

The Herald

Castlehill Parish Church

Spring 2017



Editorial

Here we are, Easter is almost upon us again. It seems no time since we were discussing Christmas. Time passes so quickly and everyone is in a rush, no time to do the things you would like to do. Some say you should make time but as we learn in the Bible in Matthew Ch. 6 verse 27 "And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life". So perhaps we just have to squeeze these things in as we go along. But squeezing in God does not seem to be the right thing to do. Surely we can do better than that.

"I would like to go to Church on Sunday, but I just do not have the time, there is so much to do" Perhaps we should compromise a bit and pause and say a quick prayer to God, even just to let him know that we are there. One thing we know he is always there to listen. It would not take long and the trouble is we do not know how much time we have. We all try to cram as much into our lives as possible but sometimes Time is never there when you need it!

Wellwood Grierson.

Castlehill Parish Church, 1, Old Hillfoot Road, Ayr KA7 3LW

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Charity Number	SCO01792

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 same email address.

From the Interim Moderator

Dear Friends,

There is much talk and much fear today when world leaders speak of refugees and where they might seek safe haven. President Trump, who professes a faith in Jesus Christ, has made an Executive Order concerning refugees and America. What would scripture have us do?

In the New Testament, hospitality is a hallmark of Christian living. It is listed as a characteristic of Church leaders (1Tim 3:2, Titus 1:8) and is commanded for every follower of Jesus as an expression of love (Rom 12:13, 1 Peter 4:9). But its meaning goes deeper than being a gracious host or opening our homes to guests.

The Greek word translated 'hospitality' means 'love of strangers'. When Paul speaks of being given hospitality (Rom 12:13), he is calling us to pursue relationships with people who are in need. It is not an easy task.

Writer Heri Nouwen likens it to reaching out to those we meet on our way through life – people who may be estranged from their culture, country, friends, family, or even from God. Nouwen writes, 'Hospitality, therefore, means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer space where change can take place.'

Whether we inhabit a country, town or village, house, a university flat, or any other accommodation, we can welcome others as a way of showing our love for them and for Christ. Hospitality is making room for people in need. To do otherwise is to create enemies and radicalise them against the better aspects of human nature and God's will for all his children.

*Reaching out to needy people,
Showing them our love and care,
Is one way that God can use us
To bring hope to their despair.*

Greetings in Christ,

John Paterson, Interim Moderator

Easter Services 2017

Through **LENT** we took a fresh look at the Lord's Prayer each Wednesday evening.

1st March: Who do we address? – Part A 8th March: Who do we address? – Part B

15th March: Our will v God's will 22nd March: Our Daily Bread – what is it?

29th March: Is this the hardest thing?

Dates for your diary:

5th April at 6.50pm: Temptation is NOT from God, so...

HOLY WEEK services at 7.00pm

9th April: Palm Sunday

No service on Monday.

Tuesday 11th April: The Power

Wednesday 12th April: The Glory

Thursday 13th April: Fellowship Meal – The Passion; the Prayer

Friday 14th April: Good Friday Service – Rev Bill Johnston

Sunday 16th April: Easter Day –All Age Service - Rev Bill Johnston



Dear Reader, I just wanted to share this lovely message with you all. There is something for everyone written in this bell, and the beauty is that I see evidence of God's handiwork in everyone I come across. I also see the promises about the way we serve one another, leading to the blessings of God in our lives. I will keep trying to support you as best I can for as long as God keeps me with you. Enjoy the blessing of Numbers chapter 6 – it is for all, not just the newly baptized. Amen, and may you feel the love of God as you read this.
Happy Easter! Christine Stewart (Locum)



