





The Manse  
December 1999.

Dear Friends,

Anyone crossing the Forth Road Bridge this year must have seen the digital numbers on the Railway Bridge, to mark the countdown for the year 2000, the next Millennium. Much has been made of this event, at times, grossly exaggerated “hype” in terms of media coverage.

“Countdown” is a word used in many contexts other than the Millennium.

It is used in the preliminaries to the launch of a Space Probe from Cape Canaveral.

It is the name of a very popular TV programme of some intellectual status, requiring great expertise with words and numbers. Many are devotees of this programme, and feel cheated if it is interrupted or missed. Once I incurred a member’s displeasure by telephoning in the middle of “Countdown”!

It is also applicable to Christmas with the world of commerce constantly reminding us of the remaining number of shopping days left to Christmas. For myself, I would want to speak more in terms of “Build-up” to Christmas rather than “Countdown”, with its connotations of an event being over once the countdown has been completed.

It is to be hoped the countdown to the Millennium will not overshadow the build-up to Christmas. For, in a sense, the two

events ought not to be at variance, but complementary.

All Millennia, to date, take the date of the Birth of Jesus as the base-line from which all subsequent dating is reckoned, just as the Meridian Line at Greenwich Observatory is the base-line, or “norm” for Latitude and Longitude.

Hopefully the arrival of a New Millennium will prove to be a base-line for much needed improvements in all facets of Human Life all over the world. It IS a fresh start, a new beginning, but also an instance of great potential for eradication of the worst ills of our Life-styles everywhere. Taking the Birth of Jesus not only as a norm for Chronological Measurement but also for Moral Re-discovery would make all the hype of the Millennium countdown truly worthwhile. To establish a real “Christian Norm” would be an occasion of great rejoicing for a new era.

Scholars of the Bible have long debated exactly what constitutes “Normal Christianity”.

Some believe the picture of Jesus as a simple peasant, speaking in simple language and doing deeds of simple love and compassion is all that is required.

Some see the picture of Jesus in some of the later Gospels, like the Gospel of John, as the correct one, one in which Jesus occasionally seems to “float” above the surface of the ordinary world while speaking in language and metaphors understandable only to educated people well versed in Greek, Roman and Jewish Theology and Philosophy.

Some see the Risen and Ascended Christ as preached by St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles and his own Letters as most relevant for our contemporary needs and problems.

At the end of the day scholars tend to the conclusion there was no one “Normative Christianity” against which all others could be measured and judged. Christianity as preached and practised in Jerusalem may not have been precisely similar to that preached and practised in Alexandria, Antioch or Damascus.

Continuing research into the contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls shows conclusively that in Jesus’s lifetime there was no one “Normative Judaism” above all others practised by Pharisees, Scribes, Priests and Levites along with innumerable smaller religious groups and sects.

Therefore, we have no right to claim our Western, Protestant, Presbyterian Church of Scotland form of Christian Belief and Practice as the only correct one, against which all other churches, denominations, sects and groups should be judged. There are as many forms of Christianity as there are people, a cogent reason for Openness and Flexibility towards them rather than Persecution or Bigotry.

At Advent and Christmas we await the birth of One who grew up accepting people for what they were, neither condoning nor condemning. Pharisees, Levites, Scribes and Priests, by vivid contrast, were Judgmental and Condemnatory to the point of real Cruelty.

Jesus said: -

“Don’t judge; you yourself might be judged .....

(Mathew 7,1)

And THEN He extended to each one an offer of Help, Support and Companionship to build a new and better life.

Openness and Flexibility to people and situations set Jesus apart from the religious leaders, lawyers and teachers of his day. He

established a new "Religious-Ethical Norm" by which he invited, even expected, his followers to live. At this time it would be beneficial for us, purporting to be His followers, to take to ourselves these same qualities, personally and collectively.

Equally the same Religious-Ethical Norm would serve well as the Principle on which to enter into life in a New Millennium.

