



Galashiels Old Parish and St. Paul's Church

Newsletter ♦ June 2006

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Dear Friends,

The media has a big effect on what we think and the attitudes we adopt whether we are aware of it or not. Watching television, listening to the radio, reading newspapers and magazines shape a person's tendencies of thought, and if that's all they do then they become moulded by them. That's why we encourage people to make a habit of Bible reading and prayer so that a bigger picture than what is going on in the buzz of society around can be got. People complain and strike back at political correctness, or 'PC' as it is called, when they are fed up of being told what to think and believe, but things become PC because of a certain lethargy of mind and thought.

Having just returned from the General Assembly I thought I would write to correct some false impressions that have been given about Assembly business in the media, particularly to do with a very PC area. On the Tuesday afternoon of Assembly Week there was a large much-publicized debate about a report from the Legal Questions Committee on the matter of Civil Partnerships, the new legislation aimed at allowing people in homosexual relationships to have the same rights as married people, albeit not technically called marriage.

The Committee brought before the Assembly a request to pass a Declaratory Act stating that if a minister performed a service of blessing for such a Civil Partnership he or she would not be liable to censure by a court of the Church.

The Committee argued that they were not doing anything new or novel in asking for this (!) - just guarding a minister's freedom of conscience in a pastoral matter. It would be fair to say that the Assembly did not agree with them on that matter.

The Rev. Jock Stein brought a motion that the matter be deferred until a sub-committee on human sexuality reported next year. The Assembly did not go along with that. Subsequently a counter-motion to the Committee's came from the Rev. Gordon Kennedy of Stranraer, who moved that the Assembly give instruction that no minister perform such a service. This was followed by another motion from the Rev. Ian Watson to the effect that both the Committee's motion and Mr Kennedy's counter-motion be re-drafted as Overtures under the Barrier Act* to go down to Presbyteries for discussion and either approval or disapproval before coming back to next year's General Assembly. Though resisted by the Committee, this was the motion that the Assem-

bly agreed with, thus removing the possibility of a *fait-accompli* on the matter by the Legal Questions Committee.

The Principal Clerk then said that the procedure would be for the Assembly to vote for which Overture (the Committee's or the counter-motion) they wished to be sent down, and then having decided that, a simple 'yes' or 'no' to send the winning Overture down to Presbyteries would be put. On a very close vote of 322 to 314 the Assembly chose the Committee's motion over Mr Kennedy's, and then on a closing vote agreed to send the Committee's recommendation down to Presbyteries for their opinion. A certain amount of confusion existed over the last vote as to whether voting for it meant agreeing with the Committee's motion, especially as the Principal Clerk had said that if the Assembly didn't vote for it then we would have had a long debate but produced nothing as a result. Not a few who voted for it to be sent down were certainly not in agreement with the tenor of it.

When I went home that evening I looked at the BBC's website only to see the headline "Kirk backs Gay Weddings". Let me tell you that that was certainly not the case: what the Assembly did was refuse to take such a decision without first consulting Presbyteries. What needs to be done now is for the Kirk throughout the country to declare its mind on the matter before it comes back to next year's General Assembly. The matter of course belongs to Presbyteries, although any who wish to express an opinion to Presbyteries are free to do so before they discuss the matter, probably around November of this year. I will say more on the matter before then, but in the mean time you may pray that wisdom will prevail throughout the land. Finally, "don't believe everything you read in the papers" is an old truism, but what's perhaps more important is - don't allow yourself to be taught by everything you read or see in the media. Major issues are too important to be decided that way. With every blessing,

*Yours in Him,
Leslie Steele.*

* The Barrier Act is a provision which prevents the General Assembly from taking decisions which might profoundly affect the Church without first referring these downwards to the presbyteries, and is intended to prevent rash decisions to the long-term detriment of the Church.



PYRAMID ROCK HOLIDAY CLUB

Old Parish & St. Paul's Church
31st July until 5th August 2006



All children who have attended Primary School this term are invited to join us for fun and games and songs based around the Bible stories of Joseph.



There is a small charge of £3.00 for the whole week; this includes a "Pyramid Rock" disco on Tuesday 1st August.

Join the Holiday Club team in this exciting tour of the Old Testament scriptures, we will "rock" in the name of Jesus for the week.



Pre-registration is advised: please contact Gail Fox at 39 Cotgreen Road, Tweedbank, for an application form.
Or email...gordon@smith9444.fsnet.co.uk.



1st Galashiels Boys' Brigade

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their very kind and generous donations towards the sponsored walk

which took place on Saturday 6th May. We walked a circular route from Yarrowford to The Three Brethren (on the Southern Upland Way) and back down Yarrowford Hill (approx. 11 miles). The money raised will go towards the Company Section attending their annual camp, and should cover all our food and transport costs.



