

# ***THE PARISH OF BOWDEN & MELROSE***

## ***Magazine***

***December, January, February 2011***

**Minister's Letter**

**November 2010**

Dear Friends,

May I begin by expressing my thanks for all the messages of congratulations received on my recent appointment as a Chaplain to the Queen in Scotland. As the congratulations were almost always followed by the question, "What does it involve?" I thought I would offer a brief description.

The Chapel Royal, as the College of Chaplains is called, consists of a Chapel Royal in England and in Scotland. As a body the Chapel Royal originally comprised a group of priests and choristers to attend to the spiritual needs of the monarch. In England there are 36 chaplains who are on a rota for conducting worship in the Chapel Royal (the building) at St. James' Palace, usually in the Queen's absence as she regularly worships at Windsor. In Scotland there are 10 appointed chaplains and 2 domestic chaplains, the ministers of Crathie and the Canongate in Edinburgh. For the Scottish chaplains the duties normally include preaching at Crathie following appointment and when the Queen is resident at Balmoral and attending occasional events at Holyrood. The appointment is until one's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, and so my appointment followed the Rev. Charles Robertson, formerly minister of the Canongate, reaching that age in October. There will be a Service of Installation sometime in the New Year, the date and venue still to be agreed, and I would be delighted if any of the congregation should wish to attend.

It so happened that my appointment was immediately followed by a visit of the Scottish Chaplains to the Chapel Royal in England, which explains why I had no sooner returned from the visit to Israel and Jordan than I was flying back down to London. It was an extremely enjoyable and interesting visit, the first afternoon and evening being spent at Windsor Castle and consisting of a visit to St. George's Chapel, evensong and then a reception given by the Queen. The second day included a visit to the Tower of London and St. James' Palace.

Again my thanks to retired colleagues who conduct worship in my absence and also to the Rev. Sheila Moir, minister of Newtown, St. Boswells, Maxton and Mertoun who provided pastoral cover. I would especially like to thank at this time the Rev. Haisley Moore who keeps retiring but has now, I think, this time finally retired! Haisley was for a number of years our Pastoral Associate, then continued to conduct worship and provide pastoral care during my absence. His contribution to the life and worship of the congregation has been much appreciated. It is also appropriate at this time to offer congratulations to John Butcher, one of our elders, who this year celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being appointed first a lay preacher in the Methodist Church and then a reader in the Church of Scotland. At a recent meeting of Presbytery John was thanked for the significant contribution he has made to the life of the Church.

Our project fund, started two years ago, has continued to receive donations throughout the year. The fund is for our ongoing support for Tabeetha School, the Church of Scotland school in Jaffa, the Al-Shurooq School for Blind Children in Beth Jala, near Bethlehem,

who are greatly appreciating their new premises, and our new twinning with the congregation of Chiniwali in Zomba, Malawi. A DVD was recently received from Chiniwali of the presentation of mosquito nets to children and the elderly desperately in need, and recording their thanks. Then on the recent visit by members of the congregation to the Al-Shurooq school we were able to present a cheque for £2500. Those who were there are best able to tell how our support for the school is so much appreciated. As indicated in the last magazine the Kirk Session have agreed to fund the children's holiday for the next 5 years at a cost of £2000 annually as the school was finding it difficult to fund. While acknowledging that many have been affected by the current economic climate I would ask those that can, in this Christmas season, to give generously to support this fund and the work it makes possible. Donations can be made at any of the Christmas Eve services of worship, or at any other time if clearly marked for these purposes.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas season.

Yours sincerely

**An invitation to Holy Communion on the last Sunday of January  
and February at Bowden Kirk, 9.30a.m and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March  
at Melrose Parish Church, 11.00a.m.**

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

As announced at church on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October our congratulations to Alistair on being appointed a Chaplain to the Queen In Scotland. It is an honour, the news of which was received with great pleasure in the congregation and beyond. We wish him well in this new appointment. To mark this a Celebration Lunch will be held in the church hall following worship on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December to which all are welcome.

