

The Herald

Castlehill Parish Church

Winter 2013



Editorial

The Christmas story comes around once again with its joyous news of the birth of our Lord. We all have a favourite part, the Shepherds, the Wise Men, the gifts, the crowded Inn, the lowly stable. But as we watch the daily world news we see thousands of refugees fleeing from Syria, leaving all behind to find shelter in a foreign land where they are not particularly welcome.

Perhaps we missed that part of the Christmas story, when following Herod's edict to kill all children under two, Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus suddenly became refugees. Were they made welcome, did they have to go to a refugee camp because no doubt lots of young families would have had to flee from Bethlehem. Certainly they were luckier than many modern day refugees in that eventually they were able to return home to their own country. Still the ravages of war are with us. Bob Dylan's protest song still rings in our ears.

*How many times must the cannonballs fly
Before they are forever banned
The answer my friend is blowing in the wind
The answer my friend is blowing in the wind*

Can we pray this Christmas for a wind of change and may the gift of peace be what we all receive.

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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

The Chrismon Tree

For the last few years, there have been two trees in the Sanctuary at Castlehill . The smaller tree is known as a Chrismon tree. It is decorated in white and gold and all of the handmade decorations (made by youth church members) symbolise Christ.-Christ Monograms (Chrismon). The white and gold represent majesty and purity and the symbols include a crown, a cross, a dove, a star and a lamb, all revealing facets of Jesus' life and character. The evergreen tree symbolises the everlasting nature of Christ and the white lights remind us that Christ is the light of the world.

We also use this tree, during our quiet Christmas service, to hang symbols of the loved ones we miss at this time of year. We use the wood from the tree to fashion a cross that adorns the sanctuary during Lent and Easter and thus celebrate the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus - a wonderful way to journey through the Christian seasons.

May you be blessed this Christmas

Liz Crumlish

www.liz-vicarofdibley.blogspot.com



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Worship for Advent and Christmas

Quiet Christmas Service (for those missing loved ones)

Wednesday 4th December, 7pm

Community Carol Service with the Salvation Army and Ayr Community Gospel Choir

Sunday 8th December, 5:30pm

Children's Nativity Presentation

Sunday 22nd December, 11am

Christmas Eve

Family worship, 7pm

Watchnight Service, 11:30pm

Christmas Day

Family worship, 11am



Where are they now ?

Continuing our series on former students who trained for ministry at Ayr:Castlehill

Rev David Mitchell

My memories of my assistantship at Castlehill Church are fond ones, though my first memory is arriving in Glendale Place was to meet Michael who promptly went on holiday for a few weeks and left me to it. Our son David was 1 when we arrived in Castlehill he's 27 now and we also have a daughter Heather. Elizabeth has fond memories of the young mothers group and of Michael Dickie's car starting abilities. We had an old Astra with a dodgy starter motor and Michael regularly pushed Elizabeth out of the car park.

At the conclusion of my assistantship I was ordained and inducted to Colston Wellpark Church in Glasgow and enjoyed a successful ministry there for 10 years. In 1998 I was appointed full-time chaplain at the Marie Curie Hospice in Glasgow, I'd worked part-time for a few years, and in 2003 trained as a lecturer in Palliative Care. I was being made redundant from Marie Curie in 2006 and it was time for a change. I returned to parish ministry and was inducted to the charge of West Cowal in Argyll and now look after the congregations of Kilfinan lw Kyles and lw Kilmodan and Colintrave. I live in the manse at Kames, Tighnabruaich. I also teach part-time for Glasgow University as the programme leader for Healthcare Chaplaincy Education.

Throughout my ministry I've kept coming across Castlehill connections, I've worked with Iain Macritchie, Liz Crumlish and Ian Stirling.



Harvest Appeal

Once again, we sent a bumper collection of non perishable foods to the South Ayrshire Foodbank to help feed local families.

Many of you continue to donate in this way week by week, for which we are grateful. The food that you continue to donate will be used by the Salvation Army in the food parcels that they distribute every day.

