

Buccleuch & Greyfriars

FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Newsletter

CONTENTS

Ministers' Updates

Dates For your Diary

Congregational News

Missionary News

Finances

Rotas

Activities



March 2005

MINISTER'S UPDATE

As mentioned later in this newsletter, at the AGM on Wednesday 30th March there will be discussion of a feasibility study the Deacons' Court will present concerning the renovation of the building. A proposal will be put to the congregational meeting including:

1. The replacement of the heating system with a system that will comply with health and safety regulations and efficiency standards,
2. The replacement of the pews with much more comfortable and aesthetically pleasing, high quality, upholstered wooden chairs,
3. The carpeting of the whole floor with industrial quality carpet,
4. The redecoration of the church.

Some of these items, such as the heating and the redecoration, are essential, but equally, if the pews are not replaced, considerable resources will need to be expended to make them more presentable and comfortable.

In the providence of God, Buccleuch were gifted the considerable sum of £50,000 in

the past year. The cost of the proposed renovations (already estimated) should be well within that figure (detailed figures will be available nearer the time), and it is proposed that the cost of the renovations be taken from that donation.

It is entirely understandable that there may be some questions and misgivings in the congregation about these proposals. After all, they will involve some considerable upheaval, and not inconsiderable cost, in addition to changing the look and feel of the interior of the church. That being so, what is the justification for the changes?

First, no major work has been carried out on the church since the extensive repairs to the stonework and spire and the creation of the hall a quarter of a century ago. A building the age of Buccleuch needs constant attention and the Deacons' court have sought to ensure that the building has been kept wind and watertight over these years. However, it has been apparent to most of us that over recent years the building has begun to look shabby. We have already begun to address this by repairs

to the wall, railings and gates at the entrance, and by the recent tarmacking of the front and side areas. Various external repairs will continue to be carried out over the next few months. However, it is apparent, when one looks at the interior of the building with fresh eyes, that it looks dingy, dirty and shabby and is in need of some TLC (tender loving care)!

Second, previous generations have given us an amazing resource in what is a very elegant and historic building and it is our duty to look after it, and ensure that it is attractive and useful for this age. Something that has been brought home to me in recent times has been the fact that in this postmodern age, having an old gothic building is by no means a disadvantage (it might even be attractive to Goths!) Certainly, a building that resonates with a long spiritual history, is a distinct attraction – not only for local postmoderns but also for international students.

However, thirdly, that does not mean that we can be content with having a building that looks uncared for and is not welcoming to people (and I

don't refer here to the welcome of the people, but the welcome of the building!) When we invite friends and acquaintances into our homes, we want our homes to look attractive, to be comfortable and to express something of our own personalities. Why should we do any less for a building that is dedicated to the welcoming of sinners into the kingdom of God? Something about dwelling in cedar-panelled houses and neglecting the house of God comes to mind!

Fourthly, as far as the heating is concerned, it is obvious that the present system is inadequate, dangerous and inefficient, and has reached the end of its useful life.

Obviously, we will all have to consider these proposals carefully over the next few weeks. For myself personally, I think the time has come to take a decisive step in making the interior of the building comfortable and attractive, particularly for visitors and the infirm.

Alex MacDonald

ASSISTANT MINISTER'S UPDATE

"Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I

am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:9 – 10)

These words originally spoken by God to the Apostle Paul were given as words of encouragement on Friday night when Ruairidh MacRae was inducted as minister of the Paisley Free Church. Let us remember Ruairidh and Audra as they begin a new chapter in their lives and in the life of the Paisley Church and pray for the community in Paisley. More than most large towns, Paisley has a growing culture of drugs, violence and crime. Only the gospel can truly break these destructive cycles of despair. Please pray for my friend Kevin who lives in Paisley and is trying to redirect his life. Kevin is a young man with great potential but he needs God's help to make the right decisions and to choose the right path in life.

