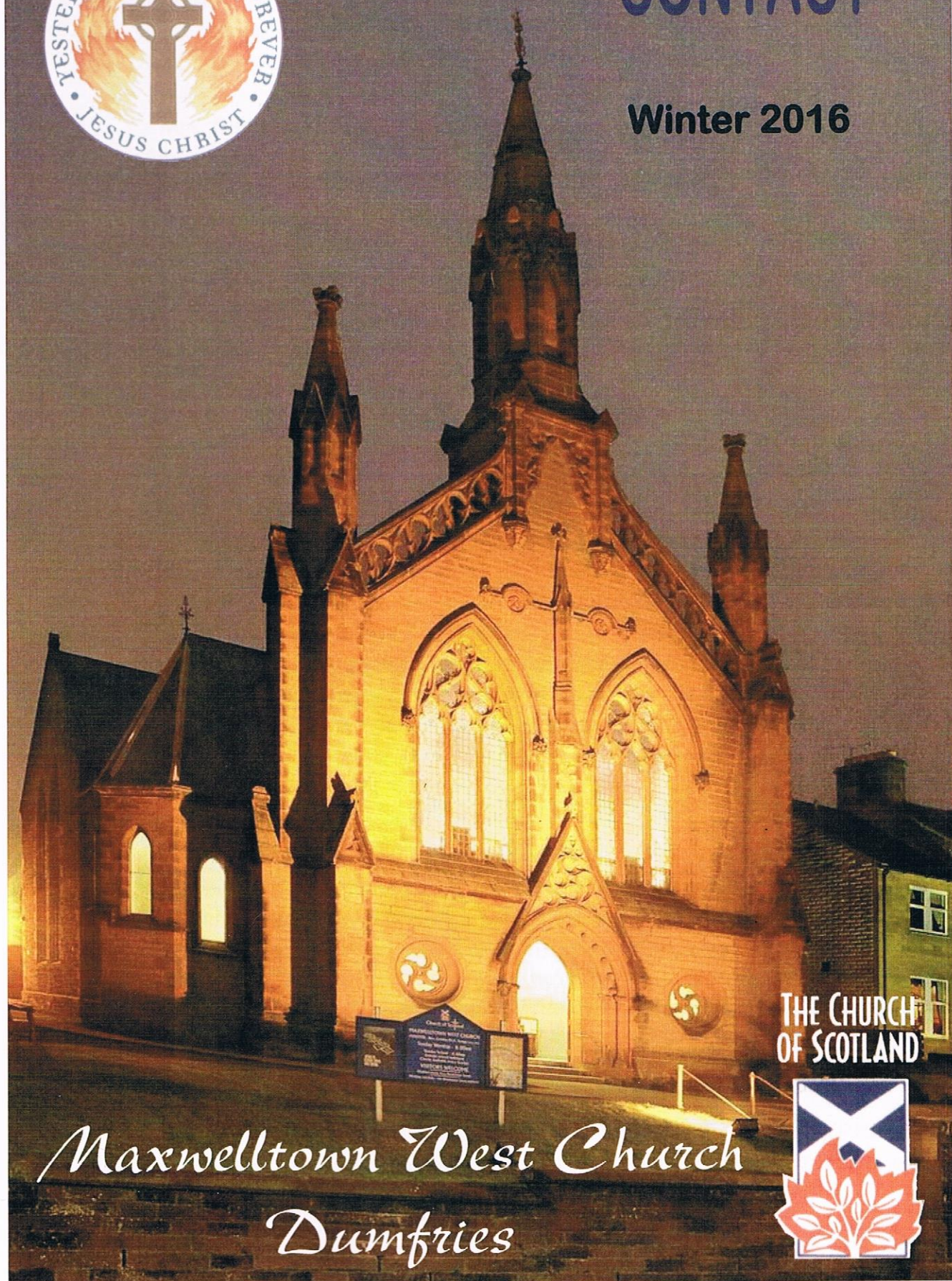


CONTACT

Winter 2016



THE CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND



Maxwelltown West Church
Dumfries

MAXWELLTOWN WEST CHURCH, DUMFRIES

www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk
<https://twitter.com/MaxWestChurch>

Scottish Charity No.: SC015925

Tel: 01387 255900

SUNDAY SERVICES: 11.00am.

