousness that can never be tarnished

A peace that can never be understood

A rest that can never be disturbed

A joy that can never be diminished

A hope that can never be disappointed

A glory that can never be clouded

A light that can never be darkened

A purity that can never be defiled

A beauty that can never be marred
A wisdom that can never be baffled
Resources that can never be exhausted.

Anon

WOMEN'S RURAL COFFEE MORNING

Many ladies in our church family are members of the WRI and this year Anne Wilkinson is President. The President gets to choose which charity will benefit from the annual Coffee Morning and this year it will be held on 22nd October and all proceeds will go to Combat Stress at Hollybush House, outside Ayr.

Hollybush House is the only residential facility in Scotland for our service personnel who are suffering from post traumatic stress. They also have to offer help to people from Northern Ireland and the north of England because there are so few places in Britain able to give the help required. Due to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan more and more people desperately need this help and they have to rely on the Combat Stress charity to provide this.

A member of our church family goes to Hollybush House for a week twice a year and says it has been a lifesaver for him.

Please support this Coffee Morning. Tickets can be bought from Anne, me or any other member of the WRI.

Deirdre Murray

Dear Friends,

Our (Louise, her 2 eldest & myself) trip to visit the Children's Home in Jaffna, Northern Sri Lanka, was a great success. It was very encouraging to see the North slowly recovering from 30 years of civil war. Houses are being restored and enterprises reopened. There is still a lot of road maintenance to be done!

The Home is also prospering. Now every child has a bed and mattress. When I first went 6 years ago, they were sleeping

on the floor without even pillows. The children have grown – they are nearly all teenagers now with all that goes with that age-group. Usually visitors are grown-ups. It was nice for the teenagers to have their own age-group come to visit. And even a boy!

We had 2 beach trips, a party for the girls & a party for the boys, an outing to the ice cream parlor and plenty of games, dancing and singing around the house.

The absolute highlight came just before I was due to fly home, and is also the reason I extended my trip by a week. The children were invited by the Bar Association of Sri Lanka to a show in Colombo. We had 2 days to organise legal permission, transport, lodging and getting every one's gear packed. It was a 13 hour journey for a 250 mile trip, half of which are on Kangaroo roads or building sites. The children were all glued to the windows of the bus watching the wonders of the city. Most had never been away from the Jaffna Peninsula. They had never seen a train or modern buildings. We went to see the elephants and the mountains – they were fascinated to see steep slopes and the huge tropical trees (Jaffna is absolutely flat and dry). For me it was a thrill to watch the children's joy and be able to be part of this very special trip for them all.

All in all it was a special time for all of us.

Thanks for all your support in our fundraising activities (Louise told all about them at Church to a fascinated audience). We were able to achieve our target and could hand the funds over to a grateful Home Director, my friend Prebha.

Blessings

Heidi

