

# CROSSWIND

The Journal of St Michael's Parish Church



**Summer 2015 Vol 18:2**

*When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne in heavenly glory.* MATTHEW Ch25:v31

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# SUNDAY SERVICES



## Communion

### Sunday 28th June

All-Age Communion at 9:30am.  
Traditional Communion at 11am  
in the church  
3pm in the Kirk Hall  
with common and individual cups

## Weekly Services

**9.30am First Morning Service**  
*Crèche in Cross House*

**9.45am All-Age Worship**  
*Term time in Springfield School*

**11.00am Second Service**

**6.30pm Evening Service**  
*in Kirk Hall*

## Monthly Communion

**Sunday 26th July**  
**at 12:15pm**  
*Individual Cup*

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**The deadline for the Autumn 2015 issue is 5th September 2015.**

*St. Michael's Parish Church of Scotland is a Scottish Charity Reg. No. SC016185*

# VIEW FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends,



I write in the second week of May mindful that you will be reading in the longer light of June. The General Election, the 70th anniversary of VE Day, and Christian Aid Week will be long past. These events have a future tense, however, and it will take time to work through their political and missional implications. The General Assembly, meeting next week, will already have begun to respond to the issues and challenges of the day.

I am tempted to stop there and shift focus to Alvin perhaps, or the kids. But I cannot shake questions like: What will this Parliament deliver? For whom will it be good news, for whom bad, and how? Can our analysis sort the wheat from the chaff in public policy? (This in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ; not that of party-political manifestos.) Is our compassion up to it? Our wisdom? Our courage? For it is certain that it will not be business as usual going forward, whether seen from Holyrood or Westminster.

These are not new questions, nor are we debutants. To cite one school of thought: many of our friends and partners in the world church have long been calling us to recognise God's 'preferential option' for the poor and oppressed, the traumatised and broken. They bid us read the scriptures with 'the spectacles of the victims', and listen for the cries of those suffering injustices at home and abroad. They call us to humility, confession and repentance; alliance, advocacy and a shared journey. They remind us that Christ came as God's Suffering Servant for our salvation, and calls us to sacrificial service of others in his name. This is the very stuff of true worship (Romans 12:1). They remind us too that the God of Exodus is a God of liberation, whose prophets call us to righteousness, justice and peace (Amos 5:24).

We have sought to hear this call in many ways. In recent times, the HIV Programme of the Church of Scotland has become a vital, creative partnership with diverse colleagues worldwide, supporting delivery of anti-retroviral drugs, countering stigma and furthering AIDS education. The twinning programme is bringing congregations and presbyteries together globally at local and regional levels, helping people find their way forward in Spirit-led prayer and practical action. CrossReach unites a wide range of professionals in social care and human rights advocacy, convinced that everyone is equally valuable and worthy of respect.

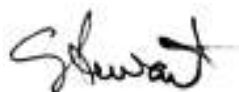
The Church's renewed support for Credit Unions, led by the Church and Society Council, seeks to address people's very real financial challenges by encouraging membership in one of the 124 credit unions operating throughout Scotland, offering ethical, low cost, accessible financial services.

Turning to St Michael's, by our participation in the Winter Shelters work of Bethany Trust, the Food Bank, Fairtrade, Eco Congregation, and Souper Sunday over many years, and the Kirkgate Lecture more recently, we have tried to address the need for both aid and justice. Further, the April youth event, Mission Survivor, sought to expose our young people to the trauma and injustice of human trafficking, to raise consciousness, strengthen resolve and provide avenues for response.

Despite all this, our comparative affluence, establishment and comfort buffer us from the ragged edges of 21st-century life. Not long after my induction in May 2004 I attended Presbytery's Finance Committee. In an effort to orient me to my new charge one member said, to general agreement, that St Michael's is 'the goose that lays the golden egg'. We were in rude financial health and, he thought, should be left to get on with our life and work with little outside interference. I have resisted this view, given that it mitigates against unity and collegiality. The resolve of the National Church that we all engage in annual stewardship events regarding time, talent and/or money, and OSCR requirements regarding our annual statements, have brought us closer to other parishes in a joint journey of faith and work.

It is often observed that a nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members. Mahatma Gandhi, Winston Churchill and Harry Truman, to name three, stated this view at one time or another. I think too of something Confucius said, prompted by my conversation with JunSoo Park, whose PhD work is on Confucius and St Augustine: 'In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of'. As I weigh these words, and wonder what a plumb line would look like for the new Parliament, I ask myself a few starters for ten: do I know the price of bread, the cost of debt, or the number of people for whom the difference between a minimum wage and a living wage is of vital importance in Scotland?

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stewart', with a stylized, cursive script.

# ST KATHERINE'S AISLE

## TRANSFORMING USES; A PLACE OF PRAYER

*by Rev Cheryl McKellar-Young*

In the year since the pews were removed from St Katherine's Aisle the transformation has brought joy to many. Joy to visitors coming to take photographs, to people looking for a quiet place to sit in our church and to those meeting for a Time of Stillness on Thursdays at 2pm. St Katherine's Aisle has also become a firm favourite with our Baptismal families and the feedback is encouragingly positive. The colourful floor play space created on these Sundays allows us to get to know the young children and one of the parents, and allows other visiting adults to worship without concern for their children. The play area provides a positive introduction to people not familiar with Sunday worship and seeing these children leave happily after the service is a real blessing.

Spending even just this short time with these families visiting the church provides an important link between Seedlings, our church for tots and toddlers on Thursdays, and Baptism. Indeed we now have several of our Baptismal children coming to Seedlings with their mums, dads or grandparents.

Often these mums, dads and grandparents speak to me about prayer. One day while waiting for Time of Stillness to begin, I wondered if we could help people by making written prayers more accessible. To meet this need, I have invited people within our church family at St Michael's to write different prayers, all on topics which people have mentioned. These prayers are now being printed and will be available in St Katherine's Aisle for people to take home with them.

