



Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's Church

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Dear Friends,

Do you have any crosses at home? Most likely it will be jewellery if you do, though it might be ornamental, it might be on a book, especially the Bible, or on a picture. What does it mean to you? A television programme just before Easter had a writer stopping people in a high street and asking them if they knew what a cross was and what it meant. Most answered that it had something to do with Jesus but other than that had nothing much to say.

The cross however is at the heart of human history for by it we have hope of forgiveness and of eternal life. Many people have their life stories written but none concentrate so much on the death of their character as the gospel writers do about Jesus. It is almost as if their histories of Jesus were written in order to explain the cross and indeed that is the truth. The cross is the place where Jesus lays his life down that we might pick it up. It is the place where the sickness and sin of our lives is paid for, the place where His death comes before ours so that life might be the result for us. It is the place where the cost of our carelessness is paid for and the place where the love of God over-rides our indifference.

It is love, passionately bleeding, to save us from utter loss. No symbol in the world is greater than this.

If you were baptised in our tradition the sign of the cross would be sprinkled upon your head. In essence it is there yet, an invisible declaration that Christ died for you. You have been marked with that sign of the passionate love of God for you and its truth cannot be undone so in whatever circumstance of life you find yourself in now, meditate on that fact. Feel that cross upon your body; know whose death you are marked with and you will not speak ill of him or those for whom he died. May the blessing and peace of God through Christ be with you this Easter.

Yours Sincerely, Leslie Steele



CHRISTIAN AID BRIDGE CROSS

Members of the UGC and the Focus Scripture Union group will be doing the sponsored Forth Bridge crossing once again to raise funds for Christian Aid.

This will take place on 30 April so please look out for people waving pink forms for sponsorship for this event.

Fairtrade Fortnight



Members of the congregation were heavily involved (alongside Tearfund supporters) with the stand in Market Square, on Saturday 12th March, from 10:00 am to about 12:30 pm. (See photo attached) The main task was handing out leaflets with information about the Fairtrade Foundation, which included the opportunity to enter a prize draw and win one of 100 Fairtrade hampers. In total, over 250 leaflets were given out as well as lots of free samples of Fairtrade tea, coffee, drinking chocolate, orange juice, and bars of chocolate.

At the evening service on Sunday 13th, there were a number of visitors from the other Churches and congregations, who enjoyed Leslie explaining the meaning of Fairtrade from the original roots of the two words; "fair" and "trade" – literally to "buy or sell" "beautifully". May we all continue to do so until Fairtrade Fortnight, March 2006!

The Stated Annual Meeting

The Stated Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held on March 22nd at 7.00 p.m..

About 45 members attended – a disappointing number considering the size of our congregation. The meeting opened with a Scripture Reading and prayer. Reports were received from various office bearers. The Treasurer presented the Annual Accounts together with the Budget for 2005. This is printed in this Newsletter along with some comments on it from the Treasurer.

The Fabric Convener, Ian Forsyth, presented his report, outlining various work that had been completed throughout the year. The vigilance of a member in pointing out a damp patch on a pew had led to a problem being dealt with that might have developed into something more serious without prompt intervention. Mr. Forsyth intimated his wish to resign from his position as Fabric Convener. He was grateful for the support of the rest of the committee, but wished to stand back from the main responsibility at present. He was thanked for all his hard work. He has indeed spent countless hours at the church, seeing to the many details of the Fabric of the building. We owe him a great debt of gratitude.

Membership of the Congregational Board. Four members were due to retire on rotation from the board this year:- Nancy Bain, Zena Forsyth, Nancy Noble and Jimmy Waugh. Thanks were expressed for their commitment and hard work. In addition to their retirement, there were three other vacancies for congregational members on the Board, due to certain members elected previously moving away, or being ordained as Elders, Nominations were asked for, but only three of those nominated were willing or able to agree to join the Board: Gail Fox, Pin Teh and Ken Teh. The Board will address the need for members at their next meeting. Those wanting to find out more about Board work should speak to the Minister or Clerk to the Board. (Hugh Bain)

The Guild



Our 2004 – 2005 session ended on March 16th with our A.G.M. followed by the Spring Tea and Bring and Buy Sale. Mrs. Steele led the devotions. The Accounts were presented and approved, and it was agreed that membership of the committee would remain the same for one more year. There was discussion about a coach outing this year. It was difficult to find a venue that suited the varying interests and physical abilities of members, some of whom could not walk long distances. Finally, it was agreed that we should travel by car to Kelso on May 4th, with volunteer drivers, and enjoy a meal together. Those who wished would go via Mellerstain, and look round the house there. Further information was given to members about the progress of the various Projects that the Guild are supporting. A happy and successful afternoon concluded with the enjoyment of tea together.



BOYS' BRIGADE

By the time you read this article the boys will have finished this year's session with their parent's night on Friday 1st April.

