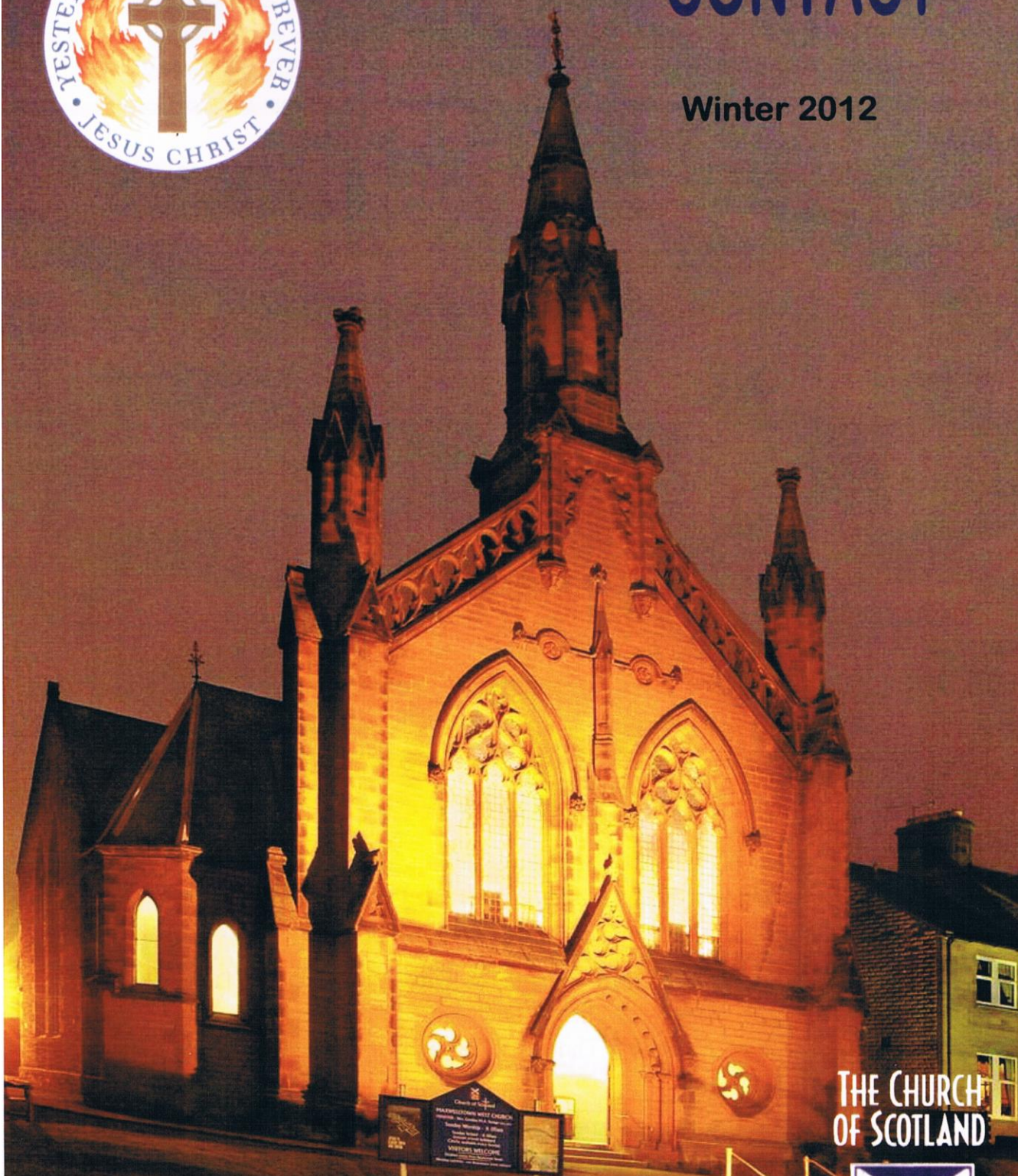


# CONTACT

Winter 2012



THE CHURCH  
OF SCOTLAND



*Maxwelltown West Church  
Dumfries*

**MAXWELLTOWN WEST CHURCH, DUMFRIES**

[www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk](http://www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk)

