



### From the Locum Minister

My first words must be words of appreciation. I'm grateful to those I've met so far for the warmth of your welcome; to your Session Clerk, Pamela, for her thoughtful induction to congregation and parish; to Claire and her musicians and choir for their willingness to tackle new hymns and songs; to the office staff for their patient and careful cooperation; and to your minister John Munro and the Kirk session for their invitation to me to serve for three months as your locum. I shall do my best to honour the trust placed in me but, like every practising minister, I shall depend upon the help, critical support, forgiveness, encouragement and goodwill of the congregation.

What more can I say after only a fortnight at Fairmilehead? Perhaps you may allow me to share these first impressions.

I see a congregation set at the heart of a large community intent on serving that community in countless ways; church and halls available and used by people of every age and stage, a marvellous asset and a hugely important focus for personal growth and community wellbeing; individual church members of real quality, committed to giving of their best for the work of Christ's church and kingdom; a former church extension charge established 75 years ago 'to provide the means of grace and the ordinances of religion in this parish' and today determined to fulfil that same purpose with energy, conviction and of imagination.

As in every other congregation, there are some challenges needing to be addressed, some issues needing resolution. And since some of these matter far more than others, it behoves us to discern which is which, to concentrate on those which belong to the central purpose of the church and leave the others to solve themselves.

God has called us to serve the church here and has promised us the help and guidance of his spirit. I have confidence that with the enthusiasm, friendliness and hard work of all our members the continuing vitality and effectiveness of our worship, work and witness are assured.

*Stewart McGregor*

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### Readings for the month of February



#### 5th February

Isaiah 40:21-31  
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c  
1 Corinthians 9:16-23  
Mark 1:29-39

#### 12th February

2 Kings 5:1-14  
Psalm 30  
1 Corinthians 9:24-27  
Mark 1:40-45



#### 19th February

2 Kings 2:1-12  
Psalm 50:1-6  
2 Corinthians 4:3-6  
Mark 1:2-9

#### 26th February

Genesis 9:8-17  
Psalm 25:1-10  
1 Peter 3:18-22  
Mark 1:9-15

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at the Church Office 0131 445 2374

Email: [office@fhpc.org.uk](mailto:office@fhpc.org.uk)

## Foundation Sunday

Sunday 26 February 2012

10.30am

Service of Celebration to  
commemorate the  
75th Anniversary of the  
laying of the

Foundation Stone

Guest Preacher -

Rt Hon Rev George Grubb,  
The Lord Provost of Edinburgh

*All are Welcome*

## From the Editor

Welcome to our first four-page Church News of 2012 - hope you enjoy. As our "starter for 10" our Locum Minister, Stewart McGregor, shares his experiences and thoughts of his first month with us. The "Front of the House" is getting "geared up" for the special Service of Celebration on Sunday 26 February to commemorate the laying of the Church's foundation stone in 1937. The Lord Provost, Rev George Grubb, will be preaching the Sermon that day. Please diary that this service commences at 10.30am. Pamela Black has a plea to all on our back page to come (with your marigolds if you have some) to give the Church a good clean for this unique occasion!

The Halls are again being a focus of much activity each weekday from 8.30am to 10.00pm. I see many of you at one or other of the daytime events - in particular I've noticed a few Members taking the Zumba plunge! A reminder all activities that take place in the Church Centre are detailed on the back page of our **Crossroads** magazine. There are spare copies of the Winter edition in the Foyer so please pick up a further copy if required.

Saturday 14th January saw the biennial Burns Supper hosted by our Social Committee at Mortonhall Golf Club House. As you can read, and see below, a good time was had by all!

A thank-you to Hugh McCreadie for his article on page 3. Hugh keeps trying to persuade me to join him and his fellow detectorists on a Sunday afternoon field sweep. One of these days I'll surprise him!

Finally, a reminder the Halls are available to hire for one-off events. The venue is ideal for children's parties, family gatherings, group re-unions or training events. If you, or anyone you know, wishes to hire a Hall please give me a call or, better still, call in to the Centre during the week before 3.00pm. Full details, including a floor plan and photographs of all our halls are available to view on our website [www.fhpc.org.uk](http://www.fhpc.org.uk).

**Stewart Morris - Church Centre Coordinator**



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## Our Burns Supper & other Social Committee Events



**Callum McGillivray pipes in "the beast" for Bill Cuthbert to address! Bill Stone and Claire Currie look on**



**Chairman Steve Brannan thanks Stuart Monro for his slant on The Immortal Memory**

Seventy four members and friends had a very enjoyable evening on 14 January at our Burns Supper at Mortonhall Golf Club House. Stephen Brannan chaired the event, the haggis was addressed by Bill Cuthbert and, in proposing The Immortal Memory, Stuart Monro gave us the geologist's view of the Bard. Bill Stone proposed the toast to The Lasses and Hayley O'Connor responded - the first time that we have been entertained by a husband and wife double act. The entertainment ended with a rendition of Tam O'Shanter by Alex McDougall. Our singing was very ably accompanied by Claire Currie.

