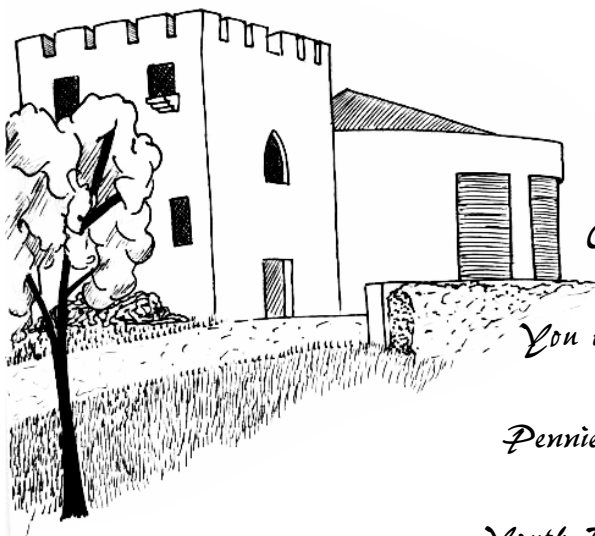


Maxwell

Matters



Celebrity News

You want it when!

Pennies from Heaven

Youth Review Survey

The Land of Yum Scrums

Children give us the eyes to see how God

*K*elvin, our youngest child, who is four, did this in one surprising way. One busy afternoon in the lead up to teatime, he made a garbled request to his mum. I overheard from the next room certain words like, “shoes ... polish ... be like dad.” Ruth, who was understandably into the automatic parental mode of making tea for a family of six, replied by saying, “Yes.”

Kelvin cheered and was a man on a mission. Nothing more was thought about it until the next morning when I looked for Kelvin’s shoes. Kelvin told me they were drying on the boiler. I opened the boiler door to discover Kelvin had certainly polished his shoes, not with shoe polish, but liberal lashings of Pritt Stick! The sticky gluey substance had now hardened as film over Kelvin’s shoes. They did have a nice shine to them! I asked Kelvin, “what was this?” His proud response was, “I pretended to polish my shoes. I wanted to be like dad!” What could I say!? I certainly laughed.

How does God, our heavenly parent, handle the way we live our lives? I think He already knows our childlike attempts at life will often be a sticky mess. However, if they are mixed in with the spiritually instinctive desire to be like Him, then my faith anticipates that there is room for grace. I hope I might be a source of heavenly laughter as one of His children, who can bring an element of surprise to the heart and soul of divinity itself. As Jesus sat children on his lap he said, “for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

Alister Bull

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News from the pews

Baptisms

Hannah Clare Elizabeth, daughter of Ian and Lynne Knox, and Finlay Graham Norman, son of Graham and Catherine McKay were baptised on 26 March.

Engagements

Congratulations to Jay Lennartson and Susan Paterson who were engaged on 19 February. They will be married on 3 June.

Weddings

We are delighted to record three weddings and we send our congratulations to the happy couples.

Stewart Bell and Nadelena Diciacca were married in St Peter's Church on 4 March.

Scott Urquhart and Gemma Roberts were married in Airth Castle on 16 April.

Alastair Holden and Elaine Campbell were married in our church on 13 May.

Deaths

Billy Spence died suddenly on 17 March. We extend our sympathy to his wife Doreen and his daughters Gillian and Pamela.

It is with sadness that we record the death of Bill Stanage on 27 March. Bill and Betty attended regularly since they joined us at Maxwell and we were able to congratulate them on their Diamond Wedding last autumn. Our thoughts are with Betty.

We also regret to announce the death on 19th April of Tom Milligan who had recently moved to a nursing home near his daughter Sheilah in Lenzie.

Frank Cooper died on 20 April. Frank was a keen member of one of our Alpha groups and attended evening worship when his health permitted.

We deeply regret to have to record the death of our Church Officer, Graeme Wright, on 16 May. We continue to remember Eleanor, Euan and Niall in our thoughts and prayers.

Elspeth & Jim Burgess

Home and Away

News from our friends now working away from the parish.

Update Israel

Bryson and May Arthur 13 May 2006

It is Saturday and we left Longside for sunny Waterfoot last Tuesday. We have been doing what had to be done concerning the house and garden and we actually bought some new summer clothes at Frasers in Glasgow. Our lives in Longside already seem far away in a distant land and time. We are kind of in-between, but we have so much to do that we are not really taking much in. Bryson has to take two services at Shotts on Sunday and on Monday we drive down to London for three important meetings, one of them with Nigel Wright, Principal of Spurgeon's College.

Israel looms ever closer. We are scheduled now to leave on Tuesday 23 May, arriving at Tel Aviv on Wednesday morning. On 21 May we have our *low-key* valedictory at Maxwell Mearns Castle (yet again).

Already we have received information of substantial support from our dear friends at MMCC; we are just so grateful to all who have so generously given. We have a close relationship with many churches

in Scotland, but MMCC will always be our home, and special. When Mary died, so long ago now, the support from MMCC was overwhelming; every need was met with abundance and over-abundance. Our need on this occasion of our return to Israel was especially difficult, and again our friends, brothers and sisters, have rallied to the cause. Why did we ever doubt God?