**SUNDAY SERVICES: 11.00am**

**COMMUNION SERVICES:** 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 11.00am and 3.00pm (in Hall)  
30<sup>th</sup> December at close of 11.00am service

**SUNDAY SCHOOL (J-Max & K-Max):** 11.00am during term time

**CRECHE** is available during the morning service every Sunday

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

During the vacancy, the Interim Moderator is **Rev. Donald Campbell**

Pastoral care will be provided by Locum Minister, **Rev. Liz Mack**

**Congregational Office Bearers**

SESSION CLERK: Mr. T Bryden

ORGANIST: Mr. S Crosbie

CHURCH OFFICER: Mr. R Wilson

EDITOR OF 'CONTACT': Mrs. F Saddington

CLERK TO DEACONS' COURT: Vacant

TREASURER: Mr. D McNay

'ACTING' FABRIC CONVENER: Mr. D Miller

**CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER**

**Marriages**

21<sup>st</sup> September 2012: Suzanne Darroch to Craig Thomson

**Deaths**

24<sup>th</sup> August 2012: Mrs. Margaret Finnie

7<sup>th</sup> September 2012: Mrs. Margaret Thomson

6<sup>th</sup> September 2012: Mrs. Madge Hutchison

**New Members by Certificate**

Miss E Beeton

Mrs. C Young

**New Members by Resolution**

Mrs. D Graham

Mr. P & Mrs. L Hyles

**MAXWELLTOWN WEST MISSION STATEMENT**

Maxwelltown West Church seeks to be a place of welcome to all in our parish; a centre of Christian worship and fellowship. We seek to provide a framework for family life and a place where young people may be nurtured in Christian values.



My Dear Friends in Max West

At the time of writing I realise that it is exactly one year since I was appointed Locum in Max West. Many things have happened in that time; Gordon's hoped for return to service was sadly not to be and with his death we were faced with a situation which this church has not experienced for almost 30 years, almost unprecedented in these times. A new Ministry and a new chapter in the life of the Church is now a reality.

I have tried to keep our spirits up and our faith moving forward. The shortened Summer services were designed to serve one important function - to allow the members of the congregation to get to know one another better over coffee. We will survive only if we are united as one body of Christ, supporting and encouraging each other and that has to start with friendship. I do hope you have widened that circle and our new Social Committee is working hard to encourage our meeting together.

We have had installed a wonderful new organ and in the hands of Stephen and Alistair have had our praise and worship enhanced.

We have experienced as a Church family, sad losses and wonderful gains in our membership. We have enjoyed the visit of John and Banice from Mathia whose overt and rock solid faith in the ability of God to move mountains has been such an example to us all.

The children are back in Church and keep your Locum on her toes!!! Harvest was a joy in a wonderfully decorated sanctuary.

At last, with the visit of a team from the Presbytery Ministry and Resources Committee, we take the first steps in the process of progressing the vacancy. In the present climate of ministerial shortages we have no idea how long this might take. I would ask that you make this a matter of priority in all your prayers that the right person might be called to Maxwelltown West.

Since it is so long since you have needed to look for a Minister I would ardently suggest that you make opportunities to go and visit other Churches and see how much things have changed. It may be a steep curve of revelation!!!

In the meantime, it is my continuing privilege to serve as your Locum. We are fortunate to have so many people who willingly give of their time and talents to keep our work and witness moving forward. Let us look forward in faith, believing that God's plans for us are good.

With love in His service

Liz

### **Kirk Session**

The Kirk Session met on 13th September when a number of items were discussed.

It was agreed that we should ordain five new elders and this duly took place on 16th September when the Interim Moderator, Rev. D. Campbell ordained S Crossan, R Fraser, B Shepherd, D Wood and J Wood. All have been welcomed at Session meetings

It was also agreed to hold the Congregational Meeting for the Election of Deacons on Sunday 18th November. With the recent ordination we are now left with eleven vacancies on the Deacons' Court.

