

SCOPE

april09



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Minister's Letter

Happy Easter,

You know those moments (either because you love them or loath them – there seems to be no in between) when Captain Kirk says “I need all the power you can give me” and then Scotty says “It’s the dilithium crystals Cap’n, they just canny take any more.” Well, I’ve had one of those dilithium crystals moments – quite a few actually. There’s just too much going on in my head at this time. Two utterly superb conferences (with lots to process through as a consequence) all the preparations for the Gift Discovery survey following on from the Natural Church Development survey, thinking through why the Unitary Constitution would be a good idea for the church and all of that’s before I can even get my head round Easter again. I’ve found John Piper to be a real tonic in just going over again why the death of Jesus is so pivotal to the faith here and now as well as forgiveness in eternity. It helps me make sure I don’t just go through the motions of Easter because I’ve “done all this before.” The fact remains, however, those brain cells just canny take it any more – Cap’n! Church life can clearly get like that, can’t it : services; house groups; Kirk Session meetings; Deacon’s Court meetings; children’s work meetings; coffee mornings; and all the other things that you feel you “really ought

to go to.” That general ‘hawd the bus, A need tae get aff’ feeling can begin to bring folk to the point where they are simply giving out more spiritually than is ‘coming in.’ And we haven’t even gone into those other vital matters like looking after children, caring for elderly parents or getting on with that other job that actually pays the bills Monday through Friday. It gets hectic. What and how much is ‘coming in’ spiritually as far as your own life is concerned? I know, as a minister, it is constantly emphasised to me that I need to keep the spiritual ‘in and out’ account in balance. Get overdrawn from that spiritual bank and you won’t be a minister for long. The obvious reality is that it’s not simply the truth for ministers. The needs in the church and parish will suck you dry if you let them. Especially if you aren’t getting the time with God that you need to maintain your level of spiritual ‘outage.’ Mark Stibbe, the man who was the speaker at the conference I went to with Jackie in March, was truly phenomenal. (It was more a house party for leaders and spouses run by New Wine Scotland rather than a conference). Jackie found one comment not only memorable but profound (she’s been repeating it to me at two hourly intervals since): “we need to work from rest – not rest from work.”

(cont’d p4)

Minister's Letter (cont'd)

We are loved by God – we need to work from that point; never towards that point. The soundest evangelical theology can subtly be drawn into a behaviour that's completely a variance with what we believe. The problem for many is that statement sounds like a call to take more time off; don't worry about the call to fulfil Matthew 28 and make the kingdom real; God's sovereign – kick back don't get stressed about anything.

As always Jesus is our example. Jesus was clearly a man on a mission but could anybody genuinely describe him as a man in a hurry. It strikes me again and again how often Jesus ministry is one of interruptions; a woman touched his garment ...; a centurion approached him ...; Jairus came to him ... Jesus was not a man who let mission be confused with some spiritual 'to do' list. He worked out of God's anointing. "This is the son with whom I am well pleased" And that was before he had actually done anything! He had time for people pastorally – he didn't let his mission get in the way because it was his mission.

So, as you do the Gift Discovery material; as you 'cope' with Easter; as you attend all the church things you are committed to do; as you live your life as a Christian seeking after God please remember your starting point

– a place of rest, acceptance and love. Maybe starting from that point and being 'interrupted' with God's interruptions along the way means we'll end up where we are supposed to be. Or to put it another way let's boldly go where no man has gone before!

Yours in Him
Ian Cathcart

P.S. Mark Stibbe is one of the main speakers at Clan Gathering this year – if at all possible try and hear him. Even if you can't make Clan Gather, try and get to some kind of conference; Faith Mission in Edinburgh or the Keswick Convention are two obvious other options. It's rest of a different kind.

P.P.S. The last evening service in April and the first evening service in May will be focused on a Christian book called "The Shack." It's a New York Times best seller and, moreover, an absolutely stunning book. Get it at Wesley Owen or Faith Mission Book shops; get it at Penicuik Library (or should I say, put your name down for it - there's a queue for this book!), or simply ask around since there are loads of people in the church who have already read it. Basically read it and come along. Again, it will bring you to a different kind of rest.

Annual Business Meeting Tuesday 24th March 2009

Thirty members of the congregation attended the Annual Business Meeting, which was a very encouraging number, particularly on a wet and windy night.

Within the Admin Report, Mary Darling noted that a summer church picnic at Alderbank after a Sunday service in June is being planned and it is hoped that as many people as possible will come along to enjoy the fun and games and ice cream. In his Fabric Report, Bill Bruce thanked those who have faithfully helped out each month on the Saturday morning work parties. He advised that the next one on 4th April would join in the clean-up of Lowrie's Den. Moira Barker presented the Treasurer's Report, giving an overview of the Annual Accounts, which have been approved.

