

Be Glad That God Doesn't Wait For Us!

I wonder if, when Stuart and Lynne get round to making up a photo album of Douglas's first year, they'll include this particular picture? It says so much, doesn't it? Of course, there's the happiness of the day. Stuart and Lynn couldn't be prouder of their little boy, and rightly so! And look at Douglas! Has any baby ever paid such attention to what was being said by the minister? Come to that, has ANYONE ever paid such attention!

But beyond that, this picture speaks of commitment; the commitment that parents make when presenting their children for baptism. Though there is great power in what happens during adult baptism, there is nothing to beat infant baptism when it comes to conveying the wonderful, reaching-out grace of God. Actually, both forms of baptism are about God's grace but, when misunderstood, adult baptism becomes about the 'decision' of the adult concerned.

Clearly, Douglas didn't make any decision on the day of his baptism! And this is the beauty of it; it's all about God's decision to love us. It's before any inkling of faith on our part that God makes His move.

That's what we're looking at in this beautiful photo; the reaching out of God, through Jesus. And that's exactly what we celebrate at Christmas! Let us always be glad that God doesn't wait for us.



Stewardship Campaign

Last June we had a tremendous opportunity to hear Martin talk about the vision of St Andrew's Church in which we all share. Those who attended the events felt encouraged, enthused, challenged and ready to participate.

Since then, there have been many hours spent contacting members and collating responses and our Treasurer, Susan Godsall, has now completed this task for the responses we have received to date. I can now give you the results.

For 2014 we expect regular giving through FWO envelopes, standing orders and to the Ministry Team Fund to increase by **29%**. Yes, 29%! In monetary terms this will equate to an annual **increase** in regular giving of approximately £30,800. In addition to this the Gift Aid tax refunds we will receive will be approximately £4,000. Therefore, the gross

annual increase will be approximately **£34,800**. In any context this would be a remarkable amount but it is particularly so in the ongoing broader economic climate.

Again, we would like to thank all the volunteers who helped with the campaign whether that was in preparing and serving the food for the evening and meals and lunches at the launch of the campaign, or those who helped prepare and distribute the Stewardship Campaign materials. We would also like to extend thanks to our Treasurer for the many additional hours she committed to this. The confidential nature of processing the responses meant that this task could not be shared and it therefore fell solely upon Susan. Finally, of course, we would like to thank you for your responses and commitment to supporting the vision for God's work in St Andrew's Church and Arbroath.

Scott Anderson (Finance and Admin Core Group Leader)



Ladies Breakfast

The Ladies Breakfast on the 10th of November attracted an interested group of ladies of all ages, keen to hear Meg Harris talk on the topic of 'Art and our Faith'. Meg's love of the work of Chagall started when she was an art student and

through many photographs of his work she showed us how the artist explored his beliefs. Meg's own love of The Lord was also very evident in her beautiful devotional prayer with which she opened our meeting. The Ladies Breakfast meets on the second Sunday of every month at 9.30.