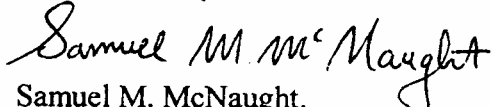
The Story of Jesus's Birth at Bethlehem is not yet another thing to be brought out with the boxes of Christmas decorations and put away after Christmas for another eleven months. It was a crucial moment in our personal history and in the collective history of our world. We do not make it our practice to keep decorations in our homes from one Christmas to the next, nor do we eat turkey, plum pudding and mince pies all year round. We try to keep The Spirit of Christmas lingering on in every day till the next "official celebration", when we bring out traditional, external trappings.

To think, speak and act in this way would be a wonderful way to truly celebrate this Christmas, this coming New Year, and all the years to come in The New Millennium.

May it be so for all of us!

With Best Wishes for Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Yours sincerely,

  
Samuel M. McNaught.

**REV. JOHN HASTINGS MILLAR, MA, 1921 – 1999**

**“A MAN IN CHRIST”**

**2 Cor. 12, 2**

Jack Millar was born in April 1921 in the town of Dalmellington, Ayrshire. He received his formal education at local schools and at Ayr Academy, before proceeding to Glasgow University in 1939.

In 1942 he graduated Master of Arts and embarked on the theological course at Trinity College.

He was licensed by the Presbytery of Ayr in 1946, and became Probationer Assistant in Govan Old Parish Church, Glasgow where he became deeply involved in the pastoral and social work side of the Church at a time when the community was notorious for its bad housing conditions and social environment.

In 1948 he was inducted to the charge of Greyfriars, in the East End of Glasgow, where his training and experience in Govan stood him in good stead in a parish where Poverty was no stranger.

In 1950 a call came to him to return to his native Ayrshire as Minister of Old Cumnock West, a charge he held until he demitted on 30th June 1960 to enter the teaching profession as one of a new breed of specialist teachers of Religious Education.

He taught in Glenwood High School, Glenrothes, Glenrothes High School and Kirkcaldy High School until he retired in the Spring of 1986, his timetable being taken over by my own wife, in a temporary capacity, until a new appointment was made.

I must admit when I came here in 1975 I was a little taken aback to find another, more experienced minister as a member of the congregation. Some of my friends had encountered the same thing in their churches in different parts of the country, and it had not always

been a pleasant experience.

Not so with Jack. He could not have been kinder or more supportive to me, never interfering and rarely commenting on what I said or wrote – except if I had put an apostrophe in the wrong place!

He was my regular “stand-in”, sometimes over long periods of time when I was unwell, and I know the congregation appreciated his work as Preacher and Pastor, while I knew everything was fine in his kind and capable hands. He knew St. John’s better than I did, having acted as Locum in the Vacancy before my predecessor.

On each occasion invitations were extended to him to accept the Call Himself.

He had done the same kind of work in almost every charge in the Presbytery, to the extent he called himself “The Vacant Minister”.

For a time he served as Associate in Denbeath & Methilhill, where he is still held in the highest regard.

Time fails me to tell of the rich diversity of this multi-talented man.

His expertise in language, particularly the Scots dialect owing not a little to his fellow Ayrshire-man, Rabbin Burns.

His inspirational inventiveness contained in his poetry and monologues, with their accurate description of the foibles of human nature.

Possessed of a fine tenor voice, Jack loved to sing in the Church Choir, the Kirkcaldy Choral Society and the East Fife Male Voice Choir. I know the practices of the St. John’s Church choir will never be quite the same again.

Until his health, or lack of it, forced him to stop, Jack loved his golf, which he played to win. I understand the weekly visits from his GP, Dr. Stewart of Markinch – a man who has restored my faith in the medical profession – contained more discussions about Golf rather than Medicine!

Jack had a seemingly endless supply of stories, reminiscences and anecdotes, plus a propensity for dreadful puns, which delighted all who heard them. He brightened our lives and many down hearted, depressed person has good cause to be grateful to him for that aspect of his ministry – I know I am. Jack had little concern for himself and gave unstintingly of himself to help those in need, perhaps born out of what he had experienced as Assistant in Govan Old with a parish where Poverty and Deprivation were beyond description.

He joined the TOC H organisation and for many years was its Scottish Chaplain.

