

GOOD NEWS!



The magazine of

ALE & TEVIOT UNITED CHURCH

Easter 2009

ALE & TEVIOT UNITED CHURCH

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Christian Aid Week 2009

Christian Aid Week is approaching, and once again I appeal to all residents of our parish, whatever your religious persuasion, to dig deep to help those who are least able to help themselves. As the world staggers through the alphabet of humanitarian crisis, from Australia to Zimbabwe, the generous goodwill of the people of the Scottish Borders is a shining light in the darkness.

Locally, 2008's **Christian Aid Week** – in spite of deepening financial pessimism – raised over £3,000. In offering grateful thanks to all who made this possible, I appeal for additional volunteers to collect door-to-door this year, in the hope – yes, and prayerful expectation – that, together, we will take one more step to **Make Poverty History**.

Ale & Teviot United Church of Scotland. Scottish Charity No. SC 016457



Writing these notes some weeks ahead of time, with snow and ice still blanketing the streets of Ancrum, I do trust that, by the time you read this, the warmer days of spring will have well and truly arrived, bringing with them the splash of vibrant colour that speaks of new life rising again from the barren chill of the winter months.

We managed to find a benign weekend to go to Ayr for a few days, coinciding with the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns, and that particular weekend was a major part of the *Year of Homecoming*, of which we have heard much. We at Ale & Teviot intend to tap into that theme by inviting people linked with the parish through baptism, or in any way at all, for a special *Homecoming Sunday* celebration.

For the Christ-follower, however, the concept of home is much more than a particular postcode, or a particular pile of bricks and mortar. There is a spiritual dimension : the Psalmist identified his greatest longing as to be in the house of the Lord all the days of his life [Psalm 27.4] ; from an early age, Jesus knew that his true “home” was in the house of the Lord [Luke 2.49]. No human being can ever be truly at home without the security of knowing God as our true Father.

Yet so many of us feel isolated from God. For many years, in “good” times, we felt no need of a personal relationship with Him, but when we are suddenly confronted by serious illness, or stressful situations at work or in the family, or the consequences of wrong decisions in the past, that is when we become all too aware of the God-shaped hole in our life, and we don’t know how to fix it.

This is precisely why Easter is Good News, not just for the *unco guid* and the “religious”, but even more so for the rest of us who know fine well that we’ve messed up and are in now in big trouble.

Paul wrote : *Christ redeemed us from that self-defeating, cursed life by absorbing it completely into himself. Do you remember the Scripture that says, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"?*

That is what happened when Jesus was nailed to the cross : He became a curse, and at the same time dissolved the curse. And now, because of that, the air is cleared and we can see that Abraham's blessing is present and available for non-Jews, too. We are all able to receive God's life, his Spirit, in and with us by believing — just the way Abraham received it. [Galatians 3.13f, The Message]

The purpose of Easter was to release humanity *from* the curse of our own disobedience to God, and release *in* us the blessing He delights to pour out on His people through His free, unmerited love and grace. Unfortunately, over the years, there has been much muddying of the waters as regards what is *blessing* and what is *curse*.

Let the Word of God speak the truth, whether the bleeding-heart commissars of political correctness like it or not! In Deuteronomy 28, we see that illness, poverty, fear, broken relationships and every kind of defeat and suffering are described as curses, the consequences of ignoring and disobeying God. By contrast, health, prosperity, peace, wholesome relationship and success are described as blessings, to be enjoyed by those who choose to love God and live by His Word.

Does this, then, mean that God sends the curses to punish people for doing wrong? Absolutely not! People have freedom to make choices, but people get the consequences of those choices. Just before typing this, I watched a TV picture of a man running across a railway level crossing, despite the flashing lights and descending barriers, just as a train was coming. He got hit by the train. Was this a punishment from God? No – it was the natural consequence of human stupidity.

Likewise, if someone chooses to smoke 40 cigarettes a day, eat junk food, and be a couch potato, his heart attack is not punishment from God, but the natural consequence of abusing his body – which the Bible calls *the temple of the Holy Spirit* [1 Corinthians 6.19].

The essential message of Easter is that God's will for your life is that you live in the fullness of His blessing, AND that because Jesus has taken the curse Himself on the cross, you CAN live in the blessing!

In 1 Peter 2.24f we read that : *Jesus used his servant body to carry our sins to the Cross so we could be rid of sin, free to live the right way. His wounds became your healing. You were lost sheep with no idea who you were or where you were going. Now you're named and kept for good by the Shepherd of your souls. [The Message].*

This Easter, in this Year of Homecoming, is the perfect time to come home to God through the shed blood of Jesus. It is the perfect time to receive freedom from the curses attaching to all your wrong choices of the past, the deliberate sins as well as the mistakes arising from carelessness and ignorance. It is the perfect time to step over into new life with Christ, a life of blessing, no longer under the curse.

Have you received bad news from the doctor? The blessing of Christ includes your healing! Are you still suffering guilt and condemnation for things you did years ago? The blessing of Christ includes your forgiveness! Are you still paying off debts from bad spending choices in the past? The blessing of God includes your prosperity!

Fasten your seat belt, because what I'm about to write may shock, amaze or even infuriate you. I don't write it to condemn or criticise in any way, but to encourage you to aim higher. If you are living with illness, stress, anxiety, bitterness, debt or poverty, you are living below the level of *life in abundance, to the full, till it overflows [John 10.10, Amplified Bible]* that Jesus suffered and died to give you!

