

The Herald

Castlehill Parish Church

Winter 2016



Editorial

We are almost coming to the end of a very eventful year and suddenly Christmas is only a few weeks away. Many will give a sigh of relief and rejoice that it is over. But Christmas is **never** over, it is another beginning, an opportunity for us to look again at the birth of the Christ child and to think again of its significance and how this miraculous event can take us into a New Year, full of hope and anticipation.

As we look back on our Jubilee Year, it is worth repeating the lines of that well known hymn "Tell me the old, old story of unseen things above. Of Jesus and his Glory , of Jesus and his love" That is what Christmas should mean to us all, a reminder of God's Love in sending down to earth his only Son. That is his present to us. What is our present to Him?

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,

'Apply your heart to instruction, and your ears to words of knowledge' Proverbs 23:12

Remember when phones were for making phone calls? With the advent of the smart phone, what was once a way to talk to someone has become a storehouse of data. Add mobile phone applications (computer programmes) to that, and you can read sports reports, play games, plan trips, find a house – or any of well over 1000,000 other tasks available with an 'app'.

That is pretty amazing, but the 'apps' for phones are nothing compared with the kind of 'apps' scripture gives us. The 'applications' of the bible are direct notes from God telling us how to apply the truth of His Word to all of life.

Take Philippians 2, for instance: The unity 'app' (2:3); the no grumbling 'app' (2:14); the shine as lights 'app' (2:15). Or look at the 'apps' of Ephesians 5. The imitate God 'app' (5:1); the walk in love 'app' (5:2); the purity 'app' (5:3); the tongue 'app' (5:4). And the book of Proverbs? It's teeming with applications.

You don't have to wait for someone to offer these on the internet. Just open the bible and see the hundreds of ways to apply scripture to your life. Got a question about the Christian life? Search the bible. The answers are there, waiting to be discovered and shared with whomsoever you meet in daily life.

*Cling to the bible; this jewel and treasure
Brings life eternal and saves fallen man;
Surely its value no mortal can measure;
Seek for its blessing, O soul, while you can.*

Yours in Christ,

John Paterson
Interim Moderator



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Our Jubilee Year: A resume of Events.

This year our Church celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in October. To mark this event in our comparatively young Church we have had special events each month. January saw a 60's night followed in February with a well attended Burns Supper.

A youth dominated service in March was taken by the Moderator. We also managed to squeeze in an Easter Bonnet coffee morning.

April saw an outing to Rosslyn Chapel and the following month there was an evening praise service given by our Church choir, and an open carpet bowling competition in the Church halls organised by our thriving bowling club. The youth of the Church had an outing to Glasgow to the transport museum, two busloads carried the excited youngsters.



Posh afternoon teas were held in July and August, and there was another outing, this time to Mount Stuart at Rothesay. In September there was a jubilee harvest festival.

In October we held an anniversary dinner to which all the previous five ministers were invited, but unfortunately only three were able to attend, Rev Michael Dickie, Rev Ian Stirling and Rev Peter Park. A display of the history of the Church in pictures from its inception to the present day was on display for two weeks, and prominent in the local press. This was followed by a special service on the Sunday morning during which two of our previous ministers took part.



November will see a St Andrews night.

This has been accomplished during a year of vacancy, which highlights the vibrancy and dedication of the congregation, and the hard work of the various groups, and the continuing support of our Locum, Mrs Christine Stewart

Over 50 years of service to the Youth in our church .

A presentation was made to Mrs Frances Russell for long service to the Church Sunday School and the Creche. The scroll, salver and flowers were handed over by members of the Youth Church



Boys Brigade Dedication Service



The most recent Queens Men with the Captain Ian Queen

On 30th October a service of Dedication was held at a well attended service in the Church. During the service six young men from the 17th Ayr Boys Brigade received their Queens Badges. David Houston, Darren Morrison, Jack McDougall, Rory McNeil, Craig Reid and Angus Stuart joined the previous 77 recipients of the Badge since the Company was formed on 23rd September 1959.

After the service the boys served up a soup and sweet lunch which raised over £400 to go towards next year's trip to Romania. The company's association with the Rhema Foundation in Romania goes back almost 10 years. Originally they filled black sacks with clothes to raise money along with monies from the tuck shop. Then in 2011, boys from the Company went out to help in the orphanage, and again in 2013.

