

Hi Folks

*You were broken and poured out for us
No words can thank you enough*

The above words were part of the prayers of thanksgiving that I used in our recent informal Sacrament of Communion. Words that are appropriate as we once more approach the Easter Season.

Easter; when we remember Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross and then the wonder of that Easter Sunday morning. He gave of himself freely that we may have life as God's children loved and forgiven.

This Easter may I ask that you read the letter from the Moderator of the General Assembly and consider how you can continue to support the work of your Church in Hagsgs Parish and in the wider world. May I add my thanks for all that you have done to support the church here in Hagsgs and your generosity in supporting Christian Aid etc. How do we continue to give thanks to God in our worship and in our daily lives giving of our time, talents and money for the furtherance of the gospel in our country?

Please come and join us on Communion Sunday as we share together remembering all that Christ has done for us. We meet together through God's grace to share the bread and wine as symbols of Christ's body and blood broken and shed for us. We share the meal in communion with each other, with Christ and with all who have gone before us.

In this time of uncertainty over the future form of ministry in the Church in Scotland one thing remains constant Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

May God's blessings be with you this Easter and into the future

Helen F Christie

Editorial

We are in to February already! Doesn't time fly! It seems no time since I wrote the last Spring editorial for the magazine and here we are again.

Now is the time before Easter when we are reading in our Bibles about the work Jesus did. Encouraging the disciples to follow him and spread the word of God. We are encouraged to do this too in whatever way we can, in the workplace, at school or amongst friends and those in need. We are also asked to give up something for Lent – for some this is quite a difficult thing to do – especially if it is chocolate! Instead why not add something to our daily duties – donate money to a charity – Christian Aid has a daily program of donations for Lent! Perhaps consider and resist the temptations that life brings to us in today's world and reaffirm our belief in God by living a life, as Christ did, that demonstrates our faith and belief in Him.

Later in the magazine you will read a letter from our Treasurer, Marion Campbell, urging you to reconsider the way in which you give to your Church financially. Please consider what she asks as this makes very sound financial sense.

Also there is an article on Sue Storrar's adventures in India – fascinating reading – Sue may well be called to talk more on this subject!

We have just had a visit from Falkirk Presbytery representatives who will be taking back their thoughts on Hagsgs Parish Church to the Presbytery. As you know we are in the midst of planning for the reduction of Ministers in the Hagsgs, Denny, Bonnybridge area in the future so your prayers are much needed for the work of your Church at this time.

A lot to consider this Easter! Have a Happy and spiritually rewarding Easter.

Jean McCheyne

Sunday Club

We have started 2012 well, although our number have reduced we can still have up to 12 children attending some weeks. The leaders met with the minister and we have agreed our program until Easter. The activities are varied and follow the service each week. The Seniors are doing more bible study, the younger children hear stories, arts and crafts, singing and praying are some of the activities we cover. As the Senior numbers are low at the moment, they are more involved with helping the younger ones. We are all working on a project that we will be displaying in church soon. I would like to extend a huge thank you to all the people who help out at the Sunday Club, Moira, Libby, Nan, Laura S, Laura R.

Shona Laird

Zumba

Come and join us every Monday 6-7pm in Church Hall, its, fun, effective, different and easy.

Pilates

Mondays 7.15-8.15pm in Church Hall (Class full at the moment)

NEW CLASS beginning Tuesdays 8.15-9.15pm in Church Hall only 2 spaces left.

For further info contact Liz on 07813857486 or fitnesswithliz.co.uk or e-mail lizheeps@msn.com

Thank you

We would like to express our thanks to everyone who joined us on Christmas morning to celebrate Edward's baptism and for all the good wishes we received.

Louise and Eddie Lyttle

Praise Band

The "Big Sing" in December went well and was enjoyed by all who attended and joined in the singing.

On 27th January we gave a Scots Night Concert for the Guild with lots of old Scottish favourites that the audience could join us with. Thanks goes to Winnie and Arthur for their work in making the evening a success.

We will soon be starting preparations for around Easter time, so if anyone would like to join, please do, you will be made most welcome. Contact any member of the praise band for details.

Elma Findlay

The Guild

The Christmas lunch on December 19th was an afternoon of good food and companionship at the Railway Inn, Dennyloanhead.

On January 27th the 37 Club were our guests at a well attended evening when the Praise Band gave a Scots concert with many old favourites. A lovely supper followed the concert. At this event we raised the sum of £250 towards our projects. Thanks are extended to all who helped in any way. Special thanks to Fiona, Margaret, Carol and Sandra who helped in the kitchen and also to Andy and Effie who helped with the catering.

There will be a Beetle Drive in aid of Driving Force on 20th February – come along and have some fun.

