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Minister's Letter

Hello again,
I need to ask you to pray about a specific situation which I think is quite serious and yet presently may be passing you by. The General Assembly – the Church of Scotland's main decisions making forum - can often make people's eyes glaze over instantaneously in uninterest and disdain simply by uttering the two words. This year's Assembly, I think, will probably be quite different – potentially for all the wrong reasons. To illustrate my point if my discretion is too subtle, some evangelical groupings within this denomination have called on members of the Church of Scotland to a day of prayer and fasting because they feel the issues this year are so crucial. A special commission will report on human sexuality and the ordained ministry. The outcome of the debate has the possibility of changing many people's attitude to the C of S permanently. The reason this issue may presently be passing you by is that there is a ban on any discussion of the issues until the General Assembly has debated it in May this year. Individual Kirk Sessions were asked their views last autumn – in between there is meant to be total silence. For some it's about God's love; for some it's about God's word; for others it's about another issue that's



equally fundamental. For others it's about not presenting the media with an opportunity to present the church in a bad light.

All of this got me thinking. I'm already fasting. I say that not to impress (because with my waist line clearly I'm not fasting too much anyway!) simply to evidence the fact that the seriousness of the situation is one that requires me to fast. My problem is that the situation that I'm referring to is the Impact World Tour coming to Scotland this November.

I'm fasting because the situation our country's in is one where the gospel is so routinely marginalised and passed-over we need a break through of God's Holy Spirit to change things. Worse still I see the church in Scotland so weak and beset with 'baggage' from the past we have our 'cap and gowns' in missing the point. The point being Matthew 28 – that's why we exist.

I see no obvious way in which the message of our Heavenly Father's love for His children will turn around a generation to Christ. So I see initiatives like the Impact World Tour as something which I am compelled

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Minister's Letter (cont'd)

to support not just by turning up at Prayer events and Pudding Suppers – important as they are – I need to bathe these initiatives in personal prayer and fasting. Impact comes with no guarantees – but God's blessing comes where His people return to Him, repent and call out in His name. This country is full of revivals that were birthed in committed, persistent prayer. But, by definition, not everything gets the same focus in prayer – as so much in life – we need to make priorities. This year's General Assembly has the potential to be the most significant in a great many years – prayer and fasting regarding its decisions would certainly not be misplaced. But whether you consider the final decisions to be 'right' or 'wrong,' Biblical or unbiblical, come June 2011 Scotland will not be much different. The vast majority of people will still be two and three generations away from a real and credible witness to Jesus Christ in their family. Great grannies in old black and white pictures who used to 'gang along tae the kirk.' What this generation needs is people – every one of us in fact – to journey with the people whom God has given us and share the gospel with them. In my mind, one of my favourite Easter images is of Cleopas and his

friend journeying to Emmaus after Jesus' death. Jesus goes with them and speaks of Himself in the Old Testament. The first peripatetic Bible study – and it made their hearts burn within them as He spoke (Luke 24:13-35)! Jesus has also promised us that we will do even greater things than He did (John 14:12). This Easter who are you meant to commit to, journey with and persist with on their road to the Cross. Not just up until Easter – but for years to come if necessary.

Who are you praying and fasting into the Kingdom because God has laid them on your heart and won't give you peace until you get on with the business of leading them to the Cross? We all need to make that list of people – who's on your list? Write it down. If you don't pray and fast for them who will? Who will be the patient one who simply never leaves them?

That's the matter I need you to pray about; that's the situation that I feel may have passed you by. That's what you need to think about fasting and praying. Pray for the General Assembly by all means – it certainly could do with some. But if you actually are genuinely praying and fasting make sure it's about the priority that God has. Have a fantastic Easter!

Yours in Him

Ian Cathcart

Notes from Kirk Session

1. House Groups

We are looking at the question of House Groups, recognizing that they are pastoral and based on an 'attraction model' where people are invited to join. One of the new concepts which we are considering and which would have a wider context for the Church than only House Groups, is a 'missional' model. There are Churches which we may visit who have this focus currently in place and this would give us insight for any future planning.

