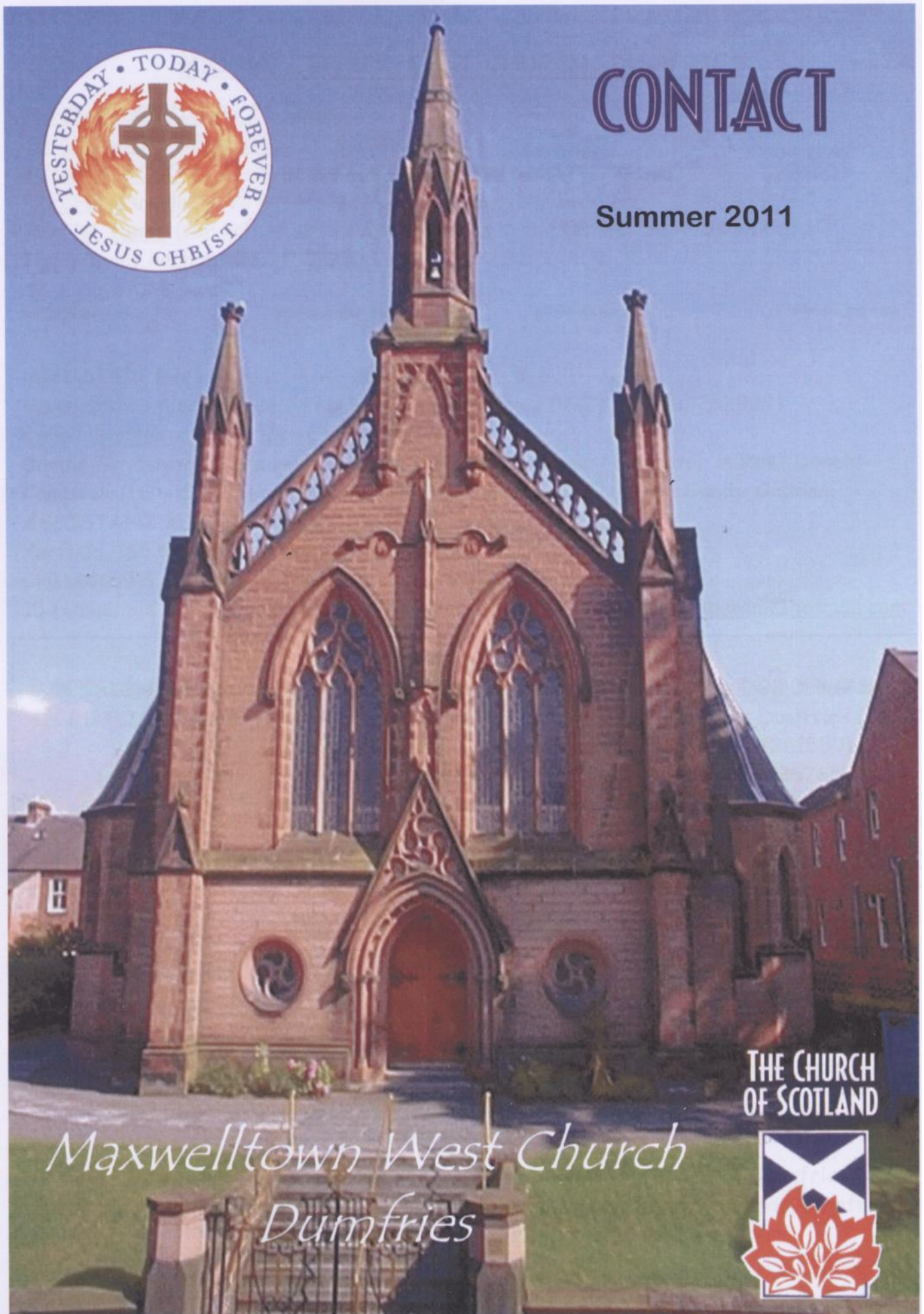


CONTACT

Summer 2011



*Maxwelltown West Church
Dumfries*

THE CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND



Maxwelltown West Church, Dumfries

Sunday Services: 11.00am

COMMUNION SERVICES: 12th June, 11.00am and 3.00pm

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

CRECHE is available during the morning service every Sunday.

