

REVIEW and OUTLOOK

December 2010/January 2011

The Word became flesh ...



and made his dwelling among us.

www.palmerstonplacechurch.com

Scottish Charity No SC004291

MINISTER'S LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

Dear Friends,

There is a familiarity about the Christmas story that we find reassuring in an uncertain world. The characters are so well-known and the scenes that make up the drama have been enacted out year upon year, we notice if any changes have been made and somehow are disappointed. But suppose the story had not worked out according to plan...

- if Mary had refused the angel...
- if Joseph had given up on Mary...
- if Joseph and Mary had not gone to Bethlehem but stayed at home...
- if they hadn't bothered going up to the Temple after Jesus' birth...
- if Anna and Simeon had kept quiet about what they were thinking...
- if the Magi had stayed with their books and not set off to follow the star...
- if the shepherds had remained in their fields with their sheep...
- if Joseph had stayed in Bethlehem and not gone to Egypt...
- if the Magi had gone back to Herod and told him the location of the child...
- if Joseph had settled down in Egypt and raised Jesus there...

So many ifs and buts. These twists in the story never happened, but what can we learn? Maybe we are reminded here that *little promptings from God and our little actions change the course of history*. We should watch for God's promptings in saying yes or no, getting a divorce or staying together, skipping or attending church, or even staying put or moving away from home. God may not send the angel Gabriel or come to us often in dreams but He still speaks and our obedience to His prompting can change the course of our life's history.

The Christmas story contains a marvellous picture of God's plan unfolding in the lives of ordinary people who were open to God's Spirit. Joseph and Mary, the shepherds, the Magi, Simeon and Anna—they show us what it means to trust God in the face of enormous difficulty, and in so doing, they were part of God's plan to bring his Son to this world. Some knew more, some knew less, but none understood in advance all the Father intended at Bethlehem.

Let this thought encourage you today and as we go into 2011. Your life may seem rather mundane, but you never know what God intends to do through you. Who knows? You may be part of something much bigger than anything you can imagine. Let me finish with a Christmas benediction *"May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the Magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever."*

Every blessing for Christmas and for whatever we face in 2011. May you know "tokens of grace" in the midst of life.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DECEMBER

Monday	6	7:30 pm	Kirk Session
Wednesday	8	7:30 pm	PPP Lunch
Thursday	9	2 pm 7:30 pm	Friendship Club Choir
Saturday	11	3:30 for 4 pm	Church Christmas Party
Sunday	12	11 am 3 pm 5:15 pm 6-6:30 pm 6:30 pm	"Be not afraid" Luke 1 Sacrament of Baptism Sutherland Street Music for the season Refreshments "What will you find this Christmas?" Lk2 Evening Service (Holy Communion)
Tuesday	14	7:30 pm	Bridging the Gap Christmas Party
Thursday	16	2 pm 7:30 pm 7:30 pm	Friendship Club Christmas meal Prayer meeting Choir
Sunday	19	11 am 6:30 pm	Nativity Play and All Age Christmas Service Lessons and Carols
Friday Christmas Eve	24	11-11:30 pm 11:30 pm—12:05 am	Coffee and mince pies in the hall Watchnight service
Saturday Christmas Day	25	11-11:40 am	Christmas Day All Age Service
Sunday Boxing Day	26	11 am	The last word on Christmas No evening service

JANUARY

Sunday	2	11 am	New Year Message
Thursday	6	7:30 pm	Prayer meeting
Sunday	9	11 am 3 pm 6:30 pm	Morning service Sutherland Street Service Evening Service-Judges Danger of a Second hand faith"
Wednesday	12	2:15 pm 7 pm	PPP—Personal Perspective on Tonga Christianity Explored
Thursday	13	2 pm	Friendship Club
Sunday	16	11 am 6:30 pm	Morning service "Following Jesus" Evening service "A long suffering God"
Monday	17	7:30 pm	Property and Finance meeting