Soon we leave you once again for the Holy Land, but we will never leave you in our hearts. At the final service at Longside, after the speeches, the organist struck up – “For yer no awa tae bide awa”, which was sung with relish. And that sums up our leaving. “We are no awa tae bide awa we'll aye come back and see ye”. The corollary to that is “see you next year in Jerusalem!” (well, Nazareth actually.)

May God's great blessings be with you all, giving you peace.

With sincere love in Christ

Bryson and May

The Land of Yum Scrum

From Max, our Storyteller, the first of a few stories that will appear in each edition of Maxwell Matters for young readers - or young at heart anyway!

The sun shone beautifully in The Land of Yum Scrum.

It was called Yum Scrum because, as long as everyone was happy, then everything smelled of all the yummy scrummy things you love - like strawberries and ice cream or warm chocolate sauce or even beefburgers and tomato ketchup.

All the pretty little coloured houses twinkled cheerily and the pretty little flowers in their fat tubs waved gently in the breeze.

At No.7 Hullabaloo Street there was a sound of loud

singing - very loud singing - so loud that the birds took fright and flew off in a flutter to the next garden!

"LA LA LA ... DIDDLE DEE DEE ... DOO DOO DOO DAH!" sang the voice.

One of the people who lived in Yum Scrum was called Not so Pally Pete - he was called that because he always ALWAYS had something not nice to say about EVERYBODY - so he came stomping up to No.7 and shouted "Stop that racket! That is terribly noisy!"

The door of No.7 opened and out bounced Beaming Billy.

"Ah Pete my pal ... how good of you to knock my door ... would you like a cake?"

"A cake?? A cake?" spluttered Not so Pally Pete. Suddenly the lovely smell of sugary doughnuts changed to smelly old boots.

"I don't want a CAKE!! I want some QUIET! Pete shouted.

"Ah but Pete ... is this not a day when you might like a bit of cake?" asked Beaming Billy and the smell of old boots slowly changed back to marshmallows.

"Why would I want cake? I want peace - no not a piece of cake but peace and QUIET" he shouted, his little fat face going quite red with anger, bringing the smelly boots smell back but even smellier!

Beaming Billy beamed a huge grin which made Not so Pally Pete even madder.

"Is this not a day for you that is a special day? I was singing

because I am practising to make my voice sound especially good today!"

Pete's fat little red face changed to pink. The lovely scrummy smell of marshmallows again wafted all around them.

"Special day ... for me? Well ... not special really."

"But it IS. I happen to know it is your birthday today and I have made a cake for you! And if you would stop making faces and shouting, I have a surprise for you inside my house!"

"For me? A surprise? Nobody gives ME surprises" he said.

"Well today is different. I decided that you need some new pals and really I think you are a nice little person under that grumpy face ... so come in and see!" beamed Billy. Well what a

surprise ... when Not so Pally Pete went into Beaming Billy's there were all the people in Hulabaloo Street and when Pete popped himself round the door, Billy turned to them and said " Right ... in your best Dee Dee voices ... GO!" and they ALL began singing.

"Happy Birthday to you. Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday Dear Pete, Happy birthday to you".

Well ... Not So Pally Pete did something that his face had not done for a long long time. His cheeks began to twitch ... then twitch more ... then before he could stop it, his face broke out into a HUGE grin.

"Oh my ... nobody has EVER sung to me before ... not ever". and the smell of marshmallows that

had chased away the smelly boots changed to the most delicious wonderful yummy scrummy smell you ever smelled in your life.

"And here is your cake. Do you like your name?" asked Beaming Billy

And written on the top of a huge chocolate cake was written:

Happy Birthday to Pally Pete.

From that day on, there was no more Not so Pally Pete but Pally Pete and also, if you passed by No.7 Hullabaloo Street, you would even hear the sound of singing ... two voices loudly singing "La la la DEE Dee Dee Dee Da Da Da!" Now whoever could that be!

Max, the Storyteller

A Fantastic First Job

One of the highlights of my life so far was a year spent working as a researcher for an MP at Westminster. It was a fantastic first job! I walked past Big Ben every day as I made my way to an office at the top of a spiral staircase just off Central Lobby. I had the opportunity to draft speeches which were then delivered in Parliament.

The placement was arranged through the Christian charity CARE. I was one of 12 graduates working for MPs from all the main political parties. Each Friday we got together to receive training on how our faith impacts the political world. As you can imagine that led to many vigorous debates!

That year opened a number of doors for me to possible jobs in the political world. I decided to opt for a career in the civil service back in Scotland, which was cut short by the call to full-time ministry. But it was an invaluable experience which I would thoroughly recommend.

If you are coming towards the end of a course at University or College and aren't sure what to do next – or you know someone who is – this might be something to consider. The programme has recently been extended to offer placements at Westminster but also in the Scottish Parliament, Brussels, the BBC and beyond. CARE is currently looking for funding to expand the number of Intern places from around 20 to 100.

Unfortunately, the deadline for applying for 2006–07 has passed but there's always next year. I know politics doesn't excite everyone but I'm sure there are a few sad people out there like me! For more information, speak to me or see www.care.org.uk.

Graham Nash

ON WORK ...

I owe, I owe, it's off to work I go.

