

Buccleuch & Greyfriars

FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Newsletter

CONTENTS

Ministers' Updates

Dates for Your Diary

Congregational News

Wonderfully Made

**Buccleuch's Identity, Vision
and Mission**

Rotas

Activities



March 2007

Minister's Update

This month sees the Bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade. It was on the 25th March 1807 that the Royal Assent was given to the Abolition Act of Parliament.

Among the various celebrations of this significant anniversary is a new film, *Amazing Grace*—the title taken of course from the song of the same name. The release date for the film is Friday 23rd March. You can see trailers on the websites (see below). It looks as if it is going to be a great film, accurate and sympathetic.

The main character, of course, is William Wilberforce, who spearheaded the campaign for abolition in Parliament. He led a long campaign over 20 years for the abolition of the slave trade, and then spent the rest of his life campaigning for the abolition of slavery itself and the emancipation of the slaves, which was achieved just a few days before he died in 1833.

We might wonder today why people took so long to see the evils of the slave trade and slavery itself. It was quite simply because of vested interests. The slave trade

formed part of a triangular trade: the same ships brought manufactured goods from Britain to Africa, slaves from Africa to the Caribbean, and sugar and rum from the Caribbean to Britain. The movement for Fair Trade faces the same kind of vested interests today. Similarly, future generations may look back and wonder how ours could justify abortion. And indeed there is a flourishing worldwide slave trade today. Human trafficking is a huge international crime. It is estimated that there are at least three times the number of slaves in the world today (12 million) as in Wilberforce's day (4 million).

It took brave men to take on the Establishment of that day, and God raised up such men for the hour: not only Wilberforce, but also John Newton, the author of the song *Amazing Grace*, who had himself been a slave trader, and at one stage a slave, in his early life.

And it will take brave men and women to take on the Establishment and vested interests today, whether over abortion, fair trade, human trafficking or freedom of

religion (in connection with the Sexual Orientation Regulations – see item later in newsletter).

We need to ask God to raise up such people today—for today's issues—particularly in Parliament. And we need to play our own part. There is a wealth of information out there (see websites below) and easy ways by which we can contact our politicians. Above all we have the same resources of God's grace to draw on as Wilberforce and Newton.

Amazing Grace (How sweet the sound)

*That sav'd a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears reliev'd;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believ'd!*

*Thro' many dangers, toils and
snare,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe
thus far,
And grace will lead me home.*

Useful websites:

Amazing Grace film:

www.amazinggracethemovie.co.uk

www.amazinggracethemovie.com

Tearfund: www.tearfund.org

Stop the Traffik:

www.stopthetraffik.org

CARE: www.care.org.uk

Alex MacDonald

Assistant Minister's Update

Today has been a day of highs and lows. This afternoon Alex and I met with Lan, a friend who has been attending the Sunday services and the Thursday night discussion meeting. She was very excited and enthusiastic to tell us that she has become a Christian and is eager to tell others of her new-found faith in Jesus. As she prepares to return to her native China, she is eager to tell her friends and family about Jesus. She realised that she needed to make a decision and realised that now was the time – there was no reason to delay.

Tonight, I also learned about the death of Steve, a 24 year old who went to school with James Forsyth. Steve died at the weekend in an auto

accident; his life cut tragically short. Steve used to be in a band with James and Doug MacDonald. Life is short and sometimes it seems very short indeed.

In Romans 12:15, we are exhorted, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn." So we celebrate with Lan in her joy and we sympathise with Steve's family in his sudden and tragic death.

In 2 Corinthians 6:1 – 2, we are reminded, "As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favour I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation."

Yours faithfully
Bob Akroyd

Welcome

It is always a pleasure to see new people in the congregation whether they are students, new residents in Edinburgh or visitors passing through Edinburgh on holiday. We hope you feel welcome and that you enjoy your time with us at Buccleuch.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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 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, March 14th. We will continue our studies in the New Testament book of Ephesians using a Bible study book prepared by John Stott. The Hosts and Venues for the next Bible study are:

North West

Neil & Mary Campbell, 54 Strachan Road, EH4 3RG (343 6067)

East

Bob & Heather Akroyd, 275 Guardwell Crescent, EH17 7SL (664 6306)

South East

Fergus & Dolina Macdonald, 113 St Albans Road, EH9 2PQ (667 1546)

South

Donald & Mairi Forsyth, 24

Blantyre Terrace, EH10 5AE
(447 6908)

South West

Donald & Joan MacDonald, 6
Craiglockhart Grove EH14
(455 8777)

Buccleuch Church Hall

on the other Wednesday evenings and each Saturday morning at 9am we will have our prayer breakfast where all are welcome to share food fellowship and prayer.

