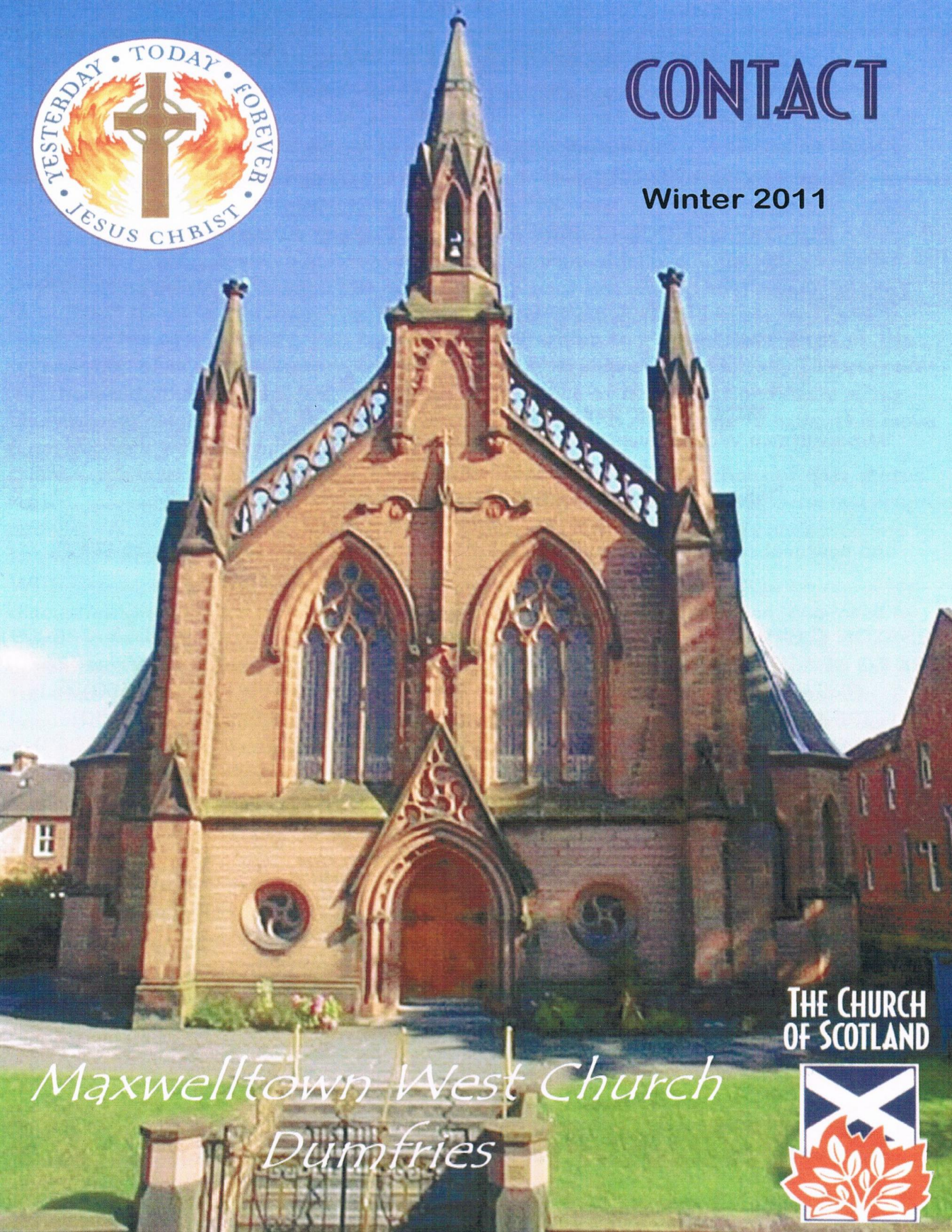


CONTACT

Winter 2011



*Maxwelltown West Church
Dumfries*

THE CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND



MAXWELLTOWN WEST CHURCH, DUMFRIES

www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES: 11.00am

COMMUNION SERVICES: 4th December at 11.00am and 3.00pm (in hall); 25th December at 11.00am

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 absence, the Interim Moderator is

Rev. Donald Campbell and 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: Mrs. E Riddick

TREASURER: Mr. D McNay

'ACTING' FABRIC CONVENER: Mr. D Miller

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Baptism

30th October: William Harris McKenzie

Deaths

10th August: George Cossar

16th September: James McDougall

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 People of Maxwelltown West,

(I do trust as we get to know one another that we might see each other as friends).

