

Pastor Roy Writes...

Dear Friends,

In his first letter to Corinth, St Paul, the Apostle, was talking about what happens to Christians after death and in this connection he made a very telling comment. He said, “*If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*” (1 Cor 15:17)

That is why the Lent, Holy Week and the Easter Celebrations are so vitally important for the Christian Church. What is shared, preached, sung, and enacted during this season is truly the heart-beat of the Christian Church and our own personal faith.

You rarely go into a church anywhere in Scotland and not be made aware of the centrality of the cross. In most churches, in either stained glass windows, or visible on Communion Table or other altar furnishings, there you will find the enduring image of the Cross of Christ.

With each Sunday morning service in churches everywhere, we are made aware of this continuing proclamation on the Lord’s Day, as a re-enactment as it were, of that first Lord’s Day morning, when Jesus had visibly and bodily been raised from the dead.

By the time this magazine arrives Lent will have begun and we will be headed down the road towards Holy Week, Good Friday and then Easter. Please accept our invitation to come to any of these Christ centred services, where we will be made aware again of the importance of the cross and the death of Christ, for our salvation. Then we celebrate again on Easter Sunday. By doing so, as Christians, we fully accept and believe totally in His bodily resurrection.

Which brings us back to Paul’s verse. Our faith is not futile, and we are no longer in our sins. All because of what we share, and believe together in this season of Christ’s death and resurrection.

Roy and Christine

Worship Diary

Normal Sunday Services are held at 11.00 am. Once a month, there is an evening service, including prayers for healing. A short mid-week service is held on Thursdays at 10.30 am.

Special services between now and the next issue of St John's News (all at St John's except where indicated):

Easter 2012

April 1 Palm Sunday

Family Service at 11:00 am

Joint Evening Service at Kirkton at 7:00 pm

5 Maundy Thursday

Service at URC at 7:30 pm

6 Good Friday

Service at URC at 7:30 pm

8 Easter Day

Community Service for Easter Day at Market Square at 8:30 pm, followed by breakfast at URC.

Easter Celebration Service at St John's at 11:00 am

*
* **Sacrament of Holy Communion** *
* will be held on Sunday, 3 June 2012. *
*

Thursday Morning Service

I want to personally thank all who attend our Thursday morning service. It has always been an exciting half an hour for those who make it a prime appointment on Thursday mornings.

Yet recently on Thursdays, much more has been happening than simply a time of singing and praying and listening to a short devotional often brought by guests, either from within the church or beyond.

Those wonderful people who attend on a Thursday are extremely vocal about the benefit and blessing they derive from these services. Personally, I receive so many plaudits from the Thursday congregation regarding their enjoyment of the music, the talks and the humour. So many would never leave without expressing how that half hour inspires them, and encourages them for what they are dealing with in their lives.

Yet, it is the time of fellowship afterwards, round the tables, as people meet, and share their stories where I perceive a change occurring. Folk stay longer. They do not feel rushed. People are talking at a deeper level. More folk are willing to be transparent about what is happening in their lives. People are listening at a new level. The response I notice from a few is sometimes prayer, but always concern.

So, thank you to those from St John's, St Andrew's and Kirkton who come and make Thursday mornings a great time of gathering and worship. If you have missed all this, and have the time available, then I extend an invitation to you to come and experience what the Lord is doing on Thursdays. Personally I would hate to miss out on the Blessing!

Pastor Roy

Money Matters

Details of how the money to be raised by the congregation in 2012 is used for Ministries and Mission was included in a letter to our Session Clerk from Gordon Jamieson, Convenor of Stewardship for the Presbytery of Lanark.

St John's is required to contribute a total of £56,070. Of that figure, £48,220 (86%) is put towards the cost of the ministry of around 1000 ministers and other parish workers. The total cost of a parish minister at the top of the scale is £39,895. This includes his or her stipend, employer's NI and pension contributions. As you can see, St John's is able to not only pay for the ministry of our minister, but contribute towards the cost of ministry in other congregations, who are unable to meet the full cost of their minister.

The remaining £7850 (14%) of our Ministries and Mission contribution goes to support the resourcing of congregations for Christian education and outreach, caring for the most vulnerable in society in partnership with churches in some of the poorest parts of the world and providing a Christian perspective on the issues of today. It also provides financial, legal, safeguarding and other services for congregations. and committees and supports the cost of the General Assembly and the Moderator.