Bob Akroyd

**The First Wednesday -
7.30pm Church Hall**

On the first Wednesday of each month, at the usual time of 7.30pm, we are encouraging the entire congregation to join together in prayer in the hall. If you can attend only one prayer meeting in the month, please make every effort to attend this meeting. If you don't usually attend the midweek meeting, please attend this meeting. The focus will be on prayer with a reading and a short Bible message. The meeting will finish promptly at 8.30pm. We as a session realise that there are legitimate pressures on many in the congregation. We do not wish to add to these burdens but rather to find a way to encourage regular and concerted prayer in the congregation.

Of course we will continue to have our regular Prayer Meeting and Bible studies and Home Bible Studies

Guest Service

The next in our series of guest services will be on Sunday, 18th March at 6.30pm when Alex MacDonald will preach. Please take this opportunity to invite your friends to church to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ and pray that God would use these occasions to convert those who attend.

**Congregational Meeting -
28th March**

If as a congregation and as a denomination we are to be able to continue to enjoy the important tax and other benefits of charitable status, new civil legislation governing charities requires us to comply with a variety of rules concerning the way in which we administer our resources. After a long dialogue with the newly appointed charities body, the church centrally, by means of a recent finding of a Commission of Assembly, has decided that

compliance with the new regime would be best secured by means of each individual congregation registering as a charity and by the Deacons' Court of each congregation adopting a written constitution.

The Commission of Assembly has approved such a constitution and instructed the Kirk Session of each congregation to appoint a congregational meeting for the purpose of adopting that constitution. The new legislation also requires that each body applying for charitable status elect or identify those in the organisation who perform the function of "charity trustees". Under our present arrangements and under the new constitution those who perform that function are and will continue to be the members of our Deacons' Court. Our Kirk Session has therefore decided to hold a Congregational Meeting in church hall on Wednesday 28th March 2007 at 7.30 pm for the purpose of the congregation adopting the new constitution and of confirming those who will be designated as charity trustees.

Separately, and somewhat

confusingly, we as a congregation also need to have "congregational trustees" or property holding trustees. This is not a new requirement. The last trustees appointed to this role were Donald Mackay, Iain Urquhart, Iain MacLeod (sometime of Currie!) and Donald Forsyth. As Donald Mackay and Iain MacLeod are no longer members in the congregation, we need to replace them with others who are members. It is therefore intended that two new property holding trustees should be elected by the congregation at the same meeting.

Despite the formality of this notice, the meeting will be an important and hopefully interesting evening. Congregational meetings are open to everyone so come along and participate!

Neil Campbell

Adult Sunday School

The Pursuit of Holiness: A Puritan Vision of the Christian Life

Everyone is warmly invited to attend a five week course on the life and teaching of John Owen (1616-1683). By studying this important Christian leader, our

goal is not to relive 'the good ol' days' of the seventeenth century but to apply the insights of the past to the needs of the present. There will be time for questions and discussion. The course will begin at 9:45am and end at 10:30am in time for tea and coffee. For more information, please contact John Tweeddale, who will lead the classes.

The remaining classes will meet on the following dates:

March 18 NO ADULT
SUNDAY SCHOOL

March 25 Faith vs. Sight:
Meditations on the Glory of
Christ

April 1 NO ADULT
SUNDAY SCHOOL

April 8 NO ADULT
SUNDAY SCHOOL

April 15 NO ADULT
SUNDAY SCHOOL

April 22 Four Hefty Tomes:
Thomas Chalmers's Favourite
Commentary

April 29 A Civil War Within:
Overcoming Sin and
Temptation

Meetings of Kirk Session and Deacons' Court

The Kirk Session Meetings will meet on the following Tuesdays at 7:30pm in the manse (except

at Communion, where they will be held in the vestry).

March 20th

April 17th

April 22nd Communion

May 25th-27th Communion

June 19th

July No meeting

August 25th/26th Communion

September 18th

October 7th Communion

October 23rd

November 23rd-25th Comm.

