

# Church Matters

West Kilbride Parish Church Magazine

Issue No. 2 October 2010



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## Church Matters - Minister's Letter

I'm sure a number of you saw the programme on BBC 2 recently called 'A Church in Crisis'. In some ways it was a depressing programme about the Church of Scotland, but it did reflect the fact that within the church in Scotland as well as the Church of Scotland there are currently problems.

Generally, numbers are declining and the average age of those attending church is rising. There are financial problems and the church itself is struggling with moral problems. The 'Church in Crisis' programme suggested that the Church of Scotland would have all but disappeared by 2033. The issues are huge, and if we dwelt on them for too long, then we would probably fall into a pit of despair.

In the face of these problems, what then are we to do? You see, the natural tendency when problems come is to look inwardly and to go on the defensive. But what actually is needed is to look outwardly and attack! As any sports coach will tell you, the best form of defence is attack! Now, 'attack' seems rather brutal, but I will explain what I mean.

The message that we have as Christians that we have to proclaim - of God's love and grace in the Lord Jesus - has not changed. Whether people know it or not, it is the best news that they could possibly have - because in Christ they are reconciled to God, their sins are forgiven and they have the hope of eternal life.

But perhaps for too long, we have kept this message to ourselves, and not shared this message with our neighbours, community and the world - as Jesus has called us to do. Perhaps now is the time for that little bit of boldness and courage to speak to those around us - not just about the church, but about Christ and what He has done in our own lives. And also to live out our faith with a new vigour.

In our Sunday morning services recently we have looked at the book of James and have thought about the 'Fruit of the Spirit'. Both of these sermon series have been very practical topics which have encouraged us to live out our lives fully for God and to His glory. I'm sure that many of you will have heard of the saying by St. Francis of Assisi: *'Preach the gospel always. If necessary, use words.'* And our recent sermon series have been encouraging us to be serious in how we live out our Christian life - because it is amazing what an impact that will have on others around us. Living out our faith in a half-hearted way won't have that impact. So our first point of attack is how we live out our life. To get serious in reading the Bible, in prayer and in living out our life to God's glory. But the second thing is that we must not be afraid to proclaim the gospel.

Now that doesn't mean that you should be delivering a sermon on the street corners necessarily or bashing people with the Bible - but the fact is that each Christian is called to be a witness for Christ and to tell others about Him. As Paul writes in Romans:

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10: 14, 15)

Now, more than ever, is the time to be on the attack. Positively, gently, caringly, lovingly sharing the Gospel.

If we knew where to obtain a million pounds - I'm sure we would share it with others. The Gospel is much more precious than that. Will you join me with renewed vigour in sharing it?

Your friend and minister,  
James

# **EDITORIAL**

As I write this editorial Brian and I have just got back from Oberammergau where we watched the Passion Play. It was a very moving and thought provoking performance involving most of the people who live in the village. It is such a commitment for them as it is performed five days a week for six months. The plays and musicals we have been involved in pale into insignificance compared to this!

We are currently involved in the Panto and the Community Choir, both of which need more people to help. Please come along if you can on Sundays at 12.45pm in the Session Room for the Choir and 2.30pm in the Bill Penny Hall for the Panto.

We would like to say a big “Thank you” to all who have told us how much they are enjoying the Praise Band in church and to the anonymous donor who gave us £500 to spend on equipment. Your support is appreciated very much. Some people may still have some reservations about Praise songs and prefer the old hymns but I do hope you enjoy the humorous expose of the difference in them on page 15.

I have not had much feedback from the first edition of Church Matters so please feel free to let us know what you think of the magazine. If there is anything you would like to see included in future editions or anything you would like to submit, it would be good to hear from you. Perhaps we could have a letters page if you would like to write to me. Remember, this is *your* magazine.

*Deirdre Murray.*

## The Guild

The Guild has now resumed for the 2010 - 11 session and already welcomed new members. On September 14<sup>th</sup> at an “in house” session we heard details of the year’s programme which is varied and interesting.