COMMUNION SERVICES: 4th December at 11.00am and 3.00pm (in Hall)

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

CRECHE is available during the morning service every Sunday.

Minister: Rev. Dave Sutherland, Maxwelltown West Manse, 11 Laurieknowe, Dumfries DG2 7AH (tel: 247538)

Congregational Office Bearers

SESSION CLERK: Mr. D Crossan, Dumfries

CLERK TO DEACONS' COURT: Mrs. J Wood, Dumfries

ORGANIST: Mr. S Crosbie, Dumfries

TREASURER: Mrs. L Hyles, Dumfries

CHURCH OFFICER: Mr. R Wilson, Dumfries

FABRIC CONVENER: Mr. J Hastings, Dumfries

EDITOR OF 'CONTACT': Mrs. F Saddington, Dumfries

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Weddings

8th July: C-A McGarrie to S Culshaw, at Maxwelltown West

23rd July: K McLean to C Hill, at the Crichton

3rd September: L Hilton-Smith to G Beattie, at the Edenbank Hotel

Deaths

23rd August: Mrs. Helen Campbell, Dumfries

21st September: Mrs. Elizabeth (Joy) Craven, Dumfries

2nd October: Mr. Howard Wilson, Dumfries

24th October: Mrs. Marion Wilson, Dumfries

Certificates of Transference

Mrs. C Gass, Dumfries

Mr. R Finnie, Dumfries

Mrs. L Currie, Dumfries

Mr. and Mrs. R Braidwood, Dumfries

Mrs. C Harvey, Dumfries

Mrs. S Young, Thornhill

Mrs. A Auld, Dumfries

Mrs. S Crozier, Dumfries

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,

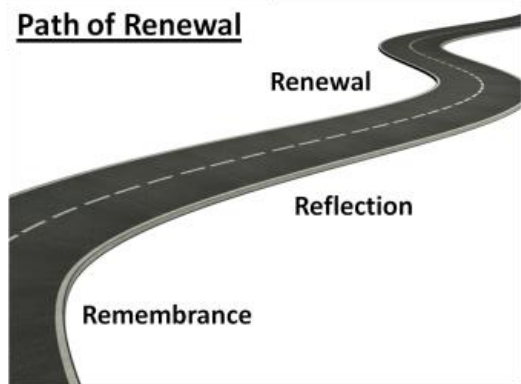
By the time you read this letter, we will be at the beginning of Advent looking forward again to celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. We will also have celebrated our 150th Anniversary of worshipping God in the Maxwelltown West Church building and being able to remember all that has brought us to where we are now.

In terms of Path of Renewal and the concept of Remembrance, Reflection and Renewal that enables us to guide our thoughts and ideas, we're now coming through the Remembrance and Reflection to look at what Renewal means. At our Fellowship Dinner in September, the Very Rev. John Chalmers shared his thoughts on church and church membership. He acknowledges that the drive for "membership" has negatively impacted on the Church both nationally and locally.

Here are a few of the things he said:

- The stuff we are meant to do in building people up cannot be measured in numbers
- People are not looking to join an institution
- We need to reinvent ourselves and not be obsessed and defined by the number of card-carrying members
- The great sin of the church is the way we have turned it into an exclusive club
- Census figures tell us that people believe that they belong to church and Church of Scotland – but they're not on our books
- Spiritual life is important – we're human **beings** and need to **be** with Christ

This last point looks again at the need of discipleship; something which Gordon Savage considered positively in his 2005 Study Leave report on Membership. Path of Renewal is not a project but a way of being, a way or movement where we explore what it is to walk with God as He shapes and transforms us.