Tots 'n' Tunes (for babies and toddlers) meets in the Committee Room on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 10.00am

MINISTER: Rev. Gordon M.A. Savage, M.A., B.D.

Maxwelltown West Manse, 11 Laurieknowe, Dumfries DG2 7AH

During Mr Savage's phased return to work, the Interim Moderator is Rev. Donald Campbell

Pastoral care will be provided by Rev. Sandy Geddes.

ASSISTANT MINISTER: Rev. Sandy Geddes, M.A. B.D.

CHILDREN'S & FAMILY WORKER: Mrs. Rachel Lyagoba

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: Mrs. E Riddick

TREASURER: Mr. D McNay

FABRIC CONVENER: Vacancy

Congregational Register

Deaths

13th April: Mr. James Weatherer

19th April: Mrs. Janet McLean

New Members by Transference

Mr. G May and Mrs. A May

Mr. J Russell and Mrs. I Russell

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.

Dear Friends,

New Beginnings

It's great to be back! Although still in the 'phasing in' process, I have enjoyed being back in church, sharing in the leading of our worship, and also making some visits and gradually becoming involved again in other aspects of ministry. I am indebted to those who have helped me in this process. However, although I am the same person, with the same calling to ministry, my body is not quite the same as it was. The treatment has left its mark, and my energy levels are unlikely to be as they were before. I am sure I can call upon your understanding and patience in the coming weeks.

So, for me, it feels like beginning again. That's a good biblical concept, for our Saviour Christ makes all things new. We have recently celebrated Easter, when the disciples discovered what new life really meant. In fact, each new day offers us a chance to begin again ... to leave behind the mistakes of the past and to renew our commitment to God, to our families, to all aspects of our lives.

Speaking of beginnings, the Royal Wedding has dominated the news this spring, and provided us with an inspirational day of celebration, as a young couple took their vows to each other before God, and set out on a new adventure. We wish William and Kate well, as we would wish for any young couple getting married. Marriage is almost as old as mankind ... yet, for every couple, it represents a new beginning. This occasion provided an opportunity for many married couples to think afresh about their wedding vows, and perhaps to make a new commitment to each other.

Whatever stage you are at in the life of faith, there is always the opportunity to make a new beginning. In our worship week by week, I believe there are always new things to learn, as we grow closer to God through his Son Jesus Christ.

With all good wishes
Yours sincerely

Gordon M.A. Savage

Editorial

It is with mixed feelings that I turn to this, my final editorial. How does one approach the task? - light heartedly (demob happy) or solemnly risking being portentous (what a way to go.) In the end I have opted to go for a theme I have alluded to several times in the past – the silent minority, i.e. those who have put in years of work on behalf of our Church in a quiet and efficient way, without seeking praise or thanks – belief in what they were doing seems to have been enough.

My predecessor spent twice as long in the editorial chair as I have. Our recently retired Treasurer outstripped me, as did the retiring Fabric Convener. As for our Session Clerk, he undoubtedly takes the biscuit. There are others one could cite, but the picture is, I hope, clear.

It is perhaps the privilege of the Editor of Contact to see these people from a distinctive perspective. That is the lesson I take from my spell as Editor and I do not use the term 'privilege' lightly. In closing, may I wish our new Editor and the new team well. Changes there will undoubtedly be and I for one look forward to seeing them unfold.

S C retiring Editor

Message from the Editorial Team

There have been 'new beginnings' with Contact as well. We now have two new members on the editorial committee and this is our first edition. We are so pleased that it coincides with such a happy time in the church, with Mr. Savage once again playing a leading role in our services.

As Editor, I am delighted that our former Editor is still contributing to the magazine and would like to thank him not only for his hard work and enthusiasm over the past few years, but also for his continuing support.