I know some of us may choke on this teaching, especially the idea that wealth is a blessing. Believe me, this old Presbyterian struggled with it too – after all, didn't Jesus say something about camels and needles? [Matthew 19.24]. Proverbs 10.22 offers a clue to solve this riddle : *The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it [New International Version].* In 3 John 2 we find also : *I pray that you may prosper in every way and [that your body] may keep well, even as [I know] your soul keeps well and prospers. [Amplified Bible]*

How much clearer does it have to be for us to “get it”?! But we must bear in mind that God blesses His people so that we, in turn, can be a blessing. That is His best and highest will for our lives. As we see in the parable of the talents [Matthew 25], the more faithful we prove ourselves in the use of the resources He entrusts to us, the more He

will entrust us with. God is on the look-out for safe pairs of hands! God wants to know if He can trust us enough to pour out His blessing upon us, confident that it will not be abused in a selfish manner. When Jesus told His disciples to go out and preach the gospel, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons, he reinforced that command with a reminder of what He'd already done for them : *freely you have received, freely give [Matthew 10.8, NIV]*.

Selfishness is a blessing-blocker! It is selfishness that, as the Lord's reference to camels and needles indicates, can turn the blessing into a curse! Despite what you may have been told, health and wealth *are* good, and *are* of God ... but they *are* to be shared!

God doesn't heal us just so we can lie around all day and watch Sky Sports, without lifting a finger to help anybody else! God doesn't give us wealth so we can go on sprees to the BMW dealer or the designer outlet, and forget about our tithes and offerings for those less well off. God longs to release the blessing Jesus has bought and paid for on the cross, no problem – Galatians 3.13f – but are we ready to receive the blessing gratefully, use it prayerfully, and prove our faithfulness?

This Easter, you can receive and experience the very best that God has in store for His people, through the sacrifice Jesus made for you on the cross. You can know the joy of forgiveness and reconciliation, of healing and restoration, of deliverance from bondage to drink or drugs, over-eating or over-spending, dodgy magazines or websites.

It doesn't matter how long you've been far from your spiritual home in Jesus Christ. The Father will always rush to embrace a prodigal son or daughter and welcome you into your rightful, blood-bought place in the homestead of salvation and blessing. That is His greatest joy, made possible through His Son's greatest pain at Calvary.

I urge you not to miss out on God's plan to bless you in every way as you turn in faith and trust and love and humility to our Saviour Jesus.

Alexis and I join to pray that the healing, reconciling, forgiving love of Jesus will embrace you ALL like a warm blanket this joyful Eastertide.

Frank

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Proposed Crematorium for the Scottish Borders

Readers will be aware that the Kirk has been at the forefront of the campaign to establish a crematorium in the Borders – even though, alas, our original offer to provide the former Eckford Church for the purpose did not find favour. This is the text of a letter sent by Presbytery to Scottish Borders Council.

You may recall that I wrote to you in February 2007 enclosing a detailed submission by Presbytery in support of the provision of a crematorium for the Scottish Borders. At that time, Presbytery identified as the ideal location for this purpose an area bounded by Kelso, Jedburgh and St Boswells.

However, the matter was considered afresh at a meeting on 4 March 2009, when Presbytery noted, with much satisfaction, recent press announcements that Westerleigh plc, a private developer with a proven record of providing crematoria for relatively rural areas, were at an advanced stage of discussion with Scottish Borders Council to construct a crematorium near Melrose.

The following deliverances were approved unanimously :

- [1] *Presbytery welcomes the announcement that proposals are now in place for a crematorium in the Melrose area.*
- [2] *Presbytery urges Scottish Borders Council to continue to do all in their power to expedite the construction of a crematorium, as proposed.*
- [3] *Presbytery instructs the Clerk to notify Scottish Borders Council accordingly.*

In support of these deliverances, I would comment that, in our discussions with Westerleigh over the years, we have been much impressed by their professionalism and their attention to detail.

After the most recent conversation with a Westerleigh spokesman, we are confident that they have been assiduous in preparing their business plan for a crematorium. We also understand that they have, over the past 15 years or so, carefully inspected some 20 sites from the Berwickshire coast to Hawick, and that the Wairds site at Melrose is the first, and only, one that has met the logistical requirements. It may not be within Presbytery's "ideal triangle", but it is very close, and certainly far closer than Edinburgh, Blyth or Carlisle.

We are heartened to note that the crematorium proposed is quite different in style from those in the cities. This observation implies no criticism whatever of the service provided by the staff at, for example, Mortonhall, who have always maintained the highest standards of courtesy and helpfulness. It is simply that the nature of the service appropriate to a rural community cannot be provided by a facility in an urban setting and serving a much larger city population.

We believe that the crematorium in a tranquil rural setting such as Wairds will be able to offer a service which is less stressful, more personalised, and much less regimented by the tyranny of the clock – as presently experienced at the crematoria recently opened at Dumfries and Irvine.

We have been assured also of Westerleigh's awareness of the environmental sensitivities of the Wairds site, and of their commitment to take account of these in preparing the detailed plan for the crematorium. We note that they have constructed a crematorium in the New Forest, another area of natural beauty, with some of the most stringent planning regulations in the UK.

To maintain a proper perspective on this, we are confident that the visual impact will be no greater than the nearby Borders General Hospital, which is universally recognised as an unmixed blessing to the people of the Borders.

The overwhelming concern of Presbytery is a pastoral one. The need to travel considerable distances to a crematorium places an unacceptable burden on families at a time when they least need such a long and painful journey.