THE BELL

WHO WE ARE IN JESUS

I am God's child (John 1:12)
 I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
 I am united with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17)
 I am bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20)
 I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph. 1:1)
 I am a personal witness of Christ (Acts 1:8)
 I am the salt & light of the earth (Matt. 5:13-14)
 I am a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27)
 I am free forever from condemnation (Rom. 8:1-2)
 I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant (Phil. 3:20)
 I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8:31-34)
 I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Cor. 5:17-21)
 I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)
 I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)
 I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39)
 I am established, anointed, sealed by God (2 Cor. 1:21-22)
 I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28)
 I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)
 I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph. 3:12)
 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)
 I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15:1-5)
 I am God's temple (1 Cor. 3:16). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2:10)
 I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). I have been justified (Romans 5:1)
 I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship (Eph. 2:10)
 I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected (Phil. 1:5)
 I have been redeemed and forgiven (Col. 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child (Eph. 1:5)
 I belong to God
 Do you know
 who you are!?

"The LORD bless you and keep you;
 the LORD make His face shine upon you
 and be gracious to you;
 the LORD turn His face toward you
 and give you peace."
 Numbers 6:24-26



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Moanin' Minnie

They dinæ gie me a bit in the last magazine, so a thocht I wid try again.

The ither Sunday Ah wis singing away like a linty when Ah suddenly discovered the words were different frae them singin' roon about me. Ah had mind o' the words frae the Sunday School and here Ah wis singin' about mankind, when the rest were saying humankind. Ah didnae ken there wis sic a word.

Ah spoke to somebody about it later and they said that the "PC" brigade thocht that sayin' "man" didnae cover everybody. A don't ken who the "PC" brigade are, the only Brigade Ah kent wis the Boys Brigade

It a' started wi' jist a few changes here an' there, but where will it feenish. Wee Zacchaeus will no be allowed up a tree for fear he fa's doon and sues somebody.

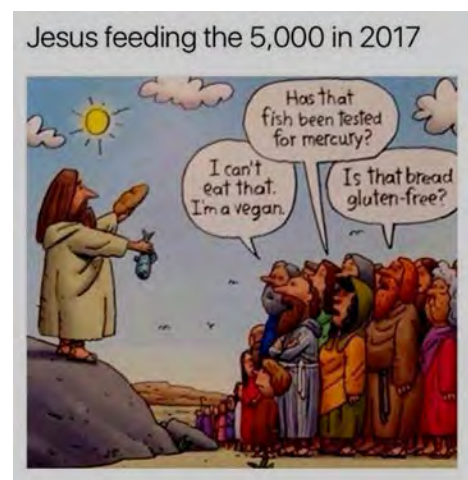
Ah remember hearin' a poem once:

They have written brand new hymns Lord with tunes that I don't know
So I hardly ever sing Lord though I did love singing so
They are very go ahead Lord they are doing series three
But the words are not so beautiful as the others used to be
They have modernised the Bible the Lord's Prayer and the Creed
When the old ones were so perfect that they filled my every need

My minds not quite so agile as it was some years ago
And I miss the age old beauty of the words I used to know
It is very clear to me Lord I've overstayed my time
I don't take to change so kindly as I did when in my prime
But it can't be very long now before I'm called above
And I know I'll find you there Lord and glory in your love
Till then I'll stick it out here though it is not the same for me
For while others call you "YOU" Lord do you mind if I say "THEE".

Mebbe it is no' that important really, He will ken whit Ah mean.

Some problems for the Church's Complaints Department



Here is a puzzle for all to try to solve. Find all thirty Books of The Bible mentioned and win a voucher for £5. Send your entries to the editor either by email to wellwoodgrierson@gmail.com or hand them in to the office in a sealed envelope by 30th April. Answers will be in the next magazine. If there is more than one correct entry the winner will be drawn and notified.

Find the Books of the Bible hidden in the text. (Ignore punctuation, capital letters etc.)

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an aeroplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing the banjo: Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving the puzzle so demanding, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty featured in this puzzle; the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new sales record. The local paper, the Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Hummana humbly puts it, "The books are all right there in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also keep in mind that punctuation and spaces mid-word are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found.

