



MacLeod Room Dedicated

It was with great pleasure that the members of St. Andrew's Church welcomed Anne and Alice, and family – the daughters of the late Rev. Ian and Alice MacLeod – to the morning worship service on Sunday 16th December. Ian was, of course, minister of St. Andrew's Church for over thirty years until his retirement in 1991.

Following Ian's death, much consideration was given as to how best to mark his ministry at St. Andrew's. It was decided that one of the meeting rooms, formerly the vestry, should be refurbished and re-named, 'The MacLeod Room.' The room was dedicated after worship, with the present minister, Martin Fair, and Anne and Alice, being joined by members of the congregation with whom the MacLeod family had particular links. Scripture readings and prayers were heard and a special Prayer of Dedication offered. Pride of place in the room itself is given to a print of the classic painting of the Bell Rock Lighthouse and, under it, an inscription giving *Glory to God and in memory and with grateful thanks* for the ministry of The Rev. Ian MacLeod.

Rev. Martin Fair, Anne and Alice at the dedication of The MacLeod Room



Hallelujah Havilah!

Do you think it is anyone's ambition to be a smackhead?

Just when you think that life is going along just fine it has a nasty habit of throwing up complications and difficulties that at times you feel you just cannot cope with. That is when the door of temptation is opened and, just like Adam in the Garden of Eden, so called friends encourage and tempt you to do what you know is wrong.

With heroin it would normally be a dealer who would encourage you with promises of stopping the psychological pain, loneliness and longings. The dealer will also use the influences from other users, who are supposed to be your friends; in their desperation for the drug they will paint a glorious picture of the benefits of using the

drug, pushing you towards heroin. There is just no way of getting away from the similarities of Adam's experience with Eve and the serpent. The temptation continues with the dealer offering the drug free of charge because he is "concerned for your wellbeing", until little by little your defences are broken down and you accept your first hit of heroin and start on the slippery slope of addiction.

Adam blamed Eve who in turn blamed the serpent. It is all too easy for us to join in with Adam and Eve in this blaming game, pointing our finger at people who are trapped in the despair of addiction and saying that they are the reason for much that is wrong with society today. If we step back and look at people through the eyes of Jesus, it is easy to see God's beloved children who are all special to and loved by Him and, therefore, is it not essential for us who profess to be Christians to reach out a helping

hand to enable God's children to get back on their feet? Did the Lord Jesus not say that a doctor does not come to heal the healthy?

Once you are hooked you are pulled into a horrible world full of desperation and crime, and because of this and the stigma that the world has placed on heroin use, you lose all self-respect and dignity. This forms an ever decreasing circle which continually gets harder and harder to break free from. Heroin users are, on the whole, looked on as modern day lepers with people preferring to cross the street rather than walk past one. This then contributes to the feeling of self-loathing and worthlessness which helps to drive a deeper wedge between yourself, family and real friends which then impacts on the loneliness resulting in a deeper desperation which returns to the self-loathing again.

(continued on page 4)

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MAGAZINE EDITOR/CDs

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH**REGISTER OF MEMBERS**

December 2007 - January 2008

Baptisms - None

Weddings - None

Funerals - Ann Marshall, Edna Nicol

DEADLINE DATES FOR DIARIES**MARCH EDITION**

Please note that **DEADLINE** dates **must** mean exactly that, with all articles and pictures submitted beforehand, or on those dates.

Friday 15th February (Written/preferably typed)
Tuesday 19th February (Word-Processed file)

To my 'other' family in St Andrews Church: Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

You may recall that last Sunday (13th Jan) as the final part of his sermon Martin preached (and here I quote from 'Digging Deeper') - ".....No, Jesus was not saying that family isn't important - far from it. But he was saying that the Christian has another family - that those who follow God's will are his brothers and sisters". So it is to you as fellow members of God's family in St Andrews Church that I now address the heartfelt gratitude of myself and my 'earthly' family for the overwhelming motherly/fatherly, sisterly/brotherly love, care, compassion and prayerful support we have received from you all in these past two weeks following our loss of Ann and from myself for the warmth of the loving care, compassion and your prayers which I personally have received over the past years of Ann's illness. It really makes me very privileged, proud and yet humbled to be able to consider myself a member of such a wonderful family. May God bless you all.

