



KILTARLITY AND WARDLAW CHURCHES
The Parishioner



THE VIEW FROM GOD'S LITTLE ACRE

Dear Revellers in the Year of our Lord 2010, may it be a year of grace to you !

I came across this beautiful description at a funeral of a young man not long ago. I hope you will find it as moving as I did. It speaks not only of death but of the quality of life that we might all covet in this year and every year....

"He has achieved success, has lived well, laughed often, and loved much, has gained the respect of intelligent men, and the love of little children. Who has filled his niche and accomplished his task, who has left the world better than he found it, who has never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who has always looked for the best in others and who gives the best that he had; whose life was an inspiration, whose memory a benediction."

A Prayer for a New Year by Thomas Merton:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am doing your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe the desire to please you does in fact please you, and I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing, and hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore, I will trust you always though sometimes I may seem lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear for you are ever with me and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Through Jesus Christ our fellow traveller. *Amen*

Happy journeying in 2010

WILLIS



Your opinion would be appreciated – see page 18 thank you

Church of Scotland statement on dissent and complaint

The General Assembly have agreed a moratorium on further public discussion of some of the issues debated this year. This note describes the decisions made, to help congregations to understand them.

The General Assembly have set up a Special Commission chaired by a Scottish judge to examine questions relating to homosexuality and the ordination and induction of ministers. The Commission will report to the General Assembly of 2011. Meanwhile, the Assembly have instructed the Courts and committees of the Church to avoid making public statements on that particular issue, while leaving open the possibility of more general discussion. Individuals too are asked to behave in the spirit of this decision.

The Assembly heard a case involving the Presbytery of Aberdeen, which had previously been brought before the Church's Courts. The Assembly approved the procedures followed by the Presbytery, and therefore decided to allow the Call to the charge of Aberdeen: Queen's Cross to be sustained. However, further decisions relating to ordinations and inductions in similar circumstances are not to be made until the Special Commission has reported.

Church of Scotland Special Commission on Same-Sex Relationships and the Ministry

The General Assembly of 2009 appointed a Special Commission with this remit:

"A Special Commission composed of nine persons, representative of the breadth and unity of the Church, to consult with all Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions and to prepare a study on Ordination and Induction to the Ministry of the Church of Scotland in the light of the issues

(a) addressed in a Report welcomed by the General Assembly of 2007: 'A challenge to unity: same-sex relationships as an issue in theology and human sexuality', and

(b) raised by the case of Aitken et al v the Presbytery of Aberdeen,

and to report to the General Assembly of 2011."

Proposed method of working

The Special Commission will prepare a short consultation paper which will invite Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to express their views on the questions which the Commission considers arise from its remit and the divisions in the Church which have led to its appointment.

It is hoped the consultation paper will be sent out by the end of February 2010 and to have a consultation period until the end of May 2010, during which the Commission will expect every Presbytery and Kirk Session to hold a special meeting in order to prepare a response.

The Commission will spend the latter part of the year in analysing the responses and preparing its report for the General Assembly of 2011.

Membership of the Commission

Rev John Chalmers - Pastoral Adviser and Associate Secretary (Ministries Support and Development) Ministries Council.

Mrs Ruth Innes - Advocate, member of Palmerston Place Church.

Very Rev Dr Sheilagh Kesting - former Moderator of General Assembly, Secretary and Ecumenical Officer, Ecumenical Relations Committee.

Rev Dr Donald MacEwan - Minister of Largoward linked with St Monans, secretary of the working group which produced "A Challenge to Unity."

Rev Dr Angus Morrison - Minister of Stornoway St Columba, immediate past Convener of Mission and Discipleship Council, also a member of the working group.

Rev James Stewart - Minister of Perth: Letham St Marks, with experience of a previous commission.

Rev Professor Allan J Torrance - Professor of Systematic Theology, University of St Andrews.

Miss Kim Wood - Student at Dundee University; a Youth Representative to the General Assembly from Presbytery of Glasgow.

Convener - The Hon. Lord Hodge (Patrick Hodge) - Court of Session Judge; former Procurator of the Church.

Clerk to the Special Commission - Rev W Peter Graham - former Clerk to the Presbytery of Edinburgh.

Kiltarlity – Flower Calendar 2010

You may enjoy arranging flowers or wish to place flowers in the church for a special anniversary or occasion. Or you may prefer to donate flowers and have someone else to do the arranging.

The flower list for 2010 is now on our church notice board for you to enter your name and telephone number against the dates of your choice. Flowers last well in the church and it is feasible to book a two week slot.