December No meeting

The Deacons' Court will meet on the following Tuesdays at 7:30pm in the hall.

May 15th

August 21st

December 4th

Deacons' Court

There was a meeting of the Deacons' Court on 13th February. Here are some snippets.

Treasurer's report – all will be revealed at the forthcoming ACM.....

Manse maintenance – volunteers still required to help lay loft insulation (see Steven's Green Tips later on).

Church maintenance – the big one here is the renovation of the kitchen. The kitchen is heavily

used. Work to start around 23/26 March, lasting for three weeks. Everything to be stripped out, by us, and kitchen made fit for purpose, by contractors, (cf the Home Office to understand this bit of jargon). Current “interesting” wall décor to be the first thing to get sorted. Once completed the kitchen is no longer going to be available for any other purpose than as a kitchen. However, you would feel perfectly safe in eating Nanna's Spaghetti or Mum's Ten Minutes biscuits made in it. (To understand this reference, just keep reading.)

Property trustees – See above under Congregational Meeting.

Health & Safety – See below under Children's Safety. (I'm getting good at this)

Decisions made between Meetings and recording thereof – Our esteemed clerk (pro tem – but if we say nice things about him he might do it for a bit longer) will kindly record any decisions made at the click of a mouse by email between court meetings for ratification at the meetings.

Lease agreements – All non-congregational usage of the building to be the subject of a

lease, irrespective of whether a rent is charged or not. See the very end of this Newsletter for instructions on how to request use of the facilities.

Care van – See bit on Care Van below.

International Students' Meal

International Meal: Free Food & Fellowship!

Attention all internationals: Our next International Meal is on Saturday 17th March at the home of Donald and Mairi Forsyth, 24 Blantyre Terrace. Meet at the church at 6:30pm. For more information, please contact John & Angela Tweeddale (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx) We look forward to seeing you!

Informal English Classes

The informal English classes meet in the church hall on Tuesdays from 2:00pm-3:30pm. Please speak to Ena Mackay for more details.

Christian Life and Work

Last month those who came to Christian Life and Work had a lively discussion all about how we should relate to our boss in the workplace. The example of David and his relationship with Saul gave us much food for

thought and we were challenged to consider ways that we can serve and honour our boss. A few people who hadn't been before came along, enjoyed it and plan to come to another session.

There is much in the media about the increasing levels of stress, whether it be at home or in the work environment. What are some of the pressures we experience in the work place? How should we handle them? What does the Bible say about coping with stress? Why not come along on FRIDAY 20th APRIL 7.30pm in the hall to get some answers to these questions

Joan Macdonald

The Klub

For S1-S3 7-9pm in Buccleuch Church Hall (unless otherwise stated)

23rd Mar: Cooking at St C's (7pm, St Columba's Church Hall)

20th April: Movie Night (meet at 7pm, Richard's house, 20 Gilmore Place)

4th May : Mayhem V

18th May: Oscar Night

1st June : Meadows Malarky (meet 7pm, Buccleuch Church)

15th June: BBQ (meet 7pm

at Esther's house, 2/2 New Orchardfield, off Leith Walk)
If you need more information phone Mairi Forsyth on 447 6908

The Weekend Away

The Weekend Away is on the 4th - 6th May 2007. It will be the same place as last year, The Acarsaid Hotel, Pitlochry. See Roddy MacLeod, Jeff Brannon or Norma MacLean for more info or any suggestions.

Put it in your diaries.

Men's night out

The men's night out will meet at the Forsyth's home (24 Blantyre Terrace) from 6.30pm on Friday 16th March for pizza followed by bowling. If you want to come along please email

Donald
(xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

- feel free to bring your friends.

Donald Forsyth

Care Van

Chris Somerville will be co-ordinating the Buccleuch Care Van Team. The next date for the Care Van will be Sunday 29th April.

Thank you to Douglas MacDonald who has organised this work in the past.

Advanced Notice
Camps Training Day

Saturday 12th May 2007 10am-3pm at Perth Free Church. Lunch will be provided

Mhairi Mackintosh
 Camps Administrator
 Free Church Youth Camps

Congregational Outing

The congregational outing will take place on Saturday 2nd June. Currently the venue has still to be decided, but put the date in your colander.