Your loving brother in faith.

Bill (Marshall)

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**SUNDAY**

10.30 am - Gathering for prayer in crèche room.

10.30 am - Choir practice in new hall.

11.00 am - Morning service (with short communion on the third Sunday of each month. Tea/coffee after.

Creche - up to age 3

Infants - ages 3 to 5

Juniors - ages 8 and 9

Seniors - ages 10 and 11

Sunday Club - Elaine Fair (873238)

Teen Scene - S1 to S2

6.30 to 8.00 pm - Sunday evening ICE-BREAKERS - up to age 16

8.00 pm - Sunday evening Youth Group - age 16 plus

MONDAY

11.00 am - Havilah - Drop-in Centre - Church Office (431135)

2.00 pm - Dorothy Dobson Over 50s Exercise Class

6.00 pm - Rainbow Guides - L Hadden (875379)

7.30 pm - St Andrew's Guild : Fortnightly - Joyce Lownie (430053)

7.30 pm - Flower Club : Fortnightly - R Spink (874690)

WEDNESDAY

10.30 am - Midweek Meeting Point - M Fair (873238)

11.00 am - Havilah - Drop-in Centre - Church Office (431135)

5.45 pm - Brownies - Morag Scorgie (01674 820721)

7.15 pm - Guides

7.30 pm - Wednesday@Seven30

7.30 pm - Women's Group - first Wednesdays - Elaine Fair (873238)

THURSDAY

10.00 am - Parent and Toddler Group - Joan Archer (876522)

2.00 pm - Friend's Club : first Thursdays - L Smith - B Gerrard, secretary (434821)

6.00 pm - Anchor Boys - J Tasker (874664)

6.00 pm - BB Junior Section - W Ewart (876114)

7.30 pm - BB Company Section - M Clark (437758)

FRIDAY

9.30 am - Coffee morning, main hall

11.00 am - Havilah - Drop-in Centre - Church Office (431135)

Intimations, changes of address, hall bookings etc., please contact Alison Davie at the Church office, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon and for 15 minutes after Sunday Service, telephone 431135.

Printing, tickets, syllabi, etc - W Marshall (873376).

Please call 875235 in the event of corrections or omissions, and an updated sheet will be produced.

Martin



Fair

February 2008

Dear friends,

Elsewhere in this edition of QUEST, you will find an article written by Jim, one of our Havilah organisers, based on his conversations with one of the young men who have made Havilah their home. It makes for interesting, if harrowing reading and takes us into a world that is entirely foreign to most of us – the world of serious, all-consuming drug addiction.

I trust that you will all read it and that you will give thanks as you do so that this particular young man (and there are others like him) is finding hope in life through the Havilah ministry...hope that had been entirely lost to him. He is currently free from drugs and is doing well. Of course, it is never easy and there is a long road ahead of him but he has made a start and for that we can rejoice.

And let us, at the same time, rejoice that we have the Havilah ministry! Jesus came not for the respectable folks, not for those who are well, but for those who are sick, for those on the very margins. And it is that ministry that Havilah continues...in the name of St. Andrew's Church. We can be very grateful to the small band who are making such a tremendous commitment to this particular work. It is not everyone who would be suitable for it but, as minister, I am gladened that there are those among us who are. We need to offer them ALL necessary support. Such ministry is not without its costs and hassles but to turn our backs on it would leave us very exposed on that judgement day when Jesus asks, *'and what did you do for these, the least of my brothers and sisters...?'*

Today, 23rd January, 22 people were welcomed into Havilah - a new record!! It was all hands to the pumps to make sure that there was tea and toast and soup for everyone at lunchtime. Is this the proof that essentially what people need is to be welcomed, listened to and accepted as they are? Isn't that the kind of non-judgemental love that Jesus embodied? And won't it be true that as we continue to try to model our church in this way - in all the different aspects of its life - that we'll see amazing things happening?