Wednesday	19	7 pm	Christianity Explored
Thursday	20	2 pm 7:30 pm	Friendship Club Prayer meeting
Saturday	22	12:30 for 1 pm	House group lunch at the Manse
Sunday	23	10:30 am 6:30 pm	St. Mary's Cathedral Evening Service "Breaking the cycle"
Monday	24	6:35 pm	Coordinating Team
Wednesday	26	12:15 pm 7 pm	The Yemen of Yesteryear Christianity Explored
Thursday	27	2 pm	Friendship Club
Sunday	30	10:30 am 11 am 6:30 pm	Kirk Session in Church Hall Sacrament of Holy Communion "Weakness is strength 1 Cor 1 Evening Service "Two special women" Communion in shortened form

WANTED: NEW ELDERS

The Kirk Session is looking for members of Palmerston Place who might become elders of the congregation. The elders are the trustees of the church and responsible for its spiritual leadership. Any member of the church who is over 18 can be an elder. The Session are looking for people who are committed to Jesus Christ and to his church and who would be willing to serve in this role. Session members are expected to attend regularly and to support the worship, fellowship and service of our church. As well as Session meetings, most serve on a Session Team and help support the congregation in a variety of ways.

We are inviting members (and regular attendees) to suggest names of those we might invite to consider becoming elders. If you would like to suggest someone could you write their name on a piece of paper (preferably not "the woman who sits at the end of my row!") and then put your name as the person suggesting and put your suggestion or suggestions into the box which will be clearly labelled in the vestibule of the church. Please pray that God will guide us to the right men and women for this role.

We have been blessed with a team of very faithful elders over the years. Some have recently had to step down as they have become less able. So while we are looking for the right people of any age we are particularly looking for those under retirement age who may help us shape the vision for the years ahead.

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

We welcome David Bogie as the new Convenor of the Service Team who takes over from John Macpherson who died in the summer. David Boyd who has coordinated our Care Van teams over the years is stepping down in the spring and we are grateful for all the work he has done for us.

Colin Sinclair

The Prayer Page

"Love came down at Christmas" - He is the image of the invisible God. Col. 1v15

Let us take time to praise and thank God for his immeasurable love in sending his son to earth.

Thank Him for all the many, many blessings we enjoy, which we so often take for granted.

Let us pray for our families and friends that we may all experience afresh some of the wonder of Christmas, putting the legitimate preparation and fun into perspective.

Pray for those of our members who care for elderly relatives and at the same time are involved with looking after children and grandchildren.

Pray for energy and wisdom.

Let us remember those for whom this season is painful whether due to loss of loved ones or because they are reminded of previous hurts and pain.

Remember those in our city who are homeless, and feel unloved, and let us *thank God* for agencies such as Bethany Christian Trust and Edinburgh City Mission and others who work to provide relief in different ways, offering not only shelter but love and concern.

Pray for faithfulness, patience and grace for the helpers and that they will be blessed as they bless others.

Let us pray for those who are in prison that they will respond to the care given by prison staff, chaplains and others who reach out to them in love. May many of them want to learn of God and have the opportunity to do so.

Pray for those who are victims of crime that they may be helped to deal with this experience.

Let us pray for all the Christmas services, and for those who will attend. May all find a welcome, and a sense of peace and love.

As we start a new year

Pray for our ministers, elders and all in leadership that they may be filled with a fresh desire to proclaim Christ.

Pray for our national Church facing difficult times.

Pray for our Prime Minister, members of Cabinet, MPs; our City Councillors that they may make wise decisions.

May we always **Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

Dorothy Steel



Christmas Greetings

RODDY, AMANDA, & ROSALIND FERGUSON would like to wish their friends and all regulars at PPC a very Happy Christmas. Every blessing for 2011! XXx

BRIAN ROBERTSON

Wishes to thank the many members of Palmerston Place Church for their kindness and wish all from the church much happiness this Christmas and in the New year.

