

The Herald

Castlehill Parish Church

Spring 2011



Editorial

In our last magazine we were eagerly looking forward to Christmas and all the celebrations and excitement of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Can we all seriously say that we are looking forward with the same anticipation to the Easter message of the Cross? Is that because we seem more relaxed with Christmas and perhaps fearful of the implications of Jesus' crucifixion? In both events, God gave us wonderful gifts, the gift of the baby Jesus at Christmas and the gift of eternal life at Easter. Surely each is worthy of joyous celebration.

As we read our magazine we see how we can celebrate Jesus' life in the opportunities to join together in our Church activities and to learn from the example of others. Our individual Christian lives should be filled with joy and daily celebration. Let us resolve, not to fear the events of Easter but to carry them with us on our life journey.

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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 email address quoted.



From the Manse

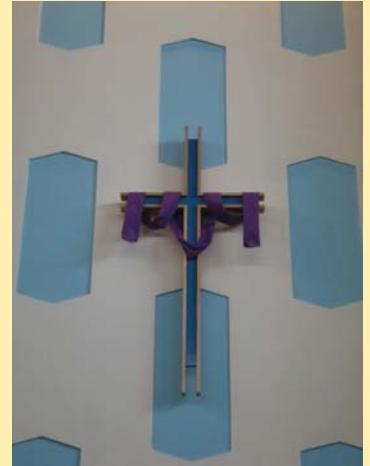


Reframing Hope

I am about to go on a week's study leave. I am meeting 40 other women ministers on a Cruise ship sailing from Florida to explore a book by Carol Howard Merritt on Reframing Hope - Vital Ministry in a New Generation. This group of women are from different backgrounds and denominations, all of us united by the common task of trying to interpret God's word for today's people. I share with many of them online week by week as I prepare the services but this will be the first time we have met face to face. I look forward to being able to share with you in the coming months the blessings that I am sure this trip will provide.

Hope is at the heart of the Christian message, especially at this time of year as we look beyond the cross to the hope of the resurrection.

The six weeks of Lent provide lots of opportunity to ponder the journey Jesus took, the life he lived and the love in which he died. It's good to be able to mark the passage of these weeks with a heightened awareness of the presence of God in our everyday, to take time to do that before we get caught up in our Easter Celebrations. Taking time to journey with Jesus heightens our sense of anticipation and of hope of life beyond death. As we prepare once again to celebrate love's triumph over death, may you be strengthened by hope in all of life.



Blessings

Liz Crumlish

www.liz-vicarofdibley.blogspot.com

Forthcoming Services

Holy Week and Easter

During Holy Week, (18th –22nd April) there will be a service each night at 7pm, with the celebration of communion on Maunday Thursday.

On Easter Sunday we celebrate together at 11am. This service will also include a family celebration of Communion.

Bunny Hunt

Fun for all the family. Saturday 26th March.
Meet at church 11am to pick up clues. Go find the bunnies and return for lunch. Cost £2

Worship through Lent

Throughout Lent, there will be midweek services on Wednesday evenings at 7pm. These are short, reflective acts of worship designed to create some space in your busy week. Starting Ash Wednesday 9th March.

There will also be a Labyrinth set up in the church for you to explore.



Tom McLeod - Auxiliary Minister in Training

COOPERATION

Over the past few weeks I have been reflecting on my time at Castlehill – almost 2 years now – and I have been thinking about everything I have learned and gained from my time here. I believe I have gained a tremendous amount from Liz and Douglas and all the office bearers and members of Castlehill.

I have been particularly struck by the generosity, friendliness and enthusiasm I have encountered. The people of Castlehill have a great desire to work together and to achieve much. The Church generally is going through a period of change and like all areas of life at present it is a difficult time. However, I thought I would share this little poem with you as encouragement for the times ahead.

Cooperation is joining together
to help one another
to believe in something
we might have thought
we could have never have done.

No team can flourish;
no peace can last;
no army however strong can win the war;
without co-operation.

A little can be achieved working alone
but we can exceed our goals
whenever we co-operate
and allow God to operate!