For all the above reasons, Jedburgh Presbytery whole-heartedly supports the present proposals, and urges the Council to do whatever lies within its power to progress the matter. This is a golden opportunity to move ahead with the much-needed provision of a crematorium for the Borders, and it would be hugely disappointing if wrangling over the site, for example, were to set it back for another ten years or more.

Yours truly,

Frank Campbell, Presbytery Clerk

On the lighter side ... the Beauty of the English Language

Once again, Alastair Scougal unearths a gem!

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.

If the plural of man is always called men,
Then shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?

If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?
Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.

We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine : she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language!
There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger ;
neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
English muffins weren't invented in England.
Quicksand can work slowly,
boxing rings are square,
and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing,
grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?
Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend?
If you have a bunch of odds and ends, and get rid of all but one of them,
what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?
If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?
We ship by truck but send cargo by ship.
We have noses that run and feet that smell.
We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway.

And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same,
while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language
in which your house can burn up as it burns down,
in which you fill in a form by filling it out,
and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

And, in closing, if Father is Pop,
how come Mother's not Mop?

FLORIDA COURT SETS ATHEIST HOLY DAY

In Florida, an atheist created a case against the upcoming Easter and Passover holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians, Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days. The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, *“Case dismissed!”*

The lawyer immediately stood objecting to the ruling, saying, *“Your honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays.”*

The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, *“But you do. Your client, counsel, is woefully ignorant.”* The lawyer replied, *“Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists.”*

The judge said, *“The calendar says April 1st is April Fools Day. Psalm 14:1 states, ‘The fool says in his heart, there is no God’. Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that if your client says there is no God, he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned.”* Praise God for a Judge that knows his scripture!

Post Office Cutbacks

Sadly, Ancrum Post Office closed its doors for normal business for the last time on Monday 9 March. The following day saw the start of an outreach service from Kelso, offering a limited range of Post Office facilities on Tuesdays from 9.30.am to 12 noon, and on Thursdays from 2 – 3.30.pm. The problem for the village has been compounded by the sale of the properties housing Ancrum Pantry and the former Ancrum Butchers. Our thanks and best wishes to Morag & Ian Jackson and to Colin Liddle for their immense contribution to the life of the community.

We are glad to report, however, that Ancrum Pantry will continue under new ownership from April, and we wish the new proprietors, Jack & Arabelle Trinity, every success in their venture.

Happily, Lilliesleaf retains its Post Office service at the home of Donald and Deirdre McLean, 3 Riverview, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.am to 3.pm.

However, the Lilliesleaf Post Bus, the only public transport connection serving the village outwith the school term, is to be discontinued from Saturday 4 April. The Post Office had demanded a huge increase in the subsidy it receives from Scottish Borders Council to provide the service, offering Lilliesleaf and Riddell a return journey to Melrose and Galashiels on Mondays to Fridays, or a one-way outward journey on Saturdays. The Council is now undertaking a survey to assess the need for public transport in the Lilliesleaf area.

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Our Historical Heritage

A potted biography of one of the most famous preachers of the Scottish Reformation, Samuel Rutherford, a native of our parish.

Samuel Rutherford was born in 1600 in the parish of Nisbet, one of three sons of a farmer, and attended school in Jedburgh. One incident in childhood, narrated by Rutherford himself, gives a clue to the origins of his spiritual development. At an early age, he fell into the village well. His friends ran to a nearby house for help. When the rescuers arrived they found him, sitting on the grass and soaked to the skin, but safe. His explanation? “A bonnie white man came and drew me out of the well.” Unsurprisingly, this angelic encounter affected him greatly.

Rutherford studied at Edinburgh University, where he was awarded an MA in 1621, and was duly appointed professor of Latin language and literature there. Around this time, Rutherford had a personal encounter with Christ, which he describes : “He hath fettered me with his love ... and left me a chained man. Oh, but Christ hath a saving eye! Salvation is in His eyelids! When He first looked on me, I was saved ; it cost Him but a look to make hell quit of me!”

Rutherford then studied theology and in 1627 accepted an invitation to become minister at Anwoth, Gatehouse of Fleet. His passion for the gospel drove him to labour hard and long in this rural community, reputedly getting up at 3.am for a daily time of personal devotion. A colleague, Rev James Urquhart, paid tribute not only to Rutherford’s dedication to his people, but also to the passion of his preaching, “Many times I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ. He was never in his right elements but when he was commending Him. He would have fallen asleep in bed speaking of Christ.”

The Anwoth years, however, were laced with multiplied personal tragedy, with the long illness and death of Samuel’s first wife, followed by the death of their two children. Indeed, personal suffering continued to haunt this man of God, as his second wife predeceased him, and of the seven children she bore to him, only one outlived Rutherford himself, and developments in the years to come seem to indicate that these bitter experiences affected his theology as he writes of his vision of God’s nature : “My faith hath no bed to sleep on but omnipotency.”

Rutherford’s ultra-Calvinist utterances led to his expulsion from Anwoth. For years the Church of Scotland vacillated between Presbyterian and Episcopal rule, and in 1634 the Episcopalians, supported by King Charles I, held sway. Thomas Sydserff, an associate of the royal *confidante* Archbishop William Laud, became Bishop of Galloway. Rutherford published his *Treatise against Arminianism*, which criticised the doctrines and practices of the Episcopalian party, in 1636.

An ecclesiastical court was convened in Wigtown, and Rutherford was banished to Aberdeen. His exile was not especially happy, as the Granite City had been deliberately chosen for him on account of its hostility to the Calvinist cause. There was no liberty for Rutherford to preach and he much lamented those two years of “dumb Sabbaths”. Yet denial of a pulpit could not silence the pen, as he wrote prodigious quantities of letters from Aberdeen, many warning of the dangers of being too thirled to the “vanity of vanities” of the passing age.