You will find the prayers on a table which comes to us as a kind donation from one of our members. It is at present being made, using two of the pews removed from the Aisle last year.

I believe that when you create a space, God fills it. It has been such an interesting year watching the way in which God has found ways to fill and transform the uses of St Katherine's Aisle and it is my prayer, that the prayers written by our own church family will travel near and far and provide comfort to those who come across them in St Katherine's Aisle.

### **Philippians 4:6**

*'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.'*





# Under the Spotlight

**Team Bible Class have put our organist Andrew Sutherland 'Under the Spotlight'...how did he do?**



**Is playing the organ a bit of a physical workout?** *It keeps the brain ticking over and tones the legs. Anne always wonders why I'm not a great dancer given the co-ordination required for playing the organ.*

**How many emails do you get each week, roughly?** *250. Whatever the number is, it is too many but less than the thousands I received when working.*

**Describe your sock drawer.... crazy socks, self-coloured socks or two odd socks person?** *Comfortable self-coloured socks.*

**Can you solve a Rubik's cube?** *Only once!*

**Do you have any hidden talents we don't know about?** *Not that I know of!*



**What's your favourite knock knock joke?**

*Knock Knock!  
Who's there?  
Who!  
Who who?  
Didn't know you had owls!*

**If you could learn one new skill, what would you learn?** *To speak Italian.*

**What are some of your favourite websites?** *BBC news, Airdrie fan pages, Bloomberg business news, Rapallo webcam.....*

**When the doors are locked and there is no-one else at home what music would you listen to?** *Classical – Russian so Shostakovich, Rachmaninov; Jazz – Chick Corea, John McLaughlin/Mahavishnu, Weather Report;*

Popular – most stuff from 1970/80s so Elton John, Neil Young, David Bowie, etc; World – Latin stuff – Cesaria Evora, Cuban salsa, Tango – Astor Piazzola, Flamenco – Cameron de la Isla,..... You did ask!

**We see you playing the organ, the piano and the clarinet, what other musical instruments do you play?** *That's it folks!*

**There are a lot of the Team Bible Class folks (S2-S3) taking their music grades – did you study music at school?** *I started getting piano lessons at 6 – my father was a keen amateur musician – and went through the grades for Clarinet and Piano at Denny High School which had an excellent music department with inspiring friendly teachers. It was great! I started playing the organ (self-taught) to fund a stereo when the organist at our local church retired and no one else wanted to do it.*

**What is your favourite movie?** *Kingdom of Heaven; It's a Wonderful Life. But Life of Brian and Great Expectations (David Lean) are also up there.*

**Do you have a favourite place in the whole world?** *Linlithgow has been a great place for us to bring up our family – but my favourite place is Venice.*

**What would you say is your favourite food?** *Anything Italian usually. Seafood.*

**What is your best memory or moment with the choir?** *All of the Lessons & Carols – there is a huge sense of tradition now and there is a lot of work to be done rehearsing and preparing which they always (so far!) have managed to do and perform at their best. For me, it is inspiring how they have come through colds, flus and snow storms! I love the unannounced format of the Service – it just happens; you feel a real sense of momentum and togetherness as a result.*

**Who is your hero?** *Martin Luther King. Although a religious man, his sayings have a universality which applies to all people of all ages.*

**Who or what makes you laugh out loud?** *My grandchildren. Thea (age 4) has a really lively sense of humour.*

**Do you have any hobbies or interests apart from music?** *Travelling; reading (history, crime novels); being in Italy; gardening (not very well); watching football (Airdrie and Sampdoria).*

**PS: Are you brave enough to answer a question from our Sunshine Starters?**

**What dish would you cook Anne to make her happy?**

*That's easy, I make a mean Chicken cacciatore!*



# A SIGN OF OUR TIME

by Anne Law



You will recall that in the April edition of Crosswind I wrote about how the Stewardship and Finance Team intended to take forward an ongoing stewardship programme as part of the 20:20 vision. We undertook to ask members of the congregation to review their personal stewardship of time starting in the summer of 2015, and again in 2018; we would then consider our financial giving in 2016, and again in 2020; and we intend to review how

we use our talents for God's church in 2017 and 2019. This pattern may of course change if something unforeseen occurs.

So what will this year's programme on Time look like? We are keen to celebrate God's gift of time to us as part of His creation and we want to reflect on how we use the time that God gives us. The first priority of a Stewardship Season is to share in, and respond to, the generosity of God which would result in the releasing of the potential of our people to further the worship, mission and service of the Church.

Stewardship is not merely about balancing the parish budget; it is about examining our attitude towards, and the use of our possessions, our skills, our time and the environment in the service of God. By considering each aspect of stewardship separately, over a three-year cycle, congregations are being encouraged to build Stewardship into the whole life of the church which is what we are now setting out to do in St Michael's.

We would like a Stewardship season based on 'TIME' to help us all to realise that Time is part of God's Creation. It should provide opportunities for us all to reflect on how we use all the time that God gives us. It should not make us feel guilty! Indeed, through this we should discover that God wants to protect us from life in our stressful society.

We have chosen August to be our Season of Stewardship as it is the start of the new church year. During July or early August your elder will pop a small information pack through the letterbox, asking us all to stand back and take a look at how we use the precious resource

that is time, and consider how we might balance all our time commitments – the spiritual and the practical. We would like to encourage every one (of all ages) in our congregation to fill in a diary to show how we use our time during a particular week and we have chosen the week commencing Sunday 16th August 2015.





This is the week when the schools go back but if that doesn't suit you – perhaps that is not a 'normal' week for you – how about the week of 23rd August?

This can be done simply with pen and paper using our Time Diary, which will be part of the materials delivered to you, or on the PC, or by keeping a journal if that is what you prefer.

We would like to encourage everyone to re-appraise how we use our time. We are asking everyone to then complete a response card where we can choose how we might find time for worship, for prayer, for the Bible and possibly for other church work.