A major item on the agenda was a discussion on the proposed change to have a Unitary Constitution in Penicuik South Parish Church. Previously decision-making in the church has been split between the Deacons' Court who considered temporal issues such as fabric maintenance and funding and the

Kirk Session who considered spiritual issues. It has been apparent for some time, however, to both the Kirk Session and the Deacons' Court that financial considerations, on how the church should faithfully use its funds need to be made prayerfully and so the financial/spiritual split is not an appropriate one. It had been suggested that one leadership group, the Kirk Session, who would meet each month instead of bi-monthly and be able to make decisions on financial and spiritual matters would speed up and ease the decision-making process. Although the Deacons' Court would no longer exist, its Admin, Fabric and Finance Committees would still meet and carry on their same functions and would report to the Kirk Session as necessary. Further to this internal benefit, the change to a unitary constitution would also simplify the church's dealings with the charity accounting regulator, OSCR. This organisation requires to be able to clearly identify a list of trustees responsible for funds in each charity whom they can contact and it has proved extremely confusing for them to try and understand the differing

(cont'd p6)

ABM Report (cont'd)

roles of deacons and elders in the Church of Scotland. Having only a Kirk Session with elders who are the trustees would help to clarify this issue, and, for this reason, the Church of Scotland had suggested that churches might wish to consider moving to a unitary constitution.

As this step would involve a constitutional change for the church, it was necessary to vote on the matter at the meeting. The result, was a unanimous decision that Penicuik South Parish Church change from the present constitution and move ahead to adopt a unitary constitution.

Lorna Souter

Love Russia Ceilidh

Thank you very much to everyone who supported the Ceilidh last month which raised over £1000 for Love Russia! It was attended by about 100 folk and a fine time was had by everyone!

Thanks to Bon Accord for the music, especially the Russian dance and to Sharon and her team of helpers in the kitchen, also to Ami and Rosie for setting up the hall and to everyone who contributed in any way!

It is hoped to repeat the experience in aid of Comfort Rwanda later in the year!

Denise Halcrow

Comfort Rwanda

Excitement continues to grow toward our trip to Rwanda in September 2009 with Comfort Rwanda.

The deposits have been paid and we now await dates. We'll start next week with the first of our many inoculations in preparation for our trip. There are six going from South Kirk as far as I know. Also some from Malcolm Round's Church in Balerno and some from Kenny Borthwick's Church, Holy Trinity in Westerhailes.

There is a Travel Clinic at the Western General and also Carberry at Wallyford. Watch this space, we'll keep you posted when we have more information.

Update on Pastoral Visiting

Following the recent pastoral visiting meetings we now have a group of Pastoral Visitors who will be starting to visit members of the congregation. Mairi Tulloch has agreed to be the coordinator for the team. Please contact Mairi in the first instance if you know of someone who would appreciate a visit or indeed if you would like a visit. (Gill Mackintosh can also be contacted as a back up if Mairi is unavailable). Mairi will liaise with the pastoral visitors and Ian to co-ordinate visits and she will also report back to Kirk Session on a monthly basis.

We also agreed to re-instate 'The Wise Men' system which used to operate some years ago. This system works alongside the pastoral visitors and the wise men will visit new people who come along to the church and who are interested in becoming part of our fellowship. The wise men would ensure that information is given on all aspects of church life such as prayer meetings, housegroups, 0-18 groups as well as speaking to them about supporting the church financially ie. Gift aid, freewill offering envelopes. We have a team of 4 people at present, Mairi Tulloch, Mary Darling, Rommie MacDowell and Douglas Hamilton.

Please contact Mairi Tulloch - 01721 722990 if someone needs a visit or if you are interested in finding out more about Pastoral Visiting.

Prayer Making a Difference

Thank you for your prayers for persecuted Christians – they do make a difference!

Pauline Ayyad is the widowed wife of Rami Ayyad, the manager of the Bible Society Bookshop in Gaza. He was kidnapped and murdered by Islamist radicals in October 2007. He was 29 years old and the father of two small boys and a yet unborn baby girl. Pauline says, "Your prayers filled me with the strength and ability to endure. They were like the stick that helped me walk and balance wherever I went."

Marina Shestakov is the wife of Uzbek Pastor Dmitry Shestakov. He was arrested in 2007 and sentenced to four years in a labour camp for illegal religious activities. Marina has three daughters with whom she travels over 500 miles to visit Dmitry in the labour camp a few times a year. She says, "We know that people all over the world are praying, and now I really understand what the Bible means by 'One Body'. When one part suffers, we all suffer."

From the Open Doors Handbook of the Persecuted Church

Denise Halcrow

Calling!

