

# Park Pages

the magazine of Uddingston: Park United Free Church of Scotland



## Letter from the Minister

As we approach the summer period, it is always tempting, within the life of the church, to see this as the Quiet Zone – a period of relative inactivity where things just coast along until the start of the real WORK in September.

How mistaken this is!

Whilst it is true that, 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens...' (Ecclesiastes 3:1), it is also true that those varied seasons are ordered so that in and through them all, we may recognise that, '...everything God does will endure forever.' (Ecclesiastes 3:14)

For many of us, the next few weeks and months are times given to us to be refreshed in mind, body and spirit. That is important if we are going to be healthy in the fullness of all that makes us truly **human**. However, so often we forget the **spirit** part of that fullness. This period may have been provided for **you** so that you can feed your **soul**; **read** God's Word, spend time before the Lord in **prayer** and meet with your fellow believers, wherever you are, in **fellowship**. As you do so, you will discover that this summer period can be a time, '...to be born... to plant... to build... to celebrate... to gather... to embrace... to search... to heal... to reflect... to love... for peace.' (Ecclesiastes 3:2-8)

May it be so—for **all** of us!

*Wm B Russell*

**'there is a time... to be born... to plant...  
to build... to celebrate... to gather...  
to embrace... to search... to heal...  
to reflect... to love... for peace.'**

**(Ecclesiastes 3:2-8)**

## Welcome...

...to our first electronic newsletter! Park Pages has a new look! It will appear quarterly on the church website but hard copies will also be available in the church for those who don't use the internet. We hope you like the new format.

## Summer 2015

### Inside this issue..

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# Family and Children's Worker

On Sunday 17 May 2015 Elizabeth presented to the congregation an overview of what we are presently doing as a congregation for the young children and youth but also a vision of what we would like to be able to do in the future. It is great to see more young families attending our Sunday services but we would also like to be able to reach out into our community too with the good news of Jesus. To this end we are hoping to be able to employ a Family and Children's Worker for 21 hours per week for the next three years to make that vision a reality. To this end Pledge Forms were distributed and the congregation were asked to prayerfully consider giving to this cause for the next three years so that the good work we are doing just now will be carried

over to future generations. It is our duty as Christians to pass on the good news to our children. Psalm 78 says:

Listen, O my people, to my instructions;

Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable;

I will utter dark sayings of old,

Which we have heard and known,

And our fathers have told us.

We will not conceal them from their children,

But tell to the generation to come the praises of the Lord,

And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done.

If you weren't at the service that day but would like to give to this project please speak to any office bearer who will be pleased to give you a Pledge Form.



Suffer the little children to come unto me..

## News from our Mission Partners

**Robert Wainwright:** Robert will be ordained into the Anglican ministry on Saturday 4 July in Christchurch Cathedral, Oxford. The minister will be attending and representing our fellowship. Please pray for Robert as he sets out on this journey that he would settle in quickly as curate in the Parish of Burford and make friends in his new setting.

**Allan Ooi:** From 12-14 June Allan will be attending Agapé's 'Move Weekend' conference where there will be teaching and seminars on topics such as "A community approach to faith-sharing" and "Having meaningful dialogue with people of other faiths."

Agapé are sending summer projects to Portugal, Romania and Russia from 21 June to 5 July. The teams of students will work alongside local Agapé ministries and join them in their existing outreach programmes. Please pray for fruit from these trips!



**Catherine :** Please pray for Catherine as her mum recovers from a major operation. Catherine will be staying at home to look after her mum for a few months and will be speaking at some of the UF churches including Park. Pray for good relationships within the family and a sense of God's peace for Catherine, her mum and sister as they deal with this illness. Praise God that the initial operation went well and give them strength for the chemotherapy treatment that lies ahead in June.

**Steve and Katuska Davies:**  
**Mozambique—**Things are going well at the seminary and there's a growing body of students who have a good school background, study skills and the will to persevere! We'd value your prayers as OMS HQ seek to appoint a new field director which may mean big changes in our small team. Pray for wisdom and inspiration in this endeavour. We have much to thank God for—the roads and borders are more peaceful, the weather has turned cooler and our boys are enjoying playing with our neighbours' kids. God is good!



