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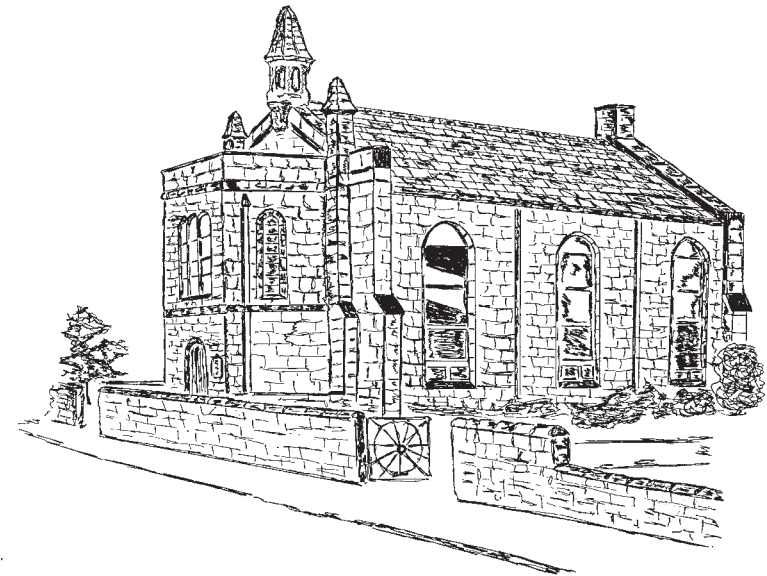
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THE LINK

The Magazine of Hags Parish Church
Spring 2008

Spring 08

Haggs Manse
March 2008

Hi folks,

I am writing this letter on Mothering Sunday, a day when we give thanks to God for the family blessings that enrich our lives. Maybe a day when we look back to our childhood and remember the love and care of parents who are no longer with us and give thanks for the memories and the values that they passed on to us.

When we are born into a family we have to be clothed and fed, cared for and encouraged, if we are to grow up into healthy well balanced adults.

For most of us Baptism was a part of our infancy when our parents took vows to bring us up in the Christian faith. In our Service of Baptism the congregation also accepts their part in the nurture of the child.

We as adults have made our own profession of faith and accepted responsibilities as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ and members of his Church. But faith is like a child once it is born it has to be nurtured for it to continue to grow and develop. Part of that nurture is sharing in the worship and life of the Church.

Soon we hope to hold gatherings where we will celebrate how as a Church together we can make a difference in our lives in our community and in our world. Please give us your support through your prayers and your presence with us.

God bless you all
Helen F Christie

EDITORIAL

Last October the Kirk Session discussed an invitation from Falkirk Presbytery for us to be part of a pilot scheme for a new style of Stewardship programme. The Kirk Session agreed to accept the invitation and proceed with the programme.

I have to admit that I was initially sceptical of the whole idea, that this would be just another Stewardship programme that would involve some of our members in a lot of work, without very much in return. However as I learned more about the programme, from our external helpers, my scepticism turned to acceptance and then to enthusiasm.

The programme is called “Together we make a Difference” and it is what it says – a programme where we all pull together to give thanks to God for his blessings to us and to share some of those blessings with others.

By now you will have received some literature giving you an outline of the programme and some key dates. Put those dates in your diary. Welcome the visitors who come to your door with an invitation to our Gatherings and come along to a friendly night with other members of Christ’s Church.

There is still a perception that Stewardship is all about money and in a way it is. However, I looked up the dictionary and one of the definitions it gave is:

“One who manages another’s property, finances or other affairs”.

God has charged us with being His stewards: managing His property – the world: His finance – our givings: His other affairs – His people. Let us use this opportunity to be God’s stewards in the full sense of the word and make our Stewardship programme a success.

Remember: TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Jack Dunn

SMILES:

Save the earth – it's the only planet with chocolate

I married Ms Right – I just didn't know her first name was Always

At the wedding, the bride tripped and fell into the arms of the minister.
"That's the first time I've held a fallen woman" he said, to which she replied "It's the first time I've been picked up by a minister".

