



GOOD NEWS

News from and for local churches

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Local news

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A BO'NESS minister is not trying to deliberately entice non-churchgoers back into the fold by having a chocolate foundation in the sanctuary, but instead to remind his congregation of the true meaning of Lent.

It's all part of plans for the aptly named "Chocolate Sunday".

[Click here to read more:](#)

THE Duke of Edinburgh visited a church in the Capital following its radical transformation into a multi-purpose venue for the community.

His Royal Highness toured the new facilities at Broughton St Mary's Parish Church and met with local groups and schoolchildren.

[Click here to read more:](#)

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[Click here to read more:](#)

Press releases

News from the media and communications team

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Right Reverend Bill Hewitt is among the 27 competitors teeing off at Lanark Golf Club on Tuesday 9th March as part of his visit to the area.

[Click here to read more:](#)

A SENIOR Church of Scotland convener has hit out at the "unacceptable and shameful behaviour" of the Lloyds Banking group after it announced it was to stop funding its Lloyds TSB Foundation charitable arm.

The bank's decision brings to an end a 25-year relationship that has seen £85 million donated to Scottish charities.

[Click here to read more:](#)

THE Church of Scotland has announced a major consultation on the results of a review by the Mission and Discipleship Council.

The review found that the Council's core objective of defining the overall mission of the Church was not being achieved effectively and efficiently.

[Click here to read more:](#)

MINISTER HOPES CHOCOLATE SUNDAY WILL BE SWEET SUCCESS

IF EVERY church had a chocolate fountain, chocolate crosses and chocolate sweets readily available for parishioners during worship, it may do something to perk up attendances.

However a Church of Scotland minister in Bo'ness is not trying to deliberately entice non-churchgoers back into the fold, but instead to remind his congregation of the true meaning of Lent.

Reverend Albert Bogle, of Bo'ness St Andrew's, is the mastermind behind the aptly named "Chocolate Sunday", which will be held on March 7.

He explained: "We're inviting people to debunk the secularity of Lent – too

often we give up the things that cost us very little.

"We won't change the world by giving up chocolate but we can if we take up a cause that's worth dying for.

"Although it's a bit tongue-in-cheek, people can eat the chocolate, but what we really want to do is take up our crosses and start serving others."

"We won't change the world by giving up chocolate but we can if we take up a cause that's worth dying for."

Reverend Albert Bogle, Bo'ness St Andrew's

During each of the 40 days of Lent members who have signed up receive a daily Bible verse by text or email to encourage them in their relationship with God.

Mr Bogle is renowned for his visionary leadership in the Church of Scotland, and is continually exploring different ways the Kirk can utilise technological advances.

Texting, Twitter and other social media already play a key role in his congregational life.

He continued: "Most churches ask you to switch off your phones during the service, but at Bo'ness we want people to keep them on.

"Folk in the pew can text



Reverend Albert Bogle

for prayer during the service, and it will appear on the screens at the front of the Church as something for the congregation to remember.

"Our services are webcast too, and we're building up a strong online community."

Mr Bogle hopes these developments will continue to grow the Church's presence in both online and local communities.

TOP PRESBYTERY ROLE FOR CLERMISTON MINISTER

A GERMAN-speaking Clermiston minister has become the new Moderator of Edinburgh Presbytery.

Reverend Alistair Keil, who has been at St Andrew's Clermiston Church for over 20 years, was sworn into the role at February's Presbytery meeting at Palmerston Place Church, taking over from Reverend Peter Graham.

Mr Keil said that during his Moderatorial year he hopes to encourage more elders to participate in debates at Presbytery, even if that leads to disagreement, as well as introducing a more responsive style of worship.

Originally from Elgin, Mr Keil worked in a bank before coming to study at Edinburgh's New College from 1976 to 1982.

He did his probationary year at Richmond Craigmillar, before spending four years as an associate at Liberton Kirk. He became minister at Clermiston in 1989.

Mr Keil is something of a veteran, having previously convened the Pastoral Care, World Mission, Property, and Deployment of Resources committees in Edinburgh. He has also advised the World Mission

and then Church and Nation departments of the central Church.

With a keen interest in German literature, Mr Keil hopes to build up links between his home congregation and a church in Jena, in eastern Germany. He has also preached at Edinburgh's German-speaking congregation on Argyle Terrace.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH VISITS CAPITAL CHURCH

THE Duke of Edinburgh visited a church in the Capital following its radical transformation into a multi-purpose venue for the community.