Jack embodied all that was finest and best in the proud tradition of the Ministry of the Church of Scotland.

But, in himself, he was a shining example of what St. Paul called -

“A Man in Christ”

For Jack no artificial distinctions existed between being a Human Being, a Christian and a Minister of the Gospel. He showed us what Discipleship **could** be and **should** be like. In everything his positive faith shone bright and clear, and although we mourn his passing with tears and regret, we serve his memory best by trying to get on with our lives in that same positive manner, not ashamed to let the world know whose we are and whom we seek to serve.

To Beth and the family, our sincere sympathy is extended along with

the assurance that we will remember them in our prayers for all time to come.

*(Part of a Tribute to Mr. Millar given by Mr. McNaught to the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy on 14th September 1999.)*

## **During Recent Months ...**

### **We Welcomed into the Church Family by Baptism ...**

*Angus ROBB,*  
18 Lina Street, Kirkcaldy.



27. 6.99

*Georgia Paris COWIN,*  
C/o Balfour, 33 Winifred Street, Kirkcaldy.

18. 7.99

*Jennifer Jacqueline Isabella CORSTORPHINE*  
C/o Dryburgh, 109 Lismore Avenue, Kirkcaldy.

18. 7.99

*Ryan Derek McGOWAN*  
12 Balmoral Drive, Kirkcaldy.

24.10.99

### **We Celebrate the Weddings of ...**



*Janet COOK, 100 Winifred Crescent, Kirkcaldy To* 10.7.99  
*William COULTER, 28 Forth Park Gardens, Kirkcaldy.*

*Yvonne STENHOUSE, 10 Woodlands Road, Kirkcaldy To* 17.7.99  
*Craig DRYSDALE, 14 Panmure Place, Kirkcaldy.*

*Kerry HARDING, 105 Dallas Drive, Kirkcaldy To* 10. 9.99  
*Fraser RITCHIE, 25 Atholl Terrace, Kirkcaldy.*

*Sarah-Jane WRIGHT* TO 18. 9.99  
*Gordon EMERSON*, Both 116 Main St.  
Coaltown of Wemyss.



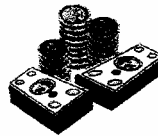
## **We Were Saddened to Lose ...**

*Mr. Wemyss COOK*, 8 Balsusney Road, Kirkcaldy. 11. 8.99  
*Mr. CHAPMAN*, 65 Kennedy Crescent, Kirkcaldy 22.10.99  
*Mrs. CUNNINGHAM*, Chapel Level Home. 30. 8.99  
*Mrs. KEIR*, Barrogil Home, Cluny. 2.10.99  
*Mrs. SMART*, Marchmont Home. Aug. 99  
*Mrs. DARLING*, 6 Stanley Park, Kirkcaldy 23.10.99

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

It is always difficult at this time of year to anticipate the year end result. Expenditure is known, but there is no way that income can be estimated as it varies so much from week to week.

From the figures available at present, I estimate that our expenditure will exceed our income by approximately £3,000. However, this could change for better or for worse by the end of December. Any efforts to improve the situation would be greatly appreciated.



Every year is a difficult year, but 1999 has been particularly difficult because it was decided to postpone the Christian Giving Campaign which had been planned for the Spring. Some form of Christian Stewardship is required. We believe that our whole lives should

show gratitude to God in as many ways as possible, for the benefit of all his people, both here and at home, and in the furthest corners of the world. The people of St. John's are well known for their generosity when they take a thing to their hearts, so please think earnestly and give as generously as God has enabled you of your possessions, but also your abilities and your time.

Thank you for support over the past year.

*Brian A. Booth*  
(Treasurer).

## **CHOIR**

Practices continue on a Thursday evening at 7.15pm in the New Hall. As there was no response to our summer appeal for new members, the appeal is therefore still open. New members will be made most welcome.

