

REVIEW & OUTLOOK



PALMERSTON
PLACE
CHURCH
EDINBURGH

February 2012

www.palmerstonplacechurch.com

Scottish Charity No SC004291

MINISTER'S LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

I came across a new phrase "the ten year century" by which is meant that the pace of life has so rapidly accelerated that what used to happen in a century now happens in a decade. Changes that used to take generations—economic cycles, cultural shifts, mass migrations, changes in the structures of families and institutions—now unfold in a span of years.

We have all heard it said that the whole store of human knowledge is doubling at an amazing rate. Some sources say every 14 months. Others say every five to seven years. The real point is that what used to take centuries now takes only a few years. It's not just change, it's the dizzying rate of change. If things seem to be moving faster today, that's because they really are. We see real-time events from the battlefield that would have taken weeks to report during World War II or months during the Crimea.

So this is our world. Welcome to the Ten-Year Century. What does this mean for ministry in the 21st-century?

1. We'll have to learn faster how to learn faster.
2. Long-range planning means thinking about 2012 and 2013. Forget about 2019. That's a century from now.
3. We'll need to focus more, find a few things we can do well, and communicate like crazy.
4. Churches will have no choice but to adapt to change quicker than in the past. Those that don't adapt will slowly wither and die.
5. We'll do more and more Bible teaching, discipleship, prayer and mentoring over the Internet.
6. In the cities churches will have to cope with highly transient populations. In the past we could count on having families stay in the same church for 30 years. Now we'll be fortunate to have them for 18-24 months. That means rethinking our whole approach to discipleship. We're going to train young leaders who will end up serving in some other church.
7. In an era of rapid change, building trust takes an even higher priority.
8. Foundational teaching will become very important. We'll have to go "back to basics" every year or so in our teaching and preaching. We can't assume that our own people truly understand what we say we believe.
9. And, finally, in the era of the "ten-year century," change is the order of the day. Tomorrow won't be like today. What an incredible time to be alive as we seek to make the unchanging Christ known to an every changing world

Take a deep breath and let's move forward together. Who knows, it might even be fun!

Warmest Greetings



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



FEBRUARY

Monday	6	7:30pm	Kirk Session
Wednesday	8	2:15pm 7:30pm	PPP—To the Arctic Circle, Ron Steel Christianity Explored
Thursday	9	2pm 7:30pm	Friendship Club Thursday House Group at Helen Macpherson's
Saturday	11		Christianity Explored day away
Sunday	12	11am 3pm 6:30pm	Morning Service Sutherland Street Service Evening Service
Monday	13	6:30pm	Monday House Group in Annan House
Wednesday	15	7:30pm	Christianity Explored
Thursday	16	2pm 7:30pm	Friendship Club Prayer Meeting
Sunday	19	11am 6:30pm	Morning Service Student and Young Adult Lunch at Manse Evening Service
Monday	20	7:30pm	Property and Finance Team
Tuesday	21	6:35pm	Coordinating Team
Wednesday	22	12:15pm 7:30pm	PPP—ROSPA Christianity Explored
Thursday	23	2pm	Friendship Club
Sunday	26	11am 6:30pm	Morning Service Evening Service

MARCH

Thursday	1	2pm 7:30pm	Friendship Club Prayer meeting
Friday	2	2.30pm	World Day of Prayer- St Mary's
Sunday	4	10:30am 11am 6:30pm	Kirk Session Admission of New Communicants Evening Service
Monday	5	7:30pm	Kirk Session

The Prayer Page

THE CHURCH'S MISSION

Loving God,
we give you thanks for our church here,
remembering all we have shared together,
and looking forward to everything the future still holds.
Hear now our prayer for your people in every place.
Grant your blessing upon their life and witness,
and upon all you have called to service.

We pray for those involved in mission,
either at home or overseas -
all those who seek to proclaim the gospel
and make known the love of Christ.

We pray for those who exercise roles of leadership,
whether it be in our congregations,
presbyteries, or denominations.

