
From the Manse...

... a word from our new minister

I am writing this brief note on Sunday 29th January, having had my final service at Lylesland this morning and the farewell social lunch afterwards. It has been a big day, bringing to a fitting close our eight plus years in Paisley.

Sheila and I (with Zak the dog!) now look ahead with excitement to moving to Hawick on Tuesday, to the induction on Friday and all that lies ahead. We do so trusting in the Lord who watches over our coming and going both now and forever.

We look forward to getting to know you all in St Mary's & Old and Teviot & Roberton over the coming weeks and months and to beginning a new ministry among you in a very different place for us. Please join us in prayer for the empowering of the Holy Spirit for faithfulness and fruitfulness as I give myself to the ministry of God's Word and prayer and all that this ministry will involve.

This is as just a brief word for now; I'm sure there will be further opportunity for me to tell you more about myself after I arrive!

May God bless us together in this new beginning.

Alistair Cook

Guild

The Guild — Go in Joy

The Guild's first meeting in 2017 was held on Wednesday 25th January. The title for the afternoon was *Going ... not in joy ... to Hong Kong*, and we heard from Betty Smith about her life after returning from missionary work in Sabah with her husband David.

After the hiccup of asking God for a pharmacist position in East Lothian or Fife and finding he gave her one in Lanarkshire instead, Betty settled down happily to life in Scotland with her family about her. However, after a few years her husband was called to Christian youth work in Hong Kong.



Betty didn't fancy this much, and suggested David go on his own; but after reflecting on wise words both from her mother — "If you want a good husband you'll need to be a good girl!" — and from the apostle Paul — "Wives, submit to your husbands" — Betty decided that she should go with David, closed up the family home and followed him by ship to Hong Kong.

We heard a little about how Betty and David lived while they were there, and the lengths Betty went to in order to travel home regularly to see her children, who were in boarding school in the UK. However, we all felt there was more to hear, and having enjoyed her talk so much we've asked Betty to give us the next instalment in a future session. Watch this space!

Teviot Guild was also represented at the commissioning service for Hawick's Street Pastors on Saturday 28th January. We have a particular interest in this work, as the training of Street

Pastors in Scotland is the national Guild project which we have chosen to support through this three year period. Our prayers go with the four new Street Pastors, and existing Pastors from around the Borders, who will now regularly be going out on the streets of Hawick in Christ's name.

The next Guild meeting will be on Wednesday 22nd February. Our guest will be Margaret Borthwick, who will be speaking with joy about her connection with an orphanage in Kenya. Do come — 2.30pm in the Lounge.

Please contact Lesley or Mairhi about transport if you would like to come to this or any meeting. Lesley: 01835 864488, Mairhi: 01450 218519.

Early notice, as the March magazine won't be out before it happens, of The World Day of Prayer Service prepared by Women of the Philippines on the theme *Am I Being Unfair to You?* This will be held in the Baptist Church at 7.00pm on Friday 3rd March. Note, it's no longer the Women's Day of Prayer — ALL are invited!

And an apology from me — the AGM date is wrongly printed in the syllabus and in the December magazine. It will be on Wednesday 19th April. I just can't count.

Lesley Donaldson

Holiday Club 2017

The Guardians of Ancora

Well, I was quite blown away by how many enthusiastic people turned up to our first Holiday Club meeting of the year, on Sunday 17th January. If memory serves me correct this initial planning meeting — held in the church lounge — usually attracts a handful of people. But this year there were 17 folk, drawn from both congregations — so many in fact that our esteemed session clerk was one of those who found themselves sitting on the floor!

So, with levels of enthusiasm for the endeavour evidently in place we have made provisional plans to run Scripture Union's *Guardians of Ancora* Holiday Club during the last week of the Scottish Borders School Holidays — Monday 7th to Friday 11th August 2017

The *Guardians of Ancora* Holiday Club is based on a Bible-story based app that Scripture Union has developed in the last few years, aimed at engaging the current generation of tech-literate youngsters. Fortunately the materials can also function to provide a stand-alone club in the usual mould (although we do have our techies on the Team so watch this space!).

Ancora means 'hope'. Once, the Hall of Memory in the City of Ancora was filled with wonderful story-treasures, each a reminder of one of the great stories of the Saga (Bible). Now, many of those objects have been lost. Each day of the club, the task of the Guardians (children at the club) will be to find a lost story-treasure, return it to the Hall of Memory and explore the story that it represents. As the Hall fills up, the Guardians will discover how each story fits together to



reveal more about who Jesus is and how they might develop their own relationship with him.

