

From the Manse ~

Christmas – Festival of Incarnation

Each year during Advent I like to read and listen to things that will help me both to prepare for and to understand Christmas. This year I'm reading the slim book *The Meaning is in the Waiting* by Paula Gooder, which explores the themes of the four Sundays in Advent (Promise to Abraham and Sarah, the Prophets, John the Baptist and Mary). Her introduction reflects on the significance of waiting. The world in which we live always wants things 'yesterday.' We hate waiting, and yet waiting is so important for us as we seek to understand more fully the promise of God and its fulfilment in the coming of Jesus. I'm looking forward to reading the rest of the book – but I'll need to wait for each theme as it comes!

Another on my list, this time for preparation, is *Christmas: Festival of Incarnation* by Donald Heinz – it's on order so I can't tell you much about it except that I think it's important for us each year to look at something different to help us see Christmas with fresh eyes. I'll also be listening intently to the traditional carols on my iPhone, scanning the words afresh to listen for the voice of God.

Waiting and preparation are important, but so are celebration and proclamation. Christmas must be a Festival – a time of feasting, joy and celebration. God has come among us in Christ – how mind-blowing is that? How worthy is that of celebration! Put aside our cultural additions and eat and drink for joy that God has come! This is Good News, and Good News is for telling. Like the shepherds of Bethlehem, let us not be afraid to proclaim him but, with openness and creativity, let us tell of our Lord.

Special Christmas Services

The list of Christmas services will be found elsewhere in *The Net* but, as we think of Christmas as a time of sharing Good News, I'd like to draw attention to three opportunities for us to invite friends and neighbours. '**Community Carols**' on 10 December at 7pm is going to be a Lessons and Carols service for everyone in the Parish, thinking especially of students and others who might be elsewhere on the Day.

We all know the experience of marking Christmas having lost a loved one during the year. The **Remembrance and Thanksgiving** service, on 12 December at 4pm in the Church, is to acknowledge

our sense of loss in order to help us celebrate Christmas without being overcome by it. Invitations will be available for you to give to those whom you think would find the service a help. It will be simple, reflective with the opportunity for an act of remembrance – the placing of a single stem flower in a vase and the lighting of a candle. So far as is possible, the flowers will remain in Church over the course of the Christmas season.

Christmas Eve has two services – Family and Watchnight – both of which are great opportunities to invite people to come and join us for what is, often, the highlight of the year. Do make use of the Church Christmas cards as a personal invitation. The picture on our card was painted by Courtney Ellwood of P5 at Prestonfield Primary School, the winner of our competition at the school. Thanks to all the children who took part and the teachers who helped them.

Fabric Developments – update

I doubt if any of us could have guessed in advance the success of the Gift Day. Thank you to all who contributed to raise such a substantial sum of money for the refurbishment of the interior of the church. A great deal of prayer has been offered for wisdom to understand what is needed and for the means to bring it about. God has truly blessed us and we look forward in the coming months to the plans coming to fruition. As yet, there is no firm date for starting and our timing will be, in some measure, dependent upon others, but the intention is to get the work done as soon as possible. Look out for more news in the coming days.

Congregational Board – Thanks and Farewell

At our Congregational Meeting in October we decided to adopt the Unitary Constitution from 1 January 2011. We have now received the signed copy from 121 George Street and the last meeting of the Congregational Board was on 24 November. At that meeting I asked for the thanks of the whole Congregation to be recorded in the last minute to all who have served the Board, not only as members and Office Bearers, but also as those who have put its plans into action. Your work has been really appreciated and it was celebrated with a little party at the end of the meeting.

From now on, the Fabric and Finance Committees will report directly to the Kirk Session, which will have overall responsibility for the affairs of church life.

A close shave for the Sarcoma Trust

As I write, two young people I know are undergoing aggressive treatment for a less usual form of cancer called Ewing's sarcoma, which affects bone and soft tissue and is found among the young, mainly boys. One is Callum, son of David and Alison, who is well known and loved in Priestfield, and who is now living in Cambridge. The other is Tom, long-time boyfriend of our niece Kathryn. Not having come across Ewing's before, I found it extraordinary that we should know two folks who have it. So I was asking, how might we respond?