New donors / arrangers are welcome. Any further information, please contact : Barbara Wilton (741 352) or Marie Harvey (741 328). A church key is available from Barbara Wilton if required.

Grateful thanks to all our flower donors / arrangers who made our church welcoming with their beautiful flowers in 2009.

The Parishioner Newsletter Issue 23 - January 2010
CANDLES and CAROLS SERVICE at WARDLAW CHURCH on 27 DECEMBER 2009

This service was scheduled for the Sunday before Christmas, but the snow and ice left members of the choir stranded that day, therefore, this inspiring event was held 7 days later.



A special word of appreciation is extended to the members of the Celestial Choir under the masterful direction of Mary Robb for the outstanding quality of music they provided for our Candlelight and Carol Service on the 27th December. We very much enjoyed the playing of Richard Cunningham, our guest organist on the night. A word of thanks to those who provided and served the mulled wine and the mince pies after the service. It was a wonderful evening, and the turnout was most encouraging despite the weather. The members of the choir are :

Debbie Ross	Avril Marr	Ethna Ferguson	Elizabeth Piesse
Marie Harvey	Margaret West	Pat Jones	Sarah Cameron
Mary Bell	Lynn Fraser	Julie Fraser	Margo MacIennan
Jacqui Wilton	Ellenor Thomas	Wilma Williamson	Maureen Matheson
Jean MacLean	Vivien Reid	Willis Jones	Ian Morrison
George Fraser	Malcolm Fraser	Jock Fraser	

Charlie Gallacher and Peter Collinson from Crown Church, Inverness made guest appearances on the night

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS at WARDLAW CHURCH

We have been very encouraged by the response to our Evening Prayers in Wardlaw Church. The short service begins at 7:00 p.m. and finishes by 7:30 p.m. Prayers are both free and fixed. Prayer for individuals and their needs, the church, world issues, and whatever is on the minds and hearts of those present. Evening Prayer in Wardlaw Church will take place next on 13 January and then on 27 January 2010.

You are most welcome to join us for this time of prayer.

THANK YOU

The editors of The Parishioners wish to thank all contributors who sent in items for publication during 2009. Please continue sending those contributions to us at iainandrosemary@btinternet.com throughout 2010, or handing in your contribution to Willis Jones, Marie Harvey, or any of the Elders of the Churches.

BURNS SUPPER

To celebrate Rabbe Burns, our National Bard, on Saturday 23 January 2010 at 7.30 p.m., at Brockies Lodge Hotel, Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Parish Churches will combine their efforts to honour our national bard. This is the second year we have organised this celebration, and it is highly recommended that you book your place without delay. The cost will be again £12.50, and, to avoid crowding the room as we did last year, numbers are restricted to a maximum of 100 diners. The available places will be split between Kiltarlity and Kirkhill until Monday 11 January, after which places will be available on a "first come first served" basis. We had an absolutely splendid evening last year, and look forward to another convivial gathering. Please do come !

The menu is as follows:

Dram served on arrival.

cock a Leekie soup

cockburns haggis, neeps and tattles

(vegetarian haggis available)

(All haggis served with whisky cream sauce served separately in a sauce boat)

cranachan with shortbread rounds

Tea / coffee with clootie dumpling

Ian Morrison will propose the toast to the Immortal Memory of the Bard. There will be appropriate Burns songs and readings throughout the evening.

Places may be booked with Rosemary Mortimer (782 648) at Kirkhill or via Marie Harvey (741 328) at Kiltarlity.

Payment at the time of booking your place would be very helpful, as we would like to settle the account with Brockies Lodge at the earliest opportunity after the event.

Please make any cheques payable to Church of Scotland Kirkhill.

Beware the 4th of January

On Monday 4th January, don't eat your lunch too noisily, keep your voice down on the phone, and for heaven's sake, don't sniff ! You risk really irritating your colleagues if you do. The first Monday in January is reckoned the most stressful day of the year, and researchers have found that annoying personal habits are most noticed then. It is a day of when millions of us struggle with rising tension, soaring stress levels and increased blood pressure.

The reasons are easy to find: Christmas festivities are finally over and it is time to return to work. The car needs scraping, and it is cold and miserable outside. That is depressing enough if you had a good Christmas, but suppose you had a terrible Christmas ? More people visit divorce lawyers on the first Monday in January than at any other time of the year.

Also, January is the month when we pay for December, and fight the urge to keep spending in the sales.... real economic gloom can set in. All in all, don't be surprised if you return to work feeling fragile.