CHURCH OFFICE : 431135**ADMINISTRATOR**

Candace Laing

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri : 9 -12noon

MINISTER

Rev Dr W Martin Fair, BA, BD

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Rev Stuart Irvin, BD

MINISTER EMERITUS

David Searle, MA

SESSION CLERK

Jane Miller : 875235

TREASURER

Susan Godsall : 430862

FREEWILL ENVELOPES

Iain Robertson : 877519

CHURCH OFFICER

Janis Clark : 878594

PASTORAL CARE

Kim Marr : 430505

YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR

Sheila Dunphy : 873218

**HAVILAH PROJECT
LEADER**

Tracey McLeod : 434088

HAVILAH ADMINISTRATOR

Karen Reaney : 434088

ORGANIST

Jane Miller : 875235

FABRIC CONVENOR

Ray Reaney : 07803 235418

SUNDAY CLUB

Elaine Fair : 873238

SAFEGUARDING

Eleanor Mands : 01382 477318

FLOWER CONVENOR

Margaret McIntosh : 876993

PRAYER PROMOTERS

Judy Spink : 872395

Anne Matthew : 876008

SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR

Norma Beattie : 873442

BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER

Candace Laing : 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR/CDs

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH**Parish Records****November 2013****Baptisms** - Douglas Irvin**Blessings** - None**Weddings** - Gemma Candy and John Dodds**Funerals** - Aileen Fenton, Alison Lodge**IMPORTANT DATES****FEBRUARY EDITION (No January Edition)****Handwritten articles should be handed in to the office by the first date and not to the Editor.****Word Processed files, as attachments, can be sent directly to the Editor by the second date.****Please avoid embedding articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.**

Friday 17th January (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 21st January (Word-Processed file)

Christmas Cards

Please can you help to keep our buildings tidy? If we all hand out cards directly to the intended recipient then it is not only more personal and meaningful, it keeps our premises much more tidy. Indeed, in the past, we have quite often found a good number of cards that had been left lying around and that had therefore not been received.

Therefore, **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE CARDS LYING AROUND THE CHURCH BUILDINGS.**

Thank you and have a happy Christmas!

Havilah Appeal

In order to help in many ways, we would like to ask if anyone is in the position to be able to provide Havilah with a small microwave.

This would be a very valuable gift to us and many would be most grateful. This does not have to be new.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Organisations will alert members when groups resume after holidays or when changes to venues are made.

SUNDAY

10.15 am – Gathering for prayer.

10.30 am – Choir practice.

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

7.30 to 9.00 pm – Youth Group

9.00 pm – Senior Youth Group

Monday to Friday - 11.00 am – Havilah : Drop-in Centre – Community Spirit (434088)

MONDAY

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 – Shona Kemp (878526)

7.30 pm – Flower Club : Fortnightly – M McIntosh (876993)

TUESDAY

9.30 am – 1.00 pm - Mum and Me - K Marr (430505) and G Scott (879615)

WEDNESDAY

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

6.15 pm – Brownies – Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Guides - Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

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 – Friends Club : first Thursdays – L Smith – B Gerrard, secretary (434821)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

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

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

FRIDAY

9.30 am – Coffee morning

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

Martin Fair

Dear friends,

December 2013

I'm writing this letter from on board a train from Glasgow to Arbroath - a train packed to capacity, with some people standing.

The woman opposite me looks a little worse for wear, and as if there have been too many occasions when that's been the case. The whiff of alcohol supports the hunch. She looks old beyond her years, tired and crumpled, her head lolling from side to side with the movement of the train. Sharing our table are two young women, both of them typing away on their laptops, stopping only to receive and reply to text messages. In fact as I look around the carriage, most of the young people are similarly engaged, tapping and swiping on their smart phones, their earphones conveying to them their choice of Sunday evening music. An exception, one young guy is reading a book - 'The Munros.' If he puts it down for a moment, I'll ask him if I can have a read of it! Maybe that will lead to a conversation about experiences on the Scottish hills? And me? Well, I'm tapping away on my iPad and listening to music; live worship recordings of Stuart Townend songs; How deep the Father's love, The Lord's my Shepherd, From the Squalor of a Borrowed Stable and other such songs which have become absolute favourites of mine.

I'm trying to guess as to the purpose of the journeys that my travelling companions are undertaking. Judging by the note-making etc., some of the younger ones may be students returning to Dundee or Aberdeen. Some of the men look like they're heading up North readying themselves for two weeks off-shore. And judging by the vast quantity of shopping bags stuffed into the overhead luggage shelves, for many the day has been about Christmas shopping!