**Ewan Rintoul**

## **GUILD NEWS**

To date this season, the Guild ladies welcomed Rev. Haisley Moore to their Dedication Service in October. We have then gone on to enjoy talks on the work of Traidcraft in Bangladesh by Jenni Young, followed by an inspiring afternoon of demonstration of Christmas ideas by Kath Runciman.. As I write this, we are looking forward on 18<sup>th</sup> November to a fund-raising event comprising Palm Court background music to facilitate an enjoyable afternoon of fellowship over tea, cakes, and conversation. There will also be a raffle for funds. On 25<sup>th</sup> November, Rev. Clarence Musgrave is speaking on Interfaith Support (covering our chosen Project for this year – looking at the problems of Israel/Palestine). As he will be speaking on the Israel/Palestine situation, we are extending this to an open meeting for anyone to come along who is interested. Our Christmas lunch date had to be changed from 9<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> December. However, we are much looking forward to our Festive meal being in the dining-room of Abbotsford House – which should make it a very special event – an exciting prospect.

Into the New Year, Rev. Alistair Bennett is coming on 13<sup>th</sup> January to speak about the Church visit which he led to Israel and Palestine in October. Again, we would very much welcome those interested within the church, who are not members of Guild, to come along and hear Alistair's talk – it should make for a fascinating afternoon. On 27<sup>th</sup> January, the Guild moves out of the Church Hall for one meeting, which will be held in Priorwood Court at 2.30 pm. Our own members and residents of Priorwood will be treated to an afternoon of varied music by the Tweed Quartet (an amateur string quartet). They will play everything from classical to well known up to date tunes to get your feet tapping. Being Burns Week, we will round off the afternoon singing a few Burns songs, before enjoying an afternoon tea brought in by the Guild ladies. 10<sup>th</sup> February brings a relaxed afternoon of slides touring the Western Isles, guided round by myself, and hopefully bringing back lots of happy memories of the much loved west coast of Scotland. 24<sup>th</sup> February consists of a talk from Debi Crawford who will speak on "The Benefits of Alternative Therapy."

Again lots to think about.

Into March, and the next Church Magazine, the Bowden and Melrose Guild are hosting the World Day of Prayer on 4<sup>th</sup> March at 2.30pm – an ecumenical service for all. This will be followed on 10<sup>th</sup> March by a speaker coming from Elder Voice – wait for the next magazine for details of March/April.

We are a happy band of folk, and would welcome anyone wishing to attend our meetings which are informative, thought provoking, and fun. Come along and give us a try?

## **Elizabeth Fraser**

### **Harvest Thanksgiving**

'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' – the poet's words were echoed at the two Melrose services on Sunday morning. The theme lay in rituals. The youngsters at the family service had shown their interest in painting, but 30,000 years ago for the hunter-gatherer painters of Lascaux it went beyond that. It was a ritual, down in the dark recesses of their caves that helped them to make sense of their world, and when life moved on to pasture and farming this practice went out of use. The Israelites remembered their sojourn in Egypt and their escape to Canaan by the festival of Tabernacles, where they tried to re-create the feeling of existing on the basics and being dependent on God for their food. In the course of time and in prosperity it too went out of use. What about our Harvest Festivals? Are we becoming so far removed, even in the Borders, from an agriculture-based society that they will also go? On the other hand people seem to need reminders of being open to the important things in life, our dependence on the way the world functions, our need to take care of it, our inter-dependence on each other and the desperate need of so many of our fellow human beings for the means of survival.



## **TRAIDCRAFT**

Thank you to all who supported the recent Traidcraft Christmas Sale on 5/6th November where over £2000 of fairtrade goods were bought.

The recent trip to Palestine led by Alistair Bennett resulted in first hand knowledge of the situation for Palestinians leading to a strong demand for Palestinian Fairtrade Olive Oil.

This is still available through Traidcraft and will be on sale as usual after church on 5th December with another chance to buy Christmas cards which support Christian Aid.

Traidcraft products will be available as usual after church on the first Sunday of the month next year.

## **MID-WEEK LUNCH**

Future dates:

Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> December

Margaret's team

This is the Christmas Lunch and tickets are available from Joyce in the office. No payment required until the day.

If you have never been to one of our lunches why not start with this one.

Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> January

Pat's team

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Kath's team

12.15 – 1.30pm – Price £3.00

There is a short Ecumenical Service in the Chapel prior to the lunch for any who would like to attend at 11.45a.m.

## **Pat Mackenzie**

## **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**

Remembrance Sunday saw services around the Parish in Bowden, Darnick, Gattonside, Newstead and Melrose. Our thanks to Rev Bruce McNicol for leading the service at Gattonside. The Ecumenical Service held at Melrose raised some £774.28 for the work of the Earl Haig Fund Scotland.