The other main item was a continued discussion of our approach to the vacancy caused by the death of Rev. G. Savage. It was reported that we would receive a visit by members of the Presbytery Ministries and Resources Committee. This meeting duly took place on 11th October and involved a wide ranging discussion at the end of which it was overwhelmingly agreed that we wish to call a minister without restriction. Members of the Committee will convey this desire to Presbytery and we will now await Presbytery's response.

*T B, Session Clerk*

## **Deacons' Court**

The Deacons' Court met on 25 September 2012 when the Rev Liz Mack chaired the meeting. She opened the meeting by welcoming S Crossan and D Wood, new elders, to their first meeting. She then read a passage from James about 'faith without good deeds', and followed this with prayer.

D McNay, Treasurer, gave his report and detailed the comparison for the same 3-month period last year and was happy to tell us that the church finances were in a satisfactory position, which he said was key to replacing some of the £50,000 spent on the manse roof and the new organ.

R Slack, Finance Convener, intimated that £871.21 had been realised from the Fabric Fund Box Appeal and she thanked D McNay for organising the count.

The matter of the manse garden was discussed and it was agreed that the present gardener, employed by the Savage family, would be willing to continue and would be paid for 3 hours per week at £7 per hour. B Wilson had agreed to liaise with the gardener. B Riddick had resigned from the Fabric Committee following his resignation as Fabric Convener. He was thanked for his work and the support he had given the Finance Committee over many years.

Correspondence had been received from various groups requesting the use of the halls for their winter sessions. These were all approved. An enquiry had been received from Parkinsons UK to start a singing group and approval was given for them to use our halls. J Smith had written to thank members for allowing the use of the halls for the Relay for Life event held earlier in the year.

D Miller gave the Fabric Report. There was much discussion about the position at the manse. D Miller and his team had covered all areas of concern to ensure that every aspect had been covered in the current situation.

Remedial work had been done in the Vestry. J McNaught and his family should be thanked for permitting access to their garden to allow repairs to be carried out to the roof area at the vestry.

*E R, Clerk to the Deacons' Court*

## **An Extract from Gordon's Eulogy, Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2012**

Gordon enjoyed his family, especially time spent with David and Alasdair. I recall when they were both very young, Gordon would have meetings or visits most evenings, but there were very few nights when he missed bathtime and he always managed to read bedtime stories to them. Those of you who remember Gordon's talk on favourite books will recall the different voices he used. This was a common occurrence in our house. I often heard squeals of delight coming from the boys' bedrooms as Gordon took on the guise of characters from Great Expectations, Kidnapped, Treasure Island, David Copperfield, Harry Potter and his favourite A Child's Garden of Verse by Robert Louis Stevenson.

It was impossible for us not to be aware of Gordon's work ethic. He instilled this in David and Alasdair, along with a deep sense of duty. He expected them to treat all people with respect and to show interest in others. Gordon was a traditionalist at heart but was aware how important it is to embrace change when change is beneficial to the Glory of God. He came across as quite a serious man but he had a great sense of humour and an infectious laugh. Those who attended the annual visit to the Pantomime in Glasgow will recognise this side to Gordon.

He loved Maxwelltown West and you, his people. He always made himself available and took a great interest in your lives. He found it a privilege to be part of the important events of your lives. When we knew he only had a limited time left on this earth, his first thoughts were for his family, closely followed by his concern for this congregation. He hoped that you would continue to grow spiritually and to have closure so that you can look

forward to a new chapter in the congregational life. He wasn't a vain man, but he felt loved by you and appreciated that, after 28 years as your minister, looking forward wasn't going to be easy. However I know his wish for you was to find a new minister who can help you continue to grow in your spiritual life.

