

# Uphall South Parish Church Newsletter

Autumn 2011 – No 83





*The Manse  
8 Fernlea  
UPHALL*

*August 2011*

Dear Friends

*Yahweh guards you when you leave and when you return, he guards you now, he guards you always."*

*Psalm 121. The Message*

Through all the ups and downs of life, David the Psalmist was sure that God would guard him, guide him and protect him.

His God is our God and we have the sure promise from Him that we too are guarded by His eternal presence with us. His love for us is strong, secure, unchangeable. His love for us provides the strength and the light we need to guide us throughout our whole lives.

You will be aware by now that I have accepted the invitation to preach as Sole Nominee in Ashkirk I/w Selkirk on the 21<sup>st</sup> August. Depending on how the vote goes I may well be leaving you. This will be a sad time but a time too to allow God to be with each one of us in a very special way. I am convinced that God knows the needs of Uphall South and

As we do this, we experience more of His love and dependability and the way in which that affects the living of our lives as lights to our community.

My prayers are with you all as I know yours are with me as we face this time of possible change together.

*With every blessing*

*Margaret Steele*

## CARE & FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Do you know of anyone who could benefit from a visit in our Congregation or in our Community – Please contact Ruby Small – Thanks.

Also why don't you come to Uphall South Church for a Cuppa and a Chat on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every Month.

We are recommencing on Wednesday

17<sup>th</sup> August 2 p.m.-3 p.m. after our Summer Break.

Look out for the posters around the Village advertising dates and times. Please come and join us for an hour of Friendship and Fellowship – all welcome.

May we also take this opportunity from the Care & Friendship Group to thank all who have supported us in this venture over the past months which we greatly appreciate as we strive to be God's Love in Action.

## **S.O.Y.A** (Special Offers for Youth Aid).

Thanks to all who donate regularly to this project. It would be good if more people gave even one item each week to this worthwhile cause. Toiletries, food items i.e. any tinned food, packets of rice, pasta, soup, biscuits etc. (non-perishable items) would be appreciated.

## **Christmas Gifts for S.O.Y.A.**

(Special Offers for Youth Aid)

By the end of October we will be thinking about items for Christmas. We would be pleased if you could donate towards this and help those young people enjoy Christmas – suggested items – male/female – deodorants, shower gel, socks, beany hats, scarves, gloves, small chocolate boxes, small funny books, fancy mugs – hot chocolate, cappuccinos sachets etc. Female – make up, lipstick, nail polish. All items should be small enough to fit into a bottle bag and should not be wrapped. Bottle bags are also required. Normal food donations will continue to be received.

The above project is supported by the Churches in Uphall and Broxburn, some of which collect money monthly and buy savings stamps from Asda and this goes towards Gifts for Christmas.

Information on any of the above can be had from Margaret Forisky.

## **Statement from The Church of Scotland following the decision of the General Assembly regarding Same Sex Relationships in the Ministry**

The Assembly has agreed to establish a Theological Commission of seven people, representative of the breadth of the Church's theological understanding, who will address the theological issues raised in the course of the Special Commission's work.

The Theological Commission's report will examine:

- (i) the theological issues around same-sex relationships, civil partnerships and marriage
- (ii) whether, if the Church were to allow ministers freedom of conscience in deciding whether to bless same-sex relationships involving life-long commitments, the recognition should take the form of a blessing of a civil partnership or whether there could be a Church service and what form that might take
- (iii) whether people, who have entered into a civil partnership and have made lifelong commitments in a Church ceremony, should be eligible for admission for training, ordination and induction as ministers of Word and Sacrament or deacons.

This means that the Theological Commission has been given an instruction to explore the possibility of making significant changes to the Church's present position.

**Timetable** - The Commission reports to General Assembly **2013**. If change is agreed Presbyteries will be required to vote and send voting decisions to General Assembly of **2014**. The final decision will be taken in **2014**.

Please pray for all the members of the Commission regularly that God would make His will known very clearly. The members are the Rev John McPake (convener), Rev Andrew McGowan, Rev Gordon Kennedy, Rev Marjorie McLean, Rev Mary Henderson, Rev Alan Falconer and Dr Jane McArthur.



CHURCH OF SCOTLAND  
HIV PROGRAMME



### **From Project to Programme – what’s the difference?**

Not a lot! But when the Church of Scotland HIV/AIDS Project came to the end of its allotted lifespan in December 2010, it had raised over £1 million from congregations around Scotland. The HIV Programme, which began in January 2011, is now fully based within the World Mission Council, who recognise the impact of such projects and have committed to continue and progress this work. The HIV Programme is building on the strong foundations laid by the HIV/AIDS Project and we are currently supporting 28 projects run by our partner churches in 15 countries of the world, including Scotland.

