



Old Parish and St Paul's Church, Galashiels

Old Parish and St Paul's Church of Scotland, Galashiels, is a Charity, SC010389, regulated by OSCR
~ Linked with St John's Church, Hawthorn Road, Langlee, Galashiels TD1 2JZ ~

Newsletter ♦ March 2019

www.oldparishandstpauls.org.uk/newsletters.htm

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Dates for your Diary

(details of some of these events are in this Newsletter or the Sunday Bulletin)

Regular Events

- ♦ Sundays at 11.30
Morning Worship
- ♦ Sundays at 18.30
Evening Worship
 - ♦ Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct & Dec in St Paul's; alternate months in St John's
 - ♦ Communion last Sunday each month
- ♦ Tuesdays at 10.00 at 2 Abbots-view Gardens
Bible Study
- ♦ Wednesdays at 10.00
Badminton for Seniors
- ♦ Wednesdays at 14.15 (fort-nightly from October - March)
Guild
- ♦ Thursdays at 12.30
Lunch Club
- ♦ Thursdays at 19.30
Music Makers
- ♦ Fridays from 18.00
Boys' Brigade

Other Events

- ♦ **Patrick Bryan of Interserve** is our Guest on Sunday 10 March
- ♦ **Meeting of Trustees** on Tuesday 12 March at 19.00
- ♦ **Joint Meeting of St. Paul's & St. John's Kirk Sessions** on Tuesday 12 March at 20.00
- ♦ **Annual Stated Meeting** on Tuesday 26th March at 19.00
- ♦ **Celtic Songs of Praise** on Sunday 31 March at 11.15 in Trinity
- ♦ **Kirk Session Meeting** on Tuesday 2nd April at 19.00
- ♦ **Congregational Board Meeting** on Tuesday 9 April at 19.00

A Message from the Moderator

Representatives of the Galashiels Kirk Sessions are meeting regularly to discuss the way forward.

Absolutely no decisions have been made, and no decisions will be made until the congregations have met and discussed the matters before us. Much discussion is needed over the coming months. In the end, Presbytery will decide what the Plan for Galashiels and for the rest of the Presbytery is going to be. Hopefully, Presbytery will make that decision in December, or thereabouts.

I have been encouraged by the fact that the elders of all three congregations seem to be determined to work together to further the cause of the kingdom in Galashiels.

Our discussions have been friendly and full of faith and Christian commitment. We shall see in the course of this year what everyone thinks.

Rev. Dr David Donaldson, Interim Moderator

Reflections from Donald

In February school children in Ullapool and elsewhere 'went on strike' in protest against the Government's failure to do more to 'save the planet'. Such fears are natural in those who have never been taught about God. God has evidently allowed humankind to imperil in many ways this old planet; indeed, Jesus foretold a time when, but for Divine intervention, all flesh would perish. It is Christians' responsibility as ambassadors for Christ to keep the world informed; we have His authority.

But God sent His Son into the world to save souls, not the planet. It is all very well to tell people of the love of God and of the availability of forgiveness. But God's love is manifest chiefly in the Cross. There is no other Gospel. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22). "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18).

If we honour God's Word and preach it, He will honour us. But if we keep it to ourselves, He will not honour us, and to the outside world we will appear irrelevant anachronisms.

Dr Donald Cameron

New Member



We warmly welcome and extend the hand of fellowship to Mrs Muriel Brown, who has recently joined our congregation.

Stan and Ollie

Last month I went to see 'Stan and Ollie', the new film about Laurel and Hardy. There's a scene towards the end of the film, when Hardy says to Laurel 'I'll miss this when we're gone'. He speaks the words, indicating his eagerness to finish the show with the dance routine that, due to his heart disease, he knows, from a solely medical point of view, he is unwise to perform.

Oliver Hardy knows it's not just his career with Stan Laurel that is drawing to a close - it's also his life. What he chooses to do, though, is not simply based upon the notion that one should live only for the moment. Mindful of the future, the sadness he will feel, and recalling the past joy he has known, he makes a decision in the present. Hoping not to be left with the sadness of regret - he dances.

For those who've not seen the film, I'll not spoil it by saying what happens but, suffice to say, it's a bittersweet moment. The sadness is extenuated by the joy, the joy extenuated by the sadness. It made me smile - as I cried.