As you know, one of the side effects of chemotherapy is loss of hair, so I thought that I could identify with them just a little bit by having my hair and beard shaved off – at a price of course, in order to raise money for research into the disease. The shearing will take place in the Lounge after the service on 26 December. Jane will be responsible, but anyone who would like a shot can have one for a donation. I will be advertising for sponsorship, which will mainly be collected through a Just Giving page on the internet – but cash will also be welcome!

In the meantime, remember in your prayers Callum, Tom and their loved ones at what is a tremendously trying time for them all.

Mark's Gospel

This coming year between Christmas and Easter we'll be reflecting on the Gospel of Mark in our Sunday gatherings. Mark was probably the first Gospel to be written, it's the shortest, and it's fast moving and action packed. I'm sure you will get more out of the studies if you read through Mark in the coming days – it is short enough to read at one sitting even! That way you will get a sense of the flow of the story and its themes as Mark seeks to point us in the direction of Jesus.

Communion – First Sunday

In recent times the Kirk Session has been reflecting on our celebration of Communion and it has been agreed that, from February 2011, we will celebrate Communion on the first Sunday morning of every month – there may be exceptions but this will be the broad pattern. Being nourished by God's grace through the sacrament is an important part of our Christian life individually and collectively and I look forward to this more frequent morning celebration.

Fiona Tweedie

Those of you who were at the 11am service on 7 November will remember the pain and discomfort that Fiona was in because of a problem with her back. At present she is waiting for a consultation and is likely to undergo surgery at some point. Please pray for Fiona, Stephen, Heather and Susanna as they cope with the disruption to life that this will bring, and for Fiona that she will be seen quickly and have a speedy recovery.

Study Leave

My Study Leave application is about to be submitted, but I thought you might be interested in knowing the shape of what I'm hoping to do, which is very much rooted in the mission of our church. It's my intention to speak to people who live in the area at gathering points in the parish to find out from them what they think of church, what their needs are and how church might help. I'll also be seeking to learn from others who have been deeply involved in this kind of work and who have written about it or who are prepared to speak about it.

I'm applying for five weeks of leave in the late spring of 2011 and the provisional shape of it is this...

Week 1 preparatory reading; Week 2 listening to people in the parish; Week 3 learning from practitioners at the Church Army Centre in Sheffield; Week 4 time for reflection, perhaps at Ampleforth Abbey in Yorkshire; Week 5 writing up my thoughts and possibilities for us.

If this comes to pass, the Presbytery would appoint an Interim Moderator for the period so that Priestfield is looked after.

And Finally...

Jane and I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a New Year that is full of good things from God. Be prepared to be amazed!

Blessings,

Jared.

BLYTHSWOOD CARE SHOE BOX APPEAL 2010



Many thanks to all who filled boxes. We managed to fill 66 this year, the most we have ever filled.

A big thank you to some of our students who brought boxes - this was very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank all the ladies who went to Craigmillar Park Church to check the boxes. We checked over 7,000 boxes and they are now on their way to Kosovo and Romania.

Many thanks to you all.

Pat Smith

PRIESTFIELD CHURCH - CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Come and join us for any or all of these services

Friday 10 December ~

7.00 pm Community Lessons and Carols Service

Come and sing carols together – traditional and modern

Sunday 12 December ~

4.00 pm Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service

For those who will miss loved ones at Christmas

Sunday 19 December ~

10.30 am Christmas Family Service

A service for all ages

Friday 24 December ~

4.30 pm Christmas Eve Family Service

Come with the children to the noisy stable

11.30 pm Christmas Eve Service

Coffee and mince pies from 10.45pm, Carols from 11.15pm

Saturday 25 December ~

10.30 am Christmas Day Celebration

Bring one of your presents to tell us its significance for you

Sunday 26 December ~

10.30 am Christmas Communion Service –

A service for all ages

Sunday 2 January ~

10.30 am Epiphany Service –

Come and join the 'Wise Men' in seeking Jesus

WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?