WILLIE-JOHN & JESSIE MACDONALD would like to wish everyone in Palmerston Place Congregation a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

"May everything good from God the Father be yours."

Colossians 1:2b (The Message)

Give thanks and be joyful for Jesus is born—
Happy Christmas and every blessing in 2011.

RON & DOROTHY STEEL

DAVID BOYD wishes everyone in Palmerston Place Church
A Very Happy Christmas and a Good New Year.

DAVID & EILEEN MCCOLL
wish you a peaceful Christmas
filled with love and happy
memories.

I wish all my friends in Palmerston
Place a very happy Christmas
and a good New Year.

ALAN WRIGHT

IAN AND SHEILA SWANSON wish their many friends
in Palmerston Place Church A Very Happy Christmas and
a Peaceful New Year.

MARGARET MOODIE wishes all her friends in Palmerston Place Church
a joyous Christmas and many blessings in the year ahead.



SAMARITAN'S PURSE AND OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2010

By the time you read this article, all the gift-filled shoeboxes recently handed in to our Church will be on their way to Belarus in time for Christmas. This year we collected 240 wonderful shoeboxes from members of the congregation and from the community. They were all colourfully displayed in Church during our special Shoebox Sunday service on 21st November and they were collected the following week, ready to begin their journey overland to Belarus. Your shoe box will be hand delivered to a child in need, asking nothing from them in return. All boxes are given to the neediest children regardless of nationality, political background or religious beliefs.

Thank you all so much for your amazing contribution to this year's Shoebox Appeal. Kind folks gave us gorgeous knitted hats, gloves and scarves and really super hand puppet clowns and teddy bears to put into the boxes. They are hugely appreciated and we value enormously the amount of time and care spent on making these lovely items. Others have given money and selections of items for us to make up even more shoeboxes and we have had great fun and pleasure getting them ready. Thank you for all the love that you put into your shoeboxes and for making a difference in so many children's lives.

And, so you know just how much of a difference a shoebox can make, this is Diana's story...

Hi everyone, my name is Diana and I am from Romania. It's hard to find words to describe the joy I felt when I received my first shoebox but I want to try and share my own experience. I received gifts that I had never had before but most amazing was the little teddy bear that I called Martin.



I remember opening the shoebox, seeing the teddy bear and thinking that my little heart at 7 years old would burst. I remember holding him up and showing him my school that had ugly, old chairs and tables, with paint peeling off the walls. I remember running home from school, down a bumpy road, holding my box in one hand and clutching my teddy in the other. I remember arriving at my home with no carpet, running water, central heating or electricity; there were just a lot of muddy children playing outside and a little baby crying inside while my mum was cooking.

Diana's story cont.

I remember taking my special box of presents and showing them off to my parents. I remember my dad saying "Somebody really loves you and thought about you" and I remember putting my new teddy bear on top of my pillow, pride of place in my little house.

In the following years my whole family and I got involved in delivering shoeboxes. My father is a pastor and a church planter and together with friends we distributed boxes to hospitals, orphanages and rural schools, sharing God's love through these wonderful gifts. Because of your big hearts we were able to brighten up many children's lives.

For many a shoebox is the only present they will ever get and this they will never forget. For me, I knew that I couldn't expect anything from my parents, apart from food on the table but amazingly I got a shoebox and that was more than I could ask for.

Now, here I am, relocated in England, working as an au pair and writing to say thank you. Thank you from the little girl that received a shoebox, but who is now able to help others in the UK put together shoeboxes for children in need.



And just in case you're curious, I still have my teddy bear, Martin. He's got a nicer pillow now and is 15 years old but he is still as special to me as the first day I saw him.

By Diana Arustei

Thank you for your wonderful support this year. We are planning to take part in this Appeal again in 2011 and with your help we want to reach even more children in one of the poorest parts of the world.