Sometimes as we get older days might drag but years fly by! When we are stressed and have too much to do we might benefit from thinking of Time as a gift and we should choose whom we give our Time to. If we are dogged by worry can we learn to limit our worry to a slot in the week and to a certain place (eg the kitchen table) to make a list of all our problems, think about them, and give them to God in prayer.



Most of us need to find a healthy balance between work, rest, family, friends, worship and service. It might be helpful to ask a loved one whether we have the balance right. Are we so busy 'doing church' and going to committee meetings that we haven't got time for God? We can learn much from Celtic Christianity which teaches us to put back natural rhythms of prayer, work, rest, play and silence into our modern lives. The US Pastor Rick Warren who wrote 'The Purpose-Driven Church' says: 'For some of us the most spiritual thing we could do is to go to bed earlier!!'

And finally there will be a service of thanksgiving, encouragement and rededication on Sunday 30th August at 9.30am for everyone who comes to St Michael's. I do hope that you will be able to attend.

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# MESSY CHURCH

*by Russell Shields*

Have you ever wondered how dipping your hand in slime, a paddling pool with origami boats or an egg box lying upside down in mud can help us worship God? ... No? ... Why not?



Life is busy and messy so Messy Church looks to engage people of all ages in worshipping God through stories, Messy activities and a meal together. St Michael's Parish Church has been discussing various ways that we can best help people in and around Linlithgow worship God. Messy Church is one opportunity to do this.

Once a month on Saturdays from 4.30-6.15pm, St Michael's Messy

Church gathers people together to learn about the Bible and worship God in a new way. Some have been involved in St Michael's before but many come because they can't make it on a Sunday morning, and Messy Church offers them a very hands on and informal place to be Church.

We gather in the Adam Room for a chat before our band leads us in a song, usually one that kids might remember from Holiday Club. We then unpack a Bible story; someone tells the story, sometimes involving others to bring it to life. Later we go down to the Hall where there are stations laid out with different activities and discussion topics – you can try them all or stick to 1 or 2. We've had Primordial Slime, where we got our hands stuck in and discussed what the world might have been like before God created anything on it; Chain People, to talk about how God made so many different people but loves us all; Easter Gardens, remembering the tomb Jesus was laid in after His death; The Rolling Stone, a banner of paint streaks where we talked about the stone rolling away and Jesus' resurrection; Wet Play, a paddling pool to think about Jesus' disciples being fishermen; and Fishing, using magnets on fishing rods to catch cardboard fish and write our names on them to help us think about being fishers of men and telling others about God.

Lastly, we go back to the Adam Room with some quick thoughts about the story from a leader, a song and a prayer leading into our Messy Meal. We pack a lot into 1 hour 45 minutes – often people stay on to chat a bit longer. The young people really enjoy time with their family, learning actively about God.

Messy Churches exist all over the world and have 5 key values.

**1) Christ Centred.** It's not a craft club and a feeder into more traditional forms of worship. Messy Church is Church and helps people learn about God and follow Jesus.

**2) All-age.** There's no point where kids leave and adults listen to a talk, or vice versa. Everyone is together the whole time, singing songs; listening or acting out stories, doing Messy activities, praying and eating together. It is a time to be a large church family.

**3) Creativity.** Everyone gets involved and artistic talent is optional. God has an awe-inspiring imagination and blesses us with the chance to imagine and create. Messy activities get us active in our learning and allow us to ponder on our discussions.

**4) Hospitality.** As God welcomes us into His family, we also must welcome each other, and a great way to welcome each other is to eat together. Whether it's cakes and biscuits or baked potatoes, eating together brings people together. I really enjoy seeing everyone at Messy Church, as kids run about and adults finish their discussions, enjoying each other's company.



**5) Celebration.** We have the life of Jesus written down to show us the Good News. He loves us and wants us to live life to the full. Jesus died for us and offers us forgiveness and the gift of eternal life with Him. We can enjoy spending time with God as much as we enjoy spending time with each other.

If you're interested in anything more about the Messy Church Organisation, please check out [www.messychurch.org.uk](http://www.messychurch.org.uk).

At St Michael's, we have had a trial run and are currently reviewing the future of this group (things should be clearer by the time this magazine is out). We've had a great experience offering this service and many young people have enjoyed taking part each month.

I'm very thankful for all the very skilled leaders who've been cooking, running the Messy Activities, playing in the band, discussing the Bible stories with everyone who comes, making everyone welcome and so much more.

I'd be glad to talk to anyone who'd like to know more. If you'd like to be kept up to date on our plans for Messy Church please contact the office on [info@stmichaels-parish.org.uk](mailto:info@stmichaels-parish.org.uk) or check out the Facebook group 'St Michael's Messy Church, Linlithgow'.

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*by Russell Shields*



Preparation for launch is underway as this year we are blasting off to Space Academy at Holiday Club 2015!

St Michael's and St John's churches, and for this summer LYPP, have been getting ready to reach for the stars and learn about God's awesome power and love. With our usual mix of games, crafts, puppets, Bible stories, jokes, dramas and so much more, it's going to be so good, it's out of this world!

From the 3rd - 7th August 2015 we will explore the life of Daniel and how God helped guide and protect him in some pretty disastrous situations. But to achieve our mission, we need you. We need people to spread the word and encourage children to come along; people to help with teas and coffees during the week; people to get alongside the children and take this journey with them; people praying for us. Our needs are great but our God is greater. If you can spare a day or five please get in touch and we'll find how you can best be part of the Holiday Club family.

The club will run from 10am-12.30pm for anyone in P1-S1, and this year we're trying something new. We're looking back, moving forward and returning to Cross House for a bit of a new environment. This will give us the use of various rooms, the Peel and LYPP's Lounge. It will be very exciting to see so many young people coming along and hearing about God.

