

REVIEW & OUTLOOK



PALMERSTON
PLACE
CHURCH
EDINBURGH

MAY 2011

www.palmerstonplacechurch.com

Scottish Charity No SC004291

MINISTER'S LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

Dear Friends,

With Easter at the end of April, May begins in its afterglow.

"Christ is risen, hallelujah!" That great event unlocks the meaning of Christ's life and death, and also gives significance to our own lives.

There is a lovely phrase in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. He said: "God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, *because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*" (Acts 2:24) This is the victory we celebrate at Easter. Death is not the end— it has been defeated.

Back in the Old Testament there is a small book called Ecclesiastes in which the writer struggles to make sense of life. If history teaches us anything it is that we learn nothing! Rich and talented, not afraid of hard work, the writer tries every possible way to make sense of life. He threw himself into pleasure but found he got increasingly jaded, having to work harder and harder for smaller returns. Pleasure became a tyrant god. He undertook great building projects, erecting houses and planting gardens. But once he had achieved his own Eden, the joy went out of the project. He acquired wealth and possessions that placed him among the mega rich, but contentment remained elusive. Nothing lasts, and one day he would have to leave it all behind... then what? In death he was no different to the person who had done nothing with their life.

He sought understanding and became a scholar—reading, studying, reflecting. But the more he knew, the more he was aware that he did not know. You cannot think yourself into life, or make order out of the disordered world of experience. Life seemed to be like a jigsaw puzzle, with pieces that didn't fit, and no picture on the box. He became addicted to knowledge, yet frustrated in his quest. The more he learnt of wisdom the more he learnt of sorrow. That door also closed before him

"Vanity of vanities," says the King James Version, or simply put, "life is meaningless". Life is not long enough between birth and death to make sense of life under the sun. However, Easter says that life is not found "under the sun" but "under the Son", and that death is not the end but a doorway to life. So the writer concludes "Fear God and keep the commandments" or as the New Testament would put it "Trust Christ and live by faith".

Life is not pointless but worthwhile. Christ is the key to ensure we do not drift through it, but use well the one life we have. Let the Easter hope make sense of your life.

Happy Easter!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



MAY

Tuesday	3	7:30 pm	Hitch Hiker's Guide— 'Bible as Symphony'
Wednesday	4	7:30 pm	Manse House Group
Thursday	5	7:30 pm	Prayer meeting
Sunday	8	11 am	Guest Preacher Rev Peter Neilson Peebles Outing No evening service
Monday	9	6:30 pm	Monday House Group in Annan House
Wednesday	11	7:30 pm	Hitch Hiker's Guide 'Bible as Screenplay'
Thursday	12	7:30 pm	Thursday House Group at the home of Ron and Dorothy Steel
Sunday	15	11 am	Christian Aid Week (All Age Service)
		6:30 pm	(Christian Aid Lunch following service) Judges 17-18—Micah's idols
Wednesday	18	7:30 pm	Hitch Hiker's Guide 'Bible as Streetmap'
Thursday	19	7:30 pm	Prayer meeting
			Saturday 21—Friday 27 General Assembly
Sunday	22	11 am	Building blocks 1 Peter 2
		1-6 pm	Roll Away the Stone at Princes Street Gardens
		6:30 pm	Judges 19-21 There was no king in the land
Sunday	29	11 am	PPC Anniversary Sunday Celebration of King James Version (AV) of the Bible. Film KJB 'The Book that changed the world' will be shown after morning service coffee and again at 4:30 pm.
		6:30 pm	Ruth 1 King on the move—love shown as loyalty
Monday	30	6:35 pm	Coordinating Team
Tuesday	31	7:30 pm	Worship & Christian Education Team

JUNE

Thursday	2	7:30 pm	Prayer meeting
Sunday	5	11 am	Morning service
		6:30 pm	Evening service

The Prayer Page

Give thanks...

... that we live in a democracy where free national and local elections take place regularly and by exercising our vote we can have some influence on government.

... that we are free to express our views, and stand up for causes we hold dear.



Pray for all who have been campaigning for election to Holyrood and for their families: -

... that those elected will govern with integrity, dedication, and justice with compassion.

... that those who did not succeed will find other meaningful work.

... for all who work in the Civil Service putting into effect decisions made at Holyrood.