Castlehill Bowling Club

Our season continues to progress with some more new members. The competitions are well underway, but the results will not be known before the publication of the magazine, but you will find out in the next issue. We will be having a closing party on Wednesday 29th March and after that we can relax until the planning of the Girvan outing hopefully in July.



My thanks to all who have helped in so many ways to have made this another successful season.

David Kerr, President



Rainbow Services offers more than simply the delivery of Care Services. If you are looking for a service that lets you or loved one keep on enjoying life at home why not look at our website:-www.rainbowcareservices.co.uk or give us a call on T:-01292 294180.

South Ayrshire Dementia Support Association Day Care is a small, homely local charity, offering a warm welcome for those living with dementia while providing for the progressive care needs that this can present.

Our mission is to provide quality *communication, care and companionship* for those living with moderate to advanced dementia, ensuring that within a happy and friendly environment, activities are varied to encompass all tastes and abilities.



Meet the staff

Tea breaks and lunch are enjoyed (in particular the desserts and cakes as allowed!) during non-stop conversation amongst those with now established friendships and those who, where they are new to SADSA, soon feel welcome and become a 'part of' our lively company.

Caregivers will, many of them, also be working on weekdays, attending colleges or maintaining the home and family life. Knowing that their loved one is warmly welcomed and cared for within our organisation is critical and we can proudly confirm that SADSA is often said to be providing a 'LifeLine'. Our Carers' meetings include information sharing and meeting with other carers, which provides a welcome opportunity to exchange experiences and offer mutual support.

SADSA provides person centred care supported by 1:3 care ratio. During 2016 we researched and trained in *Communication and Comprehension* to better interpret and ensure our clients needs and comfort.

Dr Maggie Ellis, Research Fellow of St Andrews University and Co-Founder of Astellis Training helped us achieve our Dementia Gold program. This involves training in wider communication skills in support of those experiencing difficulty in communicating with advanced Dementia.

SADSA is now developing plans to continue to work with Dr Ellis to deliver, support and monitor training, with measureable outcomes, for the wider Dementia Care sector.

Our support for our clients is extended in line with individuals' needs and desires, to include personal care. This can include showering, hairdressing, podiatry, District Nurse support, GP visits and many other inputs from associated Professionals who visit us at Day Care.

Outings for our clients can vary, dependent on taste and the weather! However, we are big music lovers with loud voices, we love the shoreline and we love going out to lunch! We are delighted to visit Musical Memories and The Little Art School is also now encouraging those artists among our clients!

We love visitors, so consider yourself invited! This can be to chat over a cuppa, perhaps about a loved one's needs. Sharing a worry or question, to actually help serve the cuppas as a volunteer (or offer other support as available) or, just to spend time with us in song!

We know we provide a caring support, but what do others think.

"Since my husband first attended SADSA, it has provided him with an enhanced quality of life. Staff members' professionalism is matched by their caring, giving, dedicated and empathetic manner – nothing is ever too much trouble. They honour my husband's dignity and respect him for who he is. These values are a reflection of the leadership that their manager, Liz, gives. I know that my husband is in a safe and stimulating environment."

"My relative going to Eglinton Terrace has been a great benefit for her and she enjoys going very much. Every carer is so good. Thank you all."

"I can give no greater endorsement of this service than, I believe, my husband would gladly spend all his time there, if it were possible!" (S. Cunningham)

Call Liz (Liz Campbell, Day Centres Manager) to arrange a visit, or to chat on 01292 283954 or 288396. South Ayrshire Dementia Support Association

The Gardening Doctor

Do you suffer from PLUMBAGO
Is your back a Little sore?
Or perhaps It's PYRACANTHUS
Which you caught in Singapore?
You've a nasty Little HOSTA
Which I think I'll have to lance
And I notice your SPIREA
Has been leading you a dance!
Are you getting quite forgetful?
Is NEMESIA the cause?
Does your ANTIRRHINUM pain you
When you're walking out of doors?
You've had SKIMMIA RUBELLA
I can see that by your nose
And CORNUS CAPITOSA
Has played havoc with your toes!
How is your VIBURNUM TINUS
Have you lost your sense of smell?
Use a SYRINGA REFLEXA
That should help to make it well.
I'm afraid your MACROCARPUS
Isn't really up to scratch
And do avoid NIGELLA
It's a nasty thing to catch!
Still, I think you're doing nicely
Watch the QUERCUS in your knees
Take your BERBERIS twice nightly -
Cheerio! Next-patient-please!