Just when you thought you were winning the rat-race, along come faster rats.

THE ONLY PLACE SUCCESS COMES BEFORE WORK IS IN THE DICTIONARY.

If you aren't fired with enthusiasm, you'll be fired with enthusiasm.

Unwanted Furniture

Need a new home for unwanted furniture?

I receive at least a couple of phone calls per week, either at Starter Packs or at home, from people who have good, useful furniture they wish to pass on.

At present, due to limited space, we are unable to take any items of furniture larger than a small coffee table at Starter Packs in Govan. Occasionally I am able to match items with individuals requiring furniture.

If you have items of furniture you wish to pass on there is one legal requirement: All soft furnishings must have the kite mark safety label stating the item is fire retardant. Without this label items containing fabric cannot be passed on through charities or furniture projects.

Once you have determined the item is safe to pass on, there are two projects which may uplift:

- ◇ Second Opportunities, Ibrox 0141 425 1177
- ◇ British Heart Foundation, 0141 334 9046

Any small household item may be left, clearly labelled "Starter Packs", for me to collect, by the bench in the Maxwell Hall across from the drawbridge. Starter Packs works all through the summer and I will collect any items left during the holiday period.

Denise Lawson

Pastoral Team changes

Evelyn Foote takes over the leadership of the Pastoral Team later in June. I hope that everyone will continue to be supportive by passing on news of illness, bereavement, births and other celebrations so that appropriate contact can be made by the minister, an elder or member of the team. At the moment, the team is made up of Evelyn Foote, Eleanor Carvel, Janette Ferguson, Margaret Gray, Margaret Halliday and Winnie Macvicar. I would like to thank them for their work with me during the past five years, and wish Evelyn every blessing as she takes over.

Heather Russell

Youth Survey Review

Maxwell Mearns Youth Survey Review Findings Dec 2005

The congregation was asked to participate in a Youth Survey Review by filling in a questionnaire. There was a promise to share the findings in Maxwell Matters. The easiest way is to share the top 10 findings.

1. The greatest strength of MMCC youth ministry was the youth minister.
2. The two important aspects of a youth minister's work were considered to be as a teacher and pastor.
3. The first point of focus for a youth minister in MMCC was 12–15 year olds.
4. The biggest source for hearing about the youth work and activities is through the Church Notice Sheet/ Youth Pullout.
5. The biggest perceived reason by far for young people to leave MMCC Youth Ministry is other interests and attractions.
6. Friendships and facilities were the biggest attraction for young people.
7. The biggest benefit identified was the spiritual development of young people.

8. Over 80% of the respondents felt there should be another full-time worker.
9. The importance of outreach in youth ministry was a distinctive opinion found only in young people's views.
10. 82 people responded, approximately 20% of possible returns.

These responses informed the Kirk session of the opinions held in the congregation. The findings complemented the finding that emerged from the focus groups, who had an interest in youth work at Maxwell Mearns Castle. This helped the Youth Ministry Review Group to formulate recommendations in order for the Kirk Session to make a decision.

Your contributions made a real difference to the whole process.

Thank you for taking part.

Rev Alister Bull

on behalf of the Youth Review Team:
(Ian Forgie, John McNicol, Elaine Campbell, and David Cameron)

You want it when?!

Many of us will have thought in panic or even gasped aloud these words in disbelieving response to a particularly demanding timescale for action when issued by a Client, Employer, Spouse, Child or even Church Magazine Editor. Thankfully, with some concentration of the mind and body and the use of modern computer technologies such as word processors, spreadsheets, internet and emails many of those daunting tasks can be completed on time but sometimes due to factors out with our control we are faced with failure.

In situations where I have done all that I considered was humanly possible and still faced the prospect of failing to meet a deadline I have found it helpful to simply step aside from the situation and pass the problem upstairs to One who is not intimidated by our earthly timetable. Sometimes the results have been amazingly relevant and sometimes not apparently so at the time - but at the end of the day a solution has always been found.

The problem in our human situation is that having achieved the impossible deadline once, it then tends to become the expected norm for our future efforts.

As an aside may I pass on a funny (or perhaps not so funny) time-related story heard recently where a grandparent, on hearing a rather blunt request for sweets

from his young grandchild, uttered the time-honoured phrase "Well what's the magic word then" only to be told in no uncertain terms that it was "NOW".

During his recent bible study course on Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Martin Smith introduced the class to the concept of the "Now – Not Yet Tension". This is a useful shorthand expression to describe the fact that when we accept Jesus as our Saviour we immediately enter into a relationship with God whereby even now we experience, albeit in part, the fullness of God's benevolence. The "not yet" refers to the fact that it is only beyond time and in eternity that we shall experience this benevolence in full.

This "not yet" period of our lives requires us to be diligent and vigilant and, as often proclaimed from the pulpit at Maxwell Mearns, "keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our Faith". The modern day evangelical church understandably promotes the gospel, but we must also pay heed to our ongoing responsibilities as Christians so that as described in 1 John 2: 24 "See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us – even eternal life."

Sam Nugent

A conversation with...

Lawrence Renn

On Sundays he is most often spotted welcoming people at the door or taking his daughter out to Sunday school. Here Lawrence talks to Maxwell Matters about himself, his work and his family.

