

The Manse  
December 2000

Dear Friends

As part of the School Holiday in October, my wife and I spent a few days in the area around Manchester. Near the famous Old Trafford sports ground a new shopping mall, the Trafford Centre, rivals the Metro Centre at Gateshead in size and in the number of retail outlets.

Unusually, it has a "Prayer Room", tucked beside a large McDonald's restaurant on the Upper Level. It is wedge-shaped, quite spacious, carpeted, plain walls and a lot of glass letting in a good deal of light.

Along one wall are half-a-dozen wooden reading-cases with glass fronts, at average chest height. Each case contained the holy writings of our multi-faith culture:

- "Bhagarad Gita" – Buddhism
- "Koran" – Islam
- "Tanach" – Jewish Old Testament in Hebrew
- "The Bible" – Christianity
- "St. Benedict's Rule" – Roman Catholics
- "Book of Mormon" – Mormonism

Above the entrance was a large wooden cross. On one wall was a statue of Christ the King with the Bleeding Heart. On the shortest wall were "Praying Hands". On a table were various garments, appropriate to each faith – prayer mats for Muslims, shawls and skull caps for Jews, etc. On the wall opposite the Christ the King statue was a black mark, with the printed legend underneath it:

- "This is the direction for Due East.  
Face this way for Mecca."

Clearly, the Muslims were taking no chances for their worshippers. Praying in the wrong direction would be useless, a waste of time, even sacrilegious. To ensure worship and prayer was effective, it was necessary to face in the right direction, towards the Source of the Religion.

I admit I felt a sense of envy and admiration in respect of the Muslim faith, which gave explicit instructions and directions for its worshippers to find the Source of their belief and faith.

For many today, who once had a strong faith, have felt that faith slipping from them because of pressures, disappointments, misfortunes and traumas in their lives. They would like to find their faith again, but do not know which way to go to find it. Perhaps we turn back to earlier times in our youth when we found faith first of all, and to the place of our birth, which is "home" no matter where we live now.

As I approach retirement, I realise I have lived longer OUT of my native Glasgow than IN it. Kirkcaldy has been "home" for the major part of my working life. Yet Glasgow still is "home" even though I have no physical base there.

For me, it is the Western setting sun which pulls me to the University Chapel on the green covered mount overlooking the River Kelvin winding its way to the greater River Clyde and on down to the Western Sea until it laps the shores of the New World, where many friends wait to welcome me in other homes as dear as my own here.

It was not to the West, but to the East the Three Wise Men, in Matthew Chapter 2, turned to find the Source of the Heavenly Mystery in the sky. To them, the unusually bright star was a clue

that it was leading them in the direction to find the Source of the Mystery, to find knowledge and belief.

They may have felt that a New Day was about to dawn, one lasting more than the normal 24 hours, the first of an infinite number of days making up the Eternal Kingdom of God.

A New Sun was about to rise, not a Star or Planet, but a human being who is God made Flesh. That Sun, spelt with “u” or “o”, would never set or grow cold and dark.

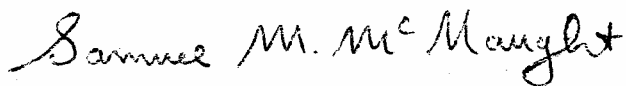
On Easter Day, 30 years later, the faith of the Three Wise Men was more than justified. The Source of Christian Faith is found both in the events of Christmas and Easter.

We might envy Muslims with their very definite guidance mark to help them find the Source of their Inspiration and Belief. As Christians, we may think such help is not necessary. We believe we know the direction in which to look and travel to find the Source of our Belief at this Christmas time.

Read God’s Word. Pause and reflect on it and on our lives amid the frenetic bustle calling itself “Christmas”. Wouldn’t it be shattering if we found that all our lives we have been looking and travelling in the wrong direction?

A Peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Samuel M. McNaught". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Samuel M. McNaught  
*(from a sermon preached during Advent)*

**The following couples were married .....**

Lynn Diamond, 36 Pentland Place, to  
Gordon McCowat, 44 Cairnwell Place, on 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Donna Allan, 28 Braehead Road, to  
Scott Lawson, Glenrothes, on 10<sup>th</sup> June

Julie Wright, Glenrothes, to  
Gordon Stewart, 2 Culzean Crescent, on 17<sup>th</sup> June

Kirsty Morrison, 48 Turnberry Drive, to  
Neil Davidson, Mintlaw, Aberdeenshire, on 15<sup>th</sup> July

Karen Jack, 26 Barnton Road, to  
Craig McGowan, 23 Canmore Gardens, on 12<sup>th</sup> August



***Congratulations and Best Wishes to Mr. & Mrs. J. Reid, 17 Percival Street, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2000. They were married at Inveriel North Church on 4th September 1940 by Rev. A. McPherson.***

**Get Together**



Calling all original members who came from the start. We are hoping to have a real get together soon, so do contact us, any Thursday, at the Church, tel. 201723. Other contact numbers are:

Agnes Rae: 261869

Mary Struthers: 266486

Effie Cooper: 265041

Christine Greig: 201719

# Fabric

Bill Whyte, Fabric Convener



## The Church and Halls

Items of repair and replacement continue to be required, examples being the renewal of emergency lighting units and glazing repairs caused by vandalism. These, together with countless other repairs, keep the Fabric Group on its toes.

Roddy Sellars is currently dealing with the practical implications of installing a radio microphone system and it is hoped that this will bear fruit soon. This has been possible as a result of a very generous bequest by a former member of St. John's, the late Miss Mabel Young.

The replacement of the vinyl floor covering in the lesser hall is being looked at now. Various contacts are being pursued and hopefully we can tap a source for materials. If *you* know any contact points, please let me know.

## The Manse

It has been necessary to replace the damaged up and over garage door – our Insurers met the main part of the cost, although we had to meet a damage excess.

The electric oven unit in the kitchen has been replaced following a fault, and in this case our Insurers met the total cost. The unit was installed by our “live wire”, Jim Christie. Thanks, Jim!

## General

It is the Fabric Committee's wish to improve the Church's kitchen facilities and also a much-needed upgrade of the decoration in the large hall. Unfortunately, we do not have the funds at present but we keep hoping – some day.

My grateful thanks to all who have helped in the maintenance of our property.

# St. John's Women's Group

Irene Wood (tel. 267995)

Session 2000/2001 is our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. The Group began in September 1970 as St. John's Young Wives and Mothers Group, which later became St. John's Young Women's Group and eventually St. John's Women's Group.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Group had a membership of 40. We met each Tuesday evening from September to May. I'm sure many people remember our concerts, fashion shows and demonstrations.

Our syllabus this session is, as usual, very varied, with our Christmas Dinner on 12<sup>th</sup> December closing our meetings this year.

In 2001 we re-commence meetings on 9<sup>th</sup> January with a New Year Quiz. Among the other meetings later next year we have a joint meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February with the ladies of the Guild: "My Faith, My Flowers", visits to Kingdom FM in Glenrothes, to the Adam Smith Theatre and a car treasure hunt. Our Spring Jumble Sale will be on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

Our membership has gradually decreased over the years. At present we have 12 members, meeting usually every two weeks on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm in the New Hall. A very warm welcome will be given to ladies of the congregation and friends to come and join us. Go on!

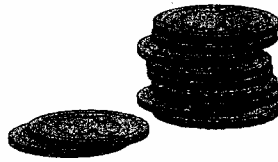


As a member of any church committee will tell you –  
after all is said and done,  
there's a lot more said than done!



# Treasurer's Report

*Brian A. Booth, Treasurer*



## Christian Giving Campaign

After considerable discussion over the past year, the Congregational Board has decided not to go ahead with the Christian Giving Campaign in the Spring of next year. This decision was reached after contacting several local congregations where similar campaigns had been held over the past few years. These congregations reported that there was little to show for the effort involved.