So mark the dates in your diary and note the changed venue. Jump on the website and let us know you're coming. Everyone is welcome at Space Academy. P1-S1 in the club, S2-S6 as our young leaders and 18-year-olds and over can join the team in a variety of roles. There's really something for everyone, even a crèche for any children with parents leading at the club. It's a great opportunity to have fun, make friends and learn about our God who truly reaches infinity and beyond. And that's true for both young people and leaders!

For more information or to register as a leader, young leader or a child coming along please head to: [www.linlithgowchurchesholidayclub.org.uk](http://www.linlithgowchurchesholidayclub.org.uk)

So come along and make sure you don't miss out. Come along in your space suits and jetpacks. Come along in your lion onesies. Come along and be part of an amazingly fun week.



# NEW ELDERS

*Photos by Stephen Blake*

At the 9.30am service on Sunday, 22nd March 2015, our Kirk Session gained three new members.

Alison Tunnicliffe and Jamie McIntosh were ordained as elders and together with Catherine McIntosh, who had already been ordained in another congregation, they were admitted to the eldership of St Michael's Parish Church, Linlithgow.



Jamie and Catherine McIntosh



Alison Tunnicliffe

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# SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF ST MICHAEL'S

*by Gillian Grant*

The Society of Friends of St Michael's recently received a bequest to cover the cost of new floodlighting of the spire. The bequest was made by a member of the Friends, Mrs Margaret Vallance, together with her brother, Robert (who lives in Alabama) in memory of their mother, Mrs Anne MacLellan, who with her husband, Alistair, was a long-time resident of Linlithgow. Both were loyal members of St Michael's and Mrs MacLellan was awarded a long-service certificate in 2006 in recognition of her 53 years' service to the Guild, which she continued to attend until shortly before she died. Mr MacLellan was an elder and he himself is commemorated by the Donations Box for the Friends at the back of the Church.



Donations, bequests and legacies have been a substantial source of income to the Friends over the years. Indeed, it was money left to the Society by Mrs Julia Wade that helped it make the donation of £15,000 towards the lighting of the Choir stalls as part of the Empowered project. All moneys received by the Society, whether by donation, legacy or special bequest, are used solely for the further enhancement and adornment of our beautiful Church building. That is the purpose of the Society, which is a registered charity.

Gift Aid can increase the value of donations; bequests and legacies can have inheritance tax benefits. They enable the Society to do so much more than if it relied only upon members' subscriptions and the visitors' donation box. Donations are always

welcome but please also consider remembering the Society in your will. Our beloved and beautiful church will be the beneficiary.

If you would like any further information please contact either the Treasurer, Mr Gregor Macdonald, tel 01506 844856, e-mail: [gregormac41@hotmail.com](mailto:gregormac41@hotmail.com) or the Secretary, Mrs Gillian Grant, tel 01506 844611,

e-mail: [gillian@opalgen.co.uk](mailto:gillian@opalgen.co.uk).

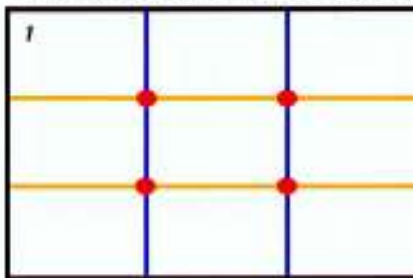
# PICTURES THAT CLICK

by Gordon Young

I'll be honest. I cannot draw a straight line — even with a ruler! I think that's why I love photography; it allows me to exercise my artistic bent using just my eyes.

As we approach the holiday season, many will be off to new places and will be taking a camera to record events, people and scenes. For some, a snap is enough as an aide memoire to tomorrow's memories. However, a number will want to get the best out of their cameras so that the resulting pictures can be viewed with satisfaction. This article lays out a few simple rules that should do just that.

Most people now have a digital camera with a large screen at the back on



which you compose the picture. Imagine, therefore, the screen is ruled in thirds with two vertical bars splitting the screen into three and two horizontal bars doing likewise (illustration 1). By placing a significant feature or your main subject matter on one of those points where the horizontal and vertical lines intersect, you will greatly strengthen the composition (illustration 2).

A splendid panorama can be given scale and dramatic proportion by including something of known size in the photograph. If you pose your travelling



companion to the side of the picture and have them turn to gaze at the scene, the viewer will, by inference, also be invited to share the vista.

Occasionally, a grand edifice such as a building or monument can be given added impact by being photographed at a low angle rather than from standing height. Remember the rule of thirds above? This time we deliberately want more foreground or

much more sky for the effect. Crouch down (come on, you know you can do it!) and see the difference (illustration 3). You might find it easier to manage if you angle the camera up from a very low position. With a digital camera, you can review the picture and re-shoot it if necessary. This low camera angle can also work effectively when taking, for example, a flower. The beautifully formed head could be lost when the subject is lost amongst its pals. If it can be separated from the others with its head in the sky, all will be able to enjoy its perfection that you saw too.



Always check the light. Mostly the sun is behind or to the side of the photographer when taking pictures but occasionally it is directly in front. This is fine to photograph a sunset but probably not desirable otherwise. The camera's automatic setting will overcompensate for the sun's brilliance resulting in lots of dark areas with no detail, eg people silhouetted against the backlit landscape behind. Under these circumstances use flash. Virtually all compact digital cameras have a built-in flash now. Normally the user has four flash options: to stop flash altogether, to fire flash every time, to allow the camera to determine if flash is required, and finally to balance flash and daylight; use the latter in this circumstance. If your camera does not have this function it almost certainly has the option to fire the flash regardless. Set it to this and take the picture. You should end up with a credible result (illustration 4).



Another challenge arises when taking pictures of, say, two people sitting at opposite sides of a table. The automatic focussing system of modern cameras normally assumes that the subject matter is in the centre of the image. In this case it's on either side of centre and as a result, the main subjects would be out of focus, while the distant background in the centre would be sharp. Most cameras have Automatic Focusing Lock (AFL). There are two stages in pressing the button to take the picture; the first part activates the distance measuring facility, and following through beyond this half-way stage, clicks the shutter. (Check your instruction book to see if I'm right.) Align the centre of the camera on either of the two people in the picture, half press the button and keeping this soft pressure on the shutter release, recompose the picture the way you want and follow through. Bingo! one properly composed and focussed result.