PAT'S CORNER

My little corner of the world has been in Kiltarlity this December. This has been such a delight. I was involved in a production of the Sunday School called "The D.I.Y. Christmas Crèche." It was a time to get catch up with the adults as well as the children of the Tomnacross Church. I was especially interested in getting reacquainted with globe trotting Fiona Ferguson. Her newest venture is with "Save the Children" located in London. Her story renewed my recession weary soul.

Some of you may know that I am a closet playwright. Because of that I was amazed and thrilled that the Tomnacross Sunday School asked me for a script and put me on the production team for their nativity pageant. The major players on the production team were inspired by Linda MacKenzie, Maggie Third, Anne Buchan, and Ellenor Thomas, all experienced producers of Christmas plays. The hands on work of organising, practising, costuming and staging were shared by Ruth MacKenzie, Annaliese Garvie, and Louise Watson. I enjoyed working on sound production and interpretation of lines. The TCC and the children were the stars. They braved the ice and snow to get there an hour ahead of time and proved to be energetic, animated, flexible and well behaved. Every single actor and actress made the story come alive. Well done Tomnacross Sunday School and TCC. We look forward to great things from you.

Fiona Ferguson brings joy to the world whatever she does and wherever she does it. Presently Fiona is working for the Save the Children Agency .Fiona has some good news for a weary world. She has recently become a member of the media team and deals with public relations for their African project. The motto for the educational team is "Everyone deserves an education." Save the Children has teamed up with other charities at Christmas time to encourage love for the planet, by discouraging food waste. This coalition sponsored a feeding of the 5,000 day at Trafalgar Square in December. Given away was produce bags for the poor. These bags were filled with vegetables which supermarkets would not accept because they were not so attractive. However, they were nutritious and nutrition was the focus. Many happy people went away not only with bags of food, but with helpful tips about avoiding waste in their cooking. Watch this space for more information about Fiona's projects.

Thanks, Kiltarlity for a great December. There is never a dull moment in your place.

Happy New Year,

Pat

Guild Meeting - Tuesday, 12 January 2010

The next Guild meeting at Wardlaw Church is on Tuesday, 12 January 2010, starting at 2:30 p.m. This will be a Bible Study of Micah 6:8 *"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you ? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

This meeting is open to all members and friends of the Wardlaw and Kiltarlity Churches.

If transport is required to attend the meeting, please contact

Margaret (831 518), or Rosemary (782 648), or Elizabeth (831 665).

Pitter pattering around the parish

- ▶ On Sunday, 29 November there was a very successful Advent Dinner for Kirkhill in the Community Centre. Many thanks to Iain Marr for organising the film show with Willis's assistance, and to Robert (Waddie) and Lil Wilson for entertaining the guests as they arrived. A massive thank you to the maitre d' Flora Morrison for organising a five star meal, and all her happy band of chefs, who supplied, cooked and presented all the food. All the food, drink and consumables were donated by members of the congregation and £350 was donated to the Kirkhill Church development fund.
- ▶ On 10 January 2010, David Garvie and Ellenor Thomas of Kiltarlity Church will be ordained to the office of the eldership. We welcome David and Ellenor to the Kirk Session, and wish them well in their ministry among us. The Rev. Reg. Campbell, Interim Moderator will officiate at the ordination.
- ▶ During the month of December 2009, the following were admitted to membership in their Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Parish Churches:

Kiltarlity Parish Church

Anne Buchan, Baptism / Profession of Faith
John Fraser, Profession of Faith
Amanda and Ian Campbell, Profession of Faith
Anne Wood, Profession of Faith
Davey Wilson, Profession of Faith
Gena MacLean, Profession of Faith
Heather and Alex Jamieson, Profession of Faith
Kath MacRitchie, Profession of Faith

Kirkhill Parish Church

Russell Dobson, Baptism / Profession of Faith
Margaret Birkbeck, transfer
Lisa Quinn, Baptism / Profession of Faith
Lorna Cameron, Profession of Faith
Tracey Fraser-Lee, transfer
Heather MacKenzie, Baptism / Profession of Faith

We commend these new members of our extended family and to your warm welcome and friendship.
Welcome aboard.

- ▶ Eilidh, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Rutherford of 3 Post Office Brae, Kiltarlity was made a "Child of the Covenant" by Holy Baptism on the 6 December 2009 in the Kiltarlity Parish Church.
- ▶ The sympathy of the Kirkhill congregation is extended to Emily Wilson in the loss of her mother Madge just before Christmas. We remember the entire family in our prayers.
- ▶ The Presbytery of Inverness has encouraged the churches within its bounds to set aside a specific time for what's being called "Souper Sunday." The Wardlaw Church will worship in the Kirkhill Community Centre on Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 10:30 a.m. to be followed by soup and sandwiches. The service theme will be "Do not be afraid – I am with you !" (*Isaiah* 43:5). The collection will be sent to the Church of Scotland HIV / AIDS project. Any assistance offered with the soup and sandwiches will be gladly received, please contact Maris Elkin (831 590)

The Southern Cross

Three ancient men in Bethlehem's cave,
With awful wonder stand;
A voice had called them from their grave,
In some far Eastern land...

