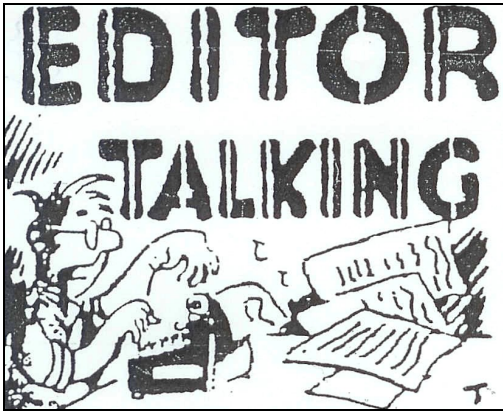


GOOD NEWS!



The magazine of
**ALE & TEVIOT
UNITED CHURCH**
Christmas 2011



Glory to God the highest

in



Coming soon, to a
house near you ...

yes, by the time this magazine is in your hands, we will be *officially* in the season of Advent ... though if you've been anywhere near any retail outlet since mid-October you'll have noted Christmas trees, Christmas music, Christmas everything, creeping up on you! And if, miraculously, you've missed the approach of Christmas, your children and grandchildren will soon put you right!

I must confess, the Christmas lights went up on the model railway in the manse on the afternoon of Remembrance Sunday. Would that the buying of presents were as well organised and ahead of the game!

Like it or not, it's on its way, and we need to be prepared. I confidently predict that if no presents are bought and wrapped, no turkey acquired and defrosted, no cards written and sent, no decorations unpacked and strung up, before the shops close on the 24th of December, your Christmas – to put it politely! – may not be a resounding success!

The need for preparation to enjoy Christmas to the full is true in the spiritual sense as well. We need to consider what it's all about, why God bothered. Why did Jesus come, knowing that Christmas would inevitably segue into Easter, the romantic picture of the stable fading into the stark horror of the cross ; gold, frankincense and myrrh replaced by whips, spears and nails? This was no easy road for Jesus to take. He wouldn't have done it if we hadn't needed Him to.

From the palaces of heaven to a byre behind a pub ; from creating the entire universe with a word of authority to creating chairs and tables with a hammer and chisel ; from the adulation of a million angels to the taunts of a jeering crowd on the last journey to Calvary : as Paul wrote to the church at Corinth : *you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was **rich**, yet for your sake he became **poor**.*

All right, we know that verse, we've heard it often. But what does it mean? To make sense of it, we need to take into account the whole of 2 Corinthians 8.9 : *you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was **rich**, yet for your sake he became **poor** ... so that you through his **poverty** might become **rich**.*

So, Frank, you may think, *are you saying that Christmas, and indeed the whole of Christian life, is about money?* Er, no. For the Babylonian system that runs this world, admittedly, money is the be-all and end-all. But in God's thinking, true wealth includes money but isn't limited to it.

It's no use having a big house, big cars, big bank balances if you're lying flat on your back with serious illness and can't enjoy it ; or if the way you exploited and manipulated people to make money means you've got no-one to enjoy it with ; or if a lifetime of selfishness means you've no relationship with God and are scared stiff of the future.

True wealth flows from knowing, for sure, that God loves you, that you are His precious child, that He protects you and looks out for you every moment of every day. There is no-one so poor as the person who has chosen to exclude himself from the embrace of Father God. That is poverty in the extreme. It is life in the pig-sty. It is hell on earth.

You don't want to be there ... and the Good News of Christmas is that you don't have to! Jesus came to earth, at Christmas, as a baby, to transform our life, to pay the price of our mistakes, to die in our place, so that you and I might have and enjoy LIFE in abundance, LIFE to the full, LIFE till it overflows, LIFE without limit and without end.

Jesus came to bring "the blessing of the Lord" – which, the Bible says, includes long life, health and wholeness, prosperity – that is, all good things for us to enjoy and to share freely with others – peace and joy in all situation ... all FREE to anyone who will truly welcome Jesus as Saviour and Lord. We pray that you will receive the best Christmas gift ever – new life and the blessing of the Lord, through faith in Jesus.

May the Lord grant peace and prosperity to you and all whom you love during 2012, and may you come to know and love Him more.

With love in the precious Name of Jesus

Frank & Alexis

Holy Humour

A wee boy told his dad proudly, "I know what the Bible stands for!" His dad smiled. "What do you mean?" "Easy, Dad!" the boy replied excitedly, "It stands for '**B**asic **I**nformation **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth.'

A very religious lady was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in southern England. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments." answered the lady.

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in Edinburgh because he was late for a meeting at 121 and couldn't find a space with a meter. He put a note under the windscreen wiper : "I've circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses." When he returned, he found a ticket from a traffic warden along with this note : "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."

There are only two kinds of people in the world – those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord!" and those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good Lord, it's morning!"

A minister announced one Sunday : "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our roof repair programme. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."

People can't make up their minds, They want the front of the bus, the back of the church, and the centre of attention.

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson : "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?" A hand shot up in the air. "He's an artist!" said wee Jimmy. "Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked. "You know, like in the prayer : Our Father, who does art in Heaven."

A minister waited 15 minutes to get his car filled with petrol just before a holiday weekend. When he finally got to the counter, the attendant was apologetic. "Reverend, I'm sorry for the delay. Everyone seems to wait until the last minute to get ready for a long trip." The minister chuckled. "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."

The minister was worried about asking the congregation to come up with money for unexpected roof repairs. The regular organist was on holiday, and the substitute wanted to know what to play. "Here's an Order of Service," said the minister, "but can you think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances?"