It reminded me of four things:

1. Seemingly good advice is sometimes best ignored.

There are some things more important than one's health - the value of a life is not measured by its length. As Christians we need to be wise enough to ignore the wisdom of the world, regardless of how loud, as we have seen in Revelation, that voice may be. Instead we need to listen to 'a better word' [Hebrews 12:24] so that our faith 'might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God' [1 Corinthians 2:5]. So regardless of how wise the world's advice might seem, let's ignore it and listen instead to Jesus, whose words we know - even if we die - are the words of eternal life.

2. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.

Jesus said that eternal life is to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent [John 17:3]. That is the main thing. Paradoxically, to really live is not to avoid death. Revelation has reminded us that living as a Christian may lead to suffering and even death. But if we live for Christ we will have truly lived - we will have known life in all its fullness, even if we lose all that the world offers. 'For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?' [Mark 8:36]. And so we should dance, whatever the cost.

3. Contradictory emotions can be experienced simultaneously.

We cannot deny the existence of sadness - it is a reality for Christians as much as anyone, perhaps more so. Jesus himself was described as 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'. I don't doubt He cried out in agony as the nails were driven into his hands and feet. His crucifixion was no less painful for knowing he'd rise from the dead three days later. Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. His tears were no less anguished for knowing that he would shortly bring Lazarus back from the dead. At these times Jesus shows his humanity - his being 100% man even as he is 100% God. And being human can, in this vale of tears, be incredibly hard. Our sadness today is no less real for it being a sadness that is accompanied by the joy of the knowledge of our salvation. 'In this [we] rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, [we] have been grieved by various trials [1 Peter 1:6],

Joy then is not the absence of sadness, just as sadness is not the absence of joy. Paradoxically, we can be happy and sad at the same time. As with Paul, who described himself as 'sorrowful yet always rejoicing' [2 Corinthians 6:10], we can know what it is to smile - even as we cry.

4. We need hope.

Hope sustains us in hard times. For Jesus in the garden it was the hope of 'the joy that was set before him' that sustained him as he 'endured the cross, despising the shame' [Hebrews 12:2]. God has made promises - promises he cannot fail to keep. We often find that what we experience now and what we hope for in the future stand in contradiction to each other. Our hope is directed at what is not yet visible, and it is our faith in God's promises that assures us that what he promises we will surely one day experience. God's promises do not always throw light on the reality that exists today: mystery often remains, but they do illuminate the reality that will one day be.

So let's be reminded again of some of those promises. Though the grief remains, there is a day coming when the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise (1 Thessalonians 4:16). There is a day coming when what is sown perishable, will be raised imperishable; what is sown in dishonour, will be raised in glory and what is sown in weakness will be raised in power (1 Corinthians 15:42-43). There is a day coming when God will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things will have passed away (Revelation 21:4). God is sovereign and reigns supreme. The battle has been won, Satan is defeated. That, despite the suffering and sadness we experience today, remains the message that we find in Revelation.

In the film, Oliver Hardy said 'I'll miss this when we're gone'. The hope for the Christian is that there is a new heaven and a new earth coming, which is better by far. Ultimately, we'll not miss what we have now, for the best is yet to come.

Now if only I could dance!



Joy as revamped Midlothian community hub church reopens

In the first of a series about how other churches have embraced change, here is a feature on Mayfield and Easthouses Church, which was published on the [Church of Scotland website](#) on 8th February.



A Midlothian church has re-opened after a £450,000 refurbishment to transform it into a community hub fit for the 21st century.

The interior of Mayfield and Easthouses Church has been modernised to create a versatile and flexible space to enable the congregation to serve the local community in more imaginative ways.

Remodelling means the building is suitable for a wide range of activities like music productions, film screenings and exhibitions – opening up the possibility of being open seven days a week.

A community café (pictured right) with children's play area and charity shop, selling a variety of items including clothing and bric-a-brac, offers the community a place to gather and share refreshments.

The building on Bogwood Road, Mayfield, which first opened in 1955, has new toilets, a smart heating system, modern kitchen and floor to ceiling windows, which means it is flooded with natural sunlight.

Mabel Currie, Session Clerk of Newbattle Parish, said: "We are absolutely delighted that work to create a modern, comfortable building in the heart of our community has now been completed.

It is a source of great pride and joy for the congregation which has always used the church in creative ways and the refurbishment allows us to take that to the next level.

We are really open to new ideas and exploring what it means for us in terms of supporting our community, developing our own faith and sharing the Good News.