Pale Japhet bows the knee with gold,
Bright Sem sweet incense brings,
And Cham the myrrh his fingers hold:
Lo! The three Orient kings.

Types of the total earth, they hailed
The signal's starry frame;
Shuddering with second life, they quailed
At the Child Jesu's Name.

Then slow the Patriarchs turned and trod,
And this their parting sigh:
"Our eyes have seen the living God,
And now – once more to die."
by Robert Stephen Hawker 1804-75

Day and Night Blessing

May God's blessing be yours,
And good be it sent;
May Christ's blessing be yours,
And good be it meant;
Spirit's blessing be yours,
For life's good intent,
Day arising indoors,
Night lying down spent.
Ancient Celtic Prayer

A Prayer for Humility

God I pray you'll grant me
A fair share of humility,
Let me live my life to be
With diffidence and modesty.

Be gracious Lord and teach to me
The meaning of servility,
Open my eyes and let me see
The world does not revolve round me.

Let me serve you in all I do
My faith and love of you renew
Let me recall what is so true
That I am nothing, without you
by Colin Hammacott

Overheard on the wise men's journey to Bethlehem

"OK, we got the gold. We got the frankincense. We got the myrrh. Think we should get something more practical, like nappies, maybe?"

" I thought this was supposed to be a weekend trip... my wife is going to be furious..."

"All this star-gazing from the back of a camel is making me sick."

"What's so WISE about wandering around the desert for three years ?"

"You know, I used to go to school with a girl name Beth Lehem."

That's telling

Young Jimmie finished his Christmas holiday and headed back to school. Only two days later his teacher was on the phone, telling his mother that he was misbehaving. "Wait a minute!" protested Jimmie's mum. "I had him here for two weeks over the Christmas break, and I never once rang YOU when he misbehaved!"

Greening of Kiltarlity Church

What an evening it was for the "Greening of the Church" in Kiltarlity on Friday 11th December. It was a gourmet's delight in the standing room only turnout. Everybody took part in the decorating of the church and it was gorgeous. The caricatures of Willis and Pat on the wall would take one's breath away (permanently!). The caricatures were drawn by Sarah Ferguson following a prompt from her mother-in-law. Marie Harvey organized the decorating section and Ethna Ferguson organized the food department. The fun of the evening was that everyone took part. The elders made the wine, and Willis and Pat have never seen American flags decorating a Christmas tree before. Thanks to all for a lovely event.



1 January - The naming of Jesus

It is Matthew and Luke who tell the story of how the angel instructed that Mary's baby was to be named Jesus - a common name meaning 'saviour'. The Church recalls the naming of Jesus on 1 January - eight days after 25 December (by the Jewish way of reckoning days). For in Jewish tradition, the male babies were circumcised and named on their eighth day of life. For early Christians, the *name* of Jesus held a special significance. In Jewish tradition, names expressed aspects of personality. Jesus' name permeated his ministry, and it does so today: we are baptised in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), we are justified through the name of Jesus (1 Cor 6:11); and God the Father has given Jesus a name above all others (Phil 2:9). All Christian prayer is through 'Jesus Christ our Lord', and it is 'at the name of Jesus' that one day every knee shall bow.

6 January - Epiphany

On 6 January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus. But who were these wise men ? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were they called kings - by a church father, Tertullian. Another church father, Origen, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given. Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things. Since the eighth century, the magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.

25 January - The Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things ! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then on his way to Damascus Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him, literally, in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed. Saul changed overnight. He took a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ. He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote many epistles to the young churches he founded - and thus wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: he was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in AD 64, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many millions of people down the centuries.

26 January - Timothy and Titus

Timothy and Titus are the saints for you if you've been a Christian for some time, and now realize that God wants you to move into some form of leadership. A daunting prospect!

The books of First and Second Timothy and Titus are what are known as the three pastoral letters, where Paul writes to ministers in charge of important churches instead of writing to the churches themselves. Paul gives both Timothy and Titus explicit instructions for how to shepherd the sheep in their care. Timothy had been given the responsibility of the church at Ephesus, and Titus the care of the church at Crete.