### Guild Annual Meeting in Dundee, “Grace and Mercy”

Four of our members along with over 500 others from all over Scotland, attended the Guild Annual Meeting in Dundee at the end of August. This is always a stimulating and uplifting occasion, but for us from West Kilbride it was particularly special, because the former interim Minister at St. Andrews, Rt. Rev'd. John Christie, who is now the Moderator of the General Assembly, was the first speaker of the day. The theme of the meeting was “Grace and Mercy” and the Moderator spoke very meaningfully about forgiveness and reconciliation, and how showing mercy and love where there is hatred and conflict can transform a difficult situation, and is a Christ-like attitude. He quoted from Portia’s speech in Shakespeare’s “Merchant of Venice”, which brought back memories of school-day literature studies.

“The quality of mercy is not strained -  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest -  
It blesses him that gives and him that takes -  
In the course of justice none of us  
Should see salvation, we do pray for mercy. “

John Christie had just returned from a tour of Shetland and told us an amusing story of a visit to a Primary School there. One small boy went home and told his mother that a very important gentleman had been to the school that day, someone who had been on TV. “Who was it?” asked his mother. “I don’t know,” replied the boy. “I think it was the Weatherman.”

We did not think that the Moderator would spot us among such a

crowd, but he did, and came to speak to us at the end of the morning session, wanting to know how things were going at West Kilbride Parish Church. He sent his love to us all.

The other two speakers on the same theme of love and forgiveness were Lesley Bilinda and Elaine Duncan. Lesley spoke about her time in Ruanda in the 1990's. She worked there with Tear Fund and had taken a short holiday in Tanzania when the genocide - massacre of many of the Tutsi tribe - took place, Many of her friends and co-workers were killed and their homes destroyed. Her husband, an African pastor, had disappeared and to this day she does not know details of what happened to him, but believes he was killed. It took her a long time to find forgiveness in her heart towards the perpetrators of such atrocities. I remember a Christian friend saying to me, "Forgiveness is a process." It takes time to come to a place of mercy and reconciliation. Lesley Belinda's moving book "The Colour of Darkness" is in the church lending library.

The Afternoon speaker was Elaine Duncan, chief executive of the Scottish Bible Society. Elaine gave us a Bible Study on the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant [Matthew Ch.18]. In a lively and dramatic way she re-told the story about a servant who was released from a huge debt by a merciful King, and who then went out and found a man who owed him a small debt and demanded payment immediately. When the King heard of this he said to the servant, "You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you"

We who have been forgiven much through Jesus' death on the Cross should be forgiving and merciful to others.

We came home challenged, uplifted and encouraged to show more grace and mercy in our Christian lives.

Eileen Hinde



## Session Update

Since the last issue of 'Church Matters' there has only been one brief Session meeting – held following morning worship on Sunday 19th September. The individual 'Teams' have been meeting on a regular basis and are scheduled to report to the Session Meeting in October however for the purposes of this update, the following are specifically highlighted from the aforementioned Session:

- The Fabric Team continues to investigate the work required for the Balcony area. An architect has also been engaged and a full feasibility study prepared in respect of what structural work may be necessary/desired as the Church considers the buildings and how best to use them going forward. This will be presented to Session on Tuesday 19th October.
- An anonymous donation of £500 has been received and specified for Praise Band purposes.
- The Pastoral Care Team has been reviewing the Church's pastoral care/visiting strategy. Previously, both Overton and St Andrews operated a 'District' system with Elders visiting members both in the lead up to Communion and at other times as deemed appropriate. The current review is evaluating how best to structure this work as our new Church develops. Essentially, the Pastoral Care Team will oversee what was once the role of each Elder i.e. it will be

their key focus. In summary, we are looking to move away from One Elder/One District - It's early days so please bear with us. We will of course keep you informed as matters progress.

- The Moderator of Ardrossan Presbytery, Gillean MacLean, will preach at our morning worship on Sunday 3rd October.
- The Moderator of The Church of Scotland, John Christie, will preach at our morning worship on Sunday 9th January 2011. It is also hoped to have a buffet lunch that day, so please keep your diaries free.