Some months ago I transferred my Church membership to Maxwelltown West at the termination of my appointment and long-time membership at Kirkmichael, Tinwald and Torthorwald Church. As I live within walking distance of Max West and many of my churchgoing neighbours are members here, it seemed the right time to make this move. (Last winter's weather might also have been a factor!!)

I came as a member of the congregation, but circumstances have changed that status. As you all sadly know, Gordon's return to duty, rejoiced in by us all, has been interrupted as he faces once again the punishing chemotherapy treatment which is endeavouring to keep his illness at bay.

With the departure of Sandy Geddes, we are left with a ministerial gap, which, after discussion with our Interim Moderator Rev Donald Campbell and Gordon, endorsed by the Kirk Session, I have agreed to partially fill as your Locum Minister. This appointment covers Sundays plus the equivalent of one other day's work, so it's not a full-time job! But, as I have done in all the other parishes in which I have served, I am happy to do all that I can to maintain and encourage the full life of the Church during this time of difficulty. My answer phone is on at all times and I am available for all pastoral matters as required.

We are happily not in a vacancy and Gordon is still the Minister of Maxwelltown West, albeit on sick leave, and be assured that we will be in regular consultation. I will however, be utterly dependent on YOU to keep me informed of anyone in hospital, sick at home, or in any other way in need of a visit. Please leave me details on the phone or in writing, as verbal information at church is liable to be short-lived in my brain!

This situation is very hard for Gordon, Mairi and the boys and we hold them constantly in our prayers. It is also hard for the congregation, as its long term stability has been sorely shaken, but as Gordon said in his last pastoral letter, this is a time for pulling together and willingly sharing the load in maintaining the life and mission of our Church. Helpers are needed in all areas, especially in our youth work. With Rachel's resignation, the Sunday School and Youth groups need more adults for this essential work. As Mother Teresa once reminded us, "God has only OUR hands to do His work on earth." BUT, He will never leave us to work in our own strength alone, for every task He calls us to, He always provides the necessary ability.

This is something which I have learned with great joy and relief as I moved from the playing fields as a teacher of Physical Education and Guidance, to the pulpits and pastoral ministry of the Church – a huge jump of faith, but one which reliance on God has enabled me to do in many different parishes in this Presbytery for the past 18 years. And I'm grateful that God does not seem to believe in Retirement!!

As we work together for His kingdom here, let us cling steadfastly to the beautiful promise found in the book of Jeremiah chapter 29 at verse 11. "For I know that the plans I have for you" declares the Lord "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future ... and you will find me when you seek me with all your heart."

May God Bless us all

Liz

Dear Friends

When I last wrote for 'Contact' I did not envisage being off work again so soon. Things were looking up and I was getting more involved in weekly worship. However, I have had to resume chemotherapy treatment as of 21st October, and while I am disappointed about this, I know that in Liz Mack you have a very capable worship leader who will keep things going ... please give her your support!

Never underestimate the power of prayer. Mairi and I and the boys will greatly value your prayers during my course of treatment.

With best wishes to you all

Gordon M.A. Savage

Editorial

Recent events in our church have set me thinking. First we had to say farewell to Sandy Geddes and then we learned that Gordon Savage would again be absent on sick leave for some months. It has made me realise how much we depend on our ministers, not just for leading our worship on a Sunday (for the prayers, sermons, hymns and readings) or for conducting the many baptisms, marriages and funerals a church our size requires, or for the visits we receive either in hospital or in our own homes, but also for being somebody we can turn to; somebody who will pray with us and offer guidance in times of trouble. Now it's our turn to offer support and help, so as a congregation, let's unite in prayer as we remember Gordon, Mairi, David and Alasdair during the difficult times ahead.

We also extend a warm welcome to Liz Mack who has agreed to step in as Locum in Gordon's absence. We are so thankful that, as Liz says, "God does not seem to believe in retirement." I'm sure we'll all get to know her a lot better in the next few months.

FS

Session

The Kirk Session met on 15th September when a number of items were discussed. One item raised concerned young people in Church, when it was noted that there has been a decline in the numbers of young people attending Sunday worship. This matter will be debated at future meetings. Members thanked Rev. Sandy Geddes for his donation of a pulpit fall and gave him their very best wishes for his future. This has left a vacancy for the post of Pastoral Assistant and it was agreed to invite Rev. Liz Mack to take on this position. Mrs Rachel Lyagoba's letter of resignation was received and it was agreed to discuss her post at the next Session meeting.

It was agreed that we hold the Congregational meeting for the election of Deacons on Sunday 20th November. At present we need seven new Deacons. Other routine items were also discussed.