That is my desire for Castlehill that we all cooperate together and allow God to operate through us. May God's love and blessing be with us all as we work to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

God Bless
Tom



Christian Aid

Christian Aid Week is the 15th to 21st May and Castlehill Church is making their collection by enclosing the envelopes in the Church Magazine. Envelopes should be returned on Sunday 15th May and no later than Sunday 22nd May.

Please give as generously as you can. Remember, if you pay tax, that can be reclaimed to benefit Christian Aid simply by signing the Gift Aid slip.

This help is given to the most vulnerable people on earth in Christ's name. From the comfort of our homes we have all watched the devastation of war and natural disasters. Let us remind them that as Christians we have not forgotten them as fellow human beings.....CHRISTIANS CARE.

Cherry Fisher

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A thought from Douglas Moore, Auxiliary Minister

Hello there.

This time of year is a time when we see so much happening in the world of nature. As I write this, I can see daffodils in flower and buds on the trees. All signs of new life that is all around us. A sign that things are moving on.

A sign for us also that we should move on and not keep looking back to the past. The old saying goes that we can't live in the past is true, but what happened in the past has helped to shape us and get us to where we are just now. For us as a fellowship, the faithfulness of our Lord and the faithful people who helped get us to where we are is perhaps the most important thing. We remember, with grateful thanks, all who faithfully gave of their time, talents, and money over the years, whether they are sadly no longer with us, or still very much part of our fellowship today.

However, we shouldn't cling to the past and not let go. Living in the present and looking toward the future should be our goal. St. Paul says in Philippians 3 "Straining forward to what lies ahead." Sometimes the future can seem a scary place to go. It can be full of uncertainties and unknowns. The past however, can seem a warm cozy place [even though sad and difficult things may have happened], because it is a known quantity. Pardon the old joke, but nostalgia isn't what it used to be. How soon we forget the disagreements and anxieties of the past.

The present and the future, however, are unknown quantities. We don't know what is going to happen. We sometimes don't know if we're doing the right thing or not. Well, how can this dilemma be resolved? How can we have any peace in the present if we're worrying about the future? Let us be grateful that when we pray, we can come to Jesus any time of the day or night with our concerns. Remember, Jesus was there before time began, he is here with us now in the present, and we have His assurance that He will be with us and those who may follow us in times to come, till He comes again to bring us home to be with Him. Because of Jesus and what He did for us on the Cross that first Easter, we can look forward in faith. We can lay our plans, our vision before Him and work in faith for the future. A future that will ensure that there will be a witness for Christ in this town for our children and long after we're gone.

In this season of change and growth and promise, let us live in the present and be looking towards the future, with our hands in the hand of our Lord and Saviour. May each and every one of you know the joy of Easter in your day-to-day lives.

Douglas.

Castlehill Youth Church

The Youth Church started the new session in September with a Games Morning. Football and Table Tennis proved to be the most popular, with all the children enjoying themselves at the various activities.

The children soon settled into their various groups enjoying a variety of activities each Sunday. We were soon into rehearsals for our Nativity Play, which was a great success thanks to Marie McWilliams who rehearsed with the children. The children enjoyed the music which was based on songs from Mama Mia. From all the positive comments we got from the congregation they really enjoyed it too.

The Busy Bees and the younger primary school aged children had their usual Christmas Party. We invited along an entertainer who amused the children with his bubble art. Santa Claus also managed to make a visit to give out the presents. All the other children and young adults went bowling and had something to eat.

The children are now busy preparing for Mother's Day. I'm sure the ladies of the congregation will appreciate their efforts. We are also beginning to think about where to go for our annual Summer Outing. Mums and dads, have you got any suggestions?

Castlehill Seniors Group

We had two enjoyable meetings in December and February. A Christmas party was held in the morning, the entertainment provided by pupils of Kincaidston School. Their enthusiastic performance was appreciated by everyone, and proved to be a good start to the seasonal festivities. In February we were entertained by Peter Christie from Troon, who had a varied programme of old and new favorites. Judging by the enthusiastic sing along it was a successful afternoon. In April we are hoping to have Jim Colvin and his group and we welcome old and new friends.