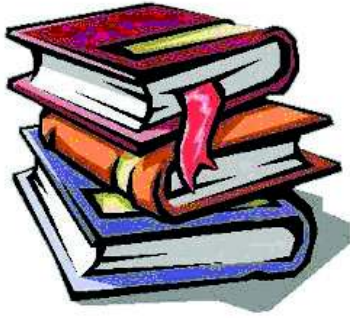
Pressure of space precludes me from giving more tips at present but even these few simple hints and rules should help you gain added satisfaction from your photography. Finally, I would make one appeal. Don't lock your photographs away on the memory card or computer but have them printed and put into an album. Photographic prints nowadays can cost as little as 5p and allow you to share your memories in a more convenient way than peering into a diminutive screen. If the photograph was worth taking, it is worth printing.



Enjoy your photography.

# CHAPTERS

*by Sally Chambers*



Our first Chapters Book Club Meeting was a small affair with 4 people in attendance. There were lots of discussions and decisions on the format of the club and agreement that other activities, related to reading, become part of the programme, eg Edinburgh Book Festival and going to the cinema. During coffee/tea break we had a blether, covering many topics such as reminiscing about former shops in Linlithgow in years gone by, recipes, plants and family life. The Book Club meets on the first Thursday of every month from 3.15pm to 4.30pm, our next meeting being on July 2nd. All are welcome.

# GREETINGS

After visiting St Michael's stand at Heart and Soul in Princes Street Gardens in May, Jane Farr from St Andrew's Kirk in Newcastle-upon-Tyne sends greetings to all our members and says:

Did You Know ....

that as well as Church of Scotland congregations in Scotland, there are also sister congregations across England including Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Scottish Presbyterians have worshipped in Newcastle since the Reformation and are still doing so. If any St Michael's members are heading

south this summer, or may have family or friends relocating to the North East of England, then look out for St Andrew's Kirk in Newcastle <http://standrewskirknewcastle.org/> Twitter: @NewcastleKirk. There are also congregations in Corby, Liverpool and London.





**PARISH**

## WEDDINGS

*They are no longer two, but one*

### **April**

Julia Dawson to William Bradford  
Samantha Davis to Steven Sneddon

### **May**

Maxine Gibson to Jay Toye  
Jennifer Campbell to Mark Reid  
Jenna Toland to David Turnbull



## BAPTISMS

*Let the children come to me*



### **March**

Orla Margaret Olivia McDonald  
Matthew Darrell  
Thorfinn James Grieve  
Samuel Jon Starkey

### **April**

Noah James William Ritchie-Laing

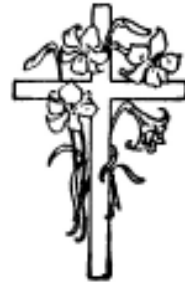
### **May**

Aaron Marshall Robert Oliver  
David Thomas Hill  
Lisa Evelyn Callaghan

## REGISTER

### FUNERALS

*I am the resurrection and the life*



#### March

Margaret Turnbull, Wyndfordlocks Care Home, Glasgow



#### April

Wilma Smith, Avontoun Park  
Gordon Jack, Station Road

#### May

Peter Manson, Linlithgow Care Home (formerly Bridgend)

### NEW MEMBERS

*For we are all members of one body*



Lisa Callaghan, Linlithgow Bridge  
John Fisher, Bathgate

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **COFFEE MORNING**

From 10am to 12 noon in the Kirk Hall

Sat 22 August Fund Raiser in aid of work in Romania



### **OTHER EVENTS IN THE CHURCH**

Sun 28 June Big Sing in aid of Alzheimer Scotland (4pm – 6.30pm)

Sat 12 Sept Scottish Chamber Orchestra Concert (7.30pm)

### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Sat 20 June Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Gala Day  
(On Peel if fine or in Church if wet)

Sat 4 July Jousting Event at Linlithgow Palace

Sun 5 July Jousting Event at Linlithgow Palace

Sat 8 August Party at the Palace Music Festival

Sun 9 August Party at the Palace Music Festival

Sat 12 Sept Linlithgow Folk Festival Association Craft Fair  
(10am-4pm Cross House)

## **WEBSITES**

**[www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk](http://www.stmichaelsparish.org.uk)** – See Crosswind in full colour! Also find podcasts of sermons, current intimations, details of upcoming events and all other church activities.

**[www.helpcentre.org.uk](http://www.helpcentre.org.uk)** – For information on support available for most situations.

# OVERSEAS MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP (OMF) IN JAPAN

by David Ferguson

One word which is often associated with our lifestyle is 'change'. Of course it's not just a word but a reality. When you serve overseas, that in itself brings many changes. Everything around is different but while you are away, changes also happen in your home country. And because you are living in a different culture and experiencing much that is different, you change too and then look at things through a different lens.



Recently we have gone through a number of changes. We were back in Scotland for a few months for what is called home assignment. That is a time to reconnect with family, friends and churches and to share about what has been happening in Japan. At a minimum it meant a change of location, change of language and change of weather! For our youngest boy Alistair, it meant a change to a Scottish school. And it needed us to adapt to customs

and ways of doing things that were different to what they might have been when we were last here. We generally didn't have any problems readjusting but some experience what is known as 'reverse culture shock' – struggling to fit in to what is 'home' because of having grown used to something different.

Back in Japan, our colleagues have also been working through a lot of changes during our absence. We have had many new workers come to Japan in recent years. We needed to rethink how we were set up as OMF in Japan and that has meant a lot of work in putting in place a new structure with a new leadership team which will be rolled out from the beginning of June. We are looking forward to this new phase for OMF in Japan and we trust that our new set up will enable us to serve there more effectively as we seek to reach the people in Japan with the gospel and partner well with our Japanese colleagues.