On Thursday 25th February, His Royal Highness spent the morning at Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, on Bellevue Crescent, where he toured the new facilities and met with local groups and schoolchildren.

HRH is the Royal Patron of the congregation's Inside Out project, which has been taking the church's work and identity out into the parish following the £1.2 million refurbishment works in the lower part of the building.

Minister, Reverend Joanne Hood, said members were buoyed by the royal visit: "To have someone like the Duke of Edinburgh endorse what we're doing is hugely

encouraging for the whole congregation.

"When we started this project we wanted to become a catalyst in the community, and this will help us gather momentum as we look towards refitting the sanctuary.

"Since the official opening last month we have had lots of enquiries about available space, and it could soon be likely that all of our rooms are being used to capacity."

A group for adults with learning disabilities has already set up home in the lower halls, and the church also accommodates youth organisations, music groups and conferences.

It is hoped it could become an official venue for the Edinburgh Festival and will be an even more attractive performance space after the sanctuary is rewired and refitted.



The Duke of Edinburgh greets members in the new kitchen



*HRH speaks to architect Benjamin Tindal
(Thanks to Cassandra Pleydell-Bouverie for the photos)*

MATCH OF THE DEITY AT PORTOBELLO

St James' Parish Church in Portobello Edinburgh is holding a Football Night, the third such event in three years, hosted by Paul Mitchell, BBC Scotland football commentator.

Starting at 7.30pm on Friday 26th March, the

night will feature two teams battling it out in a Question of Sport, and this will be followed by a question and answer session about Scottish football.

Allan Preston, ex Hearts and St Johnstone, Dougie McDonald, FIFA referee,

Steve Cowan, ex Hibs and Aberdeen and Jimmy Sandison, ex Hearts and Airdrie, are confirmed guests so far.

Tickets will be priced £5 and will include the chance to win a prize in the 'Ask the Audience' part of the night.



Dougie McDonald

They can be bought in advance by e-mailing mailbox@stjamesparishchurch.org.uk or on the night.

EDINBURGH CHURCH RECEIVES GREEN KIRK AWARD

AN EDINBURGH church that devised a list of 10 “Eco Commandments” has received a top environmental award for their green efforts.

South Leith Parish were presented with an Eco-Congregation Award following an extensive campaign to cut their

carbon footprint.

The congregation has helped with a number of environmental activities for young people in the local community, and have put in place “eco procedures” in their own buildings.

They are the first church to receive the newly designed Eco-Congregation Award plaque, which has been made by Greyfriars Recycling of Wood (GROW).

GROW, part of the Greyfriars Church Community Centre based in the Grassmarket, is an

emerging social enterprise that seeks to create new employment opportunities for the long-term homeless with addiction and mental health problems.

It brings together homeless service users and volunteers from the local community as they produce high quality saleable goods made from recycled wood – most of which is old church pews.

The quality of goods produced demonstrates the ability of people who are generally devalued and the process of making things of beauty and value from what has been discarded as worthless is



Adrian Shaw

itself a message to the wider community.

Adrian Shaw, the Church of Scotland's climate change officer, said: “Eco-congregations share the vision of re-using scarce resources and the beautiful plaques made by GROW help us put that into effect”.



The new plaque

CONTEMPORARY HYMN WRITER VISITS THREE KIRKS

ONE of Britain's best known contemporary hymn writers will visit three Church of Scotland congregations this month as part of his British tour.

Stuart Townend, whose songs include In Christ Alone, will lead praise at Mount Florida and Balshagray Victoria Park churches in Glasgow Presbytery, and East Kilbride South Parish Church in the Presbytery of Hamilton.

He held an evening concert at East Kilbride South two years ago, which attracted over 600 people, with some spilling

out into the vestibule because the sanctuary was so full.

On that occasion Stuart was on his own, but this time he is bringing his band with him.

“I was last in Scotland a couple of years ago doing some solo concerts and I was also involved in the Church Without Walls event in Edinburgh back in 2008, so it feels like home – as it should do, as I was actually born in Edinburgh!

“I love coming to Scotland. I always feel really welcome here, and in all

the concerts I've done there's been a great sense of anticipation and enthusiasm among the people, which makes a huge difference.

“I'm very excited about the tour. The evening will combine elements of congregational singing and musical performance, and incorporate different musical styles of acoustic folk, jazz and classical.

“The band line-up includes violin, whistles and saxes, double bass, accordion, guitars, banjo, and even a melodica - and if you don't know what that is, come along and find out!”