Tell us about your family?

I have a daughter Cathy, 3 1/2 years and a son Jonathan aged 18 months. My wife Linda and I have just celebrated 8 years of marriage. We met through the missionary agency Youth With A Mission (YWAM) when we were co-leading a team in Edinburgh and were engaged within a month of going out together.

Were you with YWAM for long?

Nine years in all. I started in Wales and have been involved as a student and leader of various teams including at the Olympic games in Atlanta. I got in touch with them initially when I was 20. As a child, I had gone to a C of E school where I had had a lot of religious input. I had gone to a local church youth group and yet it wasn't till I was about 18 when one of my youth leaders challenged me about the inconsistencies of my thinking and lifestyle that I really began to think about God and what it meant to be a Christian. I became a Christian shortly afterwards. A YWAM team

came to our area and I recognised that it was something I could do - and that God was calling me to do it too. I was in a boring job at the time and knew that there had to be more to life than what it offered.

What were you doing?

I was working in an auditors office. I had started there at 17 on a YTS scheme straight from school. I never thought that I would continue in finance. Then with YWAM, I was involved in helping with the accounts instead of the more usual team work duties such as cleaning the kitchen, and I still give them regular advice.

Your current job is....?

I am the bursar for the International Christian College in Glasgow – what used to be the Bible College. That involves virtually everything non-teaching. I am the person who is responsible for all the financial aspects such as paying bills and collecting fees, the administration staff, IT and maintenance of the building and flats associated with the college. It is a very varied job and it is quite challenging for me to learn all about new areas, such as current legislation on HR or health and safety.

That won't leave much time for hobbies.

No – especially with a young family. I used to like computer games and board games. Now I love reading books especially science fiction and am quite happy to collapse in front of drivel on the television when I get the chance.

What about church commitments?

We have been at Maxwell for about 5 years. I am a member of the Board and involved in the missions prayer group. I still do accounts for a couple of other churches and help YWAM with financial advice too. I am happy to support Linda in her church roles with toddlers and nursery.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

In Morocco. I have been saying for years that “within 2 years” I’ll be there. Now it is within 10 years. I have felt God calling me there since I was a young Christian and yet I know that at the moment He is saying “not yet”. Linda has had a similar call. Humanly speaking it would be a lot easier to go now when the children are young but I know I am in exactly the place God wants me just now. We currently get involved with North Africa through our giving and prayer. I have always wanted to avoid being “pew fodder” – just turning up at church out of habit but never really engaging with God and what His plans are for me or His kingdom.

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God” then?

Absolutely. It is a guiding principle for life. It is also one of my favourite songs.

Interestingly, I’m told it was written by someone who used the royalties from it to pay her YWAM fees.

What about other songs or hymns?

There are some really awful new songs that just sound “wet” and some older ones where I don’t understand the words but which I’m sure would really benefit from updating. I like most songs, new and old, and enjoy some “thumpy out” ones on an organ too.

Is there a bible verse that speaks to you?

Ephesians 2: 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

If you had one thing to pass on to your children what would it be?

Life is weird. Your expectations are rarely fulfilled and life usually works out entirely differently from what you expected.

And to sum yourself up?

A happy family man

Thanks for talking to us Lawrence. Trust life continues to be pleasantly “weird” and that God continues to use you here and, eventually, in Morocco.

Lawrence was talking with Lyn Steven

Vacancies

Extract of email reply to XXXXX Recruitment Consultants

Dear Claire

Thank you for keeping me advised regarding Facilities Management vacancies arising in West of Scotland. I would appreciate if you could remove my name from your database as I am no longer interested in this form of employment. I am now entering my final year of study, as part of my training for Church of Scotland ministry. However, you might be interested in the vacancies we have currently have on offer:

WANTED

Imperfect people to come and experience the warmth, fellowship and the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. No specialist skills required other than the acceptance of unconditional love and a willingness to communicate that gift to others. No need for interview as unlimited opportunities are available and all applicants are acceptable. We are an organisation that values relationship. The three members of the management team are available 24-7 and are entirely supportive of the needs of the workforce. Furthermore, they are willing to assist with anything that is personally requested. Even workers who have defected to the opposition, or who have proved unreliable in the past are warmly welcomed on their return. Guaranteed benefits include eternal life.

Applications in person at a Church near you. If unsure, please contact the undernoted. (Quote ref: John 3: 16)

Andrew Robertson

Celebrity News

It is amazing what people will accept as a god ... that's what I was thinking in church last week. A member of our youth group was promoting our church's holiday club at the time.

She said: "Young people *are* looking for something ... They just think they don't! All you have to do is walk through any town or city centre street in the wee hours of Sunday morning to appreciate that!"

The church is seen though by many people (young, not so young and old) as a place for slightly delusional "happy clappy" people to waste their time and money in the "vain" hope there will be something at the end for us. There is "obviously" no way a merciful God can exist when he allows tsunamis, floods, diseases, earthquakes etc. as well as all the misery that follows them.