There will be very few changes, if any, but of course any articles or reports should now be handed to me or any committee member – D Crossan, C Murray or R Fraser. I will always give three weeks' notice of the deadline, but please feel free to hand in material as early as you like! I am very handily situated, directly opposite the back door of the church but you can also send your articles via our web site contact page.

FS

Session

The Session met on **16th March**.

Mr. Gavin Elliott, Ministries Support Officer of the Church, advised on the issue of Mr. Savage's phased return to work and related procedures and time scale.

Plans for the proposed visit of Winnie Owour from Kenya were discussed at length.

J Love and B Riddick were appointed to represent Maxwelltown West on the Dumfries Christian Network (DCN), and it was noted that J Love had completed his term of office as Convener of the DCN.

I Slack has intimated his resignation from the Session and the Deacons' Court. The Session expressed their appreciation of his long and distinguished service.

A Committee was appointed to review the Church Membership Roll.

The Session met again on **19th April**.

The World Church Team reported a number of successful ventures. These included a coffee morning in support of Winnie's visit to Dumfries, which had raised £850. In addition there were direct contributions to Bondo and Mathia.

Reports of annual visits to organisations were generally satisfactory, though it was noted that many of the young people within our youth organisations had no family connection with the congregation. The resignation of Rev. Colin Sutherland was noted and his help during a difficult time for the congregation was acknowledged.

Two chairs had been obtained on loan from the former Buittle Church, to assess their suitability flanking the Communion Chair in Maxwelltown West.

The Session meets again on **22nd June**.

SC and TB

Visits to Organisations

Guild/After Eights.....R. Braidwood & Miss P. Jardine
K Max and J MaxW. S. Riddick & Mrs. J. McMillan
Y MaxMrs. A. Dunbar & Miss J. Marchbank
Good CompanionsJ. Alexander
Scouts/Cub Scouts/BeaversG. D. Little & J. Beggs
Guides/Brownie GuidesH. MacDonald & Mrs. V. Coltart
Badminton ClubsD. Rosie

Deacons' Court

The Court met on **3rd March.**

The principal item of business was the approval of the Trustees' Report and Accounts for 2010. The Treasurer, D McNay, presented a review of the accounts. The essence of his review was that, despite changes in presentation dictated by OSCR, our position has improved greatly as a result of the stewardship programme. Details have been presented to members at the Annual Meeting and make interesting, if somewhat complex, reading.

B Riddick gave his fourteenth and final report as Fabric Convener. Once again, a great deal has been achieved at relatively modest cost, due to skillful purchasing of services and the help of volunteers. The Court unanimously thanked him for his lengthy and successful management of the fabric of the church.

The Court held a further meeting on **27th April.**

The most important item was the Treasurer's report covering the first quarter of this year. D McNay described an improving situation and despite a short term deficit, the overall picture was encouraging.

The amount raised from the Fabric Box Collection was £921.83.

The issue of reviving a programme of social events was deferred till the next meeting, in the absence of the sponsor.

The Court will meet again on **22nd June.**

E R & S C

World Church Team

Although we are now almost in summer, I would like to convey to you the Easter greetings and many blessings sent to all at Maxwelltown West from our friends in Mathia and Bondo. They greatly value their connection with us.

Grateful thanks to everyone who supported our coffee morning in March to assist with travel and the visit from Winnie in Bondo. The excellent sum of £850.65 was raised. We hope to receive Winnie on 5th June and she will stay with I and R Slack, as their guest.

A programme is planned for her to meet as many church people as possible at her request. We hope you will be free to come along and hear her latest news. The date of a social evening will be announced through the church intimations quite soon. The new Mathia Church is progressing slowly and it seems our donation has helped to install the windows.

The BB members should all have hats now, bought as our gift after our visitors to Kenya reported that only a few of the boys owned hats. They like to raise their hats and cheer when required. A photograph has been promised soon.