Both Timothy and Titus were young men, and both felt quite daunted at the task ahead of them! Timothy, half Jewish, had met Paul when he was still a child, living with his mother Eunice at Lystra. Paul had come to their city and preached, and they had both become Christians. Timothy had then accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey - a great training experience. But experience is given to us so that we might in turn become productive - and in due course Paul entrusted the vastly important church of Ephesus into Timothy's care. This church was so vibrant in its faith that within 50 years so many Ephesians became Christians that the city's pagan temples were almost forsaken. A huge responsibility!

Titus was a gentile, almost certainly another convert of Paul's. Paul had used Titus as a trouble-shooter with the Corinthians, and when Titus was successful in that, gave him a real bit of trouble: the church at Crete. Again, Titus served his Lord faithfully, even in this most difficult of situations.

So if you are going to attempt any leadership for God, why not make time to read the three Pastoral Epistles first? They have been an invaluable handbook for Christian leaders for 20 centuries, and are full of spiritual wisdom and good common sense. If they worked for Timothy and Titus, they may work for you as well!

Timothy became the first bishop of Ephesus, and was finally martyred when he opposed pagan festivals (probably in honour of Dionysius). He was killed by stones and clubs, easily to hand during the pagan festival of Katagogia. His supposed relics were translated to Constantinople in 356.

Titus went on to become the first Bishop of Crete, and is believed to have died there, though history does not tell us how. His relics are supposed to be buried in Crete, except for his head, which was allegedly taken to Venice in 823.

Both Timothy and Titus were good and faithful servants, and could look back on lives well spent. Imagine - one day you will stand before the Lord, as well, and say: "This is what I did with the leadership role you entrusted to me. Was I a good and faithful servant, too?"

On how to mix town and country – or not

Wardlaw Manse
Kirkhill

My dear Nephew Bill,

Your idea for our two churches to hold a combined New Year's Day walk was an admirable one, although I could sense a certain clash of cultures when your party arrived at the starting point with boots, waterproofs and GPS equipment. Our own group, rather anticipating tottering between tea shops, with a little light shopping in between, sported tweed suits, shopping bags and furled umbrellas.

Even the two sets of dogs seemed bemused with one another, with your Westies and King Charles spaniels making enough noise to scare all the wildlife in the county, and our Retrievers puzzled why the pheasants were not dropping from the sky. Dear Miss McDonald's miniature poodle, with the painted toenails, will probably need life-long counselling; the furthest she had walked previously was from her bed to beside the dining room table.

The electronic navigation equipment brought by members of your group made me think that if only the wise men had had these blessings, they wouldn't have had to follow anything as unreliable as a star. Although I suppose that instead of gold, frankincense and myrrh, they would then have arrived with an MP3 player, a mobile phone which would have been obsolete before Jesus' first birthday and a CD of Madonna's greatest hits.

I do concede that our two congregations learned much from one another. Our ladies were most interested to hear about the latest in personal trainers, while yours discovered how to bring a pan of jam to a rolling boil. Your men seemed impressed to hear of squirrel shooting while ours gathered useful tips for caravanning abroad. And poor Miss McDonald's poodle learned that the great outdoors was a parallel and hostile universe.

By mid-afternoon, however, the balance of power shifted. When the leader of the walk from your group lost his SatNav, our members felt the need to assert themselves. The gentlemen navigated using wind direction, moss on trees and angles of the sun, while our ladies, with tweed skirts furled somewhat higher than one would have wished, showed yours how to wade through peat bog without complaining.

Perhaps town and country really can learn from one another. But if Major Fraser's wife arrives for Worship next Sunday sporting the latest gym gear, you will have much to answer for.

Your loving uncle,

WILLIS

Diary dates for JANUARY 2010

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 3 January | Worship at WARDLAW at 10:30 a.m. and KILTARLITY at 12 noon. |
| 10 January | Worship at WARDLAW at 10:30 a.m. and KILTARLITY at 12 noon. |
| 12 January | Guild meeting - Bible study - Wardlaw Church at 2:30 p.m. |
| 13 January | Prayer meeting at Wardlaw Church at 7:00 p.m. |
| 17 January | Worship at KIRKHILL COMMUNITY HALL at 10:30 a.m. and KILTARLITY at 12 noon. |
| 23 January | Robbie Burns Supper at Brockies, Kiltarlity at 7:30 p.m. |
| 24 January | Worship at WARDLAW at 10:30 a.m. and KILTARLITY at 12 noon. |
| 27 January | Prayer meeting at Wardlaw Church at 7:00 p.m. |
| 31 January | Worship at WARDLAW at 10:30 a.m. and KILTARLITY at 12 noon. |

Using a diary to pray in 2010

Life without time for prayer and reflection can easily spin out of control. With so many pressures and demands pushing in from all directions these days, the need to step back and find ways to commune with the Divine is essential. Using a diary to pray is not just a resource for writers. There is no wrong way to do it. In this age of technology, it may be a much welcomed luxury to engage in writing several longhand pages each day you can carve out the time. Whether your words take the form of your own stream-of-consciousness, or a letter to God or to yourself, listen. Pay attention. Be honest. Pray.