Abram 'called on the name of the Lord.' Genesis 12:8; 13:4; 21:33

Read this poem and reflect on what it means to be in a relationship with a God who hears our cry and responds.

I'm calling you, Lord,
I know your name (and you're in my directory),
You know my name (and you've got my number),
It's not a courtesy call,
Not a care-free, hands-free catch-up call;
this is an emergency call.
I'm here
but where are you?
How long will you be?
I need an urgent reply,
A text would do
(maybe from Psalms).
I'm pressing recall,
recalling your promises,
recalling all that you have done for me.
I'm holding, to be connected,
holding fast to truth,
holding on to faith,
I've got through,
through the valley and it's shadows,
through the deep waters.
I don't understand it,
you've hung up;
hung up your son on a cross for me.
I'm out of credit,
out of righteousness,
unless you credit me some,
Speak soon.....

Taken from 'Closer to God'
Contributed by Rommie MacDowell

Report on Words of Encouragement Meeting 27.02.09

About 12 people attended the evening of practicing the gift of prophecy as taught by Rick and Cynthia Hayes earlier in the year. Firstly we were asked to say what we think fills God's heart with joy. Some of the responses were:

Laughter.
To seek His face.
The breaking down of wrong mind-sets.
God is pleased with the worship as we worship Him in our hearts.
When we reach out to others.
Harmony in the Body of Christ.

Kate Humphrey shared her vision that all of us were like chocolates within a chocolate box. Each one of us a different shape and centre. Giving a sense of awe and delight to Him. Following this we all went into groups of 2 and were to pray for a word of encouragement for each other then share what we saw to our respective partners. The next exercise was to move into groups of 3 or 4 and ask God to give us visions for South Kirk. Here follows a summary of the visions taken from each group:

The church is filled with God's goodness. It is like a storehouse where her people are working together in harmony using their God given talents. People will be arriving bound in chains from darkness into the 'Storehouse' and with their pain and despair will buy corn. There they will receive comfort, joy, healing and

love. There is a loud voice heard in the church crying "the dead shall rise!" God desires to heal us.

There is an open door. It has only one handle that is on our side. We are to open that door. People inside the church are dressed shabbily. The call is to strip off pretences and shine as lights. God's purpose for us is to be His body and display his splendour.

The final exercise was to form new groups again and to support one another with prayer and words of encouragement.

We learned how blessed it is to give a word of encouragement especially when to someone we know little about and his or her response is very positive. We were assured that it is alright to make a 'mess' as we are all learning and just as with all forms of education we all start in the nursery. We realised that God is the God of encouragement. He sees potential and good in each one of us so to fulfil his plan and purposes in the perfecting of His Kingdom.

A word fitly word spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.
Proverbs 25:11

In whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.
Ephesians 2:21-22

Valentina Russell

Book Review

'Luke for Everyone' by Tom Wright

How many copies of the Bible do you have in your household? Large ones, maybe large print? Compacts that you might take on holiday? (who uses up their luggage allowance with a Bible?); leather back, paper back; amplified; interlinear - Greek on one line, English underneath; New International Version and The Message, separate volumes or one volume, paralleled, side by side. The list is almost endless and given we can only read one book at a time, perhaps it's gross that we have so many and others don't even have one Bible in their heart language.

Nevertheless, here I am suggesting another variation. Strictly speaking, this is not 'a Bible'. Tom Wright, who is currently Bishop of Durham, has set out to provide his own translation of the New Testament accompanied by comments. Each book has the '..for everyone' title, on the understanding that the gospel is for everyone and I am impressed enough by what I've read of this to recommend any book in the series, although it happens to be Luke that I'm currently reading.

There's something about his translation that is fresh and current. It's up to date, but perhaps more importantly, it's today's UK English. That's not to downplay American translations - but there is a familiarity about the way Tom Wright writes that makes it striking and relevant and the reaction 'is that really what that says?'.
The key thing, though, is that these are not just translations. They're not commentaries - they don't do a verse by verse analysis with lots of Greek this and that. They carry two or three pages of comment, which might have an occasional helpful explanation of the original culture and language, but is more the kind of thing one might read as a day by day devotional, perhaps as a change from the more traditional Bible reading notes.

