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Paving the Road to Belief

Dear Friends,

During my weeks in Orchardhill I have seen all the things that happen each week, from the busy Sunday morning worship with the choir and the Stepping Stones and Bridges and the morning coffee afterwards, then all the youth and adult organisations through the week, discussion groups meeting in different rooms and halls and houses. And the Orchard Café. And badminton. Orchardhill church is really like a village.

All this is made possible by the commitment and energy of a host of gifted people. Orchardhill church has a phenomenal range of talented people taking part in its life.

A key role in Orchardhill is played by the Elders, the members of the Kirk Session. I have been reading a book which will be published this spring, called *Reflections on Eldership*. The author explains that there are about 35,000 Elders – “the Church of Scotland’s silent army”.

He spent months interviewing

Elders in different parts of the country. He asked them how they became Elders, and what being an Elder means to them. Many of them felt they had to try to be good examples in order to give God and Jesus Christ a good name. But one story stands out.

This Elder had tried to persuade one young man that he should explore what faith could do for him. But then the Elder left home and got divorced. Years later he met the young man, who by then was himself involved in a church. “I wondered if I had said or done something to help him to that new stance,” said the Elder. “It was when you got divorced,” the young man replied.

Up till then the young man had thought that God would only have time for good people, so not for him. But seeing this fallen Elder still believing, the young man thought God could, after all, be good for him too.

The most unexpected things can pave the road to belief.

A blessing.

John Miller

Eastwoodhill Coffee Morning



Eastwoodhill's annual coffee morning will be on Saturday 12 April in Giffnock South church halls from 10.00am to noon. As in past years, the event is being run by the Friends of Eastwoodhill.

Last year's coffee morning enabled a very special bath to be bought for Eastwoodhill, the Church of Scotland residential home for the elderly at Eastwood Toll. The bath is now being used, much appreciated by residents and staff.

This year's effort will be raising funds towards a customised health-care room to be used by doctors, district nurses, chiropodists and the hairdresser as need arises. Tickets (£2 for adults, £1 for children) can be obtained from Jeanette Birnie, the Orchardhill Guild representative, or Evelyn McMurtrie, our

Kirk Session's representative. The popular quizzes (£1 each) also are available.

Eastwoodhill continues to attract residents, nearly always full (36 residents) with a waiting list. The Friends continue their support of the home, befriending the residents, offering a games afternoon every six weeks or so, and raising funds for treats for the residents.

It is hoped that every Friend can visit two residents, remembering them at birthdays and Christmas, but with the increasing age and infirmity of the Friends themselves, this is not always possible. Despite this, we all continue with enthusiasm to support the residents and staff. These Friends are volunteers from the neighbouring churches, and two local churches that are not represented on the group have recently been approached with an invitation to help.

Food Bank in Robslee



The Trussell Trust have set up a food bank that is now operational in Robslee Drive. It is early days for them, and they are not yet asking for food donations, but what they do need is that everybody in East Renfrewshire is aware that help is available for anyone who needs it. Please pass on the information that this facility exists so that word can reach those who might be in a crisis situation.

The food bank is part of the Thornliebank Resource Centre, which is open normal office hours: the food-bank function is available on Thursday afternoons from 12.30 to 2.30. Food banks are open elsewhere in East Renfrewshire on other days.

In addition to giving food, the Distribution Centre also offers a cup of coffee and a friendly chat as well as directing clients towards debt counsellors, advocacy and similar assistance.

Collection Rota



April

6	Donald Carmichael 638 2555; Fergus Cook 644 1354; Shona Cook 644 1354; Susan McQuilter 638 6936
13	Donald Carmichael; Fergus Cook; Shona Cook; Gillian Brogan 639 6269
20	Donald Carmichael; Fergus Cook; Shona Cook; Caroline Stuart 560 3335
27	Donald Carmichael; Fergus Cook; Shona Cook; Caroline Stuart

May

4	Fiona Thomson 571 7153; Bill McMurtrie 571 2512; Margaret Howard 571 7854; Ronald Carswell 638 6639
11	Fiona Thomson; Bill McMurtrie; Margaret Howard; Ronald Carswell
18	Ann Pope 616 4809; Steve McAslan 589 4289; Roseanne Henderson 571 7375; Neil Mackenzie 638 0591
25	Ann Pope; Steve McAslan; Valerie Clarke 638 6148; Neil Mackenzie 638 0591

Fundraising Group

The Orchardhill Fundraising Group was set up specifically to organise events and activities to raise money for church funds. The group are presently looking for additional members who can contribute ideas and some time. There is no set timetable for meetings, which are as required but usually following a Sunday service. If interested, please contact Fergus Cook, chair of the group, on 0141 644 1354 or in person.



Imagining Scotland's Future



The Church of Scotland's historic report on the future of the nation is being presented at venues across the country. *Imagining Scotland's Future: Our Vision* has gathered the views of over 900 people who attended 32 community events aimed at gauging opinions on what a future Scotland should look like. The report provides a unique perspective on the referendum debate.

These community events included a conference-style meeting of Glasgow Presbytery earlier this year.

Examples of the conclusions in the report included:

- The referendum is about far more than the simple question "what is in it for me?" The idea that being £500 better off or worse off would affect how people vote was conspicuous by its absence in all the 32 events. Instead participants prioritised the building of local communities on the principles of fairness, justice and sharing of resources
- Dissatisfaction with the political system at all levels, not just Westminster or Holyrood also featured strongly. Participants wanted to see integrity, accountability and transparency, being able to hold politicians accountable between elections and for the party system to be less powerful
- Call for radical changes including far greater local decision-making and for politicians to see themselves as public servants in a more participative democracy
- A modern, successful economy needs limits placed on free market forces; business models should be more focused towards the employee and more value driven. There was a willingness to consider alternative and more progressive models of taxation to build a better society
- There was a strong expression of the need for prayer and for the Church to be involved in social action and in promoting Christian values such as love, hope, respect and forgiveness, as the fundamental building blocks to contributing towards the common good.