Jesus is the Reason for the Season

"All you have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to you" is a line taken from JRR Tolkien's Lord of the Rings and is the very question I will be asking myself this Christmas. When Jesus was here on Earth, he lived life to the fullest knowing that every moment was precious. In his mission he made the ultimate sacrifice, giving himself to others with Joy, Enthusiasm, Sincerity, Understanding and Strength in his heart. He touched people in extraordinary ways and, as his followers, we should learn by his example by walking in his footsteps, knowing that he will carry us through our journey home. I don't know about you but, personally, I find it difficult to be a follower of Jesus. I catch myself asking questions like, "Am I a good person?" or "Why should I be doing this?" but, after a while, I just take a step back, breathe and say, "There must a reason why I am here" or "If He did it, so can I". My fears and doubts all seem to melt away at Christmas, since I am always filled with hope, love and warmth for the future. When I spend Christmas with my family doing all our old traditions I receive a fresh wave of enthusiasm to try and make room for new ones, hoping to make the world a better place. This, ultimately, was what Jesus wanted to achieve. What will you do with your time?

Kirsty Wyllie



Forehill Primary School

An evening of Dedication and Celebration was recently held at Forehill Primary School to mark the completion of many years of renovations. The school has been transformed both inside and out and is now a wonderful facility for staff and pupils and for the local community.

As school chaplain it was an honour to be invited to dedicate the newly refurbished facility.

Words for the Dedication of Forehill Primary School

From portacabins
to technology suites
From churned up ground
to sensory play area
From muddy field
to outdoor classroom
Transformation
Brought about
by thinkers and dreamers
by the skill of architects and planners
by the graft of builders and
by the patience of saints who endured the chaos
and continued to nurture and care for
the Forehill community
as dreams took shape
and visions were given structure
and resources were released
until the whole
became so much more
than the sum of all the parts.
And it's hard to remember what was
in the distraction of imagination becoming reality.
And still it goes on
The dreaming and the planning
and the building and the shaping of young lives
The gentle opening of minds
by more thinkers and dreamers
and planners and builders
with skill and patience
and vision and hope.
A work in progress
Always a work in progress.
We continue to wonder and marvel
And simply give thanks
For a work built on good foundations
celebrating all who have shaped lives
and continue to nurture our young
honouring the wisdom
that lies deep within
Releasing the promise and potential
that come to fruition
when each is valued
and given the space and encouragement to grow.
And so we dedicate this new facility and phase
of Forehill Primary School -
The place where dreams are made real.

(Liz Crumlish 30th October 2013)

From the Prayer Group

We are fortunate in our Church that we have a Prayer Group who takes the time to respond to prayer requests and spend some time in remembering those who are in need, and also their immediate families. Not everyone wishes to participate, or indeed to air their personal worries.

It is interesting however to discover the number of cards that are sent, wishing speedy recovery from an illness or expressing sympathy for a recent bereavement. How many are worded "Thinking of you" and in themselves are prayers from one friend to another. In her poem "Solitude" Ella Wheeler Wilcox begins;

"Laugh and the world laughs with you, Weep and you weep alone"
Always remember in John Chapter 11, verse 35 it says "Jesus Wept".
With prayer you need never weep alone, our Lord is always there beside you if you but ask.
Our prayers are with you all.



Can you help?

Members of Castlehill Church join with residents at Orchard House and at Creggan Bahn for worship, usually monthly. If you would be interested in coming along to swell the numbers, please speak to the Minister.

Proceed with caution

The dangers of modern media devices are well debated, and children in particular are well warned to exercise care when using them. They themselves are concerned as well.!

*The computer swallowed Grandma, yes honestly it's true.
She pressed "Control" and "Enter and disappeared from view
It devoured her completely the thought just makes me squirm
She must have caught a virus or been eaten by a worm.
I've searched through the recycle bin and files of every kind
In desperation I asked Mr Google my searches to refine
The reply from him was negative not a thing was found on line
So if inside your inbox my Grandma you should see
Please copy, scan and paste her and send her back to me.*



A word from our organist...