These words in Acts remind us here in Edinburgh that we do not need to be afraid and that God wants us to keep on speaking, to keep on serving and to keep on praying. We are never alone because God is with us and because God has many

people in this city.

Not only are there many Christians in this city, there are many who are seeking Jesus. Are we willing to speak, willing to share, willing to welcome? All of these questions challenge us to act and respond to God and his word. As we have just celebrated the Lord's supper, let us pray that many who as yet are uncommitted and unconverted would find their faith and hope resting in Jesus. Pray that friendships made through BG's, campaigners, International meals, Bethany Outreach, the Big Questions and many other ministries would grow and deepen. Please pray for the people that I visit regularly in prison and the men who attend the church services that they would hear and respond to the message of Jesus. Pray for Donnie now in Polmont and Jason who has recently been released.

These things are beyond our ability to achieve or even attempt but God is able to work in us and to use us in his service. We need to pray and seek the Lord's blessing. Remember the words of Jesus, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find;

knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.” (Matthew 7:7 – 8) In this coming month, may we each be resolved to ask, seek and knock with faith that God will answer our prayers and direct our lives.

Yours faithfully,
Bob Akroyd

Bereavement

The congregation were greatly saddened to hear of the deaths of two babies of families connected with the congregation. First, John and Catherine (née Mackay, Willie and Ena daughter and Eric's sister) lost their baby at 7 months into the pregnancy. Then Findlay and Jen Macleod lost their baby Emily Louise just after birth. Emily's funeral was held in Buccleuch on Wednesday 16th February.

Our hearts go out to both these couples in their sad loss, but we are thankful to God that he is upholding them. Please continue to pray for them.

Alex MacDonald

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Congregational AGM

The Annual meeting of the congregation is due to take place on Wednesday 30th March at 7.30 pm. Not only will there be the usual reports (including the financial report), but there will also be discussion of a feasibility study the Deacons' Court is engaged in at present into a proposed renovation of the Church building (for more details see minister's update).

Please make every effort to attend this meeting so that the Deacons' Court may be fully informed of the views of the congregation.

Alex MacDonald

Student Lunch

Young people (and not so young people) mark your calendars: Friday afternoons 1pm – Free food at Buccleuch! Please come along and bring your friends!

Prayer Breakfasts

We continue to meet weekly at 9am on Saturday mornings for prayer, food and fellowship. Thanks to all who have made these breakfasts possible and

thanks to all who attend. If you haven't been able to come, please stop by one Saturday morning to enjoy this special time of fellowship and prayer together.

Home Bible Study

The next home bible study will be on Wednesday 9th March. A study sheet with details about the venues and the topic will be available in the hall. If you haven't come along to a home bible study yet, please consider coming - it is a great way to meet people and to get to know the Bible better.

Youth Fellowship

6 Mar *Liberty of conscience and legalism*

13 Mar *Living in the Spirit*

20 Mar *Any Questions?*

(See Alasdair Black for details)

All Age Sunday School

Bible Overview: New Testament

A special six week course designed to provide an overview of the whole of the New Testament is planned for Sunday Mornings. Everybody is warmly invited to attend. The course will be held at 9:45am. It will end at 10:30am in time for coffee before the morning service.

The weekly topics are:

6th March *Acts of the Apostles*

15th May *The Letters: Romans to Philemon*

22nd May *The Letters: Hebrews to 3 John*

29th May *Revelation*

The Big W

The next meeting of the Big W takes place on Friday 4th March at 7:30pm in the church hall. The title this month is 'Moving on – career choices. The speaker will be Rev. Bill Denholm, Associate Pastor of Charlotte Baptist Chapel. He will speak from a Biblical point of view and from his own experience.

A questionnaire will be distributed to those who have been attending to evaluate the usefulness of the Big W meetings.

Joan Macdonald

Congregational Weekend Away

The Weekend Away will take place from Friday 29th April to Sunday 1st May 2005.