To learn more about the financial state of our congregation, please make an effort to attend the **Stated Annual Meeting**, which will be held in church after morning worship on **Sunday 25 March**. It does not last long but you will gain a good insight into the economics of running a church.

Senior Citizens Supper

The 'young at heart' ladies of St John's Young Woman's Group would like to invite all members of St John's who are 60 and over to come along to our annual supper on Friday March 30, 2012.

We would love to see you there and would ask you to cut out the reply slip below and leave it in one of the boxes provided in either the large hall of the church or at the front door or alternatively telephone me on 770903. As usual, transport can be provided for anyone who needs it. Please phone me if you require a lift to and from the Church hall.

I look forward to hearing from you and am sure we shall all, once again, have a great time. It would help our planning if you could reply no later than Friday 23 March.

Margaret Dougan
President

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

If you are available to provide transport to and from the Church Hall on Friday, March 30, 2012 we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Margaret Dougan on 770903 as soon as possible. Many thanks.

St John's Young Woman's Group
Senior Citizens' Supper
7.00 pm on Friday March 30, 2012

I would like to join you at the Senior Citizens' Supper.

I do/do not require transport (*delete as appropriate*)

Name: _____

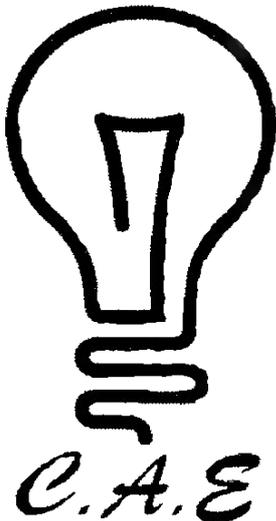
Address: _____

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The Guild

We have enjoyed a good session at the Guild. With a number of new members, and have enjoyed a number of excellent speakers and look forward to a few more before we finish for the summer. Our outing this year is to St Andrews with High Tea at the waterfront in Anstruther.

Helen Wyper.



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Gift Aid

Would members who Gift Aid their offering, or other donations, please remember to put their name on any such donations.

We cannot claim back tax if we do not know who gave made the donation!



Information Update Form

Are you about to change your name and/or address?

Please take a moment to complete, then return this form. You can hand it in at the door any Sunday morning, or post it to the church (*see the back page for the address*).

You can also email your details to office@carluke-stjohns.org.uk

My current details are:

Title: _____

Forename(s): _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

My changed details are/will be:

Title: _____

Forename(s): _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

email address: _____

Thank you

Last year, Gordon Robson spent some time with the Beit CURE Hospital in Zambia. He took with him a gift of money raised and later in the year, further donations were collected for the hospital.

The Beit CURE Hospital transforms the lives of disabled children and their families in Zambia through medical and spiritual healing, serving all at our specialty teaching hospital, building local partnerships and advocating for these children.

Charity Mathenge-Nduna of CURE send a thank you email and a report on what was done with the money taken out by Goron in the Summer:

On 1st July, 2011, we received \$1,100 (app. 690GBP) as a donation, mostly from the congregation at St John's, Carlisle and Gordon Robson's family. These funds were directed towards the overall cost of offering surgical treatment to the poor disabled children at the hospital.

This includes:

- *The cost of surgery, currently pegged at 750 GBP per operation. (Some children need more than one operation)*
- *Admission related costs such as three daily meals and toiletries for both child and mother (When a child is admitted, we have to take in a guardian as well to assist in minding the child.)*

*As we celebrate our Five year anniversary this year, we are privileged to have offered **6,330 free life changing surgeries**. You have been part of that change!*

Opposite is the story of just one of those cases.

Healing Changes Everything

Mike Chitala is an eleven year old boy, born with a growth between his eyes (frontal encephalocele). He is supposed to be in his third grade this year but dreams of school seemed to be slipping away and the nightmare of a distorted face looked more realistic.

He and his younger sister were born to a divorced mother, who could not take care of them, prompting her to relinquish the joy of parenting to her father who lives in the copper belt region, about five hours away from Lusaka, the Zambian capital.