I commend the whole of this issue to you and take this opportunity to thank Ken Miller, who edits and produces the magazine, Mary Scott who organises the distribution of it, and the many of you who are responsible for delivering it.

God bless,

Martin, Elaine, Callum, Andrew, Fraser and Flossie!

MartinFair@aol.com

The Buildings Project

One cold December Sunday morning, I was not able to worship at St Andrews as usual because I had to attend a family celebration at lunch-time in Aberdeen. I decided to go to Gilcomston South Church in Union Street instead, although I would have to leave the service early. "Will they let you out?" a friend asked, semi-seriously! Being reasonably familiar in the past with the big old church building, I understood her concern, and had already planned to ask a steward on the way in how easily I might leave the building while the service was in progress.

In the event, my train was seriously delayed. Bitterly disappointed, I made my way slowly up Union Street as I now had time to 'put in' before being picked up by my nephew. I drew up opposite the church about 11.30, expecting to see the big wooden doors firmly closed while I wistfully imagined the congregation worshipping inside. To my surprise I found myself looking through glass doors straight into the warmly and brightly lit sanctuary and into the face of the leader facing the congregation on rows of

chairs in front of him! A steward was on duty at the door – 30 minutes into the service! – and I realised, too late, how easily I could have both slipped in late and left the service as necessary. I was also impressed by how easily a passer-by on the street, intrigued and attracted by the warmth and attractiveness of the scene, could slip in to sample the service and perhaps find friendship and so much more!

This was quite an experience for me, and I contrasted it with another experience I had last July, on the first of our summertime services starting at 10.30am. Arriving at 10.45 I found the front doors heavily closed, side doors locked, and no-one on hand to help. I look forward to seeing the glass doors on our own church in the near future!

(Editor - This is in line with our own plans for glass front doors and arched windows in the vestibule wall which will allow passers-by the opportunity to see right into our sanctuary while we worship. We also plan to have the sound fed into the vestibule area so that an usher (or ushers) could remain 'on duty' while still listening and taking part in our worship. The wooden doors will remain, but will slide out of sight into partitions.)

Home and Away - OUTREACH - Home and Away

Hallelujah Havilah

(Continued from page 1)

The cycle is not just on the relationship side - there is self-loathing because of the actions of the addict in their pursuit of the drug. The drug is all consuming and takes over all rational thoughts compelling the user to do whatever it takes to be able to buy a bag. This restarts the self-loathing process because once the user has had his hit his conscience kicks in again enabling the realisation of what he has done and who he has let down to secure the heroin. Heroin becomes more important than life itself which is the root of many overdoses because users are more worried about protecting their drugs than ensuring medical attention is called for in the case of an overdose. This is not because users do not care for others or that they do not want to help. It is because they are completely consumed with the need to protect their heroin because by this point heroin is life and nothing else matters.

All users will from time to time decide to try and stop their habit. This is without fail because they absolutely hate the way they are living, but heroin will not give up its grasp on the user without an epic fight. Initially there are the "rattles" i.e. the physical withdrawal which is extremely painful causing convulsions as the body begins to restart its digestive system, bowel movements and all the other natural movements of the body that have stopped due to the heroin. The pain of this is magnified by the fact that a heroin user's natural pain killing system has been shut down because of the large amounts of opiates they have been taking. This is, however, the easy part of stopping heroin use - believe it or not. The physical pain, as excruciating as it is, is nothing compared to breaking the psychological addiction which is constantly and relentlessly urging the addict to have another hit.