We will be returning to Balvonie Conference Centre, Skelmorlie. www.balvonie.com
Expected cost:

Adults	£80
Students	£35

Children (11-16) £18
(5 - 10) £10

The cost includes all meals (breakfast, morning coffee, lunch, afternoon coffee, evening meal) from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. All rooms are either en-suite or have private facilities. Speak to Donald Mackay, Roddy MacLeod or Norma MacLean for further information.

Norma Maclean

Guest Service

The next in our series of guest services will be on Sunday, March 27th at 6.30pm when Bob Akroyd will preach on the Easter Story, "Christ is Risen!" Please take this opportunity to invite your friends to church to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ and pray that God would use this occasion to challenge and convert those who attend.

Late Night Bible Studies

The late night Bible Studies will continue to meet in the hall at 9:30pm. The programme for the term is as follows:

3 Mar Matthew 17
The Transfiguration
10 Mar Matthew 18

More Parables of the kingdom

The Big Questions **(Thursday 6.30pm – 8.30pm)**

"The Big Questions" deals with some of the key questions that come up in discussion of the Christian Faith. These meetings are suitable for those who are interested in finding out more about what's involved in Christian faith and for Christians who want to gain a better understanding of their faith. We meet on Thursday evenings 6.30–8.30pm, and the evening follows the usual pattern of a meal followed by a talk and discussion. The remaining questions are:

3 Mar Week 5
What about other religions?
10 Mar Week 6
What about suffering?
17 Mar Week 7
What about hell?

Christianity Explored Course

There's a 'Christianity Explored' course in Buccleuch church hall every Wednesday afternoon at 1.30pm. This is especially for **International students** who'd like to find out more about

Christianity. Feel free to go along and bring your friends!

Meetings of Kirk Session and Deacons' Court

Kirk Session: (7.30pm, Manse)

Tuesday 22nd March

Deacons' Court: (8pm, Manse)

Monday 14th March

Women's Fellowship

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the clothes swap evening, particularly Mary Campbell and Sarah Lytle who displayed our cast-offs to amazing effect! The evening raised £375 for the Tsunami Appeal. The next meeting will be on Friday 11th March in Mairi Forsyth's home (5 Gillespie Cres.) when Doug MacDonald will speak about his work with the homeless in Edinburgh. One or two of the ladies who help with the care van will also share their experiences. Hopefully they will inspire others to give it a go too. Feel free to bring a friend.

Mairi Forsyth

International Meal

The next meal for international students and friends from the congregation will take place on Friday 18th March at 7.00pm at

the home of Donald and Joan MacDonald (6 Craiglockhart Grove). Please feel free to come along and enjoy meeting people from all over the globe! As usual, those needing transport should meet in front of the church at 6.30pm.

If you would like more information or are interested in helping with this, please speak to Catriona Macdonald.

Catriona Macdonald

Night Shelter (Extra Night)

Monday, 21st March will be an extra night in Buccleuch for the Night Shelter.

Sunday School Teachers' Training Day

The Free Church Youth Committee in association with the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow are putting on a training Day for Sunday School Teachers at the Royal Lodge Hotel, Bridge of Allan, on Saturday 5th March 2005, 10.00am – 4.00pm. The main speakers are Rev Alex MacDonald, Buccleuch Free Church and Mrs Irene Howat, Editor of The Instructor. There will be Workshops, Seminars and Sunday School Resources. The Cost of £10 includes Lunch

and Teas/Coffees. More details and booking form may be found in the January Monthly Record.

Vision for 2010

What will the Free Church of Scotland be doing as a church in 2010?

Yes, it's in God's hands, but it is our duty to plan for the future and seize opportunities. The General Assembly of 2004 authorised the Stewardship and Policy Committee to hold consultations with ministers, office-bearers and the membership. In January three conferences were held for ministers and presbytery elders and the next round of conferences is for the membership in general and any office-bearers unable to attend the January events. The conferences will be interactive and participative.

These conferences are on Saturdays in April and will last from 10am to 2pm. The Edinburgh Conference is planned for 16th April in St Columba's Church Hall. Put this date in your diary now!