"Darwin and humanity: Should we rid the mind of God?" Tuesday March 13th, 6pm

A special debate between Alister McGrath, Professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University, author of "Dawkins' God" and "The Dawkins Delusion" and Peter Atkins, Professor of Chemistry at Oxford University, well-known atheist and supporter of Richard Dawkins. As seen on Channel 4's "The trouble with atheism". Tuesday March 13th, 6pm for 6.15 start at George Square Lecture Theatre, George Square, University of Edinburgh.

All are welcome.

Admission free. Open to general public. Arrive early. A joint event between the Philosophy Society and the Christian Union.

Contact Josh Hordern on joshuahordern@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

Following the footsteps of Wilberforce

Two hundred years ago, Christians in Britain and Ireland were at the forefront of attempts to end the horrors of slavery. Many Scottish Christians took a courageous stand. During 2007 we will be commemorating those who succeeded in passing legislation in Parliament halting this barbaric trade.

However, today we find that slavery is not over. People are still physically enslaved, trafficked and abused. Others endure slavery in a different form - engaging in a daily fight for survival.

Tearfund and the Evangelical Alliance join forces at 7.30 pm on Saturday March 24th in Perth at Letham St Mark's Church of Scotland to challenge and motivate people to think about the role we can play today, following the footsteps of Wilberforce. Colin

Sinclair will be the keynote speaker and it is hoped that Nelson Mkandawire from Malawi will speak about the legacy left in his country by Dr David Livingstone.

Pete Chirnside, National Manager of Tearfund in Scotland says “This is not just a time to commemorate the past; but an opportunity to shape the future.”

For further information please contact:

Pete Chirnside
National Manager Tearfund –
Scotland (0141 332 3621)

College Centenary Challenge

Over the 100 years of the College’s existence every congregation in the Free Church has benefited from the ministry of men who were trained there. In most cases that will have been through settled ministries for most of that time; for some of our smaller congregations it may more often have been in the form of pulpit supply. But either way our souls have been warned, awakened, challenged, comforted, strengthened and nourished by ministers who have been well-grounded in the faith by the training they had received. It is, I’m sure, all our

hopes that the College will long continue to provide our ministerial students with a solid academic foundation on which they can build their own ministries and in this way best secure the future of the Church.

To this end the Board encourages all our people, as congregations and individuals, to contribute generously to the Endowment Fund in this Centenary year.

If each Congregation were to donate £100 and each member and supporting adherent to give £10 during the course of the year the sum collected would be £10,000 from congregations and £90,000 from individuals, thus making a round total of £100,000. Wouldn’t that be a fitting way to help secure our College’s future as it enters the first year of another century of service to the Church (DV)? We would encourage any who are in a position to do so to repeat their donation annually hereafter.

Dr Allan MacPherson
Chairman, the College Board

Friends International Scottish Conference

This Conference is on Saturday

March 17th, 10am-4pm, Logie & St John's, Dundee. With keynote address by Wanyeki Mahiaini (Friends International, Director of the Philip Project). Seminar titles include: "Befriending international students", "Discipling international students", "Running a hospitality scheme", "Developing cafes for international students", "Keeping in contact with returnees", "Understanding international students from East Europe", "Understanding international students from Hindu background", "Understanding international students from China". A light lunch will be provided. Cost: £10 (£2 for students). Please let us know if you plan to come - 0131 443 7268

sxxxxxxxxx

nxxxxxxxxx

Edinburgh Creation Group

The Edinburgh Creation Group meet in the hall every Monday night at 9pm and have a variety of speakers about different aspects of creation, science and the Bible, evolution etc. Their website (www.edinburghcreationgroup.org) says:

‘Edinburgh Creation Group (ECG) is an active forum where scientifically minded people can meet to present and discuss evidence that supports the biblical account of creation. Anyone is welcome to join us whether you believe in a creator or not. We aim to meet once a week during University term time. The normal format will be a presentation followed by a time of discussion, accompanied with tea, coffee, hot chocolate and a slice of cake.’

The next meeting is on Monday 12th March at 9pm. It will be a film night ‘To End All Wars’

A true story about three philosophies under trial in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. Starring Robert Carlyle, Kiefer Sutherland and Ciaran McMenamin ... Must see!!!

Steven Hammer

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Iain Macleod

Let us continue to remember Iain in our prayers. He has now been transferred to the Fraser Ward in the Balfour Pavilion of the Astley Ainslie.