Just before the offering, the minister said, "My friends, we are in great difficulty. We need to find £20,000 for emergency roof repairs. Anyone who can pledge £500 or more, please stand up." At that moment, the substitute organist played "God Save the Queen" ...

When you carry the Bible, Satan gets a headache
When you open it, he collapses
When he sees you reading it, he faints
When he sees that you are living what you read, he flees

Of organs and pulpits ...

It's been great to see Colin Fox returning to organ duties in Ancrum and Lilliesleaf after some time recovering from surgery and treatment. As we give Colin a very warm welcome back, it's a good time also to thank all our musicians who have stepped into the breach to lead our worship – especially Alison Fraser and Ken Fotheringham, but also Margaret Smith, Rena Stewart, Isobel Portch and Bryan Topping.

There's also been a change in our pulpit supply team. Our good friend Alastair Scougal is taking a well-earned retirement, and we welcome a new member to the team, John Shields. Many thanks to John Riddell, Bruce McNicol, Lindsay Thomson, Dagmar Knox and Liz Findlay. Without you, we simply could not continue regular worship in all three churches, and we are extremely grateful for your help and support.

Junior Church

It's been a difficult session for the Junior Church, but we're delighted to see Elaine [and indeed Tony] making good recovery from surgery. Many thanks and best wishes to Heather, whose assistance has been greatly appreciated, but who will soon be moving with John, Magnus and Patrick to Kirkcudbright. For this year – only! – there is no Nativity as such, but it is hoped that the children will take part in the All-age Lessons & Carols Service at Ancrum on Sunday 18 December.

Ale & Teviot International Church : on-air and on-line!

During the past three months, Ale & Teviot has enjoyed the privilege of broadcasting the good news of Jesus by **European Gospel Radio** - www.egradio.org - on short-wave radio to Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and via Internet radio to the World! We had a weekly 15-minute slot at 12.45.pm UK time on short-wave [9510 kHz].

Our programmes also went out on Sunday evenings on two English language medium-wave stations in Italy, plus live internet streaming. Until the end of January 2012, you can still hear the broadcasts on our church website : <http://www.aleandteviot.org.uk/multimedia/sermons/>

Short-wave radio remains a powerful tool to reach out to a potential audience of hundreds of millions in some of the hardest countries to minister to by any other means. Many thanks to Dave Coyle for his invaluable technical support in this new missionary venture.

The Scottish Borders Crematorium

On Tuesday 13 December, the new Borders Crematorium opens at the Wairds, Melrose. This marks the fulfilment of a long campaign, in which the local Kirk has played a prominent part. Bereaved families need no longer face a gruelling trek to Edinburgh, in all weathers, when they are at their most vulnerable.

The Crematorium is owned and managed by the Westerleigh Group, who have an excellent record of providing small and environmentally sensitive crematoria, especially suitable for rural communities.

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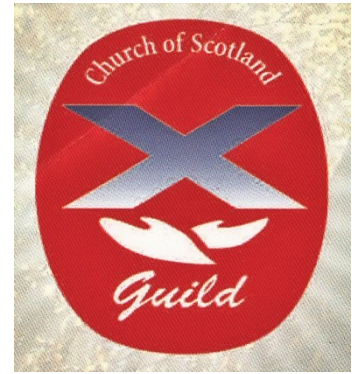
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Church of Scotland Guild

IN HIS FOOTSTEPS 2011



The Caird Hall in Dundee was the venue for the annual meeting of the Church of Scotland Guild on Saturday 27 August, where over 2000 members from across the country converged for a day of fellowship and the launch of the new theme 'Called to walk humbly with God', the last under the strategy 'What does the Lord require of you?'

Chaired by National Convener, Alison Angus, the day was a moving testimony to the work of the Guild. Morning worship began by singing 'Christ triumphant, ever reigning'. Readings were from the KJV in recognition of its 400th anniversary. A tribute was made to the retiring General Secretary, Alison Twaddle, who received a standing ovation.

Then we were introduced to the current Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Reverend David Arnott. His theme was 'Creation Time', but he also mentioned 'The Rhythm of Life'. He visited a rural farming community driven by the natural rhythm of creation – the seasons. He told us how little things he heard in busy cities could transport him away from the rush and greyness. W B Yates's 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' provided solace for him and he recited it for us.

As our discussion topic for the upcoming year is 'Thanking God for His Creation' he wanted us to think beyond just celebrating harvest. One year his church's harvest service was held on a fruit farm. The pulpit was a bale of straw. He did think that maybe just sitting in such a setting for an hour – in peace, no talking – might have been perfect, but they did have a Service during which he read R S Thomas's poem 'The Moor'. His other thought was the use of manse gardens, or other idle space, as an allotment – possibly raising funds with the produce?

He encouraged us to go back to our churches and think about celebrating harvest or creation in a new way and suggested twinning rural and city congregations – both within Scotland and beyond. His conclusion was a short prayer from the Celtic tradition.

Our next guest was Fiona Milne – a mezzo soprano originally from Melrose now living and teaching in Edinburgh. She enthralled us with her rich tones three times through the day but began with two songs in recognition of our theme, Handel's 'Wheree'r you walk' and, from The Messiah, 'How beautiful are the feet'.

Ali introduced our second guest speaker for the morning, Rev. Joel Edwards, International Director for Micah Challenge – a global Christian response to extreme poverty. In our third year on a theme, we are all familiar with a few verses from Micah but I wonder whether we are familiar with the entire book?

