



Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's Church

Minister: Rev. Leslie Steele. Tel: 752320. E-mail: leslie@oldparishandstpauls.org.uk
 Session Clerk: Hugh Bain, 11 Langhaugh Crescent. Tel: 756615. E-mail: hugh.bain@virgin.net
 Treasurer: David Leckey, Dove Cottage, 69 Melrose Road. Tel: 757631
 Newsletter Editor: Mrs Margaret Cashman, 'Grantley', 38 Abbotsford Road. Tel: 752711
 E-mail: mcashman@tiscali.co.uk

Dear Friends,

What makes you believe what you believe?

I have a scribbled quote from a lecture given by a theologian and it's one of those questions that I suppose we would expect from a Christian apologist, "If God gave his Son for the life of the world how can we ignore it?" Of course not everyone agrees with it. Some say we can't know, other's that it's too high-flown, yet others that it doesn't make sense at all. Whatever men or women think of it one thing is certain, we can't escape it in a world that has been so suffused by Christian teaching down the centuries and across the continents.

What is the truth though and how can we know it? Some view the truth as inert, waiting to be discovered and as we go along we stumble upon it or discover it or we seek it and find it. In some cases we may find it in other cases maybe we will never know. We would like to know the truth about everything but there just isn't the time to complete such a voyage of discovery so we cling to the known and to what others round about us cling to.

However God's truth isn't quite like that. His truth isn't inert waiting for us to find it but pursues us in order to find us. The boot is on the other foot. This is the thing that converts people from atheism to Christianity, from Churchianity to Christianity, from apathy to Christianity. There is an activeness about God's truth that doesn't just lie out there waiting to be discovered but keeps forcing itself upon us and won't leave us alone. This is why conscience bothers us and this statement that God gave his Son for the life of the World is one of those

truths that will not lie down but keeps pursuing us like a bloodhound.

Truth isn't a timid little thing that lies quietly in its place until discovered rather it rattles at the windows, scratches at the doors, troubles the nights and casts shadows in the day to make itself known. It broadcasts, "Here is the Truth from God".

I say all this because there is an apathy about life in general today, an apathy of which the Church receives its fair share but I don't have any fear for the future for I know that the truth that Jesus is the Son of God and gave His life for the world will not cease but continue and it will pursue men and women, demolishing their apathy, demolishing their arguments and bringing them into, not just knowledge *about*, but knowledge *of* Jesus. This is a truth that has boots on and even those who would like to lie in apathy can't forever escape it because it is not an inert fact but the activity of a person.

*"I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;....."*

So says the start of Francis Thomson's poem "The Hound of heaven" (available on the internet for those who want to see the whole poem) and finishes with,

*"....Halts by me that footfall;
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."*

Yours in Christ,
Leslie Steele.

Silent Auction - Fri. May 28th 7pm - Church Hall

Are you able to help? If you can, please leave items for auction (or Pledges) In the Church Porch, or telephone Nancy Noble (752724), Catherine Bain (756615), Zena Forsyth (850250) and Vi Wood (753660) for any goods needing uplifting. Remember, this is a major fund-raiser this year – please support it and bring your friends to what we hope will be an enjoyable evening. Entry will be £1.50, which includes Tea and Cakes. Children 50p. Payment made by cheque should be accompanied by a cheque card.

Nancy Noble, Convenor

CONGRATULATIONS!

We offer congratulations and best wishes to those in our St. Paul's family who have enjoyed special celebrations this month.

100TH BIRTHDAY

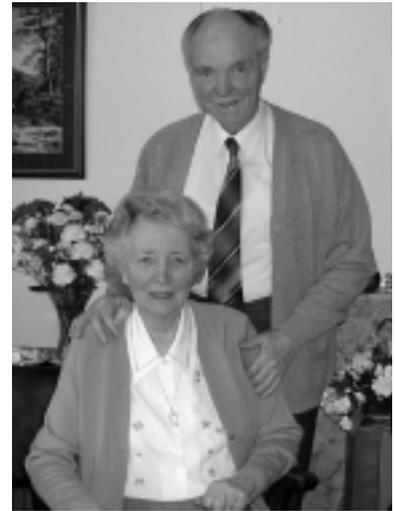
We congratulate Mrs. Barbara Hutson on reaching her 100th birthday on 10th April. Barbara (Batty) has given long and loyal service to St. Paul's, and we wish her good health and many more happy years.



Mrs. Hutson (left) on her hundredth birthday with her sister-in-law Cathy Redpath.