To be honest, I can see their point ... that's how it logically appears in Western society if you have not found the Lord. But then I can also see the bible's and the Lord's point of view that the earth and everything on it works like a well-oiled, incredibly precise machine which man can break just as easily. If we start pumping out noxious gases into the atmosphere, then we have polar ice caps melting and flooding in other parts of the

world. For me, one of the hardest parts of being a Christian is that the Lord doesn't always intervene in the way that we want him to – despite trying our hardest to be more like him and carry out his will. But then, fathers don't give their children sweets for breakfast, lunch and dinner either because they know it's a bad diet, rots their teeth and gives them a stomach ache. The Lord knows best whether we like it or not!

So what is modern society doing to fill this gap from God? They are filling it with fast food for the soul ... entertainment. In modern society there is no moderation any more. Everyone in entertainment needs to be SO thin, SO healthy, SO wealthy. Entertainment has even created its own gods ... celebrities! Celebrities, generally have celebrity lives; they marry, they divorce, they party, they have fun in their faux-god like status ... until it all goes horribly wrong and they end up dead, in rehab or forgotten. Soaps are just as bad, marrying people off, separating people and divorcing them in the space of a few years. What sort of role models are these?

So, perhaps in our post-Christian society we should offer the things that people *really* want. Friends, a sense of community, belonging, safety, counselling

and love. One of the greatest pieces of testimony I have heard was by Lorna Grady, a few years ago now. She said that she met a Christian in the church who also enjoyed Billy Connolly, which broke the ice with her. That person broke down the barrier. They didn't say "Mr Connolly swears a lot, we won't be expecting that sort of behaviour here!"

I'm not saying that we have to renounce our faith to understand the secular world, but we do have to identify with it to speak to people at their level and remove the name tags associated with church.

Our Lord is a kind and merciful God, in our i-Pod, mobile phone, 3G, laptop world, we can stop and talk to God anytime that we wish without any extra hardware. We have to take away the false gods of celebrities, media and self gratification and put the Lord back in people's lives.

If we despair of non-Christians in the world then non-Christians will despair of us in the church.

Doug Scott

A new minister was visiting the homes of his parishioners, but at one house, though it was obvious someone was at home, there was no answer. So he took out a card, wrote Revelation 3: 20 on the back of it and put it through the letterbox. the next Sunday he found that his card had been returned with a cryptic message: Genesis 3: 10. checking the Bible, he broke into laughter!

Revelation 3: 20: Behold I stand at the door and knock.

Genesis 3: 10: I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid for I was naked.

A church was considering the purchase of a new chandelier. A parishioner who was unable to attend the business meeting where it was initially discussed wrote a note to the head deacon to express her opinion. The note said simply:

I am definitely opposed to buying a new chandelier for the church for three reasons:

1. I can't spell chandelier.
2. If we got one, who's going to play it?
3. If we've got that kind of money in the treasury, why don't we buy a new light fixture to brighten up the church?

Child Protection Law

Child Protection Law and the Church of Scotland

Background

In May 1997, following the Dunblane disaster and the Cullen Report, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland took the proactive decision to adopt procedures, that would try to ensure all children and young people involved in activities and organisations under the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, are safe from the possibilities of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. The procedures are based on recommendations from various government reports and are intended to protect, not only the children and young people, but also the leaders and teachers from false allegations, and the Church, as an organisation, from possible litigation. The Kirk Session at Maxwell Mearns Castle has adopted the policy laid down by the General Assembly.

New Procedures

On 10 April 2005 there was a significant change in Scottish Law, making it mandatory for every new volunteer working with children and young people

to complete a Disclosure Application Form – administered by Disclosure Scotland and processed by the Scottish Criminal Record Bureau (SCRB) Only when a Disclosure Number has been issued, will anyone be allowed to work with children and young people in the Church. As part of the process, each individual has to complete an application form and have an informal “interview” so that their roles and responsibilities are made clear and also to answer any questions that may arise.

The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Unit intended to introduce a 5-year rolling programme to ensure all volunteers working with children and young people in the Church complete the appropriate application procedure. As part of this process, all volunteers working with children and young people will have completed the Church of Scotland “Good Practice” training programme which is run over one session lasting under 3 hours. (It is normally held at various venues in and around Glasgow.) It is our intention to run the programme here at Maxwell Mearns Castle, but we need at least 25 people to sign up for each event to make this viable.

The Next Step

From 1 September 2006, anyone who is at present working with children and young people and has not attended the Church of Scotland “Good Practice” training programme will be unable to continue their work until they have completed the training.

Here at MMCC, we have been very encouraged by the number of people (around 180!) who have successfully completed the Church of Scotland “Good Practice” training programme. Nearly 40 people have been checked by Disclosure

Scotland and have received a Disclosure Number.

As Child Protection Coordinators appointed by the Kirk Session, we are obligated to make sure all our volunteers have completed the proper procedures to ensure the wellbeing of the youngsters in our care.

If you have any questions, please give us a call!

Graeme Lipsett 01355 263376

May Taggart 0141 644 3867

FROM A LUMP OF CLAY

From a lump of clay
my hands can free
your shape,
because my hands
remember.
But his hands,
what would they have remembered
creating you?

Horia Bădescu

Spring Harvest

I have been involved as a steward with Spring Harvest since 1999.