Joel endeared himself to us immediately by admitting that he hadn't realized how embedded real issues are to the Guild's being. This level of affirmation is quite reassuring. His talk, although focusing on humility, looked at the wider impact of our theme and underlined the importance of keeping the three words 'Justice, Mercy and Humility' together in our minds. Despite this very serious topic, Joel managed to inject lightness and humour throughout which ensured that our interest was maintained – and that we didn't get too despondent.

He wondered whether humility was just a lack of self-confidence and suggested that we needed to keep a balance between our talents and humility. He said that we shouldn't compare ourselves with either God or anyone else in the church ; that humility was neither self-deprecation nor elevation, but was the simple act of bending down to lift others up. Humility is about recognizing our gifts.

Joel noted that bullies have a humility deficit, but Christ demonstrated total humility to God. "The world is waiting for an overwhelming volume of Christian humility to challenge the world's problems."

The Olympic Torch was passing through Dundee that day and made an appearance on the stage. This is probably the nearest any of us would get to it!

After lunch we were introduced to the new Guild General Secretary, Iain Whyte. After only two weeks in the office, this could have been quite a shock to the system but with a background in teaching as well as strong church involvement, maybe it wasn't so bad.

Iain observed that the Guild has always been about 'Growth, change and vitality' and that it was always 'A Guild for its time'. He is looking forward to be invited out to Guilds to meet us all.

The final speaker was former Chief Superintendent Sandy Scrimgeour who now coordinates Perth Street Pastors. He started speaking with his street uniform on (jacket and baseball cap) but soon needed to discard at least the cap because of the increasing warmth in the Caird Hall. This quick change didn't detract from his very powerful story.

He described a 'typical' Saturday night and how their non-confrontational approach can help to get people to talk. The movement started in 2003 and there are now some 13 centres with 400 volunteers operating in Scotland. With a very definite twinkle, he told us that the best pastors are grannies ... hmmm.

Street Pastors is an Ascension Trust led initiative and is an inter-denominational Christian response to today's social problems. It is a partnership between local authorities, police and churches. They follow simple guidelines : 'Listening, caring, helping'. They don't mention religion unless the person they meet does but work with Jesus in their hearts (just not their mouths).

I am sure that he was hoping to encourage some of us to really think about Street Pastorship. Even if we didn't feel like volunteering he strongly recommended that we think about spending 2 hours with a team on the streets to experience how they, in their small way 'walk in His footsteps', but apart from that he asked for our prayers and to speak well of Street Pastors. I'm certain that we will ; many of us left thinking hard about the challenges they face on our streets.

The day was closed by briefly summarizing what we had heard and held Mary Slessor up as a great example of humility. After her closing prayer we sang 'At the name of Jesus' and together gave each other the blessing.

Anna Gilmour

On Monday 5 March 2012 at 2.pm our Guild will show the DVD of the national meeting. All are welcome to come and share this, whether a Guild member or not – come and be inspired and challenged!

The Guild

During the autumn, the Guild enjoyed their visits from Liz Findlay with her “Memories of Iona”, Rosemary Elwell on “Tall Ships – The Jubilee Sailing Trust” and Martin Johnson of “Farm Africa”. In addition, there was another highly successful Coffee Evening.

Ladies and gentlemen alike may be sure of a cordial welcome on the first Monday of the month in Ancrum Church Meeting Room at 2.pm. The ever-popular Christmas Party is on Monday 5 December, then it's the Presbyterial Council Carol Service on Sunday 11 December at 6.30.pm in Jedburgh Old & Trinity.

Into the New Year, Averil Inglis is the guest on Monday 6 February, speaking on the Holy Land Interfaith Guild Project. Monday 5 March will feature a DVD of the 2011 National Guild Meeting, and the branch AGM will be held on Monday 2 April. Please feel free to come along!

Not just on Sunday mornings ...

In all our churches, there is a **Prayer Box** near the door, and Prayer Cards are provided for prayer requests, anonymously if you prefer.

A **Devotional Diary** is produced monthly, available at the church door, with a prayer point for every day, accompanied by three suggested Bible readings. You can also download this on-line

Healing : Alexis and Frank will gladly make ourselves available to offer healing ministry – please e-mail or phone.

Prayer & Bible Study : Beginning again in late January, on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of the month, 7.pm to 8.30.pm in Ancrum Meeting Room, led by John Marshall. We are presently studying 1st Corinthians.

Tuesday Girls : Alternate Tuesdays, 7.pm to 8.30.pm in The Manse, led by Alexis, with a emphasis on health and wholeness. This includes a Bible study, and, for those interested, a “Pray & Weigh” session.

On-line Sermons : You can download and print Sunday sermons from the website. Go to the “news” page and browse “sermons”.

Check the weekly Church News or the website for more information.

Our Historical Heritage

Last year, Major Jock Sprot of Riddell, local historian and former Session Clerk at Lilliesleaf, died aged 99. Jock had already given permission for extracts of his autobiography, "The Life Story of Major John Sprot MBE TD" to appear in GOOD NEWS, and during 2011 – Jock's centenary – we are happy to do so. We conclude the series of extracts with some of Jock's memoirs of the Second World War.

On the 19th December 1943, I was in my office at Galashiels where I was Staff Captain at the Border Sub-District, when my father telephoned at about 4.pm asking me to come over immediately as the old house was on fire. I obtained permission to leave and by the time I arrived at Riddell the fire was out! Older houses often smouldered and flared up again if not extinguished properly.