Orchardhill in £12m fund-raising success



First the bad news: For a growing number of people across the world, the horror of war is part of daily life.

Now the good news: Individuals, communities and churches can make a real difference in the 2014 Christian Aid Week. Last year 20,000 churches across the UK helped raise the magnificent sum of £12m during Christian Aid Week. Thanks to those efforts, many more people can look forward to a future free from poverty.

Why Me?

Because “The body does not consist of one member but of many” 1 CORINTHIANS 12:14

Thousands of members of churches in Britain and Ireland will demonstrate their love for God and for humanity through house-to-house collecting in Christian Aid Week from 10 to 16 May. It takes a lot of volunteers to raise £12m, so we need all the volunteers we can get. Everyone over 18 can play a part.

Christian Aid needs you!

I'VE NEVER DONE IT BEFORE

Knocking on doors can be a bit daunting, so here are some examples of things you could say once the door has been opened:

“Hello, I live up the road/I’m from the local church, and I’m collecting donations for Christian Aid Week.”

“Hello, I dropped off a Christian Aid Week envelope earlier in the week, and I’m calling back to see if you would like to make a donation.”

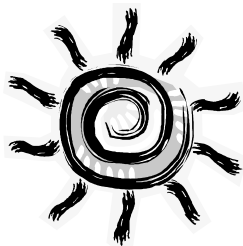
“Hello, I’m a volunteer collector for Christian Aid Week from the local church. Would you like to make a donation?”

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Email Ian Anderson at session-clerk@orchardhill.org.uk to find out how you could make a difference collecting in Christian Aid Week next month.

Find out more at www.christianaid.org.uk.

Sunshine Bags



The Mary's Meals charity operates throughout the world giving one good meal a day in a school to some of the poorest children. The meal attracts the children to the school, and with an education these children may be able to escape their poverty. The charity started in 2002 feeding 200 children in Malawi, but today they are feeding over 860,000 in countries all over the world every school day.

This year's Sunshine Bag appeal will again concentrate on the work of Mary's Meals in Haiti. There they provide meals in Cité Soleil, a desolate slum area in the capital, Port au Prince, quite lawless, being run by armed gangs. The hunger and malnutrition are desperate, particularly among the

children. Mary's Meals also provides a daily meal to children in two very poor rural areas in Haiti.

Last year your generosity and compassion raised £1954 for Mary's Meals in Haiti. Can we do the same this summer or even better? You will remember the idea – whenever the sun shines, whenever something good happens in your life, whenever you feel the presence of God especially close, pop some money in the bag. You will be able to choose your bag from the array of colours any Sunday in April before the morning service. They will be collected in during October. If you have difficulty getting to church but would still like to be associated with this appeal, please phone me (638 0457), and I will be delighted to deliver one to you.

Jeanette Birnie

A Fixed Date for Easter?



Should Easter be on a fixed date? That's a question posed by Life and Work in this month's edition.

The Church of Scotland magazine also reports from Bosnia, where the Moderator of the General Assembly, Very Rev Lorna Hood, learned at first hand the horror of the massacre which continues to haunt families in that Balkan country today.

Other features include:

- The Moderator highlighting the importance of the role of the Church of Scotland in the life of our country.

- The life and Christian influences on the Scots-born naturalist and author, John Muir.
- A Glasgow church which became the first in Scotland to be accredited dementia-friendly.
- Rev David Scott describing how his church held a "Welcome to the Lord's Table" ceremony for children's first communion.
- Powerpoint, a Christian gathering in Edinburgh which attracts of hundreds of teenagers.

Plus all the regular columnists, news, reviews, letters and crosswords – all for just £2.

COMMUNION ROLL

Disjunction

Mrs Margaret Hetherington, 1 Sutherland Drive, Giffnock G46 6PL (district 14)

Death

On 4 March 2014 Mr Harry Dinsmore, Mearns Kirk House, Old Mearns Road, Newton Mearns G77 5RZ (district 1)

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Baptism

On 2 March 2014 Henry Karl George Bell, son of Karl and Fiona Bell, 77 West Park Drive East, Roundhay, Leeds LS8 2EE.

Deadline for May's Orchardhill Record

Sunday 13 April is the deadline for the May edition of the *Orchardhill Record*.

Contributions should be sent by email to record-editor@orchardhill.org.uk before 1.00pm or left in the relevant slot in the rack in the church corridor no later than 10.30am. We prefer contributions to be sent by email, and we cannot accept any handwritten or typed item that does not identify the source.

The editor acknowledges every contribution. Contact him before the deadline if he does not confirm that he has received your contribution.

The Orchardhill Record will be taking the usual summer break and will not be published in June and July. So the May edition will be the last chance for any organisation to submit a report on the previous eight months' activities.

Orchardhill Diary

April

Fri 4 1.30pm Giffnock Primary School Spring Service

Sun 6 10.30am Family Worship led by Fergus Cook and David Howard

Sun 13 10.30am Family Worship Rev John Miller

Thu 17 7.30pm Maundy Thursday Service at Giffnock URC Church

Fri 18 7.30pm Good Friday service at The Park Church, Giffnock

Sun 20 9.00am Easter Breakfast

10.30am Easter Sunday Service Rev John Miller

Tue 22 7.30pm Kirk Session

Sun 27 10.30am Family Worship Rev John Miller

May

Sun 4 10.30am Family Worship