... for all who work in our Local Authorities, that they may strive to do what is truly best for our communities.

... for those who are likely to lose their jobs because of hard financial decisions.

Let us pray for the General Assembly during Sat. 21st – Fri. 27th May, and especially for the new Moderator Rev. David Arnott.

Pray for wisdom, discernment and grace for both him and all who participate in the debates, discussions and presentations.

Pray for all who have been part of the Special Commission on same sex church leaders and for that debate, and the decisions which will be made. Pray for courtesy and grace but also courage to try to understand what God is saying to the Church at this time.

Let us pray for many parts of the world where there is conflict, countries where there is no freedom of worship; where Christians live in fear, and yet are ready to share the Gospel with those who enquire, for courage to continue witnessing, and pray that many will respond to the message of love which Jesus Christ brings.

Finally, in this month of celebration, let us thank God for his faithfulness over the past 136 years.

Let us praise God for the 30 years since Colin was ordained into the ministry, for the years he has been with us; and pray that God will continue to bless him and Ruth as they serve God.

Dorothy Steel

PALMERSTON PLACE NEWS

PRESBYTERY

Our Presbytery Elder, Angus Macpherson, will be stepping down from that role in the summer. The Kirk Session has invited Norma Rolls to take his place. We also have two freely elected elders, Haldane Tait and Alan Somerville, to ensure an equal balance of ministers and elders on Presbytery. However, this Autumn, Alan is stepping down having served as an elder on Edinburgh Presbytery for 53 years - an extraordinary record.



MARK LOWEY

Mark is now back at work, glad to resume his probationary training with us having been off for some time following an operation to his foot.

Meanwhile he and Caroline are rejoicing in the safe arrival of Jacob, a brother for Hannah.

SPRING HARVEST

Once again I was asked to teach at Spring Harvest, a large event that draws together thousands of Christians from many different denominations for a week at Easter. I was asked to be part of the team that ran the event and also to undertake a fairly heavy teaching programme. Given the 400th Anniversary of the Authorised Version, I taught on how to make different parts of the bible more accessible to those who want both to understand it and to live it. In particular I was asked to help teach Church Leaders every day ways of connecting with the timeless but ever fresh message of the bible. It was exhausting, but I and my family enjoyed the few days very much.



I was invited to attend an open day to mark the 10th Anniversary of Fresh Start, an initiative of Edinburgh Presbytery, to help homeless people

back into their own homes. I was very impressed at the calibre of the staff and volunteers, and their resourcefulness in converting all the gifts they were given into something that could directly or indirectly serve the project. Our neighbour, Rev Mark Foster, spends 20% of his time on Fresh Start and Sheila Swanson is our link person in the congregation. I came back hoping that we would continue to support a much needed and worthwhile charity on our doorstep.

Colin Sinclair



The Scottish Parliament was reconvened in 1999 after nearly 300 years, and the first debate and decision it took was not to pray for themselves. This challenged a number of Christians to take as their mandate Paul's words in 1 Timothy 2:1-4 where he urges Christians to make 'requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving for everyone – for kings and those in authority...'

And so Parliamentary Prayer Scotland was formed under the Directorship of Mrs Anne McIntyre.

This is a growing prayer network of men and women 'standing in the gap on behalf of Scotland' (see Ezekiel 22:30). They act as a catalyst and seek to inform and stimulate prayer for our Scottish Parliament; but they are not a party political or lobbying group; and any action they take is their own personal or church's response.

When Parliament is in session they meet weekly to praise and pray at the Salvation Army Worship and Community Centre, The Pleasance, Edinburgh, from 10.30 am—1.30 pm. They then go down to the Public Gallery in the Parliament building and pray quietly there from 2.00—2.45pm.

They pray for all those in government; for the Queen; members of the four UK Parliaments and the EU. Also all support staff – aides, administration, restaurant workers and security.

To learn more, visit the website www.ppscotland.org or pick up a leaflet from one of the windowsills in the vestibule.