Prayer triplets

Interest has been expressed by some in the congregation in forming prayer triplets. If interested, please put your name on the list at the back of the hall, or speak to an elder.

Congratulations

Bilgay Balsarak & Mingxiu Li have both recently passed their PhD viva examinations. Congratulations to them both and best wishes for their future. Well done doctors!

Crèche Helpers

Due to the fact we have an increasing number of children in the crèche, we are having to increase the helpers from two to three each week to meet the ratio guidelines (1:3).

So we're looking for more helpers. If you have already been disclosed, that would be ideal. However, if you haven't yet been disclosed, we can look at getting the appropriate forms sorted out. Please speak to Norma MacLean.

Children's Safety

The crèche has now moved to the opposite side of the church (vestry side). The screens will remain up until the church is

vacated, so that children can be collected from the crèche / preschool safely. Juice will be served to the children there. Due to Health and Safety children MUST NOT be at the kitchen side of the hall unsupervised. If children are in the church, then they need to be supervised, and should not be eating, drinking or climbing over the pews.

Amica

If you have a travel cot or a baby changing bag spare Amica would love to take them off your hands. Amica are also looking to stock up on supplies so if you have any good quality clothes for babies up to 1 year please give them to Sarah Lytle.

Sarah Lytle

Happy Birthday

Happy birthday to Alasdair Macleod who had a birthday on the 5th of March.

Anyone for Tennis?

Come and keep fit on a Saturday morning and have a game of tennis. We are now playing at Craiglockhart due to the weather, and the time can vary. If you are interested speak to Evelyn, Heather, Mairi or

Moira.

Lost Property

The lost property box is full - lots of interesting stuff (clothes, dishes, birthday cards!). Please check the box to retrieve your items.

Anything left at the end of March will be given to Bethany.”

Steven's Green Tips

The Home

Does the home play a part in reducing our impact on the environment? In Britain our domestic use of electricity, gas and other fuels accounts for about 25% of all emissions. And like our personal transport, pollution from our home is something we have control over. The first and most obvious pollutant, especially at this time of the year, is heating. Turning our heating down by 1 degree doesn't affect our comfort very much, but it can save us a lot of money in fuel. Savings in fuel costs usually mean that we are using less of it, and so polluting less. Obvious and simple DIY jobs like putting insulation around doors and windows and slightly more complex ones like lagging

pipes and installing loft insulation can also keep us warmer while reducing our effect on the environment. Sensible use of heating can also help. Corridors and little used rooms can be heated less or not at all compared to the living room.

Lighting and electrical goods also account for a lot of our energy use. Lights left on in empty rooms; computers, hi-fis, TVs and digital boxes left on standby; and any variety of small electrical goods left on all the time all consume electricity pointlessly. Try looking round your home and thinking about what you can do without, and switch it off when you're not using it. You may think that one person leaving a TV on standby all the time doesn't matter. However, if everyone in Scotland did that, we would need far more power stations. Your individual contribution to pollution is important, and if you reduce it, it can be very significant in reducing our collective misuse of the earth's resources.

Most electricity companies now have green tariffs. Switching to a green tariff would encourage them to

invest more in less damaging methods of power generation (wind, wave, tidal, biomass...). It's a really easy way to reduce how much pollution you produce. Significant ones in Britain include Good Energy, EcoTricity and Green Energy UK. Or why not install your own power generation equipment? The Scottish Executive gives grants to households that want to install wind turbines, solar water heating and ground source heat pumps (amongst others).

If you really want to be inspired, there's a new type of house design that has been built in Fife, near Kinghorn Loch. It's called an Earthship, and it uses mainly recycled and reclaimed materials in its construction, and incorporates many environmentally friendly methods of power and heat generation. Next time you go over to Kirkcaldy, see if you can find it.

Websites:

www.good-energy.co.uk;

www.ecotricity.co.uk;

www.greenenergyuk.com -
three main green power suppliers in the UK.

[\[scotland.org.uk/earthship.html\]\(http://scotland.org.uk/earthship.html\) -
more about the EarthShip in Kinghorn.](http://www.sci-</p>
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<http://www.est.org.uk/schri/> -
for info on Scottish Executive grants to install your own renewables.