Our Tuesday Treat

When I wake up I check the day
Please let it be Tuesday today
When all the coffee hollics and tea Jenny's meet
Where the home made scones and cakes are hard to beat
It's the Tuesday morning coffee date
Better make sure you are not late
Then we compare our aches and our medication
Among us we take enough pills to save a nation
If you happen to ask "are you feeling fine"
Then you wait for their next line
"Well funnily enough I have bother with my hip"
"It's giving me a bit of Jip"
"And it seems to be when you get older"
"It plays havoc with your shoulder"
"And my eyesight has a bit of a waver"
"Do you think I should be going to specsaver "
"And of course there is my bunions"
"Sometimes they smell like rotten onions"
We all discus the good old days
And how things have changed in many ways
All the good times had at The Glasgow Fair
When the smell of fish suppers filled the air
Everyone piled into busses and trains
Bringing all their friends and bairns
That was the time we dressed up to go to the dancing
Hoping for a wee bit romancing
Remember the bop and the jive
And the amount of hairspray to hold up your beehive
When the guys wore drainpipes and blue suede shoes
While Elvis belted out singing the blues
Meanwhile our teams of tea ladies rush about
And Dads Army at the top table shout out
"Ladies we are needing more tea"
"We have just resolved World War Three"
Everyone's so friendly and happy and having a ball
That's the best therapy of them all
Everyone's welcome so please don't walk on by
Pop into our coffee mornings and give it a try

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Diamond Jubilee

We did not set out to make a profit from the various celebrations that we had throughout the year, but due to better attendances than expected, and some generous donations we have accumulated almost £1000.

It was put to the congregation that we would like to have ideas on what the money could be spent to give a permanent reminder of the special year. We have received a number of suggestions and we would like to give the other members who receive the magazine an opportunity to add to the suggestions.

The Kirk Session and Board will discuss these suggestions and will be making a decision at their next meeting on Thursday 6th April. Please hand in any ideas to the office before that date.

As a matter of interest we still have two mugs and a number of commemorative lapel pins left.



Seniors Afternoons

Our Christmas Party in December was well attended. Forehill Primary School as usual provided an excellent programme of Christmas songs and carols. Their professionalism was remarked on by all.

In February we welcomed back Bobby Kelly and his daughter Christine from Cumnock. Their music and songs had everyone tapping their feet and singing along, and tempted a few to get up and dance. The proceeds of the afternoon were in aid of Cancer research, of which Bobby is a keen supporter.

Our next meeting is on 11th April and we hope as many as possible will be able to come along. If transport is required please telephone Wellwood Grierson at 737459 or contact the Church Office. All from the Church and the parish are welcome and feel free to bring along a friend.

Wellwood Grierson.

Finance update

The church financial year ended on 31 December 2016. Members of the Congregational Board and Kirk Session are Trustees of our congregation and they approved the Annual Report and Financial Accounts at a meeting on 2 February. These were passed to an Examiner to be approved and then a copy goes to the Attestation Committee of Ayr Presbytery for approval and a copy also goes to Church of Scotland headquarters in Edinburgh. Following approval by the Attestation Committee a copy goes to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

At 31 December 2016 there was a deficit of £4,112 meaning our expenditure was greater than our income. The amount given by standing order, Free Will Offering envelopes and amount of Gift Aid claimed were all less than in 2015. Although we did not have any major repairs to the church, halls or manse, fabric expenditure still cost £9,862.

