

The Herald

Castle Parish Church

Spring 2016



Editorial

Our front cover bears no resemblance to the road on the way to Emmaus. Far from being tree lined and covered with flowers, it was most likely a dusty desert highway. On that road Luke tells us that two people, discussing the events of Jesus' death met with Him on the road, but they did not recognise him.

One was Cleopas, the other was not named but some think it could have been his wife as it was told she was at the foot of the cross with the other women. Possibly she invited Him for the evening meal but it took them some time to realise who he was.

Three times Samuel heard the voice of God calling him but he did not realise who it was. How easy it is for us in this busy world not to hear Jesus calling or even to recognise his presence.

Many of us never experience His presence or His voice but we believe that one day these things will happen. Christine mentioned in a sermon recently that we know all about Jesus, but do we KNOW Him. Maybe on a road somewhere, someday we will experience that meeting, so we must continue to look and listen and make sure we recognise the signs.

Wellwood Grierson Editor

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Have your say

If you have any comments to make on the Magazine, please feel free to do so by letter or email to herald@castlehillchurch.org We are always pleased to consider any articles for the Magazine from members of the congregation, These can also be sent to the email address quoted.

From the Interim Moderator

Dear Friends,

We often wish answers to be forthcoming in our time when perhaps we ought to wait on God's. Patience can be an answer to prayer! As a congregation we pray for God's guidance. Psalm 8 verse 4 states, 'What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?'

An African proverb states, 'The one who asks questions doesn't lose his way'. That concept can be helpful as we consider the next steps in the congregation's life. David asks questions in his Psalms. He was clearly seeking God's guidance for the way he should go.

Look for example, at some of the questions he asked. 'O Lord – how long?' (6:3) A question of eagerness to see God's plan accomplished. 'What is man that You should be mindful of Him?' – a question of awe that God even cares about each one of us. 'Why do You hide in times of trouble?' (10:1), a question that reveals a longing for God's presence. 'Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?' (15:1), the ultimate question of who may live with God.

David had some tough questions for God. He had discovered what it was like to lose his way when he excluded God and followed his own path – no matter how well intentioned. But as he penned the Psalms he was a man in search of godliness, which meant he probed God's mind about difficult subjects.

Questions. Like David you have them, we all have them. Keep asking. Then, through faith in God's Word and the work of the Holy Spirit, listen as He leads you and the congregation in His way.

*My mind cries its questions,
My longing heart, joining:
O Father, please hear me!
O Spirit, keep teaching.*

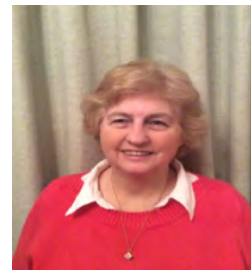
With God's richest blessing,

John Paterson

Your 'Locum' Writes....

The winter is over; the rains have stopped; in the countryside the flowers are in bloom. This is the time for singing; the song of doves is heard in the fields.

Song of Songs chapter 2 verses 11 & 12



Recently, as the sun shone, the above verses came to mind – aren't they so evocative of spring. It made my heart full of praise for our creator, God, and my soul full of thanksgiving for the love of Jesus, displayed to us by his death, burial and resurrection, as we have just been reflecting on the season of Easter.

When I returned to the house, I was tidying up some papers when I came across a programme for a winter concert which contained one of my favourite Christmas songs, "Thorns in the Straw" by Graham Kendrick. It is about the birth of Jesus and poses the question about whether or not Mary recognised at his birth that his purpose was to die – "...and did she see there, in the straw by his head, a thorn?" For me, this is one of the best attempts in song-writing to link Christmas and Easter as they are linked in God's great plan of salvation. So I thought I would include the following meditation as it seemed appropriate this month. It is taken from "God Came Near" by Max Lucado.

They put him to death by nailing him to a cross. But this was God's plan which he had made long ago. Acts 2:23

John said, "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29

The moment the forbidden fruit touched the lips of Eve, the shadow of a cross appeared on the horizon. And between that moment, and the moment the man with the mallet placed the spike against the wrist of God, a master plan was fulfilled.