A ‘programme’ suggests more permanence than a ‘project’, and like many other organisations, we now separate HIV and AIDS, as one no longer leads inevitably to the other.

We pray that churches and congregations will support the HIV Programme with prayer, action and donations, as generously as they did the original HIV/AIDS Project.

## **HIV and AIDS – 30 years on**

It's a salutary thought that this year, 2011, marks 30 years of HIV and AIDS. In that time AIDS has claimed more than 25 million lives and more than 60 million people have become infected with HIV. Each day, more than 7000 people are newly infected with the virus, including 1000 children. No country has escaped the devastation of this truly global epidemic, and the challenge of HIV and AIDS continues to demand global cooperation to respond effectively to it.

So what is the current state of the global epidemic? Progress has been made, but unless commitment is sustained, there is a real danger that the situation could worsen again. There is evidence that HIV programmes are being successful - global HIV incidence is declining, more people are able to access treatment, fewer children are born with HIV. However, stigma, discrimination and gender inequality continue to undermine efforts to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. There is certainly no room for complacency, or a loss of urgency in responding to the epidemic.

In June of this year, the United Nations will be holding a General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) to review its commitments on HIV and AIDS – now more than ever we need to ensure that we do not allow HIV and AIDS to slip off the international agenda. The Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria must be replenished as fully as possible so that those who are already receiving ARVs continue to do so, and more who need it gain access to this life-saving medication. Stigma and discrimination need to be challenged strongly. We in the Church of Scotland HIV Programme will continue to monitor what is going on, and where appropriate, alert church members to take action - visit [www.churchofscotland.org.uk/speak\\_out](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/speak_out) to find out more.

# A Smile

A SMILE COSTS NOTHING,  
but gives much.

It enriches those who receive, without  
making poorer those who give.

It takes but a moment, but the  
memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

None is so rich or mighty that he can  
get along without it, and none is so poor  
but that he can be made rich by it.

A smile creates, happiness in the home,  
fosters goodwill in business, and is the  
countersign of friendship.

It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the  
discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and it  
is nature's best antidote for trouble.

Yet it cannot be bought, begged,  
borrowed or stolen, for it is something  
that is of no value to anyone until it is  
given away.

Some people are too tired to give  
you a smile.

Give them one of yours, as none needs  
a smile as much as he who has no  
more to give.

# Harvest Thanksgiving

Harvest Thanksgiving  
Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September at  
been decided to support  
Scottish Bible Society  
people of Cuba. As usual there will be the opportunity to  
give to the Harvest Offering as well as giving your weekly  
offering.



will be held on  
11am. This year it has  
the work of the  
bringing Bibles to the

Imagine yourself living in Cuba on the average weekly income of just **£3.25**, which is also the price of a basic Bible (when available - supplies are not keeping pace with growing churches). Would you invest that much to buy a copy? As we are celebrating the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible, and as we enjoy the luxury of freely-available Scripture, the Scottish Bible Society has agreed to fund a supply of special Bibles full of resources for all the family.

The Bible that Cuban families will receive is an up-to-date family edition in everyday Spanish, including more than 500 articles in categories ranging from adolescence and dating to marriage and divorce. It will be a crucial resource in helping to tackle the problems of emotional isolation, abuse and marriage breakdown by encouraging spiritual and emotional growth between members of the family.

# US MEN Outing to Arbroath

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July US Men had their first annual outing to Arbroath to visit Nelu and his family. Nine of us made the trip in glorious sunshine and arrived about 1030 to have refreshments in



Nelu's garden. We then strolled across to see the beautiful and very historic church of St. Vigean's. After a fascinating 90 minutes we dragged ourselves away and wandered through countryside paths for a couple of miles before arriving back at the manse for lunch prepared for us by Lesley and Nelu.

It was great to speak to them and the kids. Their friendship and hospitality was fantastic and they were really delighted to see us.





In the afternoon we went into Arbroath and played crazy golf which was great fun and everyone had a good laugh. We then visited the Bell Rock Museum and the weather was so good that we could

actually see the rock and lighthouse 11 miles offshore. We finished off with fish and chips which we ate in the hall of Nelu's other church, Knox's. We said our thanks and goodbyes then headed home. We arrived about 7:30 and everyone agreed it had been a brilliant day. Can't wait for next year and the new session for US Men.

## FAITH CUP

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



www.joyfultoons.com © 2007 Michael D. Waters

through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

- ROMANS 5:2 NIV

# Live a brighter, bolder life of faith

Matt Redman – the Grammy nominated songwriter, acclaimed worship leader and successful author – is sharing insights and inviting readers to dream of a brighter, bolder life of faith in a brand-new book.

Having taken readers on valuable journeys towards a more authentic, passionate practice of worship with the books *The Unquenchable Worshipper* and *Facedown*, Matt quickly unpacks his central metaphor in his latest book *Mirror Ball*, which has just been released.