Fergus MacDonald

'The Gospel according to Hollywood' is an evening of

foot-stomping Gospel sounds from the movies performed by Origin Scotland. It takes place on Saturday 12th March at 7.30pm in the Usher Hall and tickets are priced £5-00 (£4-50 concessions).

Friends International

If you are interested in finding out more about ministering to international students, here's advance notice of two forthcoming events run by Friends International.

This year's Friends International Scottish conference on 29-30 April focuses on 'Crossing cultures - crossing mindsets' with Dick Dowsett as the key speaker. Seminar topics include 'Islam' 'How to lead evangelistic Bible studies' and 'Asian mindset'. The full cost is £57 or £25 for Saturday only (with reduced prices for students).

There will also be a gathering of those involved in (or wanting to become involved in!) international student ministry in Edinburgh. This forum takes place on Thursday 12th May at 7.30pm at Bellevue Chapel (Rodney Street) and the discussion will focus on evangelism.

For further details on both these events, please see the information on the noticeboard or speak to Catriona Macdonald.

Catriona Macdonald

Advanced Notice: Working To Live

Is work worth getting up for? Is it inspiring, motivating and fulfilling? Or are you stressed, weary or just plain bored? Join the Working to Live team from Care for the Family for a seminar at Carrubers Christian Centre on 25th May, 7:30-10:00pm to get fresh insights and practical ideas, challenging you to work smarter not longer and make your life count.

To book tickets, which are £6 each (special offer buy three get one free) call 01368 864070 or visit the Care web site at www.careforthefamily.org.uk

Elizabeth Mackenzie

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Help

At the end of March our nine-month-old niece will be coming to visit. We are in need of the following for her two week visit: a high chair, a crib, a stroller and a baby bath tub.

Does anyone have any of these items that they could loan us for a short time? If so, please contact us at 0131 662 4891. Thank you.

Stephen and Lisa Myers

Congratulations

Congratulations to Steven and Jocelyn Hammer on the birth of their son, Ben on the 28th January 2005 weighing in at 7lbs 11.5oz.

Let us remember Steven and Jocelyn and all parents with young children in the congregation in our prayers.

Cookery Book

The WFM committee has decided to produce a second cookery book to raise money for the Disaster and Relief Fund and so once more are asking for your favourite recipes. Dishes are required for all the usual categories as well as international cooking, special diets and budget meals. If you have a dish in the first cook book please do not resubmit it as it is hoped that the second edition will be completely different. Similarly please do not submit any recipes that have been lifted straight from any other cookery book as this

infringes copyright and could get the Committee into trouble! Apart from those provisos anything goes - get cooking! Your recipes are wanted by the end of March. For further information or to submit any recipes please see Sarah Lytle.

Sarah Lytle

Scripture Union

We are looking for volunteers to help run weekly lunchtime Scripture Union Groups in various Primary and Secondary Schools in Edinburgh City Centre. Do you have a passion to reach children with the gospel and have some free time during the week? Then please get in touch with Susan Gemmell – Schools Worker – susan.gemmell@scriptureunion.org.uk

Tsunami Disaster

Thank you to everyone who has contributed the Tsunami appeal. To date (including the money recently raised by the women's fellowship) a total of £2,600 has been raised. This money will be channelled to Tear Fund to aid in the on-going emergency relief in South Asia. Please continue to pray for all connected to this tragedy and

those who are bringing help.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Nobody is too old to have a birthday mention in the newsletter! Just speak to Moira (she's over 40!). This month it is Happy Birthday to *Alasdair Macleod* who has a birthday on 5th March.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Richard and Barbara are Free Church Members serving as Missionaries in The Comores. (First under 30 year old who tells the Editor where the Comores are gets a sweetie) They have sent us the following letter.