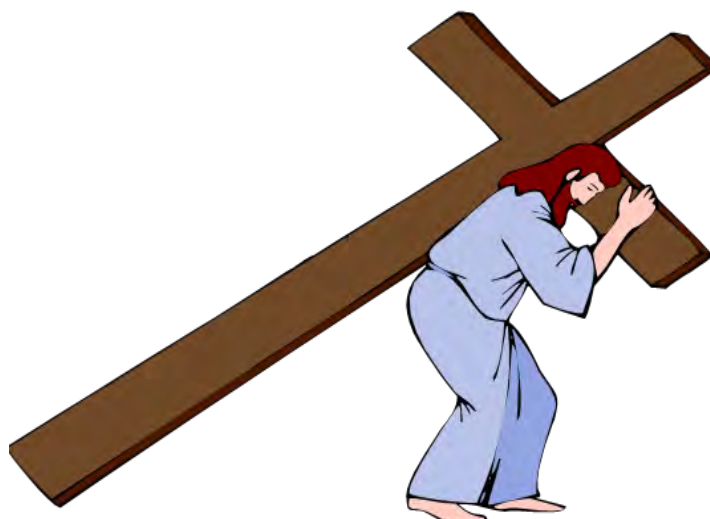
Jesus was born crucified. Whenever he became conscious of who he was, he also became conscious of what he had to do. The cross-shaped shadow could always be seen. And the screams of hell's imprisoned could always be heard.

This explains the glint of determination on his face as he turned to go to Jerusalem for the last time. He was on his death march (Luke 9:51).

This explains the resoluteness in the words, "The reason my father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again. No-one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord." John 10:17,18

So call it what you wish – an act of grace; a plan of redemption; a martyr's sacrifice; but whatever you call it, don't call it an accident. It was anything but that. (M. Lucado)

Love and prayers, Christine.



Where Are They Now?

Following our series of past assistant ministers in our Church we caught up with Nick Archer:

Since leaving Castlehill in 1970 it has been an adventurous road to travel and there is much to reflect on in terms of Romans 8:28, "we know that all things work together for good for those who love God who are called according to His purpose.

After a year at St. Colm's in Edinburgh, I went to Malawi from 1971-1977. There I was a Literature Secretary for the Synod of Livingstonia, and I worked as Chaplain of the Secondary School. It was a privilege to be with a team of other missionaries from Scotland and Ireland, and our African colleagues were supportive and helpful. It was while I was on leave in 1975 that I married Elizabeth who then accompanied me back to Malawi. Being a nurse enabled her to help at the David Gordon Memorial Hospital in Livingstonia.

From 1978-81 we were in the Scottish Borders where I was minister at Ecclefechan, Thomas Carlyle's birthplace. We were asked to return to Africa in 1981 after Zimbabwe's independence, Whilst in Harare I was fortunate to meet and work with Rev .Max Chigwida who was then head of World Vision in Zimbabwe. It was a pleasure to hand over to him in 1982 and his influence did much subsequently to implement African integration in the PCSA in Zimbabwe.

Returning to Scotland took us north to the parish of Dores and Boleskine in 1983 where we stayed until 1992. During this time Elizabeth worked as a triple duty nurse in the community, and her help greatly assisted the congregations by Lochness-side as well as in Stratherrick.

Teacher training followed next when I spent a year in Edinburgh at Heriot Watt University qualifying as an R.E. teacher. Later I was glad to qualify as a German Teacher fulfilling many years of interest in teaching and translating German. I worked at Peterhead Academy from 1993 – 1996 and then went for a year to Botswana to teach there. Further experience in teaching in the London area prepared me for seven very happy and fruitful years teaching English in China from 2000-2007. Elizabeth had maintained her nursing work in Inverness and was eventually appointed Paediatric Liaison for the Community. This was a well-deserved promotion which involved her working with nursing colleagues throughout the North of Scotland and the Islands.

Since the purchase of a retirement home in Edderton on the Dornoch Firth in 2002, we were glad to welcome many friends, especially from China. It has also been a privilege to help with much locum work in the Presbyteries of Sutherland and Ross, and this has taken me to many congregations in the north of Scotland. During the last two years other doors have opened in Harris and North Uist and I have been glad to get to know new friends in the Hebrides.

Sadly Elizabeth was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010. During the last two years of her life she was a constant inspiration to me. It was a great tribute to her that so many of her nursing colleagues from different parts of Scotland attended her funeral in Tain on 7th February 2012

I have many positive memories relating to my time at Castlehill and perhaps I should say that this was a formative experience which owed much to Michael Dickie to whom I will always be indebted for his patience with a raw recruit. The congregation were always welcoming and supportive and there are many to whom I wish I could say a personal thank you, thinking particularly of Mrs Murray of 51 Meadow Park Drive who was truly a God-send.

I wish the congregation well at this time when they are seeking a new minister and my good wishes go to them.

Nick Archer

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations.

Our Jubilee Celebrations had a flying start with a **60's night** in January well attended, despite some snow, and more importantly enjoyed by all who came along. An excellent quiz was presented and showed up a lot of unexpected knowledge by many. The resultant photographs also showed some rather fearsome characters as can be seen.



Burns Supper.