Our next event will be a Beetle Drive on Sunday, 25 March in Buckstone Hall, starting at 2.00 pm. We intend this to be a very entertaining event. It will be open to all ages from children to grandparents. The charge will be £2 for adults and £1 for children.

We are making arrangements for our annual lunch at the "EH15" restaurant at Jewel and Esk College on Tuesday, 24 April. Details in our next edition and in the Orders of Services.

**Donald Lane - Secretary**



**Hayley thanks "hubbie" (Bill Stone) for his kind words to The Lasses**

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## Lost - A Time Capsule

Some time, long ago, a time capsule was buried in the church garden. So long ago, and so well buried, that no one can remember when or where ... can you help?

If you can, please contact the Church Office.

Thank you.

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## Curious Parallels

In many ways 2011 has been a tempestuous year. One feature of this has been the graphic television reports of what has been called the 'Arab Spring'. Countries in the Middle East and North Africa have suddenly erupted in successive uprisings as attempts were made to throw off the fetters of long, despotic rule. From Libya to Egypt and from Bahrain to Syria the cost in human suffering has been colossal as desperate autocrats employed every known vicious device to repress movements for liberty. Armed soldiers, tear gas, live ammunition, beatings and torture have all contributed to the waves of terror endured by those seeking basic human freedoms.

The December issue of Amnesty International's monthly magazine reported that hospital staff in Bahrain had been subjected to fiendish reprisals for daring to treat injured protesters. One blog from a female medic in the capital, Manama, after being dragged from her home by 30 masked, armed men says: "I was physically and emotionally abused, blindfolded and handcuffed. They beat me and gave me electric shocks. They threatened to kill me so that I would confess to false accusations. I was sexually harassed and humiliated". All this is but a tiny, distressing insight into a world controlled by those determined to dominate whatever the cost.

The 'domination system' is nothing new. It has parallels that echo down the centuries and we see it as the background to the Christmas story. King Herod, perhaps a psychopath, murderer of his own close relatives, is reported by Matthew to have ordered the killing of infant boys when he thought his position was threatened. His own insecurity found echoes in his Roman masters. Sensing seething discontent among the oppressed Jewish people they had few scruples about crucifying any who might imperil their rule. Jesus was only one of many to die in this way. Barely forty years after his death a Jewish revolt brought a terrible Roman response when General Titus laid siege to Jerusalem, sacked it and demolished Herod's great Temple. By this means Judaism was changed forever and Christianity was encouraged to follow the apostle Paul into the wider world he was the first to enter.

Only by a degree of empathy with the anguish of the many now embroiled in the Arab Spring can we hope to understand the turmoil of those once involved in the great events recorded in the Gospels.

**Jim Moffat Education Convener**

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## Dry Your Eyes

It wasn't until relatively recently that I heard of such a thing as a LACHRYMATORY – TEAR BOTTLE. Exactly what are they and when did they come into being? The Old Testament of the King James Bible refers to collecting tears in a bottle – in Psalm 56:8 when David prays to God: "Thou tellest my wanderings, put thou my tears in Thy bottle; are they not in Thy Book?" The reference predates the birth of Christ by over 1000 years!

Tear catchers were commonly used during Roman times. At funerals mourners filled glass vials with their tears and placed them in tombs as a symbol of their respect for the deceased. The tear-filled bottle was also used to show remorse, guilt, love and grief. The tears collected showed how much the deceased was respected and important. Bottles were designed with special seals, which allowed the tears to evaporate. By the time that the tears were assumed to have evaporated, the mourning period was considered over.

In the 19th century during the Victorian era, tear bottles made a comeback among the wealthy. These were more elaborate than their Roman predecessors, and were often decorated with silver and pewter. Now, one of those would be a unique kind of find for a detectorist!

There are several stories regarding their usage. One was that the tears of the mourner were caught in the

vial, then corked. After a year the tears were then poured onto the grave. The other version of the story is that once the tears dried up in the vial, the mourning period was then over. Another story is that the widow would wear the tear catcher around her neck and every time she cried over the loss her of husband in the first year, she would collect the tears. On the anniversary of his death, she would pour the preserved tears on his grave. How poetic!

In the American Civil War, women were said to have cried into tear bottles and saved them until their husbands returned from battle. Their collected tears would show the men how much they were adored and missed.

**Hugh McCreadie - Church Officer**

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**Early Roman tear catcher**



**Victorian glass tear catcher**

## Pentland Walking Group

We started the year with a walk in the Mortonhall Estate, with mulled wine en route, and returned to Frogston Hall where, having been joined by some former walkers, 40 of us sat down to an excellent tea. Thanks were given to all who had provided the refreshments.