Dorothy Steel

NEW MINISTRY

On May 12th the Presbytery will induct Rev Jack Holt as minister of Polwarth Parish Church, which means that after 16 months my role as Interim Moderator will come to a close. During that time I have acted as Moderator for special congregational meetings, for the monthly Kirk Session meetings and attended the meetings of the Nominations Committee. I have got to know the congregational leadership well over that period and wish them well as they start this new chapter in their history. At the same time on April 28th our near neighbours, St Andrew's and St George's West, elected the first minister following their union, Rev Ian Gilmour, former minister of Leith South. We wish both of these congregations every blessing in the days ahead.

Colin Sinclair

WHAT'S ON?



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

"Christian Aid Week" is an annual fundraising drive by the charity Christian Aid. Held each year across Britain since 1957, the event, now in its 54th year is Britain's longest running fundraising week. This year the "Week" begins on 15 May 2011. As usual, we'll be holding a fund-raising lunch for this which will be on Sunday 15 May 2011 after the morning service. Please come along and support the great work done by Christian Aid over the years.

David Bogie
(Convener of the Service Team)

BETTY WILLIAMSON

Those of you who remember Betty Williamson will be pleased to know that she is coming home from New Zealand (temporarily only, unfortunately) and will be here in Edinburgh from 29th May until 11th July. I hope that as many of you who are free to come will join us for OPEN HOUSE at my home on Saturday 18th June between 10:30 am and 12:30 pm to enjoy some time with Betty.

Helen Macpherson



SUMMER COFFEE MORNINGS

This month our Summer Coffee Mornings begin. This is a great opportunity to meet friends for a chat on the second Wednesday of the month from May until September at 10:30 am in Annan House. Each month we will raise money for a Charity with the help of a Bring and Buy stall:

Wednesday 11th May
Wednesday 8th June
Wednesday 13th July
Wednesday 10th August
Wednesday 14th September

Combat Stress
Care Van
Oliver Gill Trust
Phoebe Anna Traquair Trust
Guide Dogs

Mary Bennett

OUR CHURCH BARBECUE

Are you coming? I do hope so! We are heading to Beecraigs on Sunday 26th June for a 2:30 pm start. Tickets are £5 (but children up to the age of 12 go free) and will be on sale from the end of May. We cater for all ages from within our church fellowship and you are very welcome to bring friends along. There is time for games and walks or you can sit quietly in the sun and get to know each other better before tucking in to burgers, hot dogs and chicken—with a wee sweet treat to follow. Please let me know if you can help with ticket sales, salad, fried onions preparation, cooking or serving on the day. We will also help coordinate transport for those who require lifts.

Norma Rolls

WHAT'S ON?



THE HANDSEL STALL

Now that the days are becoming longer and the weather is getting warmer, keen gardeners and even some not-so-keen gardeners, will be heading out into the fresh air to begin the new growing season. Before long, the seeds sown now will be growing fast and will soon produce crops for harvesting. Perhaps, if this is a good year, there will be surplus produce of fruit, flowers and vegetables. If you are lucky enough to be in this position and would welcome an outlet for, for example, your extra lettuces—which always seem to mature at the one time—then bring them along to the Handsel Stall, which we will run again this summer. Your donations of surplus flowers, fruit and vegetables will be sold to raise funds for Chogoria Hospital and for Christian Aid. We also welcome donations of home baking, as this is always really popular and sells very quickly. Please just bring your donations to the stall ready to be sold that morning.



This year the stall will be open for the first time on Sunday 8 May from 10:30 am until the start of the Morning Service and will, as usual, be set up in the Lothian Room. It will run every Sunday morning through the summer until and including Sunday 25 September.



Please come along and buy from the Stall—our prices are always very good—and please remember that we need volunteers to serve at the Stall each Sunday. There will be a rota on the Stall for you to fill in your name on the days which suit you best.



Joan Meikle



God: "Whew! I just made a 24 hour period of alternating light and darkness on this new planet of mine called Earth."

Angel: "Now what are you going to do?"

God: "Call it a day!"

Anonymous

BRIDGING THE GAP

*You've seen it advertised in the notices—but what is it?
What happens on those Tuesday nights in Annan House?!*

I asked Fiona Edwards, a Bridging the Gap leader for the past four years, a few questions. Read on and find out everything you wanted to know!

What is Bridging the Gap (BTG)?

It is a group for anyone in S2 or above who wants to find out more about being a Christian.

What kind of things happen at BTG?