As several of the church activities operate in term time I often confuse myself with when organisations have their 'year end'. As a rule I consider the choir year to run from September to June however, I have found myself thinking quite reflectively about this article so I am presenting a musical round up of 2013.

This year the choir have sadly lost two stalwarts from our ranks. Jim Rae passed away in August and Trudy McLeod died in October. Both are missed by the choir not only for their strong voices but for their personality and the contributions they gave to our Friday practices. We give thanks for the contributions that they made to the musical life of the church and they will be missed by all.

Despite these recent sadnesses the choir continues to develop and has continued to perform our eclectic collection of anthems at Worship. This year saw the introduction of tambourines in one of our anthems however, I do not think they were played with the same flare as is currently being taught by our friends from the Salvation Army. Perhaps I will arrange for the choir to have special lessons! I am always open to requests so feel free to pass any suggestions for anthems to members of the choir or to myself. One of the advantages about getting requests from others is that I escape the blame when the members of the choir don't like the piece or the arrangement!

Despite having a very promising start in January with the organ work, due to a number of unforeseen technical difficulties the works are not yet finished. Things are progressing and I would hope that in early 2014 the organ will be fully restored and upgraded as per our original plan. The organ builders have advised that the last stage of the work will be relatively quick so as soon as the pipes are ready they should be installed with minimal disruption.

During a recent trip to London I visited a well known department store and was subjected to Christmas music being played throughout. Whilst this was not conducive to improving my shopping experience it did get me thinking about Christmas music and the memories that it invokes. One of the nice things about Christmas music is its familiarity and that the 'Christmas classics' sound just as good with each passing year. For me, my favourite has to be O Holy Night, particularly if sung by a young soprano voice. Those soaring notes towards the end of the chorus never fail to move me every time I hear them. It never ceases to amaze me how these young children deliver such a pure and powerful sound when they sing this soaring melody. In some ways this carol and its links to children is perhaps more apt when we consider the miraculous event that we celebrate at Christmas and the power that was bestowed on a child in a manger.

In closing this annual report I would make a plea to the aforementioned London department store that I only wish to hear the 'Christmas classics' from mid December until early January and not in October. Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a prosperous 2014.

Christopher



Competition Results

Answers to Quiz "Twenty things you should know"

1.1 Old Hillfoot Road; **2.**New Revised Standard Version; **3.**CH4; **4.**Four; **5.**Hexagonal; **6.**Three sheep and a crook; **7.**Jesus Christ Yesterday Today Forever; **8.**1964 (opening of Church); **9.**Switzerland; **10.**Romania; **11.**Superheroes; **12.**Four; **13.**The Rev Elizabeth Anne Crumlish; **14.**Watt; **15.**David Kerr; **16.**Zumba; **17.**Tai Ji; **18.**Jo Jingles; **19.**Wednesday **20.**November 23rd

Remembrance

We were walking in a small square in Venice one cold but bright morning in November when an Italian lady approached me.

She asked me about the 'red flower' i.e. poppy which I was wearing on my jacket. After telling her the reason she then told me that in Italy November is the month of remembrance and that families take chrysanthemums to their family graves.

This conversation made me think of other Remembrance experiences. I spent some weeks in an orthopaedic hospital (the original Jewish hospital) in North West Paris where some members of the Scots Kirk visited me.

At the beginning of November I was given a poppy by a very brave church member. Married to a Frenchman she

continued to live in Paris during WW.2 when she was ordered to report to Gestapo Headquarters. As she was being interrogated the door was flung open and shouts were heard in the corridor. Her questioners ran out of the office and she was aware of panic in their voices. Unknown to anyone there she understood German and learned that there had been an attempt on Hitler's life. No one noticed the small brave foreigner simply walking out of the main door of the most hated building in the city. Years later, there she was, sitting at my bed chatting calmly to me and wearing her poppy with pride.

We cruised to Istanbul one holiday in November and on the 11th there was an impressive church service led by the Captain. Reading the lesson was Richard Baker who had seen service in the Navy. The two minutes silence was memorable not only for the location but for trying to keep upright in a swell which had the ship pitching. I hung on to the back of the chair in front of me !