If a user does secure a place on a drug rehabilitation programme there are pressures and pitfalls that go along with the programme. The user will normally be given a methadone prescription with regular checks to ensure they are not topping this up with any other drugs and, because of the fragility of the user's mental health, this seems like too much pressure resulting in them coping with this in the only way they know how - another hit of heroin. This takes us back to the unthinkable cycle of self loathing.

At Havilah we display the love of the Lord, welcoming and treating all who come through the doors as humans and equals. Do not get me wrong - this does not mean that we will instantly trust that everyone will be entirely honest with us, but we will give them the benefit of the doubt and forgive any mistakes that may be made. Because of this, we can build trust, both our trust in the friends we make and in our new friends' ability to know we will always treat them with respect and never judge them for who they are or were. This then allows the support of people with addiction who have told us "If it weren't for Havilah I would still be using drugs."

This shows that when we trust in the Lord and follow Jesus' commandments to love the Lord with all your heart and love your neighbour as you love yourself, anything is possible. Today, new friends who have been welcomed into our fellowship - tomorrow, world peace? Who knows how much we can achieve when we all play our part in this Christian life of ours, because it is not a life of stillness, it is a life in all its fullness.

Jim McLeod.

MALAWI

We would like to thank everyone who supported us over the Christmas period. We sold numerous crackers and delivered around 700 cards!! Then on 12/01/2008 we had a bag pack at Morrison's where we collected almost £1800. This was a great effort and a big thank you to all who manned the tills for us. There was a great awareness of what we had been doing and the 2007 team were asked many questions about their trip. We are still being asked to talk at various venues and our next one is for the Round Table on 23/01/08. Some members of the younger section of Youth group went on their Santa Collection so it is good to see the 2 groups helping one another out.

Our next fundraising venture is a sponsored event. Two of the group,

Becky & Naomi Dunphy are intending getting their very long hair cut. This should take place around the beginning of March. Please support them. You can sponsor them by getting in touch with one of the Malawi Group or through the Church Office.

Alternative Gifts: Thanks to all who supported the work in Malawi through buying a gift through our Alternative Gift catalogue. The money raised through this is not part of our fundraising efforts but will go directly out to Aquaid Lifeline in Malawi to purchase for the children the gifts requested. An amazing total of £3625 was raised and will be sent out this month. The following was bought:

122 x Months supply of medicine for a child in Namisu Orphan village / 46 x School Uniform / 24 x Set of text-books / 16 x Mosquito Net / 11 x Football / 13 x Veggie Seeds for a

Day Care Centre / 16 x Meal for 70 Children / 2 x Sewing Kit / 3 x Set of Seeds, tools and training / 4 x School Desk / 3 x Classroom Equipment / 2 x School Trip / 4 x Scholarship for Day Scholar / 7 x Scholarship for Boarder / 1 x Drill a Borehole

All of this will make a huge difference to the lives of the children being supported by Aquaid in Malawi.

Due to continued interest in this catalogue we have decided to run it throughout the year so that you can make purchases for Birthdays and other occasions. The idea is if you are stuck for an idea of what to get someone as a present why not buy an alternative gift for a child in Malawi on their behalf. You will be given a card to give to them that will explain what the gift is you have purchased. For more info or to view a catalogue please speak to one of the Malawi group or ask at the Church office.

Travel Opportunities

Holy Land

Following the great success of the Holy Land 2007 trip, the minister is considering leading another trip in 2009, a special occasion to be shared in as part of what will be the 50th Anniversary of St. Andrew's Church celebrations. He will be announcing fuller details soon and thereafter there will be an information evening. Whether the trip goes ahead will be dependent on response. A group of 20 or thereabouts would be needed.

Oberammergau

And for those who really like to plan ahead, how about a holiday to Oberammergau in May 2010! Oberammergau is a small town in the Bavarian Alps where, once every ten

years, the local people stage a magnificent Passion Play, depicting the last days of Christ. This, they have been doing for centuries and now over half a million people travel from all over the world to witness it for themselves. The overnight stay in Oberammergau is combined with a week-long stay at a four-star hotel in the Austrian Tyrol, making for what should be an altogether wonderful trip. Because of the demand, tour companies need to plan Oberammergau trips NOW even though the Play runs through the summer of 2010. Thereafter, as with the Holy Land Trip, there will be an Oberammergau information evening very shortly to which you are invited to come. And, again as above, interest will determine whether or not the trip goes ahead.