The World Church Team hopes you will be able to meet with Winnie very soon.

A D, WCT Convener

Third Time Lucky! Raising Money for Bondo and Mathia

We are two people with a big love of the good things in life. Mostly this is hugely positive, but one or two aspects of this require a search for correctives. We did try Monday night Scottish Slimmers and then a Friday night Jazz Class, but despite enthusiasm, determination and mutual encouragement, both crumbled by the wayside.

Now, however, if you are up early enough in the mornings, you will find us pounding the concrete of Rosemount Street at 6.30am four times a week. Will we see this through? We feel we have a chance of sustaining this third bid for fitness - at least until we complete the Dumfries 5km in June. The reason we are optimistic is because we have decided to run to raise money for a cause close to our hearts, the church's World Mission Projects, Bondo and Mathia.

And now we need your help. We would love to have your sponsorship to raise as much money as we can for these two communities in Kenya. If you would like to sponsor us, please put your name and amount on the form on the wall of the Simmons hall or speak to us in church. Whatever – please give generously. You know it is for a good cause.

Many thanks in anticipation for your support.

S F and J S

God Knows!

On my daily (if it's not raining!) walk recently, as usual my ears were plugged by the earphones of my Sony Walkman (so old it plays cassettes: younger readers may not have heard of them!) That day I was listening to songs from "*Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*", originally a short piece written for a school concert but expanded into a full-blown stage show. I've seen it a few times and always thought it had great music linking its Bible story. But on that walk, hearing it again, I was struck by how great the original story was, depicting in its characters a huge range of human strengths, weaknesses, achievements and failings.

Read the story again in Genesis, 35, 37, 39-45, to see what I mean. Take Joseph's father, Jacob: pious, but also stupid, asking for trouble by so obviously making Joseph his favourite son; later he feels sorrow, fear, worry, happiness, gratitude: what a mixture! Joseph's brothers? – envy, if understandable, treachery, greed, lies, disbelief, relief. And Joseph? – on the one hand proud, self-

important, deceitful; on the other wise, tender, forgiving, generous. Again, what a mixture! So here we see a remarkable variety of the good and bad in our human nature.

My grandson Calum's favourite song is "*My God is a Great Big God*". He is. And because God created us, He knows us. More than that, He has also been one of us in Jesus, who had to face so many contradictions in those he met, from devoted joy to devious hatred. So don't be fooled into thinking that God is ignorant of, or oblivious to, all our mixed-up human thoughts and actions. He's not. God knows!

Two thoughts on all this. The first is that Jesus, on the cross, asks his Father to forgive the very people who are crucifying His only Son: surely that's a prayer made in the faith that God can forgive all of our sins, even to the farthest extent to which human evil can go. The second is that in "*Eli Jenkins' Prayer*", or "*Sunset Poem*" (which I sing with Dumfries Male Voice Choir) are the Dylan Thomas lines:

*"We are not always bad or good who live our lives under Milk Wood;
But Thou, I know, will be the first to see our best side, not our worst".*

This is our God, our Great Big God. And God knows! He knows what we're like, understands us, looks for the best in us in His love, and forgives the sins we can't even forgive ourselves. And (God knows!) we should all be glad about that.

S G

Reports from Organisations

The Guild

We have had two excellent meetings since the last Contact report. We learned about the work of the International Justice Mission in Cambodia, which has been our project for the last year. Our coffee morning in February raised £526 for this.

We have just had our AGM, followed by a very interesting, illustrated talk on Indian textiles by Mrs. Fellowes.

Our spring rally on 9th March was a very enjoyable evening and it gave us the chance to share fellowship with friends from other Guilds. This was also the case for those of us who attended the Theme/Topic day in our church halls on 12th March, when we had the privilege of meeting our Guild National Convener, Helen-May Bayne.

Although our Guild session is now finished until October, we have our summer outing on 26th May, which will be a bus run round the coast to Dalbeattie and on to Loch Ken, where we will have high tea in the Ken Bridge Hotel.