As for me, I'm on my way home having been sharing at a friend's Glasgow church. It's been an enjoyable and inspiring day - and I managed to fit in a visit to my parents who are in the process of preparing to move house. It's odd for me to think that I might never be back in that particular house - the house that has been the family home for longer than any of us can remember. So much of my growing up happened at that house. It was my Granny's house before we lived there so I was often there in pre-school days. And then, as a mischievous scamp of a lad I remember smashing the dining room window with a poorly aimed piece of slate which had been pressed into service as a frisbee!! I could go on, all the way through to the days of taking our children there for trips to see THEIR Granny and Grandpa.

I've had lots to think about and reflect upon during this journey; mostly, that all of life is something of a journey. And as we come towards the end of another year, another chapter of our journeys is drawing towards an end. For some of you this has been a good and exciting year, with much to give thanks for. Others of you will be glad to see the back of 2013.

But no matter what, we Christians always have cause to look forward with hope, trusting absolutely that God will journey with us into a new year. God's coming into the world, which we celebrate at Christmas, is the promise and guarantee that we will never walk alone. We might not know what's in store, or what route will unfold before us, but we do know that He will walk beside.

Take a moment to quietly thank Him for his faithfulness.

God bless,

Martin, Elaine and the boys (and Flossie, since some of you pointed out that her name had been missing from the salutations of late!!)

martin.fair@sky.com

18-25 year-olds

We're particularly fortunate to have a good number of excellent young people around our church, those broadly between the ages of 18-25 - a group that is almost always missing in congregations nowadays. For this, we are in debt to Sheila, our youth worker, who has nurtured many of them through the difficult teenage years when many drift away from involvement with the church.

As they move on from being 'the young people,' to take their 'fully grown-up' place in our congregation, it's im-

portant that we continue to invest in them. To this end, Martin, our minister, has started to meet with this group on a regular basis. Together, they are looking to GROW in faith that in the fullness of time they might be GREAT leaders in the church. The requirements for involvement in this group are commitment to worship and involvement in the life of the congregation. Thereafter, it's about fun and fellowship, Bible study, prayer and supporting one another in life.

Let's pray for this group as it begins to move into this new stage of life. May God richly bless these young people.

Ask Theophilus

Question :

In Luke 14:26 Jesus is recorded as saying, *If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.* Elsewhere we are told that we must *love* our enemies. How then are we told here to *hate* those we love?

Theophilus answers : The answer to this good question is really easy. But first two simple points. 1. Difficult passages of the Bible must be explained by other passages of the Bible and 2. Often in the original language words are much more elastic and have a far wider meaning than we think.

So point 1. Here is another NT occurrence of this nasty word 'hate': Matthew 6:24, *No one can serve to masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.* This is an example of Semitic parallelism, that is, two statements made with the key words having the same meaning. In the verse 'hate' is in parallel with 'despise' and 'love' is in parallel with 'devoted to'. Therefore here Jesus is saying that when someone is very committed to Boss A, if they also work for Boss B, in a situation where the two bosses' aims clash with each other,

their loyalty to Boss B could be severely compromised in favour of their favorite Boss A. Indeed, that employee might end up 'doing the dirty' on Boss B! Point 2. This illustrates how elastic and flexible in Hebrew thinking is the meaning of the word translated 'hate'. Its core meaning concerns issues of loyalty and devotion.

So back to the question on Luke 14:26. Notice carefully that Jesus isn't just speaking about the would-be disciple's relationship with her/his family. He also includes the personal 'I-me' relationship—*yes, and even his own life*. So he is speaking again (as when he contrasted *God* and *money*) about issues when our loyalties may clash, and very hard decisions have to be made. What he is unfolding is an extension of the first commandment, *You shall have no other gods before me*. Or as he himself summed it up, *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment* (Matthew 22:37-8).

In short, whenever you and I are faced with a divided loyalty and have to choose between obedience to Christ or following our own desires or those of our nearest and dearest, the test of our discipleship will always be whether our love for the Lord is strong enough for us to deny ourselves, and even say no to someone we love, because God is first and foremost in our lives.

7th Arbroath B.B.