Mandate

In November, a group of men – ranging from teenagers to those in their seventies! – travelled to Belfast for the conference, Mandate. They had a wonderful time and there is a fair chance that we will repeat the visit in this coming year. Here is what two of them had to say.

I found that Mandate was a truly amazing and spiritual experience. The worship was led by Robin Mark who I'm quite a big fan of and I thought it was amazing singing along with 4000 other men. I also liked it as it gave me a chance join in on the worship a bit more as at other times I am playing bass or guitar. The speakers were also brilliant as Erwin McManus was younger than most other speakers I have heard (no offence Martin) and I feel

that what he was saying was something I was able to relate to.

Michael Marr

Mandate for me was without doubt an awesome experience as I gathered with over 4000 men in the Spirit of Christ. It was so vast a gathering and yet so much of what God had put in the speakers' hearts spoke to me in a very personal way, at times as if there was no one else in that arena.

The praise and worship was hugely uplifting and took us into the presence of the Lord with true passion in worship for Him.

For me it was a time of refreshing, renewing, confirmation and a new desire to press on that I might get to know Him better.

Robert Matthew

National Gathering

3-4th May 2008

In what could prove to be THE most fantastic weekend, the Church of Scotland is hosting a *National Gathering* over the

first weekend in May at the Inglestone Showground outside Edinburgh. They are catering for up to 20,000 people, with congregations coming together from all over the country. There will be something for everyone with bands and

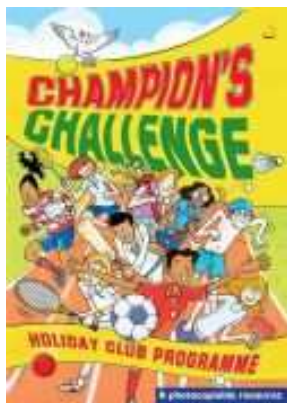
skate parks for teens and quiet areas for prayer and reflection for those who enjoy a slower pace. The climax will be an all-age worship time on Sunday morning – which could be the largest of its kind ever seen in Scotland! Details of

how to be involved will be in next QUEST but there will be single day of weekend options...with camping for the really brave!

Let's make sure that St. Andrew's Church is right at the heart of this national gathering.

Holiday Club 2008

Our children will be keen to know that the Holiday Club this year is on track and all ready to start on Monday 31st March. The club will run each morning of that week, from 10am till 12noon. The title this year is **Champions Challenge** which, given that this is an Olympic year, is very fitting. No need to worry if you're not the sporty type; there are altogether bigger challenges to think about here... challenges for everyone! As always, there will be plenty of ways for you, the members of the congregation, to get involved and to support the club. Watch this space.



Clerk's Corner

There are two pieces of internal 'news' this month. Firstly, the formation of the Core Groups is progressing with the Finance and Fabric Groups being the first to begin their work. The second piece of news involves every single one of us! As a Christian family that has grown and changed, we now feel it would be extremely useful for us to be more aware of our members' ability to offer service. To this end an audit form is under preparation which will give

each of us the opportunity indicate where we feel we could help. When a need arose, we could then approach members to seek help but, of course, you would always be able to say "no thank you" at times when you are too busy. Many of you are already serving our Lord in various ways, not necessarily within St Andrew's, and you will be able to indicate this on the form.

The information which will be collated will enhance the work of the Core Groups. Watch this space for further details.