Joan Meikle and Norma Rolls



Palmerston News

CARE VAN AND SHELTER

While we enjoy the holiday at Christmas and New Year the homeless will wander the streets. The Care Van is out every night except on 31st December and the Care Shelter is open every night during the winter. Bethany have teams who staff the Care Shelter every night, helped by 800 volunteers from 80 churches some of whom also provide the venue.

Each church team provides hot meals as well as breakfast for the following morning. Bethany staff manage the shelter and provide support to service users to help them tackle their problems. Last year 928 people with nowhere to go received vital support from this valuable service.

Bethany need £110,000 to fund the Care Shelter this winter. One way to help is to buy a Caring Christmas Tree. The closing date for ordering a tree is 13th December for picking up on 17th/18th December. Phone 0845 111 8733 or visit www.caringchristmastree.com



I would like to say a big thank you to the many people who give their time to help on the Care Van and at the Care Shelter. I would also like to thank the members who regularly give me cash donations and supply cup-a-soup and clothes etc... Recently I asked for donations of blankets and received a great response. Shortly after I received an email from Bethany asking for help with blankets for the Care Shelter as there was a bigger turnout than expected. A big thank you to those members who enabled me to answer the email.

I am very grateful for all the help I have received and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New year.

David Boyd

LIFE AND WORK

The cover price of Life & Work will increase to £1.80 from the January issue. This is the first price increase for 5 years and the magazine still represents excellent value for money. Request for payment will be attached to the January issue.

Mary Bennett

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS

Each year the offerings taken at our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services go to causes outside our congregation. This year the Session have agreed that the offering will be divided between St Columba's Hospice and Sightsavers and we encourage you to give generously to these good causes

Colin Sinclair

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Please note that there is no Friendship Club on the following dates:

23 December; 30 December; 6 January.

It will restart on Thursday 13th January 2011.

Eileen McColl

Palmerston News

ASSOCIATED BOARD OF ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

I am delighted to be passing on the contents of a letter received from Mrs Sheila Boyce of the Associate Board regarding the use of our Church as a centre for the exams.

"Palmerston Place Church came out as one of the most praised venues with Examiners commenting on the acoustics, the lovely ceiling and a good atmosphere. One Examiner said it was the best piano they had ever examined on!"

David McColl

FESTIVE FLORAL FUN TUESDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2010

The evening started with an introduction by Dr Alison Wilkinson explaining that the orthopaedic drill at Chogoria Hospital had fallen apart and urgently needed replacing. As a result the funds raised that evening would go to this specific project. The new drill would cost £8000 and £6000 had already been raised. We then settled down to enjoy an excellent evening with an entertaining display of floral art for Christmas. We learnt about the current Dutch style of tall parallel lines rather than the classical British symmetry as well as the botanical marvels of Morrison supermarket car parks at least for budding florists students looking for a bargain outwith the shop itself! Fiona forecast that this style would take over in this country within about 5 years. We were encouraged to search out greenery in our gardens especially fatsia and not to forget the natural bounty of foraging highways and byways such as along the Water of Leith. It was a delight to watch such beautiful arrangements appear so quickly with impressive red flowers such as roses and the greenery of Christmas wreaths not to mention all the added sparkle and glitter. Fiona introduced us to the mood boards of modern brides. There was a lively interchange of question and answer adding to the friendly atmosphere so evident throughout the evening. There is no doubt that the advantage of Andrew Caskie's camera allowing Fiona's skills to be viewed close up on the screens enhanced the discussion. Alison provided most attractive cards and we all gorged ourselves on the delicious tray bakes to bring to a close a very worthwhile event. The turnout was splendid and we raised £889.40 with Alison making £94 from the sales of cards so the hospital is within £1000 of its target for the orthopaedic drill. A huge thanks to everybody involved in organising the evening and to the lively audience and not least to Fiona Cumming for her wonderful Festive Floral Fun!

Michael Wilson

WHAT'S ON?