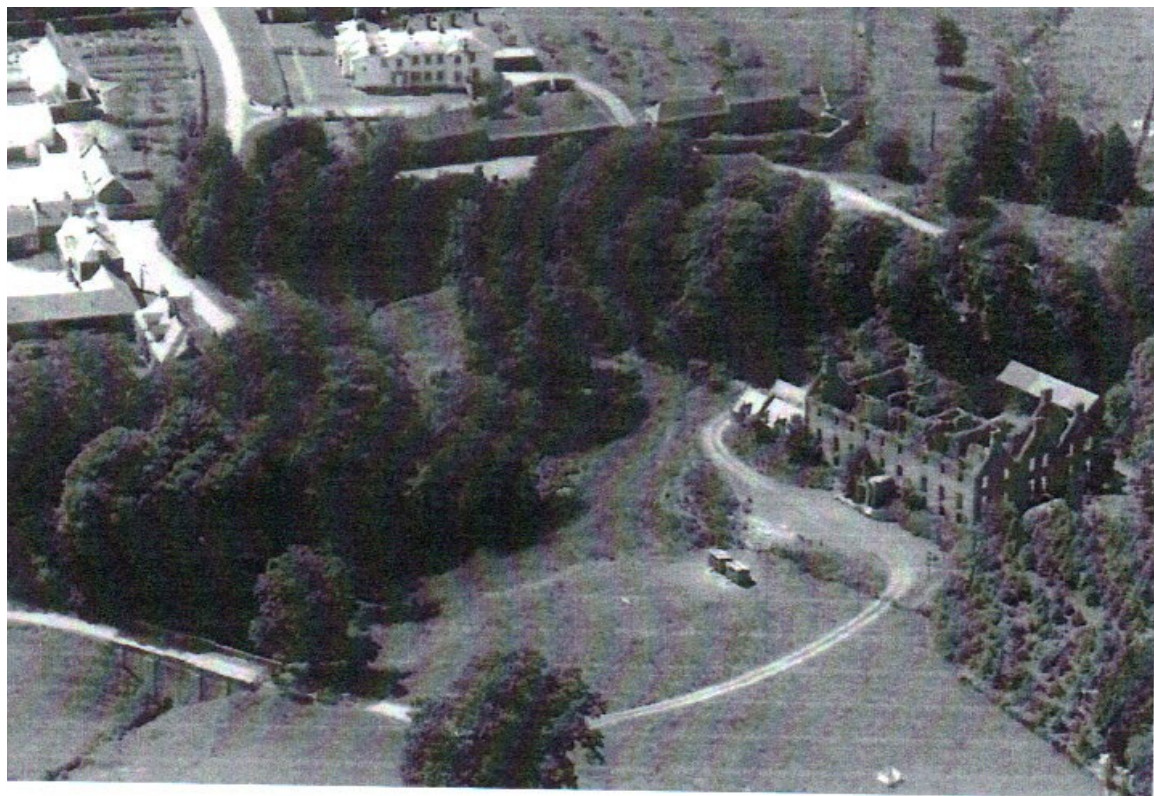
With this in mind we requested that the fire brigade left two men overnight, though they refused. Four hours later, the fire had reignited, and a piece of heavy stone cope on the roof had fallen through the floors, taking with it some of the burning timber. The floors were made from pine trees with lathes on the bottom and floorboards on top.

The large gap between the top and bottom was stuffed with bog hay which had dried out from years of central heating and it immediately set ablaze. Nothing could stop the fire, it had spread from the West End Gable, and the westerly wind that evening fanned the fire on. We watched as all the plate glass windows melted and, though there were no flames coming out of the roof, inside the house was an inferno.

The furniture that we hadn't needed for our smaller house had been stored in the attics of the burning one and was impossible to recover, although nothing of great value was up there. The cause of the fire was proved to have been started by the Women's Land Army who had been in residence there. They had gone into an unauthorised attic room and lit a fire in the chimney, or so the story goes.

My father claimed insurance from the Department of Agriculture. They sent him a cheque for £200, saying this would cover the annual rental of the building. Luckily, my father had kept his own insurance and we

received a cheque from them for £25,000. This was the end of what had been a very happy home for us all, as well as generations before.



Riddell House after the blaze in December 1943

I was in Galashiels up till the spring of 1944. At the back end of 1943 I said to my commander that I really must move on as I'd been there for four years now. I asked him if he could get me a good job and he wrote away and eventually I got a letter saying would I go out to India with the special forces. I said yes I certainly would. I was posted to Force 136 and reported early in 1944 to their headquarters in London.

I was then, along with three or four others, sent on a short course at Beaulieu in Hampshire. This was mainly to show us what the Force did in general. We then went by air in March 1944 in a Sunderland flying boat out to India. We started in the evening from Poole and flew out in a big circle over the Atlantic to avoid being spotted by the German planes and arrived at Gibraltar for breakfast.

We had a lovely breakfast there and then got onto our flying boat again, the Sunderland, and went out along the Mediterranean - you could see both Africa and Spain for quite a long time. We then veered

over North Africa, close to Oran, where the green grass, yellow sand and deep blue sea made a wonderful picture.

After about an hour we turned inland and cut across to the Gulf of Gabes and over the former battlefields of the Tunis campaign and landed at the island of Jerba for a time to stretch our legs and then have supper. We then continued to Cairo overnight landing on the Nile on the outskirts of the city. We were there for twenty four hours and took the opportunity of visiting the Sphinx and Pyramids. I bought some chocolate and fudge from the famous chocolate shop "Groppie".

This proved a disaster as when we flew over the next stage to Habinea in Baghdad I offered the chocolate and fudge around and they all felt sick afterwards having been deprived of this for so long. I was the only one not affected Then we went down the Persian Gulf to Bahrain where we had supper. It was lovely going down there, looking out of the portholes and watching all the whales going up and down.