## Marvellous, Excellent, Great and Awesome!

We have had great fun at MEGA this past winter session with an average of 23 children coming along to enjoy a Bible story, singing, games and craft—all around a theme. Our theme this past year has been Junior Heroes from the Bible and how they teach us more about God's special armour: the belt of truth (Samuel), the shield of faith (David and Goliath), the helmet of salvation (Naaman's servant girl), the sword of the Spirit (Josiah) - and prayer (Rhoda, the servant girl who witnessed Peter's miraculous escape from the prison). We have not only learned lots from the Bible but have made new friends and had lots of fun together too.



## The Light Factory Holiday Club

Park Church will be holding its annual Holiday Club from Monday 29th June– Friday 3rd July from 6.15-8pm.

We are going deep into space, becoming a light factory which lights up the darkness and where we can find out more about Jesus; the Light of the World. Each day we'll meet a different Bible character, who appears in costume, and think of how their lives were changed by meeting with Jesus.— how He brought life and light into the darkness of their life and situation. We will have all the usual holiday club fun— playing space-themed games, cheering on our team, joining in messy challenges, making crafts. Each night too there will be an episode of The Lighthouse, our special drama.

Friday 3rd July is Parents' Night when we hope to run a quiz and present elements of the programme.



### Prayer Points

- Please do make the club widely known; it is open to anyone starting P1 right through to those having just left P7. Flyers are available in the hall.
- Pray for the team as they prepare, and that we would have the right number of teams for the number of children who come.
- Pray for advertising, that children would come!

## Stand by Me—The trip to Ethiopia

Laura MacKenzie, the denomination's youth worker, came to speak to us at our Sunday evening service on 17th May about this project. Stand by Me are a Christian charity committed to rescuing and caring for some of the world's poorest children. They believe by showing these children God's love they give them hope. Ethiopia in eastern Africa is one of the world's poorest countries with famine, HIV Aids and extreme poverty blighting the lives of its inhabitants.

Two of our own fellowship, Alison Strawbridge and Alison Murray, are going out with the team in August. The girls raised the majority of their funds (£1200 each) by doing a sponsored walk on the West Highland Way over Easter and also by holding a very successful coffee morning on 16 May in the church hall which raised over £650.

The team will be doing holiday club style work—teaching bible stories, singing songs and playing games with the children as well as helping

set up water filtration systems for families so that they can have clean water, something we all take for granted here.



**The girls would appreciate your prayers for safe travel by both plane and the long road journey afterwards, good health and energy and also for unity within the group.**



# Sacrificing Earl Grey tea for the sake of the Kingdom...

Martin Paterson

Picture the scene with me. After a long day's work in the heat of Thailand all you want is a nice drink. Patiently you wait for your order of earl grey tea to arrive only to discover that what you have instead is a green tea latte. Disappointment and frustration quickly take over and you begin to ask "why am I even here? I know how to get tea in Britain". It all seems so futile because you can't even order a cup of the earl's finest.

The language barrier is tough. All cross cultural workers find it difficult. Brits in particular have a great problem in this regard. We are socialised in a mono-linguistic culture compared to most other nations in the world and expect people to understand English. This only went so far for us in Malaysia and it did not even get off the ground in Thailand. Speaking louder is not the answer either. It still doesn't make sense and just comes across as aggressive. For this reason Hudson Taylor, the founder of OMF, radically shifted the norms of missional engagement. He suggested that in order to win the people of China he and his team had to become like them. Famously he stated *"let us in every way not sinful, become like*

*the Chinese, so that we may save some."* This meant learning language, developing cultural

awareness and wearing the same clothes as those around him.

We were only in Asia for a short time and therefore barely scratched the surface of understanding language and culture. But we did have to enter into a wide range of situations where such skills were required. Take for example being invited to a post Ramadan feast hosted by illegal Filipino Muslims. What do you do? The smart thing; follow the example of the missionaries you are with.

I think it is also important for me to stress the differences between both of the nations we were placed in. Malaysia is an Islamic nation. Early in the morning you would hear the Muezzin calling people to prayer from the minaret. However it is a melting pot of many different people groups which has the potential to boil over. Thailand is a Buddhist country and its footprint is seen everywhere. Temples are ornate and beautifully decorated. Yet the message of the monks is one of despair and continuous cycles of suffering.