We pray for those who witness to you in their daily life and work,
expressing their faith in all kinds of occupations and vocations,
fleshing out the gospel,
putting it into practice,
exploring what it means
in concrete and sometimes difficult situations.

We pray for those who work for Christian unity,
striving to draw your divided Church together,
breaking down barriers,
and building bridges of trust, respect, and co-operation.

Loving God, guide your people,
strengthen, equip and inspire each one for service,
and so may we, with them, joyfully serve you,
sensitively proclaim you,
and faithfully express your love for all.
Build up your Church
and so bring closer your kingdom.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



WHAT'S ON?

SU HOLIDAYS

A good number of people in our congregation have very fond memories of SU holidays. Some came, and still come, as campers, and others as leaders and cooks. These holidays, mainly led by volunteers who have been trained and equipped, provide for youngsters from P6-S6 a wonderful holiday in a Christian atmosphere. There is a wide ranging programme of activities which are great fun. People come with their friends, but often make new friendships among the other campers whom they meet up with each year at their SU holiday. Many of our youngsters speak of the atmosphere of the holiday, in which they feel valued and safe, free from bullying, and able to enjoy the holiday at their own pace. Finally it is chance to explore some of the big questions about the meaning of life and to show the relevance of Jesus Christ to young people today. If you would like to know more about SU holidays then please speak to Jo or Aaron Black or to Ruth and myself and do pick up a brochure lying in the vestibule.



Colin Sinclair



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE
Friday 2nd March 2012 at 2:30pm
St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral,
Palmerston Place



'**Let Justice Prevail**' is the theme for this year's service, written by the Christian women of Malaysia. In their concern for the unjust and unrighteous actions which occur in the political and religious organisations of their society, they invite us to pray for God's mercy and healing in Malaysia.

Sheila Swanson



PASSION PLAY

IN ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

We are planning a rehearsed reading of The Passion from the Chester Mediaeval Mystery Plays, with choral interludes, in the Cathedral in Holy Week. If you are interested, please come to a meeting at the Vice Provost's flat, at 7:30pm on Sunday 5th February. Palmerston Place members and friends are welcome.

Mike Appleby

WHAT'S ON?

Women Walking with God

Edinburgh International Conference Centre

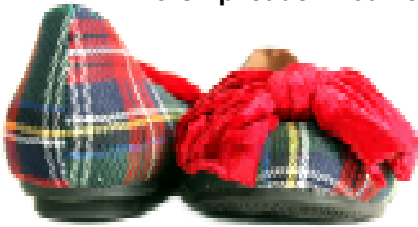
2nd – 3rd March 2012

'Known

their names were never recorded, but Jesus knew them'

Speakers: Elaine Storkey, Kay Cathcart,
Tania Bright-Cook

Worship leader: Lou Fellingham & Phatfish



www.womenwalkingwithgod.co.uk

Women Walking with God Trust, charity registered in Scotland SC037904

JOINING THE CHURCH

A number of people who have been attending regularly at PP for some time have indicated that they want to join our congregation. We will be having a service of admission for new communicants on Sunday March 4th at 11am. At that service also, a number will be joining us by transfer of certificate, having now made their home with us. If you would like to know more about what is involved in joining our church please speak to me as soon as possible.

Colin Sinclair

PALMERSTON PLACE PEOPLE

8 February	2:15pm	Ron Steel	Sheena Watson
22 February	12:15pm	ROSPA	Margaret Moodie
7 March	2.15pm	Easter Celebration	Molly Anderson
21 March	12.15 pm	Love in Action	Mary Bennett

PALMERSTON PLACE NEWS



GIFT SERVICE

Thank you to everyone who contributed toys, money and vouchers to our Christmas Gift Service. Thanks to your wonderful generosity, we were able to hand over approximately 110 gifts for the children of the prisoners at Saughton Prison and a total of £700 in cheques and vouchers to Dalry Primary School Library. A letter has been received from the Prison thanking us for our wonderful support and saying that the children's Christmas was made all the more special due to our congregation's kindness. Dalry Primary School also sent a letter thanking us for our "incredibly generous" donation to the school and saying that they will enjoy involving the children in the decision of which books to buy for the library.