DECEMBER 2010

Thursday	2		Home Groups
Saturday	4	10.00	Coffee Morning (Congregational Board)
		3.30 –	Christmas Tree Party
		5.00	<i>GodSpace</i> and friends have fun decorating the Christmas Tree
Sunday	5	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Communion Service (including the receipt of gifts for the Prison Chaplaincy). We will welcome a team from 'Mary's Meals', who will join us today. For more information see http://www.marysmeals.org/
		6.30	Forum: with the opportunity to come and share your thoughts, ideas and hopes for the future. A follow-up to the Congregational Conference
Thursday	9	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Friday	10	7.00	Community Carols – <i>why not invite your friends and neighbours?</i>
Sunday	12	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service
		4.00	Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance for the Bereaved
Thursday	16		Home Groups
Sunday	19	<u>10.30</u>	Christmas Family Service, incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Friday	24	4.30	Christmas Eve Family Service – <i>come and join us in the stable</i>
		11.30pm	Christmas Eve Service - <i>with coffee and mince pies from 10.45pm and carols from 11.15pm</i>
Saturday	25	<u>10.30</u>	Christmas Day Celebration
Sunday	26	<u>10.30</u>	Christmas Communion Service, incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>

JANUARY 2011

Sunday	2	<u>10.30</u>	Epiphany Service, incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Thursday	6	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	9	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service
Thursday	13		Home Groups
Saturday	15	10.00	Coffee Morning (St Andrew's Ambulance)
Sunday	16	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service
Wednesday	19	7.30	Kirk Session
Thursday	20	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	23	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service
Thursday	27		Home Groups
Sunday	30	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service

FEBRUARY 2011

Thursday	3	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Saturday	5	10.00	Coffee Morning (Uniformed Organisations)
Sunday	6	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Communion Service
Thursday	10		Home Groups
Sunday	13	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service
Thursday	17	7.30	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	20	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service
Thursday	24		Home Groups
Saturday	26	7.30	Bruce Davies' Concert
Sunday	27	10.00	<i>GodSpace</i>
		11.00	Morning Service

MARCH 2011

Wednesday	2	7.30	Kirk Session
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WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?

~ SNIPPETS from the KIRK SESSION ~

14 September 2010

Award of Grant by Presbytery

The Session heard that Presbytery had awarded Priestfield a grant of £3,000 towards the package of work which included redecoration of the chancel and upgrading and modification to the projection and audio systems.

Internal Ministry

The Session discussed;

- *Prayer before the 11 am service each week*
- *Prayer after the 11am service on the first Sunday of the month*
- *Prayer Request slips*
- *'Praise and Prayer'*
- *Prayer in Sunday Services*
- *'Open Church' for prayer*

Student Ministry

Publicity: Priestfield would again have a presence at 'Church Search' in George Square and at the 'Freshers' Fair'. Welcome banners would be hung on the church railings and a student page was being introduced on the website.

International Students: The Group was again promoting the befriending of international students.

Prayer: A student-based prayer programme had been developed and this had been set out in prayer cards, Connections and The Net.

'Reaching Out in Faith and Friendship'

Development of a 'drop-in' facility: Consideration was being given to providing a 'place' where non-English speakers could meet and speak English. The focus initially was those international students living in the family accommodation on Blacket Place. Links were being developed with a number of families.

Parish Christmas card: It was intended to distribute Christmas cards with a message and details of services again this year. A competition was being run in partnership with Prestonfield School, and one of the prize-winning pictures would be used on the front of the card.

Remembrance Sunday

The Session approved revised arrangements for Remembrance Sunday so that members of the congregation could meet with the local community after the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial, rather than rush away to church.

6 October 2010

Presbytery Plan Consultation

Presbytery was engaged upon a two-stage consultation on the development of its new Presbytery Plan. The Plan was required by March 2012 following a decision of the General Assembly. The Kirk Session met to consider a summary paper and questions that had been prepared by Presbytery's Plan Team.

A summary of the Session's discussion was sent to the Presbytery Clerk. The second stage of the consultation process would take place early in 2011.

10 October 2010 (Meeting of the Congregation)

The Congregation met after the 11am service to vote on the adoption of the Unitary Constitution. 45 votes were cast for the motion, no votes were cast against adoption and there were no spoilt ballot papers. The Moderator duly declared the motion passed.

13 October 2010

Unitary Constitution

The Clerk confirmed that the Presbytery Clerk had been advised of the congregation's approval of the adoption of the Unitary Constitution. Presbytery approved the proposal on 12 October 2010. The matter would now be passed by the Presbytery Clerk to the Delegation of Assembly for final 'sign-off'.

Internal Ministry

Pastoral Care Coordinator: The Kirk Session supported the group's proposal to appoint a coordinator. In addition to acting as a focal point for information gathering and dissemination, the person would ensure effective use of the Care Group and arrange lifts to church.