Wellwood Grierson



A FORGOTTEN TREASURE

In the centre of Newmilns, you will pass a sign for Murdoch Nisbet Court, a set of buildings which won an architectural award some years ago. But who was Murdoch Nisbet? Last week when I asked the question of one of the locals, his reply was, 'Nae idea! Probably wan o' the auld cooncillors'. Tragic.

In the centuries before the Reformation, the Bible which was in use in churches was in Latin, a language understood by few of the ordinary people and many of the clergy. One of the great needs of the people was a version of the Bible which everyone could read in their own language. It is important to remember that at that time the people of Ayrshire spoke Scots, a language different in many ways from English. The publication of the King James Bible in 1611, whose 400th anniversary we celebrate this year solved the need, at least in part. The people of Scotland now heard the Bible read in English, or read it themselves in English – and of course in schools the language of the Bible (English) became the basis for education. All had to learn a new language (English) and this process has continued up to the present.

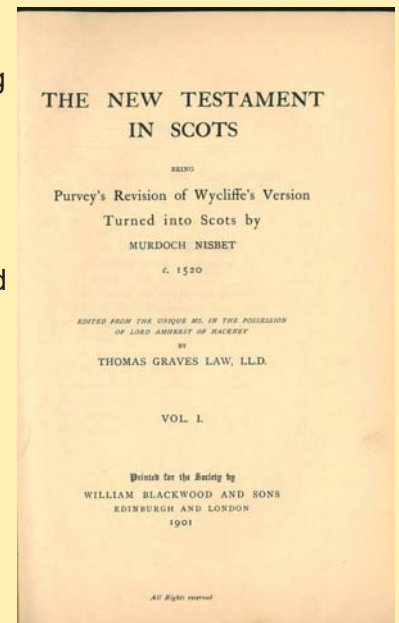


Murdoch Nisbet lived during the early 1500's at Hardhill, a small farm situated at a bend in the Huggincraig Burn at the west end of Newmilns. In those days, it was strictly forbidden for anyone to possess a Bible in any language except Latin, but such was the demand for access to a Scripture which everyone could understand, that copies of English Bibles were smuggled into Scotland from the Continent. Nisbet was well educated (perhaps at the Grammar School of Ayr). He worked as a notary public, drawing up and witnessing legal documents for the Campbells of Loudoun and other significant landowners in the neighbourhood. His reforming ideas must have come to the attention of the authorities, so to escape imprisonment and possible death, Nisbet went into voluntary exile in Germany around 1520.

In Germany, he had access to John Purvey's version of Wycliffe's English translation of the New Testament and painstakingly prepared his own translation of it into the Scots language, so that it would be more intelligible and familiar to his countrymen.

Despite the possibility of arrest, Nisbet returned to Ayrshire with his precious manuscript around 1528 and resumed his work as notary. He kept a low profile. The Nisbet family history tells us that he constructed a cellar under his farmhouse, where he could hide, worship in peace and read his new book. To him came groups of friends with whom he joined in reading and discussing Scripture in their own Scots language.

In 1543, after the death of James V, the momentum for religious change gathered pace. It now became legal for the people of Scotland to read the Old and New Testaments in English or Scots. Nisbet's manuscript then continued to be used more openly as a vital aid within his Bible reading group in Newmilns. Sadly it was never published and made available for general use. The manuscript passed down as an heirloom through the Nisbet family for generations until it came into the hands of Gavin Hamilton, Burns's friend, and thereafter Sir Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck. But where is it now? In the British Library in London. A treasure, like its author, forgotten.



Alastair Hendry

Wee Kirks

By the time this magazine is distributed, some of you will have had a visit from your collector. We are appreciative of the continued support from all wee kirk "owners," and the dedication of the collectors. In the last collection in October we received just over £1200. This is of great value to our "Kirk". We have repainted a number of kirks and if you want to have one of them, or hand in your old one for redecoration and return, either let me know or mention it to your collector. Many thanks to you all, and if anyone wants to own a Wee kirk, just let me know.

Wellwood Grierson



EACH WEEK OUR HALLS HOST A HUGE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES. JUST TWO OF THESE ARE DESCRIBED HERE:

EVERYBODY'S DOING IT!