On 19th February a successful Burns Supper was held with an excellent attendance. The entertainment for the night was provided in the main by members of the congregation and their performances were warmly appreciated by the audience. The haggis was carried in by Margaret Graham and piped in by Colin Reid and was

addressed by Douglas Owens. The meal was provided by outside caterers but the ladies of the committee did a first class job laying out the tables and decorating the hall, as can be seen in the photograph.



The immortal Memory was proposed by Ian Jamieson, from Prestwick, a Reader with the Church of Scotland. The toast to the Lassies by Alan Jack received a formidable reply from Morven Petticew. Carol Graham and Robbie Henderson provided songs accompanied by Christopher Watt. An excellent reciting of Tam O'Shanter was given by David Kerr and a Vote of Thanks in verse was given by Our Locum Christine Stewart.

Moderator's Visit



On Sunday evening 6th March The Moderator, Right Rev Dr Angus Morrison, addressed a service celebrating the Youth of the Presbytery of Ayr. The large congregation took the opportunity to meet the Moderator over a cup of tea after the service. He presented the Church with a ceramic Celtic Cross which will be displayed in full view within the Church Buildings.





Coffee Morning and Easter Bonnet Competition

There was a good turn out on Saturday 19th March to display a wide variety of Easter Bonnets. It was good to see so many taking part and the winner, judged by two of our younger members, was Robert Forrester.

Thanks is due to all who took part and for those who provided a great variety of Easter Goodies.



Advertisement

Diamond Jubilee mugs are now available for purchase at £5 each, in one of two designs. Choose the one you want and contact the office or anyone on the Sunday morning duty teams. There will be a limited number for sale so buy yours now!



Dates for your diary:

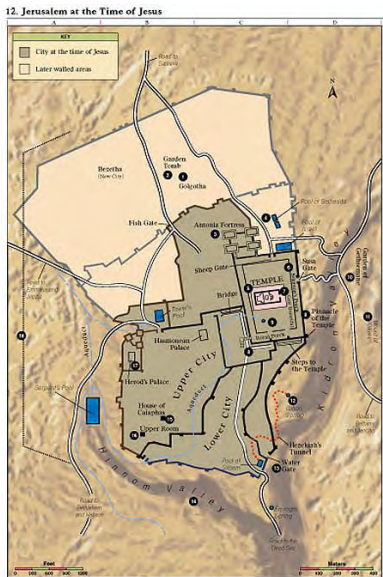
- May:** Choir Praise Service and Tea Friday 13th at 7.30
 Bowling Tournament Friday/Saturday 27/28th May
- July:** Afternoon Tea
- August:** Afternoon Tea
- September:** Harvest Festival
- October:** Jubilee Celebration Saturday 22nd October
- November:** St Andrews Night.

Check with the Jubilee Celebrations Notice Board in the Vestibule, or follow us on Facebook

facebook

THE GARDEN TOMB - "at the place where Jesus was crucified there was a garden" Luke 19 v. 41 NIV - "a tomb cut in the rock" Luke 23 v. 53

I have always been fascinated by the burial place of Christ described so matter-of-factly in the Gospels.



Gospels.

After 2000 years it is not surprising if the location of Jesus' tomb is disputed. Having visited the Holy Land, I find the argument for the location of the Garden Tomb, discovered in 1867, quite compelling. The Bible states in John 19 v.20 that Jesus was laid to rest

"near the city" whereas the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, traditionally accepted as Jesus' burial place, lies within the city walls - though possibly outside an earlier wall. In the end, it was not the intellectual arguments that won me over but coming face-to



face-to-face with the eery sight of Golgotha, meaning the "Place of the Skull". As with all ancient sites, the city of Jerusalem now extends beyond its original city walls. The Place of the Skull is a massive outcrop overhanging a bustling and very mundane bus station. Some consider that the name refers to the sinister imprint it bears of a face, the eye-sockets and nose on an enormous scale.

In contrast to the noise and hubbub of the bus station, the nearby Garden Tomb is peaceful and serene. It wasn't at all what I had imagined but it immediately fitted the descriptions, in particular of how the boulder

was rolled in front of the door of the tomb – something

I could never understand before. Where the Golgotha cliff face was dark and foreboding, the clean limestone elevation into which the Garden Tomb was carved is cheerful and bright. Inside, it is like a cave dwelling, a home in a cave, such as you see in many southern Mediterranean countries, with two rooms. You can see a video and plan of the inside of the tomb here:

<http://youtu.be/kagLdjf26FY>

Matthew 27 vs 57-60 tell us that Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and a disciple of Christ, gave his own tomb to be used for the burial of Our Lord. Perhaps the two rooms were intended to be the resting place for Joseph and his wife or other members of his family. At any rate, the description of "two men" Luke 24 v.4 or "two angels" John 20 v.12 sitting inside, also makes much more sense when you see the space inside the tomb. I think we sometimes have a sense of incredulity on reading the stories in the Gospels. They can seem like so many fairy stories from our childhood but the strange thing is that, the more I am confronted by the reality of the places to which they refer, the easier I find it to understand and believe.

