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**The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church
Summer 2009**

Summer 09

Haggs Manse
June 2009

Hi folks,

Over the past few days we have seen and enjoyed some beautiful sunny weather and can but hope that this is not our summer over.

This weekend is the 65th anniversary of the D Day landings and many in our country and in our own congregation will have their own memories of this time. The beginning of the end of World War 2, a beginning that would see the death of many who fought for the freedom that we now enjoy. As we remember their sacrifice let us give thanks for our freedom by working together to bring peace and freedom to our world.

In Church on this Trinity Sunday we remembered one of the ways in which Christians have tried to describe God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father as creator, the Son as redeemer and the Holy Spirit as inspirer.

We prayed to Jesus as our Redeemer. He redeemed us by giving his own life on the Cross that we may have our freedom from sin. As we remember His sacrifice let us give thanks for our freedom by working together to show God's love to our neighbour and to bring peace and freedom to our world.

As our weekday Church activities slow down for the summer I wish to take this opportunity once again to thank all who help to organise and participate in our different activities. I wish you all a very pleasant holiday and hope that you continue to share in worship on Sunday here or wherever you may be.

God bless you all,

Helen F Christie

EDITORIAL

Another General Assembly has come and gone. Looking back at previous Editorials, I have normally commented on how little coverage the event gets from the media. This year was quite different – the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 2009 made it to the national news in all forms of media: TV, Radio and Newspapers.

The topic that got everyone's attention was the ordination of gay ministers to our clergy. There was much debate and even the threat of a potential split in the Church. Opinions were strongly expressed on both sides and the Assembly reached three significant decisions. Firstly the call of the Rev S Rennie (a gay minister) to a church in Aberdeen was upheld. Secondly it was agreed that no gay ministers will be ordained in the next two years and thirdly there will be no public discussions on the subject, outwith the Church, for the next two years.

We all, I am sure have our own views on the subject and we might feel that what the Assembly did was a mixture of strong decision making and fence sitting. There is no doubt that the subject requires further debate and decisions have eventually to be made and it is to be hoped that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, those decisions will be for the good not only of the Church but of all of God's people.

I am writing this editorial at the beginning of June, just after the spell of hot sunny weather. What a difference a few days of sunshine can make to our lives and our feeling of well-being. We become cheerier, happier and friendlier. We look forward to our summer break and the chance to relax and enjoy ourselves. So, as you go about this Summer time, remember that the sunshine that has made us feel good is part of God's creation and for that we should give Him thanks. Remember also that we can go to Him at any time during the year and, through worship and prayer, improve our sense of well-being.

Have a very pleasant and relaxing Summer, whatever you do. Come back to Church invigorated and prepared to continue to worship and witness for our Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that Together we make a Difference.

Jack Dunn

Teas and Coffees after Church

Tea and Coffee in the Church Hall after church on a Sunday has become a regular part of our worship this year. Those who come along enjoy a few minutes of conversation and relaxation before embarking on another busy week. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made this possible over the last six months. Your efforts are much appreciated and have provided an opportunity for members of our congregation to come together in fellowship.

We have decided to take short break over the Summer months and normal service will be resumed towards the end of August. To make this possible we once again need help, so if you would like to take a turn on one or more Sundays in the second half of the year, please contact me. I will be happy to explain what we do and hopefully add your name to our list of helpers. Remember, together we make a difference.

Elizabeth Dunn

Christian Aid

A very big thank you to all who participated in this year's collection – we have sent off a cheque for £2674.61 with monies from the Bridge Walk still to come in! Well done!

Sue Storrar

The Flower List

Thanks are due to all who donate flowers each week to make our Church a place of beauty.

This is a quote from William Shakespeare
'Love comforteth like sunshine after rain'.

Moira and Jean

1st Hags Anchor Boy Report

2008-09 has been a hugely successful session for the Anchor boys, with an amazing 13 boys coming along every Tuesday night. These have been filled with fun, games, arts and crafts, bible stories and news from the boys (the tooth fairies have been busy this year).