Exciting times are ahead. Please steep the work here at West Kilbride in prayer and I would urge as many of you as possible to note the Church Prayer Meeting times and make every effort to attend.

Graeme Cruickshank – Joint Session Clerk.

## Monthly Prayer Diary – October 2010

Fri 1 <sup>st</sup>	“How great is our God” Let us just give Him our praise today
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Young people who are starting university and college
<b>Sun 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Father, I place into Your hands the things that I can't do</b>
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup>	God's leading and guidance for the Church in West Kilbride
Tues 5 <sup>th</sup>	Rev James McNay, Anna and baby John
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup>	Human Trafficking – people bought and sold into slavery
Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup>	Aid workers called to serve in difficult situations around the world
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup>	We continue to remember the people in Pakistan affected by the floods
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup>	The Persecuted Church and all who are imprisoned because of their faith in The Lord Jesus
<b>Sun 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Father, I place into Your hands my friends and family</b>
Mon 11 <sup>th</sup>	Young families during this week of school holidays
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup>	Families who are struggling to cope with illness
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup>	Families who are coming to terms with the loss of a loved one
Thurs 14 <sup>th</sup>	Families who wait the return of a 'prodigal'
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup>	Families who are struggling due to drug and alcohol addiction
Sat 16 <sup>th</sup>	We give thanks for love shared within families

<b>Sun 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Father, I place into Your hands the times that I've been through</b>
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup>	Our local schools as they begin this new term
Tues 19 <sup>th</sup>	Our GP Surgery and local hospitals
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup>	Bishop Elias Teban and MAI and the work they are doing in Sudan
Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup>	All who we know who have been called to serve God in other parts of the world
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Our Youth Organisations, Junior Church and Crèche
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Carol and Graeme and our Elders, especially those leading the Ministry Teams
<b>Sun 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Father, I place into Your Hands the things that trouble me</b>
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup>	Rt. Rev. John Christie in his role as Church Moderator
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup>	All who are sad and lonely – may they find hope
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	Katy Clarke and Kenneth Gibson, our MP and MSP and all those in authority
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup>	Protection over our village against violence and crime
Fri 29 <sup>th</sup>	Children in foster care and Residential Homes
Sat 30 <sup>th</sup>	Protection over our children during this season of Halloween
<b>Sun 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Father, I place into Your hands the way that I should go, for I know I always can trust You</b>

“May the favour of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us-  
yes, establish the work of our hands.

Psalm 90 v 17

## **Church Flowers**

When the Flower Team was formed, shortly after the Union of the Churches, we wrote two thank you letters: one to those in St Andrews who had donated flowers over the years and the other to those in Overton who had donated to the Flower Fund for the purchase of flowers over the years. It has just come to our notice that these letters were not sent out. For this we apologise sincerely.

Overton & St Andrews had two very different systems for providing the Church Flowers. We quickly realised we would have to introduce a method that would be easy to organise in the larger Church and so decided that the handing in of flowers would no longer be practical.

We are delighted that many of you still wish to acknowledge special dates by providing flowers in the Church, but we would request that this be done by giving a monetary donation which would then be used to buy flowers on your behalf by the designated arranger for that Sunday.

There is a calendar on the notice board in the Lower Hall where we would request that you write your name beside the date that you wish to mark.

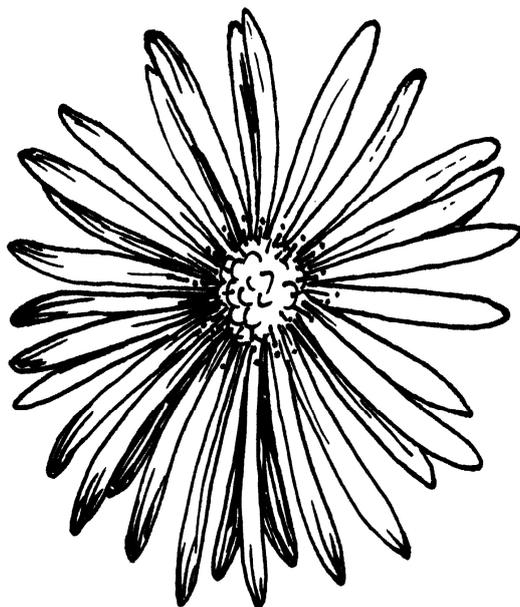
As there is also a rota sheet of arrangers beside the calendar please feel free to phone the person 'on duty' for