Change is always upon us: in the world, in the home, in the school, in the workplace and in the church. The difference for us as Christians is that there is stability in the midst of all that change and reforming: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever." *Hebrews 13:3 (New International Version)*. I believe that despite what is going on around us, Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer, is a constant in our lives and that enables us to deal with the changing circumstances in which we exist.

I don't believe for one moment that moving forward will be easy but I do believe that we need to go forward on a path of renewal. Jesus calls us to follow Him in love, to love God, to love our neighbour **and** to love our enemies.

Jesus came so that all who believe in Him may have life and life in abundance; that they may have eternal life and not perish. These things come from the birth of a baby who was and is the Son of God. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very blessed and merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Why not join us at some of our services throughout December to celebrate what God the Father has done, through Jesus Christ the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit?

With every blessing

Dave
Your minister

Christmas Services

Sunday 4 th December:	11am and 3pm - Sacrament of the Lord's Table
Saturday 17 th December:	4.30pm - Messy Church
Sunday 18 th December:	11am - All-age Nativity Worship
Monday 19 th December:	6.30pm - Carol Singing at Lochduhar Care Home
Saturday 24 th December:	7.00pm - Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 11.15pm - Watchnight Service
Sunday 25 th December:	11am - Christmas Day Service with the Sacrament of the Lord's Table
Sunday 1 st January 2017:	11am Worship

Stewardship

The Stewardship Campaign of 2010 had a positive effect on the sacrificial offerings of the congregation.

Unfortunately over the last years, the effect has diminished through a decline in membership; something which most congregations know all about. I wonder though, if you could review your own personal giving to Maxwelltown West Church and perhaps see if you are able to give the cost of a cup of coffee (around £3) per week extra - it would make such a difference to the finances of the church.

Kirk Session

At our latest meeting of the Kirk Session on 7th September, various items of ordinary 'housekeeping' were dealt with on the agenda, e.g the appeal for an elder to fill the role of Presbytery Elder for the ensuing period after David Johnson stands down from the post in the next year; the need for a Finance Committee chairperson - no-one so far having stepped forward to take this fairly undemanding but important job; a final report on elders visits to the Scout Group was given by Gordon Little; Patricia Jardine gave a timely reminder of the need to order cards for Christmas distribution by elders; and several other regular matters.

It was further decided that we would no longer continue with the issue of formal communion cards, but instead would trial an informal invitation to join us in celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The need for office bearers - (trustees) - elders and deacons to fill vacancies which have occurred due to ill health, transference and other issues, was touched upon.



A Fundraising Committee is in the early stages of being set up to come up with suggestions as to how we can supplement our income giving, for charities and other purposes. So far, one proposal is for a Charity Shop to be held in the former Olivers Bakery unit near the mid-steeple. This may be held in early/mid February and further notification of this will be made in the near future. Helpers will be required to staff the shop in shifts and we will appeal to members and friends to consider an early 'spring clean' of any suitable but unwanted goods.

We look forward to a busy November and Christmas period.

D C, Session Clerk

World Church Team

In our communications with Winnie Owuor in Bondo, we learn of just what busy and industrious lives they lead. The weather has been extremely hot and dry, as usual, and they have had to use lots of irrigation for their crops. This has not been helped by the constant fluctuations, but upward trend in the price of fuel.

The school is now registered with the Ministry of Education and staff are sitting joint zonal examinations to gauge their performance set against other neighbouring government-run schools. Two of the teachers attend teacher training college in the school holidays, with their fees paid for by the income from the fish cages, which also supplements the school feeding programme - an example of self-sufficiency at work.

What they need most now is to repair and refurbish their three semi-permanent classrooms, making them permanent. New desks and chairs are also needed. Another priority is a proper kitchen, as at present they cook in the open.