A Sunday School class was studying the Ten Commandments. They were ready to discuss the last one. The teacher asked if anyone could tell her what it was. Suzie raised her hand, stood tall and quoted *"Thou shalt not take the covers off the neighbour's wife".*

People nowadays treat the Ten Commandments like an exam – *they attempt only three.*

A minister was completing a temperance sermon. With great emphasis he said, *"If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."*
With even greater emphasis he said, *"And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."*
And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he said, *"And if I had all the whisky in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."*
Sermon complete, he sat down.

The choirmaster stood up very cautiously and announced, with a smile, nearly laughing, *"For our closing hymn, Let us sing: Hymn 365, "Shall We Gather at the River..."*

Smile...life is too short not to !!!

If this brightened your day,

Don't let it stop here;

Pass it on with a smile,

Keep spreading the Cheer.

The Maister and the Bairns

Do you recognise this story from the Bible?

The Maister sat in the wee cot hoose
By the Jordan's waters near,
An the fisherfolk crushed an' crooded roon'
The Maister's words tae hear

An' even the bairns frae the near-haun streets
Were mixing in wi' the thrang,
Laddies an' lassies wi' wee bare feet
Jinkin' the crood amang

But yin o' the twal' at the Maister's side
Rose up and cried aloud:
"Come, come, bairns, this is nae place for you,
Rin awa' hame oot the crood."

But the Maister said as they turned awa',
"Let the wee yins come tae me",
An' He gaithered them roon' Him whaur He sat
An He lifted yin up on His knee.

Aye, He gaithered them roon' Him whaur He sat
An' He straiked their curly hair,
An' He said tae the wonderin' fisherfolk
That crushed an' crooded there:

"Send na the bairns awa' frae me
But raither this lesson lairn:
That nane'll win in at Heaven's yet
That hisna the hert o' a bairn."

An He that wisna oor kith or kin
Buy a Prince o' the Far Awa
He gaithered the wee yins in His arms
An' blessed them yin an' a'.

William Thomson

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 11 – 17 MAY 2008

“If we come together, we can achieve amazing things”
“TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

Rekha Biswas from Bangladesh provides the most humbling and inspirational example for Christian Aid Week. This courageous lady goes from house to house, talking to families about the problems they face getting water. And vitally, she challenges gender roles. She encourages women to come to meetings of the local *pani parishad, the village* water council.

Getting clean water is a problem throughout Bangladesh. In the northeast, water scarcity and lack of infrastructure create difficulties for the many landless communities living there. In the central low-lying wetlands, the land is flooded for more than half the year and underground water sources can be contaminated with arsenic. In the southwest, the rise in sea levels, partly as a result of climate change, is making fresh water salty. People often have to walk for up to 24 hours to collect water to drink.

And when water is not on tap, as it is for most of us in the developed world, it's the women and children who suffer the most. They spend hours carrying heavy pots of water to their families. Lack of water can also lead to family disputes, with women and children bearing the brunt of their husbands' or fathers' short tempers at the end of a day's labour and risking abuse.

Women also have no economic independence as their lives are spent collecting water. And they end up caring for family members who become sick through drinking dirty water. Children lose out on education because they have to spend long periods fetching water.

Rekha tells people that if they come together, they can achieve things that they couldn't if they were alone. By giving up a couple of hours during Christian Aid Week you are collecting so much more than money. Your gifts can mean water, rights and courage. By coming together, we can achieve amazing things.

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

“Our Greatest Fear”

Part of Nelson Mandela's Presidential speech

Our greatest fear is not that we are inadequate but that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness, that frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, handsome, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are born to make manifest the glory of God within us. It is not just in some, it is in everyone.

And, as we let our own light shine, we consciously give permission to other people to do the same. As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

THE FLOWER LIST

Once again we are indebted to the following for their donations of flowers to enhance our Church:

January	Mrs A Campbell Miss A Clelland Mr K Halliday Mrs J Dunn
February	Mrs W McLeod Mrs Walls (jnr) Miss F Shuit Mrs I Shearer
March	Mrs B McLachlan Mrs J Stewart Mrs T Mortimer Mrs R Mcilwraith

Falkirk Presbyterial Council (Guild)

It is with much pleasure that I have to tell you that Hags has been selected to host our Summer Rally this year. It will take the format of a “Songs of Praise” and will be held on Thursday 4th June at 7:30 pm. Our guest speaker will be the Rev. Ian Wilkie who is now a fine minister and has his roots in Hags. He is our Presbytery Guild link and works tirelessly with me to benefit the 27 Guilds in our Presbytery.