Eileen McColl

VISIT TO MERCHISTON CASTLE SCHOOL

On Sunday January 15th I was invited by the Chaplain, Rev Nick Blair, to conduct worship to their whole school assembly at the start of their new term. Eleven years ago Ruth and I attended his wedding to a former leader at our SU camp. The service which ran from 10-11am brings together the whole school community including Boarders and Day pupils, together with teachers and a number of parents. There were about 600 present on the Sunday I preached. The organist David Turner is a good friend of PP and worked with Andrew on our Carols by Candlelight Service. I preached an appropriate message for the New Year and then had time to speak with parents, teachers and pupils after the service. It was a very interesting experience and I enjoyed exploring with Nick and Fi how the role of a school chaplain worked out in a boarding school.



JOINT SERVICE FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Each January we join with our neighbours across the road in either our typical Presbyterian service or in their Episcopal Communion Service. This year they joined us and our worship was led by the joint choirs. Rather than follow the theme for this year we decided that the passage for our E100 challenge namely the Beatitudes was ideal for a service in which we sought to come together. As always the service was led by people from both congregations and we also encouraged children from both churches to come together. An offering was taken to support the work of the Bethany Care Shelter.



Colin Sinclair

PALMERSTON PLACE NEWS

SAMARITAN'S PURSE AND OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2012

Although we are still looking forward to warmer, sunnier days, there will still be quite a few more cold, dark evenings to come before the summer arrives. So, we have been looking at the knitted patterns, which have been approved by Samaritan's Purse, and find that, in addition to the clown and teddy bear hand puppets, there are several new ones on their website. While hand knitted stuffed toys cannot be exported, these additional ones are suitable for our shoeboxes.



If you enjoy knitting, why not have a go at some of them? We now have patterns for wrist warmers, a cuddly snake, a bag, a purse, as well as patterns for the clowns, teddy bears and beanie hats. They are all tried and trusted patterns made many times by volunteer teams across the UK. The patterns and samples of the items will be in the Lothian Room during February, so do go in and have a look, take

away a pattern for the items you would like to knit and put the long, cold, dark evenings to good use.

Joan Meikle and Norma Rolls

SESSION TEAMS

For the last number of years our Session has delegated aspects of its work to Session Teams. These teams are given a remit and present their plans for approval to the Session each autumn. Once they are approved they are left to get on with the work, only returning to Session to report or if they want permission to do something new that was not in their original plan. Each Session team is made up both of elders and of members of the congregation. Session teams are appointed annually but usually people will serve on a team for 3-5 years. At present we have four service teams- Worship and Christian Education, Service, Outreach and Pastoral; we have four support teams- Property and Finance, Communication, IT and Human Resources; and two teams uniting the work, namely Coordinating and Development. If any members would be interested in learning more about what is involved in serving on a ministry or support team please speak to myself or our Session Clerk, Peter Gray.

Colin Sinclair



NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

May I start this month's column by taking the opportunity to thank all those involved in our memorable service of Carols by Candlelight.

The choir's hard work, with a few welcome augmenters, proved very worthwhile and a large congregation gathered to reflect on Christmas in music. Thanks also to Maisie Reid from whose garden came the holly, used so ably by Linda Cunningham to decorate the church amongst the candles.

At the time of writing, we have just had our joint service with St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, and it was as ever a great encouragement to have such a full congregation and choir to lead us in worship. We also look forward to our special concert by Thomas Trotter marking the 20th anniversary of the installation of the church organ – a full review will appear in next month's magazine.

In early February our church is used as one of the venues for the annual Edinburgh Competition Festival Association, an opportunity for amateur musicians and speakers to perform in a competitive but supportive environment. Over the weekend of Sunday 5 February we will therefore have not one but two grand pianos in the church. It would be a shame not to make use of this, and so it will be a real treat to have pieces for two pianos as our evening service voluntaries that Sunday, played by Sarah Park and Bethany Crockett, both pupils at St Mary's Music School and regulars in our praise band. Don't miss the chance to hear two talented teenagers play virtuoso repertoire, as they send us home with the electrifying *Brasileira* movement from Darius Milhaud's *Scaramouche* suite for two pianos. It will be South American spice for supper!