Communion Cards: The Session approved the Group's proposal to discontinue the use of cards. Elders would still make pastoral visits and a list of communion services would be prepared for elders to take with them on their visits.

Communion: The Session agreed that the present pattern of communion services should be modified. There should be;

- Monthly morning communion services,
- Evening communion services should cease,
- Occasional afternoon/evening communion should reflect particular circumstances,
- Home communion should be encouraged for those unable

to be at church,

- Ad hoc arrangements, for example at Balfour House, were supported.

Student Ministry

Priestfield 'TnT' (Teens and Twenties): A Sunday evening programme would start on 26 September. 'TnT' should meet in the small upstairs 'Blue Room'. Changes would be required to the room and equipment would be needed.

'Reaching Out in Faith and Friendship'

Newington Churches Together

Consideration was being given to initiatives with other churches under the auspices of the Council. Proposals included Street Pastors, a Fairtrade Fortnight in the New Year and an inter-faith walk. Colin Syme, current chairman of NCT would be relinquishing the chair in the near future.

Parish Christmas card

The format and contents of the Christmas card were outlined. Christingle would be retained, although it was not yet clear in which service it would be included.

Next Meeting

Tuesday 30 November at 7.30pm in the Lounge.

~ Student Ministry Group ~

PRIESTFIELD 'TNT'(Teens and Twenties)

The programme has been going well and our returning students have been joined by a number who have come along as a result of Church Search and seeing our banners. There are only two events left before January, both involving food! A Christmas celebration with mulled wine and, before that, a 'Grub Crawl', when a different house is visited for a starter, a main course and a sweet. A new bookmark showing the programme from January is being produced. Please pick up a copy from the Lounge to give to any students living near you. The website now has a dedicated page for students linking them into church activities.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Some members of the congregation will again be involved in befriending international students this session. In collaboration with Taylor Ince of Friends International, who is living in Blackett Place, we are considering a social programme of 'Live like a local' to introduce

international students and their families to notable dates e.g. Burns Night, Shrove Tuesday.

BREAKFASTS

The congregation and students continue to enjoy the muffins and coffee after both Sunday services. Could you help this to continue by offering to be part of the team organising them?

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for students as they go home for Christmas and then return to their studies.
- Pray for students, especially international students, who are staying in Edinburgh over Christmas. May they not be lonely or homesick but find friendship.
- Pray for all Christian students that they continue to follow Jesus.
- Pray that students will come along to 'TNT' and find out more about God's love for them.

June Henderson

~ A Message from the Treasurers ~

We are pleased to report that income for the first three quarters of 2010, at £51,748, is a little higher than the comparative figure for the previous year (2009 - £48,132).

Expenditure for the period January to September this year amounts to £66,266 – a considerable reduction on the £111,122 recorded for the equivalent period in 2009. This is partly due to heating, lighting and general maintenance costs being lower than at the same time last year. Significant, too, is the fact that, thus far in 2010, no major items of expenditure have been incurred, such as the necessary costs for manse improvements sustained last year.

A grant of £3,000 has been received from the Presbytery of Edinburgh towards the updating and re-siting of audio-visual equipment in the church. In addition, we heard recently that our contribution to the Ministries and Mission fund for 2010 has been reduced: a cheque for £3,831 in this respect has been received and banked.

A very successful Gift Day was held on 31 October to raise funds for the first phase of refurbishment of the inside of the church. A total of £16,205 has been donated, on which Gift Aid of £3,750 can be

claimed. In addition, interest-free loans amounting to £10,000 have been offered. A big **THANK YOU** to everyone for such generous gifts. Isn't it amazing what we can do with God's help?

*Fiona Ferguson
Andrew Steven*

~ FABRIC AND PROPERTY UPDATE ~

CHURCH

Gas appliances in the Church have been serviced and issued with health and safety certificates where appropriate.

A replacement timer control for the floodlights was installed at labour cost only, the box still being under warranty.

MANSE

In the Manse, minor work was required on the immersion heater and a couple of replacement parts were needed for one of the ovens.

Gas appliances in the Manse have been serviced and issued with health and safety certificates where appropriate.

CHURCH OFFICER'S FLAT

Servicing and a gas safety check on the central heating in the Church Officer's flat is not due till early 2011.