If you ever go on a tour of the Holy Land, please do go to see the Garden Tomb. It may or may not be the actual tomb but it provides a much better visual aid than the chaotic, crowded and over-developed Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is an experience not to be missed.

I will leave the last words to a visitor who wrote in an online review, "the best part of it was the sign on the door saying HE IS NOT HERE - FOR HE IS RISEN!" Amen!

Denise Fisher



Castlehill Church of Scotland Guild



We have come to the end of another season at the Guild and we are already making plans for the new Syllabus for next Winter. Whilst our speakers vary from year to year some things do not! If you look through previous minutes from years gone by the same things keep cropping up. What food to have for Opening and Closing Socials, how much to have and what to charge for tickets for said events, what projects to support, how to encourage members to take a turn at being on the Committee and how to encourage new members to come along. The most important thing that hasn't changed is the friendly welcome from our members to any newcomers. Their commitment to the church and to others members. We look forward to starting again in the Autumn and hopefully meeting some new members. In the meantime we wish everyone well during the summer with hopefully some sun to recharge the batteries!

The Guild Committee

Blast from the Past

Who remembers when and where this was taken?



Outing



On Saturday 9th April over thirty members of the congregation and friends had an enjoyable bus trip to Rosslyn Chapel. The weather was kind and the trip was well organised by Jim Roy.

A detour to Biggar for a coffees afterwards, was followed by an excellent meal at the Fenwick Hotel to round off the day.

Reports from the Organisations:

Castlehill Bowling Cub

On Monday 28th March, the last day of bowling, we had fun and games, when teams of Apples Oranges, Pears, Plums, Lemons and Bananas competed for the Mars Bar prizes. After 9 ends, 3 teams were level, so the skips had a play-off with the Apple team the winners, [Pearl Neil, Jim Roy, Elizabeth Graham, Janie McCrossan and skip John McDermott. The Booby team of Oranges [George Neil, Dorothy Jack, George Johnstone and skip Rita Macey-Lilley] were not so smart getting only smarties as prizes.

On Wednesday 30th March we held our A.G.M and Prize Giving, when the President David Kerr welcomed everyone, said Grace and the ladies served up a lovely tea. After tea the minutes of the last A.G.M on 25th March 2015 were read with no matters arising. The President gave his report, stating that it had been an extremely difficult year, with injuries and illness affecting many members. In September was the death of former member Ella Grierson, whose husband Edgar had been the Club's first President. Roy Wilson, Irene Storrie and Betty Taylor had spent long spells in hospital but were now home. In March Ian Henderson, one of the original members of the Club, sadly passed away and our thoughts are with Elise.

The standard of bowling had been very high and well contested for the various trophies. The President thanked his Vice President Michael Hardie for his advice and support, Moira Alexander the Treasurer for her expert control of the finances, the tea ladies and all members for their help when required.

Moira gave a very good report on the finances and after some discussion it was agreed to donate £900 to the Church.

The following Office Bearers were elected for the next session.

President: David Kerr Vice President: Michael Hardie Treasurer: Moira Alexander
Tea Convenors Monday: Joan Macfie, Sheila McKenzie and Frances Russell
Wednesday: Kathy McCreadie and Moira Alexander.

Dates for next year: Opening Monday 12th September Christmas Break 14th December to 9th January 2017
Closing date and A.G.M. Wednesday 29th March 2017

Subscriptions for 2016/2017 remained at £5 with tea money at £1

Other business: The summer outing to Girvan will be arranged. To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the Church a bowling tournament will be held on 27th/28th May.

The following were the prize winners:

Bill and Betty Duncan Plate, Ladies singles Winner Mary Smith, runner up Jean Hunt
Men's Guild Trophy, Gents singles Winner Sam Storrie, runner up George Neil
Edgar Grierson Quaiche Ladies Pairs Winners Liz Hunter and Rita Macey-Lilley
Runners up Elizabeth Graham and Moira Alexander
Wellwood and Margaret Grierson Salver, Gents Pairs Winners Robert Forrester and Michael Hardie,
Runners up David Yates and John McDermott
Ina Walker Trophy Mixed Pairs Winners Liz Hunter and John McDermott
Runners up Linda Telfer and Michael Hardie
John Thomson Rose Bowl Monday Points League Winner Rita Macey-Lilley Runner up Michael Hardie
Kerr Rose Bowl Wednesday Points League Winner David Kerr Runner Up Rita Macey-Lilley
Special Award Top Team score 34 -nil Robert Forrester, Jim Roy and Michael Hardie

The President thanked all for their support through the year and closed the meeting.