It is very informal. We spend time chatting over juice and snacks [*the Editor is reliably informed that this usually includes Haribos, chocolate bars and cans of Coke!*] then usually have a fun game, followed by a look at what the Bible says about a relevant issue. The issues are chosen by the group in advance which means it is never dull! We always finish with a very lively game of volleyball.



What do you enjoy about being a leader?

It is a great way to get to know the Young People at PPC and also meet other young folk who come along. I think it's important that they can see how the Bible relates to their lives.

Why is BTG important?

It can sometimes be difficult for young people to talk about their faith so BTG gives them somewhere to do this.

Here are some words from a few of the young people themselves:

"I like that it is all about the youths and learning about the word of God and how it relates to us. I would tell people that they should definitely consider coming along as they would learn a lot about the Bible and how to deal with problems and difficulties they might have."

Esther Okonkwo

"I like going because I learn stuff about Christianity/God in a different way than church. Colin is very good at teaching it in an interesting way... I am around kids my own age so have a good laugh...it has helped me understand a lot about God and helped me with my faith."

Aaron Cameron

Perhaps the sense of humour and fun had at Bridging the Gap can be seen in a comment from Bethany Sinclair '*... dad doesn't teach us anything. It's quite upsetting!*' Despite Bethany's plea, we can rest assured that the leaders of Bridging the Gap provide an excellent opportunity for teenagers to explore the Christian Faith.



BOOK REVIEW

God's Big Picture – Tracing the storyline of the Bible

Vaughan Roberts

IVP Books

The introduction on the back cover of this book reads:

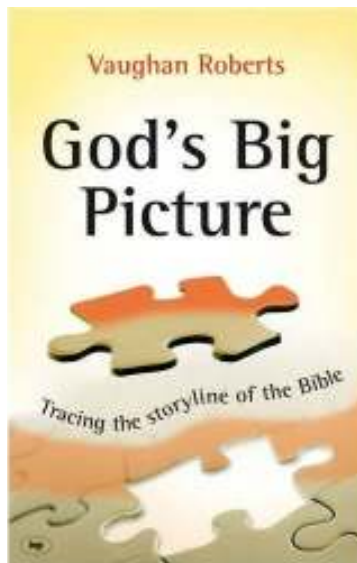
"Sixty-six books, forty authors, written over nearly 2000 years, in many different genres. A worldwide best-seller published in countless translations and languages. A book that has been sworn by in court, fought over and quoted in arguments. Clearly, the Bible is no ordinary book. So how can we begin to read and understand the Bible as a whole?"

This is the question that Vaughan Roberts sets out to answer through the pages of this excellent book. It's an easy read with some helpful timeline diagrams but it's not a long technical book. It is an excellent guide to help us to see how all the books of the Bible combine to tell one story.

Following the theme of the kingdom of God, we see how the pattern of the kingdom starts in Genesis with God's creation. The following chapters take us through the perished kingdom of the fall, the promised kingdom and God's covenant with Moses, and the partial kingdom under the Old Testament law. Then we read of the prophesied kingdom & the present kingdom with the birth of Jesus Christ, looking forward to the perfected kingdom to come.

In each section Roberts considers the recurring areas of "God's people in God's place under God's rule". It is an issue which is just as relevant for us as we consider how to be God's people here in Palmerston Place under God's rule. This book helps us to see the overall story and that every part of our Bible is relevant. There is no disconnect between the Old and New Testaments and it all points us to Jesus Christ and the salvation God offers through Him.

With searching Bible study questions at the end of each chapter it would be a good book to read with a group or on your own. It's a book I've read recently and found really useful. I would strongly recommend it. It would also work well as a companion to our minister's own book "The Hitch-Hiker's Guide To The Bible" which provides more detail on the specifics of each book of the Bible. RRP is £7.99 although the Amazon price is £5.35 and my copy is available for a free loan to anyone interested!



Fraser Edwards

ANNIVERSARIES IN MAY

Church Anniversary and the King James Bible

Our Church anniversary will take place on **Sunday 29th May**, when our congregation will be 136 years old. Also that Sunday, we will celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible, better known as the Authorised Version.

As well as marking this during our morning service there will be two opportunities for members to watch the Norman Stone film "KJB The book that changed the world" (see back page). There will be two free screenings—1 pm and 4:30 pm. The film is suitable for all ages from mid-Primary upwards. DVDs of the film will be available to buy, priced at £12.99 each.