Until Easter we shall have fortnightly Sunday afternoon walks for which we leave the Church Car Park at 1.40pm. (See the Diary section)

On Saturday, 18 February we have our Annual General Meeting in Caiystane Hall starting at 10.00am. At this meeting we agree our programme of evening and all-day picnic walks for the Summer and elect our committee. After the formal business we have refreshments and a show of some of our walks for the past year. Everyone who is interested in our activities will be very welcome.

**Donald Lane**



## Sanctuary Spring Clean

Are you free on **Saturday 25 February**? If you are please come and help to give the Sanctuary a good Hoover/polish/dust/wipe in preparation for the special service on Sunday 26 February to mark the start of the 75th Anniversary celebrations of Fairmilehead Parish Church.

9.30: "Marigolds and Mops!"

11.30: Coffee and Cakes!

Please give **Pamela Black** a ring (445-1065) if you are able to help.

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## St. Catharine's News

If you are feeling the cold these days then think of the Homeless who don't have the warm fires and warm clothing we have in Fairmilehead! That is why it is so necessary to remember the work St Catharine's do. Although they do not have beds for the guests they do provide warm meals, clothing, advice and counselling when required. They also seek medical help for those who need it and encourage and help others to make hospital appointments as required. In fact they help the guests in so many ways and our help is greatly needed too.

Warm clothes, waterproofs, strong footwear, but not our old high heels ladies!, Socks, gloves, scarves and woolly hats. Any dried foods such as lentils, rice and other pulses, margarine, tea and sugar, tinned foods. We know the guests really like corned beef and tuna - please fish some out if you have some to spare! Disposable gloves, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, soap, razors and combs - all welcome. Most of the guests are men so not many women's things are required, and definitely no children's items.

If you are able to give any of these to us for St Catharine's, then please, during the week hand them in to the Church Office and on a Sunday there will be a box opposite the Welcome desk to receive your gifts. Many thanks.

**Katherine Shaw, Moya Justice and Valerie Walke**

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## The Guild

On 1 February we hold our annual Project Afternoon Tea. This year's Church of Scotland Project is entitled "A New Hunger" and is concentrated on combating HIV/AIDS by helping people in various countries who have to live with this deadly virus. For anti-viral drugs to work, a good diet must be maintained and, with the cost of basic foods rising dramatically, the poorest of the world's population suffer. The project aims to become self-sufficient and your support would be welcome.

On an entirely different subject on 15 February we have Audrey Riddell talking on "Sangs o' the Kirk" - a history of well known hymns sung to Scottish tunes. Again, all are welcome.

**Renee Barton (Secretary)**

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## Church Register

### Deaths

Tom Masterton  
7 Camus Road West  
Edinburgh (10/5)  
Died 28 December 2011

### Change of Address

Margery Gibb from  
25 Buckstone Hill (5/3)  
to 24 Caiystane Court,  
Oxgangs Road North (12/3)

## The Women's Forum

How quickly the time passes and we are into the last few meetings of this session.

7 March is the Joint Supper with the Guild and this year it is the turn of the Guild to host it.

14 March our speaker is Donald Smith from the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

28 March is the AGM plus Sarah telling us about 'Another Rome'.

**Johan MacKenzie (Secretary)**

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## February Diary

Wed 1	1430	Guild - Project Tea
Sun 5	0945	Worship Now! & Young Church
	1100	Morning Worship
	1340	Walking Group - Linlithgow
Tue 7	1900	Community Council
Wed 8	1945	Forum
Sun 12	0945	Worship Now! & Young Church
	1100	Morning Worship
Tue 14	1930	Business Committee
Wed 15	1430	Guild
Sat 18	1000	Walking Group AGM & Coffee Morning
Sun 19	0945	Worship Now! & Young Church
	1100	Morning Worship
	1340	Walking Group - Craiglockhart Hill
	1345	Holiday Club
Wed 22	1945	Forum
Sun 26	1030	Celebration of 75 years & Quarterly Communion
Tue 28	1930	Kirk Session

## March Diary

Sun 4	0945	Worship Now! & Young Church
	1100	Morning Worship
	1340	Walking Group - Garvald
Tue 6	1900	Community Council
Wed 7	1930	Forum & Guild Dinner
Sun 11	0945	Worship Now! & Young Church
	1100	Morning Worship
Tue 13	1930	Business Committee
Wed 14	1945	Forum
	1900	Social Committee
Sun 18	0945	Worship Now! & Young Church
	1100	Morning Worship
	1340	Walking Group - Carriden & Blackness
Wed 21	1430	Guild
Sun 25	0945	Worship Now! Young Church & Monthly Communion
	1100	Morning Worship & Monthly Communion
	1400	Beetle Drive
Tue 27	1930	Stated Annual Meeting - To be confirmed
Wed 28	1945	Forum AGM

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*All are welcome  
in this place!*

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