2. Photocopier

As you will possibly know, the old Risograph has come to the end of its life for the amount of work we need it to do and it has therefore been decided to purchase a new photocopier. Approaches were made to other Churches and both St. Mungo's and Howgate are joining us in making this purchase. It is hoped the new copier will be in place by the end of March and that people from each Church will have been trained in its use.

3. Three people have responded to an approach to join the eldership of the Church – Kathleen Downey, Douglas McGavin and Vicky Nicolson and if there are no objections, their induction and ordination will take place on 3rd April.

4. In order to save money on heating the Church for Session meetings it has been decided that these will now take place in the homes of Session members.

Please continue to pray for the Session, that our focus will be constantly on God's will for our Church

South Church Flowers

I would like to thank all those who have supplied flowers for the Church each week over the last year and would also like to thank those on the team who help to carry out this work. Flowers play a very important part in Pastoral care. Each week, apart from being displayed in the Church, the flowers are delivered to someone who is in need of our love as a fellowship or perhaps just to say congratulations on a happy event in their lives. There are a number of weeks in the year where no donations are being made and it would be really good if we could fill these gaps. If you would like to be part of this Pastoral work then please contact Maureen Hazel on 673013.

Thank you.

South Church Women's Group

The Women's Group now meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30 p.m, in West Street Hall. Reluctantly we had to discontinue our afternoon meetings, as numbers had fallen considerably and it is difficult to ask speakers to come along if there are few members.

At our October meeting Jackie Ringan, from Scripture Union came and we had a Bible Study. There was a good turnout for this and we thank Jackie

In November we had an early Christmas Dinner in the Navaar Hotel as our speaker could not come to December. This was enjoyed by all.

When December arrived, so did the snow and we had to cancel , as the snow was particularly heavy on the night the meeting was scheduled for.

Our Christmas Annual Appeal with Dolly Bags, raised £119, which went to the Butterfly Trust, which helps Children and Adults with Cystic Fibrosis. We thank everyone for their support.

January 2011, my husband gave us a talk – 3000 years of history in

Penicuik. We did not know quite what to expect, including myself. We only got half way through and all being well he will return with the second half, another time. We had a good turnout, which was encouraging.

Louise Turner came in February and explained "Discovery", which is almost a Duke of Edinburgh Award for the over 50's.

Bill Bruce is coming in March with "How is your memory"

The Annual General Meeting will be held on the 6th April and on the 4th May we will have our Summer Dinner, venue to be arranged.

We thank Members of the congregation who have come along to speak to us and we are always on the lookout for speakers and of course New Members , whom we will make very welcome. It might be nice if some younger members of the congregation came along, and we would be open to their ideas and we promise that we would listen and appreciate their contribution. We still look out for each other and especially our older past and present members.

Sheena Allan Tel. No. 674309
Audrey Roy Tel. No. 675227
Wilma Wilson Tel. No. 678045

World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer was held in St. Mungo's Church on Friday, 4th March, 2011. All the Churches in Penicuik were represented. Wilma Wilson and myself represented Penicuik South.

The Order of Service this year was written by the Christian Women of Chile and was entitled, "How many loaves have you"?

On the cover of the Order of Service was an illustration of a very colourful and detailed tapestry embroidered by Chilean Women to depict the theme of World Day of Prayer 2011. It measured 60 x 40 centimetres and took a month to complete. All the images on the tapestry were from St Mark's Gospel, presented in the context of rural Chilean life in a way that honours Christ's presence in our daily lives everywhere.

The two representatives from each Church in Penicuik took part in the readings, prayers and background information about Chile.

The hymns were very lively and there was a good turnout of a congregation which helped to make a joyful praise.