Anniversary Cup Cakes will be available to enjoy following the morning service but if you need something more substantial, please bring your own packed lunch. Let's make it a day to remember—do try to be there if you can!

Norma Rolls

Colin's Anniversaries

On **Sunday the 8th May** we will celebrate Colin's 30th Anniversary in the Ministry of the Church of Scotland. He was ordained while assistant minister at Palmerston Place Church on the 3rd May 1981. Following his ministries in Ayr and with Scripture Union (based in Glasgow) he was called and inducted to Palmerston Place Church on the 28th August 1996.

The Reverend Peter Neilson (Mission Consultant) will conduct the Anniversary Service. Peter is a friend and colleague of Colin and they have worked together on many occasions.

Willie-John Macdonald (Pastoral Assistant)



HELP NEEDED!

Roll Away the Stone, the event in Princes Street Gardens on Sunday 22 May is still looking for people to steward. Our role is to be the welcoming face of the event. We are there to ease the flow of the crowds, point folks in the right direction and ensure that everyone enjoys their afternoon to the full. Informal training and briefing meetings will be arranged in due course. If you are interested, contact me – and I'll send you an application form.

Susan Kidston



NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

We have just celebrated the joy of Easter. Our thanks are due to the choir and praise band for their sterling musical contributions to the services on Good Friday and Easter Day.

In recent months we have been glad to welcome into our church Ross Chuchla, an American music student on exchange to the University of Edinburgh for a term. At a recent choir lunch he bowed to pressure and sang some Rodgers & Hammerstein (we all subsequently descended [or ascended?] to Flanders & Swann renditions *en masse*). To borrow off Jeeves, Ross has a fine baritone voice, which we look forward to hearing in May. During the musical reflection spot in the evening service on Sunday 15 May, he will sing the moving setting of George Herbert's poem *Love bade me welcome* from Ralph Vaughan William's *Five Mystical Songs*. Many of us have been amazed at how Colin has managed recently to draw the New Testament gospel message from the at first unyielding depths of the book of Judges; this song will be an appropriate opportunity to reflect as we return to Judges to complete the series after Easter.

Sunday 15 May is also two days after the 120th anniversary of the birth of English composer Craig Sellar Lang, and so his cheery *Tuba Tune* will be the postlude at the morning service.

The Baroque practice of composing short organ pieces based on chorale (hymn) themes was resurrected and Anglicised in the Victorian and Edwardian eras by several British composers. Among these was Sir Hubert Parry (he who penned the tune *Jerusalem* and the great coronation anthem *I was glad*). The morning service postlude on Sunday 29 May will be his energetic setting of the hymn tune *Croft's 136th*, which we know to the Scottish metrical setting of Psalm 136: 'Praise God for He is kind; His mercy lasts for aye'.

The evening service postlude on Sunday 29 May will be the *Marche Européenne* by English organist and pedagogue David Sanger, played as a tribute to remember his death on 28 May last year. David was a near neighbour of mine in Cumbria. Despite his international profile and hectic schedule, he gave much time to be a warm friend and a demanding but encouraging teacher, transforming my playing at the time. He performed this piece as an encore in the fine recital he gave at Palmerston Place Church in October 2004.

Sunday 5 June is the first Sunday after Ascension: in my absence we will be welcoming to the organ that morning the Rev. Bob Glover, minister until his recent retiral of Chalmers Memorial Church in Port Seton, and prior to that just along the road at St George's West. David Stewart, organist along the road in the other direction at Corstorphine St Anne's Church, will be playing for the evening service.

I hope that you enjoy the music to be heard in church during May. Thanks for all your ongoing support and encouragement.

Andrew Caskie

Rev Bill Taylor convenes Presbytery's Social & Community Interests Committee, which encourages congregations to appoint a representative to highlight the work of the Church & Society Council. A little while ago Colin asked Bill if he would be the Church & Society Rep for Palmerston Place! From time to time items of interest or concern such as the issue below, will be highlighted in different ways.