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your date if you wish to discuss colours or types of flower. If you wish we could also acknowledge your special date in the intimation sheet for that week. e.g. The flowers today are in memory of '....' or The flowers today are to mark a special wedding anniversary/birthday of '....'

We appreciate how important the giving of flowers has been to many of you and we hope that you will continue to remember special dates even if it is now done in a way new to you. If you have any queries, please contact me on 829114. The Flower Team has been running very smoothly so far and many people have commented on the different arrangements over the past few months. Those who deliver the flowers also realise just how much they mean to the recipients.

*Moira Mackinnon Flower Convener*



## **Men's Fellowship**

The first meeting of the newly formed W.K.P.C Men's Fellowship took place on September 13th, when our Hon. President, Revd. James McNay, spoke to us about the Bible. By way of a light-hearted introduction he exposed our ignorance of the statistics of the Bible with a short quiz. Do you know, for example, what is the middle verse of the Bible? More seriously, he went on to show how we came to have our versions of the Bible, producing texts in Greek and Hebrew, as well as a number of different translations. We learned something of the work of translation and the great task that has still to be completed with thousands of language groups still without any of the Scriptures in their language.

Finally, he emphasised how important it is to know the Word of God and read the Bible regularly.

The Men's Fellowship meets every Monday evening at 7.15. All men are welcome. Mostly we meet in the Bill Penny Hall, but each month we have a speaker and meet in the Session Room.

*Peter Hinde*

## ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRAISE SONGS AND HYMNS

A man accustomed to a mainline church went to a seekers' service one Sunday. He came home and his wife asked him how it was. "Well," he said, "it was interesting. They did something different. They sang praise songs instead of hymns." "Praise songs?" said his wife. "What are those?"

"Oh, they're okay, I guess. They're sort of like hymns, only different," said the man. "What's the difference?" asked his wife. He replied, "Well, it's like this. If I were to say to you, "Martha, the cows are in the corn," that would be a hymn. Suppose, on the other hand, I were to say to you, "Martha, Martha, Martha, Oh, Martha, MARTHA, MARTHA, the cows, the big cows, the brown cows, the black cows, the white cows, the black and white cows, the COWS, COWS, COWS are in the corn, are in the corn, are in the corn, are in the corn, the CORN, CORN, CORN." Then if I were to repeat the whole thing five or six times that would be a praise song."

As luck would have it, the same Sunday a young woman accustomed to seekers' services attended a mainline service. She came home and her husband asked her how it was. "Well," she said, "it was interesting. They did something different, however. They sang hymns instead of praise songs."

"Hymns?" said her husband. "What are those?"

“Oh, they’re okay, I guess. They’re sort of like regular songs, only different.” said the woman.

”What’s the difference?” asked her husband. She replied,

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“Well, it’s like this. If I were to say to you, ‘Ernest, the cows are in the corn,’ that would be a regular song. Suppose, on the other hand, I were to say to you:

Oh Ernest, dear Ernest, now hear thou my cry;  
Incline thine ear to the words of my mouth.  
Turn thou thy whole wondrous ear by and by  
To the righteous, inimitable, glorious truth.

For the way of the animals who can explain?  
There is in their heads no shadow of sense!  
Hearken they not in God’s sun or his rain.  
Unless from the mild, tempting corn they are fenced.

Yea, those cows in glad bovine, rebellious delight  
Broke free from their shackles, their warm pens eschewed.

Then goaded by minions of darkness and night.  
They all my mild Chilliwack sweet corn have chewed.

So look to that bright shining day by and by,  
Where all the corruptions of earth are reborn,

Where no vicious animal makes my soul cry,  
And I no longer see those foul cows in the corn.

