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# ST. MARGARET'S PARISH NEWS

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MAY/JUNE 2009

No. 465

## VIEW FROM THE MANSE



### Homosexuality and the Church

I hesitate to write about this issue but it is one that will be debated in the General Assembly and is causing a great deal of concern in the church – what are the issues? Homosexuality used to be a clear-cut issue that every Christian agreed on...homosexuality is a sin. Now, it has become an issue that is dividing the church.

What does the Bible have to say on the issue? Genesis chapter one speaks of the normal emotional and physical relationship as being between a man and a woman. The Bible warns against homosexual behaviour in several places: Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 10:13; Deuteronomy 23:17; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Timothy 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Jude 1:7. Nowhere is it spoken of as right.

Homosexuality is not a normal way to behave or to conduct a relationship – the following statistics are sobering:

- 74% of male homosexuals had more than 100 partners in a lifetime
- 41% of male homosexuals had more than 500 partners in a lifetime
- 28% of male homosexuals had more than 1000 partners in a lifetime.

Only 8% of homosexual men, and 7% of lesbian women ever had a relationship that lasted more than 3 years.

The Gay community offers several statements to justify their way of life:

1. *"We are born this way... we have no choice. God made us this way... God don't make no junk. Why would anyone choose a lifestyle that is so controversial? We can't help it."*

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THAT?

A "gay gene" has never been found. Homosexuality is a CHOICE. TRUE, some people have more gay tendencies than others... more of an inclination to turn to a gay lifestyle. BUT...it's their CHOICE. Children of alcoholics and child/wife abusers are more likely to become alcoholics and child/wife abusers themselves. BUT, it's their choice. You aren't born that way. Environment, society, culture and values play a big part in a person turning to a homosexual lifestyle. BUT, it doesn't MAKE them a homosexual. It's their choice. All the evidence shows that most people who turn to homosexual behaviour have been abused when they were younger – this explains, but does not condone the practice.

2. *"Christians are violating Scripture when they judge the homosexual – Matthew 7:1 "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Where is your Christian love and compassion?"*

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THAT?

When the woman who was caught in adultery was brought before Jesus he refused to condemn her, but he did tell her to stop sinning and get on with her life – that wasn't judgment, it was direction.

What are we to make of this issue? Are we to be drawn along by the views and trends of our society or do we look elsewhere for answers? The last few months have surely shown

us how little we can trust the opinions of our world – look at the mess it is in financially, morally, personally, emotionally and spiritually. In the church, we belong to a society of people who live under God's direction and we are expected to set aside wrong behaviour and not excuse or try to legitimise it.

Among a whole raft of sins, homosexual behaviour is only one, but why should we legitimise by calling right, what God says is wrong? God help us as a church the day we change our values to suit our society.

Your Brother in Christ,  
Iain.

### **CHURCH DIARY**

3 <sup>rd</sup> May	11.30a.m	Halbeath Service
7 <sup>th</sup> June	11.30a.m.	Halbeath Service
21 <sup>st</sup> June	10.00a.m.	Communion Service

### **Summary of the Minutes of the Congregational Board Meeting held on Monday 6 April 09**

The meeting was attended by the Chairman, Minister, Treasurer, Clerk plus 25 Board Members and was opened, as is customary, with a prayer.

#### **Opening Remarks**

The only opening remark was a reminder of the details of forthcoming Holy Week and Easter services.

#### **Matters Arising from Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The planning application for a fast food takeaway to be situated at the bottom of the car park at Mercer Place, has been refused by Fife Council.

The recent First Aid Course held at St. Ninian's Church and given by Jim Colville of St. Margaret's, was attended by one member from St. Margaret's.

It is hoped in the near future to gather advice from '121' George Street regarding the possibility of obtaining a grant to provide cavity wall insulation at the church.

A key for the outside gas meter has now been provided to meter personnel in order to obviate the need for calling out someone from the church on each occasion that the meter requires reading.

#### **Correspondence**

No new correspondence on this occasion.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reported that, in spite of the current economic downturn, our finances remain in a reasonably healthy state. The loan taken out to refurbish the manse is now reduced by almost one-third. Payments to service the loan are taken from dividends received from our Income Fund. One item for concern, however, is the steady drop in the unit price of our Legacy Fund since the beginning of the year. This reflects the continuing downward trend in the money market.

The Treasurer apologised for the fact the annual Accounts and Trustees Report due before the end of March was still not quite ready. This was due to family health problems and the delay had been reported to both Presbytery and '121' George Street. It was anticipated that the report would be completed within a further week's time, and ready for distribution prior to the Trustees meeting required for approval of the accounts. Once said approval had been received, our own Annual Stated Meeting would follow and the report would then be passed to Presbytery and to '121'. Dates for both meetings still to be agreed with the Minister.

The proposal to accept the Rev. Douglas Aitken as our new Independent Examiner was seconded and accepted.

A new contract regarding the provision of utilities has been agreed by '121' and both services will now be provided by the same supplier, Scottish Gas.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for his report.