A LONG ROAD

The last instalment on the work of Bob and Sue Pritchard in Senegal

We retired from the Senegal field in 2002 but were given permission to return to Senegal for 6 months to finish our writings. The mission was happy to let us go but now we were no longer under their "umbrella" and were responsible for our own actions. Once again the Lord proved His faithfulness and living in the capital (Dakar) in close proximity to a Senegalese family proved a very positive experience. There were distractions but we needed to keep in mind our reason for being back in the country.

We returned to the UK in 2003 and after a time at the mission HQ and with our home church, we moved to Arbroath. This whole process proved stressful and time consuming. Also time was moving on, and the person who was seeing about our printing was due to go on indefinite home leave in the not too distant future. We must get things finished. This again was not easy as it meant not getting involved too much in local responsibilities or family affairs.

The completed manuscript was sent on disc to Senegal but had to be printed out for church leaders to see that it did not contain any material which would jeopardise

their position or that of missions working in the country. The president, government and 98% of Senegalese follow another religion. At this point we could feel ourselves getting "stewed up" again. Things in Africa move slowly - how long would this verification take?

It did take a fair time but to our great relief, surprise and joy we received a phone call from Senegal in the spring of 2007 to say that the book was on the verge of being printed. It was not to be in the format that we had envisaged but more in 'dossier' form so as to call less attention to its contents. About 3 weeks ago we received a sample copy, but the rest of the stock will be held and sold at a nominal price in Senegal, with the money being used for church needs. Our thanks go to our Heavenly Father for keeping us onto the end of a road which hopefully will enable the Senegalese church to appreciate the pathway trodden by those who preceded them in the faith and encourage them in the future to follow more closely the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Bob & Sue Pritchard

CE - Christianity Explored

By the time you read this, the second run of CE will be underway, with another group of around 25 signed up. If you were not on the first one, and not on this one, the good news is that the third course will start after Easter...not too long to wait!! Here is what two participants from the first course had to say about it:

'I attended Christianity Explored not really knowing what to expect, but hoped to gain more knowledge of Christianity. After about three weeks I was totally committed to attending every week, to the extent that I was faced with the choice of watching Glasgow Rangers in the Champions League or attending CE. There was no contest; I was in no doubt I wanted to attend CE! Apart from getting a great deal of benefit from the fellowship, I found it to be very informative. I not only learned about Christianity, I learned about myself and about what it means to be a Christian.'
Kevin

'I have thoroughly enjoyed CE. I came for the full ten weeks despite being in the midst of moving home! I didn't want to

miss it!! I wanted to learn more about Jesus and being a Christian. I enjoyed the fellowship, being part of a group, who, over the ten weeks I felt able to trust with my own thoughts, feelings and misgivings. The 'away day' at the Meadowbank Inn was fantastic. It was the pivotal day for me, when the blinkers came off or the penny dropped. Jonathon, the guest speaker, really inspired me and helped me realise what I really wanted to be - a Christian. Thanks to everyone who helped organise the course and thanks to God for helping me through it.'

Sharon

Everyone completed an evaluation form at the end of the course and 96% rated it either 'good' or 'very good.' That is a pretty good response! Again, there was a 96% positive response to the statement: 'I understand who Jesus is, why he came and what it means to follow him. I have put my trust in him.'

That says it all. We look to having a church full of people who have moved to that place. It is not that we can't have questions nor that there won't be times when we have doubts - but the assurance spoken of in that statement is what carries us through.

LOOKING AHEAD

In addition to those detailed below, we have -

A 40 Min service every Wednesday at 10.30 am

MESSY Church, 4-6pm, last Sunday of every month, for all the family, with games, craft, worship, & all-together meal

FEBRUARY

Sunday 3

11 am - All-age Worship Service including Baptism.
8 pm OFF the W.O.L.

Sunday 10

11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 17

11 am - Worship Service including infant blessing.
Main service is followed by short communion

Sunday 24

11 am - Worship Service
4pm - **MESSY Church!**

MARCH

Sunday 2

11 am - Worship Service
8 pm OFF the W.O.L.