The heading "How many loaves have you", not only referred to sharing our resources with needy countries, but using our gifts to help people in our own town and country where we see a need.

The service ended with the World Day of Prayer Hymn "The Day Thou gavest Lord is ended", which is one of my favourite hymns. It was good to think that you had shared the same service with fellow Christians around the World.

After the Service we went to St. Mungo's Church Hall for tea, where we had good fellowship with other members from the various Penicuik Churches.

Altogether a very uplifting night.

Audrey Roy

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

Saturday 2nd April	Men's Breakfast - Testimonies	West St. Hall	8.30am
Sunday 3rd April	Morning Service - God's Provision - Matthew 17: 14-21	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 3rd April	Evening Service - Why does God Kill People? - Joshua 6: 15-27	South Church	7.00pm
Wednesday 6th April	Women's Group AGM	West St. Hall	7.30pm
Thursday 7th April	Kirk Session	The Manse	7.00pm
Saturday 9th April	Community Litter Pick - Beeslack Woods	Tesco Car Park	9.30am
Sunday 10th April	Morning Service - God's Parables - Matthew 18: 21-35	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 10th April	Evening Service - The Last Beatitude for today! - Philippians 1: 3-11	South Church	7.00pm
Saturday 16th April	Community Litter Pick - Lowrie's Den	Penicuik Eastate Car Park	9.30am
Saturday 16th April	Transformation Service - Impact World Tour - Rev. Kenny Borthwick	St. Mungo's Church	7.00pm
Sunday 17th April	Morning Service - God's Purpose - Matthew 21: 1-11 - All Age Service	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 17th April	Joint Service	St. Mungo's Church	7.00pm
Monday 18th April	Joint Service	South Church	7.00pm
Tuesday 19th April	Try Praying - 24 Hours of Prayer	South Church	
Tuesday 19th April	Joint Service	North Church	7.00pm
Wednesday 20th April	Joint Service	St. Mungo's Church	7.00pm
Thursday 21st April	Joint Service	St. James the Less Church	8.00pm
Friday 22nd April	Good Friday	South Church	7.00pm
Sunday 24th April	Easter Sunday - Matthew 28: 1-10 - Followed by Breakfast in the Hall at 8.45am	South Church	8.00am
Sunday 24th April	Easter Sunday - God's Power - Matthew 28: 11-15	South Church	11.15am
Sunday 24th April	Easter Sunday - God's Power - Matthew 28: 16-20	South Church	3.00pm
Sunday 24th April	Resurrection Service	Usher Hall	7.30pm
Friday 29th April	Powerpoint Edinburgh	Destiny Church	7.30pm

**Deadline for articles
for next issue of Scope:
Monday 25th April 2011**

Community Litter Picks

As part of the Keep Scotland Beautiful campaign
<http://www.keepsotlandtidy.org/springclean.asp> (which runs from Monday 14th March - Monday 16th May 2011), Penicuik and District Community Council will be organising 3 litter picks in some of the worst areas affected in our community:

Beeslack Woods - Saturday 9th April
9.30am. Meet Tesco car park.

Lowries Den - Saturday 16th April
9.30am. Meet Penicuik Estate car park.

Cuiken Burn - Sunday 15th May
9.30am. Meet YMCA Queensway.

The Post Code Lottery have kindly supplied us with 20 litter pick kits to add to our existing equipment. Most of the schools in Penicuik have organised their own events and will make use of the kits.

If you are able and willing to volunteer, even if it is only for a few hours, please contact me on 01968 677181, mobile 07842663987 or email chris.leavy1@btinternet.com or just turn up on the day.

Chris Leavy

Clearing the Hall - 19.03.2011

Sheila Anderson & Jackie Cathcart put out an appeal for helpers. I reckon there were 9 helpers on the morning (but I won't name them in case I'm wrong!! Males were in very short supply.) + 3 weans who did their bit by trying out pens to see if they still worked.