The first time I went was a surprise as I applied to be a steward at Skegness but I received a phone call a week before going asking me if I could go to Pwythelli, which was a challenge as I had never driven so far nor been to Wales before. All went well.

2000 came and at last I arrived at Skegness (Skeggy) which was the first Butlins ever in Britain. It was a challenge of a different kind, as I did not know anybody on the team. It was most interesting to see how ways of leading a team can be so different, but also successful.

In 2001, I was finally on a team with our very own Mr C and a few of my fellow members from Maxwell Mearns.

On the advice of a friend, we avoided the Easter Monday traffic and stayed over in a hotel in Yorkshire. It was a good idea and gave us a fresh start – and a good breakfast. I did keep in touch with my fellow Maxwellian Stewards courtesy of the mobile phone and was even able to wave to them as they passed us at Great Limber.

When 2006 arrived, we decided to go for week 1 instead of the usual week 3. This presented a new challenge as it meant transforming Butlins Holiday Camp into Spring Harvest – great fun but a lot of hard work. I remember standing in the back of a van with my fellow stewards delivering hundreds (sorry thousands) of chairs around the Butlins site. Then it was time to clean them, and we were lucky enough to have a beautiful day for the job.

It is a very worthwhile job to be a steward at Spring Harvest – to serve God in all the tasks we are given and to serve the guests. I thoroughly recommend being a steward and having the chance to work as part of a wonderful team.

There is also a sense of power in wearing a bright yellow tabard, and the pleasure of seeing your minister cycle a bike round Butlins!

Watson Beattie

(If you are interested in looking at silly photos go to the Skeggystewards website, click pictures, and you may see people you recognise!)

Pennies from Heaven...

... or cash from the covers?

It was a normal day in Starter Packs and we were busy sorting through the donations brought to us in Burleigh Street. We were almost at the end of clearing a huge mountain of bedding when Bill, one of the volunteers, asked me what he could do next. I spotted two upright boxes, filled with bedding, and asked Bill to sort the contents into single and double bedding. Bill is tall and his long arms easily raised the double sheets off the table to fold neatly. He finished the first box and told me he just had time to get through the second.

I noticed something fall to the floor behind him. Eddie, a volunteer, and I said, "What's that?" and Eddie picked up an envelope. He passed it to me and we were amazed to see the old envelope was stuffed with £20 and £10 notes.

A support worker had just passed by. I asked her if she'd dropped anything – she said, "no". I waved the envelope at her and asked if it belonged to her and again she said no.

I was trembling as I counted the money – £760. One of our volunteers examined the notes and realised they were several years old. Perhaps someone had kept the cash inside a duvet cover in a linen cupboard maybe to use for emergencies. It may have belonged to an elderly

person who couldn't always get to a bank and whoever had cleared the house had done so in a hurry. We looked back in the diary to see who'd donated goods the previous week. We contacted all those whose names were there but nobody remembered donating those distinctive boxes. As we get anonymous donations, we could not trace the goods any further.

I took the envelope to Helen Street Police Station, as we could not be certain the cash was a donation meant for us. It took a while to explain the situation but it did mean that if anyone contacted us regarding the cash we would send them to the police. The cash was kept in Lost Property, at Pitt Street, for the required two months, but nobody claimed it. I collected the £760 and went straight to the bank. We will never know if the person who brought us that bedding was aware of the riches it contained or whether it was an anonymous donation intended to help the less fortunate.

It has since been used to buy washing up liquid, multi surface cleaner, dusters, cleaning cloths, tin openers, paring knives, potato peelers, shampoo, toiletries, toilet rolls and light bulbs which we put into every pack to help those going into a new tenancy.

We at Starter Packs believe God will provide and He does, over and over.

Denise Lowson

You in your small corner...

Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.
(Matthew 25: 35)

Occasionally, as the deadline for another issue of *Maxwell Matters* approaches, Esther or I will suggest to a member of the congregation that they might have an article within them, just waiting to be written down. A recent response to such a request suggested that there may well be an article hidden within, but that some help may be needed to locate it. In other words, the person in question said; yes, and what would you like me to write about?

I thought about this, and did suggest something, but the said article-writer-to-be was tied up with work commitments and the article never came to be written.

But let's not waste a good topic. It arose from Graham's sermon of that day, Being prepared to give an account of the reason for the hope within us (1 Peter 3: 15). I wondered, not for the first time, if Christian hope implies some kind of confidence that the world is becoming a better place; if 2,000 years of Christianity is having an effect; if, in some sense, the Kingdom of Heaven is being realised in our lives and in history; if the people of the world are becoming more and more the People of God. In the 1970's,

submerged in a kind of liberation theology of the time, I very much did believe that. Since then, I have found that many devout Christians do not share any belief, or hope, at all like this. Sometimes, in the run-up to a new issue of the magazine, we receive forwarded emails on popular concerns, often religious in nature. We do not always publish these, because it becomes apparent that most people have already seen them, often several times. One which we received recently drew a number of comparisons between life in our world today, and that of 40–50 years ago. It made depressing reading, and if any kind of trend is indicated by it, it makes one fear for the future and what the world will be like for our children.

However, even if it were to be shown that the world is a more evil, dangerous and fearful place now than half a century ago, over a longer period – 2,000 years – this might be shown to be a dip in an overall rising trend. I doubt if the picture can ever be proven one way or another. History is subjective, and it changes so much depending on who's telling it.