Steven Hammer

Sexual Orientation Regulations

(This article will appear in the April issue of the Monthly Record, but action is required urgently)

On Wednesday 28th February the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) reported their findings on the Northern Ireland Sexual Orientation Regulations (SORs) and the proposed England, Wales and Scotland SORs. This report will be used by the Government and other politicians in finalising the content of, and debating, the England, Wales and Scotland SORs in the next few weeks.

What are the JCHR findings, particularly as they relate to the practice of one's religious belief?

They recognise the absolute right recognised by the

European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), Article 9(1): “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.”

However, they use the limitations on the manifesting of religion and belief in ECHR, Article 9(2), to restrict the freedom to manifest one’s beliefs in relation to homosexuality. Article 9 (2) reads: “Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”

The JCHR report says: “In our view, the prohibitions on discrimination in the Regulations limit the manifestations of religious beliefs and limitation is justifiable in a democratic society for the protection of the

right of gay people not to be discriminated against” (paragraph 44).

They interpret the ECHR as saying that a homosexual lifestyle has a protection that the religious lifestyle does not have. The problem with this is that the ECHR makes no mention of sexual orientation or homosexuality—it can only be considered a “belief” alongside others. Therefore the JCHR is effectively saying that the homosexual has the right to manifest his belief by having his views published by a Christian printer, for instance, while the Christian, does not have the right to manifest his belief by refusing to print.

This thinking is already being implemented by the University of Edinburgh authorities. They want to require the Christian Union to use literature manifesting homosexual belief, but they do not require the homosexual society to use literature manifesting Christian belief.

The JCHR Report also expresses a view concerning adoption agencies: “Where the manifestation of a belief conflicts with the right of gay people not to be discriminated

against in their access to services as important as adoption services, it is in our view necessary and justifiable to limit the right to manifest the belief” (paragraph 52). This is particularly directed against Catholic adoption agencies. Here I believe the Committee are absolutely in the wrong. There is one right that is left out of this discussion: the right of a child to have a mother and father (if at all possible). The State should do nothing to deprive a child of that right. This right is not recognised by any Convention (as far as I know) but it is a natural right, a God-given right. A child can only be conceived by her mother and her father, and it follows that she should be brought up by a mother and father.

In a recent dispute concerning homosexual adoption, Christian Magistrate Andrew McClintock lost his case to have his freedom of conscience in relation to adoption recognised when practising as a Justice of the Peace. The Sheffield Employment Tribunal handed down their judgment on 28th February. The decision of the

court means that Mr McClintock, a committed Christian who became a Justice of the Peace in Sheffield in 1988, will not be able to serve on the Family Panel. He had expressed his concern that children could be put at risk by the untried social experiment of same-sex adoption, in which vulnerable children were being used as “guinea pigs”.

It is in relation to the application of SORs to schools (including faith schools), however, that the clearest indication comes of the prejudice of the JCHR. The Government does not believe that the SORs should apply to what is taught in schools, but the JCHR believes they should: “In our view there is an important difference between this factual information [about sexual morality] being imparted in a descriptive way as part of a wide-ranging syllabus about different religions, and a curriculum which teaches a particular religion’s doctrinal beliefs as if they were objectively true. The latter is likely to lead to unjustifiable discrimination” (paragraph 67). This is an outrageous statement. Without giving any

justification, it assumes Christianity cannot be 'objectively true' and that it should be illegal, even in a faith school, to teach that Christianity and its principles are 'objectively true'!

The Report, in dealing with the question of harassment, also concludes that there should be a distinction made between religion and sexual orientation: "... one of the main reasons for deleting harassment from [the Equality Act] was concern for the impact on freedom of speech in respect of comments made about the beliefs of others. In our view, however, different considerations apply in relation to sexual orientation, race and sex, because these are inherent characteristics."

That sexual orientation is an inherent characteristic akin to race and sex is a completely unfounded claim with no scientific base. No one can change their race or sex, but they can (and do) change their sexual orientation.

However, from a Christian point of view, it is a person's behaviour that is more important than their "orientation". We may all suffer from temptations, tendencies

and "orientations" and no one should be discriminated against on the grounds of such orientation. But the Christian has an absolute right from God's word to discriminate against homosexual behaviour (as also against all sexual activity outside marriage).

There is a determined exercise in social engineering being pursued by a small minority who have come to dominance in politics and the media. We need a counter campaign.