Quest 1 (Monday): Jesus calls the fishermen. Luke 5:1-11

The Guardians find a pile of fishing nets.

Quest 2 (Tuesday): Jesus heals a Roman officer's servant. Luke 7:1-10

The Guardians find a pair of Roman sandals.

Quest 3 (Wednesday): Jesus heals a woman and a girl. Luke 8:40-56

The Guardians find a collection of handprints.

Quest 4 (Thursday): Jesus heals a man who came through the roof. Luke 5:17-26

The Guardians find a mat.

Quest 5 (Friday): Jesus feeds 5,000. John 6:1-15, 25-35

The guardians find loaves and fish.

Links to Guardians of Ancora songs, videos, small group notes, drama scripts etc. can be found at <http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/HolidayandMidweekClubs/Downloads/GuardiansofAncoraHolidayClubDownloads/3706995.id>

Our next planning meeting is scheduled for Sunday 19th February, to be held in St Mary's church following the 11.00am service. This meeting is usually focused on initial ideas for craft activities. I am optimistic it will last no more than an hour.

Also, if you have any white double sheets you no longer need please let Evelyn McAulay know, as these are required for sewing the backdrop.

Finally, please keep the Holiday Club planning, children, families and Team in your prayers.

Gwen

Mary's Meals

Our Christmas Appeal

I am delighted to announce that our Christmas appeal raised £1514 for Mary's Meals.

I had challenged us to feed 100 children for 2017, but we have sent enough money to feed 124 children.

Thank you so much to everyone for their generous donations.

I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these members of my family, you did it for me (Matthew 25:40)

*Pat Sutherland
Session Clerk*

Breathing space

Almighty and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift;

Send down upon our minister and upon the congregations committed to his charge, the healthful Spirit of your grace, and, that may truly please you, pour upon them the continual dew of your blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our mediator Jesus Christ.

(Book of Common Prayer)

Rock Solid

How to describe **Rock solid**? Fun, young, sometimes slightly crazy... A small group of young people, plus two or three leaders, meet to enjoy often bizarre games and activities which are devised by Youth For Christ to link to a Christian theme.

In my last report for this magazine I said that we were losing several of our core group last summer, as they are now in S4, so outside the **Rock Solid** age range of P7-S3. However, as it turns out we have not attracted

ANY new youngsters this session, most likely because we did not have a meeting at the end of the Holiday Club week this year.

Follow-up invitations went out to the homes of Holiday Club children in P7 and S1 prior to the November meeting, but still none

came. In fact we had just two youngsters at both the September and November meeting. It became clear that decisions had to be made. The remaining youngsters were keen for us to ask our old faithfuls back, despite their advancing years(!), so that is what we have done, enjoying a bit of a reunion at our December meeting! This means we are currently back to seven young people who regularly attend the group. Please continue to pray for us and encourage any youngsters in the **Rock Solid** age-range to come along.



Gwen

01450 370487 or gwen@thebuzzness.co.uk

Next **Rock Solid** is Friday 3rd March — activities start at 7.30pm in the church hall, meeting ends 9.00pm.

Street Pastors

Listening, caring, helping

Last Saturday evening (January 28th) I and others from churches in Hawick had the joy of witnessing the commissioning of four new Street Pastors to serve the townsfolk.

The Street Pastors initiative has been active in Scotland for 10 years. There are 14,000 trained Street Pastors out on the streets at the weekends from around 11pm to the wee hours of 3am or 4am. They offer friendship, a listening ear, help if needed in co-ordination with the emergency services and police if necessary. In the last year in Galashiels five ambulances were called and one suicide prevented. Street Pastors are Jesus on our streets to folk out having a good time, some of whom might be a bit worse for wear.

Duncan Cameron (Borders Co-ordinator) told us some statistics from the last year on patrol in Galashiels which were unexpectedly informative! For instance, did you know that Street Pastors go out onto the night street armed with nothing more than water bottles, flip-flops, lollies, sick bags and prayer? 290 pairs of flip-flops were given out. Why? Because young ladies get sore feet, take off their heels and run the risk of cutting their feet on broken glass. The response: gratitude. 1,000 glass bottles were lifted from the streets. Why? They are potential weapons. Sick bags are given out. Why? A driver is often unwilling to take someone drunk home for fear of their upholstery. With a sick bag in hand people are not left alone, helpless on the streets. 1,300 lollies were given out. Why? They reduce aggression, especially when offered with a smile and a cheery 'how are you doing?'