In the Caribbean there are many memorials to service men and women who volunteered for the British forces. Surrounded round by the busyness of market life by the harbour on the island of St. Vincent there was a striking war memorial with wreathes of purple flowers placed at its foot. On St. Lucia felt poppies were worn.

Finally to Norway. A lovely excursion into the countryside took us to a tiny village known for its afternoon teas especially waffles ! Wandering outside the tearoom we saw in the distance our coach driver enter a tiny cemetery. He appeared to be searching for something so we followed him. At last he bent down and began to pull away grass and weeds. We assisted him and there it was !

A small wooden cross with a British name inscribed in it. The previous year he had driven an English couple to the cemetery and they saw their son's grave. The day we visited was the first time our driver had been back to the village. We helped him tidy around the grave and before our coach left the village almost everyone on board went to pay their respects to a British pilot.

That gesture by a Norwegian coach driver remains in the heart and memory.

M. Petticrew



Stewardship

A huge thanks to all who have responded to our Stewardship Appeal by committing to increase their regular giving to the church. We rely on the generosity of members to enable us to continue to serve our parish, the largest in the Presbytery of Ayr. This year, major expenditure has been incurred in repairing the organ and replacing windows. Remember, if you pay tax, you can increase the value of your gift by signing a Gift Aid Form.

Castlehill Church currently does not have anyone willing to serve as Treasurer. Contact your elder if you require any advice on your offerings.

Kids' Page, for the young at heart!



Child in a Manger

is a favourite Christmas carol.

Can you make two words

out of the first letter of

each of the words printed in green?

You will have to re-arrange the letters.

Child in the manger, Infant of Mary

Outcast and Stranger, Lord of all.

How well do you know your Bible? Fill in the blanks. Ask Mum, Dad, Grandma or Grandad to help if you get stuck or look it up for yourself at

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/>

Hebrews 13:2 - Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to _____ without knowing it. *NIV-UK*

Luke 20:36 - and they can no longer die; for they are like the _____. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. *NIV-UK*



Luke 15:9,10 - 'Celebrate with me! I found my lost coin!' Count on it—that's the kind of party God's _____ throw every time one lost soul turns to God." *MSG*

Acts 27:23 - For there stood by me this night the _____ of God, whose I am, and whom I serve. *AKJV*

Luke 2:10,11 - ¹⁰ But the _____ said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people." ¹¹ "Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. *NIV-UK*

Q: What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? A: Frostbite.

Q: What do Santa's elves do after school?

A: Their gnomework!

Q: What is a parent's favourite Christmas carol?

A: Silent Night.



Find the 8 differences

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

MONDAY NIGHT BROWNIES PACK HOLIDAY

We had a halloween themed Pack Holiday from 25th to 27th October. During the weekend, the girls did halloween crafts and had a halloween party.



On the Saturday afternoon we had a visit from Owl Magic. Some of the girls enjoyed handling and petting the small owls, while the adults enjoyed handling the bigger ones.



A great weekend was had by all and the girls are already talking about their next Pack Holiday in May.



BOYS BRIGADE

2013 will go down as a red letter year in the history of 17th Ayr Boys' Brigade. Our trip to Romania was an obvious highlight of our year. However, in many ways a bigger highlight, is the fact that we presented 11 Queen's Badges, four in May and seven in October. Eleven Queen's Badges in one year surpasses the previous record of seven in 1979 by quite some way. Presenting a Queen's Badge is always a special event for everyone connected with the 17th Ayr. Presenting them in the sanctuary, sharing it with the congregation is very important. Because of the amount the members of Castlehill invest in our Boys' Brigade it is important to show how their investment of money, encouragement and prayers is put to good use.



QUEENS MEN 2013



BOYS BRIGADE (CONT)

This new session enrolled at the end of August with our annual BBQ. We have over 50 boys in our three sections with half of them in the Junior Section. Having lost our eleven Queen's Men in the last year the Company Section is depleted in numbers but the future looks bright with the healthy numbers in the Junior Section.

