

NEWTON MEARNS PARISH CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND
'THE CHURCH AT THE CROSS'

CROSSTALK
DECEMBER 2011

Dear Friends,

December/January are the darkest months of the year. The days are shortest and the nights are longest. If to that is added bad weather - grey skies, fog, slippery ground - or even snow - these two months can take their toll on us all.

'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining upon them.' (Isaiah 9:2)

The darkness can be actual, it can be mental, it can be spiritual - but the darkness can be beaten by the Light of the world - the Lord Jesus Christ. If all we do over the next 4 weeks is buy, buy, buy, then eat, eat, eat, working very hard at having a super-doooper time then come January the darkness will come. The presents will seem tawdry, the house empty without the tinsel and lights, our lives pointless as we see that all the possessions in the world cannot, by themselves, bring contentment, fulfilment, peace.

The Christmas lights went on in the Avenue on 13th November - that was too early and also Remembrance Sunday - these lights will fade - by now you probably aren't even seeing them as you shop you are so used to their presence. The only way to true fulfilment of self and family is to put Christ not only at the centre of Christmas but at the centre of your life for 2011 and thereafter.

May this Advent-tide be a time of preparation for Christ's coming, a time of reflection and prayer, a time of thought. If we all get that right then our Christmas and our New Year will shine with the light of God - and there is no better present than that!!

God bless you all at this special time,

Esther J Ninian- Minister

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

11 th December	3 rd Sunday in Advent Wellmeadow Carol service	10:30am 2:00pm
18 th December	Nativity Sunday with gifts for others	10:30am
24 th December	Christmas Eve service 7:00pm	
25 th December	Christmas Day service	10:30am
1 st January 2012	Start the year at Church with Communion	10:30am

ENQUIRERS' CLASS

An Enquirers' Class will be starting after the service on January 8th 2012. I have been approached by some folk who wish to consider joining the church so the class will run for 4 to 6 weeks. The class however is for all who want a chance to raise questions about the faith or the church or who just want to take 45 minutes to think about them. You can have been a member for decades or be someone who doesn't want to join but just wants to explore the faith or someone who does want to join - you are ALL welcome.

The place - the vestry after church. When - from January 8th for everyone - please think about starting the New Year by thinking about the Most important Things!

CHURCH OFFICE

Please note that the church office will be closed from Monday 26th December until Friday 6th January inclusive due to the Administrator's holidays. The office will re-open on Monday 9th January.

KIDS @ THE CROSS

Rehearsals are now underway for the Christmas service on 18th of December. You will have a couple of choruses to learn which we will go over the week before.

After the service we are going to have a lunch for the children followed by a party, so I'm giving Santa notice that his presence will be required! The Kids @ the cross would like to wish everyone a peaceful and joyous Christmas and thank you all for your support throughout the year.

Mary McIntyre

THE GUILD

Meetings during December will be
Monday 5th at 7.30 pm – Allocation of funds and Carols

Monday 12th at 12.30pm – Christmas Lunch at Eglinton Arms.

Meetings during January will be

Monday 23rd at 7.30pm – All our Yesterdays.

Also Soup Lunch on Monday 16th January from 12.30 - 2pm. All welcome.

TEAR FUND – JARS OF GRACE APPEAL

The monies raised as a result of coins (and sometimes notes) collected by you in jars and boxes between Harvest and Christmas provide vital support to the Charity. Please keep collecting what you can and bring your collection to the Church any Sunday in January. Most of all remember the staff and partners of Tear Fund in your prayers and ask that they feel supported in their work with God's people.

CLEAR THE DECKS FOR OXFAM & THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES HOSPICE

Both charities would welcome donations of books, bric a brac, CDs, DVDs and saleable clothes. Volunteers will take your donations to the charity shops, so please bring any donations of these items or even unwanted Christmas gifts to Church any Sunday in January. Donations including a slip of paper indicating which Charity you wish to benefit should be placed in the box in the entrance vestibule.

Many thanks – Ian Gladstone

CHRISTMAS AT THE VICTORIA INFIRMARY

Every Sunday afternoon throughout the year, a short church service is held in the Chaplaincy Centre at the Victoria and later in the day broadcast around the wards on hospital radio. 39 churches from the south side each provide a team of volunteers on a rota basis to support these services.

I always appreciate the ready response when it is our turn to help, especially back in August when my 'reliable' diary failed me miserably! Can I extend Ishaku's words to you all;

'Thank you for your invaluable support to the chaplaincy and your service of love and care to the patients and their families.'