DIAMOND WEDDING

Our warmest good wishes and congratulations to Sybil and Jimmy Barker who celebrated their Diamond Wedding on April 15th this year. Both have been loyal and committed members



of St. Paul's Church since moving to Galashiels. Sybil set a great example as Guild President for many years. Her contribution has been so much appreciated. She has many more years of service in the Guild than the years they have been in Galashiels, as she first attended with her grandmother in the war years. Jimmy has been an elder for 50 years – an amazing record. He has served on the Session at St. Paul's with great energy and devotion, and still reads the lessons in Morning Worship when asked with great clarity and understanding. Our love and thanks to them both.



LUNCH CLUB

The Lunch Club has got off to a good start, and 20-25 people gather every Thursday in the Church Hall for Lunch. We have a good number of willing volunteers who help to prepare and serve each week. However, over the summer months, when inevitably some volunteers will be away on holiday, we will need some relief help. Would you be willing, from time to time to lend a hand? Duties are varied in time and length, but include preparing vegetables, setting tables, serving and of course, washing up!! Drivers are needed to collect those who are unable to make their own way to the Hall. A leader for each day has been appointed and is responsible for menu, cooking duties etc.

If you would be willing to spare an hour or two on a Thursday, would you please phone Lillias (752320) and indicate your willingness to be on a standby list for holidays, etc.

History Day – Riverslea

Douglas, Nancy, and Richard Noble would like to thank most sincerely all 16 members of St. Pauls who came to our Church History Day on April 17th.

The sun in the morning disappeared by the afternoon, but the enthusiasm of everyone kept going, and we had a lot of fun. A special thanks to Margaret, Irene and Vi who worked so hard in the kitchen all day, ensuring the meals were on time, and subsequently coped with the washing-up! Also, to Jimmy, for ferrying tables, etc. to and from the house. It was a real team effort. Appreciation, too, for all the donations from other kind friends which increased our total to £405 for Church Funds. Grateful thanks to you all.

Christian Aid Week 9th – 15th May

By supporting Christian Aid Week, you are among millions of people who think poverty is a scandal we do not have to accept. Your actions, commitment and contributions will bring about a better life for people in poor communities all over the world.

Please don't ignore this plea. Think seriously about giving a little of your time and money to help make this world a safer, fairer place in which to live. Help with the house-to-house collection; rattle a tin in B&Q or Somerfield or attend the coffee morning on the 15th May in St. Ninians church hall. Together we can make a difference.

Angela Miller 755316

SPRING HARVEST 2005

'SING THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND'

Yes – no sooner are we back than we are having to think about bookings for next year. Bookings will have to be made on 14 June so it is important to make a decision by this date in order to be sure of a booking. Who is Spring Harvest for? It's for any one who is interested in learning more about the Bible while have a really good holiday. It's for singles, married couples, kids, students, old, young. It's an opportunity to listen to some of the best known Christian speakers, writers and broadcasters in the country. There's also the bonus of listening to some of the best known Christian musicians and worship leaders and learning new songs which can be really great in the Big Top along with a few thousand others.

It's an uplifting experience and I would recommend it to anyone.

Next year the focus is on the stories of Daniel and will be asking the question 'What does it mean to be a people of God in 2005?'

Cost will be £97 per adult (based on a full chalet) and the dates are as follows

EARLY WEEK – WORD ALIVE 21-26 MARCH • WEEK 1 26-31 MARCH

WEEK 2 - student.evolution 31 MARCH-5 APRIL • WEEK 3 5-10 APRIL

School holiday will be from Friday 1 April – Monday 18 April.

If you would like any more details please talk to me or contact me, Ishbel Adamson, on 756032

PASSING THOUGHTS

On another interview:-

"Hi, Samson. I'm Tel-sat-ale from Middle East News.

Service:- "Can I have a chat with you?"

Samson- "Sure. I'll chat to anyone. I even jawed with those asses the Philistines. Call me Sam.

Tel:- Great. Hey, wait for me."

Sam:- "No way. You'll have to keep up with me while I shove this stone around. I've got my quota of grain to grind. These Philistines may not use their loaf, but they sure eat plenty of them."

Tel:- "Look, you're a hero to some, and an idiot to others. What's the inside story?"

Sam:- "I've had time to think here, and you know looking back on life you see things differently. For around 200 years our people had succumbed time after time to Canaanite religion, worshiping other gods, getting clobbered as a result, returning to our true God and He delivering them. For 40 years before I was born, they were content to live under Canaanite domination, worshipping pagan gods. They did just as they wanted. They did not repent of their sins and cry to God for deliverance as on the previous six occasions. Now I was born to be a Nazirite, consecrated to God, and as a sign of this, my hair was never to be cut. My task was to start the delivery of my people out of the hands of the Philistines"

Tel:- "So the first things you did was to marry a Philistine! Doesn't sound like a good move, Sam. Hey – slow down Sam, I can't keep up."