You will see from the Gift Catalogue which accompanies this "Contact" that help with these two projects – classrooms and kitchen – is the main focus for our fundraising efforts for Bondo this Christmas.

Winnie writes, "We are more than grateful for your assistance, friendship and thoughts and prayers for us. May the Lord bless you all at Max West."

In contrast to Bondo, the weather in Mathia has been unseasonably cold and wet. John writes that it hasn't been this cold for over ten years.

The congregation have now received the inscribed bible from Max West, after a lengthy journey and a thorough examination by Kenyan Customs and Excise.

Completion of the Mathia Church building has come to a halt because of lack of funds. The congregation are holding a Gift Day in November, and John Njeru is taking part in a three-day sponsored bike ride around the foothills of Mount Kenya. Good luck to you John and may the wind be at your back!

Again in the Gift Catalogue, our fundraising for Mathia is solely for the funding of bursaries for the education of young people. These have proved to be most successful and it is heartening to hear of Mathia graduates who are now in employment.

Thank you for your continued support for the Max West Kenyan projects and our links with other members of the church family.

D J, World Church Team

Emily Smith and Jamie McClennan Concert - 30th September

The Emily Smith and Jamie McClennan concert started at 7.30 on 30th September to not quite a full church, with 168 tickets sold. The result was that we had a splendid evening with great fellowship and wonderful entertainment. The night was a financial success, leaving a profit of over £1,300 after all costs were met.

My thanks go to everyone who helped make the night so successful, from ticket sellers, both before and on the night, to those who made tray bakes and scones for the interval and to the members of the Social Committee who tirelessly organised the supper and arranged it so that it went like clockwork.

An evening like this does not just depend on the wonderful voices and musical talent of Emily and Jamie though, although they were clearly a great success with everyone there. It also depends very heavily on the atmosphere created in the place where the concert is held. Maxwelltown West Church can really hold its head up. Every single person I spoke to on the night commented on the warm and friendly atmosphere. The concert brought many people into the church who had never stepped over the door before; one couple I showed through the hall to the church were amazed by the spread on the tables for the supper and after the concert

went out of their way to tell me how much they had enjoyed, not just Emily and Jamie, but the whole experience.

Well done everyone and again many thanks to all who supported this great evening.

D W

Maxwelltown West Church History –Ministers of our Church

The seventh minister of our Church (1908-1914) James McNeill Little, like his predecessor, was born in Edinburgh. Born on 2nd June 1873, he was the 3rd child and 2nd son of Jacob Little and Margaret McNeil. Jacob was a former Sergeant Major in the Royal Artillery and a Chelsea Pensioner who worked as a Compulsory Officer.

James was educated at George Watson's College and the University of Edinburgh where he studied Classics. He then moved to New College Edinburgh where he trained for the Ministry. He was licensed by the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh and served as assistant in Skelmorlie and Edinburgh John Knox. In October 1898, aged 25, James was ordained and inducted to Gateshead-on-Tyne Park Terrace Presbyterian Church.

In Edinburgh on 19th September 1899, James married Jeanie Wark Robertson, aged 25. James moved to Sunderland Trinity in 1902.

On 4th March 1904, Jacob Little died from cancer. His grandson, James and Jeanie's first child, James Robertson was born in October of that year.

James McNeill Little was inducted to Maxwelltown on 23rd April 1908. During his ministry he took the Church to the People by having services in the country areas of the parish and during the summer, open air services in Market Square. James, along with his wife, expanded the involvement of the church with young people through the Men's Own and the Girls' Auxiliary.

On 9th April 1909, Margaret Little, aged 70, died in Edinburgh.

On 10th of April 1910, James and Jeanie's Daughter, Margaret McNeill Little, was born in the Church Manse, Maxwelltown.

In November 1914 as the congregation became increasingly involved in the war, James accepted a call to St Mark's UF Church in Glasgow. In 1916 the couple's 3rd child, Jean Webster Little was born.