David Kerr, President.



Bowling Club Winners 2015/2016

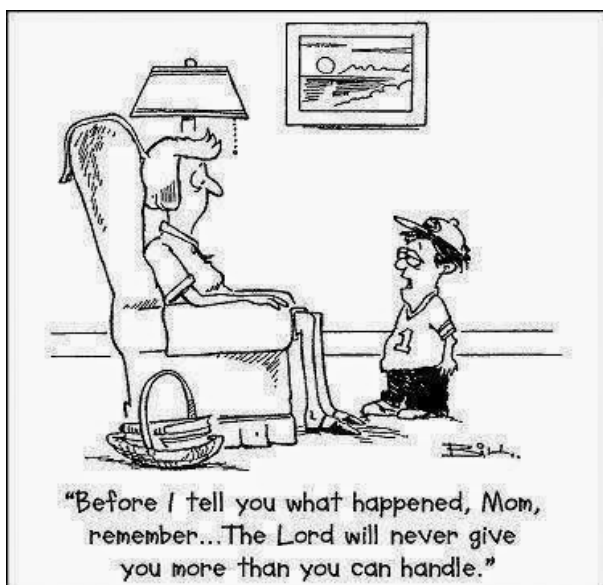
Seniors Afternoons.

In February we had a full house for the Alloway Group "Musical Memories". While they do not describe themselves as entertainers, as their principal purpose is to assist Alzheimer's sufferers to recall memories through music, they nevertheless provided a memorable afternoon of well-known songs. A collection of almost £70 was raised to help Crossreach to promote their charity.

In April we had another memorable afternoon's entertainment by Alastair Kerr. The dancing on display belied the name "Seniors" for our afternoons.

Again we would stress that all are welcome from every age group and also for those not in our congregation. We will be starting again on Tuesday 11th October, so please come along,

Wellwood Grierson.



JOHN FERGUS
Electricians

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GIRL GUIDING

All our units had a get together for a storybook party at the end of January. The girls were asked to come along dressed as a storybook character and we had a storyteller there, who read a couple of stories. After the storytelling, we had a tea party, where the girls made bracelets to take home and they played a game.



In February, we had our Thinking Day Service and we would thank Christine Stewart for helping to organise this. After the service, Tuesday night Guides had a soup lunch and raised the sum of £293.01 for their next holiday trip. The sum of £48 was raised through the sale of tablet for Southcraig Brownie Unit which now comes under our District. This is a special needs unit, which meets during school hours and the money raised was put towards their annual membership subscriptions. We are grateful to the Church members for their continued support.



Tuesday night Brownies had their Pack Holiday at Nether Auchendrane over the Easter weekend, which took a round the world theme. All the girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Monday night Brownies are working on their Friend to Animals Badge and had a visit from a Guide dog. It is proposed that before they finish at the end of May that they will have some kind of sponsored event and the money which is raised will be donated to the Guide Dogs.

Monday night Guides had a sponsored walk wearing their onesies to raise funds for their unit.

There will be a good turnout of Brownies and Rainbows and a few Guides at the Church trip on 4th June and everyone is looking forward to it.

All the units are active and we look forward to our last few weeks, before we finish up at the end of May for the Summer.

Linda McClurkin

Tales of Iona

A new computer game has been developed to share the treasures of Iona. An illuminating article in the March edition of Life and Work introduces, particularly to all school children primary and secondary, an opportunity to learn about Scottish Christianity through the medium of computer games.

You are invited to go to www.talesofiona.com and download the game.

It will be interesting in our next magazine to see if there are comments on how you found the game and its relevance to our Christian faith.

Prayer Chain/Group.

In our church life we learn about Prayer as a communication with God, Our Father and Jesus Christ, his Son. This unique means of communication, where we can speak to Our Father giving thanks for the good gifts he bestows on us each day, and the help giving strength to face the everyday issues we face.

Here are a couple of experiences when I was on the receiving end of people's "Thanks" but was more ready to reject it. One just as we were moving to Ayr, I found myself asking a good friend at the time what was happening. I was finding it difficult to understand why others were saying "Thanks" and wishing us well in the future, because as far as I could see I'd done nothing. In reply my friend said, "What's the problem? All everyone is doing is thanking you for being part of our church family in their own way. Accept it willingly, there is nothing wrong".