PPP (PALMERSTON PLACE PEOPLE)

The Palmerston Place People Christmas Lunch will be held at Dunstane House Hotel on Wednesday 8th December, 12:30 pm for 1 pm.

Ruth Sinclair

January and February Meetings

12 January 2:15 pm Personal Perspective on Tonga—Robin Webster

26 January 12:15 pm The Yemen of Yesteryear—Ron Steel

9 February* 2:15 pm The Assistant Minister—Mark Lowey

23 February 12:15 pm St. Columba's Hospice

All meetings marked with an asterisk* will be held in the Choir Room. All others will meet in the Carlow Room.



JOINT SERVICE 23rd JANUARY

Once again to mark the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we are joining our neighbours for a joint service. This year we go across the road to St Mary's Cathedral whose service begins at 10.30. We will follow their normal Episcopal form of service which includes the opportunity to take communion and the worship will be led by our joint choirs. Arrangements will be made for our children to join the young people of St Mary's. The offering taken on that occasion will go to a special cause. Therefore if you want your regular offering to go to the work of the church to avoid confusion could you put it in either the week before (16th) or the week afterwards (30th).

PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

We will be having a Church lunch to support the work of Bethany Christian Trust on **February 6th** after the morning service. Bethany is actively involved in the work of the Care Van and Care Shelter as well as many other projects in our city and we wish to show our support for what they do.



HOUSE GROUP LUNCH

**12:30 for 1pm
Saturday 22nd January**

At the Manse.

All those who have been involved in a House group this year are welcome to come along.

Colin Sinclair

WHAT'S ON?

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

In a sense we began Christmas with Operation Christmas Child (Nov 21st) and the Gift Service (5th December). As we move through Advent (from Nov 28th) the music and preaching take up the themes of the season.

However on Sunday 12th, as well as our usual morning service and afternoon Sutherland Street Service, we invite you to join us for seasonal music at 5.15—6 pm led by our Director of Music. There will be mulled wine served between 6-6.30 pm before our evening informal Christmas communion service. On Christmas Sunday (19th) we have our all age Nativity Service at 11 am and our Festival of Lessons and Carols at 6.30 pm. On Christmas Eve we gather at 11 pm for coffee or tea and mince pies before our Watchnight service from 11.30 pm to 12.05 am.

Then on Christmas Day we have a short service for all ages from 11-11.40 am. Sunday this year falls on Boxing Day so we will have one service that day at 11 am – our last chance to sing Christmas carols of 2010.

Do come along to as many of the services as you can and invite friends also to come.

Colin Sinclair



*'We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel'*



CHURCH OF SCOTLAND ENQUIRER'S CONFERENCE

**From 5:45 pm on Friday 4th February to 4:00 pm
on Saturday 5th February 2011
Scottish Police College Tulliallan**

This conference is not only for those who have an interest in Ministry of Word and Sacrament, Diaconal Ministry or Readership but is intended as a wider exploration of the ministry of the whole people of God.

However, this event is the first step that any applicant must take in respect of assessment as potential candidates for Ministry of Word and Sacrament, Diaconal Ministry or the Readership. Please see posters and flyers in the vestibule also for information.



Book Review – Bible resources for Pre-School Children

***“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”
Proverbs ch22 v6***

As parents we all want to give our children the best start in life, from home comforts, healthy food, clothes and education to the security and affirmation that comes from loving family and friends. As our children grow up we also seek to steer them safely through life ahead and make wise choices along the way.

What a privilege we have then as Christian parents to underpin these aims with the foundation of truth we ourselves know in the person and teaching of Jesus Christ. He is the person who has written the only guidebook to life worth following. Children are never too young to learn, particularly at pre-school age when they are full of natural curiosity and questions. Only today Samuel greeted me at 7am with two questions on his mind: “Mummy, what’s a centimetre?” and “Can you tell me what a volcano is?” - not what one is quite prepared for in the blurry morning hour! Children have an amazing capacity for memorising songs or regurgitating information heard perhaps only once or twice. This gives us a tremendous opportunity to instil timeless truths to carry them through life.