The dates and times of concerts are below:

Tuesday 16th March 2010
Mount Florida
Parish Church
7.30pm

Saturday 20th March 2010
East Kilbride South
Parish Church
7.30pm

Sunday 21st March 2010 –
Balshagray Victoria
Park Church
7.30pm

Tickets are priced £10
with £6 concessions.

INAUGURAL BURNS SUPPER FOR LOCHABER CHURCH

A LOCHABER church celebrated its first-ever Burns Supper at the end of January, which raised almost £500 for church funds.

Fifty people attended the event at St Munda's Church in Glencoe, Ballachulish, and enjoyed a delicious three course meal with the traditional haggis, neeps and tatties.

The Selkirk Grace was

delivered by Reverend Anne Winning, and the Immortal Memory was proposed by Ken Macdonald with the theme of Burns and the Church. Ken's well researched narrative on Burns was interspersed with many humorous stories.

Minister Reverend Alison Burnside entertained guests with two of Burns' love songs, and Bill Strachan (right) gave a

splendid rendition of Holy Willie's Prayer, complete with night shirt and cap!

Afterwards Bill Strachan said: "The night was voted a great success and we are already looking forward to next year's!"

The evening raised £480 for church funds. Members have also contributed over £400 to Christian Aid's Haiti earthquake appeal.



SOUPER SUNDAY UPDATE



Morebattle members in Jedburgh Presbytery

THE Church of Scotland HIV/AIDS Project has announced that over £70,000 has been raised from Souper Sunday – with that total likely to creep up further.

On Sunday 10th January congregations held a simple soup and sandwich lunch after worship, with all proceeds going to the project.

Co-ordinator Marjorie Clark said: "This magnificent response is both humbling and inspiring.

"Thanks to the generosity of church congregations around the country giving of their time, talents and money, we will be able to support vital projects in response to the global HIV pandemic."

PARISH GROUPING IS CHILD'S PLAY

A TOY library in Edinburgh has re-opened thanks to a successful inter-denominational parish grouping.

The previous local toy library was closed some time ago and was greatly missed, so a cluster of churches agreed to fill the gap as a joint venture.

Those involved are St Michael's Parish Church, St Colm's Parish Church, Gorgie Parish Church and St Martin of Tours Scottish Episcopal Church. The grouping is called Partner Churches.

In order to get the project up and running grants were obtained from Edinburgh City Council, the Scottish Community Foundation and the Daisy



Chain Trust, and Tesco provided cleaning materials and batteries.

Many excellent new toys were bought and other good quality toys donated. These can be viewed in their online catalogue at www.gdtoylibrary.org.uk

The toy library is now open in St. Martin of Tours Episcopal Church, Dalry Road, on Mondays (10.45-11.15am) and Wednesdays (1-2.30pm).

There is an annual membership fee and a small charge for loans.

FROM THE PULPIT – A NEW MEANING TO THE CHURCH MOUSE

This month Reverend Albert Bogle explores the Church's potential online.



Reverend Albert Bogle is minister at Bo'ness St Andrew's in Falkirk Presbytery.

You can follow his blog here:
<http://www.italker.org.uk/>

Your Mouse is Fast

We all know that we are living in a fast moving world. If we knew just how fast perhaps it would scare us all to death.

I guess the greatest impact of speed on all of our lives over the past 20 years has been the meteoric rise of the internet. The truth is there is nothing much faster than a mouse. Click and you're there.

It's like a huge big brain that we can all access in order to communicate and with which to communicate. Who would have believed even 10 years ago that over 70 per cent of our homes in Britain would be connected to the internet?

The Click On Resource

We use it for shopping, for recreational purposes, for business, for education, for social networking. What has made the internet so successful is the ability for users to become producers as well as consumers.

All this has come about because the internet has ceased to be simply a place where you go to find information. It is also a place where you can go to give information. In other words the internet has become more and more interactive.

I wonder if we have something to learn from this model in the church. Too often our churches are all information based, not much action and no facility for interaction. Take it we feed you but no feedback please!

This shift in internet usage has been given the name Web 2.0. When the web first became popular it was the place where you downloaded what the producers wanted you to have. You visited a corporate website and it was full of information. There was no place to ask questions to engage with the idea. The idea or the information was given and that was what web pages were about.

In today's world-wide-web the idea is more

sophisticated. I not only want to read what you have to say - I also want you to know what I think of what you're saying. I also might like you to see what I have produced or created.

Check me out !

In today's web world it is not just businesses and organisations that have websites, anyone can have a website. This is the age when my view is as important as the feature writer of a major newspaper. The rise of personal blogs has been phenomenal over the past two years. The internet is the 20th century equivalent of the printing press. The world of ideas can never be the same again.