I remember feeling so hot and not knowing why until I realised I still had on the same clothes I'd had on in the British Isles which were very cold at that time so I changed into something cooler. We went on to Karachi where we spent the morning - we arrived in time for breakfast. We then went to Delhi where we were met by members of our troop who told us we were just in time to go to the Viceroy's garden party.



Off we went there. It was rather like the Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace in peace time - wonderful flowers everywhere and everyone drinking champagne and heaven knows what. Two days later I was posted to Calcutta. I got to Howrah Station in Calcutta and they shouted "Howrah, Howrah".

I thought : I'm not getting out at Howrah, I'm going to Calcutta! It never dawned on me it was like London – you had St Pancras, Euston etc. I quickly realised I was in Calcutta and leapt out just before the train drew into the siding.

I had a great time there and was then sent up to Darjeeling to see about a holiday house for the troops. In December 1944 I got jaundice in Calcutta.

I was in hospital there for a few days when they offered me a position up in the hospital at Le Bong near Darjeeling. This I accepted and I went up there on the night train to Sil Ghari where I set off, then onto the mountain train which took me to Darjeeling.

A little man sat on a chair in front of the engine with a bucket of sand and a shovel. If the wheels began to slip because of the incline being too steep, he'd throw a bit sand on to the wheels and we moved on. It turned round a corkscrew once or twice, then went in a big circle and came in and passed along by itself. When we were going up that time the VAD in charge of the carriage asked me if I was feeling a bit sick. I said yes so the VAD shouted to the engine driver to slow down.

After about a week in the hospital at Le Bong I was given a fortnight's sick leave and took the chance of going round the countryside, staying at Kalimpong with the sister of Dr Graham, our doctor in Selkirk, whose husband ran the College of Indian (Anglo) boys. The school was started by their father who lived out there until his death.

I then went and stayed at a planter's club in Darjeeling. One day there were two other people there and we all decided we should go up and see Gangtok the capital of Sikkim, which is only about ten miles from the frontier with Tibet, for the day and see what it was like. So we hired a taxi and went up the Tista River to Gangtok, a lovely spot – a very small town with a bazaar street and above it a maharaja's palace, the roof and, I think, the sides made of corrugated iron.

The maharaja was evidently very poor because I asked him if he went out often round his kingdom and he said he didn't as he had very little money. He asked us to lunch with him and his wife and daughter, Princess – I always called her Cuckoo because I could never remember what her name was! She was perfectly charming, spoke beautiful perfect English and was teaching in the English school run by the two old cousins of Lucy Scott of Cairnmount, Kelso.

From : The Life Story of Major John Sprot MBE TD

With grateful thanks

The true cost of freedom : based on Matthew 16 : 21-28

Sermon preached at Ancrum & Lilliesleaf, Armistice Day 2011

In this text Jesus spoke some hard words, very much in keeping with the theme of Remembrance. *If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.*

If this Armistice service is about anything, it is about self-denial and self-sacrifice for a cause greater than self. It's not hard to see how that relates to the people of this parish who stepped up to the plate when the freedom of this nation was under genuine threat from – in the case of the first world war – old-fashioned greed and pride ; in the second world war – something even more sinister, indeed demonic.

Likewise, the church has nothing to say, and indeed no reason to exist, were it not for the self-denial and self-sacrifice of Jesus. He also had to confront old-fashioned greed and pride that is the inevitable condition of every human heart that does not know God in a personal way as Father. And He had to confront the sinister, demonic forces of evil that go beyond plain stupid selfishness into outright wickedness.

In his three years of ministry Jesus encountered, on a daily basis, what old translations of the Bible call the world, the flesh and the devil. Let me deal with that unholy trinity. *The world* doesn't refer to this planet. What God has made is beautiful and wonderful, or at least it was till the human race mucked it up by gross mismanagement.

When the Bible speaks negatively of *the world*, what it means is the world's way of thinking, the idea that there is no absolute right and wrong, that you can do what seems best to you, that it's OK to compromise on God's Word to save face, to move with the times, to appear trendy, to avoid offending people.

The world's way of thinking might concede, in bad grace, the place of Jesus as one of many ways to find "God" ; of the Bible as one of many

holy books ; but the underlying mindset is that God has no place in government, in business, in education.

Let God out to play for an hour on Sunday, if you must, for those that like that sort of thing, but keep Him safely under lock and key for the rest of the time, well away from real life. That's the world's way of thinking, and it's clinically insane. God's the only one who can make life work for you. Listen to the promises God has made :

The Lord will guarantee a blessing on everything you do. Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. I am the Lord who heals you.

I will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease. I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer ; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honour them. I will reward them with a long life and give them my salvation."

To shut God out of everyday life is like shooting yourself in both feet and then trying to run the 100 metres. That's *the world* – stupidity masquerading as sophistication. The *flesh* ramps that up to another level. *The flesh* makes a "god" of what I think, what I feel, what I want. It's all about me. Me first. Isn't that the root cause of most wars?

Finally, the devil. Many church people don't believe there is a devil. He's a master of disguise, camouflaging himself in bad circumstances. The Bible says he comes to steal, kill and destroy. Cancer. Tsunamis. Droughts. Wars. All these steal, kill and destroy.

The devil is at the heart of them. But the devil's fooled so many people into thinking he doesn't exist, that the only supernatural force left to blame is the God they've never bothered getting to know! The devil does the damage, God carries the can! Slick, but sick! Jesus gave Himself completely and willingly to defeat the world, the flesh and the devil, so that you and I don't have to fight all those battles over again on our own. When we put our faith in Jesus, we share His victory.