Japan is also changing. It is interesting to observe what is going on within the world of politics, some of which seems to be vesting more power in the hands of the government. As a nation, Japan is now in what they call 'negative population growth' which is just another way of saying that the population is declining as the birth rate is so low.

There are increasing social issues too ranging from homelessness to suicide to the phenomenon of young men and women who shut themselves in their rooms and are cut off from society. There are many challenges and it is a privilege to be there to be able in some small way to bring the good news of Jesus to a people and a land that so desperately need it.

Change has hit different parts of Japan in different ways. Many of you will remember the devastating tsunami that hit the coast of Japan in 2011. That literally changed whole communities as people and buildings were swept away by the power of the waves. The area round the nuclear plant remains an exclusion zone. Many people were displaced and continue to live with the changes forced on them by that natural disaster. For OMF too, the tsunami meant change as many of our people went to serve in those areas in any way they could. We actually had some who were posted full-time for two or three years to live and serve in one area. On hearing that the people lacked a 'gathering place', one had the idea to open a café which was somewhere local people could come to talk and be with other people in community. It was a low-key approach but as fruit of that café and the other quiet work there, a church has now started in that area under the leadership of a Japanese pastor.



*Ippo Ippo Yamada Cafe*

Changes come. Some we can anticipate, others are unexpected. Yet even when all around is changing, there are some things which do not. God does not change. The Word of God does not change. The gospel message we proclaim today in Japan or Scotland or anywhere else is the same as it has always been. Certainly we need to work hard at communicating that timeless message in Japan so that we share it in a way that people can understand. That doesn't just mean getting the language right but also understanding the culture and the way people think (which of course is the same here too). As people here partner with us in this task of sharing the gospel message with the people of Japan, we trust and hope that people's lives will be changed as they embrace and respond to that message. That task remains unchanged even when all around is changing.

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## **ALZHEIMER SCOTLAND'S ACTION ON DEMENTIA**

# **THE BIG SING 28TH JUNE 2015**

*by Rev Cheryl McKellar-Young*

Last year Alzheimer's Scotland asked us if we would be interested in working with them to host an afternoon of singing to raise awareness of their Action on Dementia. The answer was an immediate 'Yes!' and soon I met with Ruth McCabe, Deputy Regional Manager one of our church members and Abby Parkhouse, Regional Fundraiser for the South East and Central Regional Office. Over tea and delicious scones we set a date, thrashed out ideas, made suggestions and hatched a plan.



On 28 June 2015 from 4-6.30pm, St Michael's will host 'The Big Sing'. We will have choirs, soloists, quartets, and bands from near and afar, joining us to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's Scotland. A song is also being written and composed for this special event and over 500 voices will join together on the day, with our own choir from St Michael's to showcase it at the end.

This is an important afternoon not just for Alzheimer's Scotland but also for St Michael's. For over a year our church members have been involved in the Caring Café, and Dementia Sensitive Worship now takes place in both St Michael's Hospital and in Linlithgow Care Home. Our church visitors have been trained in Dementia awareness, and we now also have visitors to the hospital sharing memory books. We have a group of enthusiastic singers called the Sunshine Singers who meet once a month in the hospital to sing, stimulate and bring to mind memories that have been long forgotten through song. A person in the advanced stages of dementia may not remember their partner's name but can remember the song they danced to at their wedding.

Music remains something that can be practised and enjoyed, despite the shutting-down of other abilities. The emotions, the joy, the fun, the humour, that came with singing when they were younger come back – it is a joy to watch. This is evident also during the service of Dementia sensitive worship where joy and love of old hymns shines through.

So we are delighted to host The Big Sing and work with Alzheimer's Scotland to raise awareness for Action on Dementia and also that as a church, we care about everyone in our community.

So please come along for an afternoon of song. Bring family, tell friends. Tickets will be available soon from our church office as well as from Alzheimer's Scotland, but they are limited.

# PASSOVER FEAST

by Luke Davidson



On Palm Sunday, some of the young people took part in a dramatic Passover feast. Actors and actresses played the parts of Jesus and his disciples as they shared a narrated Last Supper together.

The Adam Room was set with tables laid with elements of a Jewish Passover meal. Although the participants dined on a much appreciated meal of chilli wraps, the traditional Passover meal was explained throughout the evening. From the foot washing to the betrayal as described in the gospel of John, the evening attempted to explain the

symbolism of the Jewish meal and the roots of the modern day communion celebrations.

The Passover meal involves the story of the retelling of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt from the book of Exodus and including horseradish and charozet representing the bitterness of slavery and the mass production of mud bricks produced; herbs dipped in salt water representing the tears shed in bondage; four cups of wine throughout the meal and prayers prayed in Hebrew; and matzo – the unleavened bread which is a reminder that the Jews had to leave in such a rush that there was no time for the dough to rise. Four compartments of a linen napkin are filled with bread which is passed around the table. All was eaten except for a small portion, which was hidden for the children to find, as entertainment later in the evening. During our feast the ransom for the bread was a chocolate bar.

Prayer shawls were worn by those acting as disciples. We were given an insight into these Biblical events and the people who lived through them, and it was interesting learning about traditional Jewish customs which would have been part of the life of Jesus.



The last Passover feast shared by Jesus and his friends in the week running up to his crucifixion included Jesus breaking bread and sharing wine. This later became our modern day communion reminding us that Jesus died on the cross for us.

Although the audience were participating in the feast, it was hard not to interact with your friends as you would usually if you shared a meal with them. It was a very enjoyable experience as well as an educational one.



*PS from Russell on the event:* It's one thing to think about the Last Supper, or even hear a sermon on it, but to sit and watch the disciples arguing and making sarcastic comments about each other brings the whole thing to life. 'I'm not washing everyone's feet, that's a servants job... Where's Judas off to?... What did Jesus just say about the bread?'



