



Galashiels Old Parish and St Paul's Church

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Dear Friends,

This is the first letter I am writing to you since returning from the States. There are number of things I would like to pick up with you from that visit but perhaps I will do so more in the coming months. What we will be doing in this newsletter is letting you know what the Kirk Session and others have been doing as a result of the New Beginnings thrust of last winter.

We have been looking at all the responses and comments that came in after the meal. It has not been an easy task simply because of the sheer number of things talked about however the Session and other groups have been taking time to go over them and it is fair that we give a sample of our thoughts and ideas to those of you who took the time to make various suggestions.

I agreed to make some response on things to do with worship and I couldn't start elsewhere than with the most common matter raised which was that of the singing in Church. It has to be said that not everyone thinks the same way about what is a good hymn or item of praise. People tend to think this debate is a traditional/modern one but in speaking to people you realize that this is untrue for there are some hymns and items of praise that have across-the-board approval quite apart from their style. What I hope to see in our repertoire of praise is a broad spectrum of music that is praiseworthy and acceptable, not to us but to God to whom it is addressed, regardless of the genre from which it comes. It will mean retaining the best of the old but will also mean introducing and making as much a part of our worship new and different praise. It will also mean accepting different styles in our one act of worship for the tendency to fracture congregations into separate worship meetings just on matters of musical taste is not a good example of Christian unity

One thing there was common agreement on was the weakness in the singing and that is something that can be bettered within the congregation by certain steps. One way of dealing with it is to sit together in the Church. No choirmaster countenances his singers scattered all around a hall just as no organ builder puts his organ pipes up, down and around the Church yet we have the habit of making the most of the space in the Church by keeping

away from each other and with the best will in the world and the strongest singers available the sum total of our praise will be weak if we keep on doing that. The other thing is that singing is weak when people don't try to open their mouths and sing. It is of course a vicious circle – if I don't hear others around me singing then I won't sing out to the best of my ability and if I don't, others within earshot won't and so on. Now not everyone is a virtuoso singer but we can all do as the Psalmist encourages us, 'make a joyful noise to the Lord'.

Another matter that was mentioned by some was my attire – no, not my suave sophistication(!) but my robes or lack of them. It appears that some of you would like me to wear clerical robes all the time and perhaps also to use the pulpit. I will tell you the reasons for my abandonment of them. First practical reasons: when I move around especially such as speaking to the children at the front or such like, I became too aware of the danger of coming down those steps in rather a greater rush than I had intended or walking up the inside of my robes on the way back up. Perhaps I'm too short but long robes are a bit of a trial when wanting to move about instead of taking a stationary position. Secondly if any of you have taken time to climb up into the pulpit you will see that it is a very cramped difficult place to stand with a lectern that is too small, requiring a hand to be kept on it at all times to prevent Bible or notes from ending up on the floor with little space to bend down and pick them up especially if wearing robes.

These are the practical reasons however spiritually speaking may I say that robes do not make the preaching better or more effective, it is the prayers of the people and the holiness of the man that will do that. Bad ministry can't be covered up with clerical black and similarly good ministry will be evident whatever the clothing. I would value your prayers for good ministry rather than kenspeckle appearance. On the pulpit, the redesigning of the church which resulted in the tearing out of the central pulpit to be replaced by the little 'egg cup' at the side was a retrograde step in visually removing the preaching of the Word from the central place it used to have in the Church of Scotland. The

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News from the Mission Committee

As the result of discussions based on returned comments from 'New Beginnings', the Kirk Session has decided the following:

- Pew bibles will not be replaced at present but will be repaired. They will now be kept at the end of the pews to save them being knocked to the floor therefore reducing damage. It is hoped that in the future, via the multimedia project, that bible passages used in the service will be projected on to the screen.
- Church breakfasts such as the one at Easter will not be repeated on a regular basis as it was felt this would detract from the specialness of the Easter Breakfast. However, it was decided that the suggestion to meet for prayer was good and as such a **church prayer time will be held on the 4th Sunday of every month commencing on 25th September at 9.45am in the BB Chapel.** All are invited to attend.

Please remember to come along to the following events and to bring your friends

BBQ and family fun evening
Saturday 17th September @ 6pm
Come along and 'Grill a Christian' too!
Friends are also welcome.



VEGETARIANS CATERED FOR!

For the BBQ it would help us greatly to know numbers for catering. Please let George (752055) or your elder know how many intend to come. Don't worry if you decide to come at the last minute.

MISSIONARY WEEKEND:

29th and 30th
OCTOBER

CURRY & CAKE NIGHT

Sat. 29th @ 6.30pm
in Large Hall

With guest speakers:
Mark and Helen Laing of
Interserve Scotland

**COME ALONG AND BE
INSPIRED!**

Whole families welcome.

(Non curry eaters also catered for!!)