We plug into the promises of *God's Word*, not the vacuous spin of the *world*. We enjoy the love, joy and peace of the *Spirit*, not the anger,

stress and frustration of the *flesh*. We stand victorious in *Jesus*, the way, the truth and the life, the *devil* crushed under our feet.

And all this comes purely by grace. Jesus has paid the full price in his own battered, violated, blood-spattered body. His self-sacrificial death offers life without measure, without limit, without end, without charge. But surely you get nothing for nothing? What does Jesus say?

If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. The words of Jesus speak of laying down our life for Him. And, yes, for some people that may be in a literal sense – just as He did for us. Jesus laid down his life so that we might have the free choice whether to follow Him or to ignore Him.

It was the same for most of the first disciples. Very few of them died peacefully in bed at a ripe old age. They laid down their lives for the sake of the message they proclaimed, of God's reconciling love in Jesus, so that we might be free to receive it or reject it.

It was the same for the names on the war memorials in our villages. They left homes and loved ones behind, and laid down their lives, so that today we might be free to come to this service and remember with gratitude their self-denial and self-sacrifice ...

... or indeed that we might be free to drive past the memorials loudly, in second gear, music blaring, making fun of those who remember ...

... or indeed that we might be free to lie in our bed nursing a hangover till mid-afternoon and never give them a thought.

You see, the self-denial and self-sacrifice of others doesn't actually *compel* a response. That isn't how it works. We are free agents. We have an absolute, unconditional right to respect or to despise the price others have paid to purchase our freedom. The ghosts of those brave men whose names are engraved on our memorials won't come back to haunt those who ignore, or treat with contempt, the price they paid.

The self-sacrifice of the victims of Flanders, Omaha Beach, or the concentration camps, entitles the generation of today to exercise our

freedom in wrong ways. If we didn't have that entitlement, it wouldn't be true freedom. Do you see the logic ... albeit uncomfortable logic?

Likewise, the self-giving and self-sacrifice of Jesus gives you and me and everyone else out there the freedom to believe and receive, or to doubt and do without ; to join with or pour scorn on those of us who have faith. That's what must drive the devil mad! When Adam blew it, the devil demanded that all humanity died, simple as, without the option. When Jesus, the second Adam, came, He demanded that all humanity have the choice, life or death, blessing or cursing.

Our God doesn't do compulsion. From the very beginning, God's will was for us to choose to have relationship with Him. He doesn't stand behind anyone with a sub-machine gun and force us. We can exercise our blood-bought freedom for faith and life, or not. Jesus said : Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in. Jesus waits to be invited into our lives.

He has impeccable manners. If we don't want to let Him in, if we don't want to hand over control of our life to Him, if we don't want to lay aside our self-centred, me-first agenda, if we don't want to let Him wipe out the mistakes of the past, and open up a future of true health, prosperity and fulfilment in serving Him, so be it. It's our call to make. Of course, our choice will have consequences here and hereafter ...

The self-denial and the self-sacrifice of Jesus on the cross paves the way for us to have a life of true and lasting meaning and significance. But we need to make a choice to hand over everything to Him. Much as we admire those who made a glorious one-off decision to die for the gospel, in certain respects making a daily commitment to live for the gospel is actually a tougher call – and it's the one you and I face.

If you're wavering, remember the last piece of the jigsaw. Part of the reason Peter got flustered in v.23 was that his brain was fried hearing the bad news : *Jesus must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed* : that he totally missed the end of the story : *and on the third day be raised to life*. We must remember the **end** of the story.

Otherwise what Jesus says in vs.24ff about laying down personal ambition, and giving up control of our lives, becomes both impossible and futile. Had Jesus not been raised to life, he would be just another dead hero, and we would still be lost in our sins.

Had Jesus not been raised to life, the firstfruits, the Bible tells us, of the resurrection of all God's people, there would be no gospel, no hope, no nothing. But He did rise again. Death was added to the list of enemies that Jesus not only defeated but humiliated.

And His rising again means that you and I, if we choose to follow Him, costly as that decision may be, will one day see Him face to face, and – with Him – those saints who walked this way before us, who paid the same price we are invited to pay, and now share His glory for eternity. I invite you, in honour of what Jesus has done for you, to choose, now, how the story will end for you – life or death, blessing or curse.

A Poem of Remembrance

The Bugle Call : by Amy Mellor, aged 12

Silence surrounds
As the bugle call sounds
An eeriness seeps through the air.
The crowd bow their heads,
As solemnity spreads
To stop for two minutes in prayer.
The trumpet cries out
And I'm sure with no doubt
A shiver will crawl down your spine.
It may seem surreal
But the war becomes real
You can picture that scene in your mind.
A sea of dark red,
Where soldiers lie dead
The smell of war hangs in the air.
I'm sure you'll agree,
Not a nice place to be,
But the music has taken you there.

As the high notes descend
The song comes to an end
And time's recognition is met.
Remembrance Day's more
Than poppies galore
It's that scene you shall never forget.

The Church of Scotland : Policy Statement

Ensuring a Safe Church for All



vulnerable adults

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. The Church affirms the responsibility of each individual within its fellowship to prevent harm or abuse of any type – physical, sexual or emotional – especially if this is directed toward children, young people, or

The Adventures of Big Alex & Friends : by CA Graham
Children's picture book by ... ahem, a local author, who may just have something to do with producing this magazine!