This event was offered to our Team Bible Class and YF and enabled them to enjoy each other's company over a meal and to understand a bit more about the context that Jesus was speaking into. Being in a very different world nowadays it can be easy to miss something. The ease we have in transport, the terminology we use or even the difficulties in translating the Bible into English from languages that have multiple words for things like love.

Seeing the fantastic acting allowed us to have a glimpse of what it would have been like to eat that meal, thinking about what each element represented and why

Jesus' words and actions were so shocking to his followers. It also helps bring the reality of life back into the story. This is not some act of fiction we're reading. These were real men, with real lives, real friends and real beliefs. Everyone involved in running this event was fantastic and I really appreciate their help in showing us the Last Supper Jesus had before the hardest trial He faced and the painful death He accepted. All before His amazing resurrection, the life He offers and the communion we have to share with each other.

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# WORLD WIDE PARISH

*by Pat Brough*

Summer holidays allow us to visit new places and new buildings. Churches can be quite contrasting – consider the little 1000-year-old St Margaret's Chapel at Edinburgh Castle. Then think of the newer Italian Chapel on Orkney made out of scrap materials by prisoners-of-war with an amazing eye for beauty. Then there are the large and beautiful Minsters at York and London and the plainer but enormous Anglican Cathedral of Liverpool. Continental churches can be dark and overpowering in their grandeur, or covered in paintings and gold leaf.



Some churches have long histories. St Paul's in London survived the Blitz. A New York church, hardly damaged when the Twin Towers collapsed on September 11th, later provided refuge for firemen and salvage workers trying to clear up the resulting horror. Some churches have many visitors and can be noisy, like Notre Dame in Paris and Saint Mark's in Venice; others are quiet and peaceful, offering their visitors tranquillity.

On holiday it can be difficult to attend a church service, but in Britain – and indeed in English-speaking parts of the world – it is usually easier. You may not find a Church of Scotland, but there is often a Methodist Church, where the service is similar to our own, and hymns and tunes are familiar.

On the Continent, several Capitals have a thriving Scots Kirk, for example Paris where a former Associate Minister of St Michael's, Alan Miller, was Minister for several years. Other Scots Kirks exist in Amsterdam, Budapest, Brussels, Geneva, Gibraltar, Lisbon, Lausanne, Malta, Regensburg, Rome, Rotterdam and Turin. In areas of Spain where British people have settled, there are thriving and energetic Churches, all of whom welcome holiday visitors.

Further away, there are Scots Kirks in Bermuda and Trinidad; there is another in Sri Lanka.

On a cruise a service forms part of the Sunday programme. It may take place in the morning or afternoon, last only thirty minutes, but the atmosphere is always reverential. Quiet music plays, hymns are known, readings well chosen. Usually services are taken by cruise staff, but on long-haul cruises a retired clergyman is available and Communion may be taken. The services are ecumenical, well attended and the seats are considerably more comfortable than the average church pew.

But no matter where you have been and what you have seen, it is always good to come back to St Michael's.

# JUST A MINUTE

Donald Burgess continues to dip into the pages of the Kirk Session minutes .....



*100 years ago*

**Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> June 1915** The Moderator stated that owing to the hall being required for the Troops, he had engaged the Masonic Hall for the meetings connected with the Bible Class, and hoped that the Kirk Session would pay for the Rent of same. On the motion of Mr. Robt. Crichton, seconded by Mr. Forbes, the Kirk Session agreed to pay the Rental of Masonic Hall for the meetings held in connection with the Bible Class.

*50 years ago*

**Tues. 16<sup>th</sup> Mar. 1965** [*Fabric Endowment Fund*]  
The Moderator intimated that it was with extreme pleasure he had to advise the Kirk Session of a most generous gift from Mrs. Dorothea C Stein, Greencloaks, a member of the Congregation. Mrs. Stein referred to the fact that St. Michael's Church had no Endowment Fund and wished to make a gift of 5,000 Ordinary (5/-) Shares of John C Stein & Co. Ltd. to form the nucleus of such a Fund. It was Mrs. Stein's desire that the income, and in case of need, the capital should be used at the discretion of the Kirk Session for the preservation of the fabric of St. Michael's Church, the Church Hall and the Manse. The Kirk Session unanimously agreed to accept this gift and the Session Clerk was instructed to write to Mrs. Stein and to convey their most grateful thanks for this most generous gesture.

[*Gift – House for Assistant Ministers*]  
Reference was made to the decision of a member of the Congregation to place at the disposal of the Kirk Session enough money to buy a house for the use of Assistant Ministers in the future, and to form the nucleus of the Hall Fund. The Moderator stated that he was now able to report that the donor was Mrs. Dorothea C Stein, Greencloaks, from whom the Treasurer had received a cheque for £4,000. The Kirk Session unanimously agreed to record their deep appreciation of Mrs. Stein's thoughtfulness and generosity.

## *25 years ago*

**Tues. 17<sup>th</sup> May 1990** [Outreach] Mr. Collen reported on the outreach campaign which had been carried out over the Easter period under the 'There is hope' banner and listed the various events which took place. Some of these were organised in conjunction with St. John's Evangelical Church eg:

- a) Joint Prayer Focus meetings
- b) Joint Youth meetings attended by approximately 60 young people and with a presentation by Saltmine Theatre
- c) Leaflet distribution throughout the parish
- d) Follow-up visiting in certain target areas
- e) Worship and Drama at the Cross on Easter Saturday

Although not many new people had been attracted to the events, it was felt that a number of 'seeds had been sown'. The number of people from within the congregation willing to help had been around one hundred and this was very encouraging to the Committee...

Kirk Session expressed its thanks to Mr. Collen, Mr. M. Green and Mrs. D. Baxter for their work in the outreach campaign.



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# AN UNFORGETTABLE YEAR

by Finlay Macartney

When I applied for a year of volunteering with Project Trust I really had no idea where I would end up. I didn't know exactly what I would be doing and I didn't care, the prospect of being transported somewhere around the globe, to be immersed in another culture, was too good for me to pass up. After a rigorous selection course on the remote Isle of Coll, I set my heart on going to Ghana. With both my parents having spent years of their childhood in Africa, and having a Grandpa born in Ghana, it seemed the obvious choice for me.