Diaries are windows. They allow you to see a glimpse within the deepest part of you, and to let light shine into the darkest corners of your soul. These pages (and God) can handle anything you write in them. Try trauma, drama and self-pity. Then listen to the soothing echo of release. This is prayer. Try tantrums, confusion and anger. Then listen and let go. This is prayer. Try questions, hopes and dreams. Then listen and let your soul rest. This is prayer. Try gratitude, praise and wonder. Then listen and let yourself celebrate. This is prayer.

When you take time for inner reflection and waiting, quieting your inner self before God, you will see and hear the things of God. Turning your attention away from outer concerns, you will enter into light and discover God's kingdom within. Once things are visible and committed to the realm of conscious thought, then light can shine on its pages and offer a respite. All witnesses will be present – your heart, your thoughts, your spirit, your mind, your emotions, and God. The words in these pages prove you are human, alive, for better or for worse. They create honesty with yourself and intimacy with God.

Prayer is a song of the heart and inside these words will be woven melodies of thought and explorations of discord, creating harmony and a wholeness of spirit, true freedom. A diary is a meeting place, a tool for prayer, where God can fill your memories with reminders of his faithful presence, enlighten understanding with healing, and centre your heart with a steady peace.

With thanks to Lynne Chandler of the Bible Reading Fellowship.

Wardlaw Church Financial News

The collection at the Armistice Service on 8 November 2009 raised £136 for the Earl Haig Fund.

The collection at the Eve of Christmas service raised £185 for the Inverness Care Shelter Project which is part of The Churches' Group on Homelessness of which the Church of Scotland is a member.

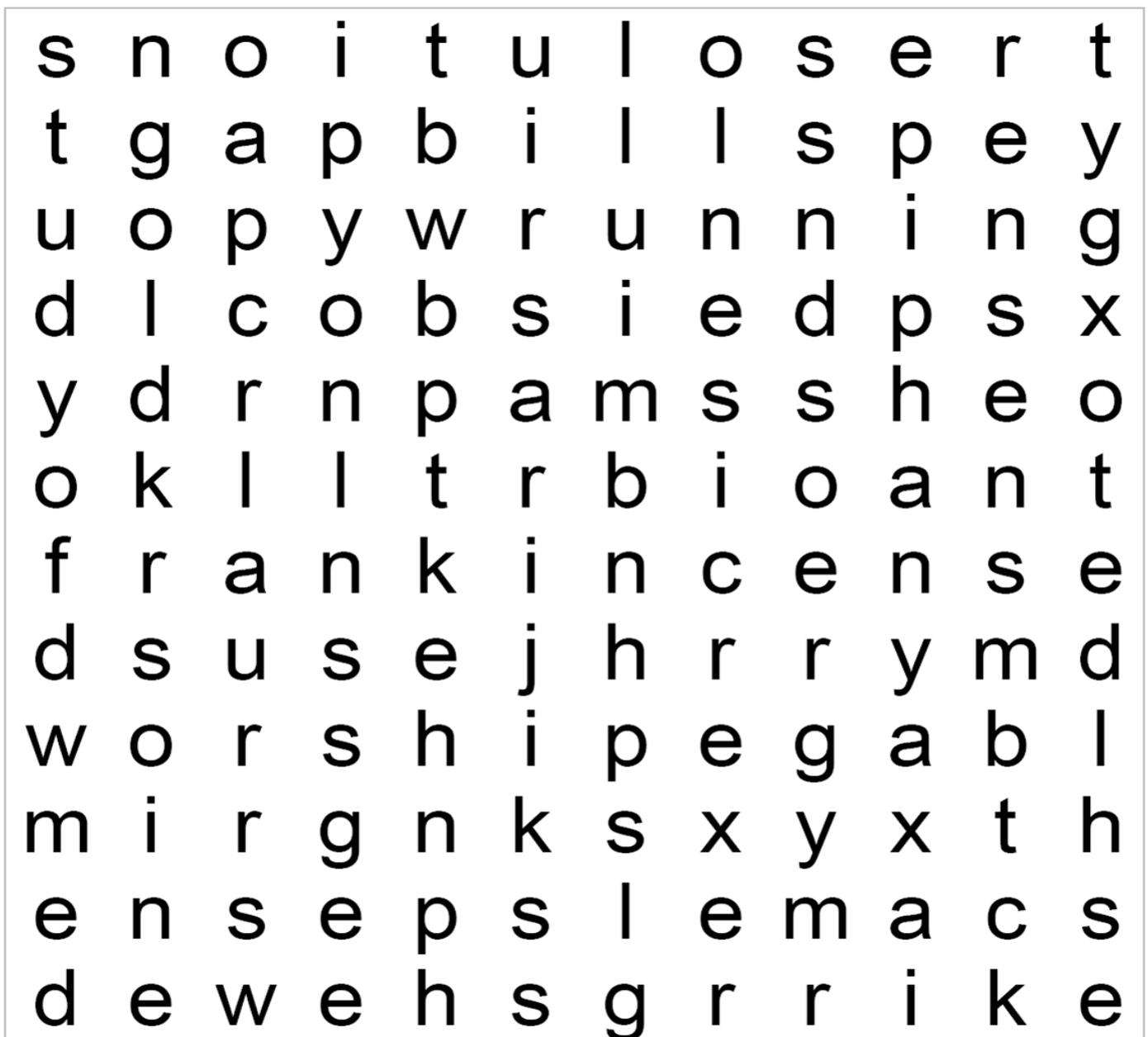
The tax Wardlaw Church has reclaimed from the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for the year in respect of the Gift Aid scheme given by tax payer's amounts to **£1,542**. This again shows how beneficial it is to the church for tax payers to give using this scheme. In that context may we once again commend the Gift Aid scheme to you ? It is so simple ! Provided you pay income tax and sign a simple [once only] form, because the church is a charity each treasurer can reclaim from HMRC the tax already suffered on your contribution. This means each £1.00 = £1.25, another miracle ! Those eligible who have not yet signed up should get in touch with John Finlayson, and he will be happy to attend to the paperwork.