It is in this area that I think we in the church should be directing more of our thinking and creativity. Last year Sanctus Media, a small media production company working out of St Andrew's Bo'ness here in Scotland, began to explore the possibility of creating a new kind of church on the net.

Sanctuary First www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk is a creative web space that is being developed into a place where people can begin to engage with daily worship and connect with others who want to explore in adventurous

and alternative ways to be communities of worship.

The site is not completely developed yet but it is up and running and already creating an interest on the world-wide-web. When completed it will be a users' and producers' space.

The dynamic that makes SF different is its ability to allow the local church to become the catalyst to create a touching place where users can meet face-to-face and engage with the material in a way that allows them to open themselves up to God.

Stage two is to take the site to the place where the users not only engage with the material but become producers, creating material for worship and reflection or comments on the existing material. Some of this is happening already but it is being developed to a greater extent.

All this is a far cry from church as some people know it. However when the idea that the user can become the producer catches on it will begin to revolutionise church as we know it. It's a kind of biblical idea anyway. Jesus called his disciples not simply to be users, but to be producers of the fruit in John 15.

Imagine a church where worshippers are invited to write their own songs of praise, write their own ...
(Continued on page 7)

FROM THE PULPIT

(Continued from page 6)

...prayers, make a film to illustrate a scriptural text, submit a picture that speaks of God's grace. Imagine a church that is focused on turning worshippers into producers in kind and in action.

Now that's a church more people in the next generation will want to join. That is a church where people are inter-connected. It is in these kinds of churches that more and more of the internet generation will feel at home and make their contributions.

NEW NATIONAL GUILD CONVENER NAMED

A PERTSHIRE farmer and Church elder has been named as the incoming national convener of the Church of Scotland Guild.

Auchterarder-born Helen-May Bayne, an active partner in the family farming business with her husband and son, will take up her post following May's General Assembly in Edinburgh.

An elder at Muthill Parish Church in Perth Presbytery, Helen-May is a former convener of Perth Presbyterial Council and also a former convener of the Guild's



Current convener Betty Dunn with Helen-May Bayne (right)

Projects and Topics Committee. She currently serves on the Guild National Executive as national vice-convener.

She trained as a primary school teacher, is a member of the WRVS, a volunteer-based

organisation which supports older people, and assists with the local Books on Wheels scheme.

Helen-May said: "I feel deeply honoured and privileged to be asked to serve the Guild as national convener."

KIRK CONVENER HITS OUT AT "SHAMEFUL BEHAVIOUR" OF BANK

A SENIOR Church of Scotland convener has hit out at the "unacceptable and shameful behaviour" of the Lloyds Banking group after it announced it was to stop funding its Lloyds TSB Foundation charitable arm.

The bank's decision brings to an end a 25-year relationship that has seen £85 million donated to Scottish charities.

Writing on his blog, Reverend Ian Galloway, Church and Society Council convener, said: "In my own parish in the Gorbals, I have direct experience of the

relationships they have forged with those they funded, adding value to their own financial support and making it go further.

"The Lloyds TSB Foundation has enabled many in truly dire and unglamorous circumstances to gain confidence in their own abilities and has shown faith in the vision of those people.

"Lloyds TSB Foundation understood that in the fragile places where much of their money went, the change hoped for and the change achieved was not always the same thing.

"For those amongst our poorest communities, even small steps can lead to big successes, and this meant that that potential of street-level work has not been overlooked by the foundation.

Mr Galloway continued: "The economic situation has already hurt millions of people who cannot afford to fight back. They haven't the means to.

"And now with the destruction of the Lloyds TSB Foundation, salt will be rubbed into the already painful wounds of those affected. It is frankly, unacceptable and



Reverend Ian Galloway

shameful behaviour from a bank.

"So you see, it was never about money for us, it was about communities having a better chance and a better story. Lloyds Banking Group has taken that away."

FAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

THE Moderator is set to swap his cassock for a set of clubs next month by playing in Lanark Presbytery's inaugural golf tournament.

Right Reverend Bill Hewitt, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, is among the 27 competitors teeing off at Lanark Golf Club on Tuesday 9th March as part of his visit to the area.

There will be a trophy for the winner, as well as quirky individual prizes such as the nearest drive to the pin on the par 3 ninth hole.

All participants will receive a goodie bag consisting of biscuits from local firm Border Biscuits, tees and

a set of golf balls inscribed with a verse from Jeremiah (29:13): "You will seek me and find me".