I arrived there in September 2013. After three flights and a few days of orientation in the capital I was taken to the isolated village of Liatì Wote which was to be my home for the year. My first evening there was an experience in itself. My partner, Josh, and I (Project Trust send volunteers to placements in pairs) were introduced to the village chief and elders in a formal meeting and then sent to our home-to-be. It was certainly basic, a single room with a desk, two beds and two chairs. We had an outhouse for a toilet and an outdoor concreted area for showers... although the 'shower' consisted of a bucket of river water and a cup! Perhaps not luxurious, but I grew to love it and was genuinely sorry to leave it at the end of the year.



The main reason I was in Ghana was to work, and I became the only French teacher in Liatì Wote Junior High School. I had not volunteered for this post but, as I had a B in Higher French, I was more qualified than any other teacher there. It wasn't easy transforming my rusty French into decent lessons but armed with my trusty dictionary I was able to make real progress with the students, though a lot of them weren't very keen on French! On top of my responsibilities

as French teacher, Josh and I shared English and Social Study lessons with the youngest year (mainly 12-15 year olds) and these subjects presented their own challenges.



For me the hardest thing was teaching Ghanaian students about the horrors of the slave trade, a tough topic to teach especially as a white Brit. However even then I could use it to help tackle the topic of racism and prejudice in the class. Of course teaching in Africa involved other, more unpredictable, problems, such as evacuating the room when a snake appears in the roof rafters or telling a student to put down the live chicken he/she had brought to class.

For me, the gateway to being incorporated into the community of Liati Wote was to learn the local language of ewe (pronounced Eh-Weh). Josh and I began by learning how to greet people but by the time we left we had hugely expanded our vocabulary and often visited our local shop to buy groceries without speaking a word of English. Not only did it allow us to fit into the community, but when locals saw us making an effort to learn their language they were both pleased and supportive and that made it so much easier. However we were far from fluent and even after a year, we could not say 'thank you' properly; it sounds like something between 'akpe' and 'akbe' but our attempts just resulted in laughter and comments like, 'oh you are trying'.

Ghana is an extremely religious country with the majority of the population practising Christianity, so attending the village church was another way I could fit into the community and experience Ghana's culture. The church I attended (the village had at least 5) held services of around three hours split into three main segments. The first was 'Sunday School' where the congregation of about 50-60 split into three groups – children, English speakers and ewe speakers.



This time was used for discussing bible passages and relating them to daily life. Then the congregation reassembled to sing and dance, accompanied with thundering drums as well as tambourines. Eventually the drums would stop and we would listen to an enthusiastic sermon from the pastor, who spoke English while another local translated it into ewe. Though the seats were pretty uncomfortable and the drums often left me with a headache, I greatly enjoyed the services and often attended bible study classes on Wednesday evenings.

To record everything that I saw, everyone that I met and all the lessons I learnt in Ghana would require at least a book (if not more) but by describing my work, and what it meant to be a member of Liati Wote's community, I hope I've been able to describe the foundations of what truly was a most unforgettable year.

# DECISIONS! DECISIONS!

by Tom Brown

From time to time all of us are faced with making important decisions in our lives. Some of these are extremely important, for example, 'should I change job', 'should I marry this person' or 'should I move house'. Others may be less life-changing but are still significant, for example how we spend our money (new cars, holidays, etc). For those of us who are Christians we are accountable to God for what we do with our lives and may therefore not unreasonably ask how we should be guided by God in our decision making, particularly about more major decisions. Belief that God guides us assumes that He is interested in what we do in the first place, and that, secondly, He can communicate with us. Time and space precludes a lengthy discussion of these matters but I believe there is more than sufficient Biblical warrant to support both premises.



The Bible is full of remarkable accounts of spectacular acts of guidance, for example angelic visitations, writing on the wall, and God speaking to people in dreams – but these are conspicuous by their absence in most of our day-to-day experience. That is not to say these things can never happen, merely that they are extremely rare and exceptional. How then does God guide? We are certainly told we have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit indeed has a part to play in directing us, but it is unwise to regard all of our inner promptings as coming from that source! Fortunately God has given us other indications of

what he would like us to do. Firstly he has given us His word in the Bible which lays down the principles by which we should live our lives.

To be sure, this is not specific in the sense that it tells you whom to marry or what car to buy! It does, however, lay down certain parameters and boundaries from which it would be unwise to depart. We would also listen to the wise counsel and advice of trusted friends who share our Christian worldview and, of course, to pray for God's wisdom and understanding in making important decisions. We have probably all made mistakes in decisions we have made in our lives but adhering to these principles makes knowing God's will more likely.



# USEFUL CONTACTS

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#### **Gift Aid Convener**

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#### **Organist and Choirmaster**

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#### **Events Co-ordinator**

Stephen Blake  
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## Organisations

### **Men's Association**

Andrew McDonald  
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### **The Guild**

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### **Parent and Toddlers**

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### **Junior Church Leadership Team**

Alison Mason (*Bubbles: the Creche 0-3yrs*)  
tel: (01506) 848502

Anne Sutherland (*Sunshine Starters 3-5yrs*)

tel: (01506) 845868

Rona Molloy (*Bright Sparks P1-P3*)

tel: (01506) 842857

Allan Kennedy (*Trailblazers P4-P6*)

tel: (01506) 828269

Nina Marshall (*Quest P7-S1*)

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John Shaw (*Team Bible Class S2-S3*)

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Stephen Marshall (*YF S4-S6*)

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### **Boys' Brigade**

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A hand is shown pouring a thick stream of white cream over a large, vibrant red strawberry. The cream is cascading down, creating a soft, textured mound. The background is a plain, light color, making the strawberry and cream stand out.

# Wimbledon sunglasses

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE TENNIS



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