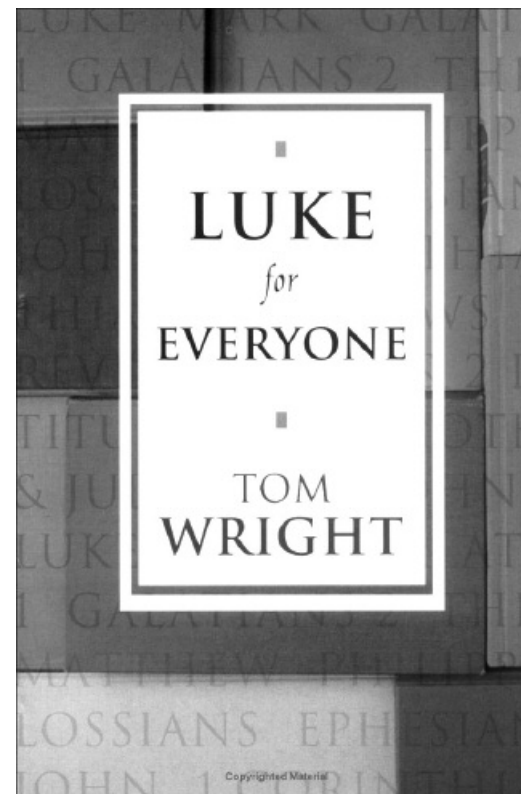
To give an example: I was really struck by his comments on the Mary and Martha story in Luke 10. Not the 'action Martha' versus the 'thoughtful Mary' but the much deeper one of the breaking of taboos. Mary was in the men's area of the house when usually with visitors present she should have been in the kitchen area, i.e. out of sight, and

Jesus endorsed her choice. He wasn't saying it was OK not to help with the supper. Much more importantly, He was saying it was OK for her to learn His teaching as normally only the men would do with a Rabbi, so that she too would be able to pass on the message of the Kingdom.

There are so many books around, including Bibles, but finding this series - I think it's opened me up again to the simplicity but power of the gospel. I commend it to you.

Jennifer Ruddick

Luke for Everyone: by Tom Wright; published by SPCK, £6.59 from amazon.co.uk



MidZone – March 2009

As our first term draws to a close in the lead up to Easter, thought it was about time that we shared with you all that we have been doing in the 1st quarter of 2009, as well letting you know about our plans from Easter through to the Summer holidays.....which is a scary thought really – where on earth does all the time go.

The 1st quarter has been spent getting to know each other in the group. This has been really good, not only for Graeme, Allison and me to get to know the kids, but the kids to get to know us better and also the kids to get to interact with each other. I think it's fair to say that we now have a team of about 8 or 9 individuals all of whom play a really vital part of what Midzone is all about.

As part of that, we have been looking at various themes relating to areas such as teamwork, responsibility, and working together as well as thinking about what it actually means to be committed as a Christian, walking with God and what it means to worship God.

We had planned to do some social activity as well, however for one reason or another we never quite

got around to this, although we will be looking to get some things organised for next term.

Our programme for Easter through to Summer will be based on Scripture Union material, using the 'Light' resources which will be specifically geared towards kids in the 11-14 age group. Each week we will have a mixture of activities, learnings, readings, and games which will support our teaching. The content will be varied so that we are doing things a bit different from week to week, however the main objective of each week will be to help the kids explore the Bible and respond to God's message.

We'll provide a further update next month, and maybe even try to get some of the group to share their own experiences of Midzone with you as well.

In the meantime, please continue to pray for Midzone - for Caitlin, Amy, Katy, Rebekah, Rebecca, Robbie and Joshua. Please help and encourage them through prayer so that they want to learn more about God, and to continue to make a fantastic contribution to Midzone. Please also pray for Graeme, Allison and me as we continue to provide the leadership and direction to them as they further develop their faith. Thank you, Craig

Prayer: Our Way of Life

Jesus declared: It is written, "My House shall be called a house of prayer" Matthew 21:13. Also, Hebrews 3:6 declares that we are the House of God.

This translates to the simple fact that our lives as Christians should be a life of prayer.

Why do we need to pray as Christians? 1. We need to pray because it is the operational rule of God's Kingdom and we are bound by this rule. This is amplified clearly in Matthew 21:13 above.

2. God does not intervene in people's lives unless they want Him to. The way to bring God into any situation is simply through praying.

3. It is a benefit available only to Christians. Although all men say one form of prayer or another, only Jesus declared that God will answer our prayers if we call on God through Him.

4. You can control your life through prayers. Prayer allows us to turn adversity into opportunity. It enables us to challenge and change undesirable financial, emotional and spiritual circumstances that we face.

Therefore, let us pick ourselves up and put on the garment of prayer. God is waiting to hear you call, that's why he declared: Call unto Me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not Jeremiah 33:3.

Jesus declared that we should pray and faint not Luke 18:1. You can't survive as a victorious Christian unless you wield the weapon of prayer.

I therefore challenge you to start praying to God now. He is waiting to hear you call on Him.

Bonus Fombo

pull it out! **What's On?** pin it up!