Please note that it is the 80th Anniversary of our Guild in October this year, so we hope to organise a celebration of some kind. This will be intimated later.

We would like to thank the retiring committee members for their hard work over the past few years and welcome those who are coming to join us on committee. We especially welcome our new Convener, M Haining, and look forward to her guidance in the year to come, whilst also remembering the excellent leadership our retiring Convener, A Dunbar, has given.

We hope that you will consider coming to join us when our meetings resume at the beginning of October, as we would be delighted to have some new members.

Can I take this opportunity to wish all our members a very enjoyable and healthy summer?

M McL

Brownies

The Brownies have been busy working on their Brownie Adventure with a variety of activities. To celebrate Thinking Day we attended our Church Parade and had a celebration evening when we focused on the Girlguiding chosen countries of Bolivia, Cyprus, Congo, Nepal and Yemen. During other meetings we have learned about the work of Guide Dogs and origami crafts and worked on the Number Fun badge. This includes learning about money and how to budget wisely.

Our team of Country Dancers were awarded second place in the Dumfries Festival. The girls danced very well and were great representatives of our Pack.

At the summer we will be saying goodbye to Sandra, who has been a leader for the last five years, and also to Alex, who has been our Young Leader. We will miss them both very much and thank them for all their help.

If you are interested in finding out about helping with Brownies, please contact me via the church web site Contact page.

J McE, Brownie Leader

Good Companions

The Good Companions met regularly and had interesting speakers and finished their programme with a meal at the Edenbank Hotel on April 20th.

We could do with more members, male or female, old or young. Everybody is welcome. Ideas please to me via the web site Contact page.

D W

After Eights

In February, Rev Ella Pennington gave us a brief biography of her life to explain how she came to be a minister who conducted weddings in the Gretna and Gretna Green area. She then kept us well entertained by relating many amusing anecdotes of her years in this role, highlighting how weddings have changed over time.

In March, Helen Muirhead, ably assisted by her friend May, demonstrated how to make three different traybakes. She did this with skill and enthusiasm. We all received a copy of each recipe and were able to taste delicious samples of each one that Helen had brought with her. At the end of the evening, three lucky ladies, whose names had been drawn from everyone present, took home a plate with several pieces of each traybake.

R Braidwood was present as a representative from the Kirk Session and said a few words on their behalf.

For the last evening of the session in April, we went to the Galloway Arms at Crocketford. It was a lovely evening for the trip out and we had an excellent meal.

J M

	Church Flowers	Memorial Vase
July		
3 rd	Mrs. M Wallace	Mrs. P. McKenzie
10 th	Mrs. Wardrop	VACANT
17 th	Mrs. McClymont	Mrs. Goodwin
24 th	Mrs. N. McCubbin	Mrs. L. Taylor & Mrs. S. Robin
31 st	Mrs. Flockhart	Mrs. M Brown
August		
7 th	Mr. Scott Carroll	Mrs. Lindsay
14 th	Mrs. Howitt	Mrs. Howitt
21 st	Mrs. E. Campbell	The Misses Bryden
28 th	Mrs. B. Wilson	Mrs. Christie
September		
4 th	Mrs. H. Campbell	Mrs. C. Whipp
11 th	Mrs. Stockdale	Mrs. J. Moffat
18 th	Mrs. Boyer	VACANT
25 th	Mrs. Cross	The Misses Gemmill

If you would like to take a vacant date or help to arrange church flowers, please contact A Dunbar via the web site on the Contact page.

Diary Dates – June 2011

- Sunday 5th Sunday School Prize Giving (11.00 am) and Church Family Day Out (Castledykes Park)
- Sunday 12th Communion (11.00 am and 3.00 pm)
- Sunday 19th Morning Worship with Sacrament of Baptism (11.00 am)
- Wednesday 22nd Kirk Session (7.00 pm); Deacons' Court (8.00 pm)
- Sunday 26th Morning Worship (11.00 am)