A great stocking-filler for the kids ... order your personally autographed copy at £10, of which £2 will go to the Kirk : speak to Frank or contact info@aleandteviot.org.uk

Have you looked at our church website lately?

Keep in touch with what's going on :

www.aleandteviot.org.uk

An Important Message from the Minister

Visits to Borders General Hospital

Throughout my entire ministry, upwards of 20 years, it has been my practice to visit the local hospital on a more-or-less weekly basis and to take advantage of the “chaplains’ lists” provided, giving the names and addresses of all those who had been admitted to that hospital. The Borders General Hospital was one of the last hospitals in Scotland still to provide that courtesy to ministers.

Alas, the constraints of “data protection” and so-called “human rights” have now prevailed, and the practice has been discontinued. As a result, I am no longer able to find out who is in hospital UNLESS someone tells me. The Spiritual Care Manager and his team at the

BGH are trying to devise some system that would allow patients, on admission, to request a visit from their minister.

HOWEVER, unless and until some resolution to the legal problem is worked out, I would be grateful to be informed if you, or someone known to you, is going into the BGH – or indeed any hospital – otherwise, I'm very sorry to say, you probably won't receive a visit. Many thanks for your help and co-operation

A few words of thanks ...

To all who supported the Harvest Thanksgiving Appeal for “Hand of Hope Ministries”, with a special mention to John Marshall, who ran in the Jedburgh Half-Marathon. In all, over £600 was raised.

To all who organised and supported the Blythwood Care Shoebox Appeal. We were able to send 55 boxes plus £130 for transport costs.

To all who organised and supported the Guild Coffee Evening – a very pleasant event which raised a quite remarkable £550

And finally ... a personal word of thanks for the surprise presentation to Alexis and Frank to mark our 20 years of ministry in this parish!

Information about our Harvest & Christmas Appeals overleaf.

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2011 Harvest Appeal : Hand of Hope

As the drought and malnutrition crisis persists in the Horn of Africa, **Hand of Hope** works with organizations with an established presence in the area to provide desperately-needed food and water. In places like Mogadishu and Garissa, staggering numbers of people are facing starvation, whilst the infrastructure in parts of Kenya is under severe pressure as so many people have been displaced there by famine.



Your generous support for our **Harvest Appeal** has helped to save many lives by providing nourishment for children facing malnutrition and has enabled families to stay together. Please continue to pray for an end to the drought and the conditions that contribute to malnutrition.

As well as this work in the Horn of Africa, **Hand of Hope**, part of Joyce Meyer Ministries, is involved all over the world in projects including the rescue of street children, child soldiers and sex slaves.

For more information see www.joycemeyer.org/HandOfHope

2011 Christmas Appeal : Margaret Kerr Palliative Care Unit

At present, people suffering from terminal illness have their specialist palliative care needs met in a standard ward within Borders General Hospital, beside other patients. This is far from ideal. A new in-patient specialist palliative care unit at the Hospital will have 8 en-suite single bedrooms, each with a view on to the Borders countryside, as well as overnight stay facilities for family members, treatment and therapy rooms, a day room and a landscaped garden and courtyard spaces.

The aim is to create a comfortable, welcoming and peaceful place, with a direct link to the main hospital. In recognition of the significant legacy left by Miss Margaret Kerr, a nurse who lived for many years in the Borders, the new unit will be named 'The Margaret Kerr Unit'.

Go to : www.thedifference.org.uk/the-margaret-kerr-unit-appeal

Cardiomyopathy Association Calendar 2012

Many people locally will remember Jane Rutherford Paton, daughter of Alastair & Sue Rutherford, who died very suddenly in 2010 at the age of 32. In honour of Jane, her husband Dougie has participated in several fund-raising activities – including marathons and an Everest expedition – for the CMA. Dougie has now drawn to our attention the publication of [a 2012 calendar of 'Life in the Borders'](#), the result of a [photography competition in the local paper](#).

This is a limited edition calendar, available at just £5. If you would like to buy one [or more], in support of this most worthwhile cause, please e-mail Rev Frank Campbell in the first instance.

Help With Heating Bills

Through local Trust Funds, it may be possible to offer some modest help toward winter heating bills – more than ever, a significant item in any household budget. If you would like to apply for help, or to recommend someone for help, in either case on a totally confidential basis, please contact Frank Campbell *in writing* – either by e-mail or by “snail-mail”. We hope we can help you.

Blythswood Care : Uplift of good used clothes etc

Blythswood Care have a monthly uplift of clothing, non-perishable foodstuffs, bric-a-brac and small items of furniture for needy people in Eastern Europe. Larger items of furniture may also be accepted, by arrangement – please call 0141-882-0585 or 07947-617047. Listed below are provisional collection dates for early 2012 :

MONDAYS : 6 February, 5 March, 2 April [January not yet known]

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

TUESDAYS : 7 February, 6 March, 3 April [January not yet known]

Hawick	Morrisons Car Park	9.00-9.45.am
Jedburgh	Bus Station Car Park	10.15-10.45.am
Kelso	Knowes Car Park	11.15-11.45.am



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Green fees : £5 [Mon – Fri] ; £10 [Sat – Sun]

Under 16 years on 1 May 2011 : half-price

Club / trolley hire : £5 including balls and tees

Buggy hire : £10 for 9 holes ; £15 for 18 holes ; £20 per day

Contact Norman on 01835-870733 or 07831-144037

Dimpleknowe, Lilliesleaf, Melrose TD6 9JU

Parish Registers : 1 July to 20 November 2011

Baptisms

24 July <i>Crailing</i>	Lewis Donald Newton, <i>son of</i> Ross & Julie [Linton], 86 Abbotseat, Kelso
30 October <i>Ancrum</i>	Jessica Catherine Lackenby, <i>daughter of</i> Clayton & Fiona [Ritchie], 15 The Glebe