TB, Session Clerk

Deacons' Court

The Deacons' Court met on 27th September.

D McNay, Treasurer, reported that income showed an increase from the same quarter last year, although expenditure had increased due to anticipated rises in our Ministry and Mission and heating costs. He was pleased to confirm that our finances continue to be in a satisfactory position and a sum of money is due from

Gift Aid tax. However, Rev Donald Campbell pointed out that Ministry and Mission costs would increase again next year.

R Slack, Finance Convener, advised that the Fabric Fund Appeal Box Count had raised a good sum. Thanks were extended to D McNay who organised the count and to those who helped.

The Fabric Report was presented by D Miller, who confirmed that planned works had been completed, including refurbishment of the front steps and annual gas equipment servicing. There was evidence of water ingress in the cloakroom at the back door and, more recently in the vestibule and this was being attended to. Security was still an issue but the signing in/out book was working well.

J Beggs and N Collins were thanked for the completion of the Inventory which had been done in a most professional manner.

The Church bell has been re-sited at the front door and the Fabric Committee will look at making a plinth and putting a plaque in place.

E R, Clerk to Deacons' Court

From Sandy Geddes

Elizabeth and Sandy Geddes would like to express their appreciation to the congregation of Maxwelltown West for their generous gifts on leaving Dumfries to start a new life in Mauchline, Ayrshire. They are settling into their new home, although not without aches and pains in muscles they never knew they had, what with lifting, opening, and flattening for disposal, a multitude of very large boxes!

Apart from a friendly next-door neighbour, who handed in flowers and a box of Mr Kipling's products to welcome them, their first visitor was the local Church of Scotland minister, who had heard on the ecclesiastical grapevine that they had arrived in his parish. Sandy has already had an invitation to join the Kilmarnock Choral Union, and has discovered that he knows someone who sings with a Male Voice Choir, also in Kilmarnock, which is just eight miles away from Mauchline. He says he might just be tempted to join one or the other or even both!

They would welcome a call from anyone in the area, perhaps en route to Glasgow or Kilmarnock. They both want to say that they look back on their years in Dumfries with real gratitude, especially to the folk of Maxwelltown West whose kindness, at the end of their stay, has confirmed the affection of so many of their friends in the congregation over the years. They have cherished memories of many in Max West, and wish them all well in the future.

World Church Team

The World Church Team has recently received emails from Bondo and Mathia.

Bondo: Winnie writes that they are very happy in Usenge, more so because they will soon have a new well to supplement the first one we provided. With clean, safe drinking water the rate of water-borne diseases will go down even further. However, with the huge increases in the price of basic commodities and fuel, together with Kenya's new constitution and administrative reorganisation, the survey fees, labour costs and materials involved in building the new well will rise sharply. The second instalment of money for the well was sent at the end of September. The well is now almost 40 feet deep and it is hoped that it will provide a 10-12 foot water table which cannot dry up even in the drought.

With the profits from small businesses, they have now built three crèche classrooms and are building a church/school, which is now at lintel level.

Winnie says, "I appreciate all that you at Maxwest are doing for us and I can assure you that not a cent donated for the community will be lost or misappropriated,"

Mathia: Rev Erastus Mbaka, parish minister of Mathia Church, sends greetings and reports that the congregation is increasing in number, especially the youth. He is happy that John has been elected as chairman of the Church, as John is “committed in all fields concerning the Church activities” and asks us to continue praying for him as he is the co-ordinator of the partnership as well as Church chairman. Prayers are also requested for the country as a whole as it has been hit by serious disasters. They too are praying for “Rev Gordon” and send us all the text from James 5:7-20.

Their students, Alex, Geoffrey, Josephine and two others are now awaiting their graduations and he thanks us for the support we have given them.

He finishes with “May God bless you mightily as you continue to make any other arrangements for this partnership.”

A D

Prayer Circle by Phone

In late summer we spent a few days in Oban and while visiting a local Church, picked up a leaflet on the above. It described a Prayer Group, by another name, with any number of members all praying in their own homes, in their own time, for people and events that had been brought to the attention of the Convener of the Prayer Circle. The Convener will pass on a received request to a second person in the Circle by phone, who passes it on to the third, and so on. Any member of the Church or community can make a request to any member of the Circle who then informs the Convener.