Deaths

Jesus said "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

July 29th Charles Butler 178 Croft Street, Gala-shiels

Aug. 9th Isobel Campbell 4 Churchbank, Gala-shiels

Aug. 3rd Jemima Hunter 29 Kenilworth Avenue, Galashiels

Aug. 18th Crichton Wightman 4 Oakwood Park, Galashiels

Aug. 27th Mary Lawson 42 Cornmill Court

We extend our sincere sympathy and the assurance of our prayers to the bereaved families.

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intention was to make a sacramental centre to the Church but in our case the result was that the sheer mass of the organ pipes took over as the central visual focus of the Church and the Word was sidelined. A pity.

There are more things to say about worship but these will suffice for the present, other contributions to the newsletter will share other aspects of New Beginnings. Do continue to pray for us on the Kirk Session as we seek to give the right leadership to you in the coming days.

*With every blessing in Christ,
Leslie Steele.*

The following letter was received by Milton Cashman recently, referring to the very happy visit of the African Children's Choir in May. So many people helped to make the occasion a success that we wanted as many as possible to read it.

Dear Milton,

What an incredible tour the African Children's choir from nKomazi are having! The media attention has been unprecedented. First, there was the performance at the world famous Live 8 event on 2 July, and a few weeks later, the Choir delighted a packed house at the prestigious Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. But no matter how much attention the Choir attracts, the fact remains that without the core support of churches like Old Parish and St. Paul's, our organisation couldn't exist.

I want to thank you and the members of Old and St. Paul's Church for the hospitality you showed the African Children's Choir. Your kindness to the children and your enthusiasm for their concert were greatly appreciated, and I am sorry for the delay in sending this letter.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to highlight the needs of AIDS orphans in Africa. On behalf of the Choir, please pass along our deepest gratitude to all that worked so diligently to make our visit a success. Please accept special thanks for handling the concert details.

Thank you too for the generous offerings of £2,991.06. It will be used to share hope and the message of Jesus Christ with these precious children of Africa.

*For the Children,
Sylvia Callister, UK Administrator.*

More correspondence! Natasha Moir has had a busy a challenging summer helping out various projects including a building project in Ghana, and now work with young people in Ukraine. She has written from the Ukraine and extracts from her letter are given below:

Hello to everyone at St. Paul's!

How is everything in Galashiels? How did the Holiday Club go? I was thinking of you all! The last two weeks have been amazing. I learned so much the first week – our training week. In the second week, we all went out in small teams to either run, or help at, Holiday Clubs around Ukraine.... In the Holiday Club I went to last week, on our team were six nationalities and six native languages. (Russian, Ukrainian, Belarussian, Polish, Hebrew – and, of course, English!) I've found the last couple of weeks difficult in terms of settling back to life here. Of course it feels like a second home, but its taken time to get back into the language again, and also because the place and the people have, of course, changed over the year. It's just hard when you don't see the gradual change in things. So something else I have learned is to let the past be where it is, and look at where things are now, giving the future to God to guide and lead.

Although I went to a Holiday Club, others did different things, including going into a Disco and

teaching a Christian dance to a Christian song, while others were in a Muslim area and were not allowed to speak about Christ. However, as a result of the Team's presence there, Grigori (who visited St. Paul's in October) was allowed to have a meeting about setting up Christian Youth Clubs.

Please pray that I will know God's plans for me in the last part of my stay here. I look forward to seeing you all in September.

Best wishes and God Bless, Natasha.

BOYS' BRIGADE



This year, 12 boys from the Company Section attended **CROSSOVER 2005** for their annual camp. This is Scotland's biggest and best Christian Youth Festival and is run by several different Christian organisations. Crossover has been running annually since 1999 and this years' event took place during the weekend 17th-19th June 2005 at the Broomlee Centre near to West Linton.

This exciting, high action event offered young people in Scotland an environment in which to meet and be challenged by the Christian faith in a relevant and dynamic way. This was achieved through up to date Christian music, teaching and witness, while also having the opportunity to take part in activities and workshops (and having a good time as well!).

This year, Crossover supported the '**Make Poverty History**' Campaign and whilst we all had a good time at the festival and had plenty of food to eat, we were encouraged to think of those in the world who were not as fortunate.

This year also saw the first **Olympics Games**, where the Boys competed against a number of teams (including the Tweedbank Girl Guides). After a little bit of encouragement, our Company came 1st in the competition and were each awarded a '**Crossover Cup**'.

There was something for everyone at Crossover 2005. If you have access, check out the Crossover web site to see pictures of the event at www.crossover.org.uk or at our own Company Website at <http://1galashiels.boys-brigade.org.uk/crossover>.