During the year the boys have enjoyed various stories from the bible, with Noah's Ark being a favourite. The boys had lots to say about the moral story of the Boy Who Cried Wolf, which we put together for your enjoyment on Parent's night.

The proceeds from the Charity party will go to a charity chosen by the boys.

The Anchor Boys have been in attendance at all of the Church Services this year, with a much improved attendance on last year. They have also enjoyed many excursions this year. The Christmas trip was to Adventure Planet in Cumbernauld, this was well received by the boys. We also attended the Falkirk Battalion Fun Day where we all joined in with other boys from the Battalion and took part in games, arts and crafts, then after a much needed juice and crisp break they were entertained by the Science Boffins.

The boys joined the rest of the Company attending Turnabout at Polmont Parish Church where the puppet show was a huge success for boys and adults alike. We were also invited to BP at Grangemouth to visit their fire station where the boys enjoyed seeing the fire-engine and ambulance.

The leaders would like to highlight the amazing behaviour of all the boys on these trips and how proud we are when we take them places.

That only leaves me to thank everyone for their continuing help and support. All the parents and guardians for sending along such well turned out boys each Tuesday and to the Church Services.

Fiona Boyd (Officer in Charge)

Junior Section

We have had around 12 boys attending each week, and, although we are down in numbers, have covered a variety of things such as simple first aid, glass painting, decorating (and eating) cakes, p.t., figure marching, drama, singing, football, swimming and sports. We entered the Battalion Spiritual Competition, in which we were unplaced, but the four boys who entered enjoyed themselves and were a credit to us. The Alan Douglas competition had to be cancelled at the last minute due to severe snowy conditions. Our team of boys at the Swimming Gala came in third and we were delighted to win the Battalion Figure marching trophy this year, where the boys really excelled themselves, being 20 points ahead of the nearest team.

In October we had our Halloween party and went to the pictures at Christmas where everyone had a great time.

We have attended several church services, our opening service, Armistice, Christmas gift service (where the boys did very well singing), Palm Sunday, and we had our closing parade at the end of the session. We were also at TurnaBBout in Falkirk, a special event organised by the Battalion, in place of a regular church parade. This is the third year of the event which took place in Polmont Old church, which houses approximately 600+. There was a praise group made up of young officers, a puppet show, which really entertained the boys, and a talk by George Craig, Managing Director of Falkirk football club, and an ex B.B. captain. We were delighted to have him as our inspecting officer at our display.

We have recently returned from our annual camp at Girvan. The boys and officers enjoyed themselves and we were fortunate that the weather remained nice throughout.

May I take this opportunity to thank all the parents and friends who gave us their support again this year, and a special thanks to our loyal officers who give up so much of their time each week working with the boys.

Hope you all have a nice (and hopefully warm) summer.

Best wishes Morag Wales Officer-in-Charge.

Company Section report

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 20-22 boys throughout the year with a good mix of ages from P.7 to S5. One boy has completed his Queen's Badge this year and 3 will start work towards their Queen's Badge. We will also have one President's Badge completion.

This year we have again taken part in National competitions and progressed further than any time in the last ten years. In the Masterteam competition we were only one round away from the Scottish final. In Table Tennis we reached the last twelve which is again one round away from the Scottish final as six teams compete in the final. In the Chess we reached the last eight having beaten one of last years finalists. Only to be knocked out 5-4 by the company who have won the competition for the last 3 years running (that's the luck of the draw).

At Battalion level we took part in football, table tennis, badminton, chess (we came second), vaulting (we came second and third), cross country, with some boys going on to represent the Battalion at the National, swimming (winning the Westquarter Trophy for the first time), Drill (we came 3rd) and First Aid (winning the senior and junior competitions).

The session ended on a high when we won the Battalion Efficiency Trophy. This is awarded to the best all round company in the battalion and is judged on participation in competitions throughout the session.