In the summer we were saddened to learn of the death of Rev. Jack Millar. Jack was a faithful member of the Choir for many years, and brought to the Choir a wealth of talent. Apart from his contribution to the tenor section, Jack was a great asset when we came to organise our Concerts. He wrote words for some of our music, and was an expert when it came to writing parodies. Choir Practices are not quite the same without his many cheery comments which we greatly miss. Jack will always be remembered for the words and music of his hymn sung to the beautiful tune of St. John's, Kirkcaldy.

The Sponsored Hymn Sing held on 30th October realised £850 and the Choir wish to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the evening.

As Christmas this year falls on a Saturday, there has been a small problem organising the Children's Nativity Play/Gift Service and the

Carol Service by the Choir. It has therefore been decided that the ~~Nativity Play and Gift Service will be held on Sunday~~ 19th December and the Choir will assist with the music at this Service.

Our Musical Evening next year will be held on Friday 24th March, so please pencil that date in your diaries.

Finally, my grateful thanks to the members of the Choir for their tremendous support once again over the past year.

*Brian A. Booth.*

## **CHURCH FLOWERS**

Thank you to everyone who provides the flowers Sunday by Sunday in the Church. The flowers are very much appreciated by the people who receive them, the sick, the bereaved and the elderly of the congregation. The Flower List for the Year 2000 is now in the vestibule of the Church. Please enter your name against the appropriate date.

St. John's have joined with the other local Churches and three Sundays during the year we will be providing the flowers for the Chapel in the Victoria Hospital.

*Senga Booth.*

## FABRIC



Since the last issue of the Echoes, the Fabric Committee carried out its annual inspection of the Church and Manse in August.

Apart from some minor repairs, the Manse was found to be in good order.

Some areas of improvement were identified at the Church e.g. a need to decorate the Counting House, Beadle's Room, plus improvements in the kitchen, including decorating. Some external items of repair were also noted.

General maintenance is always required, many of these items are carried out by our "VOLUNTEERS". BIG THANKS VOLUNTEERS.

The Presbyteries Quinquennial Inspection also fell due to be carried out this year. A firm of Chartered Surveyors, appointed by Presbytery undertook a detailed survey of Church and Manse, also in August. The Surveyor's report has not yet been submitted to us.

Finally, I am always on the look out for more VOLUNTEERS, who are in a trade or good at DIY. If you are such a person, please give me your name.

*Bill Whyte*  
Fabric Convenor.

## **THE GUILD**

We are only eight weeks into our 1999/2000 Session of the Guild and yet it has been all go since day one.

Interesting speakers, successful coffee mornings, great togetherness at Presbyterian rallies, showing off our new Banner which was beautifully made by some of our talented Guild ladies, and to top it all, we celebrated the 70th Birthday of St. John's Guild. This was the Crowning Glory – or the Icing on the beautiful cake – as we started with a commemorative service in the Church – again showing off the Banner – followed by a Party Lunch at the Victoria Hotel, with us all reminiscing in the way we love to do.

We look forward to the rest of our session's syllabus – Concerts, Xmas Parties, Scots Nights and some more interesting speakers.

As I said, it is all go in St. John's Guild so do come and join us on alternate Mondays – afternoons at 2.15pm and evenings at 7.30pm. You will be sure of a warm welcome.

*Jenny Campbell.*

## **ST. JOHN'S BOYS BRIGADE**



We are now well into our new season. The Anchor Boys are now at full strength and the Junior section have also reached their full quota of boys.

The Company and Senior Sections are also now involved in their full winter programme. The highlight of the season was the Church Service when five of the Company section were presented with the second highest award in the BB – the "President's Badge".

We also had a car boot sale in the Victoria Halls as an experiment, and it turned out to be very successful.

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The Seniors played at Bridge of Allan on Saturday 13th October in the National Five-A-Side Football Competition.

*John Methven*

## **RAINBOW GUIDES**

*'I will do my best to love my God and to be kind and helpful'*

For the first few weeks of term we looked at 'Fashion', concentrating on the latter part of this Century. We had a 'Love & Peace (sixties) Night'; a 'Swinging Seventies' night; an 'Abba' night and a 'Grease' night. Fortunately we managed to avoid a 'Spice Girls' night. It really surprised us how much of the music from all these eras the Rainbows knew (they just don't make 'em like they used to!).