Sunday 9

11 am - Worship Service

Sunday 16

11 am - Palm Sunday
Worship Service

Sunday 23

8 am - Easter Day
Sunrise Service
11 am - Easter Celebration
with all-age communion

Sunday 30

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - **MESSY Church!**

Article Lengths

It is better to have too much to fit in a magazine, than too little, but sometimes it can become many months before something can be included. We have therefore decided that the longest acceptable article will now be one side of an A4 page, in Times New Roman, and point size 12.

Visit To Romania

Tommy And Greta Knox

On 1st June we arrived at Budapest Airport and were met by Adi Suci who drove us to Timisoara where our accommodation was in the Romanian International Team's flat.

Sion, the administrator, inducted us on the Friday morning and later, we were taken to a park, for a Children's day celebration. The team were catering for street children, homeless people and gypsies. Games were played, a musical group entertained, and a type of stew for a meal was prepared. A young woman had paint thinner, which she poured into a plastic bag and then breathed in the fumes. She looked very unhealthy and we learned that she had a child being fostered and one in hospital. On Saturday, we went to a village, for a Christian open - air event where Adi and Jen, two workers, dressed up as clowns and conducted singing with the children. Games were played, a DVD was shown, and then there was a barbecue. There was a young woman with two children at the picnic and Jen recognised her as a girl who had been in an orphanage that Jen visited. The girl had run away and got married, so Jen was pleased that she was attending a Christian event. Later, her husband came and everything appeared well with them.

On Sunday we met young people who lived in a rescue shelter. These shelters have three-tiered bunks, with thirty to a room. They can have a shower and some food and they have jobs, which helps them to exist. This is progress from living on the streets.

On Tuesday, we met Adrian Pope who works for Blythwood Care, so it was good to meet someone in Romania that we knew about. Later, we went with a worker named Sion, to The Potter's House. The children who attend there, come after school and are from poor families in the area. They are taught craft work, helped with their school work, play games, are taught from the Bible, do Bible drama, view DVDs, draw on the courtyard to express themselves, and receive meals. They are helped by a Social Worker, a teacher, a psychologist and a Professor, who helps after he has finished work. His wife is a Doctor, who has a practice on the premises and is also involved. We were to meet the Doctor later, due to Greta needing treatment for mosquito bites. There were computers, which had been donated by visitors and there were to be sewing machines installed. These activities are all contributing to the children's development. We were also pleased to see a shoe box at The Potter's House, which had been used to contain Christmas presents for deprived children in countries such as Romania. We were told that much joy is experienced through the receiving of these.

After a team meeting on Wednesday, we went to the centre of Timisoara where there are reminders of the events which led to the end of the rule of Communism in Romania.

On Thursday, Jen, an Australian girl, took us to Lagoj where we visited a place for mentally and physically disabled young people. Jen took a young man in a wheelchair to a shop and a few others came along for an ice cream treat.

Jen was good with the residents and obviously has a heart for them. The establishment needs much improvement and more staff, and Helena, the social worker, is keen to get improvements. Greta received a present of a small rug from one of the girls on the farm. It is quite a task to make the rugs, but the girls enjoy doing it and other craft work and although they do not have much they appeared content.

Greta was being bitten by mosquitoes which had infected her blood. She was referred to a Christian doctor and we learned that she had a Blythwood Care connection. They really appreciate people caring enough to give to them and to visit them. One evening, before we left, they gave us a card with their names on it and a plaque that had been made at a craft session.

On Sunday, at a church named Vox Domini, we were able to follow the service as we had an English translation through headpieces. On the way back to our flat we saw an opening at the side of a road which street children use as a shelter and a sleeping place. On Tuesday we visited a centre for the older street kids who are searched before they are allowed in. A ball game was followed by a Gospel singing session and a Bible story. They were given lunch and some had a shower and a change of clothes. One girl slept most of the time, probably because she was a solvent sniffer – and we saw her the next day doing just that. Street children frequent the student area and eat any food or drink left by students in the open-air restaurants.