Everyone, he reminds us, has the unique potential to radiate the goodness, glory and power of God through our own lives. And, like the diminutive mirror ball above a disco floor, we might not look particularly impressive on our own, but once we allow the light of God to shine upon us, there's no end to the beauty that will shine.

Throughout *Mirror Ball* Matt weaves personal anecdote with spiritual insight, biblical analysis and inspirational wisdom from great thinkers. He also covers themes that range from the importance of us enlarging our view of God to the place of suffering and the importance of seeing worship as more than the singing of songs, producing some memorable lines along the way:

“Singing is easy,” he writes in chapter 1, “The proof is always in the living. Or even the dying.”

In chapter 3, Big God, Big Life, he writes: “When the majesty and mercy of God really take hold inside us, worship explodes out in every possible direction.”

The chapter concludes: “God’s power + my weakness = anything is possible. You do the math.”

Just as Matt songs reveal so much of the character of God the Father and the sacrifice of Jesus the Son, Mirror Ball has plenty to say about the nature of God.

In chapter eight he writes: “God is at work. He is not distant, dormant or docile. He never sleeps and never grows tired or weary. He is the powerful, promise-keeping, and change-breathing God. The doors He opens no one can close, and the doors He closes cannot be opened. His words never return to Him empty. He is always at work in you and all around you.”

Concluding with an eight-part study guide that draws on the book’s content, as well as new songs from Matt’s forthcoming album 10,000 Reasons, Mirror Ball aims to leave readers inspired and equipped to shine on.

**Mirror Ball by Matt Redman**  
**is published by Kingsway, £8.99.**  
**ISBN: 9780781405782.**





Do you recognise anyone in this photo?  
This is the Sunday School from Uphall South 40 years ago.

## Unscramble the anagrams to reveal some Women of the Bible

A rash

Aargh!

Brake! Eh?

Heal

A tram

Rim aim

Bad hero

Hide all

Amino

Sabbath, eh?

Threes

Bite heals

At harm

Clips rail

Soil

Has a dash

Rap a ship

Habitat

Hash tune

# Gordon Brown: faith in politics

‘We must never again allow the voices of faith to feel excluded from their rightful role. So let the trumpet sound. The voices of faith must and will be heard.’

That’s the view of former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, in a speech he gave in February at Lambeth Palace at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The speech, which saw him congratulate church leaders on organising initiatives such as the Jubilee Debt Campaign and Make Poverty History, gave the son of the Manse an opportunity to reflect on the role of faith in politics. “The generosity of your congregations you show by both example and inspiration the good that can result when people of moral purpose work together for shared objectives,” he said of the results of the anti-poverty campaigns. “Because of your voice there are men, women and children whose names you will never know and whose faces you will never see but who are alive today because of what you did.” Mr Brown told his audience that one of his predecessors, Stanley Baldwin, used to redraft his speeches by hand, often adding ‘refer to AG’ in the margins. The civil servants then went to the Attorney General to find out what their Prime Minister meant, only to discover that AG was actually Baldwin’s shorthand for Almighty God. “The ease with which a politician could invoke the divine in pursuit of his policies in the 1930s is a reflection of the uncontested religiosity of the day,” added Mr Brown. But, he continued, the role of faith in politics can be a tricky path to navigate. Speaking of his father’s experience, Mr Brown said: “he recognised that there were men and women of different party political convictions in his congregation, he was careful to tell me about the risks of preaching his own political

The second is that we should reject the standard version of liberal secularism. “It unfairly expects people of faith to leave their conscience at the entrance to the public square,” he said. Reflecting not on “abstract theorising” but on the short life of his first daughter, Jennifer, who died shortly after being born, Mr Brown established the Jennifer Brown Trust and Research Laboratory. It has, he noted “inspired advances in medical research that will prevent avoidable deaths in this country and in poorer countries, reminding me that what matters is not prizes or wealth or status a person accumulates but the contribution — that cannot be measured in the days or months or years - a life can make.” Mr Brown talked about making policies when you have a faith. “To claim or imply divine sanction for a political cause is wrong not just because it is politically unacceptable: it is wrong to me because it is religiously unacceptable too,” he said. To back up his argument, he cited Lincoln acknowledging that both sides in the American Civil War “read the same bible and pray to the same God”. His final point was to look at what religious belief can offer politics. “The special contribution that faith makes to politics is that it offers a way – by no means the only way, but one way – for people to come together to deliberate as neither producer nor consumer, neither leader nor led, but simply as humans, in fellowship with one another, gazing upon the eternal with awe,” he said. He called on society to come up with a framework that clearly distinguishes faith politics from both theocracy and liberal secularism. “We should never apologise for putting ethics, the fundamental issues of how we behave to other people, at the centre of the public square, but we cannot enter the public square free of a duty to seek common ground,” he said.