The service is open to all, no matter what age or gender (as indeed the Guild is). It would be lovely if the congregation came along and welcomed Ian “Home” – you won’t be disappointed. Also taking part in the service will be Gwen Hamilton accompanied by Jack Dunn, so it will be a real “Hags night”.

Put the date in your diary. I can assure you it will be a lovely night of praise and worship, courtesy of our own Hags Guild.

Jean Cowan.

Mission

Several years ago, Presbytery sponsored a student from South Africa, who was with us during Advent. Some of you may have met him at the Café’s Christmas Lunch. His name was Wonke Buga, a student of Graham Duncan. It give me great pleasure to tell you that Wonke is now the Rev. Wonke Buga and will be ordained on the 2nd March in the congregation of Mamelodi, in Pretoria. He has excelled in his studies having completed his Masters Degree and is now embarking on studying for his PhD. He has become a fine minister and an accomplished academic. I have sent him good wishes from all the people who met him during his stay with us.

Jean Cowan

Hags Church Guild

The Guild commenced its session last October and is going from strength to strength – we now have 22 members who are very supportive.

We are enjoying a full and varied syllabus. It has made a difference to the membership having the meetings in the afternoon and we are very cosy in the McLean Hall – only using the Church Hall for larger gatherings.

The Zetland Singers from Grangemouth have visited twice, once in November and again for a “Scots Night”, when the members of the 37 Club were our guests. The hall was filled to capacity. These meetings were a great success and were enjoyed by all.

We have also had a member from the Presbyterial Council talking on Ecumenical Relations, with a video to illustrate.

In February we had a most interesting demonstration of “Sugar Craft”. We were all interested in the finished articles. We had a competition of a decorated candle – nine ladies put in lovely candles - the winners getting an Easter egg.

We are looking forward to our Annual Outing in May, when we will be going to the new Scottish Parliament building in Edinburgh, followed by a tasty High Tea, somewhere.

We try to attend meetings in other Churches but our problem is transport – we only have three cars at our disposal.

The Guild is always looking for new members, so do come along and enjoy fellowship together.

B A Miller
Convener

1st Hags BB Company Section

This year, so far, has been busy with National and Battalion competitions, along with our normal Friday night activities. We have had a steady attendance of 14 boys throughout the year with a good mix of ages from P7 to S4 & S5. One boy will hopefully complete his Queen's Badge this year and potentially four will achieve their President's Badge.

We have participated in the National Table Tennis, Chess, and Masterteam competitions, progressing beyond the 1st round in the Masterteam for the first time. The Battalion competitions in Football, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Badminton, Chess, Vaulting and Cross Country were very competitive. So far we have been runners-up in the chess, winners of the vaulting for the second year in succession and won the intermediate team competition in the cross country and we have two boys representing Falkirk in the National competition. We hope to take part in the swimming, first aid and golf outing before the end of the session.

This Summer we hope to fit in a long weekend Summer camp as a bit of fun after a busy year and the 75th celebration in May.

Thanks to all the officers, boys and parents for their support and hard work throughout the year.

Colin Meek

1st. Hags Junior Section

The session seems to have flown in so far. We are just about finished all our badge work and will soon start to work towards our annual parents' evening, which will be a special one for us, as it is the 75th Anniversary of the Company.

We have around 19 boys attending each week. Pete Hoggan and Christopher Nelson from the Company section are with us to work towards their Queen's badge. They have been taking the games and helping with the P.T. and the boys are really enjoying this!

Saturday, 1st March, we were placed 2nd in the Battalion figure marching competition. This was a great achievement for the boys, since some of them are so young, and we are very proud of all of them!

The session will be slightly longer this year as we are having our display on 17th May, instead of March, but perhaps we will take them to the swimming or such, for a change over the next few weeks.

Ernie, John, Sandra and George continue with the boys each week, depending on their work, and I am grateful to them all for their commitment. We are all looking forward to the special celebrations of the Company and to our week-end camp to Girvan early June.