The world is a busy, noisy place. We are on the go all the time – the routine of the day distracts us from expressing our concerns – we switch off. But God has the time to listen to us. We can address God as freely as we address our parents and friends. It is the kind of freedom that combines intimacy and reverence. Three verses from the Bible:

When you come before God – find a quiet secluded place. Matthew 6:5/6

Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concern. Philippians 4:6

With God nothing shall be impossible. Luke 1:37

God will do nothing except through the prayers we make to Him through Jesus Christ. The Prayer Circle is well suited to people who may have difficulty in attending Church as often as they would like, but who wish to participate in the life of the Church. If anyone is interested, please contact me.

I S

Treasures and Artefacts

“Not a lot of people know this but”



If you cast your mind back to Harvest Thanksgiving, you may recognise the above phrase as a recurring theme of the service. But how much do you know about the ‘treasures’ and significant artefacts that we have inside our church?

Now that we have a church web site with a History page, we have added an entry about this beautiful wall hanging which you will recognise from above the west door of the church. But did you know that there is a book about the making of this beautiful work of art which you can peruse at your leisure?

[See the Church officer if you would like to arrange to borrow it]

You can see the detail of this hanging on the church web site and we are hoping over time, to gradually look at other items from around the church with dedication

plaques or stories behind them, either for inclusion in Contact or, if appropriate, for adding to the web site.

Do you have a favourite? Could you write a short history about a church feature you feel would be of interest to the congregation? Or do you have a request - something you have always wondered about and about which you would love to know more? Would you like to research and write about something?

Any suggestions, articles, information, queries please to J Love, J Denholm or M Newlands

Relay For Life Returns to Dumfries for 2012

You will remember I mentioned this in the last Contact, and requested names of those interested in taking this fantastic project forward. Since then The Deacons' Court have approved the setting up of a team to participate and to use the halls etc and to assist in fund raising. We have received a limited response but not enough, so please do consider registering your interest and let us have a meeting to plan the next few months. The earlier we start the better it will be. We should have between 12 and 15 members to get started, but more would be great. Please phone or email now. Let me have your name, phone number and email if you have one. Every pound raised helps in the fight against cancer. As we all know someone who has had or is having treatment, including our Minister, Gordon, please make a special effort and join.

Can I please ask anyone who is interested in participating to contact me with their name, phone number and e-mail, if you have one, as soon as possible.

BR

REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS

The Guild

We have just had our Dedication Service and are deeply indebted to Rev Liz Mack for taking this service at short notice due to Mr. Savage's ill health. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mairi, Gordon, David and Alasdair at this time. Liz was our speaker for the evening and gave us a very entertaining talk on her journey through life and how she came to be a minister at the age of 55.

We are now looking forward to our 80th Birthday Celebration at Woodlands and sharing our meeting with ladies from other Guilds. Following this we will have our Coffee Morning on 19th November and the Ruthwell Singers will entertain us at our meeting on 6th December. Please note that our meetings in January and February are at 2pm.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

M H, Guild Convener

Brownies

After the summer, we were pleased to welcome Steph as Leader-in-Training, Amanda and Jen, who are sharing a Unit Helper role and Emma, as our new Young Leader.

The Brownies have all been working on their Science Investigator Badge and we have now started working on the Discovering Faith Badge.

Our new Brownies have been preparing for their forthcoming Promise Celebration when we will be joined by their parents.

We have been eagerly awaiting a visit by a lady from the local donkey sanctuary, accompanied by a donkey, but this has had to be postponed three times due to bad weather. Hopefully the visit will have taken place by the time this is read!

Congratulations to Kirsty and Rachel who were both awarded a prize for being the most active from the local 'Go Smart!' team.

Should you wish any details about Brownies, please get in touch.

J McE, Brownie Leader

Scout Report for Winter 2011

We have now settled into the new session and have 10 boys in the section.

There was an Urban Quiz around the local streets. During one of the nights the boys drew the union flag, to see how it was constructed. The boys enjoyed a dry night for a walk in the dark at Mabie forest.

During the last night before the holiday break we used trangia cookers to make a stew, with sausages, green lentils, vegetables and chicken stock. We used the space at the back door, so hopefully we did not disturb the local householders too much.

On the 24th October we will have another go at the murder mystery tour, which we tried two years ago, but did not finish. There will be a Halloween party on the 31st October, so that should be fun.

We will take part in the Church parade on 13th November, while in the afternoon the boys will have a go at orienteering in the Dock Park.

There will be a night to the Pantomime at the Theatre Royal.

The Beaver section has two new leaders who are working well together - B Carr and N Stitt. Both of them are teachers, so are used to working with children.

The Cub section has A Ainslie and J McNaught, working with around 15 boys.