During his time at St Mark's, James served with the Scottish Churches Huts, (1917-18) continuing his involvement with young people.

James moved to Nairn High in 1921 where he died, aged 69, in 1943 as the result of an accident. Jeanie Wark Little died, aged 82, in 1971.

James Robertson Little married in 1931 and Margaret McNeill Little (a doctor) married in 1939. Jean Webster Little never married and died in 2006

B W

Book Review

THE WAR ON WOMEN (and the Brave Ones Who Fight Back)

by Sue Lloyd - Roberts, published in 2016 by Simon and Shuster Ltd.

When I was asked to review this book, I found I had firsthand experience of some of the effects of the abuse. While working in rural Kenya for 2 years as a nurse/midwife for VSO, I had to deal with the effects of abuse of women on a daily basis. As a member of Amnesty International for over 20 years, I have campaigned on many of these topics, and met women at conferences who have been imprisoned and abused.

Sue was a multi-award-winning journalist who started her 30 year long career at ITV, before moving to the BBC. The book takes you on a journey examining women's lives in many areas today. She acts as a mouthpiece for the brave women who challenge wrongdoing, showing courage in spite of their fears; the ones who are fighting back. Work as a video journalist did not stop with her films. She joined campaign groups and fundraised. She never let go of the stories, nor the people in them. She took great risks, visiting all corners of the world, to remote, dangerous places, along with her cameraman. She entered countries, travelling around interviewing very dangerous and powerful people, showing her bravery. She had a strong sense of the injustice when Human Rights are violated. She was also a good actress and master of disguise. It angered her that TV and news bosses were reluctant to publish the subject matter in this book. They considered that the public would find the subjects distasteful.

Sadly, Sue died in October 2015, before she finalised the book, but her notes and completed work were sufficient to publish it. The introduction is written by her daughter, who gives an insight into Sue as a person, mother, wife and journalist. Each chapter is well referenced with published sources and legal background. Historical aspects, where relevant today, are also given. Interestingly it was a source close to home which prompted her to write the book - the story from Ireland. The recent film 'Philomena' starring Judi Dench highlights this.

There are 12 chapters, covering various abuses which include:- F.G.M. (The Guild project for this year); The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo: Women in Argentina's Dirty Wars; Ireland's Fallen Women: A Story of Religious Persecution; Saudi Arabia: The World's largest Prison; The Abuse of Women in Tahrir Square in Cairo, during Egypt's Arab Spring; Trafficking of Women in Europe, including areas under UN 'protection'. Also exposed by Sue are forced marriages and so called 'honour killing' taking place even in our own country. The conclusion is written by Lyse Doucett (BBC Chief International Correspondent).

I would recommend you read this book. It will anger, upset and shock you, but it will inform you. So much of what she reports is known to people in authority or governments.

I would like to end with a quotation from Martin Luther King Jr. - "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter"

E B

This review has been abridged. A full transcript is available.

A Carer's Choice

(by Joy Craven, one of our members who sadly passed away in September)

1. It's best, they say
It's best to let her go away.
It's best, they say.
You've tried so hard, help was not asked,
You must not feel you failed the task,
No shame you can no longer cope,
Our fault it was to give you hope.
It's best, they say.
2. A home, they say
Where she will be looked after well.
A home, they say.
The strain on you is showing through,
You need a change, surroundings new.
Don't worry she'll be happy there,
The staff are kind, they really care.
A home, they say.
3. Forget, they say,
You must think of others now.
Forget, they say.
It's now your children need your love,
Attention which they didn't have.
When you were giving her the care,
They felt you were no longer there.
Forget, they say.
4. Again, I say,
Why do I have to make this choice,
Again? I say.
I have the love within my heart,
To share with each, to all impart.
I must go on. I will decide.
The answer now I must provide.
Again, I say.
5. Who is to say?
This parent-child whose life I
Her thoughts and fears all
Who is to say,
The rightness of the path I find?
If she could but my plans inspire
To help interpret her desire.
She cannot say.

REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS

Good Companions

Although few in number, we are now into our Autumn Session, including a visit to Roseland for a Harvest Service. Can I take this opportunity to invite everybody to join us for our Carol Service on Wednesday 7th December at 2.00 pm.

S H

The Guild

Be Bold – Be Strong, Go in Joy

The Guild session is well underway across the country as we move forward in our strategy 'Be Bold, Be Strong' and the theme 'Go in Joy'.

Next May the Guild will be 130 years old and it is amazing to think back to remember the thousands of people who have gone before us, especially here in Maxwelltown West, as we celebrate 150 years of our church in this place.

In September this year our Annual Gathering in Dundee was attended by over 2,000 people, including two of us from our Guild. The Caird Hall was filled with much chatting, laughter and great singing to the Heart and Soul Swing Band.

The principal speaker, the Moderator of the General Assembly, Rt. Rev. Russell Barr, spoke on the theme 'Go in Joy'. It would be an understatement to say we laughed with his tales of his journey through his ministry. His message was to make a difference to as many people as possible, through The Guild, our Projects and in our daily life as Christian people. We can look forward to his visit on 20th November when we celebrate our 150th Anniversary.

Locally, our first Guild meeting was a great success when The Old Geezers band entertained us with songs, stories and retrained us with "hand jives".

In November our speaker will give a talk on War Memorials.

On Saturday 26th Nov. our Annual Coffee Morning will take place with a Christmas stall and Baking stall from 10am -12 noon, when I hope to welcome many friends and visitors again.

December will have another musical evening and Christmas Lunch to look forward to. Please come along to any meeting and find out about us. You will be very welcome.

A D, Convener

Brownies

The Brownies have been busy working on their Brownie Adventure programme since resuming after the summer holidays. We were able to enjoy the good weather and went for a walk around the town centre looking for various landmarks before having an ice cream. Other evenings have included Brownie Olympics, World Awareness and making strawberry mice. We also held a craft bake-off when boxes were wrapped with paper and then decorated to look like cakes.

Before the October holidays, we were joined at a Promise Celebration by family and friends of our five new girls who made their Brownie Promise. We have three girls joining us after the holidays which will take us to capacity, but will be pleased to take enquiries for prospective new Brownies for the future. Interest should be registered at www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested or please speak to a Leader.

J McE, Brownie Leader

	Church Flowers	Memorial Vase
January		
1st	VACANT	Mrs. L. McWhan
8th	VACANT	Mrs. A. Milligan
15th	Mrs. O. Woods	Mrs. B. Ivins
22nd	Mrs. M. McLeod	Mrs. M. McLeod
29th	Mrs. R. Slack	Mrs. E. Wilson
February		
5th	VACANT	Mrs. M. Wallace
12th	Mrs. Mgt. Wallace	Mrs. F. Saddington
19th	Mrs. M. Kingan	Mrs. P. McKenzie
26th	Mrs. M. Wallace	Mrs. S. Aird
March		
5 th	VACANT	VACANT
12th	Mrs. J. McEwan	Mrs. E. Riddick
19th	Mrs. E. McNay	Mrs. H. Cross
26th	VACANT	Mrs. M. Bryden

If you would like to take a vacant date or help to arrange church flowers, please contact A D.



A Christmas Message from our Friends in Mathia Church



150 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

**THE PARISH MINISTER, ENTIRE
CONGREGATION OF P.C.E.A MATHIA CHURCH:**

Wishes you a very successful
celebrations during this festive occasion.
God be with you, shine His face upon you
and Receive favour in every step you
make in your lives.

Ps.31:1-2 " In you, O Lord, I have taken Refuge...
be my rock of refuge,a strong fortress to save me"