The other occasion was when I had phoned a friend and said, "Can I come round for a coffee just now?" On arrival at their door I was let in and whilst walking through to their lounge they said "Thank you". I sat down as they got the coffee. On returning with the coffee I was told, "Stop thinking about why I said "Thank you. It is not for you to know, just accept it. God knows why I said thank you".

As we think and pray for each other let us give thanks that we can, counting our blessings received from Our Father.

In times when you may feel it difficult yourself to pray on a particular issue there is the Prayer Chain with the church who are a group of people willing to do the praying for you, a message passed to myself will be relayed on to other members, so you have the confidence that the issue is being raised. We are all part of the family within Castlehill Church. Please use the Prayer plate or telephone me at the telephone number below. All requests are dealt with sensitively.

*Our Father, who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name,
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done, as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine, is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever Amen.*

Andrew Graham
Tele: 261486

At The Cross



We all have our favourite hymns and worship songs because music is an essential part of how we speak to God. I feel connected to him the most when I listen to Chris Tomlin's songs. It was while listening to his song, "At the Cross" that I realised that whenever we sing about the cross the atmosphere in the church changes, because I believe that the cross is the focal point of our faith. It is written in Hebrews 9:22 "there is no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood". This verse is what inspired Chris Tomlin to write, "At the Cross" and there is a line in the chorus, "Where your love ran red and my sin washed white" that beautifully depicts the sacrifice Jesus made for us, dying on the cross so that our sins may be forgiven. This is the reason we all come to worship every Sunday with hope that a brighter future lies ahead.

There is nothing more powerful than the grace of God and I find it incredible that Jesus knows we are not perfect and still, we can come to him as we are and get revitalized no matter how many mistakes we make. We, as Christians have pledged our lives to serve, and that makes me think about what Paul tells us in Galatians 6:14 to "never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ". As well as the power of God's grace, I often find myself thinking about the greatness of God. It is remarkable to think that he should even acknowledge us, yet alone love us, we can sometimes feel unworthy of such a sacrifice. To truly follow Jesus, we must put ourselves last and concentrate on what he wants us to do, but we sometimes find it a struggle, especially in a world where success is everything and we all like a little recognition now and again. I believe that Jesus is okay with us celebrating our achievements as long as we do it in his name. We must try to stay humble and make room for the Holy Spirit.

Even with his divinity Jesus was prone to the same emotions we face today, doubt, fear and even weakness. In the garden of Gethsemane he asked God to save him from the suffering he was about to endure because he was terrified but he knew what his purpose in life was and despite the fears he had, Jesus knew the right thing to do, and so do we, we just need to keep our eyes focused on the cross.

Kirsty Wyllie

An appreciation of Christopher Watt

We are all saddened that Christopher is leaving us in May. It is understandable that working and living in Dumfries and having to travel up to Ayr twice a week with the prospect of indifferent weather can prove a formidable task.

We have all enjoyed his music and his cheerful personality and I am sure the congregation of Troqueer Church in Dumfries have gained a worthwhile acquisition to their Church. We wish him well and our blessings go with him in his new post. There will be an opportunity for you all to say your good byes at the Songs of Praise Night on 13th May and I am sure there will be a good turn out to wish him well.

He often made fun of his "Duff" notes and we had many a laugh over this, but there was never anything "duff" about Christopher Watt.

Editor

We frequently cover the activities of various charities and in this issue we find one on our own doorstep. Until a recent presentation to our Guild, many were unaware of the existence of “Wheels in Motion” Hopefully we can rectify this.



Wheels in Motion is a Christian Charity set up to help support vulnerable people struggling with addictions or homelessness throughout Ayrshire, by providing shelter, food and companionship. We aim to provide comfort and hope, and show love in action through the Christian Faith. The soup bus goes out in Ayr every [Thursday evening](#), first stopping outside the Court at Wellington Square [from 7.45pm – 8.30pm](#). It then moves on to Lidl Car park where it stays until around [9.30pm](#). During this time, volunteers distribute food and drinks, while chatting and getting to know individuals. Often these start off as surface conversations, but generally lead to people opening up and sharing their stories.



We love to make people feel valued, and one of the ways we do this is by celebrating their birthdays. We buy a small gift, a card and a cake and sing happy birthday. It is very emotional to watch the way people respond, with some people telling us they have never had a birthday cake before, and others saying our card and gift has been the only one they

received. We believe this is another small way that we can show Gods love in action.

Sometimes people who come to the bus move into houses or flats, but have no furniture or household goods. Where possible we collect these items from those who wish to donate them and are able to deliver them to help support people practically as they move in to their new homes.



The ultimate goal of Wheels in Motion is that people will see and experience God’s love, and acknowledge the difference he can make in their life.