For example : “Happy are they who have passed their hard and wearisome time of apprenticeship, and are now freemen and citizens in that joyful, high city, the New Jerusalem”. He often speaks of his own flesh as “clay” and longs for the world to come. “O my Lord, come over mountains at one stride...Oh, if He would fold the heavens together like an old cloak, and shovel time and days out of the way, and make ready in haste the Lamb’s wife for her Husband!”

Rutherford did attend worship in the city, but inevitably became embroiled in conflict with the “establishment” on matters like predestination versus free will. But it was an age of rapid change, and in 1638 the General Assembly restored Presbyterianism, and the National Covenant was signed throughout the land. Rutherford was appointed Professor of Divinity at St Mary’s College, St Andrews where he restored the flagging reputation, both intellectually and morally, of the college, as well as serving as minister of a prestigious church in the town.

Rutherford was one of six commissioners from the Church of Scotland who attended the famous Assembly of Divines at Westminster. The representatives of the Kirk may not have had a vote, but they certainly made their voice heard, few more so than Rutherford. Some of his views are rather unpalatable, for example his assertion that the love of God revealed in John 3:16 “is restricted to the Church.” He said: “It is an actual saving love, and therefore not a general love.”

Whatever reservations we may have about the usefulness of the Westminster Confession in the 21st Century church, let us bear in mind that it was a product of a very different age and climate, both theologically and politically. In addition, Rutherford is credited with being a major contributor to the Shorter Catechism.

During his London period, Rutherford wrote his best-known work, “Lex Rex”, or “The Law, the King”, a closely-argued polemic against the royalist notion of the Divine Right of Kings. When the tide of opinion turned again, and Charles II, who had once signed the Solemn League and Covenant in 1650, was restored to the throne in 1660, Rutherford was to be brought to account for these views.

In 1661, emissaries from the King came for Rutherford, who was by now a sick man. “Tell them,” he said, “that I have a summons already from a superior Judge and judicatory and I behove to answer my first summons. Ere your day arrives I shall be where few kings and great men come.” His last recorded words are perhaps his best known : “Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel’s Land.”

With grateful acknowledgements to :

Rev David Blunt, of the Scottish Reformation Society [Aberdeen Branch] ; and "A Brief Life and Times of Samuel Rutherford" by William Carson, Scottish Preachers Hall of Fame

Mini CLAN Borders 2009

*The purpose of **CLAN** Ministries is to support local churches seeking to grow in renewal through teaching, training and equipping as requested by the churches themselves and by planning, organising and running local **CLAN** Events which specifically fulfil that purpose.*

When : Friday 8 May [evening] and Saturday 9 May [all day]

Where : Burnfoot Community School, Kenilworth Avenue,
Hawick, TD9 8EQ

Who : Adults only. Full Weekend tickets £25 each on sale at Church and CLAN office. Bring a packed lunch.

Proposed Programme

Friday 8th : Evening Celebration

6.00.pm : Registration
7.00.pm : Worship and Main Speaker

Saturday 9th : Full Day

9.00.am : Registration
10.00.am : Worship
10.30.am : Main Speaker
11.30.am : Coffee/Tea [provided]
12 noon : Seminars
1.15.pm : Lunch
2.30.pm : Seminars
5.00.pm : Break
6.30.pm : Worship, Main Speaker, Ministry
9.00.pm : Finish

*Further information about this event in weekly church news as it comes to hand, or contact the CLAN office : 01771 637962.
<http://www.new-wine-scotland.org/CLAN%20Ministries.htm>*

News Update

After many years of anticipation, a Church Hall at **Lilliesleaf** is now a reality, and a very fine facility it is too. The most obvious benefit is to allow much more space for our Sunday School, but we also now have basic kitchen facilities and a proper, disability-compliant, toilet. If you haven't yet seen the hall, pop along any Sunday. Many thanks to our Clerk of Works, Bill Anderson, who superintended all the work.

Ancrum Junior Church would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped with the Nativity production and well done to all the children involved, from both Ancrum and Lilliesleaf. Before Christmas, the Junior Church decided that they would like to put their collection towards "Gift Aid". The children raised £57 and chose to put the money toward buying some pigs and a water harvester.

Since Christmas, the children have been studying some Bible stories with a view to producing a short sketch with a message. With great enthusiasm they chose to put on "David & Goliath" during the morning service led by the Kirk Session at Ancrum on 22 March. Apart from the all-age service on Easter Sunday, the Junior Church will continue to meet each Sunday for children 3 and over until the Prizegiving and All-age Communion service at Ancrum on Sunday 31 May.

In August, the **ALE Group** will be travelling to a place that leader Tom Burnham describes as "the most beautiful village in the world, with the possible exception of Ancrum" ... a former herring port in northern Iceland, with a current population of 2! This has involved a massive fund-raising effort to raise the £2,000 or more required for the trip.

As part of this, the ALES will present "The Last Supper" in Ancrum Village Hall on Sunday 29 March at 6.30pm. This will be a re-enacting of the very meal Jesus and his disciples shared on the eve of his crucifixion. Tickets cost £5 each and are available from Tom

Burnham, the Ancrum Pantry, or at the church door.

The ALES also extend an open invitation to a presentation on their 2008 outing to Hungary. This will be held in Ancrum Church Hall after the Prizegiving and All-age Communion service on Sunday 31 May.