The Company returned after the Autumn break on 24th of October when we held our Annual Rededication Service in the Church. A large turn-out of Parents and Friends of the Company attended this special Service when we celebrated the 130 years of the B.B. movement since Sir William Smith, our Founder, enrolled the 1st Glasgow company in 1883. Our Company Chaplain, Rev. Dr. W. Martin Fair led the worship.

We planted 130 Crocus bulbs in the garden at the back of the Church, so we wait for the spring to see them bloom. To commemorate this event in the history of our B.B. movement, we also gave £130 pounds towards the Malawi Project. Sheila Dunphy came along and gave us a wonderful presentation of the work done in Malawi and we got to see a short video of our sponsored child, Grey Lewis.

We held our Halloween party on 31st of October and the following boys won the fancy dress, Anchor Section - 1st Ben Garden - Vampire, 2nd Scott Clark - Pirate, 3rd Lewis Robb - Vampire, Junior Section, 1st Jacob Watt - Skeleton, 2nd Lewis Stephenson, 3rd Tom Christison.

The company section held a scary movie night. The boys are all working on their badge work and will hopefully get their first award of the year before Christmas.

We are going to the local Panto at the Abbey Theatre on the 13th of December which will be our last meeting of the year. We re-start in the new year on Thursday 9th of January.

The Officers and Boys join me in wishing you all a very joyful and happy festive season.

Captain Wilma H. Ewart.

Men's Ministry at St Andrew's Church

Bonfires, Breakfasts and Brilliant Company

These are some of the words that come to mind as I think of the past few months and the privilege that it has been to be a part of the ministry that is going on with men at St Andrew's. A weekend away, a camping trip, some spectacularly unhealthy breakfasts and a photo challenge have been my personal highlights so far. Thinking on a deeper level though, what really strikes me is that as I've got to know the guys that come along and have got head first into the different activities that have been organised, I've come to experience a real sense of belonging.

Taking an objective step back from all the different things that have been on the roster for the Men's Group, it is apparent that there is much more going on than just meeting together. Here is a group of guys who have made me feel welcome, who have challenged me in positive ways and who I know I could turn to for support. This is a place of welcome where I am confident that people who are new to the group would feel accepted and a part of it.

What encourages me from here though is the way in which things will evolve and develop. I am confident that if 2013 is anything to go by then the programme of activities for 2014 will be great. Further though I know that more will be welcomed, friendships will continue to deepen and, vitally, there will be a wonderful opportunity for men to mature in, or perhaps discover anew a faith in, Jesus Christ.

On another note though – Do we need to be a bit more inventive with our name? Answers on a postcard or on the Mens Group Facebook page.

Children and Families Work

Advent is a time when we are reminded of preparation. It is probably in our nature to think firstly of the practical implication for this; presents to buy, things to finish off, mince pies to eat (we might as well get in practice for the gastric onslaught that is Christmas). But we know that there is, more importantly, a spiritual dimension to this that sadly is quick to be overlooked. We look back to that time of anticipation and we build it into our spiritual preparation for the celebration of Jesus Christ – Immanuel – God with us!

As different things come together in terms of what we offer for Children and Families through St Andrew's Church, my mind quickly begins to draw comparisons to the 'preparation' that we see for Christmas. Particularly with events such as Bubblegum 'n' Fluff and Dad 'n' Me* there is a lot of preparation going on behind the scenes as people prepare different elements (a word of thanks to our administrator Candace for keeping me on track with these things!). However, this all starts to fall flat if we miss out

the spiritual dimension of it all. It is about sharing the message of Christmas and being a blessing to our wider community. Likewise with our fresh Church expressions, Messy Church and Sweaty Church, the preparation and timings play a big role, but these are second place to the privilege of sharing together with these families as part of God's family.

From this can I commend two things to inform your prayers for our ministry with young people: Pray for God to bless the practical preparation and pray that God might be present as we share with children and families in different ways.