*Ian Williams,
Property Convener*

~ Social Life Group News ~

I know that all who attended the two Male Voice Choirs' concert on 1st October were delighted with the outstanding performances and there were approximately 210 in the Church that evening. The proceeds were a net £491.28 after deduction of fees etc. Many thanks again, from the committee, for your support.

The monthly coffee morning on 2nd October, hosted by the Uniformed Organisations, raised £130.00, which was gifted to Bethany Trust Summer Days Care Appeal.

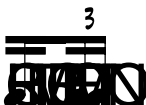
On 6th November, coffee morning organised by the Guild brought in

£105.77, which was pretty good considering the rather low attendance that morning.

In the new year the Unitary Constitution becomes effective in Priestfield Church, which means there will no longer be a Congregational Board. So, the monthly coffee morning for December, to be run by the Board, will be its very last, after 33 years' contribution. Thank you to past and present members.

Ian Williams

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In October we ran a Christmas Card Competition in conjunction with Prestonfield Primary School and the overall winner was **Courtney Ellwood of P5**. You can see Courtney's winning design on the front cover of this magazine, but check out our Christmas Card (coming soon!) for a full colour version! 3,000 of these cards will be delivered and distributed in the Prestonfield, Priestfield area, letting people know what the Church is doing over Advent and Christmas.

Thanks to everyone who took part, and congratulations to all prize winners!

~ 127th Rainbows ~

Girl Guiding celebrated its 100th Birthday this year. The finale was held on 20th October in the Corn Exchange. At 20:10 on 20.10.2010 over 2,000 girls renewed their Promise with counterparts throughout the UK. Entertainment was teaching the girls "Bollywood" dance routines and singing, mask making and refreshments. The highlight for the girls was a Chocolate Fountain!! Please look out for photographs in the church hall.

We have 14 girls at present but will be losing 9 to the Brownies after the New Year. If you know of any girls aged 5-7 years who would be interested in joining, we meet on Tuesday evenings from 6.00 to 7.00pm.

On behalf of the Rainbows and Leaders, may we wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.



~ Guild ~

When the Guild Committee sit down to plan the Guild Session, quite often we find that preparing the Syllabus can give us a bit of a headache. However, with so many committed members giving so much of their time and energy in everything they do, we soon find, after lots of friendly discussion, that we are able to provide, once again, a well-balanced programme.

WHOSE WE ARE, AND WHOM WE SERVE. This much loved Motto of the Guild (*taken from the words first uttered by the Apostle Paul in Acts chapter 27, verse 23*) has encouraged members over many years in giving their commitment, not only to the Guild, but also in their service to the Lord. Dr Alison Elliot – Moderator of the 2004 General Assembly – once said that ‘commitment is one of the things that adds flavour to life. It’s what turns a passing interest into a priority for your time and energy and gives a purposeful shape to your life.’

Sadly, commitment is not a popular concept today. Older Guild members have certainly seen a great change during their lifetime. Many couples do not see the need for the commitment of marriage, and many who do, divorce. In employment, temporary contracts are replacing the security of a job for life. Yet, even in today’s society, there are many people who continue to commit themselves in caring for their families, who may be struggling to overcome poverty, abuse and lack of opportunity. People still commit themselves to caring for a loved one during illness – and how many have valued the commitment and care of others when they have been called to make a costly commitment themselves?

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are challenged to keep going in whatever we do. We remember that, when Jesus was on earth, he committed himself, in love, towards others and he calls on us to do the same. But, if perseverance appears to call for too much perspiration and collapsing of the knees, it’s good to remember that, through his Holy Spirit, he commits himself to help us so that we, too, can care with commitment. Remember, too, that he never calls us to a task without giving us the resources to fulfil it!

Perhaps the great Martin Luther King said it all in a speech he made during the last week of his life – ‘I won’t have any money to leave behind. I won’t have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind.’

Commitment is a vital part of Christian life, so let’s all remember **WHOSE WE ARE AND WHOM WE SERVE** – and let us also continually pray for the many young people everywhere who are committing their lives in service to the Lord, and who are bringing fresh hope and new life into the Church during these difficult days.

***Do come and visit us at the Guild.
We are always pleased to see you.***

Mary McKendrick

Prayer and Meditation ~



What You Really Want – Is the Lord!