On the following Sunday morning (12 Feb), the postlude will be Kenneth Leighton's *Paeon*. Leighton (1929 – 1988) was Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh and this is one of his better-known organ works. Typically spiky and discordant, it features cluster-like chords reminiscent of ringing bells. The work plays in a celebratory manner upon the tension created by adding the note of F# to a C major chord.

If that's all a bit lacking in a good tune, the postlude after the evening service on 19 February will provide succour; Easthope Martin's saccharine *Evensong* achieved great popularity in the early 20th century.

Sunday 26 February is the first Sunday of Lent, when we begin our journey towards the cross and Holy Week. We have started a tradition recently of performing a large choral work biannually on Good Friday; this year we will instead have an augmented choir, with support from the praise band, lead us in worship on Easter evening. If you would like to be involved – most of the music will be lively and contemporary – please come and have a word. I hope you find all the music in February enjoyable and helpful.

Andrew Caskie

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Thursdays 2:00-3:30pm

Annan House,

Palmerston Place Church

ALL RETIRED PEOPLE

WILL BE MADE VERY WELCOME!

Friendly chat, board games, tea & coffee, home baking.

For further details please phone

Eileen McColl .



Edinburgh Concert Band Charity Concert

In aid of Richmond's Hope

Saturday 31st March at 7.30pm

The Tom Fleming Centre for Performing Arts

Stewart's Melville College

Queensferry Road, Edinburgh

www.edinburghconcertband.com

for more information and tickets



giftaid it

Edinburgh Concert Band is a
Registered Charity SC036509



BOOK REVIEW: What the Bible Means to Me – Testimonies of how God’s Word impacts lives.

Edited by Catherine Mackenzie,
published by Christian Focus Publications (2011)

It has been exciting to hear of many people at Palmerston Place engaging with the E100 Bible reading challenge which was launched in September last year and aims to engage readers through 100 essential readings from the world’s best known and bestselling book. Did you hear about the high demand for a new bible translation published in Norway at the beginning of the year? The publisher expected to sell 25,000 when in fact 80,000 were bought in the first few days of publication!

The Bible, the word of God is inspirational, instructive, insightful and essential for us as we think about and live life. This collection of sixty six books was written over a 1,500 year span (from 1400 B.C to 100 A.D.) and took forty generations for it to be completed. Written by over forty authors from many walks of life (e.g. kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars), it was also written in different places (e.g. dungeons, palaces, wilderness) and at different times (e.g. war, peace). It was written on three continents (Asia, Africa and Europe) and in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek). Amazing! It has now been written in 6,000 languages across the world ... but there are still 2, 100 languages without a translation!

“...the word of God is inspirational, instructive, insightful and essential for us as we think about and live.”

What do you make of the Bible – God’s Word? I would like to draw your attention to a real gem of book published last year, edited by Catherine Mackenzie and with the contribution of 44 people from all walks of life who have something to say about how the Bible has impacted their lives. The bus driver, theologian, missionary, midwife, army chaplain, artist, cancer sufferer, nurse, minister and others. Each story can be read in minutes as they cover only a couple of pages but are so encouraging.