David, Alasdair and I want to thank you for all the love and support you have shown us, not just since Gordon died but indeed for all the years we lived in the Manse. As some of you know we have moved house and are happy in our new home but we will never forget our time in the Manse nor the way you looked after us and gave us a wonderful home to live in.

Mairi

### **World Church Team**

Since our involvement with Bondo in 2007, progress continues to be made through the Usenge Development Initiative (UDI), the Charity drawn up and overseen by the committee we deal with in Bondo. In recent months 2 additional dry toilets and one deep well have been constructed and their co-operative arrangement, initiated by ourselves, has enabled them to start many small businesses, build a small Church and new classrooms. Among projects contemplated are a beehive business and a library to assist in the education and religious study of the original 300 orphans in 2007 and 250 additional orphans since then, which are currently being supported by the UDI. A spokesperson recently wrote to us saying 'Believe me, community empowerment economically and educationally is comparable to nothing else.'

The World Church Team wishes to thank everyone who is supporting our two projects in Kenya and will welcome enquiries from anyone interested in assisting the two communities.

### **Greetings from John and Banice, now safely home in Mathia, Kenya**

John writes, "We thank the entire Max West church for the lively welcome and warm hospitality we received from everyone at church and in the organisations we visited. It was wonderful for us to meet so many people and to participate in your services which we did not expect or take for granted. This made Banice and I feel part of your church family. Especially thanks to Rev. Liz Mack who was a real blessing to us."

The feedback from this visit has been positive in both directions; sharing worship, concerns and fellowship has built on our friendship and trust with each other for the future. Higher education is greatly sought after in Kenya. The people in our partner church in Mathia see an increasing need for higher education for their children. Since 2009, we at Maxwelltown West have sent a bursary of £1,000 each year which has enabled Mathia students to take advantage of higher education courses at a number of universities. To date, five students have successfully graduated, with a further nine students continuing their studies. Here are examples of Mathia students who have benefitted from the bursary:

**Washington Kimari Mwariki** (University of Nairobi) "I have already received from you 19,500 KS (approx. £160) to help me pay for my fees in my first semester. I'm so appreciative for your support which has given me hope....."

**Alex Njeru** (graduated Dec. 2011 - Moi University - B.Com Tourism, Business and Management) "You have played a major role in my education. Grateful thanks"

**Geoffrey Mania** (graduated Dec. 2011 - Egerton University - B. Business and Management Accountancy) "May He who gives, expand forthwith and nourish your helping hands".

**Boniface Murangi Wachira** (4<sup>th</sup> year, Moi University - B. Tourism/Management) "I wish to chase my dream by starting up a small firm in tourism - maybe facilitating a visit from Maxwelltown West!"

**Vivian Wairimu Mwiraki** (3<sup>rd</sup> year, Moi University - BSc Applied Stats.) "Your contribution has helped me pay for some courses that can be of value to my degree. Thank you."

**Josephine M Murang** (Egerton University - graduated BSC Animal Science, now pursuing a Masters in Animal Welfare) "You provided a light of hope for financing my studies."

**James Gakum Mathenge** (final year, Kenyatta University – BSc Management) "Thank you to everyone at Max West."

**Mwaniki Derix Gichohi** (2<sup>nd</sup> year, Kanyata University - BSc Economics) “The skills and knowledge will be vital to bringing long-term solutions to the problems facing my country.”

**Pricilla Wamithia Nyaguthii** (graduated Dec. 2011 - Kenyatta University – B. Com.) “Thank you for your support and willingness to help others”

A gift from our Alternative Christmas catalogue of £20 will enable a Mathia student to fund one semester at university.

These young people are the future for their country. We in turn can play a small part in that future.

Thank you for your support for these young people.

*World Church Team 2012*

### **Memories of Our Old Church Organ**

I joined Maxwelltown West Church in my late teens when Miss Stark was still our Church Organist. She retired soon after and in 1947, Jim Sewell from Annan took up the reins. He was very dynamic and loved our church organ.