The stage was cleared; the upstairs rooms also. I came home with some no-use-to-anyone-else carpet squares for my anti-rabbit campaign and some wood to start bonfires = a really successful morning from my point of view! (Not to mention the bacon rolls.)

But that's not my point. Sometimes we look back to some sort of golden age when we all pulled together - and enjoyed it. So, OK there weren't many people involved that Saturday morning, and I know that others were working or baby sitting. But it was that kind of morning - when we had a common objective and camaraderie (I would have said fellowship, but some people don't like that use of the word!)

Think about joining in, if the opportunity for something similar comes up: you will enjoy it and be blessed (and end up stiff!)

Jennifer Ruddick

Powerpoint Edinburgh

Fairies in tutus, vuvuzelas, flashing rabbit ears and 6 inch high beehive hairdos are not something you often see in church but when Powerpoint happens on the same night as Comic Relief nothing comes as a surprise. About 600 young people poured in to St Pauls and St Georges church on 18 March to worship God, meet friends, listen to Beth Tash, Youth Pastor, St. George's Church, Leeds, tell them how to be effective missionaries by keeping FIT. (being a Friend of Jesus, Influenced by the Holy Spirit, in Jesus' Team.) The praise was led by the Imagine band who publicised "Imagine" a four-day youth festival in Aberdeenshire at the beginning of August.

Powerpoint Edinburgh is a Christian youth event supported by local churches in Edinburgh, Scripture Union Scotland and Alpha Scotland, and is open to secondary school aged young people from all backgrounds. Attendees are drawn from all around Scotland, most frequently from Edinburgh, the Lothians, Scottish Borders and Fife. The event is in its 12th year and is regularly attended by around 500. Each event includes:

- Engaging worship
- Guest speakers
- The Mix - an opportunity to meet others
- After Hours - a chilled out café environment

The cost / suggested donation at every event is £3 and the next one will be at Destiny Church on 29 April at 7.30pm.

I would recommend that you find a few teenagers to take or volunteer as a steward.

Sheila Anderson

Operation Christmas Child

Thanks to all who supported the shoebox appeal. Some 5000 boxes were collected in Midlothian for poor children in Belarus.

Thanks again

Bill Bruce

South Church Worship Group - Report given for the AGM

The purpose of the Worship Group is to enable the congregation to praise God and focus on Him through sung worship.

The team is roughly 16 strong in musicians at the moment, although numbers vary almost on a month to month basis. In addition the Worship Team includes those who cover the sound desk and the overheads, and though not so visible, these more 'technical' people are essential to the success of the praise.

The Worship Team also includes some members of the Youth Church who help to lead the worship once a month. It's great to see them progress both musically and spiritually, and they bring a fresh outlook to our praise.

Sixteen musicians sounds like a lot but given that most can only do one or two services a month, and out of the sixteen we only have 4 to 5 people who can lead the worship (i.e. pick the music and organise it for the musicians that week) then it's not enough to easily cover two services every week. For this reason some of the evening services have the music provided via You-Tube.

The Worship Team who are playing on a given Sunday will meet to rehearse at 10am for the morning

service and 5pm or thereabouts for the evening service. We also get together once in a while to learn and practice new songs and music.

The last few years have involved a lot of changes for the team, and we very much appreciate the support and encouragement that we have had from members of the congregation.

We are always looking for new team members, especially instrumentalists, and also new faces to cover the sound desk and overheads. Any one who is interested in joining us should speak to either Caroline McIntosh, Caroline Tom, Jackie Ringan or Ian Stewart (music) or Billy Hudson (technical).

Thank You

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all our friends in the South Church for your good wishes, cards and gifts on the occasion of our Diamond Wedding Anniversary. We were very touched by your thoughtfulness.

God Bless and thank you.

Margaret and Jim Macdonald

General Assembly

We have been asked by the Assembly Officer of the General Assembly if we can provide him with names of members of the congregation who might be willing to serve as stewards at the forthcoming General Assembly.