## **CHOIR AT CHRISTMAS – MELROSE**

For many years the choir has sung at special services like Communion, Christmas etc. and if you would like to join us for this special occasion our first practice is on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 10.00am in the upper room. Further dates arranged Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December, Wednesday 15th December at 7.30pm in the upper room and Wednesday 22nd December at 7.00pm (this will be followed by our Christmas Party!) Please come along and help us make this year's Watchnight Service as memorable as ever. You will be made very welcome.

## **BOWDEN CHRISTMAS GATHERING:**

This is the third year of this highly successful, free event-an opportunity for all ages to get together fortified by mulled wine and mince pies! This year the date is Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December from 3-5 pm in the Village Hall.

## **BOWDEN CAROL SINGING:**

This will take place this year on Sunday 19th December at Bowden Village Hall starting at 6.30pm. A programme of well-known carols will be introduced by the minister and accompanied by St Boswells Silver Band. Come along with a torch or lantern and sing

round the Christmas tree. Event followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

## **CHURCH COFFEE MORNING**

There will be a Church Coffee Morning in Bowden Village Hall on Saturday 5th February from 10am-12noon. There will be stalls for Cards and Traidcraft amongst others. Your support is appreciated.

## **STAMPS, STAMPS, STAMPS.....**

John Dorricott reminds us that after Christmas he would love to have all the used stamps from your Christmas card envelopes in little bundles in his tray at the Gattonside porch.

## **TRIP TO THE HOLY LAND 12<sup>TH</sup> – 22<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER**

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>

The group of 18 were all present and correct for the flight from Edinburgh via London to Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv. We arrived in the very early hours to be met by our Sindbad coach and driver Lufti who would be transporting us for our five days in Jerusalem. Off we went in the dark from sea level to Jerusalem at 2,500 ft above. As we drove the sun came up and the sky was blue. We arrived at St Andrew's Scottish Guesthouse which was to be our home for the next five nights at 6am. The house and adjoining Church were built in 1930 to commemorate the Scots who died liberating the land from Turkish rule during the First World War. After a few hours in bed, we awoke to a lovely buffet lunch and we were off.

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>

Our coach took us to the top of the Mount of Olives in the eastern side of Jerusalem with magnificent views over the Kidron Valley to the Old City. The mount sides are covered with cemeteries, mainly Jewish, since it was believed that the people laid there would be the first to be resurrected on the Day of Judgement. We wound our way down to the Dominus Flevit Chapel built in the shape of a teardrop, said to be where Jesus wept over the fate of Jerusalem. (It was here one of the group's husband was made an offer to take his wife off his hands for a dowry of 8 camels subsequently reduced to 4).

The garden of Gethsemane was wonderfully peaceful with massive olive trees said to date back two thousand years. We then crossed the Kidron Valley to the church of St Peter in Gallicantu, built on the site of the home of the High Priest Caiphas and Peter's denial of Jesus. This church, built in 1932 has a modern appearance and is on three levels, the lowest being ancient caves where it is said Christ spent the night before being taken to Pontius Pilate. In the garden there still exists part of a stairway which Jesus would have taken after the Last Supper, celebrated in an upper room on Mount Zion, to descend to the Kidron valley and Gethsemane.

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>

Yesterday was visiting religious sites of the past; today we were back to the reality of now. To visit Bethlehem we needed our passports to go through the checkpoint in the Wall separating the West Bank from Israel but built largely on Palestinian land.

Our first stop was to the organisation WI'AM, recently awarded a peace prize at the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre. A member of staff explained that this organisation provides a centre of hope for Palestinians through reconciliation and non-violence. He took us to visit the Aida refugee camp, established after the 1948 war by the UN. From the rooftop of one of the homes we could see the extent and the effect of the Wall, 8 metres high, constructed of reinforced concrete.

We then travelled to the Al-Shurooq School for blind and partially sighted children, a truly uplifting experience. The school was started by Helena Shehadeh and has expanded to become residential, caring for 24 children of different ages from the West Bank and Gaza. We had a tour of the building led by the school administrator, a niece of Helena. There were classrooms of 4-6 children, learning Braille, the use of computers, music and English. We were entertained by one class singing "We shall overcome". We saw the dormitories, library and music room. The school aims, where possible, to place the children in mainstream education where further support is offered and a number have gone on to university education including one of the present teachers. Many of the rooms had plaques telling who had donated help and as we went down to lunch we were thrilled to read outside the kitchen "Donated by Melrose Parish Church." The kitchen is fantastic and our lunch tasted even better.