It is time once again to ask for a little of your time to come along and join with the patients at the Christmas Carol Service, Sunday 11th December and Carol Singing around the wards, Friday 23rd December, both 5.45 for 6.00pm.

Full details are to be found on the clipboards at both doors of the church. Please just add your name. I have asked for telephone numbers in case there is any need to contact you with any change to the arrangements or to arrange lift sharing.

Sincere thanks and I look forward to seeing you there.

Susan Rocke 571 3905

GREETINGS FROM MAXWELL MEARN'S PARISH CHURCH

You may remember Kirsteen Gray from our congregation who is currently working with Heart to Heart Scotland in transition houses, orphanages and baby hospitals in Romania. Some of you have supported Kirsteen in the past and have asked that we keep you informed as to when she is here for a catch up.

I would like to draw your attention to the evening of Sunday 8 January 2012 where Kirsteen will feed back information and show some slides of the work that is going on in Romania.

We will be delighted if some of you can attend and we promise an interesting evening with tea and coffee and home baking! We envisage starting at 7pm and being finished by around 8.15pm.

PROPERTY REPORT

The removal of the scaffolding to the front elevation of the church heralded the imminent completion of the comprehensive repairs to the roofs.

The start of operations coincided with a period of sustained torrential rain and initially impacted on the Contractors' planned programme but fortunately with improving weather the disruption has been kept to a minimum and without any cost penalty.

The primary concerns of high level stone stability were more than justified and they together with the many other issues in the diverse roof structure have been satisfactorily addressed and remedied.

Additionally, as you will have noticed the outbreak of woodworm in the Old Hall has been treated and the famous 'volunteers' have carefully reinstated its bright and colourful appearance for all to enjoy.

The Committee is delighted to report that despite the inevitable unforeseen items and the odd complication, the works have been completed to the satisfaction of our Consultant Building Surveyors, Robert Gavin Associates and happily within the original accepted tender.

As always good news does not come lightly and our collective thanks must go to the Consultant, the Contractors and Committee for their concerted effort in a complex situation of achieving our objectives within predicted costs parameters and a reasonable timescale.

Lastly but certainly not least, because it could not have been accomplished without the prompt and quite magnificent response from the Congregation which made it all possible, our grateful thanks to all who contributed.

Ken Fish
Property Convener

INTERVIEW WITH SUSAN JACKSON & BELINDA SANDERSON

I What made you decide to set up the Youth Club?

B&S It was mainly so that the teenagers (S1-S3 pupils) would continue to have a church connection. All the young people we have are very enthusiastic, they really like coming along. We feel too that it is so much better than hanging about the streets.

I How are things going at the Youth Club?

B&S Very well. There are now 41 names on the list, which is most encouraging. The Youth Club has grown beyond our expectations. We find that the young people are eager to do things. For example, when they heard about CHAS, 16 of them came along to Millport. They are now all involved in the Shoe Box appeal and this is the first time for some of them.

I What is your role at the Youth Club and in what sort of activities are the young people involved?

B&S We are here for guidance, not discipline. The young people here play badminton, football, table tennis. They like music and have enjoyed singing with someone playing the guitar. We are going to be having a traditional Christmas party with games and we are planning to go to the Carnival. We are organising a "Christmas cupcake bake off" and we will be part of the Christmas family service.

I How long have you been part of NMPC?

B 15 years

S 18 years

I What do you think are the priorities for NMPC just now?

- B&S** To encourage younger people, young families to come along. We would love to go back to the “busy” days of before, when the church halls were full of Sunday school pupils.
- I** What changes, if any, would you like to see within our church?
- B&S** We feel that there is more fellowship now; it has become better in the last few years. However, we would really like to inspire more young people, and have more of a mix of young people in the church. Perhaps we could make greater use of the parish grouping. We would also welcome support from presbytery.
- I** What are your interests and how do you enjoy spending your free time?
- B** I am involved in MPS PTA, and I help my husband with the Scouts.
- S** My hobbies are family related and I love baking!

BOYS' BRIGADE

The Company continues to run well with good numbers attending at all ages. Almost 50 Boys from the 79th attended the Remembrance Service on 13th November, and with the Guides, Brownies, Scouts and Cubs, made up a total of almost 200 all ranks parading to the Church. This is the biggest turnout that we have had for many years, and our thanks go to the other organisations for helping make this a successful parade.