Your Friend and Associate Minister (who is partial to a mince pie or three), **Stuart Irvin**

* **Dad 'n' Me** is a one-off event on Saturday 7th December where Dads will be doing the childcare so Mums can Christmas Shop (and perhaps have a gingerbread latte!) Speak to Stuart if you would like to help out or know someone who would appreciate an invite.

Guild

We had a change to our programme on Monday 11th November with an interesting talk from Irene Hoar on her trek to see Mount Everest from a distance. We were very grateful to Irene who stepped in at the last minute. I am writing this report where plans are under way for our participation in the morning Worship on Sunday 17th November. This is the beginning of a very busy week to help promote the Church Guild and we finish our week of activities hosting high tea.

Our Christmas party will be on Monday 9th December in the Church hall.

We resume after the Christmas break on Monday 6th January 2014 with Call my Bluff and continue on Monday 20th January with a history of Arbroath - a talk by Richard Irvine.

Malawi Fundraisers

Please don't forget to check out our Malawi Alternative Gift Catalogue. Is there someone you don't know what to buy for? Or maybe you've been asked for ideas for your own Christmas and can't think of anything you need? Why not buy something out of our Alternative Gift Catalogue. We will then give the gift of your choice to someone in Malawi and give you a card explaining what you have bought on the person's behalf. A chance to share with someone with so little at a time of year when most of us get much more than we need!

COMING IN 2014

Quiz Night, Wine Tasting, Coffee Morning, Great St Andrews Bake off?

And our famous **Murder Mystery**..... Watch out for more info!

Please Use Gift Aid

By way of a post-script to the Stewardship Report, we are always trying to encourage anyone who is a tax payer to give their offerings under the Gift Aid scheme. It makes no difference to what you as an individual choose to give, but it does mean the church can claim back tax you have already paid to HMRC – for every £1 given as an offering we

can claim back £0.25 from HMRC, so your £1 offering becomes £1.25 without you having to do anything other than be signed up for the scheme. In 2012 St Andrews Church was able to claim back approximately £16,000 in tax refunds from HMRC. So if you haven't already signed up to Gift Aid for St Andrew's, or would like more information, please speak to Susan, our Treasurer, or myself, Scott Anderson.

Clerical Humour

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. "Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. "Lead us not into temptation."

More Clerical Humour

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with petrol just before a long holiday weekend.

The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

"Reverend," said the young man, "I'm so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip."

The minister chuckled, "I know what you mean." he said. "It's the same in my business!"

Advent Calendars are Winners

Thanks to all St Andrew's folk who chose to buy a Fairtrade Advent calendar this year – we sold 60! Some will be enjoyed in the homes of congregations, and many will be given to others as a means of putting the Christmas story into the hands of relatives, friends, neighbours and school pupils – one more way that we point to Jesus as 'the reason for the season'. Sales of the calendar are good news for Fairtrade cocoa farmers too, enabling them to support their families and provide improvements for their communities. The company which makes these Advent calendars estimates that from this year's sales they will be able to donate £26,000 to the UK Children's Charity, so we have helped children at home as well as abroad. There are many winners from a simple purchase like this!

And More Clerical Humour

The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play.

"Here's a copy of the service," he said impatiently. "But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

During the service, the minister paused and said, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need \$4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, please stand up.

At that moment, the substitute organist played "The National Anthem". And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

Christmas: Changing the questions

Here is some eco-inspiration from a family whose faith journey includes implementing one new sustainable act each month, indefinitely. They add an extra thing each month, retaining all that has gone before. Here is some faith-filled food for thought from their 2012 Christmas: The place of conspicuous consumption in the celebration of Christmas is disturbing to me for many reasons, not least because it appears contrary to the essence of the religious festival that it runs alongside, and is in my mind evidence of a deep spiritual malaise inherent in Western culture. However, in the context of this blog my concerns are around its impact on our earth.