When Mike was a month old, his mother realized that there was a stubborn growth on the boy's face. She went to the nearby clinic where sadly, she was told they could not do anything about it as they did not have a specialist surgeon. There seemed to be light at the end of her dark tunnel when a visiting doctor came, but hope was dashed when he confirmed that help could only be sought in Lusaka; a far fetched dream for a peasant farmer as the grandfather.

Unbelievable as it may seem, both his mother and grandfather opted not to visit the hospital anymore; there didn't seem to be any sense in doing so!

During one of their rural visits, World vision Zambia, one of our partners in recruiting patients, identified Mike as a possible case for treatment. They facilitated a trip, in which the grandfather took up the role of chaperone, and together with Mike, they arrived Lusaka.

Mike was seen by our doctor in November 2011 and consequently booked for surgery.

Under God's guidance, Mike's delicate 12 hour surgery took place on 30th January, 2012. Now that the surgery was successful, Mike is healing well and yes, he looks forward to a confident time at school without having to endure his 'friends' mockery. His family's hope has surely been restored!

This is only one of many lives that changed.

A Listening Ear

The Rev Maureen Wilson, Regional Co-ordinator for Scotland was invited to talk to the congregation on Sunday morning, 29 January. The following is an edited transcript of what she said. Listen to the full address at

<http://www.carluke-stjohns.org.uk/sermons/2012/0129/Acorn.mp3>

Deitrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran Pastor imprisoned by the Nazis said:

"Many people are looking for an ear that will listen. They do not find it among Christians because Christians are talking when they should be listening. He who no longer listens to his brother will soon no longer be listening to God either."

This is a very challenging statement. Nineteen people from the Carluke Parish Grouping have just completed a 2 day listening course run by Acorn in Scotland. The purpose of the course was to explore a greater understanding of listening - listening to others, to themselves and to God - developing themselves as listening people.

Good listening is not easy. Many people think that they are good listeners, but it is often not until they come on a course like this that they discover they were not quite as good as they thought!! But that is good - because our courses are not about being critical of people but rather about raising self awareness of less helpful patterns of listening and offering another way to listen.

We live in a world of amazing changes in communication with all the technological advances. What has not changed, though, is the need for people at some time in their life to tell their story. What has not changed is the need for people to be listened to and heard.

I am sure those who attended the listening course will now be listening to God for his guidance as to how they can use their new found resource of listening in the future. I am confident too that they will continue to develop themselves as listening people. Acorn in Scotland continues to work towards its vision that Scotland becomes a listening people for Life, Health and Community.

KRCH Newsletter

In his latest newsletter from Kwai River Christian Hospital (KRCH), **Scott Murray** tells us about an Outreach event they held at Christmas 2011. In 2010, having planned for 200 attendees, 500 turned up. This year, they planned for 500 - and 1,000 came to experience an evening of singing, testimonies and a clear presentation of the gospel through drama and preaching.

The building of new staff accommodation was due, despite delays, to start in February, when a third doctor arrived to help Scott as the latter oversees the building project. Scott is hoping that the roof is up by June, when the rains start.

Dr. Martin Eidenbenz, the medical advisor to OMF missionaries in Thailand has volunteered to do 3 weeks per month at KRCH. This will allow Scott more time to attend to administration. Dr Eidenbenz's wife, Lydia, will also help out by teaching handicraft to TB patients.

KRCH has been asked to help out with the running and financing of two projects, currently run by the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT). The first, a safe house supports elderly, homeless and migrant folk with no other place to go. The second is Candlelight - a charity which helps disabled tribal children. Scott asks for your prayers as they feel led to tackle these projects.

For years Nok has wanted to attend a course in Teaching English as a Second Language. Finally she could do one in Chiangmai. She is there for 5 weeks and gets to stay with the kids in their school dorm while Scott is away in Glasgow lecturing at the Tropical Medicine course! She hopes to use here skills at the Christian school right next to KRCH.

Scott finishes his newsletter by reporting that there is a lot of interest from doctors wishing to go to KRCH for "jungle" experience. The University of Texas is sending them 5 trainees between March and May. Most will not be Christians, so Scott asks for our prayers to cope with this extra work and opportunity to spread the Gospel.