At the Church of the Nativity there were huge crowds and the inside was full of scaffolding. Movement through the building was limited so we opted out of joining huge queues. It has certainly changed how we will sing "O little town of Bethlehem". We continued on to the Shepherds' Fields. No sheep now but back to the sad reality of views of even more settlements being built for Jews.

Friday 15<sup>th</sup>

Our visit to Yad Vashem was to see the new historical museum of the Holocaust. This a long corridor carved into the mountain with 10 exhibition halls coming off on either side each dedicated to a different chapter. It begins with the rise of the Nazis in 1933 and culminating in the death camps.

Our next visit to the Israel Museum centred on the Dead Sea Scrolls, housed in the Shrine of the Book. These are contained in a pavilion which is dome shaped, with water jets continually pouring over it and dark inside to preserve the scrolls. They were discovered by a Bedouin shepherd, when in search of a lost goat near the Dead Sea, he entered a cave and found seven jars containing seven ancient scrolls. Over the next two decades fragments of some 800 more were found in eleven caves. They were written between the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and 68 AD. The shrine is dominated by a display case containing a copy of the great Isaiah Scroll. The surrounding walls contain a mine of information and researchers are still reconstructing thousands of fragments, hoping to unravel the mysteries of the scrolls.

Our day ended as the Shabbat began in the western Wall Plaza with the Jewish faithful coming down to the Wall, singing and praying.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>

Today was our visit to the Old City.

We approached Haram ash Sharif or Temple Mount which became an Islamic holy place with the building of the Dome on the Rock, a majestic structure which dominates Jerusalem. Unfortunately the only entrance for non-Muslims was closed which was disappointing.

We continued our walk through the souk a fascinating system of narrow streets with shops on all side until we came to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre built round what are traditionally the sites of the Crucifixion, Burial and Resurrection of Christ. Since the custody of the church is divided between six denominations it is always very busy but the quieter parts allow for reflections and feelings to rise.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>

Farewell to Jerusalem and on the road to Petra in Jordan.

Breakfast at 6am and on the bus by 6.30 (and this is a holiday!)

Arriving at the Sheik Hussein Bridge at 8.30 the crossing over took two and a half hours but our coach with guide Mohammed was there. Our first stop was Jerash, one of the best preserved and most original Roman cities in the Middle East. On our tour round we heard bagpipes and on reaching the theatre we found four pipers and drummers who on learning we were from Scotland played with increased gusto. We then travelled on to Petra arriving late in the evening but a self service buffet was available for us and a trolley containing a selection of rinks was brought to our table. Alas we discovered they were non-alcoholic - it was a teetotal hotel!

#### Monday 18<sup>th</sup>

Petra became the capital of the Nabataean Empire in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and was the centre of a vast trading empire but by the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD was largely deserted. It was rediscovered by a Swiss explorer Johannes Burckhardt in 1812. The entrance to the city is through the Siq, a 1200 metre-long gorge, set between two iridescent mountainous walls opening out as the façade to the Treasury appears. The 40 metre high façade is carved from the rock which gives Petra its other name - the Rose Red City. From here the path leads to the Outer Siq and a wonderland of sites beyond. It is 4km from the start of the walk to the finish at the museum

Two of our gentlemen went on to climb 800 steps to the monastery.

Two of our ladies decided to go in style in a carriage, actually more like a cart with no suspension.

Three ladies rode camels back - influenced by the likeness of the camel driver to Johnny Depp.

It was a great day for all.

#### Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>

Reluctantly we left Petra and travelled back to the Hussein bridge. En route we visited the great Crusader castle at Kerak, then had lunch at Ma'daba before viewing the 4<sup>th</sup> C mosaics there and nearby Mount Nebo from which Moses is said to have looked over to the Promised Land. On a clear day Jerusalem can be seen but with the heat haze Jericho wasn't even in view. Descending to the Dead Sea we then travelled north up the Jordan valley to our crossing, appreciative of how informative and supportive our guide had been. We met up with our Sindbad driver, Lutfi, who as also so helpful and knowledgeable, having acted as a driver for tour groups for 30 years. Now we were staying in the Scots Hotel in Tiberias.

In 1885 a 23yr old surgeon from Airdrie arrived to set up the Scottish "mission to the Jews". It was decided that the greatest need in the area was a hospital and it was to be open to all but the Christian gospel would be preached.