The Assembly starts on the morning of Saturday 21 May and continues until the following Wednesday (the 27th). Individual stewards aren't on duty the whole time; but operate on a shift system and if you are really keen you could be on duty virtually every day, or do occasional stints on a much more sporadic basis.

Stewarding can be done by any member of any congregation. They don't have to be elders and would be provided with a very good idea of what was required of them.

If you are interested please contact Joyce MacLean.

Christian Aid Week 15th - 21st May 2011

Do you want to be part of a transformation of a whole community? Do you want to be part of the bigger picture? Read the accompanying article and see how you can become involved in helping a community dream the impossible. God can bring about change in peoples lives when people like us stand alongside them, look at the world through their eyes and put our faith into action.

Put your faith into action and get involved in Christian Aid week this year. Help change lives and communities by giving just a little of your time to be a collector for Christian Aid - for you it is just a few hours out of one week but for those who live in the poorer communities of this world, your few hours could be life changing.

Please prayerfully consider being a collector for Christian Aid this year. contact -

Ellen Walley 01968 672014

Daring to dream the impossible

Christian Aid partner Soppexcca (pronounced so-pecks-ka) is an organisation with a vision. It is passionately committed to helping poor Nicaraguan coffee farmers to beat poverty.

Ten years ago, when Soppexcca was established, this seemed impossible. But now Soppexcca is a thriving collective of small cooperatives which helps farmers produce good-quality coffee, market it and put funds back into their own communities. It works with communities to understand their needs and empowers them to make their own visions a reality.

Gustavo Adolfo Talavera, an illiterate coffee farmer, had few prospects until Soppexcca gave him a loan, allowing him to expand his farm and build a small and environmentally sound processing plant. He had a dream of his children being able to read and write, and be educated. His dream became a reality when Soppexcca helped members of the community get enough resources together, and a group of parents built a school themselves.

Ten years ago, education would have seemed an impossible dream for Gustavo. But Soppexcca is enabling his community to dream dreams – and then to do what seems to be impossible.

The Christian life sets us within a story that speaks of transformation

where it seems to be impossible; where life is brought to the world. And the gospel stories are clear that life is about more than just survival. The life that Jesus speaks of is abundant life, rich with possibility and hope and promise. For people in Gustavo's community, it's about education and prospects.

Cooperative living is about this abundant life. It's about seeing something achievable beyond oneself and working together to make life better for everyone. Fátima Ismael, Soppexcca's director, says: 'We're not just about bread for today, but also for tomorrow. But we don't just want bread, we want bread and honey and milk.' People like Fátima and Gustavo are seeing the bigger picture – going beyond what seems initially achievable and working together to make it a reality.

The good news is that we can be a part of this bigger picture too. When we give our time, money and energy this Christian Aid Week, we are looking beyond ourselves and enabling others to do what seems impossible. This bigger picture is the world as it could look if we allowed the kingdom of God to be a reality,



Thanks to funds from Christian Aid partner Soppexcca, Gustavo's community has been able to build a school, which he proudly shows here

if we really believed in abundant life for all. It's the world that Jesus showed us in his life and ministry: a world where we stop living for ourselves and start living for others, a world where we don't put limits on love and justice, a world where the concept of our neighbour is startlingly redefined.

It's a bigger world and it's an unsettling world. But it's a world that allows for transformation in ways that we may never have imagined, to dream dreams and to do what people tell us is impossible. Of course it's about transformation

for people like Gustavo. But it's also a world that offers huge transformation to ourselves and to our churches, as we place ourselves in the frame of a bigger picture where the power of love has no limits.

Christian Aid Week is a time to celebrate transformation, and an opportunity to put ourselves in the frame of God's kingdom. Join us, and we'll give you the resources to make the impossible happen.

Help people in poverty out of poverty

To give to Christian Aid Week, visit www.caweek.org

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Prayer & Fasting

SCOPE

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