As we had two services each Sunday, there were calls for new members for the choir and, as this was before television and other distractions, we soon had over thirty members. Our practice on a Friday evening was the highlight of the week. We were taught a number of church cantatas, including Handel’s Messiah. On the Sunday of our performance we had a full membership and an overflowing church. I think Jim played every key on the organ and with the sound vibrating from the pipes, mingled with our voices, the rafters rang.

Another memorable occasion was when we were invited to sing at the laying of the foundation stone for Lincluden Church in 1951 (choir without church organ.)

During one evening service, I observed a young man in the congregation. Again we had a request for new members and at the following Friday evening practice, this same young man was standing right behind me. It was obvious to all he hadn’t a very good singing voice. Jim eventually asked him why he had joined the choir and he replied “to be introduced to the young lady standing in front of me”. To the laughter of all the other members and my total embarrassment, Jim performed this task. He also played our church organ at our wedding three years later in 1953. Our daughter, Marion, was christened in Max West Church in 1956 and our son, Gordon, in 1959, all with the help of our church organ.

In 1966, during our Church’s Centenary celebrations, Brown Owl, Jenny Morley, wrote appropriate words to an old hymn tune and asked little Brownie Marion, aged 10, to sing it accompanied by our church organ. Time moves on, as did all our choir members, leaving such happy memories behind and our organist, Jim, was replaced by our faithful John Brown.

In 1996, I again walked down the aisle on my son’s arm, with my son-in-law playing our old church organ, to say my last farewell to my precious husband, aged 69.

Our faithful old church organ also began to show its age and when the decision was made to move its position, it just retired, like all its old friends, the choir members.

*O K G*

### **What Can We Do?**

Remember Pentecost? A dozen men who walked with Jesus decided to stand up and be counted. Included were some fishermen and a Revenue representative – probably not a learned man among them – but we sit in our pews because they had fire in their bellies and spoke out for our God. How do we demonstrate a commitment to our God?

What do we feel when we come across a sob story in the street, here, anywhere? Do we feel sympathy and compassion, or do we demonstrate indifference and disdain? Decision time. Do we try and help or do we ignore? What SHOULD our instinct be? Should it be that we try and reduce his distress?

God makes the poor and destitute His priority. If we attempt to provide concern and compassion to those in need we will be fulfilling the statement made by Jesus – ‘Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.’ An old maxim states ‘I am only one but I am one. I cannot do everything but I can do something. What I can do I ought to do and what I ought to do by the grace of God I will do.’

A prayer from a book I have been reading:

‘Gracious Lord, I know that your eyes are always upon me to guide and protect and bless and correct. You have given me eyes too. Grant me the power to use them to truly SEE. Help me see those you have put in my path, really see them, with all their hurts, their desires, their longings, their needs, their joys and their challenges. As you open my eyes, prompt me to open wide my arms to offer whatever help and encouragement I have to give. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

What can we do this Christmas to sow the seed of hope in someone?

/S

### **Threads**

About 2 years ago, I purchased from the Mission and Discipleship Committee of the Church of Scotland, a DVD that they had produced, called ‘Threads’.

The Very Rev. David Lunan explains that it tells the story of several people through eight 20 minute episodes, illustrating what happened to ordinary people with extraordinary calling to bear witness to the Kingdom of God – people who are doing, not in order to impress, but because Christ has made an impression on them. Mr. Savage gave me permission to start a discussion group, but I never got round to it.

The DVD is available on loan to anyone who may be interested in listening to the journey these ordinary people are making.

/S

### **Carol Singing**

The management of Lochduhar Nursing Home has again asked if we will visit them to sing carols at Christmas and Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm is the preferred date and time. Many of the residents have a church connection and really appreciate the opportunity of participating in the singing. Would anyone interested please contact me on 01387 264612. Many thanks.

/S

### **The Last Olympic Report from London 2012**

On 27<sup>th</sup> July I had to check in by 6.30am, ready for the morning briefing and the start of the early shift. Everyone seemed bright and cheerful, as the Opening ceremony would be in the evening. During the lunch break I got a picture under the Olympic rings. My shift ended at 2.30pm, but as I had no television at the flat, I decided to do a double shift so that I could be in the Village where the excitement would be.