Yes, they really are! And Castlehill Church is up there with the best of them offering classes on a Wednesday morning in our excellent hall.

What is it that attracts mainly, but not exclusively, ladies to classes once, twice and even three times a week? What is being offered in venues all over Ayr - morning, noon and night? Why, it's Zumba, of course. An aerobic mixture of Latin, African and Oriental dance it is highly, but harmlessly, addictive. (Harmless as long as you don't suffer from a dicky ticker or dodgy knees –you need to know your limits!)

It's hard, -it really is - but somehow the buzz it gives makes it all worthwhile – that and the shrinking waistline and better-defined hips.

Like most classes involving movement, it's mainly ladies who are brave enough to try it out but, gents, I assure you, it is a perfectly macho activity in the States and you would be welcome at most classes here.

In Glasgow there are even enlightened companies providing classes in the lunch hour for their employees! Lyna was the first to bring Zumba to Ayr and, within a year, it became established all over town and now teachers have to hunt for suitable premises. Our hall is a good, big space with a stage and elevated platform making it easier to see the teacher.

The teacher at Castlehill is Kirsty and she is a qualified Pilates teacher who has followed a course in teaching Zumba. I saw some members of the congregation having good fun at her class. How many weeks is it to the summer holidays? Still time to shape up for beach!

What is Tai Ji?

One person's experience

Have you ever stepped over a sleeping dragon, ridden a wild stallion or embraced a tiger? Have you cradled the moonlight in your arms or stood at daybreak at a lakeside and slowly unfurled your snowy-white crane's wings to catch the first rays of the rising sun? You can do all these things when you practise Tai Ji.

With its origins in ancient China and veiled in mystery, myth and legend, Tai Ji is today practised world-wide by an ever-increasing number of people. It can be practised alone or in a group, indoors or outdoors, with or without music, barefoot or shod. No special clothing is needed.

Simply described, Tai Ji is a graceful, gentle form of exercise which works through the whole body, strengthening muscles and joints and improving balance and circulation. Here there is no frenetic action, no "going for the burn", but relaxed almost balletic movement which is often likened to moving under water.

This is what makes Tai Ji so accessible to any age group, of any level of fitness.

But to describe it so simply would be to miss the point, for the practice of Tai Ji goes far beyond mere exercise of the body. It involves exercise of the body, mind and spirit and requires an awareness of the world around you.... and your place in that world. The ever changing seasons and the cycle of nature are reflected in and are part of the practice of Tai-Ji.

A typical Tai Ji class begins with a few minutes of settling into the Tai Ji stance with ankles and knees softened, feet firmly grounded on the earth and spine erect, as if an invisible cord connects you to the heavens. Eyes are closed and breaths are deep and calming. This is followed by a few exercises to awaken the body in preparation for the various "forms" or flowing sequences of movements which are central to the practice of Tai Ji. Each movement has a name, poetically beautiful and often reflecting the world of nature.....Waving Hands in Clouds, Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain and most beautiful of all, in name and in practice, White Crane Spreads Wings.

These movements can be practised to music and can also be combined to make a longer sequence or form which takes you on an imaginary journey of discovery, a mini adventure which always ends with Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain. In this the hands are crossed in front of your eyes as you symbolically confront all your fears by "Embracing the Tiger" before slowly, slowly bringing your hands down to connect to the Earth, your base, as you return home safely.... "to the mountain"

At Easter time what better metaphor could we focus on than this one: Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain.

Romanian Trip

Castlehill Boys' Brigade has planned a trip to Romania this summer. A party of 23 are going to Targu Mures, a town in North Central Romania, with a population of just over 145,000. The purpose is to help support Scottish International Relief with their work with a Romanian orphanage and a local Gypsy community.

The 17th Ayr have supported the charity over a number of years, making collections for the charity's shops and donating profits from our Friday night tuck shop. We were introduced to the work of the charity by a colleague of mine, Charlie Marr. For a number of years he and his wife, Cathy, have spent their annual leave taking the residents of the orphanage for holidays to a mountain lodge.