Wednesday 1st April	Women's Group AGM	West St. Hall	7.30pm
Saturday 4th April	Community Litter Pickup	Lowries Den	9.00am
Sunday 5th April	Palm Sunday - All Age Service (No Communion)	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 5th April	Palm Sunday Worship (No Service at South Church)	St Mungos Church	7.30pm
Monday 6th April	John 12: 1-11 Ian Cathcart	South Church	7.30pm
Tuesday 7th April	John 12: 20-36	North Church	7.30pm
Wednesday 8th April	Service	Sacred Heart Church	7.30pm
Thursday 9th April	Service - Communion	St James the Less Episcopal Church	8.00pm
Friday 10th April	Good Friday - Ephesians 1: 1-14	South Church	7.30pm
Saturday 11th April	Easter Vigil	St Mungos Church	8.00pm
Sunday 12th April	Early Morning Service (Communion) followed by Breakfast in the Hall	South Church/West St. Hall	8.00am
Sunday 12th April	Easter Sunday - All Age Service (No Communion)	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 12th April	Traditional Service - Romans 6: 1-14 (Communion)	South Church	3.00pm
Sunday 12th April	Praise Night	South Church	7.00pm
Sunday 19th April	Morning Service with Alistair Cowper	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 19th April	Evening Service with Alistair Cowper	South Church	7.00pm
Saturday 25th April	Food Hygiene Training	West St. Hall	10.30am - 1.00pm
Saturday 25th April	Men's Night - details to follow	-	-
Sunday 26th April	Morning Service - Luke 24:13-35 (Dedication)	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 26th April	Evening Service 'The Shack' with Joyce Maclean	South Church	7.00pm

Community Litter Pickup

As part of the current Keep Scotland Beautiful Campaign, Penicuik District Community Council have asked me if I can gather some South Church volunteers together and help with a litter pickup in Lowries Den, Penicuik.

Litter picking tongs, gloves and bin bags will all be provided.

Please consider giving up a couple of hours to help care for our local community.

We are meeting at the new car park at the end of Lowries Den road at 9.00am on Saturday 4th April.

Ross Hadwen
01968 672707

Thank You

A very big 'Thank You' to the individual who kindly shaved off some wood from the ladies and disabled toilet door. Its such an improvement and I am sure I speak for all girls and the less able who use it regularly.

May God Bless You and Yours Richly
in Jesus Precious Name

Anne Frame

**Deadline for articles
for next issue of Scope:
Monday 20th April 2009**

Lamb

Mum and Dad took me to see baby Jesus born in a stable in Bethlehem. I took Lamie with me. I never went anywhere without him. Even slept with him. Lamie was just a stuffed piece of sheepskin roughly shaped into a lamb with some wool sewn on. He was quite worn and well hugged but to me he was my best friend.

I remember the strong smell of animal and fresh hay. A light flickered from a little oil lamp placed on a haystack. There in front of us was Mary cradling her baby. Her eyes were soft and brown. She looked tired. Dad pushed at my shoulder causing me to kneel before them. Mum said, "Son, this is your King". Mum and Dad kept their heads bowed but I could not help stare at them. Was this the promised Messiah that my parents kept telling me about? Mary smiled at me. We stood up and a tall young man came in. Dad started to talk to him then Dad pulled a parcel out of his bag and gave it to him. "Whose that?" I whispered to mum. "That's Joseph. Mary's Husband." Said Mum.

As I watched Joseph unwrap the parcel he thanked Dad and Mum and gave the gift to Mary. I recognised it! It was Mums favourite shawl.

The one Grandmother gave to her as a wedding present. It was pure purple linen embroidered with flowers and fruits. Mary looked at Mum and smiled and nodded. Suddenly, I felt I too had to give something. After all this was no ordinary baby. But what shall I give? I didn't bring anything. I looked down at my feet and there lay on the golden hay Lamie. Without thinking I lifted Lamie and placed him onto Jesus who was still sleeping in Mary's arms. I could swear I heard at that very moment a tiny, faint cry.

33 Years Later

One day a Roman soldier came into my workshop. He ordered some of the thickest nails and several planks of wood. "For crucifixion?" I asked casually. "Yeah. First thing tomorrow. Two thieves and some madman who claims to be "King of the Jews". Huh I ask you." Said the soldier. "I'll have them ready for you by evening" I said

A few days later a man walked into my shop. "Can I help you?" I asked. His soft eyes stared back at me. There was something about him.

He looked kind, like he was reading me. Knew me. "Can I help you?" I stuttered. "Do you sell any lambs?" the stranger asked. "No I only sell wood and nails." I replied. He held out his hands. In his palms were two wide holes and resting on his fingers was a little worse- for-ware woolly sheepskin toy.

"Lamie!" I cried. I fell on my knees. Tears streaming down my face. "Jesus! Forgive me. I'm the one that sold the nails and wood for your execution". Jesus placed his hands gently onto my shoulder. "Its alright Son. I became your Lamb.