But where do we begin in teaching our children the truth and wisdom contained in God’s Word? Thankfully, there are many aids available that bring those favourite Bible stories to a level that children can relate to and simple tools to reinforce the Christian message.



Children’s Bible – The Big Bible Story Book

There are many very good Bibles adapted especially for children. The particular appeal with this book is its attractive layout with photographs of endearing ‘Bible friends’ puppet characters representing the stories. These characters will be immediately recognisable to our children in the PPC Beginners class as it is the same publisher (Scripture Union) used for the ‘Bubbles’ teaching notes. Different children’s Bibles take different approaches. Some aim to paraphrase whilst remaining accurate to the full text, leaving the parent to explain the meaning; others include a question aimed at gaining a response of faith or understanding from the child. This Bible is the former.

Barfield, Maggie
The Big Bible
Story Book,
Scripture Union, 2007
(c.£10.50)

BOOK REVIEW Cont.

Each story is only a page or two long with the Bible reference helpfully noted - a very short reading to conclude the bedtime routine and bring the Bible stories to life for little ones. A handy index at the back of the book assists in quick searching for specific stories

Study Guide - Beginning with God at Christmas



This short study guide is one of a number of Bible discovery resources to help parents and children explore the real meaning of Christmas together. If you're not in time for Christmas there are many other similar guides available for use at any time of year.

There are eight Bible stories to read together covering the events of the first Christmas and an introduction to who Jesus is. This guide is designed to be used in conjunction with *The Beginners' Bible* (NB an alternative from above), but as Bible references are provided you could use most children's Bibles. The format of each

Bodham-Wetham, Jo
Beginning with God at Christmas,
The Good Book Company, 2010
(c.£3)
ISBN 9781907377242

page takes the parent through praying a simple prayer with the child, reading and discussing the story then answering a couple of simple questions to help the child think about its meaning. There are also stickers (always popular!) and a picture to colour to help reinforce the message. This Christmas edition provides a simple way to start your child in a regular habit of reading God's Word and growing to know God who loves them. It's an ideal introduction to the full *Beginning with God* series.

Useful websites for children's Christian books and resources are www.thegoodbook.co.uk, www.icmbooksdirect.co.uk, www.scriptureunion.org.uk, with some also available at www.amazon.co.uk. Christian book shops like the Faith Mission book shop on Gilmerton Road and the Free Church Book Shop on the Mound would also be good sources to browse.

Rebecca Caskie

NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH



Happy New Year! The new Christian year started on 28 November, the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation before Christmas, often missed by starting the Christmas carols too early! There is some lovely organ music for Advent and Christmas, a selection of which I'll be playing in a short recital (from

5.15-6pm) before the evening service on Sunday 12 December (programme on p.17). Do come for a brief period of relaxation amidst the rush of the season. Seasonal refreshments will be served in between the recital and the evening service.

The clear highlight of the music in PPC each year is the carol service. We are repeating last year's venture in holding this in the evening – on Sunday 19 December at 6.30pm. This is very much an outreach event geared to allow you to feel comfortable inviting friends, family, colleagues, etc. along to hear the Christmas story presented in word and song. Invitation cards are available in the vestibule for you to take and distribute. A large augmented choir will be singing a selection of carols, interspersed with readings, prayer, a message, and plenty congregational carols with organ, choir and trumpets. It should be a wonderful evening – please mark it in your calendar. No less than three organists will be taking part (!): the preludes before the carol service will be played by Cathy Shimwell, also an alto in the choir; David Turner will be playing during the service; and for the postlude I'll be playing *Dieu parmi nous* ('God with us'), the monumental toccata-like climax to Olivier Messiaen's Christmas cycle *La Nativité du Seigneur*. My thanks to all the regular choir members, the welcome augmenters, and all others who help to make this such a memorable occasion.