Initially the hospital offered general care and later became a maternity hospital. In 1959 with the opening of a new state hospital it was no longer needed. It was closed and developed into a guesthouse, again welcoming all regardless of race, creed or colour. In 1999, with the guesthouse now in need of major investment, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland affirmed the importance of retaining the Church's position on the shore of Lake Galilee. Alistair was appointed convenor of the project group and committee responsible for the development, which is now a beautiful hotel with gardens, a 25 metre pool and views of the lake and the Golan Heights, serving as the centre for the Church's work in the Galilee. Last year almost 300 tour groups from all over the world stayed there as part of their Holy Land pilgrimage.

#### Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup>

Next morning we walked down to the Sea of Galilee to board our boat to cross the lake. Asked by the crew where we came from, they responded by raising a Saltire and playing all three verses of Flower of Scotland. Kind though that was, we all felt that silence suited

our mood better in that very special place. Alistair asked for the boat to stop in the middle of the lake and we had a time of reflection. It was very special.

The temperature was even higher (over 100 degrees) that day and we were all glad that our itinerary was at a much gentler pace. Despite crowds there was the opportunity to be moved by being where the Sermon on the Mount was given, where the risen Christ appeared to Peter, and to visit Capernaum, the base for Jesus' ministry, and view Peter's house.

Bringing us back to the present, we visited a Kibbutz, high on the Golan Heights, from where we could look down on Lake Galilee and some of the very first Kibbutzim established on the western lakeshore. Much of their constitution seems to have changed to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century demands, including the provision of pensions. The self-sufficiency remains, with fruit farming, wine production and small industrial units the main activities, having abandoned some of the more exotic enterprises, including crocodile farming, attempted in the past. There is still clearly a strong community spirit with many of the young returning after army service and travelling abroad.

An exciting bus journey down the hairpin bends from the Golan, in occupied Syria, close to the Jordanian border took us back to the southern end of Lake Galilee.

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>

Leaving our lovely hotel and travelling to Ben Gurion airport. A long time getting through customs and security and a mostly uneventful flight back to Heathrow.

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>

Back to a very cold Scotland at the end of a fabulous ten days with a great group.

On behalf of the whole group I would like to thank Alistair for being such an informative guide throughout the whole trip, for taking charge of all the fine details, such as payments to various individuals, which allowed us to enjoy every minute of the Holyland and Petra, without concerns or worries, and above all, for patience above and beyond the call of duty in handling such an unruly lot!!

**Alex Arbuckle**





## 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practise their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden, meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.

- The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.
- Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testament
- Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.
- The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.
- The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
- Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit – Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership and Mercy.
- The eight maids a-milking were the eight Beatitudes.
- Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit – Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.
- The ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.
- The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
- The twelve drummers drumming symbolised the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

So there is your history for today.

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## **PARISH REGISTER**

### **Weddings**

11<sup>th</sup> November          Margaret Thomson & Neil Hoskins, Flat 1, 1 Park Gardens, Glasgow

### **Funerals**

27<sup>th</sup> August                Mrs Pamela Mackenzie, 19 Hareshaw Bank, Tweedbank

9<sup>th</sup> September            Miss Mary Tibble, St Aidan's, Gattonside, Melrose

10<sup>th</sup> September         Dr Andrew Fairbairn, 34 Keyes Gardens, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

14<sup>th</sup> September         Mrs Jemima Scott, 57 Glenburn Avenue, Newtown St Boswells

27<sup>th</sup> September         Mrs Alice Hardie, Birchfield, 14 High Cross Avenue, Melrose

30<sup>th</sup> September         Charles Orchison, 41 Blakehope Court, Tweedbank

11<sup>th</sup> October              Ian Borthwick, Meadowbank, Dean Place, Newstead, Melrose

15<sup>th</sup> October              Mrs Elizabeth Gibson, 4 Newlyn Drive, Melrose

4<sup>th</sup> November            Mrs Alison Gaddie, Rhanna, 2 Dundas Terrace, Melrose

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5 <sup>th</sup> November	Professor Elizabeth Cutter, Barnyard Butts, Gattonside, Melrose
11 <sup>th</sup> November	Mrs Jane Robinson, Waverley Residential Home, Galashiels
15 <sup>th</sup> November	Mrs Margaret Young, Bellenden, Buccleuch Street, Melrose
20 <sup>th</sup> November	Robert Greig, 7 Scotts Place, Melrose