A great blessing of cross cultural work is seeing how God reveals his glory through all peoples and all nations, because they are all his creation. That is why they need to know of God's free gift of redemption and why believing people have always had the task of announcing this glorious hope. How do you personally advance God's saving message to the nations? It has been wisely summed up that we will either go, send or disobey this command of God's good news.

***"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come buy and eat!...Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon". (Isaiah 55:1,6-7)***

This is why not being able to order earl grey tea is worth it! Because God pardons all people, everywhere, who turn to him.

# Farewell to Nathan and Steffi

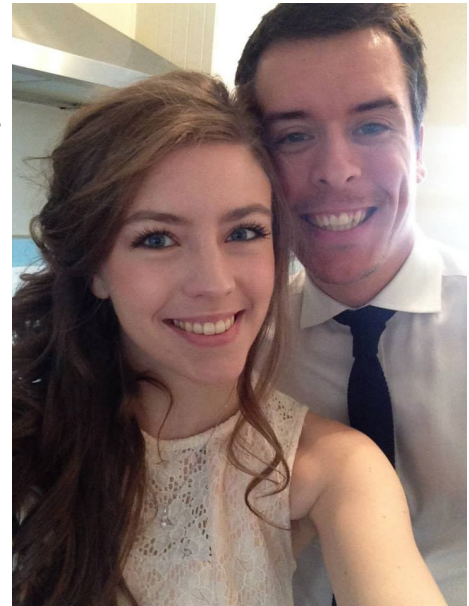
We have been fortunate over the last two years to have Nathan Owens as our assistant minister. However, Nathan leaves us in June but before he goes we put a few questions to him.

## What brought you to Park?

I was half way through my year's training at Cornhill in early 2013 when out of the blue I received a phone call from Bruce. He informed me that provision had been made for Park to hire an assistant minister, and that my name had been suggested: would I like to fulfil that role?

I was taken aback, not least because I didn't know what I would be doing come June 2013: Steffi and I were getting married but I did not have a job. Would I be going straight into a church as a minister? That was a possibility, but one I was not keen on. Would I have to go and work in a "secular" job for a while? Again a possibility, and out of the two the one I was leaning towards.

All that was going round in my head, but then I received the call from Bruce and everything seemed to slot into place. As a result I started at Park in July 2013. Steffi and I look back on that as one of God's clearest provisions for us so far; it was humbling and uplifting at the same time.



## How has your time at Park equipped you for your future as a minister?

The Puritans talked about the three-fold ministry of Jesus as being that of prophet, priest and king. These three traits characterised those who served as under-shepherds to The Good Shepherd, namely ministers and elders. The prophetic ministry refers to the teaching element of ministry, the priestly about the pastoral care that a shepherd gives his sheep, and the kingly refers to the organisational and strategic parts of ministry, thinking and planning for the kingdom.

My time at Park has helped me in each of these three categories. The Puritans also believed that an average minister would have more prominent traits from two of the three categories; I will leave you to guess or assess what might be my two "stronger suits"!

Suffice to say that these last two years have been a great blessing to me and my ministry; I have learned from Bruce and from the whole church what pastoral care involves. I have enjoyed and counted it a privilege to be allowed into people's homes and lives in order to shepherd and point to Jesus Christ, through His Word and by His Spirit; I have grown and groaned on some occasional late nights trying to bring together the sermon for the following Sunday morning; I have seen Bruce at work in meetings as well as seen the hard work that goes on behind the scenes; I have seen and learnt from all the differing elements of prophet, priest and king and this has been a blessing to me.

## What have been the highlights of your time here at Park?

There have been many. Allow me to name five!

- One of the consistent highlights has been my time spent with the young adults at church. It's been great sharing life with these people and spending time together, having a laugh, but more importantly seeing them grow in their love of Jesus and their knowledge of him.
- Another highlight was the Family Day last summer alongside The Commonwealth Games. We spent many a meeting organising the event, starting six months before and continuing right till the day itself. It was a steep learning curve for me: I chaired the organising "committee" and we dealt successfully with problems encountered along the way. The day itself was a huge success!