**Fund-raising Committee Report**

Nothing new to report

**Catering Committee**

The Easter Breakfast this year will be hosted by the Scouts and will be at the usual time of 9.30am followed by Easter Sunday Family Service at 10.30am.

**Property Convenor's Report**

A new urn had been provided for the kitchen to replace one which had been faulty.

**A.O.C.B.**

There are currently three vacancies on the Congregational Board.

At a recent Session meeting, Robert McCulloch was appointed as our new Church Officer.

A new committee has been formed combining the offices of Property Convenor, Church Officer and Hall Committee. The committee will be headed by John Strang (Property Convenor) and other members are Robert McCulloch (Church Officer) Catherine McCulloch, Tom McIntosh, Manuel Giraldas and Jack Eadie. It was also decided that, meantime there would still be a requirement for a 'Cleaning Squad'. A list of volunteers to be organised in order that a rota can be set up.

A drawing plan to provide improved disabled access was made available for perusal. Agreement would be required before seeking quotes and planning permission.

The subject of new notice boards to be placed on the south gable wall of the church was discussed. These to provide details of the Minister, Church Officer plus a list of available activities, possibly along with a 'Wayside Pulpit'. It was agreed to proceed with the costing of these.

Approval was given for the repainting of the main door of the manse.

The provision of a blind or some kind of screening for the roof window above the church projector screen was approved. Various suggestions to be followed up.

The request by the Treasurer, who is also Presbytery Prayer Group Convenor, to hold the next group meeting at St. Margaret's was granted.

Permission was also granted for the Guides to hold a Beetle Drive on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May in aid of funds for next year's Centenary.

The Meeting closed with prayer.

The next meeting will be Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**The Guild**

Monday, 11 May As this is the final meeting of the Session, a good attendance of members is requested.

The Topic for the evening – "Where do we go now?"

**The Men's Fellowship**

Our Session 2008/09 ended in April. The new Session 2009/10 will commence in September 2009 Details will be published nearer to that date.

**Summer Bowling**

The evenings of summer bowling, to which everyone is invited, will commence on

Monday evening 8<sup>th</sup> June and will continue fortnightly thereafter.

The dates are – 8 and 22 June: 6 and 20 July: 3, 17 and 31 August and 7 September  
Please come along and enjoy an evening of bowling and fellowship.

#### **National Mission – Christian Aid**

On Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> May, after Church Service the National Mission committee is hosting a coffee morning. There will be home baking and the minimum cost will be £1. All proceeds will go to Christian Aid. There will be a retiral offering that morning for all who wish to donate but cannot come for coffee.

#### **Thank you**

I wish to thank Iain and my friends of the Church for the warm welcome I received on Good Friday evening. It is nice to know you are a caring congregation.

Moira Stevenson.

*Sadly, Moira passed away on 23rd April, but I feel Moira would have wanted her "Thankyou" to be included.*

#### **Flower Distribution**

June 7	Mrs P Moyes	Mrs A McArthur
June 14	Mr & Mrs R Pratt	
June 21	Mr & Mrs W MacKay	
June 28	Mrs E Potter	Miss Bicket
July 5	Mr & Mrs W Faichney	
July 12	Mrs W Kennedy	Mrs R Wilson
July 19	Mrs S McLean	Mr D Clark
July 26	Mrs S Imrie	Mrs C Hunter



#### **HELP REQUIRED**

Flower Distributors to deliver the flowers which decorate our Church on Sundays, to sick or infirm members at home. Please contact Miss Bicket on 722312.

#### **Tea & Coffee Rota**

June 7	Mrs Imrie	Mrs Angus	Mrs Maureen Hynd
June 14	Mrs Kerr	Mrs McIntosh	Mrs Hamilton
June 21	Mrs Gillespie	Mrs Cunningham	Mrs McAleece
June 28	Mrs McCulloch	Miss Bicket	Mrs Gray
July 5	Mrs Chapman	Mrs Brown	Mrs Stothart
July 12	Mrs McArthur	Mrs Evans	Mrs McEwen
July 19	Mrs Bowie	Mrs Kennedy	Mrs Pratt
July 26	Mrs Telfer	Mrs Todd	Mrs Wilson



We welcome Mrs Val Evans to our team and we thank Val for volunteering to join us.

#### **Next Issue**

Would you please let me have the contributions for the July/August issue on Sunday 14 June

## May Issue

### **General Assembly 2009**

Reports to the General Assembly and Assembly Diary  
Profile of the Moderator Designate, the Rev Bill Hewitt

### **Christian Aid Week**

Interview with the Head of Christian Aid Scotland  
Christian Aid's work around the world  
What can my church do?  
Christian Aid Week Prayer

### **The Voice of Poverty**

Jackie Macadam reports from Scotland's first Poverty Truth Commission,

### **All About Love**

The outgoing Moderator, the Rt Rev David Lunan, reflects on the meaning of love.

### **Emerging Church**

Jackie Macadam hears of new ways of being the church.