EU DIRECTIVE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

At its meeting on 22nd March the Presbytery of Edinburgh welcomed the opt-in of HM Government to the EU Directive on Human Trafficking which happened that very day. Until then the Government had waited to see if the EU Directive became European law, which it had done, the day before. The Presbytery has written to welcome this and to encourage the Government to promote awareness of this dehumanising trade across the country. Opting-in sends a powerful message to traffickers that Britain is not a soft touch and will help in the prevention of human trafficking, the protection of the vulnerable and the prosecution of those who perpetrate these crimes.

People who are trafficked are amongst the world's most vulnerable and many face grinding poverty. Often they come to the UK legally trusting 'a friend' that there is a job and a place for them, and then it turns out not to be. They are then held against their will and are intimidated by credible threats against them or their family, who may be many miles away. There are a variety of kinds of human trafficking – the sex trade, coerced criminality, and domestic, agricultural, and industrial servitude.

"People who are trafficked are amongst the world's most vulnerable and many face grinding poverty."

Human Trafficking has been a concern of the Church of Scotland Guild since 2004. In various ways the Guild has highlighted this modern form of slavery:-

- ◆ through reports to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland;
- ◆ by urging congregations to be more open in discussing and dealing with issues of human trafficking to help raise awareness of all its ramifications within the wider population;
- ◆ by pressing for meaningful debate on the connection between prostitution and the trafficking of people for the sex industry;
- ◆ through calling for local communities to be alert to the possibility of persons suffering as a result of being trafficked;
- ◆ and by contributing to the Action of Churches Together in Scotland Trafficking Task Group.
- ◆

Guild representatives have asked politicians questions in relation to the provision of safe accommodation in Scotland, and about the preparation of adequate measures to combat trafficking in the context of the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games

The Guild identified three important strands:

Prevention – education, campaigning, challenging the acceptability of paying for sex and the demand that leads to supply. TARA (Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance) estimate around 700 women are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation each year to Scotland and that about £10million is spent annually by men buying sex in Glasgow (alone).

Prosecution – encouraging those with evidence to come forward. There have been 79 cases in Scotland (probably the tip of the iceberg) yet not one successful prosecution.

Protection – identifying safe housing for the victims of human trafficking, including asking whether the Churches have the capacity to make available appropriate facilities. The Medaille Trust and the Salvation Army provide accommodation in the UK. TARA now has some accommodation available in Scotland.

It is not an easy matter to discuss and it's hard for Churches and other community groups to find ways of engaging with those who are affected. Raising awareness is part of the picture, as are challenging the values of a society that somehow accepts this modern form of exploitation, and assuring any who might be in trouble of a listening ear. We can also pray for all whose lives are affected.

Bill Taylor

GENERAL ASSEMBLY **Saturday 21st- Friday 27th May**

The General Assembly this year reverts back to its Saturday – Friday format with one significant change.

The Garden Party on Saturday, having disappeared last year due to cost, is still absent. In its place a celebration, "Roll Away the Stone" for all ages is being held in Princes Street Gardens 1-6 pm on Sunday 22nd May.

There will be, as usual, considerable involvement from our congregation in helping run the Assembly. On the Monday the report from the Special Commission will be discussed on the controversial issue of same sex relationships and the ministry. There will also be proposals on a major change to Presbyteries and much else besides. Please pray for what could be a very demanding Assembly.

Colin Sinclair



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

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

HOLY COMMUNION

There will be a **Family Communion Service** on Sunday 11 September
where the elements will be served around the table.

KIRK SESSION

Next meeting will be held on Monday 13 June at 7:30 pm.

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

PROPERTY AND FINANCE TEAM

Next meetings will be held on Monday 20 June at 7:30 pm.

THE REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

All material for the June issue
should be in the hands of the Secretary
by **Sunday 22 May.**

Rev Colin Sinclair asks those who read the *Review and Outlook* to please inform him and his team about ways in which they can help, such as requests for hospital and other visits, and also about changes of address. The card in cover of the congregational hymnbook can be used for this and for the use of those visiting the congregation. You may wish to draw visitors' attention to it.

DON'T MISS!
FREE screening of the film:

KJB

The book that changed the world

Palmerston Place Church
Sunday 29th May
1 pm and 4:30 pm

Starring acclaimed actor **John Rhys-Davies**
(Lord of the Rings, Indiana Jones)



***Come and find out the extraordinary
story behind the King James Bible!***