Funerals

4 August <i>Mortonhall</i>	Mrs Mary Foster <i>previously</i> Repeater Station House, Jedburgh
16 September <i>Mortonhall</i>	Mrs Sylvia Robson 16 Myres Croft Road <i>Service conducted by Rev Graham Astles</i>
7 October <i>Bowden</i>	Mr Robert Wood Lilliard, Tweedside Road, Newtown St Boswells
31 October <i>Crailing</i>	Mr Walter Grieve 22 Queens Court

Weddings

16 July <i>Jedburgh Castle</i>	Wayne Scott & Gillian Scott <i>now of</i> : 27 Bongate
9 August <i>Lilliesleaf</i>	Richard Pennick & Heather Davis <i>now of</i> : 49 Lindale Avenue, Barrow-in-Furness
20 August <i>Ancrum</i>	Malcolm McCartney & Joanne Reilly <i>now of</i> : 28 Howden Crescent
26 August <i>Hermitage Castle</i>	John Hutton & Wendy Gunn <i>now of</i> : 18F Mansfield Road, Hawick
9 September <i>Crailing</i>	Stuart Little & Karen Linton <i>now of</i> : 34 Berry Moss Court, Kelso
19 October <i>Lilliesleaf</i>	Sandy Morrison & Zoe Gourlay <i>now of</i> : 37 Bountrees

Ale & Teviot United Church

Special Events over Christmas



We look forward to seeing you at any of our celebrations of Jesus' birthday!

NOTE : ALL DEPENDENT ON WEATHER!!

If in doubt, check the Website : WWW.ALEANDTEVIOT.ORG.UK

Sunday 4 December : Morning Services

Ancrum : 10.am ; Lilliesleaf : 11.30.am. No service at Crailing

Monday 5 December : Guild Christmas Party : Ancrum : 2.pm

Come and enjoy a warm welcome, some entertainment, and a lovely afternoon tea. Bring a party piece if you have one!

Sunday 11 December : Morning Services

Ancrum : 10.am ; Crailing : 10.30.am ; Lilliesleaf : 11.30.am.

Tuesday 13 December : Ancrum School Concert : 6.30.pm

In Ancrum Church, followed by mince pies in the Village Hall.

Sunday 18 December : United Service : Ancrum : 10.am

ALL-AGE SERVICE. Come and hear the Christmas story, and sing along with well-loved carols, old and new. There is a collection of new and good used toys for needy children, There will be NO SERVICES at Crailing or Lilliesleaf that morning.

Sunday 18 December : Riddell Fiddles : Lilliesleaf : 6.30.pm

A happy celebration for the holiday season, led by this locally based, and internationally renowned, group of musicians.

Wednesday 21 December : School End-of-term Services

In church – all welcome : Ancrum : 9.30.am ; Lilliesleaf : 11.15.am.

Wednesday 21 December : Carol Service : Eckford : 6.30.pm

Fun event in Eckford Village Hall, followed by coffee, mulled wine and mince pies. For more details, please contact Annette Fraser [850213].

Christmas Eve : Family Service : Ancrum : 6.30.pm

If you have young children to get safely tucked up in bed in good time for Santa, or if you are keen to get safely home before the weather turns too cold, come to our United Family Service.

Christmas Eve : Carol Singing : Lilliesleaf : 6.30.pm

Meeting at the Village Hall, singing around the village and collecting for the War Blinded ... then coffee and mince pies in The Plough!

Christmas Eve : Watchnight Services Crailing & Lilliesleaf : 11.30.pm

Come and greet the new-born King as the Christmas bells ring out! Bruce McNicol presides at Crailing, Frank Campbell is at Lilliesleaf.

Christmas Day : Family Service : Ancrum : 10.am

Begin Christmas Day with a happy half-hour to give thanks for the Saviour's birth. Kids of all ages are welcome to bring along a new toy that Santa has brought.

All offerings in church on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will be "sown" into the Margaret Kerr Palliative Care Unit.

New Year's Day : Communion : Crailing : 10.30.am

We begin the New Year together around the Lord's table. Everyone welcome, of all ages or denominations. There will be NO SERVICES

that day at Ancrum or Lilliesleaf.



ALE & TEVIOT UNITED CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Scottish Charity No : SC 016457

Website : www.aleandteviot.org.uk

Minister : Rev Frank Campbell
22 The Glebe ; Ancrum ; Jedburgh ; TD8 6UX
Voicemail : 01835-830318 ; Fax : 01835-830262
e-mail : info@aleandteviot.org.uk

Session Clerk : Mr John Rogerson
24 Cotgreen Road ; Galashiels ; TD1 3SG
Phone : 01896-754817

Treasurer : Mr Harold Inglis
72 Back Row ; Selkirk ; TD7 4AG
Phone : 01750-23172
e-mail : harold.inglis@btinternet.com

TIMES OF SERVICES : January to March 2012

ANCRUM Every Sunday at 10.am EXCEPT 1 Jan

LILLIESLEAF Every Sunday at 11.30.am EXCEPT 1 Jan
18 Mar : Communion, 11.30 [no evening service]

CRAILING 1, 8 & 22 Jan ; 12 & 26 Feb ; 11 & 25 Mar ; all at 10.30
NO *Songs of Praise* evenings during this period

Any changes will be notified in weekly Church News

**A Very Merry Christmas
and a Happy Healthy New Year!**