In mid-November the Company Section and Junior Section enjoyed a weekend away at New Lanark. We stayed in the youth hostel



which is part of the heritage centre at New Lanark. Most of the

Saturday was spent enjoying the New Lanark visitor centre with a

guided tour and our own exploration of the site. Later in the day we investigated the Falls of Clyde which were spectacular. The days concluded with a bar-be-cue and some team games. On our way home on the Sunday we went to East Kilbride and visited the Scottish Museum of Rural Life. A fascinating place with a museum and a working farm to explore, we were very impressed.



Battalion competitions are always a highlight for both the Junior and Company Sections. The Company Section started well by winning the 7 a-side football tournament for the fifth year running, on each occasion beating arch rivals, Troon, in the final. Both sections took part in the swimming gala, the Junior Section won seven medals and came second, John Houston represented the Company Section and with his sole effort the Company Section came third. Hopefully we will continue the momentum, next up is the Bible Quiz.



We now look forward to our Christmas break before which we will have our annual Christmas party/night out. On behalf of the Boys and Officers of the 17th Ayr we thank you for the support given to us by the Castlehill congregation, thank you for the funds, prayers and words of encouragement which are very much appreciated. We wish you a very Merry Christmas.

RESULTS

The Company Section won the Battalion Football Competition for the 5th year in a row on Saturday 5th October.

Also the Junior Section boys won a total of 7 medals in individual races and were 3rd in the relay.

Winners were :

Jack McKinnon - Gold in 8 years breaststroke, bronze in 8 years backstroke and silver in 8 years freestyle.

Douglas McKinnon - silver in 8 years breaststroke, gold in 8 years backstroke and gold in 8 years freestyle.

Kyle Muir - bronze in 8 years freestyle.

The relay time who were 3rd: Callum Boyd, Stewart Veitch, Jack McKinnon and Douglas McKinnon.

The Junior Section finished the night as the 2nd best Company overall

In the Company Section, John Houston was our only swimmer and he managed to be the 3rd best Company on the night - as an individual!!

John won bronze in 11/13 years breaststroke and backstroke and silver in 11/13 years freestyle. He was also part of a combined relay team with 4th Ayr who finished 3rd. What a great achievement!!

All officers and helpers are delighted and very proud of all the boys.

Colin Reid, Officer In Charge, Junior Section.



Meet the Team:

Sandra Black OLM

On Tuesday 12th November, a service of ordination took place at Castlehill Church for Mrs Sandra Black. Sandra will serve at Castlehill Church as an Ordained Local Minister until September 2014.

Ordained Local Ministers assist in a parish or other appointment designated by the Presbytery for 10 hours per week. We look forward to welcoming Sandra and getting to know her over the next few months.



Christine Stewart, Reader in Training

We also welcome Mrs Christine Stewart who is training as a Reader and will be part of the Ministry team at Castlehill until next Easter.



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The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'
(Matthew 25:40)



Loose change makes a difference

Having helped street children in Peru and the Rema Foundation in Romania, the loose change collection is now being donated to Broken Chains, an organisation based in Ayr that provides hot food, support, worship and fellowship for those who are often excluded from our churches,

Recognition of Long Service

On Sunday 3rd November, two of our elders were presented with Long Service Awards:

Marlene Forbes was recognised for 50 years service in Sunday School and Youth Church.

And David Kerr was recognised for 50 years service to the Eldership.

They were both presented with a silver Quaich and a Long Service Certificate signed by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.



QUIZ TIME

What's in a name?

In the Bible what was the name of.....

1. the father of James and John
2. the vertically- challenged tree-climbing tax collector
3. Ruth's father-in-law
4. the disciple whose name began with B
5. the snake who tempted Eve
6. the woman who organized Samson's haircut
7. the brother of Cain and Abel
8. Jezebel's husband
9. the victor at the battle of Jericho
10. Paul's cell mate in Philippi



There is no real answer to ONE of these questions....but in the event of a tie the cleverest/ most amusing answer to that question will win you the prize.