The Foundation was set up in Transylvania in the wake of the Ceausescu regime to help abandoned children who suffered from HIV, a disease which they all got from infected blood transfusions. In their time in Romania the boys helped with various projects, laying paths, helping in whichever way they could, entertaining and getting to know the children. In the ten days they were there in their company in 2011, the message that the boys brought back was "they will never realise what they did for us, but we know it was more than we did for them"

Some of the Foundation were at the morning service along with some Romanian friends. They would be heartened to see the continuing support offered to them by Castlehill Church and their Boys Brigade.

Seniors' Afternoon

For our first meeting of the season in October we had an enjoyable afternoon in the company of William Stewart. He entertained us with songs of other eras, to which everyone seemed to know the words and also with some new ones for us to enjoy.

There was an excellent turn out despite some illness and we welcomed a few new faces. Please come along, you will enjoy the afternoon. You do not have to belong to our Church or in fact any Church, you will be very welcome.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 13th December at 10.15 am in the Main Hall, when we will be having our Christmas Party. The entertainment will be Forehill Primary School and we look forward to seeing you there.

If you need transport just let us know. Phone 737459 or the office and this can be arranged.

Wellwood Grierson

Castlehill Bowling Club

After a hectic summer organising the Jubilee Indoor Tournament and the Girvan annual outing, the Club started up again on Monday 12th September. Twenty five turned up and everyone enjoyed being back to playing in the afternoons.



With holidays and illness we have had a few absentees on Mondays and Wednesdays so far, and with a membership of 41 including three new members, and having only three carpets, we have had to devise ways of ensuring everyone is kept bowling. So far we have been successful.

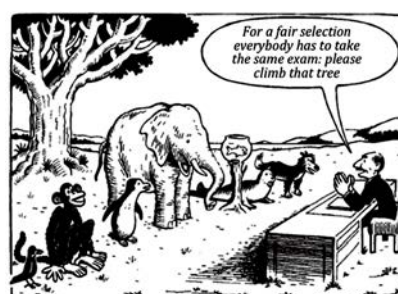
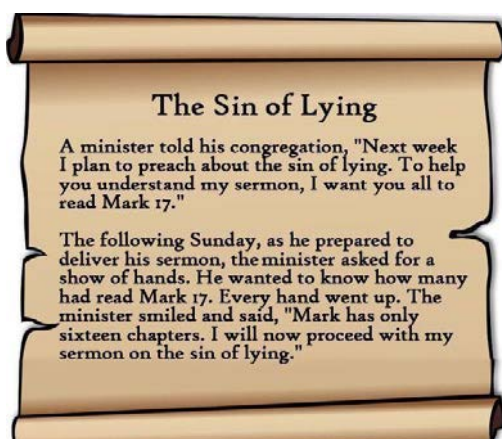
We were all deeply saddened by the death of Betty Taylor in October after a long illness. She was a regular and long serving member of our Club.

We look forward to a successful season continuing to provide competition in our points league, and various trophies, already underway, but continue to have this in a spirit of friendship and fellowship

Our next big event will be our Christmas party on Wednesday 14th December.

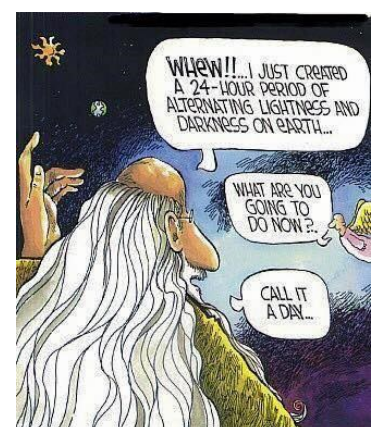
David Kerr, President.

You have got to have a laugh now and again



Our Education System
"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

- Albert Einstein



A Year On

Last December on a wet Saturday night Street Pastors ventured out on to the streets of Ayr and Prestwick for the first time. Since then, except for one, Street Pastors have been out every Saturday night sharing the love of Christ with those of the night economy.