We were able to claim Gift Aid of £12,329. If you are a tax payer and use a standing order or FWO envelopes to give money to the church we could claim 25% of the amount back from HMRC if you sign a Gift Aid Declaration form. This also applies to those who give through the Wee Kirk collections, from that, last year we were able to reclaim almost £250. There are forms in the vestibule and the office and they can be downloaded from the church website www.castlehillchurch.org under the Publications section. Completed forms can be given to Margaret Devlin or returned via the office.

Watching Over Us



I've been contemplating over my faith and it's becoming more apparent that my approach to it is evolving and growing every day, but one thing remains the same, my connection to Jesus. Most of the time my inspiration on spiritual thoughts come from music and this time it happened when I recently sung the words, "Spirit of God, unseen as the wind". They reminded me of what we are told in Proverbs 15:3 that "the eyes of the Lord are everywhere keeping watch over the wicked and the good". This strikes a chord with me as I often wonder how God views the world, does he see it as a planet, does he focus in on us as individuals or is it both perspectives simultaneously? Like a parent he keeps an eye on us, all be it at a distance, and when we find ourselves in a difficult situation or forget the right thing to do he will intervene. It doesn't matter how many times we stray away because God will always be there for us with open arms, for he shows us endless mercy. Helen Steiner Rice in her poems talks about how we should widen our view of people, "As I battle the crowd on life's busy street, and widen the vision of my unseeing eyes". This particular line reinforces what I have always believed, that with Jesus at the heart of everything in my life nothing is too much of a challenge because he is the road map, the compass pointing in the right direction. There are times in life that we can get caught up in any number of things such as success, greed, envy and guilt to name but a few but it is important for us to pay attention to what Jesus is telling us and tap into the power only the Holy Spirit can bring.

Kirsty Wyllie

Castlehill Girl Guiding



The winter will soon be over and we have had another successful session. On Sunday 19th February a service in the Church was held to remember World Thinking Day. Some have asked what is it all about and how did it begin?

In 1926 at a World Guide Conference it was agreed that there should be a special day when Guides should think of each other and express thanks and appreciation for the Guide Movement. 22nd February was chosen as it was the birthday of Lord Baden Powell, founder of the Scout Movement and also the birthday of Olave Baden Powell the world wide Chief Guide.

At a Conference in Dublin in 1999 the title was changed to World Thinking Day. As the photographs show World Thinking Day is alive and well in Castlehill Church. Perhaps we should all take part in World Thinking Day and not only on 22nd February each year.



Linda McClurkin



Enjoying their Tea!

Castlehill Boys Brigade

AS our BB year continues we have been enjoying a lot of activities and are looking forward to more.

Our company Section won the Battalion swimming gala. John Houston, Jack McKinnon, Douglas McKinnon and Stuart Veitch took part. This was followed earlier this year by our boys winning the Battalion bible quiz. Stuart Veitch, John Houston, Gavin Drysdale and Jack McKinnon starred at the quiz taking Troon to a tie break question; Troon were asked "What is the shortest verse in the bible?" and we were asked "How many disciples did Jesus have?" slight imbalance in difficulty but, we'll take it! In January we took part in the Volleyball and Basketball competitions held at the Citadel. We didn't record a podium position in the Basketball but we did finish second in the Volleyball. Our latest competition was the Cross Country at Rozelle on Saturday 18th March. Jack McKinnon was third in his age group and Stuart Veitch came sixth in his.



Bible Quiz Winners

I think it is worth pointing out when these boys achieve as individuals or as a team they are punching above their weight because at the moment we only have eight boys in regular attendance compared with some other companies, like Troon, who have over fifty boys.

Gavin Drysdale and John Houston both attended the Battalion "Building Your Skills" course which means they have qualified for their President's Badge which is the qualification to entering the Queen's Badge programme.