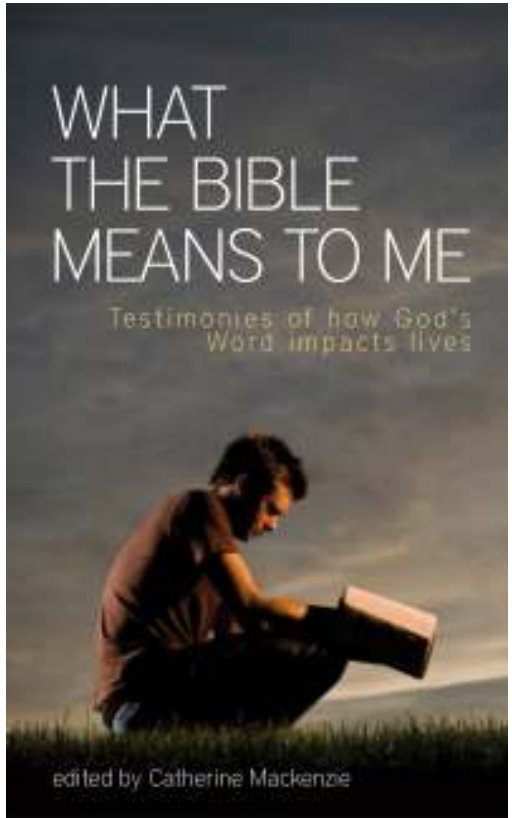
There is Bob Bond, an illustrator and comic-strip artist who “enjoys a good yarn” and says that “Jesus, of course, was the story-teller supreme”. Then there is Baroness Caroline Cox, the cross-bench member of the House of Lords, who believes that “In the bible, we find the whole gamut of human experience and the manifestation of God’s love throughout.”

Clark Walls is a bus driver in Inverness and describes how he gradually stopped going to church when he left home as a teenager but was later encouraged to turn back to the bible and eventually church by a friend – he writes that “there are so many different needs that we have and if we search the scriptures God will reveal himself to us in remarkable ways. I find it so comforting to know that whatever situation I find myself in, whether it’s a problem or something I want to be joyful about, God is always there to hear my prayers.”

Some of you with young children who love to listen to the leading children’s entertainer, Colin Buchanan, may like to know that one of his earliest memories of the Bible was when a pre-schooler sitting in Church in Dublin, thumbing his way through the New Testament with pictures depicting key stories like the Good Samaritan. Buchanan says that he loves the bible “because its truth is a truth you can see.”

Another person featured is Fiona Castle, the widow of the late entertainer, Roy Castle. She says that “Jesus never promised us an easy life, but he did assure us that our future is secure when we trust in him.” There are so many more fascinating and encouraging testimonies to read and I warmly recommend you buy and read the book – whether you are new to the bible or familiar with it.

Available on the Church Bookstall.



Gregor Innes

If you have read a particularly good Christian book and would like to review it for Review and Outlook or would like any information on what books are on offer and how to obtain copies, please email books@palmerstonplacechurch.com or speak to Fraser or Fiona Edwards.





PSALMS, HYMNS, and SPIRITUAL SONGS

Our New Year's Day service was memorable on account of the 11 hymns suggested by members of the congregation. After I told the story behind the hymn *When peace like a river attendeth my way*, a few folk have suggested it might be of interest to have a running feature in R&O on some of our favourite hymns and songs. To start the series, we can look at *There's a wideness in God's mercy* (CH3 218), which we sang at our joint service on Sunday 22 January.

This hymn was written by Frederick Faber (1814 – 1863), whose work raises the interesting question of the background of hymn-writers. Our unity with other Christians is a unity based not on woolly sentiments of it somehow feeling 'right' to be together, but a commitment to one another based on fellowship around and agreement on primary doctrines (or, as the Westminster Confession of Faith put it, 'things that ... enter into the substance of the faith'). In selecting praise, a preacher obviously chooses hymns whose lyrical content is consistent in doctrine with his own theology. But what about a hymn that in itself has perfectly good words, but has been penned by someone associated with a theology fundamentally different from our own? It was the great Baptist preacher of the Victorian era, Charles Spurgeon, who made a persuasive argument that hymns should be selected solely on the merits of their words rather than giving consideration to the character or background of the writer. A great believer in the educational role of hymns in teaching truth, he compiled a hymn book (imaginatively titled *Our Own Hymnbook!*) for his own congregation, London's Metropolitan Tabernacle, in 1866.

The relevant section of his introduction makes good reading:

The area of our researches has been as wide as the bounds of existing religious literature—American and British, Protestant and Romish, ancient and modern. Whatever may be thought of our taste, we have exercised it without prejudice; and a good hymn has not been rejected because of the character of its author, or the heresies of the church in whose hymnal it first appeared; so long as the language and the spirit of it commended the hymn to our heart, we included it and we believe that we have thereby enriched our collection.