For more information on the Wheels in Motion ministry contact

Suzanne Holden

07790 929864

Wheelsinmotionsoupbus@gmail.com

Boys Brigade

We are approaching the end of another successful BB year. We have enjoyed competitions, visits, events and a lot of fun.



The Moderator with the our boys and officers

The highlight of the year was our weekend trip to Moffat. We stayed in a large hostel called the Well Road Centre which is a great facility, so good we are going back there this year. One of the things which made it special for the officers was the way our 14/15 year old boys took on

leadership roles which they have not experienced before. They absolutely shone. During the weekend we were guided round a local wetlands trust reserve which the boys enjoyed. Later the same day we took a run alongside St Mary's loch to the Grey Mare's tail, a spectacular waterfall. Unfortunately because it was so icy it wasn't safe to go up the path. The rest of the weekend was spent doing activities in their teams which became very competitive. Thanks to all the staff who gave up their weekend for this event.



The Grey Mare's Tail at Moffat

In the Battalion competitions the Anchor Boys, Junior Section and Company Section have had a very successful year. There is only one competition for the Anchor Boys which is a colouring competition open to all boys in the Battalion. This year one of our own boys, Josh Madden, won it.



Our Enrolment Certificate



Winner of colouring competition

The Junior Section took part in most of their competitions with some very good results: They won the 10 and over 5 a side football tournament. They also won the swimming gala with the following individual triumphs.

8 Year old	Breast Stroke:	Silver :Logan Dunwoodie	Bronze:	Fraser Mullen
	Back Stroke:	Gold: Logan Dunwoodie	Bronze:	Cameron Frame
9 Year old	Freestyle	Bronze	Kyle Muir	
10 Years +	Breast Stroke	Gold Douglas McKinnon	Silver	Jack McKinnon
	Back Stroke	Gold Douglas McKinnon	Silver	Jack McKinnon
	Freestyle	Gold Douglas McKinnon	Silver	Jack McKinnon

Junior Section Relay Gold 17th Ayr

The Company Section successes were as follows: Bible Quiz 2nd

Swimming overall 3rd with the following individual triumphs

Breast Stroke, Back Stroke, Freestyle – Gold in all three!!	John Houston
John Cunningham award for best 14/15 year old	John Houston
Relay Bronze	

Cross Country	3 rd	In the Junior age 11-13	Gold
Individual results	Silver	Liam MacKie	
	Bronze	Sam Drummond	

The other team members who helped win the gold were: Douglas McKinnon, Ryan Currie and Stuart Veitch.

We are delighted to be celebrating the success of another five boys who have gained their Queen's Badge. The worthy recipients, who will be recognised at the Battalion church parade and receive their awards at our service in October, are:

Darren Morrison
Rory McNeil
David Houston
Craig Reid
Jack McDougall



A full house at the Burns Lunch

For the last few years we have provided our Soup and Sweet lunch following our dedication service and our Burn's Lunch. Both of which are essentially fund raising activities but I see them as much more, it is always great to see the church hall full for these events. It gives members of our congregation the opportunity to share time with other with whom they might not get the chance to catch up with. It's a cause for celebration when we find we haven't set enough places. We are always very gratified with the support we get from the congregation on these occasions, we value

greatly the support we get from you. It is very much appreciated.

At each of our fund raising event we set aside 25% of the money raised for our Romanian fund. It is our intention to take the Company Section back to Romania next year, you can expect to hear much more as the year goes on. After my parachute jump and 10k race I am looking for a challenge for which I can get sponsorship, I would be grateful for any suggestions.



Our Performers at the Burns Lunch

To round of this session we are delighted to be welcoming the whole Battalion to our church for their annual parade on Sunday 24th April. There will be approximately 200 members of the Boys' Brigade and their guests joining us for Sunday worship. If this means you've been shunted from your usual seat, I apologise. It will be fantastic to see the church so full for Sunday worship.

Our final event of the year will be our annual display which this year takes place on Friday 20th May in the Main Hall at 7pm, all are welcome.

As we near the end of our BB year I have to extend my thanks to Margaret Graham for, not only being the Anchor Boy leader, but for looking after our finances and taking charge of our special events, also to Colin Reid, again, not only for his leadership of the Junior Section but for the support he gives me which is valued. Thanks also to all the officers and helpers for their invaluable contribution to the life of the Boys' Brigade in Castlehill Church (I take it you're all up for another year)

Ian Queen

(Captain)

A True Presbyterian

When I sent this article in tae the Magazine I wisna sure if the editor wid print it so if ye are readin' this he must have.