Two others and I went to the post office for the Opening ceremony stamps. We saw Tom Daley and one of our group managed to take a secret photo of him. During the evening, we had a walk around the village and saw Usain Bolt, also the England football team manager. Unfortunately Team GB was not out of their accommodation as they were not due to leave the village until 11.45pm.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> July, while heading for lunch, there was a surprise visit by the Queen, Prince Philip, Princess Anne and Comm. Tim Lawrence. What a joy.

What was really good during the games was the chance to speak to the other Gamesmakers. I had a long chat to a member of the Iraqi team about how the common people were suffering from the various wars over the last 30 years. It is a rich country, but the population were not benefitting from this. They also need the support of psychologists.

On one day we were all given a village pin badge. It had a limited supply. My last day was on 31<sup>st</sup> July. I met an Australian television team on the tube and they gave me and two others Fortel pin badges.

It was sad to be the last day for my experience at the Olympics. The other Scottish member of the team and I were leaving and we were given a goody bag which contained a Gamesmaker baton and gold, silver and bronze McDonalds Gamesmaker badges. It was off to the pub for a last drink together before splitting up.

I travelled home on the train in my Gamesmaker uniform to see how it would be accepted. No one spoke or asked questions, so that did not feel good after the buzz in London. Stephen Rowe were running an Olympic theme when I got back, so I wore my uniform to work and again felt disappointed by the lack of any hype in Dumfries, compared with down south.

The great thing during the games was the appreciation given to the Gamesmakers and we appreciated the thanks. The London parade of athletes on the 10<sup>th</sup> August was the last get together for the Gamesmakers.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> September there was a farewell event for the people who had worked in the village, with speeches from the LOCOG MD and Tony Sainsbury, entertainment and access to the athletes' dining hall. Now we have been asked to volunteer for Glasgow 2014. The whole event has opened doors to other events. It has been such a wonderful and unique experience - well worth being a volunteer.

*H MacD*

## **REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS**

### **Good Companions**

We have a full programme until the end of this session when we finish with our Christmas lunch. So that we don't clash with the Guild, who hold their January and February meetings in an afternoon, the first meeting of the Spring programme will be on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at 2.00pm. We would be pleased to welcome any new members. Why not come to our Carol Service on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December.

*S H*

### **After Eights**

There was an excellent attendance for the first meeting of the new session on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September. The speaker was Andrea Thompson, who is the editor of the 'Dumfries and Galloway Life' magazine. She spoke with great enthusiasm and passion about her job and also about our region which this award winning magazine helps to promote.

*J M*

### **Brownies**

The Brownies have been very busy since returning after the summer holidays. We have had a total of 26 girls attending every week and have been following our Guiding themes of "You, Community and World." Activities in the first term up to the October holidays have included these themes.

We were pleased to meet John and Banice from Kenya, who helped us make sugarcraft flowers. The Brownies achieved the 'Finding Your Way' badge, which included a walk around Dumfries town centre to look for landmarks, plus an evening learning to read maps and public transport timetables. We also learned how to sew, making owls and enjoyed an active evening to keep fit.

We attended the Brownie Bash, a County event held at the Barony College, where the theme was the 1950's. Games and activities connected to the 1950's were enjoyed by 150 Brownies.



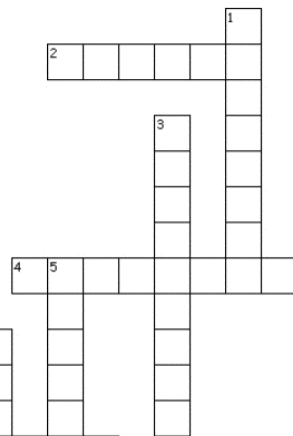
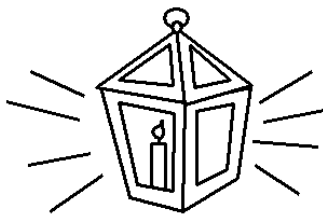
19 girls took part in a Highlands and Islands sleepover in the Church hall in early October, with most asleep by 12.30am!!