The Street Pastors have been going for thirteen years and there are now over 14000 Street Pastors in the UK with twenty three groups now in Scotland

We meet up each Saturday evening at 10.15pm at “The Inn” otherwise known as Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Hall in Fullarton Street. After briefing we have a time of prayer. One team then heads for Prestwick where they use Prestwick North church as their base whilst the Ayr team patrols Ayr Town centre. We go in teams of a minimum three Pastors. If we do not have six Pastors available then one team goes to Prestwick and then moves back to Ayr.



The teams walk about where the people are congregating, engaging them in conversation, caring, listening and helping where necessary. We reach part of the community who do not normally go to church. We do not preach but share the love of Christ by giving a listening ear, trying to meet their needs. Over the weeks we gain people’s trust and they realise our main purpose is to help them have a good night out. This leads to them asking about our faith and prayer. Street Pastors are often recognised as the organisation who give out flip-flops. That is not the only thing we do, remove bottles, sweep up glass so there are less visits to local hospitals. When we are talking in the middle of a street people feel they are in a safe place even if it is not a building.

Street Pastors are supported by the Urban Trinity – Police Scotland; South Ayrshire Council and local churches. The Police and the Council have been very supportive and we are looking to the Christian community to help further. When you are going to bed on a Saturday night please remember the Street Pastors in prayer. If you are on Facebook please “like” Ayr and Prestwick Street Pastors to spread the message. This was recently posted on Facebook *“ I was a steaming mess and my feet hurt but thankfully the street pastors were there to help and give me a pair of flip-flops which I am so grateful for.”*

We would love to see you when we celebrate our first year at Prestwick New Life Church Monkton Rd Prestwick KA9 2NX at 8pm on 10th December. For further information go to <http://www.streetpastors.org/>



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.

Dear parishioners of Castlehill Church,

Let me start by saying to you all that I feel very privileged and blessed to have been chosen to 'fill the gap' while you wait for a new minister. The first few months have flown by – and I guess the rest will follow suit.



So I began a magazine article at this time last year. Who would have believed that I would still be so involved with Castlehill Church a whole year later? Certainly not me! However, I can honestly say that my sentiments are still the same – I do feel '*very privileged and blessed*' as I continue to serve among you.

As we near Christmas, however, I have that sense of rush and panic common to most of us that there are just not enough hours in the day to get everything done. Every year I mean to pace myself better, and every year I find that I don't. How silly is that? The sense of panic probably hit me at the beginning of November when every commercial outlet seemed determined to draw us in...

However, as I sat to write this article, I've just been thinking that Christmas does spill out not only to November but into every day of the year. At least the message of hope that it gives us belongs to every day of the year, indeed to every day of our lives.

Jesus is not only the romantic notion of a baby in a manger; He came to be the Christ on the cross. In fact He was called Jesus because his purpose was to bring salvation through forgiveness of sins. If you're feeling at all miserable with your life and the way you're living it, then why don't you accept His love and forgiveness this Christmas. If you sense that something is missing, then that something could be your relationship with God in Christ Jesus. Don't be too hard on yourself. Look to Jesus and the gift He offers – the gift of freedom and hope for a more fulfilled life.

It would be terrific to see everyone in Church over the Christmas period. It does us good to draw aside from the rush and hurry to remember the true meaning of Christmas. The gift of God, when you receive it, far outweighs what money can buy. Why don't you try to refresh yourself with the true meaning of Christmas once again? If you do, you will really be able to look forward to a bright New Year for 2017

Happy Christmas,

With love and prayers, Christine Stewart (Locum).

Sunday Worship in Advent

27th November, 4th December [also Holy Communion] 11th December, 18th December.

25th December Christmas service at 11.00am

Midweek Worship in Advent

Wednesdays at 7.00pm 30th November, 7th December, 14th December,

21st December [Quiet Service for those hurting or grieving]

24th December Christmas Eve, [all age worship] 7.00pm

Watchnight service at 11.30pm

Other Dates

Advent/Christmas Messy Church 27th November, pm

Salvation Army and Ayr Gospel Community Choir Sunday 4th December 6.00pm

Congregational requirements in Church of Scotland

The Kirk Session of Castlehill Church are diligent in the need to ensure the civil law and Church law are both observed when being administratively responsible for such matters. As Interim Moderator I wish to raise with you an important, matter.