Kiltarlity Church members should contact Ian Morrison without delay to join the Gift Aid scheme.

WORDSEARCH

January brings us Epiphany and a New Year – 2010. What resolutions have you made for 2010? We all have dreams and plans for the year ahead - here's hoping that yours come true! How many words can you find that have to do with the start of a New Year?

Epiphany	Wise	Men	Camels	Baby	Jesus	Star
Herod	Worship	Gold	Frankincense	Myrrh	New	Resolutions
Bills	Diet	Exercise	Work	Study	Running	Gym
Detox	Ski	Alps	Mountains			



Kirkhill Sunday School News

Primary School Age Group

Classes for primary age children will run from Sunday 17 January to 21 March 2010 inclusive (except 14 February).

Secondary School Age Group

In order to find out how we can meet the needs of the young folks in the church they have completed a questionnaire, the feedback from which is a guide to shaping the provision for the young folks. Here is how things are looking as a result of this questionnaire.

Bible teaching and discussion The introductory course on Creation, The Fall, Exodus, Incarnation and Resurrection is now complete. The group will meet again in The Manse from 21 February to 21 March 2010 inclusive to look at The Bible, Prayer, Worship and Church. In the meantime we would encourage the young folk to attend the morning service at church when they can.

Helping others. The young folk are keen on the idea of fundraising and after a few false starts it is now firmed on offering tea and coffee with home baking after the morning service on Sunday January 10th. The aim is to raise funds for Blythswood. We hope as many of the congregation as possible can attend.

Fun stuff. A plan is beginning to come together for a day out to Gairloch which could include walking, beach stuff, rock climbing and eating food. This would be for all children and young people in the congregation. Provisionally the dates are Saturday 10th or 17th or 24 April. This would require some support from parents. We would like as many as possible of the young ones to attend so please speak to Margaret Birkbeck or Flora Morrison to let us know if your children would like to come on this trip. When we get an idea about numbers we can get on with firming up plans

Open the Book at Kirkhill Primary School

Have you ever thought that children in schools might be missing out on what the Bible has to show them?

Open the Book is a programme of themed and dramatised Bible stories each about 10 minutes long which we are eagerly looking forward to presenting to the P1-P3 children of Kirkhill Primary each Tuesday afternoon from mid February. A team of volunteer storytellers will use drama, mime, props and costumes to present the Bible stories in ways which are lively, engaging and informative.