Following the fall from power of the Ceaucescu regime images of the disgraceful conditions in which thousands of abandoned, forgotten children were being kept were broadcast around the world. A Scotsman, already involved in charity work within Eastern European countries, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, who had formed Scottish International Relief (SIR), began fund raising to build a home for the orphans. SIR now run three homes, two which they have funded, Iona House and Rosa's House, the other Bannatyne House, built with money donated by Duncan Bannatyne.

Having established the homes in Targu Mures, SIR found another need for their support in the local area. - a Gypsy community in a neighbouring area called Hill Street. In Romania the Gypsy community have no standing whatsoever and get no state aid. SIR set up a feeding programme and have subsequently funded an education programme to educate the Gypsies to a better life. A few years ago our Company Section boys decided to use the funding from the tuck shop to support a widow from the Gypsy community whose husband had frozen to death the previous winter. The money provided kept her alive for the winter. Last year SIR paid for one of the Gypsy girls, in her teens, to come to Britain for an operation. The operation was to rectify a dislocated hip which had been inflicted at birth by her mother because it would help with her begging.

The care and support which SIR have provided for the orphans has given them a life which would have been impossible for them to achieve otherwise. The youngsters who were saved from their ordeal are now in their late teens and early twenties, two of the girls were married last year. A fantastic outcome.

A seed was sown just under a year ago when my colleague, Charlie, suggested I should take the boys to Romania. I remember sitting at the BB display last year still undecided as to whether we could pull it off and undecided as to whether I should mention my intentions to the parents. I decided that if I didn't mention my desire to organise a trip this year it wouldn't happen, so I did, and it is happening.

Our trip is costing £500 per person which is more than the original budget. Ryanair withdrew the flight we had planned for, Prestwick to Budapest. We now have to fly from Glasgow to Luton and then on to Targu Mures with a stopover on the return journey in Luton. We have been fund raising and have plans for more. So far we have raised over £1,000. We have had our soup & sweet lunch, a successful Webb Ivory campaign, donations from individuals and also from the Ti Chi club at the church and a very generous donation from Spirit Aero Systems at Prestwick. We have three further main activities planned. A sponsored event in the hall on Friday 4th March, a race night at Kyle Academy on Saturday 26th March and a coffee morning on Saturday 21st May. We will take 25% of any money raised to Romania and spend it in their local economy on products or services they identify as being of need. We have identified two ways in which the money will be spent. We are taking over the feeding station at Hill Street for a day and will be buying education related items for the school which the gypsy children attend.

A friend jokingly said, why should I subsidise your holiday? My response was emotionally motivated. I'm taking 15 boys to Romania. The result of which will be that the notional idea of charity will become a reality. The forgotten abandoned children that our boys have heard about and supported will become real living people who have benefited in some small part by our involvement. They will see the results in the Gypsy community of the work which the charity has undertaken, again with some small involvement by our BB boys. In the last few weeks at our Friday night meetings we have been considering the question posed to Jesus which prompted the parable of 'The Good Samaritan', 'Who is my Neighbour?' The boys know that we are going on a journey where we are going to meet neighbours we've known about but never met. This is not a holiday, I passionately believe that this is a huge opportunity for the boys. They will experience something that they would not otherwise be exposed to, which, not on their return, or next year, but sometime in the future will affect their life choices because of the time they spent in Romania, fully understanding who their neighbours are.

Through the magazine I would like to thank the congregation for their support, both spiritually and financially, it is much appreciated.

Ian Queen
Captain

KIDS' PAGE

GAMES

Maze: Help the fledglings to find their way to the edge of the nest. They are ready to fly!

Bunny is going for a long walk. Can you spot the differences between the two pictures? There are nine differences.

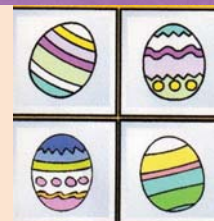
Sudoku with Easter eggs: cut out the extra eggs (ask Mum and Dad if they have finished reading the other side of the page before you do it!) and see which ones go where. Each egg appears only once in every row, every column and only once in a 2 x 2 box.

Help the little birds get out of their nest.

Kidsfront.com



SUDOKU PUZZLE GAME



EGGS TO CUT OUT AND TRY IN THE EMPTY SQUARES. GOOD LUCK!