The Brownies decided to hold a "Guess the Birthday" competition in aid of the Church Organ Fund. This raised £87.60. The correct answer (21<sup>st</sup> May) was guessed by Niamh C. (a Brownie!). Well done to Niamh. Should you wish any details about Brownies, please get in touch.

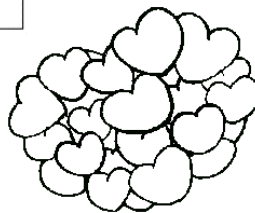
*J McE, Brownie Leader*

## Children's Corner

### Child of God Crossword



Word List:	
darkness	detail
beginning	psalm
search	thoughts
wicked	special
praise	always



We have had a very productive start to this new session with a happy return of many old faces and a big welcome to some new. We are now in the run up to Christmas with our Sunday School parties and Nativity in sight. Look out for the information sheets that will be coming out in the next few weeks, as well as all the dates for your diaries. This year we plan on concentrating on the stories from the bible building up to the birth of Jesus as many of you only know the Nativity one. This will help you get to know your bible a bit better.

#### Who's Child Is This?

**Across**

2. David asks God to do this to know his thoughts and desires and challenge him.
4. God is light, so if you hide in this God can still find you.
6. David gets upset when he thinks about these people.
9. David wrote his thoughts as a way to \_\_\_ God for all He's done.
10. This is the book in the Bible where David's songs/poems are kept.

**Down**

1. God has more of these than all the grains of sand.
3. God knew you from the very \_\_\_\_, way before you were born.
5. We can't get away from God. He is \_\_\_ with us!
7. God was involved in every \_\_\_ of who you are inside and out.
8. You were planned and made by God who made you \_\_\_ and unique.

'Whose child is this?' I asked one day, seeing a little one out to play.

'Mine' said the parent with a tender smile, 'mine to keep a little while.

To bathe his hands and comb his hair, to tell him what he is to wear.

To prepare him that he may always be good, and each day do the things he should.'

'Whose child is this?' I asked again, as the door opened and someone came in.

'Mine' said the teacher with the same tender smile, 'mine to keep just for a little while,

To teach him how to be gentle and kind, to train and direct his dear little mind.

To help him live by every rule, and get the best he can from Sunday school.'

'Whose child is this?' I asked once more, just as the little one entered the door.

'Ours' said the parent and the teacher as they smiled, and each took the hand of the little child.

'Ours to love and train together. Ours this blessed task forever.'

Should you wish to join our Sunday school please contact D McLeod. You will be made most welcome.

	Church Flowers	Memorial Vase
<b>January</b>		
<b>6th</b>	Mrs. J Sloan	Mrs. B Ivins
<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. M. McLeod	Mrs. M. McLeod
<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. McCall-Watson	VACANT
<b>27th</b>	Misses Gemmill	VACANT
<b>February</b>		
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Mrs. R. Slack	Mrs. E Wilson
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. Train	Mrs. M Gibson
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. M Wallace	Mrs. F. Saddington
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. R. McClymont	Mrs. P McKenzie
<b>March</b>		
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Mrs. M Wallace	Mrs. S. Aird
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. A. Marriot	Miss L. Riddick
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. O. Woods	Mrs. E. Riddick
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	Mrs. E. McNay	Mrs. M, Holmes
<b>31st</b>	Mrs. H Campbell	Mrs. M Bryden

For any enquiries, or to take a vacant date, please contact A Dunbar

**Dates for your Diary:**

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December:** Gift Service

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December:** Family Service, after which there will be an opportunity to meet socially over soup and mince pies etc., organised by the Social Group.

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December:** Candlelight Service at 7.00pm

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Day Service at 10.00am

The Brownies with our Kenyan visitors