Elma Findlay

Church Diary 2012

<p>March 2 p.m. 4th 11 a.m. and 6 pm 8th 2 p.m. 11th 18th 20th</p>	<p>Wednesday Services at Bankview Nursing Home Communion Service. 37 Club Glasgow Police Museum Church ASM Mothering Sunday 37 Club Gentlemen's Dinner</p>
<p>April 2 p.m. 1st 2nd - 6th 6th 8th</p>	<p>Wednesday Services at Bankview Nursing Home Palm Sunday followed by Soup & Sandwich Lunch. Holy Week. Monday at Haggs Tuesday at Bonnybridge Wednesday at Denny Thursday at Haggs Friday at Bonnybridge Good Friday. Easter Sunday.</p>
<p>May 2 p.m. 13th 14th – 19th 20th</p>	<p>Wednesday Services at Bankview Nursing Home Christian Aid Lunch & Service Christian Aid Week Heart & Soul 2012 Edinburgh</p>
<p>June 2 p.m. 24th</p>	<p>Wednesday Services at Bankview Nursing Home Sunday Club Prize Giving.</p>
<p>July 2 p.m.</p>	<p>Wednesday Services at Bankview Nursing Home Sea Sunday Service</p>

Poetry Piece

Blessing of God's Seasons

We know we must pass through the seasons God sends,
Content in the knowledge that everything ends,
And, oh, what a blessing to know there are reasons
And to find that our souls must too have their seasons -
Bounteous seasons and barren ones too
Times for rejoicings and times to be blue –
But meeting these seasons of dark desolation
With the strength that is born of anticipation
Comes from knowing that every season of sadness
Will surely be followed by a springtime of gladness.

Helen Steiner Rice.

Submitted by Nan Ure

Walking with God

What must I do to ensure peace of mind?
Is the answer I'm seeking too hard to find?
How can I know what God wants me to be?
How can I tell what's expected of me?
Where can I go for guidance and aid
To help me correct the errors I've made?
The answer is found in doing three things
And great is the gladness that doing them brings
Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God
For with these three things as your rule and your rod
All things worth having are yours to achieve
If you follow God's words, have hope and believe.
Helen Steiner Rice.

“There is hope for your future,” says the Lord’ Jeremiah 31: 17 RSV

Submitted by Nan Ure

Carpet Bowls

The Christmas lunch on 14th December at the Cornhill was a very pleasant affair with good food and good company. We still would like some new members so come along to the Church hall on a Wednesday and enjoy the fun time – 12.30 p.m.

Elma Findlay

A word from our Treasurer

It's almost that time of year again – The Annual Stated Meeting of Haggs Parish Church – YOUR CHURCH – on Sunday 11th March after morning worship. Please come and show your support; hear what's going on and what's gone on during the last year.

This year we have received £5827.89 from the Inland Revenue. This represents the income tax that taxpayers paid on the amount given to Haggs Parish via Gift Aid through our offerings. Without this money we would not be able to pay all our bills throughout the year – so please can I appeal to anyone who pays Income Tax to consider signing a Gift Aid form and allow your church to claim back the tax you have already paid on those earnings (it amounts to 25% of what you give) and, be honest, if you're like me, it's nice to take something back from the taxman. Please speak to either Murray McCheyne (01324 840137) or myself (01324 840002). We'll be delighted to 'sign you up'. You do not have to specify an amount. If you have signed a Gift Aid form, we can claim back the income tax on whatever amount you give. In the present economic climate this is a way of giving more to the church without increasing your weekly/monthly giving.

Offerings can be made in many different ways. The most popular are by Weekly Freewill Offering (WFO) envelopes or by Standing Order from your bank directly into the church's bank account. I would encourage you to strongly consider this option as giving by Standing Order relieves you from remembering week by week (or month) to fill up your WFO envelope and also when you are on holiday or unable to come to church your offering is being made regularly and you do not have to 'make up' the missing Sundays all at one time. Please think seriously about this method of giving (it also saves us buying so many WFO envelopes) – it really is the best way. Speak to me any Sunday or give me a ring and I will give you the information on how to set up your Standing Order.

Thank you all for your unwavering support to Haggs Parish Church over the last year and in this time of re-adjustment in our area we need your support even more. Please take time to consider what I have detailed above and help us to plan for and present a strong financial case for the future of YOUR CHURCH.

Marion Campbell, Treasurer.

Heart and Soul 2012

Last year there was a gathering in Edinburgh which some of the congregation went to and had a good time. This event is being run again this May - **Heart and Soul 2012**. This will take place on Sunday 20th May between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. in Edinburgh in Princess Street Gardens and various Churches in this area. There will be massed choirs, Puppets, Fischy Music, Drama, Comedy to name but a few activities. Consider going to this as it was an uplifting experience mingling amongst so many fellow Church members. No doubt further information will be forthcoming from the pulpit over the next few months about this regarding the possibility of transport etc.

For information look up www.heartandsoul2012.org.uk on your computer.

Jean McCheyne

Adventures in India – January 2012

I left Scotland for my Indian adventure on 3rd January with the wind howling and the news that many roads and bridges in Central Scotland were closed due to overturned lorries and uprooted trees. We travelled to Glasgow airport via the back roads through Kilsyth and Bearsden weaving our way along roads littered with trees, telephone cables, advertising boards and wheelie bins! Needless to say when we did arrive at Glasgow airport all flights had been suspended and we had to wait for four hours until our plane finally departed for the start of our Indian adventure.