There are lots of practical ways to reduce your Christmas footprint. The thing I am particularly committing to this year is changing the questions I ask children (and others) about their Christmas celebrations. The questions we ask teach others what we value. The most common Christmas question is *What did you get for Christmas?* I think this

LOOKING AHEAD

DECEMBER

Sunday 1

9.30 am - Traditional Service;
1st Sunday in Advent
11 am - Worship Service; inc.
all-age Communion
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 8

11 am - Worship Service;
2nd Sunday in Advent
3 pm - SWEATY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship
(in Community Spirit)

Sunday 15

11 am - Worship Service;
3rd Sunday in Advent
Service led by the magnificent
Salvation Army Brass Band
from Bellshill
6.30 pm - Evening Worship
(in Community Spirit)

Sunday 22

11 am - Worship Service;
4th Sunday in Advent
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Tuesday 24

6.30 pm - Nativity and
Christingle Service
11.15pm - Traditional
Watchnight Service

Wednesday 25

10.30 am - Christmas Day
Celebration for all the family

Sunday 29

11 am - Worship Service
(No usual evening worship)
6.30 pm - Service of
Memorial and Thanksgiving

JANUARY

Sunday 5

9.30 am - Traditional Service;
1st Sunday of the New Year
11 am - Worship Service
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 12

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - SWEATY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 19

11 am - Worship Service
Main service followed by
short celebration of
Communion
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 26

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - MESSY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

FEBRUARY

Sunday 5

9.30 am - Traditional Service
11 am - Worship Service,
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 12

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - SWEATY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 19

11 am - Worship Service
Main service followed by
short celebration of
Communion
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 26

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - MESSY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

teaches children that what we value is hoarding stuff, even if in other ways we try to teach them other attitudes. This year I will be trying not to ask this question at all. Instead, I will be asking:

Who did you spend time with this Christmas? What did you do together?

What was your favourite present you gave to someone this year?

What stories did you hear told at Christmas?

What did you notice that was beautiful?

And when the inevitable discussion of loot gathered arises, I will ask:

Who gave you [item under discussion]? What is your favourite thing about that person?

This takes no time and costs nothing. I am hopeful its impact is as one of the many feather strokes that form the character of my and others' children.

[With thanks to Clare Nerida in Perth, Australia for permission to use material from her blog. Read more at <http://smallstepsforsustainability.blogspot.co.uk>]

N.B. As well as the services above there is the following:

A 40 minute service every Wednesday morning at 10.30 am.

Malawi Update

Hi everyone,

Thank-you once again for all your support. We have had a few great fundraisers since the last email update. In September we had a soup lunch raising £193 a concert by Sheena Glover's pupils raising £300 and a Bingo night raising £250. In October we had St Andrews' Got Talent which raised £324 and so far in November we have had a soup lunch (yesterday) which raised £211. Thanks to everyone who got involved in all these events. They make such a difference in the lives of ordinary Malawians.

October also saw the shipping of a 40 foot steel container, filled to the brim with donated articles ranging from bikes to sewing machines to medical supplies to books, blackboards, clothes and shoes. Thanks to everyone who donated things for the container which will be well needed in Malawi. The container also contained 5 boxes of gifts from all of you sponsors which are now on their way to your child for their Christmas! A special thanks is also extended to the partners at Ocean Rig, the Soutar foundation and Gannochy Trust for their kind donations which paid for the container to be sent to Malawi. Further thanks must go to RGS Forfar, Forfar Removals, RS Joinery and Finesse Control Systems for their practical help in storage, moving and packing of boxes/container.

Coming up in November are a couple of events. On Friday the 29th November we have a ceilidh which will be hosted at the church- St. Andrews church, Hamilton Green, Arbroath (not the Meadowbank as previously stated!). Tickets are £7 for adults or £4 for children and include stovies. The next day on Saturday 30th November, the church craft fair is being held at St Andrews Church. Here there will be a soup/soup and pudding lunch in aid of Malawi. Tickets for the soup lunch are £1.50 and for the soup and pudding lunch are £2.50. We would love to see you at these events if you can make it!