Historically the Church of Scotland has issued Communion Cards to members of the congregation when the respective Communion Seasons have occurred. This was a record of who and how many communicants participated and the data was then communicated with the central church for statistical record. This requirement has since ceased as the central church no longer asks for such information. We further feel, from a theological perspective, that the Table of the Lord is open to all who love the Lord, regardless of the fact of whether they are members of our particular congregation or not. There may be Christians living within our parish that are not members of our congregation and the receipt or otherwise of a communion card should not be a reason to exclude them from communion. For these reasons it has been agreed that in future invitations will be issued as opposed to communion cards and there will be no requirement to present them when attending Holy Communion.

Rev. John Paterson, Interim Moderator

Following on the Interim Moderator's instruction, and our Kirk Session's agreement, an invitation will be delivered to each member for future Communion services starting with the March Communion. Should any member be unable to attend our Communion services and would like to have Holy Communion at home, please let your elder know or telephone the Church Office Tel.267520, and we will be delighted to arrange this.

Fabric Update

During this special year when we have celebrated 60 years of our Church, the maintenance and repairs of the buildings has been ongoing. From January to October of this year the cost has been £15,841.44p

Further work has been identified and has still to be done. This includes rewiring three of the lights in the Sanctuary. Resolving the problem of concrete cancer in the mullions of the window at the sanctuary end of the main hall, which will have to be replaced. This is specialist work, which only a few tradesmen are able to do, hence an expensive job.

To make the heating system more efficient, some radiators will require to be replaced, this should save us in heating costs. The bell tower needs some maintenance and sealing and the remaining part of the Church roof fascia boards need replacing.

Looking at the main hall we would love to be in a position to redecorate and also to decorate and update the kitchen, but following a planned maintenance programme, they may have to be left in the meantime.

We are grateful to the Fabric Committee for their continuing hard work not only in carrying out the maintenance plan but also physically doing a lot of the work themselves. Financially we have always had the support of the congregation and we hope that this will continue to ensure that the buildings are kept up in the way they should be.

If you are able to make a donation to the Fabric Appeal we would be very grateful

GIRL GUIDING

All our units have been very active since the start of the new session.

Our numbers have continued to be healthy and we have had new volunteers join us.

Activities have included a visit by the Guides to the Farm Park for Halloween, Tuesday Brownies took part in the Tamfest Parade down the High Street, Monday Brownies enjoyed a very successful Pack Holiday from 4th to 6th November and Tuesday Guides are planning a trip to London at Easter next year.



Carol Thomson has taken over the running of the Rainbows from Rachel Gallagher. We wish Carol all the best with her new unit and venture and would like to thank Rachel for all the time and hard work

which she gave to the Unit.

Janette Rankin our Tuesday night Guider and County Commissioner, was recently awarded her 40 years service brooch. Well done to Janette and thanks for all the years she has given to Guiding at Castlehill.



FREE SERVICES - S.I.S.G (Sensory Impaired Support Group) Charity (Ayrshire)

S.I.S.G (Sensory Impaired Support Group) Charity based in Ayrshire operate Free Services for older people living with acquired sensory loss; hearing loss, sight loss or dual sensory loss". The local charity helps over 2,000 individuals each year and has operated throughout North, South, East Ayrshire for almost 18 years now.

The project is named - "Improving Participation and Developing Coping Strategies for Older People with Sensory Disability".

The Free Services include "Help Hubs" in 15 towns & villages with free servicing of NHS hearing aids and issuing of batteries, advice, signposting, onward referral / "Skills For Seeing Training" helping individuals with Macular Degeneration / "Skills for Hearing Training" in Kilbirnie, Kilmarnock, Ayr, Girvan, Cumnock, Largs / "Participate Support Groups" in Ayr, Cumnock, Troon, Irvine, Largs / "Play & Learning Programme" weekly activities such as bowling, crafts, games / "Public Awareness Campaign" to promote early intervention and prevention.