Then, if I were to sing only verses one, three, and  
four and if I were to do a key change on the last  
verse - that would be a hymn.”

## **Howlers from Church Bulletins (with thanks to Pray for Scotland)**

The price for the Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: Jesus walks on the water.  
The sermon tonight: Searching for Jesus.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again", giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

### **Church Website / Facebook / Twitter**

Our church website is undergoing a makeover and is being slowly built up!

At the moment it is at [www.westkilbrideparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.westkilbrideparishchurch.co.uk) (please note the .co.uk). In time, the .org.uk site will reach the same site. Currently some of the latest sermons are available for download, there are some resources to look at and in time there will be some history about the church and information about all the organisations. Please go to the site and take a look!

If you are on Facebook, why not join our 'Friends of West Kilbride ParishChurch' Group and connect with others in the church.

As a church we now have our own Twitter Feed. Find us and follow us at: [www.twitter.com/WKPC](http://www.twitter.com/WKPC) and follow the latest church news!

## Dates for Your Diary October 2010

- 3rd October 10.30am Morning Worship  
2.00pm Afternoon Service at Headrigg Gardens
- 4th October 7.15pm Men's Fellowship in the Bill Penny Hall. An evening of games and competitions
- 5th October No Guild meeting – Age Concern Concert
- 10th October 10.30am Morning Worship
- 11th October 7.15pm Men's Fellowship meet in the Session Room. Speaker Mr. Peter Hinde
- 12th October 2.30pm Guild meeting in the Bill Penny Hall – Favourite Hymns and Readings
- 12th October 7.30pm Meeting of the Kirk Session in the Lower Hall
- 17th October 10.30am Morning Worship  
Please give Church Matters items to Deirdre Murray or Jo Russell in the Church Office.
- 18th October 7.15pm Men's Fellowship in the Bill Penny Hall. An evening of games and competitions
- 19th October 2.30pm Guild meeting in the Bill Penny Hall – Project Cambodia, Speaker Mrs L. Seiv-Wright

- 24th October 10.30am Morning Worship
- 25th October 7.15pm Men's Fellowship in the Bill Penny Hall. An evening of games and competitions
- 26th October 2.30pm Guild meeting in the Bill Penny Hall – Guide Dogs for the Blind. Speaker Mrs Shuna Hill
- 30th October 10.00am to 12noon, Men's Fellowship Coffee Morning in the Bill Penny Hall
- 31st October 10.30am Morning Worship  
The Church Magazine is available for distribution.

*Deep peace of the running wave to you  
Deep peace of the flowing air to you  
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you  
Deep peace of the shining stars to you  
Deep peace of the gentle night to you  
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you  
Deep peace of Christ, the light of the world to you  
Deep peace of Christ to you*

## **Congratulations Congratulations**

To Joy (nee Grant) and Paul Rankin on Tuesday 10th August a daughter, who has been named Lucy, weighing 7lbs 11ozs. A second grand-daughter for Anne and Billy Grant.

Congratulations to Nicol and Helen Armstrong on becoming Grandparents again. Noah James Armstrong Bourke was born on 30th July in Traralgon, Australia. The Bourke clan - Janis, Simon, big sister Penny and Noah are looking forward to their visit there next year.

James Thomson, younger son of Henry and Judy, married Kay Findlay on 27th August in Vancouver. The Pastor was a University friend of James.

## **Opportunities for Prayer**

Praying together as a church family is one of the most important things that we can do. In our vision statement as a church, we recognise that we are, 'in and of ourselves, powerless to transform the church / our community; we are entirely reliant upon God to transform and change lives - 'Unless the Lord builds the house, the labourers labour in vain' (Psalm 127). It is therefore imperative that we meet together and pray together to seek the Lord.

At present there are two opportunities for us as a church to pray together - Wednesday evening from 7.15pm until 8pm. And Sunday morning from 9.30am until 10am. These are open meetings which all are welcome to where we pray together and find encouragement together. Please do come if you are able.