- At different times in the year, namely Easter and Christmas, we had school assemblies for the 5th and 6th years from Uddingston Grammar. These did not take place at the school, but rather in the church building; this, I think, was a mini stroke of genius on Bruce's part! What a completely different atmosphere we had when in the church: we could speak freely and openly and tell them plainly about Jesus Christ in a way that simply would not have been possible at school.
- One thing that has developed over my time at Park has been one-to-one discipleship. It started out with me meeting up once a week with one man in the church; at its busiest this went up to six one-to-ones a week, but for most of the time it has been a steady three. We go through the Bible together, starting with the first 12 chapters of Genesis and then moving on, week by week, to a new book of the Bible. I don't know about the guys, but this has been great for me! I trust the same is true for them.
- My final highlight has been the opportunity to preach and teach. I had a quick look at my sermons and noted that during my two years at Park I have preached from 26 books of the Bible. Wow! That doesn't include the many and varied Bible Studies either. I count it a privilege to have been involved in such an extensive preaching and teaching diet here at Park.

### **Do you have a favourite verse or two in scripture and why?**

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1-2*

This is the first Bible verse I remember memorising without being told to! God has saved me and has my life secure, therefore nothing in this world, not death nor disease, not loss or cancer, not deafness nor insecurity changes this.

*"Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practise these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see you progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." 1 Timothy 4:11-16*

One of the reasons I love this passage of Scripture is obvious: I'm young and in ministry! But I also keep returning to this passage because of what it says: set the believers an example, devote yourself, practise these things, immerse yourself in them, keep a close watch... I cherish these words because they tell us something profound, that how we live and what we practise is directly related to how seriously we take God's Word, and that this is especially important for young men in ministry. Why? Because we are young, therefore we must keep returning again and again to God's Word for wisdom and guidance. That is a good thing. It forces me to hold the Scriptures above my head and say to myself: "I submit to what you have to say, Father." I pray that as I journey on into ministry that I'd continue to bow the knee to King Jesus and His wisdom and His Word. Because that is who people need, not me; that is the wisdom they require, not mine; he is their king, not I.

### **One for fun – if you were a superhero what superpower would you like to have?**

Superhuman strength, because who doesn't!?

### **What does the future hold for you now that your time in Park is coming to an end?**

The simple answer is that we don't know for definite. Ultimately we know that a full-time position in church leadership is where we are most likely to end up: I am after all a licensed and ordained minister! But as to when and where we don't know for sure. We hope that by the end of the summer a significant amount of light will have been shed on the answer to that question, but for now it is simply a matter of waiting. One thing Steffi and I do know, though, is that thus far The LORD has brought us: he will not abandon us now. How do we know that? Allow me to refer you to my answer to question 1.

**We wish Nathan and Steffi every blessing as they seek God's will for their future. It has been a pleasure having them with us these last two years and as they journey on to the next stage in their lives our prayers go with them.**

## Dates for the Diary

### Sunday 7th June

Communion Sunday  
Visit of Mission Partner at Morning Service  
Bield Housing Service at 6.30pm

### Sunday 21st June

All Age Service with Sunday School and Bible Class Gifts  
Farewell to Nathan and Steffi  
Fellowship Meal at Manse at 6.30pm

### Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July

Light Factory Holiday Club

### Tuesday 9th June and Tuesday 7th July

Prayers for Healing

### Tuesday 16th June, 21st July, 18th August

Community Prayer Time

### Saturday 13th, 27th June, 11th, 25th July and 8th, 25th August

Open to God Prayer Time

### Sunday 6th September

Harvest Thanksgiving in aid of Glasgow City Mission

*The Minister will be on holiday from the afternoon of the 7th June until Saturday 20th June. Nathan will be 'holding the fort'!*

*From Sunday 28th June until Sunday 30th August, we will have one Sunday service at 10.30am. We will use the U.F. Prayer Guide as a basis for our reflections on a Sunday morning.*

## Goodbye

We say goodbye to Steve and Louise Trelogan and baby Ben this month. Steve has finished his placement at Tilsley College and we wish him all the best for wherever God leads him in the future. Baby Ben has melted many a lady's heart since he joined us in December and we will miss his lovely smile! It was a pleasure too to meet Steve's parents from Thailand when they visited in May. Our prayers go with you, Steve and Louise; stay in touch with us here at Park!

## Births

We welcome to the world.....

Eilidh Heather Stirling, on 19th May 2015, daughter to Jennifer Stirling and grand-daughter to Irene Bryson.



## The Bereaved

We remember all those grieving for loved ones at this time.

## Wedding Bells

Congratulations to David Strawbridge and Rachel Adamson who are getting married in Shetland on 22 August 2015. We wish them every blessing in their new life together.





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