Anchor Boys Winners

Our Anchor Boys took part in their only Battalion event, the Anchor Boys Games afternoon, this takes place in the Citadel where the boys take part in twelve different activities, it's very frantic and very loud! Awards were given for the only competition the Anchor Boys take part in, the colouring competition. Two of our boys, Josh Madden and Jack Luni were awarded certificates for Highly Commended, Jack Bailey was presented with a certificate for Commended. The competition was to colour in the story of the Good Samaritan.

Our trip to Romania has been organised from 30th July until 6th August. By way of raising funds for it we held a race night which was a great success. In addition the staff of the 17th Ayr are running the Kilmarnock 10k on June 11th to raise funds for the trip. If anyone would like to donate to our cause we have a Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/Ian-Queen

As always we are very grateful for all the support we get from the Castlehill congregation.

Ian Queen

Captain

Flowers in the Church



Each Sunday the Church is adorned with a display of flowers. They are often admired, but do we know how they get there? A dedicated team arrange the flowers taking turns each Sunday. They are donated by a variety of people in the Church, remembering loved ones or events. Almost every Sunday has been taken up.

Volunteers deliver them each Sunday to deserving households, who have suffered loss, or been in hospital or have special birthdays.



There is a plate in the vestibule of the Church for donations, which provide funds for wrapping paper, oasis and additional flowers if they are required.



Maybe you would like to assist in this important aspect of our Church Service, either in arranging the flowers, or delivering them. If so you can contact Frances Russell through the office



A view from the Organ

Sing to the Lord a Joyful Song

I have been very privileged to become involved with the praise music at Castlehill. However when I joined the church I was adamant that I was going to sit up the back of the church and praise God with my new friends beside me. It wasn't long, however, through the persuasion of Christopher and the friendship of the choir led me to become a member and now the organist.

I started playing the organ when I was 14 in the South Parish Church in Girvan where four of us were taught by the organist - also our piano teacher. He was a very forward thinking gentleman and wanted to be sure that the skill of playing the church organ did not disappear in his church. Many years later (not saying how many) I am delighted and honoured to help lead the praise at Castlehill. The choir have warmly welcomed me into their fold and are an extremely patient group!!! The rehearsals are still on a Friday at 6:30pm and if you enjoy singing come along - I am sure you will enjoy it!



Liz Kelly

Rebecca Wilson

While Rebecca is not a member of our Church, her father Gordon Wilson was in our Boys Brigade Company and for ten years in the 70s and 80s was our bell ringer. Her grandfather, John Wilson, is one of the longest serving members of our Church and a former elder.

Many of our congregation will remember some years ago, Rebecca playing a tribute on the cornet to her grandmother Emmy at her funeral service in the Church, in which she served so faithfully for many years. Since then Rebecca has picked up a string of awards for her impressive performances.



She began playing in primary school and when in her second year at Ayr Academy she joined the Dalmellington Brass Band. The Band enjoys a proud heritage and reputation and has always been a family band and will remain that way. She had fun learning to play the cornet, meeting up with other young people and creating music. A Brass Band Academy has just started and she now helps to teach around 20 beginners every Sunday.

Rebecca won a few competitions and when 12 was the Scottish Junior Solo Champion. She has won the west of Scotland Solo Championships five times and four times was awarded the Dalmellington Band's Slow Melody Champion, three times in a row. She was also Scottish Solo Champion in February of this year.

Since moving to study at the Royal Conservatoire in Glasgow she has become principal cornet in the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland, touring in Norway. She has been invited to play in Germany and recently was awarded a diploma in an international wind and brass competition in Poland.

She is justly proud of now being an apprentice with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and recently performed at the Royal Concert Hall at the Celtic Connections. Equally proud of his granddaughter is John Wilson and as a Church congregation we can say that we witnessed her talent those many years ago playing in our Church and look forward to following her future progress in the world of music.

Social Committee

Dates for your Diary

There will be a Beetle drive on the 27th September at 7.00 in the North Hall, all welcome. On October 21st we have a Church Fayre. We are looking for anyone who would like to take a table to sell their goods as well as support for all the stalls from the Church organisations. On November 4th we will be holding a church dinner with entertainment this should be a very good night. We decided on this event because the Jubilee dinner was such a success last year so we thought we would do another.