For more information about SISG's free services please contact Denise McClung (Project Manager) on 01292 266791 or e-mail denise@sisg.co.uk or write to SISG, Suite 5 Beresford Court, 6/8 Beresford Lane, Ayr, KA7 2DW www.sisg.co.uk



Castlehill Church of Scotland Guild

At this time of year our thoughts inevitably begin to stray towards Christmas. The Carol "Joy to the World" springs to mind. The first two lines are "Joy to the World the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King", a phrase that is being used by some people when they don't like what they hear is ..".I don't receive this ...". The Guild ladies however live out the line in the aforementioned Carol. They do in fact very much receive their King - Whose we are and whom we serve.

Go in Joy

Have a peaceful Christmas

The Guild Committee

We are the Church

Roman 12:5 tells us, "...so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others".



There is a hymn that we often sing in Castlehill, "I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!" that reflects this beautifully and it is how I see my faith. I can get close to God at home and through my writing just as easily as I can in a place of worship. I am also unapologetic about believing this because although Jesus understood and respected the importance of religious practices, he knew that there was more to doing God's work than reading scripture, saying prayers and standing in a front of large crowd and telling a good story. Jesus visited homes, shared meals and even went out to sea to get his message across to people.

This sentiment of how we are the church is perfectly echoed through a line in the final episode of the BBC Series, "The Musketeers", where Athos says, "This was our home, a place people came for justice, for sanctuary, but it was only ever that, a place. This is not the Garrison. Wherever we draw breath, make a stand, save a life, that is the Garrison. We are the Garrison".

I believe it's our Christian responsibility to go out into the world and adopt the "All for one and one for all" approach to life because that is why Jesus came to us. To be our guide, showing us that we have the power and ability to change our world because together we can be strong - We are the Church.

Kirsty Wyllie

Bible Study Group:

A Bible Study Group now meets in the Alan Baillie Room (next to the office) on a Thursday night between 7.30pm and 9pm on the following dates:

The group have so far met on three occasions the themes being:

2016

15 th September	Be Still and Know	Psalm 42 v 10
27 th October	In My House are Many Mansions	John 14 v 2
10 th November	For God So Loved the World	John 3 v 16

Themes for 2017.

2017

9 th February	Parable of the Prodigal Son	Luke 15 v 11
9 th March	Mustard Seed on Rocky Ground	Mark 4 v 30
6 th April	What Does Easter Mean to Me?	

Personal Reflections.

All are very welcome to attend for a general discussion around the text being looked at on that particular evening.

For further information contact – Andrew Graham Tele:261486

Prayer Request Box

A new wooden Prayer Request Box has been put on the table in the vestibule by the door into the Church Sanctuary, this replaces the plate where requests used to be placed. So please remember if you have any prayer requests, place them in the Request Box, which is opened on a regular basis or telephone Andrew Graham Tel: 261486 with your request for a specific prayer. All are treated confidentially.

There are a small group of members who are willing to support you in prayer.

Prayer Chain Meetings 2017

New dates for 2017.

27 th February	22 nd May	28 th August	27 th November
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7.30pm in the Fellowship Area of the Church.

Each Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting, the opportunity is still available to meet for Prayer between 10.30am and 10.50am. The Allan Baillie Room is open during this time.

Andrew Graham

Financial Update

Our financial year runs from 1st January to 31st December and we currently have a deficit of £12,276 which means our expenditure is more than our income.

Each year we have to make a Ministries & Mission contribution to Church of Scotland headquarters and for 2016 this was assessed as £64,214. We received a reduction of £10,920 because we have a vacancy for a minister which meant a payment of £53,294 but we also pay the salary and travel expenses of our locum. The Presbytery of Ayr levies an amount for Presbytery Assessments and Property Inspection and this was £1791 for 2016.

The cost of insuring the church buildings and the manse was £2344.30 this year and to date heating and lighting the church and halls has cost £6458.91. Maintenance and repair of the buildings has cost £15,841.44 to the end of October and further work has been identified and still needs to be done.

If you are a tax payer and make offerings by standing order or the Free Will Envelopes we could claim back the amount of tax you paid via the Gift Aid Scheme. We can claim 25 pence for every £1 you donate and in 2015 we received £12,509.15 from HMRC in claims under the scheme. There are Gift Aid Declaration forms in the vestibule and they are also available from the office or on the church website www.castlehillchurch.org under the Publications heading. Completed forms can be returned via the office or given to Margaret Devlin.