**You can read the full speech at  
[www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/3141](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/3141)  
PHIL CREIGHTON**

## Kirstie Allsopp's Coconut & Lime Cake



**C**elebrate the warmer weather with a picnic and this gorgeous coconut and lime cake.

This is a really simple cake that all the family will love..

### COCONUT AND LIME CAKE

Serves 12

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Baking time: 55-65 minutes

#### Cake:

- 175g/6oz butter, softened
- 3 large eggs, beaten
- 250g/7oz Carnation Condensed Milk
- 40g/1½oz desiccated coconut
- Finely grated zest and juice 1 lime
- 175g/6oz self-raising flour
- 1tsp baking powder

#### Icing:

- 100g/3½oz icing sugar
- Zest and juice 1 lime

Preheat the oven to 170°C, (150°C for fan ovens)/Gas Mark 3.

Grease and base line a 900g/2lb loaf tin with baking parchment.

Place all the cake ingredients into a large bowl and beat using an electric hand whisk until just smooth and pale. Pour into the prepared cake tin and bake for 55-65 minutes until a skewer comes out clean when inserted into the middle of the cake. If the top becomes too brown near the end of the cooking time, cover with a piece of parchment.

For more recipes from Carnation, log on to [www.carnation.co.uk/recipes](http://www.carnation.co.uk/recipes).

## From a Sermon by the Reb, 1975

“A man seeks employment on a farm. He hands his letter of recommendation to his new employer. It reads simply, ‘He sleeps in a storm.’

“The owner is desperate for help so he hires the man.

“Several weeks pass, and suddenly, in the middle of the night, a powerful storm rips through the valley.

“Awakened by the swirling rain and howling wind, the owner leaps out of bed. He calls for his new hired hand, but the man is sleeping soundly.

“So he dashes off to the barn. He sees, to his amazement, that the animals are secure with plenty of feed.

“He runs out to the field. He sees the bales of wheat have been bound and are wrapped in tarpaulins.

“He races to the silo. The doors are latched, and the grain is dry.

“And then he understands. ‘He sleeps in a storm.’

“My friend, if we tend to the things that are important in life, if we are right with those we love and behave in line with our faith, our lives will not be cursed with the aching throb of unfulfilled business. Our words will always be sincere, our embraces will be tight. We will never wallow in the agony of ‘I could have, I should have.’ WE can sleep in a storm.

“And when it’s time, our good-byes will be complete.”

From the book – Have a little faith, by Mitch Albom



**TRAIDCRAFT**  
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27 April 2011

Uphall South Parish Church of Scotland

Dear Mrs Wilson

Thank you for holding a coffee morning and sale to raise money for Traidcraft Exchange. We are extremely grateful for your recent kind gift of £134.17 which will be put to immediate good use, it is especially welcome in these challenging economic times. We rely on the generous support of individuals and communities like yourself to help us continue our vital development work.

After hearing about how individuals like you have supported our valuable development work, Sree Akhil, one of the jute growers involved in our Golden Fibre project in Bangladesh, said this: "I am very happy that some people are giving money from outside our country so I give great thanks to those people."

We really appreciate your support; it is thanks to this support that together we have been able to achieve so much.

Yours sincerely

Kim Mayman  
Supporter Relations Team



**OpenDoors**

Serving persecuted Christians worldwide

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Uphall South Parish Church

24 June 2011

Dear Friends

Thank you for your generous gift of £153.81 for Open Doors' ministry. We are so grateful for your partnership with us in serving the persecuted church around the world.

We live in times of unprecedented change. Across North Africa and the Middle East, in Nigeria and Sudan, political unrest and social revolution are bringing both challenge and opportunity to God's people. Now more than ever, persecuted Christians need our support.

As the challenges facing persecuted Christians increase, Open Doors longs to be there to bring strength and hope to the body of Christ, through Bible distribution, leadership training, livelihood support and advocacy services. And it is your support which enables us to continue this vital ministry. As our Annual Review\* so powerfully demonstrates, your gifts, your prayers, your letters have been changing the lives of thousands of brothers and sisters around the world as together we have served the persecuted church over the last year.

So thank you so much for all that you have helped to make possible. We are all part of this chain, all part of this process of strengthening the persecuted church. And together we can help our brothers and sisters to stand firm and bring the light and hope of Jesus into their families and communities.

May you know the Lord's blessing and encouragement as you continue to serve Him.

Your friend and brother,

Eddie Lyle,  
CEO Open Doors UK & Ireland

\*please see pages 6-7 of our June 2011 Open Doors magazine, or visit our website :  
[www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/documents/magazine/2011/june/index.php](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/documents/magazine/2011/june/index.php) and select pages 6-7.