However, enclosed with this copy of "Echoes" is a Christian Giving Offering Card, which you may wish to use. I hope the card will encourage you to:

- Review your Givings
- Request Offering Envelopes if you do not already use them
- Give by Standing Order through your Bank if you so wish
- Give through Gift Aid, and
- Receive a copy of Life & Work monthly

At 15<sup>th</sup> November, the anticipated deficit was 2000 was approximately £4,500. Of course, hopefully, this figure may be reduced (as in previous years) in the remaining weeks of the year.

## Gift Aid

Enclosed also is a Gift Aid leaflet entitled "How to make your money worth more". Please read this leaflet which explains clearly how the Gift Aid Scheme works. If you have not already completed a Gift Aid Declaration Form, and now wish to do so, please complete the form on the back page of the Leaflet and return it to Mr. Stuart O'Malley, Deed of Covenant and Gift Aid Treasurer, 106 Mellerstain Road, Kirkcaldy.

On behalf of the Congregational Board, I wish to thank you all for your continued support, financial and otherwise, throughout 2000.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas.

## **Some of the events organised at St. John's for 2001**

- Bruce Davies, singer, guitarist and songwriter, in Concert on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2001 at 7.30pm.
- Dunfermline Strathspey & Reel Society on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2001 at 7.30pm.
- Joint Concert by the Kevock Choir and Traeth Male Choir from Angelsey on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2001 at 7.30pm.
- Concert by the East Fife Male Voice Choir, in memory of the late Rev. J.H. Millar, on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2001.

For tickets or further information, please contact Brian and Senga Booth, Bob Docherty, Doreen Johnston, Sandra Marshall or Audrey O'Malley.

## **Choir**

*Brian A. Booth, Organist*



We continue to meet at 7.15pm on a Thursday in the New Hall. I am not going to appeal for new members, as there is always an invitation extended to anyone who may wish to join the Choir at any time.

By the time you read this, we will have visited the Guild on 4<sup>th</sup> December and completed our "Sponsored Carol Sing" on Friday 8<sup>th</sup>

December. On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, we will be assisting the Sunday School with their Nativity Play.

As we approach once again the end of another year, I wish to thank the Choir for their excellent attendance at the weekly practice and at the Sunday Services. What would we do without them?

## **The Guild**

*Edith Chapman, Convener*

Our Afternoon and Evening meetings have been very successful, with interesting speakers and a Body Shop demonstration. Guild members went to the Presbyterial Council Autumn Rally which was held at St. Kenneth's, Kennoway, and we were privileged to hear the Scottish Parliamentary Officer, Rev. Graham Blount, who gave us an insight of the Scottish Parliament and its members.

Our Concert in November featured Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan singers, and the proceeds went towards our own Church funds. The members of the Guild finished on a happy note with their Christmas party and dinner. The Guild enjoyed the entertainers for the party, St. John's Choir, who sang various items and some carols. The Afternoon Guild resumes on 8<sup>th</sup> January at 2.15pm and the Evening meeting is on 15<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm, when any new members will be made most welcome.

*Don't put off until tomorrow  
what you can achieve today.  
Working hard until you're finished  
will keep poverty away.*

## The Bible Tree

The  
Bible  
contains  
3,566,480~~  
letters, 810,697  
words, 31,173 ver-  
ses, 1,189 chapters~  
and 66 books - 39 in~~  
the Old and 27 in~~~~  
the New Testament. The  
longest chapter is the 119<sup>th</sup>  
Psalm, the shortest and middle  
Chapter, the 117<sup>th</sup> Psalm. The middle  
Verse is the 8<sup>th</sup> of the 118 Psalms.~~  
The longest name is in the 8<sup>th</sup>~~~~~  
Chapter of Isaiah. The word 'Lord' occurs  
1,855 times, the word 'and' 46,627 times.  
The 37<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah and the  
19<sup>th</sup> chapter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Book of Kings  
are alike. The longest verse is the  
9<sup>th</sup> of the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of Esther.  
The shortest verse is the 35<sup>th</sup> of the  
11<sup>th</sup> chapter of John. The name  
of God is not mentioned  
in the book of  
Esther.  
It  
contains  
knowledge, wisdom,  
holiness and love.