Wilberforce is rightly lionised for his leading role in the abolition of the slave trade. What is not so well remembered is his campaign for the "reformation of manners (morals)", but which was equally successful in turning the tide against immorality and debauchery. O for another Wilberforce in politics!

Alex J MacDonald

What can you do?

Check out:

JCHR

Report:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200607/jtselect/jtrights/58/58.pdf

See also:

www.christianconcernforournation.co.uk and www.care.org.uk

Please contact your local MPs and Peers (the websites above will tell you how), as well as contacting Government minister Ruth Kelly.

Rt Hon Ruth Kelly MP,
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA.

Telephone:
0207 944 3013 (Her department number)
0207 2193000 (Parliament: simply ask for Ruth Kelly MP's office)
0207944 4400 (Communities and Local Government Department: ask for Ruth Kelly).
E-mail:
PSRuthkelly@communities.gsi.gov.uk
kellyr@parliament.uk

Recipe Corner

Nanna's Spaghetti

For 4-5 people
500g spaghetti
2 tins of plum tomatoes
2 cloves of garlic (crushed)
1 onion
1 packet of mozzarella cheese

(chopped into chunks)
pinch of sugar
salt and pepper to taste

Chop onion and soften in a pan with oil or butter. When soft add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Add the tomatoes and sugar and simmer for 20-25 minutes. Cool slightly and blend to form a smooth sauce.

Add the mozzarella and cover pan.

Cook the spaghetti.

When spaghetti ready and the cheese has melted, serve with the sauce poured on top of the pasta.

If you haven't got a blender, finely chop the onions and use a large jar of passata instead of tinned tomatoes.

Mum's Ten Minute Biscuits

4ozs margarine (not the spreadable kind)
3ozs sugar
1 tablespoon syrup
4ozs S.R. flour
2.5ozs porridge oats
Set the oven to 150C (300F gas 2)

In a small pan melt margarine, sugar and syrup (do not boil). Grease two Swiss roll tins. When the ingredients in

the pan have melted add the flour and porridge oats. Drop teaspoonfuls of the mixture on the greased tins. Bake for ten minutes (golden brown). Remove from tray while still hot. Makes about 24.

Thank you to Sarah and Lillian for their recipes this month.

REASONS FOR NOT GOING TO CHURCH

(from *More Echoes from the "Morning Watch"* by J.P. Struthers)



This man does not go to church now, because "his Minister passed him by one day without recognizing him."

This notice appeared in a church Bulletin:

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 pm at First Presbyterian Church. Please use LARGE DOUBLE doors at the side entrance!

WONDERFULLY MADE

The Power of Hope

A recent article in Time magazine with this title caught my attention. It was written by Dr. Scott Haig, an assistant clinical professor of orthopaedic surgery at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. There are many people who think that the human mind only exists in the physical relationship of the brain's physical elements, but Dr. Haig does not accept such a materialistic view of human beings and wrote of a specific recent example in his experience which requires a different explanation.

He had been called in to treat a patient for bone fractures which had resulted from the spread of cancer. His wife and three children visited him every evening and the husband and father did everything he could to be good company for them.

Over a period of two weeks, his speech became slurred, then impossible to understand. He stopped speaking and then stopped moving.

The specialist found it hard to treat him. There was no good news. The doctors rescanned his head, but there was virtually no brain left. The cerebral machine that talked and joked and sang, the machine that remembered birthdays was nearly gone. With that machine gone, it seemed that the patient had gone. He showed no expression and gave no response to anything done to him. It seemed that he was just not there.

One Friday, on his evening round, he found the family there, clearly upset by the lack of response from their father. After a few moments he left the room.

The next morning he checked the room. The bed was made up and empty with fresh sheets on the mattress. As he turned to leave, his path was blocked by a nurse who had cared for the patient the previous night. She said, "He woke up, you know, doctor - just after you left - and said goodbye to them all. Like I'm

talkin' to you right here. Like a miracle. He talked to them and patted them and smiled for about five minutes. Then he went out again and he passed in the hour".

Two weeks later the surgeon saw the widow in the lobby. It was busy and very public, but he couldn't help asking, "Did...?" She understood the question. With a broad, knowing smile, she nodded and said, "Oh, yes, he sure did."