Dear Praying Friends

After some discussion with village leaders, Richard is now teaching English once a week to final year students from the lycée. They are rather discouraged because the teachers are again on strike, most of them being about 5 months behind on salary. Some older people have also expressed an interest in English classes. When they go trading to Zanzibar or Dubai, or if they go on pilgrimage to Mecca, English is very useful. Please pray that the friendships

developed through English would be spiritually fruitful.

We heard a true story recently that illustrates the value of learning English. A few years ago an older man from Mohéli (Mwali is the local pronunciation) went on pilgrimage to Mecca. He must have got lost in the crowds and confused, and all he was able to communicate was that he came from Mwali. Nobody had heard of Mohéli so he was put on a plane for Mali, West Africa, about 4,000 miles from here. Some years later after a chance meeting with someone who knew some Shimwali, he was put on a plane. And a man who been given up as dead arrived home.

Our home help, Kibibi, left for Mecca in early January. She got as far as Grande Comore and waited for 12 days, not leaving the airport there as she was told the plane was just coming. She and others came home tearful and exhausted. The money seems to have disappeared. Over 300 Comorian pilgrims, we are told, were left stranded. One from our village was hospitalised, suffering from dehydration etc; facilities at the airport are not

great.

These stories illustrate the frustration and chaos experienced by people here. Please continue to pray that many would find true hope and eternal life through Jesus Christ. And please pray for us and our colleagues that we would be able to communicate the gospel effectively.

In mid-February we go to Kenya for 10 days for a conference with others who work amongst Muslim peoples. Barbara also hopes to see a doctor about the continuing ear problems she is experiencing. Planes in and out of these islands are often unreliable. We trust our travel will be smoother than that of the pilgrims.

Thank you for your prayers.

With our love in Christ

Richard & Barbara

Southern Missions Support Group

Dear All

This is to keep you informed about this year's activities of the southern missions support group. Last year we were able to send £5000 to the Dumisani library. This year the international missions board asked if we would focus on Peru, so we chose Colegio San

Andres. We hope to raise funds for the school to purchase a colour laser printer, a multi-media projector and to provide some financial help for the pupils and teachers who will be coming again this year to Scotland.

The first activity will be in Edinburgh, a soup and sandwich lunch in the St Columba's hall (thanks, Derek!) on Saturday 12th March, probably at 1.00p.m. Since we operate on regional bases, this is intended for the three Edinburgh churches, and the organiser is Christine Campbell.

We've invited a former pupil of the school to join us with his wife, and to be interviewed about his time in San Andres and his views on the school's Christian ministry. He is Dr Toshio Baldeon, currently living in Surrey and working in waste water management. (He's had some work visits to Scotland, and has managed to get to a few Free Church congregations.)

Toshio was appointed head prefect in 1991, but three weeks later his family moved to Belfast for 5 years, where his father worked as a Methodist minister. His mother has

worked on several occasions as an English teacher in San Andres primary. The parents now live in London, working with the Methodist church. Work is progressing at the Lima end on appropriate promotional material, and we hope to have that available at the meeting.

Thanks to all

John MacPherson

FINANCES

General fund

Income of £10,523 is £300 less than January last year.

Expenditure of £1,945 is £960 more than January last year.

Church funds

Remittances of £4,000 are the same as last year.

The balance on the general fund at 31 January is a deficit of £197.

Fabric fund

No expenditure in January.

Millennium fund (for the expenses of the Assistant Minister)

No comments.

Other special funds

No comments

Donald Forsyth

Statement of financial activities	General Fund	Fabric Fund	Special Millennium	Funds Other	Total
Gross ordinary income	£10,523		£1,432	£2,360	£14,315
Transfer to fabric fund	-£1,052	£1,052			£0
Net ordinary income	£9,471	£1,052	£1,432	£2,360	£14,315
Expenses	-£1,945	£0	-£1,432	£0	-£3,377
Surplus before EDO and central funds	£7,526	£1,052	£0	£2,360	£10,938
EDO	£0				£0
Church funds	-£4,000				-£4,000
Surplus for the year to date	£3,526	£1,052	£0	£2,360	£6,938
Opening balance - at start of year	-£3,723	£29,197	£0	£50,978	£76,452
Closing balance	-£197	£30,249	£0	£53,338	£83,390