We have all been busy in the garden where we planted daffodils round Peggy's Tree and a crocus rainbow next to it. The Rainbows were very enthusiastic about this venture, so much so that I will be amazed if most of the bulbs don't come up in Australia!

We had a Halloween Theme Night, when the Rainbows made spider cakes and masks, we played 'pin the wart on the witch' and had party food. It was very much a fun evening and thoroughly enjoyed by the Rainbows and Leaders alike. The Rainbows made some lovely chalk firework pictures to mark Bonfire Night.

At the moment we have two fund raising ventures on the go – A Millennium Teddy Bear Treasure Hunt and something else that I

can't mention as I think a few of you may be receiving them as Christmas presents. We decided to do this rather than hold a sponsored event, which we may do next Spring.

Christmas Time is fast approaching – this is always a lovely time of year to spend with young children. We have various crafts planned to celebrate not only Christmas but also the Millennium.

When Rainbows resumed after the summer holidays we asked the girls to choose names of flowers for all the Leaders, so, I am 'Tulip', Jayne is 'Rose', Lynn is 'Bluebell', Sara is 'Sunflower' and Carly (Girl Guide) is 'Lilly'. My sister, Karen, who helps us out with our crafts, managed to retain her name of 'Auntie Kit Kat'.

As always I would like to express my thanks to Jayne, Lynn, Sara, Karen and Carly for their invaluable help week in and week out. Also, thanks to the parents for supporting all our ventures (however crazy) and to St. John's Parish Church for the use of the halls, which are always so lovely and warm on these cold winter evenings and for the continuous support and encouragement received.

*Andrea Ladyka,*  
Rainbow Guider.

## **DANCING CLASSES**

Being able to dance is a social asset for Life. It is a social grace, a pastime, entertainment and exercise, and above all it is fun.

It is for all ages, the young and the not so young. There are two Dance Classes in St. John's – the Scottish Country Dance Class meet fortnightly in the Small Hall, the numbers are small but we still have an enjoyable evening.

The Ballroom Dancing class which commenced on Saturday 6th November in the Large Hall was very successful with twenty people attending the first session and further interest has been shown. A warm welcome is extended to anyone who is interested.

*May Whyte.*  
(Teacher)

## **MEN'S ASSOCIATION BOWLING**

Our Indoor Bowling session is now well underway with very good attendance. For any new members, we play every second Monday at the same time as the Scottish Country Dancing group. So, gentlemen, bring your wives to the dancing while you join us at the Bowling. A night away from the 'Tele' is a bonus!

*Jim Christie*

## **GET TOGETHER**

What can I say that is different. Christmas will soon be with us, we all know that but did you know that if you join us now, you will be entitled to attend our party on Thursday 16th December and all it will cost you is £4-70 which is the price of the dinner. So what are you waiting for!

*Effie Cooper.*

## **A Letter from Tony McLean-Foreman – Our Missionary Partner in Sri Lanka – October 1999.**

Dear Friends,

As winter approaches you in Scotland, so monsoon approaches us in Kandy. In fact the monsoon season has already arrived and I have got soaked several times in the last week or so. Still, when the sky is clear everything is especially lush and beautiful. It is lovely to see Kandy lake, surrounded by the hills and the jungle with the Temple of the Tooth beside it and Buddhist monks coming and going in their yellow robes, school children dressed from head to foot in spotless white and Sri Lankan girls with their colourful dresses and umbrellas. Unfortunately there is also the roar and smoke of dilapidated buses and melee of traffic charging by – such is life in the Developing World, an inextricable combination of beauty and ugliness.