On Wednesday, at a team meeting, there were Americans, an Australian, Romanians and Scots. Greta had to go for another injection, and while there we met Denisa, the psychologist. She had had a childhood spoiled by an alcoholic father and she had grown to hate him. She never had peace because of this, even as she qualified as a psychologist, but later she felt she had to visit him and forgive him. This gave her deliverance from her turmoil and so she decided to work with children, who had spoiled childhoods, such as those who attend The Potter's House. On Wednesday evening, we had a talk with two workers about our impressions and what might be the result of our visit.

On Thursday morning, we met Stave, who was to drive us to Budapest Airport. He is involved in the building of a home for boys in a place called Jimbolia, and he had worked with street children for some time. The object was to give immediate help, and also to draw them away from the streets, to have a home, and to help them integrate into society.

We were impressed by the Christian workers we met. They are so enthusiastic, and dedicated to making a difference in the lives of deprived people, especially children. They obviously want to do so much to redress the damage done through the politicians of the past and it is hoped that the present politicians will apply themselves to the problems which Christians are addressing. They could take advice from the Christians and about how to help the victims of bad government. Things will improve in Romania, as their people have the ability to make their country better. Fine examples like John, Ouoa, Denisa, Doreena and Helena can give hope to the people, because they know the God of hope.

YOUTH GROUP

The youth group has restarted after the Christmas break. There are now around 50 members between both

groups. We finished the year with a Christmas meal and ceilidh in the church halls. A big thanks to Doris, Kim, Ruth, Susan and Jane who

cooked and served such a great meal! A great time was had by all and gave everyone a well-deserved night off after the Christmas fundraising.

Looking Back To Christmas

Christmas Giving

Once again, there was a super response to the Christmas giving opportunities that were set before the congregation. The Kirk Session nominated two particular projects – one local, the other overseas. As a result of the offering, £500 will be going to support the work of OBs, the Westport youth project run by members of our congregation, and £500 will be going to support the work of Biblelands, an organization committed to the betterment of the lives of the most disadvantaged children living in Bethlehem and other areas of the Holy Land. Thank you to all who gave so generously.

On top of these efforts, the better part of £4,000 was given towards the Malawi Project by means of the Christ-



Members of the Friends Club enjoy an evening out

mas Gift Catalogue. What a magnificent effort! All of that money will be going directly to the work in Malawi and will make a real and immediate difference in the lives of the children concerned. Given that our young people raised another £1,800 at their bag-pack at Morrisons, it is easy to see that they are doing a marvellous job in keeping Malawi firmly in their sights.



The colourful Nativity Play presented by our children



Christingles cast a warm glow during the Nativity Service

Bringing Hope in '08

This year – 2008 – St. Andrew's Church is connecting with over 1200 locations in the UK to be part of a movement called "Hope '08". The purpose of Hope '08 is to support churches and ministries as they reach out with words and actions to share the message of God's love. Events will include worship, social action and evangelism, but the overriding emphasis is on prayer.

Right now the focus is on Fresh Hope – as we begin a new year, and have resolutions and hopes for the future. In the coming weeks there will be more information, and opportunities to be involved in this exciting venture.

**Do more...Do it together...
Do it in word and action!**
www.hope08.com



in our villages, towns & cities

A New Year's Blessing

On Saturday January 12th a group of people from St. Andrew's Church and Youth With A Mission gave out lovely packs of home made tablet with a Celtic prayer of blessing to over 300 people on Arbroath High Street. There was a lot of care and love put into the project, with donations of tablet from various church & YWAM members. We had a production line to wrap up the tablet packs in cellophane, adding ribbon, and finally attaching prayer and church contact cards. The finished result was really special.

The actual giveaway on the crisp sunny Saturday was finished in under 30 minutes which was amazing! The giveaway was really well received with a lot of people expressing how much they appreciated the gift and the prayer.

**Small Things Done with Great Love
Will Change the World**



Chris Barton and helpers handing out the gifts