Dr Haig's conclusion is that it wasn't the patient's brain that woke him up to say goodbye that Friday evening. His brain was already destroyed. What woke his patient that Friday was his mind, forcing its way through a broken brain, a father's final act to comfort his family.

To Dr. Haig "the mind is a uniquely personal domain of thought, dreams and countless other things, like the will, faith and hope. These fine things are as real as rocks and water, but, like the mind, weightless and invisible, maybe even timeless". "I cannot ignore the internal evidence of my own mind." "I cannot be a materialist."

WMM

BUCCLEUCH & GREYFRIARS FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Our identity, mission and vision	
Identity	Local congregation of the Free Church of Scotland which is a branch of the universal Church of Jesus Christ
Mission	To worship God together To spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ To care for and encourage one another To show practical compassion for those in need
Vision	<p>A church which is characterised by friendliness towards, and genuine interest in, all those who cross the door whether regularly or only once.</p> <p>Relevant-to-the-times, applied preaching and enjoyable worship.</p> <p>An increasing proportion of those attending committed to Buccleuch as central to their life and Christian witness.</p> <p>A congregation increasingly united as a “family” through fellowship and through working together in the “in-reach” and “outreach” work of the congregation.</p> <p>A church that values all of the people who are associated with it and in particular one that appreciates its full-time ministers.</p> <p>A church with strong and effective leadership whose leaders lead by example and which equips its members to fulfil their calling as witnesses and servants.</p> <p>A church where the members gladly serve one another in love.</p>

ROTAS**Crèche**

18 th March	Jocelyn H. Jennifer Mac. Neil C.
25 th March	Flora Mac. Jen B. Anne Mac.
1 st April	Kenny Mac. Evelyn Mac. Norma Mac.
8 th April	Mairi F. Sarah L. Kirsty C.
15 th April	Jonnie Mac. Jocelyn H. Jennifer Mac.

Amplifier

18 th March	Johnnie C.
25 th March	Graham
1 st April	Shanana
8 th April	Ken

Cleaning

17 th March	Kenny Macleod Johnnie Macleod Rebecca Copty
24 th March	Lois Eddie Dolina Macdonald Mairi Forsyth
31 st March	Rob/Mary Bonne Michael Bennett
7 th April	Calum/Norma MacLean Karen Murray Rob MacD.
14 th April	Alisdair /Esther Black Heather Akroyd
21 st April	Kenny Macleod Johnnie Macleod Rebecca Copty

Door Duty

18 th March	Willie Mackay	Calum MacLean
	Rob MacDonald	Kenneth Macleod
25 th March	John MacRae	Neil MacRae
	Chris Somerville	Jenny Somerville
1 st April	Roddy Macleod	Neil Campbell
	Ken MacKenzie	Alison MacDonald
8 th April	Eric Mackay	Alasdair Black
	Esther Black	Stephen Hammer
15 th April	Donald Forsyth	Mairi Forsyth
	Dolina Macdonald	Willie Lytle

ACTIVITIES (in church building unless marked by *)

Sunday	11:00am	6:30pm
18 th March	Alex MacDonald	Alex MacDonald (Guest Service)
25 th March	Alex MacDonald	Alex MacDonald
1 st April	Bob Akroyd	Bob Akroyd
8 th April	To be confirmed	
15 th April	Alex MacDonald	Alex MacDonald (guest service)

Crèche and Junior Sunday School during morning service.

Monday

BG's Youth Club	7-8pm – contact Alison MacDonald (664 9038) or Kenny MacLeod (555 1010)
*Bethany House Outreach	8-10pm – contact Bob Akroyd (664 6306)
*Deacons' Court	8pm monthly –

Tuesday

Informal English Class	2-3:30pm – contact Ena Mackay (447 5937)
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Wednesday

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

Thursday

*Eight-a-side Football	9:30pm – contact William Lytle (477 1403)
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Friday

Mothers and Toddlers	10:00am-12 noon
Women's Fellowship	as announced

Saturday

Prayer Breakfast	9am
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CONTACTS

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

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

PROCEDURE FOR BOOKING THE CHURCH HALL

- 1) Check availability at www.buccleuchfreechurch.co.uk -> Newsletters -> Church Year Planner
- 2) Contact Alasdair Black (buccleuchyearplanner@hotmail.co.uk), who will check suitability with the ministers and respond to you