Ministers taking part include Presbytery Clerk Reverend Jim Cutler, Reverend Bryan Kerr, Lanark Greyfriars, Reverend Alan Gibson, Carstairs United, and Reverend Iain Cunningham, Carluke Kirkton.

The rest of the field is made up of elders and Kirk members – some with a handicap as low as one.

Reverend Alan Gibson, who organised the event, said: "Lanark Presbytery has planned a varied week for the Moderator, but we are delighted that he will have time in his



Reverend John Chalmers in a challenge match against priests

busy schedule to play golf.

"We know the Moderator is a keen golfer, and quite competitive too I am told!

"Even in the recent snow and wild weather, one or two of our Presbyters have been seen out on the golf course getting in some practice.

"Obviously there is a lot at stake, and reputations are on the line!"

During his visit to Lanark Presbytery from 6-15 March, the Moderator will also be visiting local schools, Carstairs Hospital and the world heritage site at New Lanark mill.



Reverend Robin McHaffie with farmer Ian Harvey

MINISTER BACKS FARM CAMPAIGN

A BORDERS minister is urging farmers in his parish and throughout Scotland to come home safely from their fields as he lends his support to the Health and Safety Executive's "Make the Promise" campaign.

Reverend Robin McHaffie, minister of Yetholm Kirk, Kelso has been distributing "promise knots" to farms in his Borders parish, encouraging farmers to put them up around where they work.

The knots are meant to act as a reminder to take care in a bid to help to reduce the number of needless farm accidents each year.

In Scotland five workers lost their lives in farming-related incidents and 74 were seriously injured in 2008/09.

Mr McHaffie, who has 70 farms in his parish, said he was heartened by the campaign as quite often one moment's lack of concentration can bring so much devastation to one family.

CHURCH ANNOUNCES CONSULTATION IN MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP

THE Church of Scotland has announced a major consultation on the results of a review by the Mission and Discipleship Council.

The review found that the Council's core objective of defining the overall mission of the Church was not being achieved effectively and efficiently.

A consultation has been launched with employees over recommendations to centralise the work of the Council and focus on the key areas of worship, witness and discipleship.

Under the proposals three regional offices in Glasgow, Perth and Inverness would close and the number of posts across the Council would be reduced. This would help to address the £1.2 million deficit faced by Mission and Discipleship.

Council convener Reverend Mark Johnstone said: "There is a need for Mission and Discipleship to have a clear vision and purpose and we feel that has been lost in recent years.

"Too many of our areas are operating in isolation from each other with a repetition of work taking place as a result.

"Our focus has to be firmly on what congregations

expect of us and that is to enable and empower people to engage in Christ's mission through resourcing worship, witness and discipleship in the context of the changing contemporary culture in Scotland.

"The proposals being put forward will enable us to operate far more efficiently and effectively and will bring real benefit to the work of this Council."

Employees of the Council were informed of the consultation process at a meeting on Friday 5th February and all of them will have the opportunity to comment on the proposals before any final decisions are taken. The trade union Unite has also been invited to take part in the consultation.

Mr Johnstone added: "The

"It is important to state that this is not about the performance of individual people or posts but about the overall shape and effectiveness of the Council."

Reverend Mark Johnstone, Mission and Discipleship Council convener

proposals involve a reduction in the number of employees we have across the board. At the moment we have 44 posts and under the proposals that would reduce to 24.

"I recognise that this will be a difficult and uncertain time for many of our employees but we are committed to working with them to ensure that any changes are managed sensitively.

"It is important to state that this is not about the performance of individual people or posts but about the overall shape and effectiveness of the Council.

"As a charity, the Church of Scotland has a duty to ensure that every penny it spends is spent wisely and I'm sure every one of our members would endorse that view."

Following the consultation process, a report will be submitted to the Church's Council of Assembly at the start of March before any final decisions are taken.

Mr Johnstone said: "Nothing is in tablets of stone at this stage, these are simply proposals.

"However, this has to be set against the findings that the Council does not



Reverend Mark Johnstone

work well together at a strategic level, that it lacks a clear purpose and vision and has a growing financial deficit.

"Doing nothing is not an option but we want to ensure that what we do is right and our consultation will be both robust and transparent."

CONTACT US:

If you have a story or photos of church life from your congregation, please get in touch with the media and communications team.

Phone: 0131 240 2204

Email: mediarelations@cofscotland.org.uk

NEXT EDITION:

April 2010

Please send all articles to the media and communications team by:

MONDAY 22 MARCH 2010