The End

By Valentina Russell

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Bibles to China

With fear and trepidation I lifted the phone to accept my place on a team delivering Bibles into China from Hong Kong! It had sounded exciting when I applied, but upon hearing that I (recently widowed) would have to travel alone to Hong Kong from Edinburgh and then find my way to the meeting place by bus from the airport after a 12 hour plane ride, it scared me stiff! However, when I learned that God had already arranged a travelling companion for me who had been before, I knew it was meant to be, and I was on my way!

It was still daunting to have to split up and travel on my own with a trolley case of Bibles from Hong Kong by train into mainland China each day of the ten day stay, and I was constantly afraid of getting lost! Being stopped by a custom's official one time and having the Bibles taken off me was the worst thing that happened to me though, and even if it felt utterly disappointing, what was that compared with languishing in prison as a persecuted Chinese Christian, I reminded myself at the end of the trip!

It was such a joy knowing that most of the precious Bibles got through customs to be delivered into the eager hands of rural Chinese Christians who had been waiting and praying for years to have a Bible of their own; we in the free West really do not appreciate the blessing of having several Bibles per household, I have come to realise. The pastors who received them were smiling and shaking our hands, despite the risk they ran of arrest and imprisonment. I later heard of one such who was jailed for 2 years and forced to stitch footballs for the Olympic Games for 10 hours a day, denied contact with his young son and not allowed to have his own Bible in prison.

As a student some 30 years ago I had heard about a Dutchman called Brother Andrew who took Bibles behind the Iron Curtain in a book entitled "God's Smuggler". A riveting account of his driving all the way from Holland to Russia in a VW Beetle with boxes of Bibles for beleaguered Christians who were struggling to survive under an atheistic regime. When stopped by border guards he would pray silently, "Lord, You made blind eyes see, now make seeing eyes blind", and

invariably he would be waved through, even after the guards had looked right at the Bibles in his car! It was most certainly a mission from God which Brother Andrew continued for many years and is now being done by ordinary folk like me, who just started with praying for persecuted Christians, then found myself in China delivering Bibles to them!

It was undoubtedly the biggest adventure of my life, and despite being scary, an amazing and satisfying experience for which I thank God, who has a funny way of calling ordinary people to follow Him wherever He leads! Considering I have no sense of direction, it was rather funny what He asked me to do, but there again, I've discovered that it's when we are weak, God makes us strong!

Denise Halcrow

Book Review

What an exhilarating, wonderful and inspiring read which was most enjoyable. "The Small Woman" by Alan Burgess. The story of Gladys Aylurard and her determination, obedience and love of our Lord and her love of compassion toward her adopted land or country China and its people. Excellent, well worth a read. Very Inspirational.

Anne Frame

Date for your Diary

Coffee, Craft and Chat afternoon on Saturday 2 May 2 - 4pm in South Church Hall.

Come along and enjoy a relaxing afternoon over coffee or tea. If you wish, create a simple exploding book, perfect for a gift or just spend time catching up with friends and family. If you are able to bake for this event please speak to Alison Herd or Sharon McKenzie or email alison.herd@sky.com for further info or if you'd like to be involved with helping.

Princes Street Easter Play Saturday 11th April

Christ - A double distraction to shoppers on Princes St. this Easter.

“Christ in the heart of the city at Easter” has always been the motto of the Princes St Easter Play. The organizers are preparing again to put on a free production of the last days of Jesus life to be played out in West Princes St gardens. This year the play will be performed in the morning as well as the afternoon on Easter Saturday April 11th.

Capacity audience figures of 4500 in 2007 and the desire to give people a greater opportunity to be part of experiencing what it might have been like, to live with Jesus in those last days, has prompted the decision to put on 2 performances. The morning performance is at 10.30am and the afternoon performance at 2.30pm. There have always been changes to the play and this year is no exception.

The scene locations are all on the move with the play running the opposite way from previous years through the Gardens. The crucifixion is being taken back to its dramatic site just under the castle rock as in 2005 but this year the audience will approach the scene over the wider

bridge. We are also returning to the Celtic music of earlier productions.

We've heard about and you may have seen the busses saying “there is probably no God” – In Edinburgh our tourist buses have been known to stop to allow the passengers to watch part of the play. This year because of the Tram Works Princes Street and the pavement on the Garden's side are both closed. So this year passers by will not be able to watch the play from either passing buses or from the pavement on the Gardens side.

Maybe you saw the play in a previous year why not come again. Perhaps you have never seen the Play so come and join us and witness the Easter Story in the spectacular setting of Princes Street Gardens. Encourage members in your church to come tell your friends especially those who are not regular church goers to experience the event. An audience draws an audience.