It is always important to keep Christmas music alive by introducing new material, and we will over the Christmas period (including the carol service) be singing a new hymn *Joy has dawned unto the world*, by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty. Do let Colin and me know what you think.

The watchnight service on Christmas Eve is for many a magical service. Sustained by the pre-service mince pie and coffee, the dawning of Christmas Day will be marked by Garth Edmundson's joyful *Tocatta-Prelude on 'Vom Himmel Hoch'* ('From heaven above to earth I come'). On Christmas morning we strike a lighter note with Strauss' *Radetsky March*. My esteemed predecessor David Hare will be at the organ on Boxing Day.

Into 2011, January is always noted for the privilege of joining together in worship with our neighbours at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In 2011 it is our turn to visit them, on the morning of 23 January, and we look forward to the singing of the combined choirs. The postlude will be something unusual – Nick Wearne, assistant organist at St Mary's, and I will be playing David Briggs' *Variations on 'Veni Creator'* for organ duet: four hands and four feet.

A season to enjoy as we wait upon the birth of our Saviour in Advent, celebrate the Christian message at Christmas, and commit 2011 to serving our Lord in unity.

Andrew Caskie



MUSIC FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Sunday 12 December 2010, 5.15pm – 6.00pm

Palmerston Place Church (admission free)

Organ recital by Andrew Caskie

Come and enjoy a respite from the busyness of Christmas, in this short, reflective programme of seasonal organ music for Advent and Christmas. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served between the recital and the evening service.

Programme

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645 – Johann Sebastian Bach

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern – Johann Pachelbel

Noël Ecossais – Alexandre Guilmant

Noël: *Quand Jésus naquit à Noël* – Claude Balbastre

Variations on *In dulci jubilo* – Denis Bédard

Pastoral Dance on *On Christmas Night* (from *Three Christmas Pieces*)

– Robin Milford

A Good King Chills Out for Spring – Robert Cockcroft

Toccata-Prelude on *Vom Himmel Hoch* (from *Christmas Suite No. 2*)

– Garth Edmundson

MUSIC FOR TRUMPET AND ORGAN

Recital by Andrew Caskie and Tim Shimwell

Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, Argyle Street, Glasgow

Sunday 16 January, 3.00pm (free admission)

To include *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (Handel), *Salut d'Amour* (Elgar), selections from *Douze Marches Héroïques* (Telemann) and Widor's

Toccata.



THE FASHION, FAME AND FORTUNE FACTOR?

Love it or loathe it, *The X Factor* is here to stay – well, at least until 2014. It was reported in the news that Simon Cowell has signed a new three-year deal with ITV, so the annual circus of fame-chasing will continue to dominate our screens for the foreseeable future.

Whether you are unashamedly an addict, someone who occasionally flicks the channel to find out what's going on, someone who wishes to show firm allegiance to the BBC's *Strictly Come Dancing*, it seems that this year we will get plenty of opportunities to feed *X Factor* cravings – it is everywhere! It governs our headlines, our music charts and our weekends (there is even an exclusive weekly magazine dedicated to the show), and we're sure come Saturday the majority of the country will forget about the dreaded spending cuts and sit down with friends and family, ready to watch the latest live show.

With its stories of hardship and hope, glittering sets and "a beautiful princess" in Cheryl Cole, who trail-blazed the reality show path from "girl-next-door" to nation's sweetheart, *The X Factor* pits itself as a modern-day fairy story. The show encourages people that they can make the best of their situation, regardless of how difficult it is.

The beauty of the show is that it allows some genuinely talented people an unprecedented chance to showcase their gifts and to follow their dreams. There are a couple of months in between the end of the auditions to the live shows, and one can always notice a significant change in the quality of the contestants' voices. They are given the best vocal training available. It's an incredible opportunity to really develop their gift, while giving us the viewers a few hours of entertainment and escapism over the weekend.