Unfortunately the Explorer section has not met since the summer holiday, but hopefully they will be up and running soon.

Thanks again to J Brett and A Maas who are still leaders with the section.

Our thanks go to B Thomson the treasurer who has been doing a fine job and has stayed with us even though his children are no longer involved. He will be resigning in March. Also thanks to K Eggo and I Skilling, chairman and secretary respectively of the scout parents' committee.

H MacD. Scout leader.

K-Max and J-Max

Welcome back after the October holidays! I hope you have had a lovely break and are raring to go, with the new Sunday school term under way. I was sorry to say goodbye to Rachel as I'm sure you all were, but wish her well in her future endeavours. Sharon, Chrissie and I are pleased to welcome Mary, who has offered to join our team, and we are all currently looking at ways of increasing our Sunday school numbers for the future. I would be grateful to any of your parents, should they be able to help out occasionally and perhaps consider adding their names to our helpers' rota. This will be on the notice board shortly.

Well, we have many things to look forward to before Christmas this year, with you all taking part in our Family Service on the 6th November and then preparing for your Christmas Party on the 17th and Nativity on the 18th in church. And then of course we will have our 'candlelight service' on Christmas Eve, which is always a lovely event for you and your family to share.

On the build up to Christmas we will be looking at 'The Armour of God', which you can find in Ephesians 6 Verses 10-18 of the New Testament. The Memory Verse we will be learning is:

"Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"

Ephesians 6:11

Try and work out the anagrams below. Don't worry if you get stuck, as I will put the answers on the notice board at Sunday school for you.

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Armour of God Anagram

eehlmt _____

aabeelprstt _____

aceep _____

hrttu _____

dehils _____

aeprry _____

dorsw _____

bbeil _____

aeimnopsttt _____

fghit _____

Remember to pray for help for others, to ask for forgiveness, and to give thanks to God for all He has done.

I look forward to seeing you in K-Max and J-Max.

Dawn McLeod



Y-Max

Y Max has been meeting from 7 - 8.15pm most Sunday evenings. Our programme is very varied and this session we started with a BBQ at Elizabeth's house, a film night at Rachel's and an African drumming session with Dawn. In October we will be having a games night and later hope to do some drama and first aid. Many thanks to all those who have helped with the group this year.

Sarah is now helping with the group and Johnny and Rhona are the new young leaders. However we still need one more helper - even if you cannot commit to every Sunday evening until Easter.

A MacD

Guitar Group

The guitar group meets most Sunday nights at 6.30pm before Y Max. We play lots of different types of music and are learning different chords and styles. We have taken part in several services and are making good progress.

A MacD

	Church Flowers	Memorial Vase
January 1st	Mrs. A. Dunbar	Mrs. B. Ivins
8th	Mrs. J. Sloan	Mrs. M. Bryden
15th	Mrs. M. McLeod	Mrs. M. McLeod
22nd	Mrs. McCall-Smith	Mrs. Scott
29 th	Misses Gemmill	VACANT
February 5 th	Mrs. R. Slack	Mrs. E. Wilson
12th	Mrs. Train	Mrs. M. Gibson
19 th	Mrs. M. Wallace	Mrs. F. Saddington
26 th	Mrs. R. McClymont	VACANT
March 4th	Mrs. M. Wallace	Mrs. S. Aird
11th	Mrs. N. Jamieson	Miss L. Riddick
18th	Mrs. O. Woods	Mrs. E. Riddick
25th	Mrs. E. McNay	Mrs. M. Holmes

If you would like to fill a vacant date or enquire about donating flowers, please contact A Dunbar.

Dates for your Diary

19th November: Guild Coffee Morning.

20th November: Congregational meeting for election of deacons at close of service.

4th December: Communion Services at 11.00am and 3.00pm.

18th December: Family Service at 11.00am.

24th December: Candlelight Service at 7.00pm.

25th December: Christmas Day Service with Communion.

This photograph on the following page was taken on Sunday 21st August, when Mr Savage was joined by three former student friends on the Sunday before his 60th birthday.



L to R:

Rev. Colin Brown, minister at Darnley United Free Church, Glasgow (Principal Clerk and former Moderator of the U.F. Church)

Rev. Edgar Ogston, minister at Beaully Parish Church, Inverness-shire (originally from Dumfries; formerly minister at Kinlochleven, where he introduced and subsequently married Gordon and Mairi)

Mrs Mairi Savage

Rev. Gordon Savage

Rev. Alan Greig, minister at Kintore Parish Church, Aberdeenshire (Convener of the Church of Scotland Council of Assembly).