We have enjoyed celebrating the 60th Anniversary of our church this year and hope this information will highlight the ongoing financial requirements of our church.

Small things and Connections.

In Church one Sunday Allan Jack mentioned that he was going on holiday to New Brunswick in Canada. This prompted Mrs Jenny Murray to say that her brother Jimmie also stayed there. It transpired that Allan and Dorothy's daughter stayed in a suburb of Saint John and Jenny's brother stayed in another suburb close by. Jimmie [known locally as Hamish] and his wife Anne are active members of Grace Presbyterian Church in Saint John. The present of a Castlehill Jubilee mug, which inspired the visit, was duly handed over and has formed the basis of an unexpected friendship between the two families.



We have on sale some commemorative pins suitable for scarfs or lapels. These are £5 each and can be obtained from Margaret Graham. Perhaps one of those pins could spark another unexpected friendship



Castlehill Boys Brigade



This has been a very full year for the 17th Ayr. In April we had the honour and pleasure of hosting Ayr Battalion of the Boys' Brigade. This was the biggest parade the Battalion had experienced for a number of years. The Battalion is very grateful to the congregation for accommodating them in our morning service. During the service we had a collection for our Romanian charity which raised £700! A very big thank you to all who contributed.

We had another memorable dedication service at the end of October where we celebrated and awarded six Queen's Badges. I feel for boys who are one of a large number receiving their badge I hope they don't feel the moment is diluted by the numbers involved. Each badge is equally deserved and equally worked hard for.

The service was enhanced by the surprise arrival of friends from the Romanian charity which we support. My colleague Charlie and his wife, Cath, brought the director of the Rema Foundation, Ibi, to our service along with one of the residents, Mundra. It was quite emotional to see them arriving after I had shared the news with the congregation that three of the residents had died. Alex, Julie and Lotsi all died in the last three months. Alex and Julie had severe medical issues, Lotsi had mental health issues which took him to alcoholism which resulted in his death. Part of the foundation's remit is to seek out the parents who had originally abandoned these children as babies to encourage reunions between parent and child. Lotsi is one of the children who was successfully reunited with his parents. Outside the foundation, the supervision and discipline which had helped him during his upbringing, was gone and he quickly fell into the wrong company which led to his drinking. Lotsi's is a very sad story.

Following the service Ibi and Mundra joined us for our annual soup and sweet lunch. Again this was very well supported by the congregation. We raised just short of £400, thanks to all who supported the event.

Next Summer we will return to Romania to keep our friendship with, and support of, the Foundation alive between the 17th Ayr and the Rema Foundation. One parent reminded me that I said after the last visit, we would not be returning due to the extreme stress these visits cause me. Time dilutes the pain.

In November we had our annual "camp". We returned to the Well Road Centre in Moffat for the second year in a row. 29 of us enjoyed a full weekend of activities, some of the parents enjoyed the only weekend in the year free of children! On the Saturday of our weekend away we enjoyed the company of Allan Jack who escorted us to a site near the "Grey Mare's Tale". The site was rich in fossils which Alan spent a great deal of time explaining to the boys



As we approach Christmas we can reflect on the successful year behind us and hope for another successful year ahead. On behalf of the officers and boys of the 17th Ayr, thank you for your support and we wish you a very Merry Christmas,

Ian Queen

Baptisms

Ethan John Campbell 9th October



Funerals

September

Mrs Rebecca Little Heather Park
Mrs Jean Kevan Glenconner Road
Mr. John Hynds Whiteford View

October

Miss Betty Taylor Belmont Place East
James Bagnell Castlehill Road

The Shaft of Light

When we are young the Window in our youthful Life
lets in a light that dazzles
but through the glass sometimes a mist appears
it shrouds the truth and distorts the real
but a light shines through and parts the mist
and somehow all is clear and bright again
but then black clouds appear and all is turning dark
the morning seems so far away
then dawn breaks slowly and the light come back.
What is that Shaft of Light that dazzles at the start?
What is that Shaft of Light that tears the mist apart?
What is that Shaft of Light that banishes the dark?
That Shaft of Light is Love, it's just the spark
which comes through that early window
and lasts throughout your life

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