It is an open place of welcome, comfort and support and we hope that people will be able to see the real possibilities for the Church going forward."

Mrs Currie said the congregation was proud that adults with support needs, who meet in the church hall, will continue to work in the café one day a week reinforcing their identity as valued members of the community.

Mayfield and Easthouses Church contributed £70,000 of its own funds to the Cornerstone Project, first conceived in 2011, and the rest of the money was made up from grants, fundraising activities and personal donations.

The Church of Scotland General Trustees contributed £100,000 to the scheme, which was completed on time and on budget. Tyne-Esk LEADER, WREN FCC Scottish Action Fund, Robertson Trust and J M Napier Fund were also major financial supporters.

The project was delivered by contractor Ashwood Scotland Ltd and overseen by the Kirk Session with support from Lothian Presbytery because Newbattle Parish is currently in vacancy and seeking a new minister.

Rev. Sean Swindells, who left the parish to become minister of the Parish of Fintray, Kinnellar and Keithhall in Aberdeenshire in 2016, attended the opening ceremony and unveiled a commemorative plaque and planted a tree in the remodelled garden area.

The new look church, which hosts a wide range of activities including a Mothers and Toddlers group, youth group and Messy Church, held a service of rededication on Sunday, with the church practically full to capacity.

A spokesman for the Church of Scotland said: "The Church is continually reforming and seeking to grow by engaging with the communities it serves in fresh, imaginative ways.

A lot of people have fixed ideas about the Church being stuck in the past but they should think again because it is no longer just about an hour on a Sunday morning.

Across the country, many traditional buildings have been revamped or replaced to great effect to create open, versatile and flexible spaces where people want to be."



Treasurer's Report - January 2019

Budgeted Expenditure for 2019		£75,101
Budget for January		£2,193
Income from offerings to date	£2,994	
Gift Aided offerings tax reclaimed to date	£0	
Investment income to date	£0	
		<u>£2,994</u>
Surplus (voluntary income)		£801
Income from use of premises	£35	
Other donations to date	£225	
Legacies to date	£0	
		<u>£260</u>
Income surplus to date, against budget		£1,062

Actual General Fund income to date: £3,254
 Actual General Fund expenditure to date: £2,719
Income surplus to date: £535
 Average weekly offerings compared: **£864** (January 2018)
£749 (January 2019)

Selkirk Parish Church is hiring... Children and families Worker (25 hours)



Closing Date: Friday 29th March 2019

Application form and further information at:
<http://selkirkparish.church/children-and-families-worker>

Or
 contact Louise Raffier (01750 23125) or
 Margaret Steele (01750 23308)

Forthcoming Events

- ◆ **Being Together and Learning Together: Dementia-Friendly Developments in our Communities.** Conference with five expert keynote speakers and workshops on Friday 22nd March, 10 am - 4 pm at St Columba's Church, Stirling. For information and booking (by 12th March 2019) please contact Bonnie McDowell: bmcdowell@churchofscotland.org.uk
- ◆ **Worship Leader Course 2019** Dates for this course for Worship Leaders are: 23rd March, 27th April and 25th May. Indications of interest and requests for information should be sent to the Mission and Service Convener of our Presbytery: graeme.donald@btopenworld.com
- ◆ **Elders Conference 2019**, on "Creating and Deepening Discipleship", taking place from Friday 7th June to Sunday 9th June at the Scottish Police College, Tulliallan Castle, Fife FK10 4BE. Booking closes on 19th May. This is a conference to enthuse and inspire current and future elders in the Church of Scotland with a fresh vision of discipleship and to equip them to have a good understanding of their roles as office bearers. Further details/booking information at : <https://eldersconference2019.eventbrite.co.uk>

Galashiels Fellowship of Churches

- ◆ GFoC has donated £500 to Scripture Union towards their need for a worker for this area of Borders.
- ◆ Galashiels Baptist Church is closing during most of March and April for building work. Please welcome our fellow Christians as and when they join with us in worship!
- ◆ Plans are afoot to deliver Hot Cross Buns along with an explanation of their meaning to members of the public in Tesco. This will be accompanied by Easter Hymns. Do join us on the morning of Good Friday at 10 am to lend a hand and your voice!

Further information on joint services for Easter Week will appear in the April Newsletter.

Eleanor Simpson, Old Parish & St Paul's representative on GFoC