In addition to the Company Section attending the Annual Cross-over Camp during June, a further two Boys' Brigade services will take place in our Church during this summer. The first service will take place on **Monday 9th May 2005**, commencing at 7 p.m. This service includes a visit from John Neil, the Brigade President of the entire Boys' Brigade within the United Kingdom and the presentation of New Battalion Colours to our Battalion, the Scottish Borders Battalion. We are honoured to have Mr. Neil attend this special service which will add to the importance of the new colours presentation. Boys from all the Borders Battalion Companies will be represented at the service, which will be led by our Battalion Chaplain, the Rev. W. Haisley Moore. At the close of the service, the old Battalion Colours will be "laid up" in our B.B. Chapel. A warm welcome is extended to all members and friends of the congregation, especially past members of the Boys' Brigade.

The second service will take place on **Wednesday 1st June 2005**, commencing at 6.30 p.m. This service will include the Queen's Badge Ceremony, to which all boys from the Borders and Lothian's Battalions, who have gained their Queen's Badge this year, will be invited along with their parents and friends.

Again a warm welcome is extended to all.

Ian Forsyth, President

The Gap Closes!

My gap year is almost at an end and I'll soon not be here any more, so thought I'd let you all know where I am! On April 17th I'll be running in the London Marathon; it's always been an ambition of mine to do this and now I'm 18 I'm allowed! At the end of April I'm going to Newcastle to meet with all the other British people who are going to Ukraine this summer, for the Youth Conference in July. Then in May I'm going to Ghana for two months to help at a house-building and orphanage project, run by Teaching and Projects Abroad. Once I'm back at the start of July, I'll be repacking to go to Ukraine, first of all for the Youth Conference and then to help at camps in the south and west of Ukraine. I should be back in September, in time to get ready for Uni. I'm going to Aberdeen to study medicine and after a year out I'm really looking forward to it! I would really appreciate your prayers: first to give thanks to God, as none of this would be possible without God's guidance and influence, and also for His protection through the coming months for me, as places I will be can cause different difficulties! Thank you all so much for the support and friendship you have shown to me through the time I have been coming to St.Paul's. I'll look forward to seeing you all on my returns!

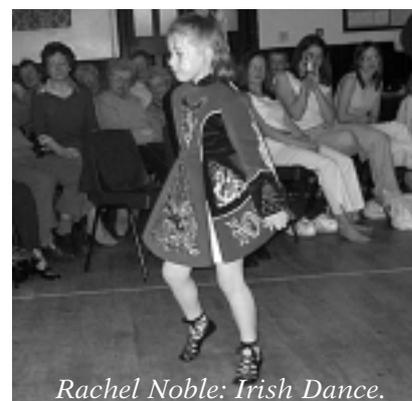
Natasha Moir

Concert

On Saturday, March 19th a concert was held in the Large Hall. A number of our members had agreed to take part, and as a result there was a varied and interesting programme including music from "The Virginians" (Neil Miller and friends) solo singers, the Music Makers, the Galahill dancers, two items from the Underground church, songs from the Sunday School, Irish Dancing by Rachel Noble and a guitar medley from Ian Hanley. The eagerly anticipated item from "The Three Crows" had to be abandoned, as one Crow was *nae* there at a' due to ill health. The programme stated that the Comper was to have been David Leckey, but the man on the night bore far more resemblance to Rev. I.M. Jolly, and was dressed accordingly. Each person taking part from youngest to oldest 'did us proud' and we are most grateful to all who took part. An enjoyable evening was had by all, and the sum of almost £366 was raised for Church Funds too. It will be time soon to start rehearsing for next year !



The UGC: Natasha, Sarah and Ruth.



Rachel Noble: Irish Dance.

PRAYER TRIPLETS "Leaving there, Jesus went, as he so often did, to Mount Olives. The disciples followed him. When they arrived at the place, he said, "pray that you do not give into temptation". Later on, "he got up from prayer, went back to the disciples and found them asleep". (Luke 22)

Just after this, Jesus was arrested and condemned to death. Jesus lived a life of prayer and continued to pray until the moment he died. If Jesus needed to be in constant contact with God, then surely we need it even more. The disciples were tired and so they gave up praying and I know that I have also fallen asleep while saying my prayers at night, so I am not judging them. God asks us to bring all our concerns and need to him, he assures us of results when we pray, Luke 11 "Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened".

Prayer is not just for those who teach and preach, it is for all of us every day. Its just keeping up "the chat" with God, keeping in his way of thinking and letting him influence our lives during the week. If you can talk to your neighbour, your family, your friends, you can talk to God.

We have a prayer quartet on a Monday evening and we have seen many answers to prayer from our time spent together. Why don't you approach some friends and start your own prayer group, it will not only help yourselves but the whole church. *Ruth*

TEARCRAFT Thank you to all who supported the Tearcraft sales evenings, held in conjunction with Fairtrade Fortnight. As a result of your generosity, the magnificent sum of £160.70 was raised and added to the Christmas orders and sales, this means that artisans in some of the poorest countries in the world, have benefited by a total of £731.20.

There are plans afoot to expand the range of products available to include Traidcraft tea, coffee and other food products – watch this space! *Jim Tennant*

The Passion of the Christ

Following the recent screening of Mel Gibson's film, 'The Passion of the Christ', the DVD is now available in the church library. If you missed the film and would like to see it then please feel free to borrow it.