Ancrum Guild held its AGM on 2 March, when Marion Davison spoke on *Married to Medicine*. Grateful thanks go to Margaret Dorricott, who for 10 years so faithfully and so ably led the Guild as President. Office-bearers for 2009/10 were elected as follows : President – Carmen Martin ; Vice-President – Anna Gilmour ; Secretary – Joan Hodges ; Treasurer – Margaret Smith ; Project Partner – Adele Nimmo.

Lilliesleaf Guild meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month during the winter in The Plough Inn. There is always a cordial welcome for new members. The next meeting, on 14 April, will feature a presentation by Guild President Merlyn Horn on her journey through northern Scotland, with a selection of photographs. All welcome!

Following the huge success of fund-raising efforts in 2007 and 2008 for the *Life Outreach "Water for Life" Appeal*, the Kirk Session have identified two projects for support during 2009 – *Help for Heroes*, which supports service personnel disabled or injured in the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq ; and BANG [Borders Additional Needs Group], a support group to provide extra quality of life for families affected by chronic childhood illnesses – such as young Maia Russell in Ancrum.

The **Tuesday Girls** meet each Tuesday evening in the manse at 7.pm. Led by Alexis Campbell, they are presently studying "The Fruit of the Spirit", with a particular emphasis on health and wholeness. For those who wish to participate, there is a brief "Pray & Weigh" session.

On alternate **Thursdays**, there is a meeting for Prayer & Bible Study at the Manse from 7.30.pm to about 9.pm. John Marshall will lead us through Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians, and there is time to bring our concerns to the Lord in prayer, and for ministry, including healing.

At each of our churches, there is a **Prayer Box** at the door to receive your prayer requests, anonymously if you prefer. You can also e-mail

your prayer requests. A **Devotional Diary** is produced monthly, with a daily prayer point, accompanied by three suggested Bible readings. The Diaries are available at the church door, or on the website.

Worship with us at home!

As part of the refurbishment of our church buildings, provision has now been made for the recording of church services for the enjoyment of those who are unable – whether through infirmity, lack of transport, work or family commitments, holidays, or simply living too far outside the parish – to be physically present with us at Sunday worship.

Within minutes of the end of services at Ancrum or Lilliesleaf, CD's of that day's worship will be available to uplift, so please remember to ask a friend or neighbour to wait – at Ancrum, with a cuppa – and collect it for you. CD's can also be sent by post, on request.

Also, within a couple of days, a link to the service will be “posted” on the website, and you can listen by computer or download to ipod!

The Year of the Homecoming

The Kirk Session have identified Sunday 6 September as a day of celebration of The Year of the Homecoming. On that day, services will be held in all churches with a special emphasis on welcoming back anyone who was baptised or married in that church, and there will be an opportunity to join the church by profession of faith.

Wherever possible, personal invitations will be sent to those outwith the parish who are not on the usual GOOD NEWS distribution list, but your help would be very much appreciated to get the message out, and we look forward to packed houses at all three kirks that day!



The Church of Scotland : Policy Statement The Protection of Children & Young People

The Church of Scotland has a deep concern for the wholeness and wellbeing of each individual. It seeks to safeguard the welfare of all people, regardless of age, who come into contact with the Church and its organisations. It is the responsibility of each individual within the fellowship of the Church to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people

Grace Update

Latest news from Ghana, with grateful thanks to Claire Law

Grace is doing very well after her second operation, I believe, and, all being well, will be heading home to Takoradi in the next few weeks. Her feet are healing well and the doctors are hopeful that she will need no more surgery, but is having another consultation in April before she will be allowed home. She has had special shoes, made to measure, which have to be worn at all times to help support her feet in the correct position. These shoes will be replaced about every six months when she goes to the Nsawam centre for check ups.

We have a substantial amount of money left in the Grace Fund that should help educate her for, hopefully, the next two or three years. We have also managed to secure additional funding which will help towards payment for the youngest Turkson child, Gabriel, to also be educated at Nazareth School, Apowa, Takoradi.

This really is fantastic news; two years ago I would never have imagined making so much progress. Having the three children in education and Grace walking is truly amazing. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to help this unfortunate family who will hopefully prosper at last.

The plans for my next trip to Tanzania and Rwanda are well underway with the help of The South of Scotland Youth Award Trust, The James McLean Trust and quite a few hard hours work at my job! I have secured a place at the Watoto Orphanage in Tanzania where I shall volunteer for one month, then I am planning on undertaking the challenge of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and crossing the border to Rwanda to learn more about the Rwandan genocide and speak with some survivors of the tragedy.

Unknown to me Ancrum Primary School nominated me for a Young Scot Award and I have made the final three in the Unsung Hero category. I am so touched to have been nominated and cannot believe I reached the final three. The glad rags will be out on the 9th of April to attend the Awards ceremony with my Mum and Dad.

I would like to take this opportunity, however, to thank everyone in the community who has helped raise funds and shown such support and enthusiasm for my hopes and dreams to help less fortunate people in the most amazing continent in the world, none of this would have been possible without you!!

Who do you think you are? : the message of John the Baptist

From Frank's sermon on 8 February 2009

In God's life-changing plan of love and grace to His people, John the Baptist was sent ahead of Jesus to prepare the way for Him by calling the people to stop and think about their lives and ask themselves some pretty big questions about how they saw God : as a tyrant to be feared, or a Father to be loved?