"The X Factor pits itself as a modern-day fairy story. The show encourages people that they can make the best of their situation, regardless of how difficult it is."

But while it may promote itself as a platform for people to become the next singing sensation, like most of the reality shows on our screens, *The X Factor* has become so much more than that.

In the interviews during the initial stages of the auditions, it is increasingly clear that the drive of the contestants is not just to sing and entertain others, but their passionate desire to be famous.

So this year's love-to-hate contestant Katie Waissel declared without a hint of irony that she wanted to be "an icon in art, culture and medicine" before blubbing through her audition – and still made it through, to a big viewer and tabloid backlash.

Katie's opinion of her own importance may seem ridiculous, but it is very common on our screens, and seemingly in real life as well. Speaking to the Independent in a fascinating article (22/10/10) about the nature of fame, Chris Rojek of Brunel University, whose book *Fame Attack* is published next year, described this as the 'mirror effect'.

"Thanks to the cult of celebrity, there is a widespread feeling of entitlement amongst young men and women these days, a feeling that your opinions matter," he said.

"People want the acclaim without actually having done well. Reality TV shows pander to this – you see people turning up to talent contests with no discernible talent whatsoever."



It's quite a contrast to what is said in the biblical account of Matthew chapter 16, where Jesus goes against this idea of self-promotion, encouraging self-denial instead. *Then Jesus went to work on his disciples. **"Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat; I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?"*** (Matthew 16:24-26. The Message translation).

The promises of stardom through *X Factor* are no doubt exciting for the contestants, but if all they want to gain is fame, Jesus tells us that this isn't the way to true happiness.

If we offer our life to Him, then we will gain far more than any *X Factor* contestant. So, as we join 13 million others this Saturday to watch with anticipation what the contestants will be singing and see (fingers crossed by the time you read this article) Wagner has been voted out, we can be assured that though we may never win *X Factor*, in the end we've got what matters most. And the great news is we didn't even have to sing to Simon Cowell to get it.

"Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how."

- Hollin Cross - Youth and Young Adults Support Worker with Evangelical Alliance
- Gregor Innes

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap
The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the king,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire)

The Christ-child stood on Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

G.K. Chesterton



SUNDAY SERVICES IN PALMERSTON PLACE CHURCH

***"bringing Christian worship, fellowship
and service back to the heart of everyday life"***

11.00 am Morning Worship
6.30 pm Evening Service

(No evening service on December 26th or January 2nd)

Crèche is available every Sunday morning.
Beginners, Seekers, ESMS Boarders and Senior Horizon
normally meet during the Morning Service.

HOLY COMMUNION

There will be an informal communion on Sunday December 12th at 6:30 pm
Traditional Communion will be held on Sunday January 30th 2011
at 11 am and 6:30 pm

KIRK SESSION

Kirk Session will meet at 10:30 am on Sunday 30th January 2011
and on Monday February 7th at 7:30 pm

PROPERTY AND FINANCE TEAM

Next meeting will be held on January 17th at 7:30 pm

Meetings of Kirk Session are held in public.
You are welcome to come along.

HOLIDAYS

The office will be closed from Thursday 23rd December
until Thursday 6th January.

THE REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

All material for the FEBRUARY issue
should be in the hands of the Secretary
by **Tuesday 25th January 2011**



Time to discover ... who Jesus is, why he came, and what it means to follow him

Whether you just want to know what Jesus really said or did or would like a clearer understanding of what you already know, without being pressured into anything, this course is for you.

The next course starts on Wednesday 12th January and runs until Wednesday 23rd February in Palmerston Place Church.

ALL WELCOME!

To register (this helps us cater for appropriate numbers) and for more information please phone the church office on **220 1690** or e-mail: **discover@palmerstonplacechurch.com**

*Ask any question you like.
you don't need to know about the Bible and
won't be asked to sing, pray or read aloud.*

www.christianityexplored.org