This year, 12 boys from the Company Section will attend **CROSSOVER 2006** for their annual camp. This will take place during the weekend of 16th – 18th June 2006 at the Broomlee Centre, near West Linton. The theme is 'Escape', which I will tell you more about on our return.

There will be no escape for the boys as last year saw the first 'Olympic 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'. We will obviously be competing again to retain our title! If you would like to see the boys at previous Crossover weekends, check out our own Company website at <http://1galashiels.boys-brigade.org.uk/crossover.htm>.
Lieutenant Robbie Noble, Company Section

Arrivals

The Kirk Session is pleased to welcome the following new members into the church family:

William & Lynn Montgomerie from the Church of Ireland (although they're not really new!), and Mrs Maria Smith from Teviothead Church.

Congratulations!



To Sunday school member Helen Montgomerie, daughter of William & Lynn, who recently won first prize in a competition run by Swan's market at Newtown St. Boswells, for a short essay called "My day at the market". Well done, Helen!

Diary dates



If any organisations have the dates of their winter meetings organised sufficiently in advance, please let Hugh Bain know as soon as possible, to fill in the diary with the appropriate hall bookings.

(Tel. Hugh Bain on 756615)

Looking further ahead

**FRENZY 2006 - SATURDAY 10th JUNE
AT INGLISTON HIGHLAND HALL**

This is a large musical event featuring top names in Christian music from Britain, USA and South Africa. The main attractions are Delirious, Tree 63, Hillsongs United, Tim Hughes, David Crowder Band, Kendall Payne and the Sporrán Again Ceilidh Band. Tickets are available from Wesley Owen. There is a mini bus running from Gala and spaces are still available. Visit www.frenzyfrenzy.com for more information!



The theme of 2007 Spring Harvest is "ONE PEOPLE"
The dates are **March 31st - April 5th 2007**
Please contact Ishbel Adamson to book your place.
(Tel 756032).

A word of thanks from the previous management!

You will have noticed that the Newsletter is now under the new management of Jim Tennant and Peter Sandison. I want to convey my thanks to them for agreeing to help out in this way as well as my best wishes. I'd also like to thank all those who have contributed articles in the past, and who were so helpful to me during my time as Editor. All you have done has been much appreciated!
Margaret Cashman

The Guild goes Supersonic!



Readers might be surprised to hear that 18 members of the Guild went "supersonic" on May 10th! A party of 22 set off from Galashiels on that day, meeting up for lunch at the Stair Arms Hotel in Pathhead. After a most enjoyable time together there, one group set off for a drive over the Lammermuirs and a picnic tea, returning home by Duns. The remainder went to the Museum of Flight near North Berwick where we were booked to board Concorde. Sadly, the plane did not leave the ground, but we were able to view this unique aircraft while listening to a recorded commentary describing its history and achievements.

We were blessed with excellent weather, and all who went agreed that it had been a most enjoyable outing. The passengers were most grateful to the drivers, especially the 2 gentlemen who became honorary members of the Guild for the day to assist with transport!



Our meetings are over now for this session, but your Committee are busy planning for next Autumn. The Presbyterian Council Rally is on Wednesday, June 7th at 7.30 p.m. at Melrose Parish Church. The speaker will be Alison Twaddle, General Secretary of the Guild. She will be telling us about the new 3 year strategy for the Guild "Let's Live – Body, Mind and Spirit." If you are interested in going, and would like transport, please speak to Lillias or Margaret. It should be a most enjoyable and informative meeting. We are fortunate to have such an accomplished and knowledgeable speaker coming to our meeting.

Margaret Cashman

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS — RE-ENERGISE CONFERENCE 2006

Gordon and I attended the above conference for 'Ministers and Motivators' at Aviemore and were among 450 C. of S. people from all over Scotland. It was a challenging 3 night event which was full of opportunities to listen to keynote speakers and to attend a wide variety of seminars. The keynote talks were -



- ◆ A Church Shaped by ... Friendship, by Liz Henderson, Minister in Craigmillar, Edinburgh. Liz was very inspiring and painted a picture of a Church bringing hope to what is one of the toughest areas in Edinburgh
- ◆ A Church Shaped by ... The Gifts of God's People, by Kenny Borthwick, Minister in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh. Kenny's Church is also in a very challenging parish in Edinburgh.
- ◆ A Church Shaped by ... The Gospel. This talk was given by Elaine Storkey, who is a University lecturer and broadcaster. Elaine talks about the Gospel with great authority and enthusiasm and also makes the message very understandable to clergy and lay people alike.
- ◆ A Church Shaped by ... The Neighbourhood, by John Bell. John spoke about how we stand as a church in the wider world, as well as teaching us a song mid-talk!