Prior to this time, it had been rare, and at times frowned upon, to sing material not evolved in one's own tradition, and Spurgeon as ever saw to the real issue.

Getting back to Frederick Faber, he was raised as a strict Calvinist, and ordained as an Anglican clergyman. Much influenced by John Keble's Tractarian, or Oxford, Movement (which advocated liturgy and ceremony), his sympathies for Catholicism strengthened until he eventually followed such as John Henry Newman (author of 'Lead, kindly light') in becoming a Roman Catholic priest, ending his days as Father Wilfred of the Brompton Oratory. The hymn (like so many Victorian hymns, an excerpt of a much longer poem) is a song to the enduring and all-encompassing love of God, based on Psalm 86:15 'But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness' (NIV). It has some beautiful profound sentiments, such as 'There's a kindness in His justice which is more than liberty', and in more controversial mode, in a verse often omitted today: 'But we make His love too narrow with false limits of our own; And we magnify His strictness with a zeal he will not own.' It is probably more the case that it is us who are soft on our sins. Similarly, the last verse:

*If our lives were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word;
And our lives would be all gladness,
In the joy of Christ our Lord.*

perhaps goes beyond our attempts to 'walk by faith and not by sight' (2 Corinthians 5:7), but the hymn as a whole is a beautiful picture of God's love for His people.

The hymn has suffered for decades from being sung to tunes (such as *Sussex*) a little too strident for the gentle prayer the words form. A modern hymn-tune, *Corvedale*, matches the spirit of the words perfectly and is growing in popularity; it was written by Maurice Bevan, a member of the choir of St Paul's Cathedral in London for forty years, and first sung there in 2004: undoubtedly one of the classic hymn-tunes of the 21st century.

Andrew Caskie

A SEASON OF PRAYER



Prayer is essential. Do **you** think so?

David, Nehemiah, Daniel, the disciples, Paul, and many many more in the Bible did, vital to their life and relationship with God. Jesus himself said “**When** you pray...”.

When would we pray, or should we pray? In good times, or in desperate personal situations?

Before forthcoming events, and after? In the face of personal attack? or fierce temptation?

The Bible sees prayer as an essential part of faith.

Many of its prayers are passionate cries for help; passionate appeals against 'unfair' treatment, or astonishing prayers of praise, even in the middle of

imprisonment or persecution. We need passion in our prayers as well – do we all need to regain some of our lost enthusiasm for prayer?

At the September conference last year, one of the subjects unanimously agreed was the encouragement of prayer within our congregation; and so, this Lent we are urging every member of the congregation, (and yes, that means you and me!) as individuals, in different groups, in Session Teams, and in organisations to make prayer an integral part of our work and lives. As one example, did you know the Beginners are using a *Trypraying* booklet designed for young children? To refresh our prayer lives at all ages, we will be offering some new ideas as to when, where and how we can pray, always remembering that any place can be a venue, ordinary language is fine, and that Jesus himself said “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be with you”.

Don't know what to pray? There are many subjects for us all to pray for – the work of our congregation, our young people, our interests outwith ourselves like Fresh Start, Chogoria, Christian Aid, local and national concerns, ... the topics are endless. The *Trypraying* initiative is happening again this year – why not get involved by taking some books for friends, or by taking part in a day of prayer covering 24 hours as we did last year?

Please start right now! Take a look at this month's Prayer page for ideas, and keep praying.

SUNDAY SERVICES IN PALMERSTON PLACE CHURCH

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

11.00am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Service

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

KIRK SESSION

Next meetings will be held on Monday 6 February
and Monday 5 March
at 7:30pm
in Annan House.

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

PROPERTY AND FINANCE TEAM

Next meeting will be held on Monday 20 February
at 7:30pm in Annan House.

THE REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

All material for the **March** issue
should be in the hands of the Secretary
by **Sunday 19th February**

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 the 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.