Entries to the office before 30th January 2014. There will be prize for the winner.

What is Christmas?

Dr. John Celes, an Indian doctor born in 1957, turned to writing poetry strongly influenced by his Christian faith. Perhaps his views on Christmas are simplistic but profound.

*Christmas isn't buying new toys
Christmas isn't wearing new clothes
Christmas isn't eating good foods
Christmas isn't sending great cards
Christmas is sharing what you've got
Christmas is giving to those without
Christmas is showing God's love to
Poor, downtrodden, unlucky ones on earth
Will we remember that?*



Castlehill Guild

We are now almost halfway through our Session and have enjoyed talks on a variety of subjects including Culzean Castle, Bees and Quarriers Homes. The ladies are also looking forward to their annual Christmas night out at the Carrick Lodge. Our Guild is still going strong with a current membership of 50 ladies. This is a very healthy position to be in ,since many Guilds are struggling for numbers. We are grateful for all the support that the committee and all the ladies give to the Guild and to each other. This year the Guild theme is " A Fellowship to Build" and we see this in action each week as the ladies welcome all the regulars ladies as well as new faces and the speakers, there is always a lovely atmosphere every Wednesday night and we are both sure that the support and fellowship that is present at the meetings and indeed throughout the whole year will continue to grow ensuring that the Guild will remain an integral part of Castlehill Church for many years to come.

Have a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Marion and Sandra

Parish Registers

Funerals

September

Nan Smith
Ronnie McCormack

Forest Way
Castlehill Road

October

Margaret Rae
Tom Stevenson
Trudy McLeod
Alf Hastings
Catherine Foster
George Black
Hazel Huber

Dalmellington Road
Craigston Avenue
Mount Charles Cresc
Burnbank Road
Old Hillfoot Road
Roman Road
Peggieshill Road

November

Margaret Wallace
Jessie Munro
Lyle Alexander

Glenriddell Road
Anderson Crescent
Maple Drive

Baptisms

15th September

Jacob Grant Lawrence, Overmills Road

6th October

Maisie Cheryl Hunt, Ellisland Square

Wedding

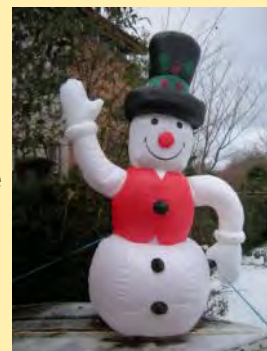
2nd November

Katie MacPherson and Martin Campbell

Seniors Afternoon

On 8th October the entertainment provided by Marie McWilliams, a member of our Church and one of our Youth Church leaders was warmly appreciated by the members. As I was unable to attend, Rev Liz Crumlish introduced the afternoon's proceedings and, while the attendance was smaller than usual, due to various reasons it was enjoyed by all. I would take the opportunity to say thank you for the card, signed by you all, which was most appreciated.

I hope to be at the next meeting on Tuesday 10th December at 10:30 in the main hall for our Christmas get-together.



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Castlehill Church Bowling Club



As we returned to our bowling on Mon. 16th Sept. we remembered one of our bowlers Jim Rae, who passed away in August after a long illness. This year we have over 40 members, but because of illness, injuries, operations and holidays, our numbers each afternoon range from 20 to 27 members at present. We have a list of members on the board, and everyone has to take a turn at sitting out, when there are more than 24 for the 3 rinks. Everyone takes part in a points league every afternoon, by choosing a disc

for a team. We are now also playing competition ties, for the main trophies. This creates excitement and pressure to do well, if you are playing with a partner and leads to some excellent games. We have one or two new members and they have enjoyed the bowling and social atmosphere in the club and this augers well for the future.

I also have to mention that Jean and Pat Patterson are still bowling and they are well over 90yrs!

The Christmas Party is on Mon. 9th Dec.

David Kerr



Men's Breakfast

Men's breakfast worship - last Saturday of every month at 9:30am



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What kind of paper likes music?
Wrapping paper!

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