### **Cruise the Canal**

A charity that takes disabled people and carers on canal trips.

### **Fair Deal**

Anne Collard's visit to Peru reveals just how effective fair trade can be

### **Simple but Meaningful**

John R Hume pays a visit to Hoselaw Chapel.

### **Love is Never Rude**

The Very Rev Dr James Simpson reflects on the damage done by misrepresentation and rudeness

**Plus** - Presbytery of Uist, all the regular columnists, news, letters and crosswords - all for just £1.60.

## **CHURCH HUMOUR**

A Church had problems with outsiders parking in its parking areas, so they put up a sign:

CHURCH CAR PARK – FOR MEMBERS ONLY – Trespassers will be baptized!

“No God – No Peace. Know God – Know Peace.”

“Free Trip To Heaven. Details Inside.”

“Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here.”

An ad for one Church has a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are inscribed and a headline that reads, “For fast, fast, fast relief, take two tablets.”

When the restaurant next to another Church put out a big sign with red letters that said, “Open Sundays,” the Church reciprocated with its own message: “We are open on Sundays, too.”

“Fight truth decay – study the Bible daily.”

“How will you spend eternity – Smoking or Non-Smoking?”

“Dusty Bibles lead to Dirty Lives.”

“Come work for the Lord. The work is hard, the hours long, and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world.”

“It is unlikely there will be a reduction in the wages of sin.”

“Do not wait for the hearse to take you to Church.”

“If you’re headed in the wrong direction, God allows U-turns.”

“If you don’t like the way you were born, try being born again.”

“Looking at the way some people live, they ought to obtain eternal fire insurance soon.”

“This is a Ch\_ \_ ch. What is missing?”

“In the dark? Follow the Son.”

“Running low on faith? Step in for a fill-up.”

“If you can’t sleep, don’t count sheep. Talk to the Shepherd.”

Exposure to the Son may prevent burning.

**Snippets**

A husband read an article to his wife about how many words women use a day ... 30,000 to a man's 15,000.

The wife replied, "The reason has to be that we have to repeat everything to men"  
The husband then turned to his wife and said "What?"

Low Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 pm. Please use back door.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "Hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in Church. So ends a friendship that began in their schooldays.

What makes men chase women they don't intend to marry? The same impulse that makes dogs chase cars they don't intend to drive...

Forgive your enemies - it messes with their heads!

God does not believe in athiests - therefore athiests do not exist.

God so loved the world that he did not send a comittee to fix it.

Artificial Intelligence is no match for Natural Stupidity.

The tongue, being in a wet place, is apt to slip.

Exercise daily - walk with the Lord.

Be an organ donor - give your heart to Jesus.

Try Jesus - if you don't like him, the devil will always take you back.

Part time religion is like part time work - it isn't enough to support you.

**NEEHBDpAD@QDQR**

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38 Garvock Hill, Dunfermline 723955
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- Treasurer** **Mr. Frank Moyes, 33 Whitemyre Court, Dunfermline. 738341**
- Clerk to the Congregational Board** **Mrs. Vera Wilson, 24 Masterton Road. 720250**
- Church Officer** **Mr. Robert McCulloch, 95 Garvock Hill. 734463**
- Organist** **Mr. Tom McMillan, 157 Halbeath Road. 727252**
- Roll Keeper** **Mr. Jim Adamson, 8 Garvock Hill. 727719**
- Editor** **Mrs. C. McCulloch, 95 Garvock Hill. 734463**

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## **SgdþA`bjþO`fd**

### **THE MOOSIE'S PRAYER**

A pair wee kirk moose, a' forlorn,  
Its furry coat fair sairly worn  
Sank doon upon its bony knees  
And prayed for juist a wee bit cheese.

The tears run doon its wee thin cheeks  
But nane could hear the saddest squeal  
That drifted on the cauld nicht air  
Till whiles it couldnae pray nae mair.

Syne daylight cam, the kirk bells rang,  
The doors swang open wi a bang  
Communion day had come oan by  
Wi' wine and plates o' breid piled high.

The wee moose lay as still a daith  
An' watched it a' wi' bated braith  
Then thocht – "If I keep awfu quate  
A bit nicht juist fa' aff a plate".

An' so it gazed as round they went  
Then, just as tho' twas heaven-sent,  
Whit landed richt upon its heid  
But twa lumps o' Communion breid!

The staff o' life lay on the flair  
Then, bounteous answer to his prayer,  
Juist as he thocht, it looks fell-dry,  
Ae body couped some wine forbye!

Wee moosie stoated up the aisle  
Wearin' sic a boozy smile'  
The fowk stopped singin', fair aghast,  
Tae see a drunken moose walk past.

The organist fell aff his chair  
The meenister could only stare  
Tae see this drunken, sinfu' moose  
Cavortin' in his sacred hoose.

At last, it staggered up the nave,  
Then turned and gied a happy wave  
"I ken noo when it's time tae pray.  
I'll dae it on communion day!"