Rachel Wood (Producer)
For more information
www.easterplay.org

Princes Street Easter Play Saturday 11th April

Actors

We are looking for 7 men to join the cast of the Easter Play. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 7.00pm to 9.00pm at St Johns Church Lothian Road (except 25th February). Come and join us or phone Susanne on 07773195426

Crowd Marshal

We urgently need Crowd Marshals for either the 10.30am or the 2.30 pm performance , training provided. For further information e-mail info@easterplay.org or check web site www.easterplay.org .

Finally and most importantly Penicuik South Kirk pray for the success of the Play and that some people may drawn down to the Gardens to experience the Gospel for the first time.

Rachel Wood

Keeping hope alive: 'education for life'

Eighteen-year-old Nadia Kabula's story is not an extraordinary one. For many people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), life is a struggle. Following ten years of conflict, malnourishment and preventable diseases still claim thousands of lives each week. Christian Aid partner organisations are helping to rebuild lives and livelihoods in some of the DRC's most vulnerable communities.

After the greatest challenge of Nadia's life, Christian Aid partner Humanité Nouvelle was there to help her focus on the future and the hope of a better life.

Nadia's father died suddenly two and a half years ago. Her grieving mother, Brigitte, struggled to provide for her six children. Even though Brigitte works gruelling 48-hour shifts, some weeks her transport costs total almost as much as her weekly salary.

Nadia was profoundly affected by the death of her father, whom she adored. And his death had immediate practical implications. There was no money to pay for her schooling, so

she had to drop out and care for her younger siblings while their mother worked.

Families like Nadia's often hear about Humanité Nouvelle's tailoring course through their local church. The course helps poor girls to develop skills to support themselves and their families. Nadia explains why girls in similar situations turn to sex work: 'They need to pursue their education and, with a lack of means, get desperate.'

It would have been easy for Nadia to despair. But instead Humanité Nouvelle 'have given me education for life', she says. She completed the course and now helps to teach the new intake of girls.

Nadia still takes care of her siblings, as well as being a mentor at Humanité Nouvelle. Her mother describes her as 'a blessing... [without her] things would be very hard'. And it's not just her family who speak so positively of her – her pastor also talks about the inspiring influence of her gospel singing.

Nadia is confident that she can earn a good living from sewing and she is

clear about her priorities: 'If God helps me... I will do all I can to take care of my siblings and my mother.'

As collectors we can be inspired by Nadia. Even in difficult circumstances she is planting seeds of hope around her.

And Nadia's mother has a message for us: 'You volunteers should not be discouraged when you're turned away from houses. You should carry on because without that money it would be very difficult for... children from destitute backgrounds to get training, get a job and secure their future.'

Your time and money are more valuable than you know. You could give a chance of a brighter future to another young person like Nadia, and support them to bring hope to the people around them.

Christian Aid

**Christian
Aid Week
10-16 May 09**

Christian Aid Week 10th-16th May 2009

Christian Aid Week is the powerful witness of 22,000 churches united by a desire for change. It's the determination of 300,000 people reaching out into their local community to bring hope to communities across the world. Christian Aid Week is the church on the street.

BUT to make it happen here in Penicuik – we need you! Your support and involvement in Christian Aid Week can make all the difference. That difference will help to give people living in poverty the chance of a full life – people like Nadia in the Democratic Republic of Congo – the focus of this year's Christian Aid Week.

Please consider giving just a little of your time this year to be a collector for Christian Aid - it may be that your street does not have a collector and its one way of getting to know the neighbours!

To get involved please just add your name to our list of collectors – contact Ellen Walley – 01968 672014

Christian Aid Week keeps hope alive for many of the world's poorest communities. Thank you for being a part of it this May.

Logos Hope – Edinburgh, Ocean Terminal 2nd – 13th April 2009

DARE!!! -Youth Event

Fri, 3 April, 19:00 – 21:00,

A unique event on board Logos Hope for younger Christians (age 17+) and those still young at heart. Does what you do reflect who you really are? Meet with the international crew of Logos Hope and learn how to make a difference in the world.

Conference passes £2 obtained in advance via the Logos Hope office.

WOMEN IMPACTING THE NATIONS (Ladies Coffee Morning)

Tue, 7 April, 10:00am – 12:00 noon

A discussion of fellowship and faith during this ladies' coffee morning. The hand that rocks the cradle rocks the world! We need noble-hearted women to impact the nations! Hear firsthand how God has been at work in the lives of ladies serving on board Logos Hope.

Conference passes £5 obtained in advance via the Logos Hope office

LITTLE SAILORS I

Thu, 9 April, 10:00 – 11:00 or 1pm-2pm,

Seeking young sailors from 7 to 11 years! Come and enjoy our sailing adventures on board Logos Hope!! A fun interactive activity for children together with our international crew.