Balance sheet	General Fund	Fabric Fund	Millennium Fund	Other Funds	Total
<i>Fixed assets</i>					
Guardwell Crescent	£146,775				£146,775
Loan from Bank of Scotland	-£98,707				-£98,707
Loan from Bob & Heather Akroyd	-£45,703				-£45,703
Fixed assets at cost less debt	£2,365	£0	£0	£0	£2,365
<i>Other items</i>					
Advance to Alex for expenses	-£508				-£508
Advance to Bob for expenses	-£38				-£38
Amounts owed to the Congregation	£1,610				£1,610
Cash	-£3,304	£30,249	£0	£53,338	£80,283
Bills to be paid	-£322				-£322
Closing balance	-£197	£30,249	£0	£53,338	£83,390

Other special funds comprise

Special donation	£50,000
Tsunami appeal	£2,353
Church improvements	£395
Willie Raeburn - benevolent fund	£253
Sunday school	£237
Mother & Toddler	£100
	£53,338

ROTAS**Crèche**

6 March	Catriona Lopez	Heather Akroyd
13 March	Evelyn MacDonald	Anne Macrae
20 March	Mairi Forsyth	Norma MacLean
27 March		

Amplifier

6 March	Douglas MacDonald
13 March	Graham Hardy
20 March	Ken MacKenzie
27 March	Rob MacDonald

Cleaning

5 th March	Dolina Macdonald	Calum/Norma Maclean
12 th March	Karen Murray	Rob MacDonald
19 th March	Kenny Macleod	Hugh Griffins
26 th March	Heather Akroyd	Alison MacDonald

Door Duty

6 th March	John MacRae Neil MacRae	Iain Gill
13 th March	Roddy Macleod Ken MacKenzie	Andy Cumming Donald Mackay
20 th March	Eric Mackay Stephen Hammer	Alasdair Black Willie Lytle
27 th March	Neil Campbell Dolina Macdonald	Alison MacDonald Nick Middlemiss

ACTIVITIES (in church building unless marked by *)

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>11:00am</u>	<u>6:30pm</u>
6 th March	Bob Akroyd	Bob Akroyd
13 th March	Alex MacDonald	Alex MacDonald
20 th March	Alex MacDonald	Alex MacDonald
27 th March	Bob Akroyd	Bob Akroyd (Guest Service)

Creche and Sunday School during morning service.

*Youth Fellowship after the evening service – see Alasdair Black

Monday

BG's Youth Club	7-8pm – contact Alison MacDonald (664 9038) or Kenny MacLeod (5551010)
*Bethany House Outreach	8-10pm – contact Bob Akroyd (664 6306)
Deacons' Court	8pm monthly – contact Andy Cumming (667 9291)

Tuesday

Informal English Class	2-3pm – contact Ena Mackay (447 5937)
Campaigners	6:30pm – contact Colin MacLeod

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting	7:30pm
*Home Bible Studies	7:30pm (2 nd Wednesday of the month)

Thursday

Christianity Explored	6:30pm – meal followed by discussion
Late Night Bible Study	9:30pm (with food) – contact Bob Akroyd (664 6306)
*Eight-a-side Football	9:30pm – contact William Lytle (477 1403)

Friday

Mothers and Toddlers	9:30-11:30am
Student Lunch	1pm (free food during term!)
Women's Fellowship	as announced

Saturday

Prayer Breakfast	9am
------------------	-----

CONTACTS

Minister	Alex MacDonald	(667 4651)	AlexJMacDonald@blueyonder.co.uk
Assistant Minister	Bob Akroyd	(664 6306)	bobandheather@talk21.com
Newsletter/sheet	Moira Mackay		Moira@theMackays.fsnet.co.uk

Buccleuch and Greyfriars web page www.buccleuchfreechurch.co.uk