Please note the humility of John the Baptist, and I mean that in the proper sense of the word. John was no simpering shrinking violet who hid behind the pot-plants in a fake play-act of modesty. He was ready to stand up and be counted. He knew he was called by God, and he wasn't too embarrassed or self-conscious to fulfil that call, even if for a while it did make him the talk of the town.

Humility is not being so shy and retiring that you won't step up to the plate when needed unless 20 different people get down on their knees and beg you, nor is it doing something with a throwaway remark that "I'm no good at this", all the time inviting everyone to say "not at all" and praise you to the rooftops. That's not the virtue of humility, it's the vice of insecurity, and it does not honour God.

True humility is agreeing with what God says about you, never mind what people might say about you, or even what you might say about yourself. It means being aware of, and confident in, who you are and what you are in Jesus, and to some ears that comes over as something far removed from conventional "humility".

Scripture teaches that you are *the righteousness of God in Christ* [2 Corinthians 5.21], *whom Christ has redeemed from the curse of the Law that the blessing of Abraham may come upon you through him* [Galatians 3.14], *chosen before the creation of the world and blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ* [Ephesians 1.4], *our sins forgiven on account of his name* [1 John 2.12].

And so on through all the wonderful promises of God. But if we dare speak these things out loud, some people accuse us of arrogance, so to avoid rocking the boat we talk ourselves down as just an unworthy sinner muddling through. Which sounds humble, but is actually a lie. It's not what God says about us in His Word, therefore it's a lie. End of story. I'm very sorry, but I'm not going to tell lies just to avoid ruffling unbelieving feathers. If anyone doesn't like the fact that we are forgiven, healed, redeemed and loved by divine grace, too bad!

John had this concept of humility just right. He knew who and what he was, he knew who and what he wasn't. He did not pretend that he was the Messiah, but was quite happy with his role of setting the stage for Him. He had an immense and healthy reverence for Jesus, claiming [v.11] that he wasn't fit to lace his boots, and we see [v.14] he struggled to understand why he had to baptise the

Messiah – but notice that he didn't argue the point with Jesus. When Jesus said "Just do it, John", John just did it. That's humility.

Let's look at what John says about Jesus. *He will baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire [v.11]*. Now this is strong stuff, but again it's a fulfilment of what the Old Testament had looked forward to. First, the Holy Spirit :

Proverbs 1:23 : *Come here and listen to me! I'll pour out the spirit of wisdom upon you and make you wise.* [Isaiah 44:3](#) : *I will give you abundant water to quench your thirst and to moisten your parched fields. And I will pour out my Spirit and my blessings on your children.* [Joel 2:28f](#) : *I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. In those days, I will pour out my Spirit even on servants, men and women alike.*

The water baptism of John's ministry was OK as far as it went, washing away sin – but it was only the beginning. What Jesus would bring was a heart that no longer *wanted* to sin, and that's something completely revolutionary. John in his ministry could only do damage limitation after the event of sin and make people wish it could be different. Jesus made it possible to be different.

It is the Holy Spirit who, whenever we make a decision to follow Jesus all the days of our lives, changes our essential being. It is no exaggeration to say that a life of faith in Jesus is a new life, Jesus himself in John 3 calls it being *born again*. Paul described it to the church at Corinth like this : *a new creation – the old has gone, the new has come*, and if anyone knew how true that is, it was Paul, the one time hammer of the church.

The very second we make a conscious informed decision to follow Jesus Christ for life, something very dramatic happens. Our own human spirit is completely re-branded, and sealed for eternity [see Ephesians 1.13]. From that point on, our destiny is assured and nothing can change it. But that's only the beginning, as the Holy Spirit now in charge of our human spirit rings the changes within us.

The Holy Spirit gets to work on our souls – our character, our personality – and gradually re-aligns our thoughts, our emotions, our decisions to line up with the Word of God. Now let me say straight away, for 99% of us, that is a long process that sometimes feels like 2 steps forward, 1 step back. Anyone know what I mean by that? Just when you start to feel you're really making progress with the Lord, the devil blindsides you, chucks a banana skin on your path, and down you go.

Do not let that get you down. Do not get discouraged when you have a bad day. Do not beat yourself up and think of yourself as one whose fate is always to be a second-class citizen of the Kingdom of God. That's not how Jesus sees you.

He hardly even notices your temporary slip-up. He has forgotten your past, he has forgiven your present, he focuses on your future. When he called you, he recognised your potential, and he will work with you to bring out that potential.

He never gives up on you, so don't ever give up on him. As Joyce Meyer often says : *I'm not what I should be, but thank God I'm not what I used to be.* Amen? Now let's take a moment to think about this *fire* business. What is all that about? Fire does a number of things. First, it burns up rubbish, gets rid of stuff we don't need and that doesn't do us any good. From time to time we all need to ask ourselves : is there anything in my life that doesn't need to be there, that's just renting space in my mind and keeping me back from being all I can be?

Is there a pocket of unforgiveness toward somebody, a hurt, a grudge, stashed away in our memory bank that shoots to the surface every time we see a certain face, hear a certain voice? We don't need that! Get it on the bonfire. Or is there part of our life we just don't want to submit to God, for fear he takes it away from us? If there's fear involved, that's a sure sign something's out of balance.

Is there's a relationship you're trying to keep away from God? Then let me tell you it is an unhealthy relationship – stop making excuses and walk away from it! Is there's a possession, or an activity, you're afraid God will tell you to give up? Then you're putting that thing above God. That's the sin of idolatry, and I can assure you that you do not want to be there. Get that sorted out, and quickly.