Conference passes £2 obtained in advance via the Logos Hope office.

AWAKENING THE NATION

Fri, 10 April, 7pm – 9pm

An informative evening for those with mission in mind. What is God doing in my area? How is the global Church reaching the unreached? Is there any way I can play a part in God's vision for the lost? Discover the answers to these questions and more as different ministry organisations present the work God has called them to.

Conference passes £2 obtained in advance via the Logos Hope office



Logos Hope Ship Tours

Tour hours (Booking E-mail : marjan.hechtermans@gbaships.org)

Sun 2:00pm-8:40pm, Mon - NO Tours. Tues~Sat 10:00am~8:40pm

Price Adult £3 / Senior & student £2 / under 12 Free

Deck 4 (Experience deck) Free entrance

opening hours: Sun/ Mon 2:00pm~10:00pm, Tues~Sat 10:00am~10:00pm

Life boat Theater – life boat experience, Book Fair and International café.

Contact - logoshope.edinburgh@gbaships.org or 0131 332 5086 for further information about tickets or visit the website: www.hopestartshere.info

An Underwater Rescue

An ordinary excursion turned extraordinary for Maui dive leader Jennifer Anderson when an injured manta ray came to her for help.

It was like many Maui mornings, the sun was rising over Haleakala as we greeted our divers for the day's charter.

The dive went pretty close to how I had thought it would:

The garden eels performed their underwater ballet, the parrot fish grazed on the coral, and the ever-elusive male flame wrasse flared their colours to defend their territory.

Manta rays are one of my greatest loves, but very little is known about them. Mantas can be identified by the distinctive pattern on their belly, with no two rays alike. I had been identifying the manta rays at Molokini, a sunken volcanic crater, and found that some were familiar, but many more were sighted only once and then gone.

So there I was, swimming along, when a beautiful, very large ray appeared beneath me. She was much bigger than what we were used to around Molokini. There was something else odd about her, I just couldn't figure out what it was.

She was wrapped Head to Tail in Fishing Line.

I saw deep V-shaped parts of her flesh missing from her backside.

At first I thought a boat had hit her.

As she came closer, now with only 10 feet separating us, I realised what was wrong.

She had very thick fishing line running to her tail. She had rolled with the line and was wrapped head to tail about five or six times. The line had torn into her body at the back, and those were the V-shaped chunks that were missing. I felt sick, but I had to do something.

Forgetting about my air, my divers, and where I was, I went to the manta. I moved very slowly and talked to her the whole time, as though she were one of the horses I had grown up with.

When I touched her, her whole body quivered, just as my horse would. I put both of my hands on her, then my entire body, talking to her the whole time. I knew that she could knock me off at any time with one flick of her great wing.

When she had steadied, I took out the knife that I carry on my inflator hose and lifted one of the lines.

It was tight and difficult to get my finger under, almost like a guitar string. She shook, which told me to be gentle. It was obvious that the slightest pressure was painful. As I cut through the first line, it pulled into her wounds. With one beat of her mighty wings, she dumped me and bolted away. I was amazed when she turned and came right back, gliding under my body. I went to work. She seemed to know it would hurt, and somehow, she also knew that I could help.

I cut through one line and into the next until she had all she could take of me and would move away, only to return in a moment or two. When all the lines were cut on top, I went under her to pull the lines through the wounds on the back of her body. The tissue had started to grow round them, and they were difficult to get loose.

When she realised that she was free, she came to life. With two beats of those powerful wings, she rocketed along the wall of Molokini and then directly out to sea.

A Thank-You Without Words

I kicked in the direction of my divers, only to have them signal me to stop

and turn around. I turned and saw her slowly gliding towards me. She approached me and stopped, her wing was just touching my head. I looked into her round, dark eye, and she looked deeply into mine. I felt a rush of something that so overpowered me, I have yet to find the words to describe it, except a warm and loving flow of energy from her into me.

She stayed with me for a moment. I don't know if it was a second or an hour. Then, as silently as she came back, she lifted her wing over my head and was gone.

Jennifer Anderson

Taken with permission from PETA's Animal Times.
Contributed by Mairi Tulloch

You can help!

Collect fishing tackle
Wildlife rehabilitators who work with marine animals know the dangers of lost and discarded fishing tackle. Fishing hooks and lure lacerate birds' feet, beaks and throats. Fishing line can wrap wound animals' necks, strangling them. Please gather a group of friends together to help clear your local beaches or lake shores of fishing tackle.
Find out more at FishingHurts.com.

STOP THE TRAFFIK

PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BE BOUGHT & SOLD



www.stopthetraffik.org

scope

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