Recently I have just enjoyed a visit from my brother Matthew who is doing a short tour of Asia. He got involved in taking local church bible studies, and came to stay at the College (Theological College of Lanka) for one night. We enjoyed eating durian which is one of the most exotic fruits of the East. It is a bit of an acquired taste, some of the students love it, others hate it. On far eastern flights it is forbidden on aeroplanes because the skin smells so bad. It tastes like, well like nothing you have ever tasted! Personally I prefer mangostines which are a bit like lychees. At the moment too it is the wood apple season. It is a very strong tasting fruit that is mixed with coconut milk to make the most delicious drink. After tasting all the local delicacies, specially selected by the student connoisseurs, Matthew and I headed off with my student fellowship group to Trincomalee. We stayed in the Methodist Boys home, which is a very hospitable if less than luxurious holiday destination. We had a great time. About twelve of us visited the hot water wells there and thoroughly enjoyed pouring buckets of hot to tepid water over each

other. We went to a totally idyllic tropical beach for a swim and played in the surf. Our driver climbed a coconut tree and cut down about a dozen young coconuts which we opened and drank. In the evening, we visited local families and had some delicious Tamil spicy sea food. After dark, the heavens opened and Trincomalee got its first rain in many months. I thought heaven can't be much better than this.

After the East Coast trip, which not many tourists go to because it is Tamil Tiger country, we joined some expatriate friends of mine and visited the Singharajah (Lionking) rain forest. We had planned to visit the forest on a Sunday and to satisfy my conscience, I decided to visit the local Anglican church on the Saturday to at least find out the time of their services. To my surprise, an ex-student was there and the whole church was engaged in an all night prayer meeting. That was rather more than I had bargained for but I was able to turn up early the next morning for their communion service. Actually, it worked out very nicely because then we had the whole day free to enjoy the forest. The forest was quite amazing; just like these pictures of Amazonia, except on a far smaller scale and being encroached upon by plantations and villages. From there we went on to the Tea country. There is a place in Haputale, on the edge of the tea country where there is an old planters bungalow called Aerie cottage which you can rent. It is on Kelbourne estate – if you ever go to Sri Lanka don't miss it. It must be one of the most beautiful spots in the world. The only disadvantage of some of these rain forests and up country places at the moment is leeches! I don't like leeches and engage in very environmentally unfriendly chemical warfare against them. Salt and cigarettes are the traditional defence method. At one point, after walking through a paddy field for just a minute or so I had ten leeches crawling up my feet and legs.

Now, however, life is back to normal and the College term has restarted. Yesterday we had a minor crisis in that the mother of one of our mature students died. In Sri Lanka, families stay together and

the children think nothing of looking after aged parents, that is just normality. Life is much more a matter of community and the involvement of each age group with the other. The mother who was 97 was staying with her son and his wife in their student house. As soon as she died, everyone gathered at Nelson's house and his grief became community property. Everyone was involved. Everyone went to see the body. There is no such thing as privacy in Sri Lanka. No doubt lectures and calendars will go by the board and a bus will be hired for the students to go down to the old lady's home village at the coast for the funeral. When I came to Sri Lanka, I used to think that the infinite flexibility here regarding timetables and efficiency was a bad thing, now I am not so sure. Maybe they enjoy life more. It makes you wonder about what really matters. Sri Lankans don't care about things that would really bother you or me.

Life in the Scotskirk too continues as normal. We have our harvest thanksgiving service on Sunday. The minister's wife Pearl has just returned from a trip to South India. She has a heart condition and diabetes – many Sri Lankans have diabetes. She went to India to take a special treatment. There are many interesting forms of medicine out in this part of the world. This particular treatment involved water and clay. Because they say mankind was originally made out of water and clay, these are thought to have healing properties. After the mud baths and special diet, including grass and water – which they call juice! - Pearl and sister went off to visit relations; they originally come from Kerala. The sisters were able to meet their maternal aunt who they had not seen for over 50 years. So they all had a wonderful time. Apparently the old people in Kerala are all in marvellous health; they have a natural diet involving a very few refined foods and lead an active life – which combined with the occasional mud bath seems to do the trick.

Pearl's husband George continues to hold the fort at the Scotskirk while his wife gallivants about. The church is growing, I preached on Sunday to a full house and we have two afternoon services.

Once a month we also have a special Tamil service. The growth of the church is really a kind of small miracle. I think that it must be due to George's prayers and sincerity. Of course there are many problems but amidst them all, God continues to work.

Well that is my news for the moment. Every blessing to you all.