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

Colin Meek, Officer in Charge

Captains Report

This session all sections have worked hard in their activities with the Anchor Boys increasing in numbers under the leadership of Mrs Fiona Boyd and helpers Mrs Jane Dickson, Miss Gemma Milligan and Mr Robert Mullin giving the boys a varied programme. Junior Section numbers have been down this year which is disappointing but the boys still took part in all battalion competitions, which they enjoyed. Thanks to Mrs Wales, Mr and Mrs Moffat, Mr J Fenney and Sergeant C Nelson. Company Section have been very busy this year mainly due to the success in National and Battalion competitions with a lot of work done by the officers Mr C Meek, Mr A Hobbs, Mr R Carson, Mr A Laird and Mr S. Abercrombie, so a big thanks to them.

I would like to thank Gemma who is retiring from the Anchor Boys for all the years she has given us and we wish her the best in the future.

Finally thanks to the Steadfast Association (parents committee) for the continued work they do in raising funds for the company - in keeping the minibus on the road and treats for the boys.

Thanks, Ernest Firth, Company Captain.

How to Find Happiness, Helen Steiner Rice.

Happiness is something you create in your mind,
Not something you search for but can't seem to find.
Not something that's purchased with silver or gold
Not something that force can capture and hold,
It's just waking up and beginning each day
By counting your blessings and kneeling to pray,
It's giving up thoughts that breed discontent
And accepting what comes as a gift heaven sent.
It's giving up wishing for things you have not
And making the best of whatever you've got
It's knowing that life is determined and planned

And God holds the world in the palm of his hand,
And it's by completing what God gives you to do
That you find contentment and happiness too.

Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord.

Psalm 119:1 NIV

The First Thing Every Morning and the Last Thing Every Night – Helen Steiner Rice.

Were you too busy this morning to quietly stop and pray?
Did you hurry and drink your coffee
Then frantically rush away,
Consoling yourself by saying – God will always be there
Waiting to hear my petitions, ready to answer each prayer?

It's true that the great generous Saviour
Forgives our transgressions each day
And patiently waits for lost sheep who constantly seem to stray,
But moments of prayer once omitted in the busy rush of the day
Can never again be recaptured, for they silently slip away.
Strength is gained in the morning to endure the trials of the day
When we visit God in person in a quiet and unhurried way.
For only through prayer that's unhurried can the needs of the day be met
And only in prayers said at evening can we sleep without fears or regret.

For all our errors and failures that we make in the course of the day
Are freely forgiven at night time when we kneel down and earnestly pray.
So seek the Lord in the morning and never forget Him at night
For prayer is an unfailing blessing that makes every burden seem light.

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.

Psalm 67:1 RSV

Articles from Life and Work - June 2009

Churches against nuclear weapons

A world without nuclear weapons is not only possible but more secure, NATO has been told by a coalition of national, regional and global councils of churches.

In a letter sent in March, four councils of churches urged the NA leadership to 'reinforce the vision of a world without nuclear weapons, consigning to history the notion that nuclear weapons preserve peace and instead recognising that they make security more precarious.

An immediate step towards that goal, the churches' letter suggests, would be to update the alliance's strategic concept and security doctrine. The alliance should also show willingness to remove hundreds of US tactical nuclear weapons still placed in European countries.

The letter, signed by the general secretaries of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the National council of Churches of Christ USA and the Canadian Council of Churches, came ahead of the NATO summit of heads of State and Government, held in April at Baden-Baden and Kehl, Germany, and in Strasbourg, France.

"We believe security must be sought through constructive engagement with neighbours and that authentic security is found in affirming and enhancing human interdependence within God's one creation," the letter states.

State Your Faith Online

Christians are being called upon to declare their faith by signing an online declaration.

The 'I am a Christian' campaign launched in Holy Week as a direct response to the National Secular Society's five year campaign which encouraged 100,000 people to "de-baptise" themselves by signing a Certificate of De-baptism.