Apart from all of the above we were encouraged to have a bit of leisure time as well, so we made good use of the leisure facilities as well as joining a prayer walk round Loch an Eilean.

During our after hours leisure time we also got into conversation with Liz Henderson from Craigmillar. The parish where Liz is minister has every kind of problem imaginable - much of it drink and drug related, and yet they have managed to make really meaningful differences within that community. I asked her what we as an out of town parish could do in any way to help, especially in their attempts to reach out to the young mums/couples.

APPEAL: Craigmillar could use second hand children's clothes, especially with names, e.g. *Gap*, *Next*, etc., and also any equipment, e.g. stair gates or fire guards. Please talk to Gordon or myself if you are able to offer these items.

This is just a very short recap on the conference. If you have access to a computer then you can both view and listen to various talks. These can be found on www.cwvresources.org.uk then click onto RE-ENERGISE on the left hand side. If you would like to listen to the talks on CD please let us know and we will get copies.

Ishbel & Gordon Adamson

Treasurer's Report April 2006	
Income	£
Offerings—4 weeks (Weekly average £808.36)	3,233.45
Dividends, Bank Interest, etc.	353.00
Donations & Gift Day	5,449.00
From Floodlighting A/C	164.89
Total Income	9,200.34
Expenditure	£
Electricity, Gas & Church Telephone	909.90
Advertising, Printing, & Stationary	181.38
Fabric	417.52
Sunday School, etc.	102.98
Standard Monthly Expenditure	£
Stipend	4,348.70
Organist	125.00
Cleaners (4 weeks)	40.00
Total Standard Monthly Expenditure	4,513.70
Total Monthly Expenditure	6,125.48
Offerings	£
3rd	479.80
10th	576.25
18th	772.20
25th	403.20
Total Weekly Offerings	2,231.45
Paid through Bank	1,002.00
Total Offerings	3,233.45

Offerings Update				
	2006		2005	
	Monthly Total (£)	Weekly Average (£)	Monthly Total (£)	Weekly Average (£)
January-March (13 weeks)	10,265.26	789.64	10,824.68	832.67
April (4 weeks)	3,233.45	808.36	3,348.37	837.09
Total	13,498.71		14,173.05	

Christian Aid Thanks!

A huge thank you to all those who contributed in any way to this year's Christian Aid appeal. At the time of going to press the figures were as follows:

From St. Paul's:

Door to door collections	£ 1130.05
B & Q collections	£ 143.13
Somerfield collections	£ 188.73
Church collection	£ 62.00
Total from St. Paul's	£ 1523.91

Coffee morning at Trinity £ 330.75

Total from all churches £ 5802.15

+Gift Aid £ 428.08

As you can see the total from Galashiels is well over £6000, which I think must be something of a record.

From the Tsunami to Darfur, from Malawi to Kashmir, Christian Aid is helping to rebuild lives shattered by disasters around the world. Many many thanks!

Angela Millar

Good News from Scripture Union

ESTHER BAILEY is the new regional worker for the BORDERS. Esther is currently working at Whithaugh Park where her husband is the manager. This means that she will continue to stay at Newcastleton - she fully realises that this is not the most central place in the BORDERS but is realistic about travel, having done jobs involving much travel in the past. The Baileys have 2 children at primary school (11 and 7 - I think) and have been in the Borders for over 2 years. Previously Esther has worked with SU England and Wales for 9 years and for a variety of other Christian organisations.

Esther is likely to begin work towards the end of August.

The Borders weekend went well with 39 children from a wide area throughout the Borders. Please pray for them back at home. Boating in the Peffer in the freezing cold had to be the highlight for many, and we couldn't persuade the Sunday morning group not to go!!

Thank you to all those who have supported this initiative in any way – please continue to pray for the detail of Esther's appointment, the practical solutions of her working environment, the building of relationships, and the ongoing development work of Scripture Union through all our volunteer leaders to make Esther's integration that little bit easier.

Jackie Ringan, Scripture Union East Team Leader

CHRISTIAN AID - UGC & SCRIPTURE UNION FOCUS GROUP

This year, for a variety of reasons, the UGC were unable to do the sponsored Forth Bridge Cross so tried a different fund raising venture. They set up a coffee, bacon rolls and baking stall outside the church and with the blessing of the Manor School of Ballet targetted the children and parents who use St Paul's on a Saturday morning.

We managed to raise £190 which will be split between Christian Aid and our funds. This will enable us to hire mini-buses to attend various events such as Frenzy - a Christian music event which will take place at Ingliston in June.

Thanks to everyone who supported in this new venture.!

UnderGround Church / Scripture Union Focus Group

Conference

The next Enquirers Conference will be held in the Kelvin Conference Centre, Glasgow on 23rd and 24th June. Please see the poster in the Church for details or speak to the Minister – "What are you doing with the rest of your life?"