If you wish to watch it with a **group** of people then our screening licence now permits (for this next year) for groups of up to 15 people. If you wish to use it in this way please let Robbie Noble know.

There are leaflets at the back of the church to go along with the film. Please help yourself.

Sharing Day

It is normally the case that every second year we ask the members of the church to help the churches financial situation by making an extra financial gift to the church. We will therefore be having a "Sharing Day" on Sunday 8th May which is our next communion Sunday. Elders will bring "Sharing Day" envelopes to you with your Communion cards and these can either be posted or returned to the church during the month of May. All that we have is given to us by God so please support the church on "Sharing Day".
Many thanks. *Colin*

Treasurer's Report

The Annual Accounts, along with the General Fund budget (shown here) were presented at the AGM in March. I now bring to the attention of the Congregation the financial needs for the present year.

The Ordinary General Expenditure anticipated now comes under four headings –

National Ministry and Mission & Wider Work -	£41,758.00
Local Staffing Costs -	£ 3,600.00
Building Costs -	£15,000.00
Other Local Costs -	£ 4,412.00
Total -	£64,770.00

Our budget for 2005 shows a projected deficit of £8,969.00 presuming there is no fund raising undertaken, although it is recognised that the congregational concert was held only a few weeks ago. There is also the opportunity at the May communion to contribute to reducing this projected deficit, and the details are to be found elsewhere in the Newsletter. Monies raised from these events should help to reduce the anticipated shortfall in our income.

Can I encourage members and friends of the congregation to consider increasing their regular giving so that the anticipated shortfall in our budget can be reduced significantly? I would urge you, dear reader, to support the running costs of St Paul's through your offerings.

I would ask each member of the congregation to prayerfully consider their level of offerings, and thank those people who contribute by Gift Aid – whereby the Church can reclaim from the Inland Revenue 28p in every £1 given by Tax paying members. Tax is not only paid on wages/salaries – it can also be paid on Bank/Building Society interest, Pensions and Dividends. For more information please contact Zena Forsyth.

David Leckey, Treasurer.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

	BUDGET 2005 £	ACTUAL 2004	£
INCOME			
Offerings			
WFO Scheme (non Gift Aid)	6,535.00	6,535.00	
Gift Aid Donations	22,873.00	22,873.00	
Tax on Gift Aid Donations	6,655.00	6,655.00	
Ordinary Offerings (Open plate)	8,811.00	8,811.00	
Other Offerings, Donations, Gift Days, etc	<u>2,713.00</u>	<u>2,713.00</u>	
	47,587.00		47,587.00
Other Ordinary General Income			
Contributions from Congregational Organisations	2,125.00	1,956.00	
Regular Fund Raising Events	-	3,537.00	
Weddings & Funerals	275.00	275.00	
Investments & Deposits	3,064.00	2,533.00	
Use of Premises	<u>2,750.00</u>	<u>2,354.00</u>	
	8,214.00		10,655.00
Total Ordinary General Income	<u>55,801.00</u>		<u>58,242.00</u>
EXPENDITURE			
National Ministry and Mission & Wider Work			
National Stipend Fund Allocation	32,627.00	29,986.00	
Less: Vacancy Allowance			
Less: Endowment Income			
Mission & Renewal Fund Allocation	8,831.00	8,028.00	
Presbytery Dues	<u>300.00</u>	<u>280.00</u>	
	41,758.00		38,294.00
Local Staffing Costs			
Voluntary Additional Stipend & Employers National Insurance			
Travelling Expenses	1,675.00	1,446.00	
Minister's Expenses	250.00	230.00	
Ministerial Assistance (Salaries, NI & Expenses)			
Pulpit Supply	275.00	218.00	
Other Salaries, National Insurance & Pensions	<u>1,400.00</u>	<u>1,242.00</u>	
	3,600.00		3,136.00
Buildings Costs			
Fabric Repairs & Maintenance	5,000.00		-
Heating & Lighting	3,400.00	2,919.00	
Water Charges & Insurance	4,000.00	3,762.00	
Manse Council Tax	2,450.00	2,128.00	
Cleaning Materials & Laundry	75.00	194.00	
Upkeep of Grounds	<u>75.00</u>	<u>83.00</u>	
	15,000.00		9,086.00
Other Local Costs			
Outreach	450.00	420.00	
New Beginnings	-	460.00	
Telephone, Posts, Printing, Stationery, Photocopying	750.00	1,720.00	
Congregational Organisations	1,167.00	1,537.00	
Publicity & Advertising	700.00	687.00	
Organ & Piano Maintenance	300.00	296.00	
Music Expenses/PP License	250.00	225.00	
E J Turnbull Challenge	20.00	18.00	
Safe Custody Insurance (Silver)	175.00	148.00	
Other expenses	<u>600.00</u>	<u>595.00</u>	
	4,412.00		6,106.00
Total Ordinary General Expenditure	<u>64,770.00</u>		<u>56,622.00</u>
GENERAL FUND SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	<u>(8,969.00)</u>		<u>1,620.00</u>