We eventually landed at Trivandrum airport in Kerala, South West India following a rapid transfer at Dubai. The heat and sea of faces welcomed us as we emerged from the airport terminal and we were hustled to an awaiting taxi to the sounds of hooting from the teeming congested traffic.

For the first two weeks of my stay I was based at the Kailasam Retreat in Kovalam practising yoga for two sessions each day, relaxing and chilling out. On our rest days we went on trips: a boat trip down the 'Backwaters' seeing how people living by the river use it to meet their everyday needs and to the Kerala Forest to wash the elephants in the sanctuary! Kerala is a fertile green oasis growing much of the food for other regions of India. It is the province with the highest levels of literacy of India and the highest levels of employment.

For the next two weeks I travelled in the North of India, flying into Delhi Airport to foggy and cold weather conditions. The number of people and the high level of traffic congestion were overwhelming. India is overtaking China as the country with the highest population in the World and many of them have descended on Delhi looking for employment. We were shocked by the levels of poverty, with families living in shacks made from sacks and pieces of cardboard by the sides of the road and huddled around open fires trying to keep warm. This is a country that has had 65 years of democracy yet the government seem to have not improved the lives of millions of people who are living on less than a dollar a day.

We took the opportunity while in Delhi to visit a slum school supported by an Ashram who participate in fundraising activities to pay for uniforms and resources for the children. The school was surrounded by piles of rubbish and an open sewer with pigs, donkeys, cattle and dogs grazing over the rubbish. It was an open sided structure with a corrugated iron roof. There were 150 pupils all in one space; all well behaved and seated on the dirt floor in rows. They learn basic literacy and numeracy skills up to Grade 4. Some of the children recited their 2X table and the alphabet in English and poems in Hindi. The school had very limited resources and seemed grateful for our meagre donation of pencils, pens, colouring books and book marks. It does raise questions about where the £270m aid given to India by Britain each year has been spent, certainly no International aid was reaching this slum school.

From Delhi we travelled widely through Rajasthan – to Udaipur, Deogard, Rohet, Jodhpur, Jaipur and Agra. We visited many amazing temples, palaces and forts decorated with semi-precious stones and carved in beautiful coloured marbles. The contrast between the wealth of the few and the poverty of the many over many centuries became very apparent. An acceptance of their lot in life seems to be part of the Hindu religion; they believe in reincarnation and believe that if they lead a good life now then they will be reincarnated to a better life in the future.

It was very striking how everyone, young and old, incorporated religion into their everyday lives. Visiting the temple was more than an act of worship but also a social and cultural event that was vital to everyone.

The highlight of the trip was our visit to the Taj Mahal at sunrise. The palace was built over twenty-two years by craftsmen from Persia as a memorial and testimony of love. The whole building is made from white marble that lights up as the sun shines onto it because of translucent crystals embedded in the stone. As the sun rose in the East the colour of the stone reflected the light changing it to a rosy pink colour – truly one of the Seven Wonders of the World!

The finale of our trip was a flight to Varanasi situated on the River Ganges. Varanasi is a very old religious city and the streets are bustling with all sorts of people and vendors. At sunset we travelled in a rickety wooden boat to visit the Ghats of Varanasi to witness the ritualistic cremation ceremonies and the performance of Ganges Aarti. We saw the Hindu devotees perform the 'Puja' ceremony with lighted lamps and incense, all to the sound of constant ringing bells and chanting. The people seem to enjoy all the Hindu rituals and witnessing life and death beside and in the Ganges is part of their culture as well as their religion – quite amazing!

I returned to Scotland on the 1st of February having enjoyed an incredible holiday. As I set out on my new life of retirement I have learned some important lessons in India:

- Not to worry too much about tomorrow but to enjoy each day with all God's small blessings
- To appreciate and treasure the love of my family and friends
- To appreciate good health and having the energy to explore life's experiences
- To not to crave for material goods, they do not necessarily bring happiness, but to try to share more of my wealth with those less fortunate than myself
- To try to become more careful when using world resources

Sue Storrar

Baptism

'Suffer little children to come unto me'

Dec. 25 Edward Andrew Lyttle

Marriage

'Whom God has joined together'

Dec. 28 Carolanne Chambers to Colin Houston

30 Clare Bowie to John Leung

30 Stephanie Smith to Kenneth Pollock

Deaths

'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'

Dec. Mr Thomas Duff	Banknock
Mrs Hilda Boyle	Dennyloanhead
Jan. Mrs Mary McNeill	Denny
Mrs Sadie Blair	Coneypark
Mr Bill Leckie	Denny
Mrs Annie Moffat	Dennyloanhead
Mr Myles Gallagher	Banknock
Mrs Janet Walker	Banknock
Feb. Mrs Tracey Mullen	Banknock
Mrs Mary Shedden	Banknock

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