Sam:- Do more jogging, Stop eating camelburgers. Knock off the booze and pay attention. God was using me to cause a breach between our people and the Philistines, to re-establish Israel's position as a separate and covenant people. Oh boy, he picked the right guy. Every scrape I got into, and I got into plenty, ended up in a rammy, and dead Philistines all over the place. Amazing, isn't it, how God can use the most unlikely people. To accomplish His purpose, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and gave me mighty strength, just when I needed it most and the Philistines went down like ninepins – in large numbers!"

Tel:- "And how! Boy what destruction, what slaughter. You created mayhem for 20 years. Yet not everyone was on your side. The men of Judah handed you over to the Philistines."

Sam:- Well, the Philistines were getting just a tech

up tight, and there's always some who want to save their own skins – yet look what that led to. Another load of dead Philistines. The Lord's purpose will not be denied.

Tel:- Then you hit the skids. You hung out with a prostitute, fall for Delilah, play guessing games with her, open your big mouth and tell her the secret of your strength, get a hair cut and land up as a blind miller. Not exactly a shining example of upright manhood!"

Sam:- Don't I know it. Now listen. It wasn't the haircut that lost my strength. I used God's gift for my own amusement. I broke God's covenant with me and the Lord departed from me!"

Tel:- Sam, I've got real bad news. Tomorrow you're going to be the lead in a big production before their god Dagon. There will be thousands watching under the one roof. I reckon you're for the chop.

Sam:- "Yes, – but pick up your feet, you are dawdling again –

Tel:- You've been taking lessons from these slave drivers

Sam:- No wonder, - patent shoes. You're as big an idiot as me! Where was I? Well, I've realised my follies. I've truly repented and prayed to the Lord for forgiveness. Tomorrow, before that pagan image Dagon, I'm going to beg the Lord's help. I'm sure we'll see that this Dagon is pretty small beer!"

Tel:- "What's going to happen?"

Sam:- "Only God knows, but I do know one thing. As you newsboys say, it will be a momentous production, I'll be the lead, it will be a slap bang finish, in fact it will

BRING THE HOUSE DOWN

Jack Howie



How about a trip to North Berwick?

The Guild has arranged an Outing to North Berwick by Coach on Wednesday, 26th May, 2004, leaving the Focus Centre at 1.30 p.m. and returning by approx. 8.00 p.m. We will be having High Tea at the Blenheim Hotel in North Berwick.

There are still a few seats left, and we would be delighted if any member of the Congregation would like to join us. The cost of the trip is £16.50. Those not wishing to join us for tea would be charged £8.50 for the coach fare. Please phone Margaret Cashman (752711) if you would like to join us.

UKRAINE TRIP

A BIG Thank you from Natasha Moir

I would like to express my thanks to the Congregational Board who, on your behalf, have given me a very generous donation towards the cost of my forthcoming trip to Ukraine in the summer. A couple of members of the congregation have also offered anonymous donations towards my mission trip, and again I am deeply grateful. I would also like to thank you all for your support through your prayers that you have already given me.

As I am quite new to St Paul's, I would like to introduce myself to you and tell you a bit about myself. I grew up in Peebles where I attended St. Joseph's R.C with my mum, two older sisters and three younger brothers. We moved to Galashiels in 1997: I went to St. Margaret's school for six months before High school, and attended Our Lady & St. Andrew's church. I had been an altar server since I was seven, and continued in this role, becoming a Head alter server and an M.C. (Master of Ceremony). I started going to the Focus youth group just after moving here, where I met Ishbel, Catherine, Gordon and Gordon. Through them, I was able to help at holiday clubs in the summer and also at St John's Easter holiday club. I went on my first S.U. camp to Arran in my 1st year of High school. I had a really great time; I couldn't believe what I'd been missing out on! It was great to enjoy so many activities, yet have it all related back to God and meet so many people who all had the same beliefs too. In the last couple of years I have been back to Arran as a camper, as well as going to Basecamp (leadership training) before Ukraine, and again as a leader there after Ukraine.