Parish Registers

Funerals

October

Betty Pettigrew

Clairmont Nursing Home

November

Rene Small

Ellisland Square

Alec Peters

Castlehill Road

John Wilcox

Burnbank Road

December

Margaret Wyllie

Dunure

Mary Roy

Drongan

James McMorland

Pine Brae

Walter Leckie

Caledonia Road

Agnes Dougan

Dalmellington Road

Rae Collins

Masonhill Road

James Quinn

Burnbank Road

Henrietta Cummings

Primrose Park

January

Eupemia Kenny

Leslie Crescent

William Haire

Snowdrop Square

John Ritchie

Morton Ave

Jean Stevens

Windy Hall

Patricia Sargent

Alderbank

February

Peter Gosnay

Emmy Wilson

Ada MacAllan

David Boyd

Robert Gilchrist

Andrew Carrington

Jean Henderson

Margaret Grant

Elizabeth Kelly

Briar Hill

Windy Hall

Briar Grove

Glenconnor Road

Glendale Crescent

Orchard House

Shalimar

Hillfoot Road

Fenwickland Ave

Baptisms

Jackson John Lawrence

28th November

Sarah Morrison

16th January

Barbara Morrison

16th January

Harley Gordon Gemmell Walker

6th February

Heidi McDowall Scaife Gemmell Walker

6th February

Harry Alexander Kilbride

13th February

Weddings


Julie Christian & Martyn Gordon 28th December 2010

Property Report

Over the past year we have been very busy with regard to the main upkeep of the buildings with the North Hall being the main hub of activity. As you were all aware the bell tower was the main project for this year and we are pleased to let you all know that the work has now been completed and also the re-plastering of the interior has also been carried out. We have spoken to the surveyor and it is recommended that we maintain the tower every five to seven years. This would entail an inspection and re-spraying if required. The boundary walls are starting to deteriorate due to the severe weather we have had and work will commence on them in the near future. A lot of areas in the church, including the sanctuary and new plastered areas are needing freshened up and re-painted. Hopefully this will be ongoing during the next couple of years. The main projects still to be carried out are the Main Hall floor which hopefully will be started this July, the replacement of the metal windows and some exterior work that still needs to be done. We would also take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who have given up their time, energy and skills to maintain the property and saved us a lot of much needed funds once again. If you have any skills or would care to join the team contact the office.

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Snippets

Holiday Club

This year's Summer Holiday Club will take place 8th - 12th August, the last full week of school holidays. This is always an action packed week for children and leaders alike. The Holiday Club runs 10:30 till 12 noon each day and caters for children of primary school age. If you would like to help in any way, please contact the minister.

Bible in a Year

60 people took up the challenge of reading the Bible in a Year in January. It is hoped to get people together soon to share this experience and to encourage each other.

Where God Drinks Coffee

A Monthly Breakfast worship for men starts Saturday 30th April, 9:30 in the lesser hall and continues on the last Saturday of each month.

Service of Wholeness and Healing

A monthly Service of wholeness and healing will be held the last Sunday of the month at 9:45 am in the Sanctuary, beginning Sunday 27th March.

Congratulations to our oldest member, Miss Ireland, who celebrated her 102nd birthday in January.

Do you remember?


Jim Roy passed to me a card he found that Mary had kept. (pictured). The verse inside reads:

*Loaf said "I'm like a pretty flower
That's why I'm called a bloomer",
He whispered to a thin-sliced pan
"I've heard a lovely rumour
The church wants bread for sandwich lunch
and we could fit the bill
Warburtons, Allinsons and Mother's Pride
We'll march to Castlehill".
A modest wee brave pale-faced roll
piped up "there'll be a choice,
we've got a larger army
so shoosh your pan-chuck voice".
Lord freezer nearly boiled with rage
But had to keep his cool
"You uneducated half-baked lot
should have spent more time in school,
The church won't accept tough guys like you
You'll get your just desserts,
pavlova, gateau, trifle, sponge,
fruit salad and jam tarts".*




Can anyone recall the occasion for which this was produced?
Liz Crumlish

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