That kind of fire has a purifying effect. [Malachi 3:2](#) : *For he will be like a blazing fire that refines metal or like a strong soap that whitens clothes.* But there's more. Fire often implies passion, as in fire in the belly, and if that passion is properly directed toward something that God is passionate about, great.

As Christians, we *should* burn with a righteous anger against poverty, disease, injustice and exploitation. We *should* have an uncompromising determination to do all we can, by natural and supernatural means, to eliminate these obscenities from the face of the earth. We *should* have a burning desire to combat the wrong beliefs that hold so many of our family, friends and colleagues captive in defeat, and to share instead the good news that on the cross Jesus has broken the curse of Adam's disobedience and set us free to enjoy unbroken fellowship with God.

In 3 John 2, the beloved disciple says *I pray that you may prosper and enjoy good health, just as your soul prospers.* That's God's best for His people, and is released into our lives only by faith in Jesus. But far too many people have been deceived into believing that nasty things like illness, accidents and all sorts of problems are sent by God to strengthen our character. That is a lie of the devil. It portrays God as a child-abuser! I, for one, am passionate about exposing and rooting out these destructive deceptions so that God's people can live in freedom and in victory which Jesus by the shedding of His blood has paid for.

I pray that we will all receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit with fire, getting rid of the old junk and becoming a new creation in Christ, passionate to spread his Good News in word and deed. Let Ale & Teviot United Church become in reality what Jesus has commanded, authorised, and empowered us to be : a people of power, history-makers for His Kingdom – and the sooner the better!

Photography for every occasion

Chris Morrison

**10 Muirhouselaw, Maxton,
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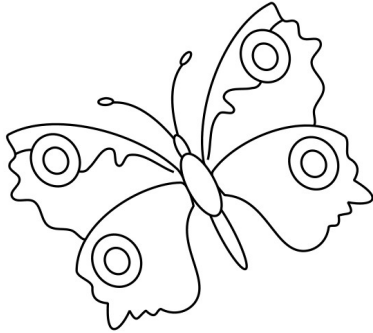
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Ancrum Kirk : Good Friday : 7.pm

*WORLD PREMIERE : The first time this piece has ever
been performed with string quartet and organ*

In support of Ale & Teviot United Church

CONFESSION OF FAITH FOR HEALING & HEALTH

It is the revealed will of God in His word that His people should prosper and be in good health, just as our soul prospers [3 John 2]. Needless to say, the devil, who comes only to steal, kill and destroy [John 10.10] opposes this good purpose and plan of God. We need to fight back with our confession of faith. Will you join the battle by declaring these scriptural truths out loud, each day?

In the Name of Jesus, we rebuke and bind all religious, traditional and deceiving spirits which have been holding in bondage the people Jesus loves and died for.

In the Name of Jesus, we release the Holy Spirit to minister truth into their lives, and to open the spiritual eyes of each one to the glorious truth that God loves them, and wants them to enjoy good health through the sacrifice of His Son.

In the Name of Jesus, just as when He cursed the fig tree in Mark 11, we curse from the root all cancers, all diabetes, all strokes, all arthritis, [add here any particular ailment affecting a family member or friend], all disease.

In the name of Jesus, we declare and decree wholeness, through the shed blood of Christ our Lord, to the entire nation of Scotland.

We declare to Satan : you have no authority on this earth. Jesus declared, "It is finished," which speaks to you, your leagues of demons, and sceptres of false authority. In the Name of Jesus, we command you to get out of Scotland, get away from the Church residing there – leave and take your diseases with you.

Throughout Ale & Teviot, and every parish in the Scottish Borders, we breathe the shalom peace of God upon all people - nothing missing and nothing broken.

We call for the angels of healing ministry to descend upon those suffering from disease, especially from cancer, and in the power of Jesus' name to restore full health of spirit, soul and body to those attacked, and to repair completely all damage done, either by disease or by its treatment.

We speak to all affected bodies, in the name of Jesus, and command every organ, every bone, every muscle, every tendon, every ligament, every nerve ending, every piece of skin, every drop of blood, from the sole of their feet to the crown of their head, to be made whole in every way, through the blood of Jesus!

We speak to all affected souls, and command all hurt, all fear, all anxiety, all guilt, all grudges, all bitterness, all insecurity, all perversion, all

addiction, all strongholds of sin, to yield to the blood of Jesus who, by His death, has redeemed us from the curse of the Law [Galatians 3.13]

Be made whole, now, in spirit, soul and body. In Jesus' Name, according to the promise of 1 Peter 2.24 : *By his wounds you have been healed.* Amen!

The Astonishing Power of 57 Cents

Dr Russell Conwell was a Baptist pastor in Philadelphia in the early part of the 20th Century. He tells how, one afternoon, a little girl, who had eagerly wished to go to Sunday School, had to turn back from the door, crying bitterly because there was no more room. Dr Conwell asked her why she was crying, and she sobbed that it was because they could not let her into the Sunday School.

Dr Conwell said that she would take her in, and that the church would some day have a room big enough for all who should come. Unbeknown to Dr. Conwell, the little girl went home and told her parents that she wanted to save money to build a larger church, and they indulged her by letting her run errands for pennies that she saved in a little bank.

Tragically, just a few weeks later, she took suddenly ill and died. At her funeral her father told Dr Conwell, quietly, of how his little girl had been saving money for a building-fund. And there, at the funeral, he handed over to the pastor what she had saved — just fifty-seven cents in pennies.

At a meeting of the church trustees Dr Conwell told of this gift of fifty-seven cents — the first gift toward the proposed building-fund of the new church that was some time to exist. For until then the matter had barely been spoken of, as a new church building had been simply a possibility for the future.