As you well know we like a guid moan in oor Kirk a' the time and it seemed a guid idea to jist to air some o' these moans. The ither Sunday [I wid say that I am a gie regular attender though I say it mase] when I went tae sit in ma usual seat, lo and behold there wis somebody sittin in it. I didna recognise her and thocht maybe she wis a visitor. I've sat in that seat for years so if she wis local she wid have kent better.

I pushed in and said "Hello" in a voice that let her know I wisnae too pleased,[I mean come oan this is MY seat we are talkin aboot] She said "hello" as well. "Are ye a visitor?" I asked. "No I am a member, I am here most Sundays" I thocht she should have known I sat here but said nithin mair. She looked at me and said, " I usually sit on the other side of the kirk and thought I would have a wee change. Are you a visitor?"

I just about swallowed my pandrap and almost started to say somethin' when I realised that we were baith at the kirk every Sunday and didna' even know that. Efter that we had a right blether.

The next Sunday I thocht I would sit on the other side too for a change. I sat doon and a man came in and gave me a queer kinda look. "Are you a visitor?" he said. I said nithin. There must be message in this someway.

Maonin' Minnie

A Note from your Organist



Now that Easter is over we are fast approaching the next in our series of Jubilee events we come to the musical extravaganza. Sometime ago the committee tasked with planning our Jubilee celebrations approached me and asked if the choir could do something to mark the event. At first I thought that we would do some sort of concert but then I changed my mind and decided that a songs of praise evening would be a far more fitting tribute to mark our 60 years. I think it is no exaggeration to state that music has shaped and influenced worship at Castlehill since your inception and so what better way to mark the 60 years than sing some great hymns that have been part of Castlehill during that time! The evening will have a mix of congregational singing together with choir pieces and a few guest solos. I hope that everyone who comes will get a sense of how important a role that music plays during worship and enjoy singing along to some of their favourite hymns. The Songs of Praise night will be Friday 13 May at 7.30pm in the sanctuary followed by some baked goodies in the hall.

Every time a new hymnbook is published one or two hymns don't make the cut and fall out of circulation. One such hymn that suffered this fate when CH4 was published was that great Lenten number "Yield not to Temptation". The chorus of this hymn has four short lines but contains a powerful message:

*"Ask the Saviour to help you,
comfort strengthen and keep you.
He is willing to aid you,
he will carry you through."*

This simple message gives us all great hope that no matter what life throws at you, help is always there when it is required. Every person who believes can draw great strength in the safe and secure knowledge that Jesus will be there and carry them through at all times of change and trial.

This hymn has had great relevance for me recently when, after much reflection and prayer I decided to take up a new organist post at Troqueer Parish Church in Dumfries. Some of you may know that for the past 8 years I have been living and working in Dumfries and whilst I have loved returning to Ayr each week for worship I have been finding the travelling increasingly challenging as the pressures of my day job increase. Making the decision to leave has been extremely difficult as Castlehill has been a huge part of my life for over 10 years now and I have been blessed to have the privilege of sharing in worship with you for this time. Working alongside the choir and the ministry team I have loved making the walls shake with thunderous renditions of great hymns each Sunday.

I couldn't finish this article without paying tribute to the members of the choir who have been so diligent in working with me over these past years. Until joining Castlehill I had a very limited experience of church choirs but most of those experiences had been of stuffy groups of older women preaching the gospel of "as it was, tis now, and forever shall be, Amen!" However, I quickly discovered that Castlehill choir was a very different breed with a large group of vibrant individuals who all wanted to come together and sing but also to have fun. No matter what I have thrown at them they have managed it admirably and we have been able to tackle many different styles of sacred music as a result. Although sadly, not all of the original members are still with us, there remains a great bunch of committed members and that ethos of fellowship, fun and music is still very much to the fore. I am going to miss the choir and our practices but I am sure you will continue to develop and do great things with your new organist.

You will be glad to know I am not leaving you in the lurch and that Liz Kelly will be filling in when I leave in May until you get a new full time organist. So all that remains is for me to thank you most sincerely for letting me be part of your worship and for your friendship over my time with you and to wish you the very best as Castlehill develops over the next 60 years.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher

Weddings:

Laura Paige & Colin Hynds 5th May

Baptisms:

Leo Thomas Irvine 13th March

Hugh Thomas Irvine 13th March

Pheobe Sarah Gallacher 10th April

Funerals:

November

William Blyth Hillfoot Road

January

J. Lindsay Dundonald N.H.

February

Valerie Steele Glenriddel Road

Mae Hamilton Old Hillfoot Road

March

Ian Henderson Armour Drive

Jennifer Gibson Ellisland Square

Cherry Fisher Laurel Bank



To Daffodils

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.

Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.

We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

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