Since the last email we also had a visit from John Kang'ombe who is the executive administrator within Aquaid Malawi and you will have read about that in the October Quest.

Things at Kambilonjo and Thyolo continue to go well. The new houseparents at Kambilonjo have settled in well and seem to be very dedicated to our children there and the job in hand. Work still needs to be done to get the surrounding community on side and everyone working together in an effective team, however there have been definite steps in the right direction which is very exciting to see. Electricity has now been supplied to Kambilonjo daycare and residence. This is a great step forward as the connection fee to our centre was quite significant but now makes electricity much more accessible and affordable for local villagers also. It also means that the children can now study at night time since they have electric lights and in terms of security also makes the centre much more secure and safe from any potential thefts. We also have two school leavers working with us in the daycare and residence, teaching and tutoring the children. This is very useful as the boys are both very clever and have done well at school, so are able to teach the children in a range of sub-

jects effectively. It is also creating employment for these two boys whilst they wait for their school exam results coming out.

At Thyolo, things are also going well, the rains have come and the maize has been planted so everyone is praying that the rains continue and are not too heavy or light but that after several years of bad harvest that this year God would provide an abundant harvest. We also have a school leaver - Francis House who has just finished secondary school and has done well. Whilst he is waiting for his exam results he has been teaching and tutoring at Thyolo daycare centre. He has been primarily teaching the standard 2s in the morning and standard 8s in the afternoon - helping them on a one-to-one basis alongside the primary teacher who gives them extra lessons. He has also been tutoring some of the secondary school pupils primarily in his preferred subjects of Maths and Physical Science. Francis has been working for half monetary payment and half maize payment since the summer which has allowed him to feed his family as well as save up for further education once his exam results come out. He has also been going back to his home village to visit his family at the weekends and help them out in their garden, growing their maize for the next year.

The exam results are out now for the Standard 8s and Form 2s (End of Primary school exams and equivalent of standard grades respectively). The school which most of our students in Thyolo attend had 235 children sitting the standard 8 exams and 29 passed. Of those 29, 6 were our children. Unfortunately, although the children have passed their exams they need to get sufficiently high results to get selected to secondary schools. Of the 6 children who have passed only 3 were selected to secondary schools. Chipiliro Stephano and Mary Masache were selected to Mpinji Community Day Secondary School and Petro Charles was selected to Adolata Mission School. The other 3 (Mevice James, Yamikani Chamutolo and Damson Kamwendo) were accepted into a local night school but may get selected in the second round of selections which are coming up soon. The fact that they are funded by an NGO stands in their favour as the schools know that they are more likely to pay their fees. All the other standard 8s who failed are now repeating so we now have a class of 9 standard 8s.

Mary Nkoma who sat her J.C (Standard grades) this year has passed well and has progressed to form 3. The Form 4 students exam results are not out yet but we hope that they have done well.

On a sadder note, one of our quite disabled children-Robert Wellos, died last month of pneumonia. Unfortunately, Robert's extreme spinal curvature made him susceptible to chest infections and this time the infection proved too much for him.

Thanks once again for all your help,

Please continue to pray for the rain, for Robert Wellos' family and friends and also for Christina and her family as she runs Thyolo and Kambilonjo for us!

Thanks again

Becky



The St Andrews' Got Talent evening raised £324 for Malawi.



Our BB raised £130 for Malawi, and 45 Commando Group helped us to load the container destined for Malawi.



Andrew Dawson (right) and the Food Parcel Project team, a joint venture of Old & Abbey and St Andrew's. Andrew is retiring from heading up this work as he is soon to be emigrating to Australia. We are indebted to him for his invaluable work in this area.



The Men's Group Photo Challenge

How did they do it? From traffic wardens, to building sites and even the police, their powers of persuasion were amazing!