Morag Wales Officer-in-charge.

TurnaBBout 2

Falkirk and District Battalion hosted their 2nd “alternative” Parade on Friday, 29th February at Falkirk Town Hall. Over 500 members of the Battalion attended and the excitement and anticipation was amazing!

We were welcomed into the hall by large screens on each side of the stage showing a video of last year’s performance, and, thereafter, the camera scanned the hall and relayed images of this year’s audience.

The Battalion colours were marched on, to Run rig’s “Loch Lomond” and then suspended above the stage for the rest of the evening. Even the smoke machine was put on, giving the lads a touch of a “real” rock concert!

The Christian rock band “Thundershock” travelled all the way from Bristol to be the leaders in worship and invited the boys to come down to the front and jump around. They were a great success and spent time at the end signing autographs.

Mike McCurry, Member of the Magic Circle, F.I.F.A referee and Baptist minister did a very enlightening talk about “making the right decisions”, using magic tricks and his football chat to make his point. He was our speaker last year and they especially asked for him to be there again. He has become quite a personality in our Battalion! Some of the older boys “cornered” him at the end to speak to him, and he too was quite happy to sign autographs.

All, in all, the boys really enjoyed themselves and joined in the spirit of the occasion., all be it a little noisy for those of us slightly older!

The next question will be “Where do we go from here?” but, no doubt, the Battalion will take all the comments on board to bring the Word of God to the boys, all be it in a slightly unconventional way!

Morag Wales.

Psalm 23, Mariner’s Version

Captain J Rogers

The Lord is my pilot; I shall not drift
He leadeth me across the dark waters
And steereth me in the deep channels

He keepeth my log
And guideth me by the star of holiness
For His name’s sake

Yea, though I sail amid
The thunders and tempests of life,
I shall dread no danger,
For Thou art with me;

Thy love and Thy care, they shelter me.
Thou preparest a harbour before me
In the homeland of eternity;

Thou anointest the waves with oil,
And my ship rideth calmly.

Surely sunlight and starlight
Shall favour me all the days of my voyaging,
And I will rest in the port of my Lord forever.

Source: The Mast September 1948

STEWARDSHIP

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The previous magazine contained a short report on our Stewardship campaign. We have now moved forward and by now you should have received our first newsletter. ***YOU DON'T REMEMBER IT?*** It was delivered along with your March communion invitation.

Newsletter number 2 will be with you before the end of March. Please read this as we have arranged social gatherings for the end of May, to which you will all be personally invited by one of our visitors. The idea of the gatherings is to let everyone see what is happening in our church and how we help with projects throughout Scotland and worldwide.

There is always space available for you to help or just participate in the activities. It is our church and the success of the campaign depends on the talents of every member. We have said before, it is more than just Sunday worship, marriages, funerals and baptisms.

Please come to one of the gatherings and find out more. If you don't like what you see or hear, the only way to change things is to participate and let your voice be heard.

The strong letter in Hags is "A". Don't let this stand for apathy. **Apathy** changes nothing. The strength of our church is its people. This is a good time to encourage everyone to say "YES" if you are asked by a member of the planning committee to take a role in the preparations.

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Colin Meek on behalf of the Planning Committee

Poets Corner

Perhaps the true secret of life is in
Enough happiness to keep us sweet
Enough trials to keep us strong
Enough sorrow to keep us human
Enough hope to keep us happy
Enough failure to keep us humble
Enough success to keep us eager
Enough friends to give us comfort.
Submitted by Mrs N. Ure

Marriage 'Whom God has joined together'

Dec. 1 Lorraine Barclay to Gay Shilliday
2 Michelle Black to Christian Kilgour
30 Louise Hamilton to Barry Sutherland

Feb. 8 Lyndsey Forrest to Neil Cartwright

Mar. 1 Lesley Reid to Martin Stevenson

Deaths 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'

Dec. Mrs Olga McDonald Bankview
Mrs Jean Blair Bankview

Jan. James Taylor Bonnybridge
Mrs Elizabeth Miller Falkirk
William McBinn Bonnybridge
Mrs Margaret Stewart Edinburgh

Feb. Mrs Janet Turnbull Longcroft
Mrs Janet Menzies Hags
James Anderson Allandale