*Lieutenant Robbie Noble
Company Section*

New Beginnings and the Pastoral Committee

In their response to the New Beginnings questionnaire, some members indicated that they would welcome a regular visit from someone in the congregation, and some that they would be happy to visit. The Pastoral Committee of the Kirk Session were asked to discuss this matter and have it in hand. If any reader would like to add their names to those wishing to help with visiting, or wishing to be visited, please do get in touch with Lillias Steele on 752320.

Tearcraft celebrates 30 years

Tearcraft has now been trading for 30 years, bringing you beautifully handcrafted home, gift and jewellery products from around the world. It's our pearl anniversary, named after the beautiful, valued object that starts out as a small gritty particle inside the oyster. It seems appropriate: Tearcraft has been one of the pioneers of the concept of fair trade, something that was seen as just a minor irritant 30 years ago, but which slowly and surely has built into something recognised as being of significant worth. As you browse through the new catalogue, be encouraged that when you buy these products you are making a life changing choice. Tearcraft exists to benefit skilled artisans from some of the world's poorest communities, helping them to create and market products of the highest standard and ensure a fair price is paid for their work. This means that every purchase you make has a real and positive impact. To receive your copy of the 2005 Tearcraft catalogue; contact Jim (Tel: 01896 751003 or e-mail: godiswireless@btinternet.com)

Open Doors

... are still looking for individuals to sign their prayer petition for persecuted Christians, as a way to encourage our suffering brothers and sisters, to let them know we are praying for them. Brother Andrew launched the petition at this year's Spring Harvest; they are looking for a total of 100,000 signatures. If you would like to sign up, the petition is situated on the notice board at the Hall side of the Church.

MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

Day 2 of this momentous campaigning event is on September 10th, so get your wristband back on! In conjunction with this campaign, as a fundraising exercise (pardon the pun), I am participating in the Great North Run this year again. You will note I didn't say "running" in the event, that's because of an injury to my knee that has developed during my training programme, and unfortunately it means that I cannot train without the risk of long-term damage. Therefore as I have already paid the entry money, I intend to walk round the course (quickly on the dual carriageway, in case it opens before I am off!) and would appreciate any financial and prayerful support that anyone would like to give.

Jim Tennant

Treasurer's Report

JUNE 2005

Income

Offerings 4 weeks (Weekly average £837.75).....	£3,350.99
Dividends, Bank Interest, etc	£577.88
Fundraising	£103.70
Sharing Day	£615.00
Donations	£932.00
	<u>£5,579.57</u>

Expenditure

Electricity, Gas & Church Telephone	£261.68
Advertising, Printing, Stationery	£173.13
Piano/Organ Tuning	£510.00
Annual Safety Inspections	£217.86
Sunday School Materials	£227.33
Maintenance Repairs, etc.	£376.20
Pulpit Supply x 3	£161.00
Standard Monthly Expenditure	£4,297.80
	<u>£6,225.00</u>

STANDARD MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OFFERINGS

Stipend	£3,262.70	6th	£601.37
Mission & Renewal	£883.10	13th	£553.90
Organist	£80.00	20th	£648.49
Relief Organist x 2	£40.00	27th	£503.23
Cleaners (3wks)	£32.00		
			<u>£2,306.99</u>
		Paid through Bank	£1,044.00
	<u>£4,297.80</u>		<u>£3,350.99</u>

OFFERINGS UPDATE

		2005	2004	
Jan-May	22wks	£18,475.85	£15,996.55	21wks
June	4wks	£3,350.99	£3,323.73	5wks
		<u>£21,826.84</u>	<u>£19,320.28</u>	

JULY 2005

Income

Offerings 4 weeks (Weekly average £797.52).....	£3,190.06
Dividends, Bank Interest, etc	£72.99
Gift Aid Recovered	£2,485.30
	<u>£5,748.35</u>

Expenditure

Electricity, Gas & Church Telephone	£165.09
Advertising, Printing, Stationery	£189.62
Travel Expenses	£428.40
Annual Safe Custody Insurance Premium	£148.05
Pulpit Supply	£161.00
Sunday School	£113.44
Bank Mistake	£25.00
Standard Monthly Expenditure	£4,265.80
	<u>£5,496.40</u>

STANDARD MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OFFERINGS

Stipend	£3,262.70	4th	£452.08
Mission & Service	£883.10	11th	£462.22
Relief Organist (4wks)	£80.00	18th	£595.50
Cleaners (5wks)	£40.00	25th	£666.26
			<u>£2,176.06</u>
		Paid through Bank	£1,014.00
	<u>£4,265.80</u>		<u>£3,190.06</u>

OFFERINGS UPDATE

		2005	2004	
Jan-June	26wks	£21,826.84	£19,320.28	26wks
July	4wks	£3,190.06	£3,104.61	4wks
		<u>£25,016.90</u>	<u>£22,424.89</u>	

Senior Badminton

Senior Badminton commences again on 21st September, at 10.00 a.m. New Seniors will be very welcome.