“...I SHALL NOT WANT.”
Psalm 23:1

Do you remember when all the stuff you now have was stuff you only dreamed of? Now you realise that lasting joy doesn't come from what you drive, deposit or dwell in.

The words 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want' teach us that what we have in God is greater than whatever else we don't have.

Here are two stories to help you realise that.

STORY 1 : While on a short-term mission trip, Pastor Jack Hinton was leading worship at a leper colony when a woman who'd been facing away from the pulpit suddenly turned around. 'It was the most hideous face I'd ever seen,' Hinton said. Her nose and ears were entirely gone. She lifted a fingerless hand in the air and asked, 'Can we sing "Count Your Blessings"?' Overcome, Hinton left the service. He was followed by a team member who said, 'I guess you'll never be able to sing that song again.' 'Yes, I will,' he replied, 'but I'll never sing it the same way.'

STORY 2 : Doug McKnight was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at 32. Over the next 16 years it would cost him his career, his mobility,

and eventually his life. But he never lost his sense of gratitude. When his church friends asked him to compile a list of prayer requests, he responded by sending them 18 blessings for which to be grateful and six concerns for which to be prayerful. His blessings were three times greater than his needs! Doug McKnight discovered that what he had in God was greater than whatever else he didn't have in life. **Have you discovered that yet?**

How many loaves have you?

~ World Day of Prayer Service ~

To be held in: **PRIESTFIELD CHURCH**
on: **FRIDAY 4th MARCH 2011**
at: **2.30PM**



Friday 4th March is the date for the World Day of Prayer Service in 2011. Women, men, old and young, from around the world are invited to share in this Service, which will take place from sunrise in the Tonga Islands until sunset over Alaska, thirty-six hours later. People in over 180 countries make time to come together to sing, think and pray around a common theme every year at this time.

Bearing in mind the horrific earthquake which occurred just off the coast of **Chile** on 27th February last year, followed by, in recent months, the traumatic plight of the miners trapped underground over a long period of time before, thankfully, being rescued safe and sound – it is highly appropriate that the world-wide Service has been written by Christian women of **Chile**. At the time of the earthquake, buildings, bridges and roads were destroyed in many parts of Chile, and yet the resilience of the people looking ahead to a restored nation is echoed in the Service which they have written. Taking as its theme, '**How many loaves have you?**', the Service of 2011 looks at those in countries where food and possessions are in abundance and sets that against places where the people are poor and starving.

Services will be held in schools, hospitals, nursing homes, universities, shopping centres and prisons. The Service for the South Edinburgh grouping of Churches of different denominations – a total of 11 Churches, of which we are one – will be held here at Priestfield on Friday afternoon, 4th March 2011, at 2.30pm.

We invite you all to join us at this Service, when you, like people throughout the world, will be asked to consider the question which Jesus himself asked his disciples – **How many loaves have you?** Will you be there?

The Service will include the singing of many well-loved hymns, together with readings and prayers, which will be led by members from each of the 11 Churches. During the Service, an offering will be taken up, which the World Day of Prayer Committee will be donating to the Scottish Bible Society and Feed the Minds, both of whom have projects in Chile. You are also invited to join us for tea after the Service.

Mary McKendrick

Prayer and Meditation ~



Stand on God's Promises

“HE ALWAYS DOES EXACTLY WHAT HE SAYS.”

2 Corinthians 1:19

Ever had a friend break a promise?

The cheque doesn't come, the repairman doesn't show up,
your date doesn't call?

Count on it, people will let you down. But God won't,

'He always does exactly what he says.
He...fulfills all...[His] promises.'

2 Corinthians 1: 19-20 TLB

Knowing that enables you to keep walking by faith while you wait for them to be fulfilled.

James MacDonald says: 'It's the not-knowing that crushes us. We doubt...worry... despair...falter and fail...If we knew how this was going to play out we'd be okay. We can take a bad day...month... year...or decade...as long as we know how it ends. A health crisis...a question about your marriage...uncertainty over a child...we all have areas we need to hold on to what God said...He knows what he promised, He can't lie, and He can't forget. He'll deliver on time. Who else can make a promise like that? Now, I wish I could tell you it always figures out perfectly in our lifetime, but I'd be lying...You can't make sense of God's promises with this life only. You must factor in

the reality of eternity...Eternity brings it all together...eternal life...and the assurance of heaven are what make His promises so precious.'