Some of you may already know that last year I spent two weeks in Ukraine with five others from Britain, helping at an S.U. camp near the capital, Kiev. The experience really taught me a lot, both during and after the trip. It was the first time I'd been a leader at a residential camp (having previously helped at holiday clubs in St. Paul's) and I felt that I learned so much spiritually too. We worked alongside the Ukrainian leaders, organising games and crafts and leading groups of children in Bible studies and worship. Language was only a barrier as much as you let it be, and we had translators for us when we gave talks or introduced activities. The experience was such that I felt a great sense of needing to go back. Ukraine is a country many people forget about, but I promised I wouldn't. I was very interested in the changes in their country over the past couple of decades, the life they are striving to get as something I've always taken for granted. I saved up through my jobs to return for a week in January, when I stayed with one of my friends from the summer. We went back to the camp for a few days, where there were several of the leaders and children I'd met in the summer. We had a great time in the snow, which fell the day I arrived! This summer, I am intending to go for about two months, to help at the same camp again and also a camp in the South of Ukraine.

After the summer, Kate (Cleland) and I started up our school S.U group, and were soon joined in leadership by Sarah Blackwood from Our Lady & St. Andrew's. Over the past year we've covered many topics, going between studying certain books of the bible and focusing on certain issues. It's been challenging, being so responsible and trying to make it fun and interesting for everyone. I feel that we are learning more and more through it all, and take this opportunity to ask for your continued prayers in supporting us.

It was really over last summer that I started coming to St. Paul's on a more regular basis. I have always felt so welcomed by many friendly faces every time I've come, no matter how long it was since my last visit

So now maybe you know a bit more about me, and I hope I will get to know many more of you too in the coming year before I go off to University. Currently in my sixth year, I have been accepted for a deferred entry to Aberdeen in 2005 to study medicine.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone again for your continued support and ask for your prayers in these coming months.

Natasha Moir.

Treasurer's Report

MARCH 2004

Income

Offerings 5 weeks (Weekly average £749.14).....	£3,745.72
Dividends, Bank Interest, etc	£1,987.14
Donations (incl for alts).....	£7,865.00
Transfers from C of S Investment Fund.....	£110.45
	<u>£13,708.31</u>

Expenditure

Electricity, Gas & Church Telephone.....	£158.00
Advertising, Printing, Stationery.....	£156.80
Fabric Repairs.....	£193.18
Manse Telephone Bill – church calls	£70.00
UGC Crossover Event.....	£480.00
Minister's Travel Expenses.....	£360.00
Sunday School Materials.....	£177.63
Council Tax – Manse.....	£2,128.33
Standard Monthly Expenditure.....	<u>£3,905.40</u>
	<u>£7,629.34</u>

STANDARD MONTHLY EXPENDITURE		OFFERINGS	
Stipend	£2,998.60	1st	£594.50
Mission & Renewal	£802.80	8th	£651.02
Organist	£80.00	15th	£512.36
Cleaners (4wks)	£24.00	22nd	£666.66
		29th	£420.18
	<u>£3,905.40</u>		<u>£2,844.72</u>
		Paid through Bank	£901.00
			<u>£3,745.72</u>

OFFERINGS UPDATE

		2004	2003		
Jan-Feb	9wks	£5,869.62	£5,880.14	8wks	
March	4wks	<u>£3,745.72</u>	<u>£3,067.27</u>	5wks	
		<u>£9,615.34</u>	<u>£8,947.41</u>		

SPRING HARVEST – REVISITED

I last visited Spring Harvest six years ago and as we made our way down the motorway system, I really looked forward to the 2004 version. When we arrived everything went smoothly except for a little problem with the keys to the chalet! However that was soon solved and we unpacked and made ready for the Big Top.

Everything seemed bigger and better! There were 8500 there, most of them it seemed with young families! Being knocked down by a scooter was a definite possibility!

The Celebrations in the Big Top were really exciting: Graham Kendrick and his band to lead the music (to a member of Music Makers this is THE BEST!!), some of the best and well known Christian speakers – like Steve Chalke – to speak in the evening and some of the best Bible teaching I've ever heard – led by Dr Bruce Milne who spoke on Ephesians. Add to that 8000 Christians all singing with enthusiasm and the best flag wavers I've seen and you get a little idea of the Big Top Experience!

The morning and afternoon seminars were also very enjoyable. I attended a couple on Storytelling led by an American preacher who has written a book of interactive stories for use in church – you may remember Gordon and Louise used one of them for a children's address not long ago – and he was very entertaining.

One aspect of Spring Harvest which had not changed was – How do you fit in everything you want to do in a day? I guess old age must be catching up with me as I only managed one After Hours event. They run from 10.30 or 11pm! We did go to a performance by Riding Lights Theatre Company where they gave a great version of Christian Oscars Night! Did you know you could win the Best Christian Quiche or the Most Attractive Christian jumper!! I think we all benefit from poking a little gentle fun at ourselves occasionally!

I think the 2004 Spring Harvest lived up to all the expectations I had. I came home physically tired but feeling very spiritually refreshed which I guess was the whole point of the exercise!!

Nancy Bain