On a related note, two of our seniors, Blair Cunningham and Glen Malcolm, gave up some of their time to assist with ‘selling’ poppies in The Avenue. This will be counted towards their voluntary service for their Queen’s Badge.

On 12th Nov, 11 Boys entered the District Swimming Gala. All the Boys did really well, winning a number of individual medals, resulting in the 79th winning the District Trophy. Saturday 26th Nov saw our Junior Section attempting to retain the District Unknown Factor competition that they won last year. We had 11 Boys entered, who competed in teams of 3, (other companies had odd numbers, so combined teams were made up, and who took part in quizzes, puzzles, and physical challenges. Fun was the aim of the day, but I can report that two of our teams gained joint 1st place, and hence brought the trophy back to Newton Mearns. In the individual sections for P4 Simon Fraser was 1st and Adam Inglis 2nd, for P5 Matthew McGoldrick was 1st, and for P6 Adam Ladadaje (who stepped up a year) was 2nd. Well done to all the boys who represented the Junior Section.

The Company Section has had a busy month. It started with an activity which the company have not been involved in for a number of years.

Stuart Walker has been attending the Battalion pipe band drumming course this session, and entered the Novice Drumming Competition, where he won the gold medal. Maybe this is the start of things to come!!

At the Battalion Swimming Gala, we had 4 Boys represent the Company. As this was a Battalion event, there were some very strong swimmers. Stuart and Robbie Walker acquitted themselves well at Intermediate and Junior level, while Lewis McGuire picked up a silver, and Blair Cunningham a bronze at Senior level.

Next up was the National Master team competition, where we travelled to Coatbridge on the 19th to take on 6 other teams from the central belt. Our young team, oldest 15, was up against stiff opposition, (age limit for National comps is 18), but performed really well. As the rounds went on, and with 2 to qualify for the next round, we were 2nd, then 3rd, then 2nd again,.... (the suspense is building)...., then 2nd equal, before finally finishing 3rd on 60 points, only 4 points behind. Still we had a chance to qualify as a highest loser, but again we just missed out with the cut off being set at 63 points. However there is still good news – they got 10/10 in the Bible Knowledge round. 😊

The District badminton competition took place on Monday 21st Nov. We had 11 Boys represent the Company, in all 3 age groups, junior intermediate & senior. Again all the Boys had a great night, and medals went to Connor Daniels (Sen. gold), Callum Stewart Jun. bronze), and Greg Burnett (Jun. gold). Well done to all who took part.

Finally, to drill and the first competition(s) of the year, which took place on the 25th. Again it was a young squad who represented the Company in the Squad Drill and Championship Drill competitions. The standard was high, but with two great efforts on the night, the Boys brought both trophies back to the 79th for another year.

More news next month.

Robbie Sutherland, Captain, (0141 639 9515)

**“MINDFULNESS” MEDITATION – 8 WEEK COURSE
COMMENCING 1ST FEBRUARY 2012 – Newton Mearns Parish Church**

Mindfulness Meditation coupled with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a great way to gain clarity of thought, improve concentration and to bring peace to your daily life. It can also help with pain management, anxiety and depression.

How do we do it? Throughout the 8 week course you will learn daily meditative practice along with open discussions around the barriers to practice to help you along the way. It's as simple as that!

Here is what Russ Berrie says about Mindfulness Meditation:

"I have learned to be happy where I am. I have learned that locked into the moments of each day are all the joys, the peace, the fibres of the cloth we call life. The meaning is in the moment. There is no other way to find it. You feel what you allow yourself to feel, each and every moment of the day". *Russ Berrie.*

Deborah Gray and I have been practising mindfulness meditation for some time now and would like to pass on the benefits to others. Deborah has a degree in Psychology and I have a Post Graduate Diploma in Counselling. Together, we will support and guide you through this new way of being.

If you are interested in attending the next course, please do get in touch. I look forward to meeting you there.

Why not take this opportunity to buy as a Christmas gift for someone!

Warm wishes

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CROSSTALK

Please note that you can receive Crosstalk by email, if you would like to take advantage of this then please send an e-mail to the office at: office@churchatthecross.org.uk. Also, if you change your email address, then please notify the office.

The first issue of Crosstalk in 2012 will be February.

The next edition of Crosstalk will be available for distribution on
Sunday 5th February 2012.

The **DEADLINE DATE** for articles is Friday 27th January 2012.

Contact the church office on **639 7373** or e-mail us at

office@churchatthecross.org.uk

www.churchatthecross.org.uk

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