We hope you will support all these events as this will bring us together as a family in Castlehill Church. More details will be found on the notice board in church and the weekly Order of Service.

Fabric Report

We are pleased to report that there has been no vandalism damage in the church this year. We have only had one broken window in the fellowship area and this was due to weather conditions. We are pleased to say the mullions have been repaired on the wall of the main hall. This was a big job and it went very well and the weather was very kind to us to get this completed.

We have had the usual maintenance things to do such as a small water inlet in the ladies toilet which turned out to be just the vent that the wind had moved and was easily repaired. We have had all the fire safety equipment checked. We are hoping to get all outside wood painted this year weather permitting.

For the future we are looking at the maintenance of the bell tower as this is ongoing. We also would like to do the other side of the roof lining on the main building.

Liz Reid Fabric Convenor

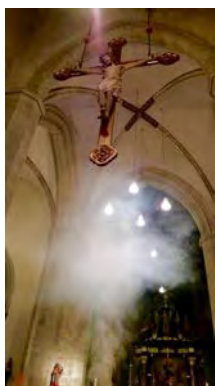
An Ash Wednesday reflection

Sometimes in Castlehill Church we have celebrated Ash Wednesday. Mostly, however, it is celebrated in Roman Catholic churches.

I was lucky enough this year to attend a mass in Belgium on Ash Wednesday. Despite the rainy, cold evening, the big church was almost full. I was surprised at just how many people had turned out for the midweek mass, including a fair number of children and teenagers.



The priest invited the children and teenagers to gather around a brazier up at the front of the church. In theory, the palm crosses, distributed on Palm Sunday the previous year, are burned to make the ash used for anointing those present. The flame was over a metre high and warmed the cheeks of the children standing around. It was extinguished with sprinkled water and the column of smoke that rose from it was no less impressive as it curled around the feet of the crucified Jesus on the enormous crucifix hanging from the ceiling. The priest went round the circle of children anointing each in turn, making a large cross on their foreheads, before inviting the adults to come forward to receive theirs.



Some people had attended a mid-afternoon mass and had gone on to work afterwards. An administrator in a refugee centre told me how she had gone in to work with the ash cross still emblazoned on her forehead (as is the custom), much to the astonishment of the youths in the centre, most of whom had never seen such an expression of Christianity. Of course, that gave Chantal an opportunity to talk about her faith, to explain what the cross meant and, yes, to "witness", as we used to call it.

What does the wearing of the ash cross mean? Of course, the phrase from the burial service "ashes to ashes and dust to dust" resonates in our minds. Indeed, one of the objectives of this service is to make us confront our own mortality and reflect on how short life is (don't the years fly by faster as we get older?) so that we can make the right choices and not waste the time that we are granted on futile arguments, unkind acts and pointless activities.

In some ways, Ash Wednesday is like New Year. We are invited to reflect on past failures and put them aside. Ash Wednesday is the day to begin anew with fresh resolve to share what we are fortunate to have and to love and care for one another.

Denise Fisher



They will be coming to get me again
at the beginning of April. Have you
got one?

Baptisms

January

Caileb Thomas Brian Stewart

Funerals

November

George Belford Cessnock Place

December

Jane Brown Thistle Walk

Keith Worrall Kincaidston Dr.

Betty McCloy Glencairn Rd.

January

Ronald Tweedie Cunningham Place

Robert McCormack Leslie Terr.

February

May Paton Glencairn Road

Jessie Lyall Glenriddell Road

Beatrice Martin Gordon Street

March

Helen Feehan Claremont Care Home



Missed opportunities

It is a great pity we don't know

When the dead are going to die

So that over a last companionable

Drink, we could tell them

How much we liked them

Happy, the man, who dying, can

Place his hand on his heart and say

"At least I didn't neglect to tell

The thrush how beautifully she sings

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