Peter Kerridge, CEO at the Christian Media Group, Premier, which set up the campaign said "My faith is at the centre of my life and I am honoured to declare that. Many Christians feel passionately about their religion.

"We're asking those Christians to declare their beliefs at www.iamaChristian.co.uk and to stand united in our shared faith.

"Christianity will continue to be challenged by secular society – the National Secular Society's campaign is just one example of this. However, we will not be duntrodden by their campaign".

Sign up at www.iamachristian.co.uk. Christians on Twitter and Facebook are calling others to take part at twitter.com/premierradio and the Facebook group 'Are there 1,000,000 Christians in the UK who are passionate for Jesus?'. .

General Assembly 2009

Here is a brief summary of the main committees and groups that reported at last month's General Assembly, along with what they do:

Central Services Committee -

The Central Services committee is mainly in charge of managing the Church Offices in George Street, overseeing the delivery of central services to the departments within these offices and operating as an employing agency of the Church.

Council of Assembly –

Much of the Council's attention this session has been given to following up the remit of last year's General Assembly to bring recommendations for the establishment of a post of full-time Secretary to the Council separate from the post of Principal Clerk to the General Assembly.

Forces Chaplains –

The Report by Her Majesty's Forces seeks to affirm the support and thanks of the Church for all who serve in Her Majesty's Armed Forces as Chaplains and thank them for their spiritual and pastoral care towards the sailors, soldiers, air personnel and their families.

Mission and Discipleship –

The Report by the Mission and Discipleship Council seeks to encourage the Church to reflect on evangelism in contemporary Scotland, recognise its changing patterns and trends, and affirm the importance of sharing faith positively and confidently in word and action.

Church and Society Council –

The Church and Society Council is keen to focus on education and the needs of young people. As a result, the Council seeks an instruction to work with other Councils to introduce a Child Friendly Church initiative based on the United Reform Church's model.

Proportionality –

A comprehensive and in depth report addressing the theological and practical issues of forgiveness and proportionality for sex offenders wishing to worship in Church of Scotland congregations is the subject of a 47-page joint report by the Kirk's Mission and Discipleship Council and Safeguarding Committee.

Carpet Bowling

Members and friends of the Carpet Bowling Club had their outing on Wednesday 27th May.

We boarded the coach at 10.45 a.m. on a pleasant day and made our way to Dundee, arriving around lunch time – a shopping spree was enjoyed by all and we met again at the coach around 4 p.m. to be taken to the Restaurant in Broughty Ferry, The Glass Pavilion. They meal was delicious and the service excellent. We had a nice run home enjoying the scenery.

B. Miller

The Guild

The ladies of the Guild and friends had their annual outing on Monday 18th May. We all boarded the bus on a dull showery day, hoping the sun would shine for us later. Our destination was Loch Katrine – when we arrived we had a snack in the Restaurant at the head of the Loch. We were booked to have our sail on the Loch at 2.30 p.m., so there was time for a little shopping – the water was calm and the scenery was gorgeous.

The coach took us to Gartmore House where we enjoyed a delicious tea with home baking.

Everyone enjoyed their day out and the sun did shine on the way home.

B. Miller

Baptism

‘Suffer little children to come unto me’

April 26 David Edward Dalglish Hancock

May 3 Olivia Smith Hancock

Marriage

‘Whom God has joined together’

March 27th Laura Muir to Richard Dunlop

April 5th Victoria Sharkey to Peter Hansen

“ 12th Lorraine Geelan to Gordon Lamont

“ 26th Marian MacKay to Patrick Gordon

May 9th Jenna Taylor to Mitchell Moir

“ 30th Laura Bissett to Colin Anderson

June 5th Stefanie Kelly to Graeme Alexander

Death

‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord’

March Mrs Sarah McKenzie Allandale

April Mrs Rae Allan Banknock
Gordon Johnstone Allandale
Mrs Ina Henderson Bonnybridge
Alexander Muir Banknock
James MacKenzie Dennyloanhead
Gordon Humphries Bonnybridge