Victor Frankl, who survived the horrors of the Holocaust, said, 'A weak faith is weakened by predicaments and catastrophes, whereas a strong faith is strengthened by them.'

A Sunday school class was memorising Psalm 23 and little Tommy couldn't get beyond the first verse. On the big day he stepped up to the microphone, grinned at the audience and announced, '**The Lord is my Shepherd - and that's all I know!** And it's all you need to know for now.'

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These daily devotional excerpts are taken from Word for the Day and are used by permission from United Christian Broadcasters Ltd, P.O. Box 255, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 8YY. Free issues of the daily devotional are available.

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~ Cathie McKay ~
(1908-2010)



Cathie McKay was born in 1908, six years before the turmoil that was the Great War. Things that were part of our history lessons, she lived through; things that we see from a distance, she saw up close.

Cathie was born and brought up in Edinburgh, together with her sister Jessie. That sibling relationship is one that held strong not only in these early days of life, but in middle life when they lived in Southern Africa and late in life in Edinburgh, even when they were in separate care homes.

I have no idea why Cathie never married, but I know that many of the eligible men of her generation were swept away in the tide of the Great War. So she gave herself to her work, and she gave herself to her mother after the death of her father. She had a keen and inquiring mind which, with the office training that she had, meant that

she had excellent organisational and administrative skills that were put to good use in the accounts department at the printer's where she worked.

Her keen mind was allied to a creative spirit, and she not only enjoyed art and culture through the many museums and galleries of Edinburgh, and the stately homes of the National Trust, she also created her own art in the form of landscape paintings and special hats.

After retirement, a decade and more was spent in Southern Rhodesia, as it was in those days, where she lived in the same area as her sister Jessie. Being fit and well then, she was able to work there too, but as circumstances were changing she returned to her native Edinburgh.

Cathie was content with her own company, and although she was often on holiday with friends – there is a photo of her on a camel in Egypt! – she didn't find being on her own oppressive. Perhaps because she was comfortable with her own company, her relationships with others were sometimes edgy – there were times when she could be a 'nippy sweetie'! But she was also capable of having deep and committed friendships, and while almost all of her friends have died before her, she has been very fortunate that she has known the help and friendship of Beatrice.

Over the course of these latter years of life, Cathie has known some of the trials of old age through worn and broken bones that occasioned spells in hospital. She also had the blessing of the community of Balfour House, and the care of the staff at Oaklands, where she died peacefully in her bed, but not before having her breakfast and an extra helping of porridge. Cathie lived as she could right to the end.

Over the years she was involved in London Road Church and when she moved to Balfour House she transferred to Priestfield. She didn't wear her heart on her sleeve, but her faith helped to give her that inner strength she undoubtedly had.

Even long lives have to come to an end, and one could hardly hope for a more peaceful or fitting end than Cathie's – rising to face a new day, having a good breakfast and then slipping gently from this life to the next in her sleep. She is now at peace and rest in God.



Church Flowers



FLOWERS

DISTRIBUTION

DECEMBER 2010

5 th Miss M Robertson	Miss M Mason
12 th Mrs R and Miss S Badenoch	Mrs F Ferguson
19 th CHRISTMAS SUNDAY	Mrs F Ferguson
24 th CHRISTMAS EVE	-----
25 th CHRISTMAS DAY	-----
26 th Church Flower Fund	-----

JANUARY 2011

2 nd Mrs P Smith	Mrs C Mackenzie
9 th Mrs S Kirk	Mrs C Mackenzie
16 th Mrs June Henderson	Miss N Watson
23 rd Mrs M Bremner	Miss N Watson
30 th Mrs J Macgregor	Mrs A Stiff

FEBRUARY

6 th Mr & Mrs J Dorward	Mrs A Stiff
13 th Mrs B Law	Mrs J Macgregor
20 th Miss E Forbes	Mrs J Macgregor
27 th Mrs Jess Henderson	Mrs P Smith

MARCH

6 th Church Flower Fund	Mrs P Smith
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~ Within the Congregation ~

DEATHS

September ~

Miss Cathie McKay	Oaklands Care Home
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October ~

Mrs Gert Scrimgeour	Braeside Nursing Home
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‘I am the Resurrection and the Life.’