So one day, over breakfast, we three had a conversation about this – as one does! Esther had recently returned from 2 weeks in Romania with Heart to Heart. Perhaps her answer was not so much

shaped, as given added relevance, by her experience with the children, teenagers and the society of Romania. She said that the difference between Old Testament times and the Christian era was that the covenant made between God and the Jews was made between God and a nation, but that with the coming of Jesus, a new covenant was made – one between God and individuals. Arguments about the harm which religion has caused, (sectarianism, the Crusades etc) look at the wrong end of Christian witness. When an individual commits himself to God, his mission is to have an effect on the people and areas encountered in his life. The effects of Christians just being Christians in their 'small corners' may not catch the headlines, but that is where real change can be seen. To be 'a little leaven' may seem quiet, but we only have to look at the mess of Romania, or any country from the Soviet bloc, to see the effects of a totalitarian system where change was imposed from above. Seeing the work of the staff of Heart to Heart, who care for and give hope to the smallest, weakest, most vulnerable in society, confirmed that Christians can, and do, have a positive effect on society. Instead of attempting to impose beliefs, or a way of life, on others, these Christians are living their faith, and in so doing, they radiate God's Love and Being, and draw others to Him. And so it

goes on – spreading like the rays of the sun, with the source of light and life glowing in the centre.

Then, I came across the end of George Eliot's book, *Middlemarch*. I would like to say I had read it, but, no, I watched a 6-hour BBC production on DVD, and, by chance, watched the final episode on the same day as the above conversation. I was more than struck by the aptness of the final words of the novel, as Eliot describes how the heroine spent the remainder of her life. She (Dorothea) had always been reluctantly rich, and wanted only to spend her wealth and energy in improving the lot of the many needy people around her. In the closing sentence of the book, with that one word 'growing', the writer shows her own hope for the world, and describes in beautiful language the same sentiments as I had heard at our breakfast table that very day.

... the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.

Archie McLellan

Think on

A forum for you to express your views on a subject chosen by our minister, David Cameron. For this issue we focussed on the following:

“The Lord works in
mysterious ways
His wonders to perform.”

The celebration of Pentecost is one of the highlights in the Christian year and for each of us in our journey of faith, experiencing the impact of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, upon our lives, is very often a life changing moment.

No two people will necessarily experience the same thing. So why not write in and share something of your life changing moments in the journey of faith – you never know it may, in some mysterious way, be used by God to work one of His wonders in someone else who reads it!

Pentecost

I remember when I was younger, considering myself a Christian, accepting that God was the Creator in Heaven, and that Jesus, God’s son and our Saviour, had been born as a baby who grew up to teach people about God, and who then died on the cross for the sin of the World and returned to Heaven to be with God. Somewhere in a vague

sense there was also this Holy Ghost (when he was mentioned at all), who had no relevance to me or my struggle in this world to be good and try to get to Heaven. I was “down here” on my own while God and Jesus were “up there”. One morning, very early, before I went to work, I felt compelled in a way which was like being physically pushed, to pray about a particular person. This led to a powerful, warm feeling of being surrounded by God’s love in a way I had never experienced before, but which I just knew was the work of the Holy Spirit – there was nothing ghostly about it. Everything looked different – even the moss on the ground that morning was brighter green and I seemed to see the amazing details more clearly. I felt as if I was smiling all day.

That evening I found out by phone that the person I had been praying about had fallen and hurt her back and was unable to care for a dependent relative. This seemed to confirm that the prayer had been God directed.

From then on, I knew I was not struggling on my own, but had the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit who had so unexpectedly become real as the third part of the Trinity missing in my life until

then. There no longer seemed an insurmountable gap between this Earthly life and Heaven. Everything I heard in church now seemed to make so much more sense and was really alive.

From then on I wanted to read and learn more from the Bible and from other books and people, but basically my faith is still a “gut feeling” rather than an intellectual one. I wanted to do all sorts of things I had not really felt drawn to before, and things did happen, always as a result of prayer. Nothing has been the same since that experience, for which I am truly thankful.

Heather Russell

Better Yet

Those were the days
 When our minds and hearts were young,
 The joyous ways
 Of our faith so newly sprung;
 Clear then the sound
 Of our glad and leaping song,
 The celebration round
 Of inward seeking Him,
 And together greeting Him
 With love, so early on.

These are the days
 Of a rich and fruitful time,
 By grace, the ways
 Of our faith, to brimming prime;
 Replete the sound
 Of our full and ripened song
 The celebration round
 Of inward meeting him
 And together greeting him
 In love, as ever on.

O for that Day
 Of our calling, soon and high,
 The upward Way
 Through a shining crystal sky;
 Joining the round
 Of a vast unending song,
 The celebration sound
 Of endless praising Him,
 Our Saviour, raising Him
 In love, for ever on.

George Ewen

May you know the peace, power and presence of the Holy Spirit this Pentecost.