We are looking for additional volunteers from either Kirkhill or Kiltarlity. So, if you would think you would like to get involved and want to find out more please get in touch with Flora Morrison. Flora is coordinating this project and you can either speak to her at Kirkhill Church, or by telephone 831 373. There are no limits on age, gender or size ! It will take about 1 hour of your time per week during term time. In addition to doing the presentation there is a vital role in making props and costumes so if you have these skills and would like to volunteer, Flora would love to hear from you.

KIRKHILL CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - 6 DECEMBER 2009.

This meeting of the congregation was held Sunday, 6 December 2009 after morning worship. The purpose was to review the recommendations of the steering committee and ascertain the preference of the congregation. The Rev. Reg Campbell presided over the congregational meeting.

Simon Fraser spoke on behalf of the Deacon's Court and the steering committee, and went through the 10 proposals listed on the handout that was issued to the congregation on the 22 November 2009. The proposals for the disabled toilet and the repairs to all the church floor areas are essential works that need to be carried out irrespective of which refurbishment / upgrade decisions are taken.

The costs attached to the proposals were not available at this meeting, but it was felt that an outline agreement on which proposals were agreeable needed to be known and then detailed costing would be sought. Initial research would indicate that any Church of Scotland grants for any of these proposals would be difficult to secure. The Church of Scotland has already given a grant of £30k to Kirkhill Church to enable the roof to be repaired and to prepare reports and drawings for refurbishment and upgrade options.

It has become apparent from congregation feedback, at the meeting and conversations outwith the meeting, that the major area of concern is the question of whether we replace the pews with chairs, or put the pews back after the floor has been repaired. In order to give a clearer guidance / preference to the Kirk Session, Deacons Court, and the steering committee, please complete the simple survey below. When completed, please tear off the survey, and place in The Parishioner survey box in the church entrance by Sunday, 24 January 2010.



IMPORTANT - KIRKHILL ONLY - PEWS vs. SEATS

On the matter of possibly replacing the pews with chairs, what would be your personal preference ?
Please circle your preferred option:

ALL PEWS

ALL SEATS

NO PREFERENCE

Is this the preference of more than one churchgoer in your household ? If so, how many?



"We're looking for something to help us survive our church's early morning Winter services"

Wardlaw Church Flowers

If you wish to put flowers in the Church on a particular Sunday that is special to you, please enter your name and telephone number against the date(s) of your choice on the flower list calendar for 2010 in the church vestibule. Anne Lyle can be contacted on 831 453, if you wish her to choose and arrange your flowers. Alternatively you may give Anne money to buy flowers for "free" Sundays.

Should you wish to deal with the flowers yourself, do remember that arrangements are lovely but a simple bunch in one of the church vases will be more than acceptable.

Thank you to everyone who contributed with flowers or funds during the last year!

These glorious insults are from an era before the English language got boiled down to four letter words.

The exchange between Churchill and Lady Astor: She said, "If you were my husband I'd give you poison."
He said, "If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." - Winston Churchill

The February 2010 issue of The Parishioner will be published on Sunday, 31 January 2010

OPINION SURVEY

This issue of the Parishioner is the 23rd newsletter - and as we approach two years of distributing The Parishioner to Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Churches, it seems more than time to ask readers their opinions / feedback about the newsletter content and format and so on. So could you take a couple of minutes to answer the following questions, tear off this page, and put the completed sheet into the special box in the church entrance by Sunday, 24 January 2010. There is no need to put your name on the sheet, unless you would like an answer on a specific issue. Many thanks !

Please indicate (✓) your level of interest / enjoyment regarding the following regular features, with 1 indicating no interest at all, and 5 meaning you specially enjoy this item.

	1	2	3	4	5
View from God's Little Acres (Willis' letter)					
Pat's Corner					
Interim Moderator's letter / item					
Pitter Pattering news items					
Calendar / What's On					
Puzzles					
Church of Scotland / Christian info.					
Humourous items					
Items specific to your church					
General information e.g. Remembrance Day, Energy assistance, etc.					

If there is anything else you would like to comment upon to improve the newsletter, e.g. new topics to increase interest, different format, etc. ?

It would help if you could also let us know your thoughts on the following areas, please circle the answer that most reflects your opinion.

Frequency of issue Too often / Just right / Not often enough

Size of paper Too small / Just right / Too big

Size of print Too small / Just right / Too big

Tone of newsletter as a whole Too informal / Just right / Too formal

Availability of Parishioner I can always get one / My church runs out of copies

Balance of content Too much Kirkhill / Too much Kiltarlity / Just right

Do you pass on your copy to someone else, or get them a copy: Yes / No

Name (optional)