The trustees seemed much impressed, and within a few days one of them came to Dr Conwell to express the view that it would be an excellent idea to buy a lot on Broad Street. Dr Conwell talked the matter over with the owner of the property, and told him of the beginning of the fund, the story of the little girl.

The man was not a church-goer at all, but he listened attentively to the tale of the fifty-seven cents and stated that he was quite ready to go ahead and sell the church that piece of land for ten thousand dollars, taking a first payment of just 57 cents and letting the entire balance stand on a 5% mortgage! As things turned out, the church soon came to own the land free and clear, thanks to a single donation of the entire ten thousand dollars.

If you are ever in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, look up Temple Baptist Church, with a seating capacity of 3,300 ; Temple University, where thousands of students are educated ; the Good Samaritan Hospital ... and a Sunday School building which houses hundreds of wonderful children, built so that no child in the area will ever need to be left outside during Sunday school time.

In one of the rooms of this building may be seen the picture of the little girl whose 57 cents, so sacrificially saved, made such remarkable history. Alongside of it is a portrait of her pastor, Dr. Russell H. Conwell.

From : Conwell, Russell H : "Acres of Diamonds". New York : Harper & Brothers, 1915

Parish Registers

22 November 2008 to 5 March 2009

Weddings

28 November
Ancrum Scott Redhead & Lynn Finlayson
now of: 8 The Knowe

14 February
Lilliesleaf Craig Young & Cheryl Scott
now of: Whin Court, Galashiels

Funerals

10 December
Lilliesleaf Mrs Elizabeth Inglis
St Dunstan

12 December
Lilliesleaf Mrs Annie Shortreed
Blair Avenue, Jedburgh [*formerly Cheviot Cottage*]

18 December
Selkirk Mr Len Haldane
Ladywood [*formerly Dunera, Lilliesleaf*]

30 December
Mortonhall Mrs Nellie Elliot
Pinnacle

30 December
Mortonhall Mr Sandy Scott
Thornfield Terrace, Selkirk

3 February
Jedburgh Miss Jeannie Smith
Headrig

20 February
Lilliesleaf Mr Rob Young
West Port, Selkirk [*formerly Bellfield Cottage*]

27 February
Ancrum Mrs Alison Wood
Copland [*formerly Belses Smithy*]

2 March
Ancrum Mrs Sheena Allan
The Knowe

5 March
Mortonhall Mr Walter Phillips
Ashgrove, Lilliesleaf

Services & Events : Easter 2009

Passion Sunday, 29 March

UNITED Service & Annual Congregational Meeting
ECKFORD VILLAGE HALL : 10.30.am

NO SERVICES that morning at Ancrum or Lilliesleaf

The Last Supper, with the ALE Group
Ancrum Village Hall, 6.30.pm

Friday 3 April

School Easter services, in church :
Lilliesleaf Kirk at 9.15.am ; Ancrum Kirk at 1.pm

Palm Sunday, 5 April

Ancrum, 10.am ; Lilliesleaf, 11.30.am
Songs of Praise : Crailing, 6.30.pm

Maundy Thursday, 9 April

United Communion at **Lilliesleaf** : 7.pm

Good Friday, 10 April

Service in Jedburgh Old & Trinity Parish Church at 10.am, followed by tea and coffee, then an ecumenical Walk of Witness around the town ending at St Mary's for tea, coffee and hot-cross buns

Stainer's "*Crucifixion*", **Ancrum Kirk** : 7.pm
Performed by Abbey Consort : offering for Ale & Teviot United Church

Easter Sunday, 12 April

ALL-AGE services at Ancrum [10.am] and Lilliesleaf [11.30.am]
Songs of Praise with Jedforest Band at Crailing : 6.30.pm

TIMES OF SERVICES : from 19 April to 26 July 2009

- ANCRUM** every Sunday at 10.am EXCEPT 5 July
10 May : Communion, 10.am & 6.30.pm
31 May : United all-age communion with Prizegiving
- LILLIESLEAF** every Sunday at 11.30.am EXCEPT 31 May, 5 July
28 June : Communion, 11.30.am
- CRAILING** 26 Apr ; 10 & 24 May ; 14 Jun ; 12 & 26 July
All the above at 10.30.am. Communion : 24 May
5 Apr, 3 May, 7 & 28 June : Songs of Praise, 6.30.pm
- ECKFORD** 24 May : Communion, Village Hall, 6.30.pm

United Outdoor Service : with 42nd Dundee Boys Brigade

[Provisionally]

Ancrum Football Club : Sunday 5 July : 10.am

Blythswood Care : Uplift of good used clothes etc

Blythswood Care will uplift clothing, bric-a-brac and small items of furniture for needy people in Eastern Europe, on the following **Mondays** and **Tuesdays** :

6 & 7 April ; 4 & 5 May ; 1 & 2 June ; 6 & 7 July.

Pick-ups will be at the following times and places :

Monday :	Galashiels	Asda Car Park	2.00-2.30.pm
	Melrose	Rugby Club	3.00-3.30.pm
	Selkirk	West Port Car Park	4.00-5.00.pm
Tuesday :	Hawick	Morrisons Car Park	9.00-9.45.am
	Jedburgh	Bus Station Car Park	10.45-11.15.am
	Kelso	Knowes Car Park	12.00-12.45.pm

Larger items of furniture uplifted by arrangement.

Please phone the Glasgow office on 0141-882-0585



Acknowledgement : <http://gospelgifts.com>