David Cameron

Book review

Suite Française by Irène Némirovsky (Chatto & Windus, London, 2006)

Irène Némirovsky was an established novelist of Russian descent living in Paris when war broke out in 1939. She was a Jewess and was arrested on 13 July 1942. She died in Auschwitz on 17 August 1942, leaving two young daughters who were hidden from the police and survived the war. One of these young girls put the manuscript of a novel written by her mother into a suitcase and preserved it. Sixty-four years after the author's death, the book was published in the original French and translated into English by Sandra Smith, entitled *Suite Française*. Part 1 is entitled *Storm* and describes the state of France after the fall of France in 1940. Part 2 is entitled *Dolce* and describes life in a small French community under German occupation.

This work of fiction based on fact has been praised by the critics eg David Coward in the *Times Literary Supplement* as "A book of exceptional literary quality ... it has the kind of intimacy found in the *Diary of Anne Frank*."

These events occurred many years ago, but it is salutary to be reminded of man's inhumanity to man not so very long ago.

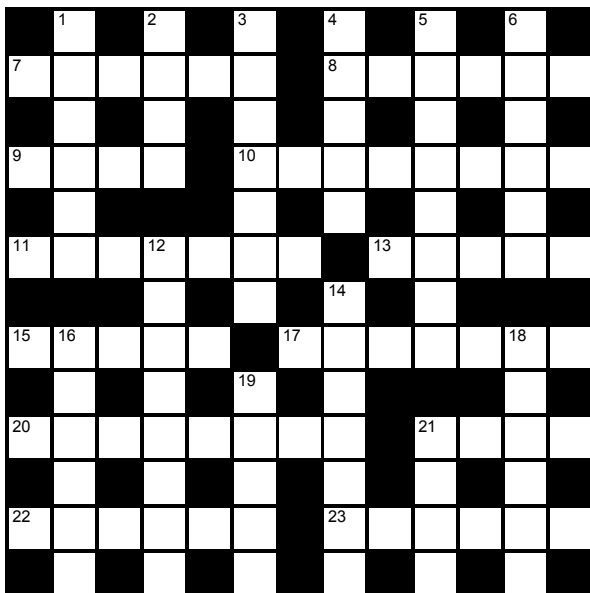
Dan McNicol

Booth's Secret of Power

When J. Wilbur Chapman was in London, he had an opportunity to meet General Booth, who was then over 80 years old. Dr Chapman listened reverently as the old general spoke of the trials and conflicts and victories he had experienced. The American evangelist then asked the general if he would disclose his secret for success. "He hesitated a second," Dr Chapman said, "and I saw the tears come into his eyes and trickle down his cheeks, and then he said, 'I will tell you the secret. God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities; but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ could do with the poor of London, I made up my mind that He would have all of William Booth. And if there is anything of power in the Salvation Army today, it is because God has all the adoration of my hear, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life.

Dr Chapman's said he went away from that meeting with General Booth knowing "that the greatness of a man's power is the measure of his surrender."

Fair Trade Chocolate Crossword



Now with Helpline!

Email us if you're stuck and we'll get you going again.

We will give a bar of *Fair Trade* chocolate to the person of your choosing when you win our crossword competition.

Three clues relate to members of the team who went to Romania.

First all correct entry out of the hat on Monday 26 June is the winner.

Across

- 7 Brimming tureen. (6)
 8 Time or tide doesn't wait here! (6)
 9 Sounds like a couple of fruit. (4)
 10 Spoiled in nappies. (8)
 11 Devoured 8ac in Scotland to make an assembly. (7)
 13 Circle herd and a swarm is released. (5)
 15 Cop, he is around for a special time. (5)
 17 Sick of drama, yet skittish! (7)
 20 The long arm of the Church! (8)
 21 Was Polly Flinders a coy girl? (4)
 22 Fought, kept off and held the loot. (6)
 23 Bring in goods of great significance. (6)

Down

- 1 Jacket dance? (6)
 2 Away along, a long distance away. (4)
 3 Girl makes flock absorb little lieutenant. (7)
 4 ... goes west with mail. (5)
 5 Creation: an early log or just a story? (8)
 6 Direction needed to straighten waste pipe. (6)
 12 Lice root in coir. (8)
 14 Heavy weather call at Jerusalem entry. (3,4)
 16 Did 'e spurn such 'umble fruit? (6)
 18 Wedding guides. (6)
 19... has wee pale dad. (5)
 21 Within physical psychological range. (4)

Details

Maxwell Matters is on holiday now. And many of you will have been on holiday by the time the word goes out that we need some contributions for Issue 12. So we would like to make a plea now. If you think of something, or if something happens that you would like to tell about, then give a nod towards the magazine in your mind, right there and then. The idea might return and grow, or it might fade away. But if there's no seed, there will be no plant, and who knows what that flitting thought might grow to become!

Thanks to all our contributors: Bryson & May Arthur, Watson Beattie, Alister Bull, Elspeth and Jim Burgess, George Ewen, Graeme Lipsett, Denise Lowson, Archie McLellan, Esther McLellan, Dan McNicol, David Merriman, Graham Nash, Sam Nugent, Andrew Robertson, Heather Russell, Doug Scott, Lyn Steven, May Taggart.

Thanks to Graeme Lipsett, Heather Malloy, and the production team.

Last word

So many

signs

of

the

mysterious

workings

of

the

Holy Spirit