We heard from police officer Sgt Quinn who gave his wholehearted support to the project. He has enquired of other regions what their experience has been and has found everyone to be very enthusiastic. For him, Street Pastors embody compassion, and care without discrimination or judgement. They epitomise the Good Samaritan. His only small criticism was that sometimes the sick bags provided are too small! Thanks on behalf of the Scottish Borders Council who are also very supportive were given by Councillor McAteer.

Who can be a Street Pastor? Any Christian over the age of 18. The oldest Street Pastor in Scotland is in Perth. She is 86 years old! That made me think twice.

How often will I be expected to go out? Once a month. If more people volunteer in Hawick then Street Pastors can go out more weekends.

Do I go out on my own? No. You go out in teams. And everyone receives thorough training.

I don't want to go out but want to be involved. What can I do? Become a Prayer Pastor. You don't have to sit up all night, just be on call for as many hours as you feel you can. You don't have to meet up with the teams before they go out at 11pm, unless you want to. It is very flexible.

Can I accompany a Street Pastor to see what they do? Yes. Street Pastors welcome Observers. You get your own Observer jacket for the night and just hang around with the team. (I'm told the bug is very catching!)

I was deeply impressed by the stories of how simple acts of kindness, the willingness to listen or chat make a big impact on people, and that the presence of Street Pastors calms a place making it safer for everyone.

If you would like to learn more contact Duncan Cameron, 0770 8060918, borders@streetpastors.org.uk

Jo Maybury

Chalmers Lectures 2017

This year's series of lectures is given by Rev Dr Doug Gay, Principal of and lecturer at Trinity College, University of Glasgow. The three lectures on the topic of **Reforming the Church of Scotland** are:

Wed 1st February: **Walls without Church?** Tracing the historical decline of the Church and the experience of those who have lived through it.

Wed 8th February: **Call and Response.** Looking at the calling of the Church and its response in terms of organisation and resources.

Wed 15th February: **Grand Designs.** Looking at the challenges of structural reform and urging a more radical approach.

All lectures are free to attend at St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh at 6.30pm on the dates above. If you are interested but unable to attend the lectures will be streamed online at www.churchofscotland.org.uk.

More details are available on the notice board in the crush hall.

Jo Maybury

PVG training

PVG Training for members of the Session

PVG training is now mandatory for all members of Kirk Sessions. It would be helpful if you could attend.

Sunday 19th February 2017, 2.00pm – 4.00pm in SMOP church halls.

Pat Sutherland

Thank you

Dear Congregation,

We are writing to thank you for all the lovely presents you have given to us to distribute to the vulnerable children in the Teviot community.

We know what a difference this can make both to a family's Christmas and to a family's sense of esteem.

We are very grateful for your thoughtfulness.

Merry Christmas to you all.

Julie Flannery
Senior Social Worker, Children and Young People's Department

Roberton Church

On Sunday 25th September 2016, a Service of Worship was held in Roberton Church. This was followed by a meeting to discuss the future of Roberton Church building.

Twenty five people attended; Nine, from the Kirk Session and 16 from the congregation.

Following discussion, a vote was taken on whether or not the church building at Roberton should be closed.

14 voted to keep the building open

11 voted for closure of the building

Following further discussions at a subsequent Kirk Session meeting, it has been decided that for the immediate future, Roberton Church building will remain open.

The situation will be under constant review, as costs to maintain the building continue to rise.

*Pat Sutherland
Session clerk*

Special services activities and events

Teens: Upstairs on February 19th and 26th.

Rock Solid dates: March 3rd. 7.30pm, Teviot hall.

Prayer meetings: Thursdays at 5.30pm in Teviot Church lounge. Contact Evelyn or Kerry for details.

PVG Training for members of the Session: Sunday 19th February 2017, 2.00pm – 4.00pm in SMOP church halls.

Church contacts

Minister: Rev Alistair Cook, The Manse, 4 Heronhill Close, Hawick TD9 9RA (07802 616352)

Session Clerk: Pat Sutherland (375150) rasutherland@tiscali.co.uk

Safeguarding Officer: Mary Walker (372549)

Treasurer: Ron Smith (374216) rhs@ellistrin.com

Doorkeeper: Eileen Glendinning (374775)

Magazine Editor: Jo Maybury (375750) joannemaybury@googlemail.com