*Tony.*

***Dear Boys and Girls,***

I hope you are all fine. Thanks for the cards and pictures that you sent me. As I write, the monkeys are running over my roof and making a terrible racket and the dogs are chasing them and barking their heads off! I was thinking of buying one of these really BIG water guns to fire at them. It wouldn't hurt them but it would give them a mighty fright. The man next door is very keen for me to get one when I next come back to Scotland – you can't buy them here. He and his sons and dog have a constant battle with the monkeys because they have a lot of fruit trees in their garden. Of course they can all shout and bang and bark and jump up and down with rage but the monkeys just sit up in the trees and laugh and eat the fruit.

Recently I visited the rain forest and we saw some very interesting and big monkeys high up in the canopy. They were very shy but it was great fun spotting them with the binoculars.

The students and people at the College where I work have a lot of projects on the go at the moment. One of the garden workers has a cow that has just given birth to a calf. I have not gone to see it yet because there are so many leeches down at the cowhut. Two of the students have been busy cutting up an old tree trunk from which they are to make stools and a table. When they are finished they are going to invite me round for a meal – a carry out supplied by me of their favourite food (specially fried rice) and we will eat it at the

table sitting on the stools!

The other day I got a surprise invitation to a school. We sat in the College chapel and sang together. The chapel is a beautiful building that has no walls. You don't need walls in Sri Lanka because it is never really cold. In fact it is nice to have a breeze blowing through. The Sri Lankans are very good singers and dancers. They are not all that shy about joining in and doing things. That is a good lesson for us.



## CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Saturday 27th November saw our halls packed with lovely goods and most of all people. We raised the magnificent sum of £2755. In less than two hours.

The Committee would like to thank everyone who in any way donated to the Fayre and for all their hard work. We had a new stall this year which proved very successful and this was beautiful gifts made of wood. Many lovely Christmas Presents were bought at St. John's Church. Also thank you to Santa Claus who delighted the children by popping in and giving us a visit.

THANK YOU ALL ONCE AGAIN FOR SUPPORTING OUR CHURCH.

## LAUGHTER – the best medicine?

A little girl was saying her prayers – ‘God bless my mother and father, by brother Terry, my Gran, my friend Susan and God bless my friends in Brownies. And God, please take care of yourself, ‘cos if anything happens to you we’ve had it!’

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A drunk man staggered on to a train and sat next to a vicar. He started reading the newspaper, then he turned to the clergyman. “Tell me,” he slurred. “What causes arthritis?” Seeing an opportunity to lecture the man the vicar decided to try and show him the error of his ways. “It’s caused by immoral living, too much drinking and smoking and sins of the flesh,” he said. “Oh, really?” said the drunk. “It says here that the archbishop has got it.”

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For the past year or so my husband has helped count the collection money after Church. One Sunday a visitor placed a cheque for £200 in the plate. After the service, my husband congratulated the priest on the large donation. “I’m sure it was because of your wonderful sermon,” he gushed. “Really,” replied the priest. “If you can’t be more honest than that , how can I trust you to count our money?”



*One or two top Holy Bloopers which actually appeared in various church bulletins:-*

Potluck supper. Prayer and medication will follow.

For those of you who have children and don’t know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement on Friday afternoon.

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*Finally a personalised prayer to be appreciated by the computer nerds!*

The Lord is my programmer, I shall not crash.  
He installed His software on the hard disk of my heart:  
All of His commands are user friendly.  
His directory guides me to the right choices for  
His name sake.  
Even though I scroll through the problems of life,  
I will fear no bugs, for He is my backup.  
His password protects me.  
He prepares a menu before me in the presence of my  
Enemies.  
His help is only a keystroke away.  
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days  
of my life, and my file will be merged with His and  
saved forever.

Amen.



To be able to think of the future without worrying is wonderful. But the luckiest thing of all is no longer being tied to the past.

*John McCarthy*  
Former Beirut Hostage.

A Prayer for the Millennium from The National Bible Society of Scotland –

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father in Heaven,  
Hallowed be your name.  
Your Kingdom come,  
Your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil,  
For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever.

Amen.

