

# newrestalrig

## an evangelical church of scotland

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## PARISH NEWSLETTER

## NOVEMBER 2006

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### FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

I have just recently received an update from the MacDonald's in Zambia and include an excerpt below. Please continue to pray for this work.

*We are slowly melting away in the sweltering heat of another hot October, and we are all longing for the rains which will bring relief and more importantly give the farmers a chance to plant their crops for the coming year. Just looking back at my last letter I cannot believe how much has happened in the intervening 6 weeks. The first, and most awesome thing is that just when we thought all was lost in terms of buying the farm we had seen, events took another turn. When we got back from Scotland we were told that another offer had been received for the farm we looked at, and as result we began to look for other suitable places. We looked at a couple neither of which seemed to meet our needs, although we would have been prepared to take one of them and carry out extensive repair work on it.*

*Then one afternoon, without warning, we got a phone call from a businessman in England. He said he had spent a very disturbed night after reading our last letter, and asked if a donation of £15,000 would assist in helping us increase our offer. This, together with the money we raised on our house in Edinburgh brought us to exactly the*

*amount of the asking price. Isn't providence amazing? And aren't so many people kind hearted and generous? We contacted the sellers who told us that they would be happy to accept. They also told us that the previous evening they had decided to call the other prospective purchasers and accept their offer, but that the phones had been down and they had been unable to reach them. So it seems it was meant to be. And we now have a moving in date of 9 December. In order to purchase the farm we have had to set up a small company since we have not lived personally in Zambia for 10 years. This has been done, and Christine and I are now the proud directors of "Old MacDonald's Farm Limited". Everybody laughs when I tell them, but I just couldn't resist it – sorry.*

*The boys are all in a ferment of excitement at the thought of going to a farm, and have already formed all kinds of grandiose schemes, but we will just watch and pray, and carry out the work required as we are able. We have already had (last year) 2 donations that will allow us to build a workshop for the carpenters and welders. I am sure the donors have been wondering if we were serious about it since we have taken so long to do it, but we can see now that if we had built it in either our previous residence or here, we and the boys would have lost the benefit of it. Now we can make it the first alteration we make, and I can promise the donors – you know who you are! – that you will get a photo diary of the building.*

*We would like to build up the premises so that we can cater for 50 children, including girls, so we will plan it all out over the coming months. Phil has already done a fantastic job on devising a mini-farm, which will include crops, both rain fed and irrigated, a kitchen garden, greenhouses, fruit trees, chicken sheds, a piggery, a goat pen, and a fish pond. We will try and work the welding, mechanics and carpentry into the farm as well, each as little business units, and who knows, we may become self-sufficient in terms of food. Certainly we should be able to teach the children very good farming methods that will stand them in good stead in years to come. If we have 50 children, we will have the basis for a small school, and we would perhaps look at that as a longer-term project, which we could open to local children as well, so that the entire community benefits.*

*The children continue to pour through our garden like little bits of jetsam washed up by the tide. Feeding them and speaking to them once a week seems like sticking a band-aid on a severed limb, but it is all we can do. It is tempting to be overwhelmed by the scale of the problem, but still we must make every effort to be part of the solution.*

*Well that's about it for now.*

*Thank you all for all your love, friendship and support.*

*God Bless,*

*Don, Christine, Sarah, Rachel, Nicholas and Mulenga*

Visit the MacDonalds blog at:

[www.lusaka-street-children.blogspot.com](http://www.lusaka-street-children.blogspot.com)

## RESPOND!

"You are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" Gal 3:26,27

The phrase "in Christ" is a very common one in the New Testament. We're told to have faith in Christ, to glory in Christ, and that we have life in Christ. But here in Galatians 3:26,27 we have quite another meaning. Here we're pictured as being inside Christ, with Him as our outer garment. What Paul is reminding us of is the fact that when God looks at us, He doesn't see our sinful selves but He sees the perfect, obedient, sinless Jesus in our place. The simple fact is that God deals with us as though we were Jesus himself. That is why we are able to have complete confidence before his judgement seat.

But if God treats us this way, how are we to treat others? Just imagine what life would be like if we treated each other as though we were dealing with Jesus himself. Perhaps it's worthwhile pausing to consider how we would deal with Jesus if we were to interact with him as a person on a daily basis, eating, working, relaxing, and living. No matter how commonplace his presence might become, we could never forget His sacrifice and Love, that could never seem less than the miracle it is. So let's take this Grace that God gives us so abundantly and spread it far and wide.

Perhaps this is the key of the parable of the talents (Mat 25:14-30). God gives Grace to people in different measures, but from all he expects ample return. Let's not bury His precious Grace in the ground, but invest it where it will return to Him tenfold, in the people we live our lives with.

# CARING CHRISTMAS TREES

“Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.”

The nights are drawing in and the hours of daylight are getting fewer, a sure indicator that Christmas is getting closer. As the darkness increases we begin to make festive plans to dispel the gloom of winter. With decorations and seasonal lighting we bring cheer to our homes and communities. Candles, sparkling tinsel, Christmas trees and strings of lights appear in homes, shops and offices to mark the birth of the Christ in the world.

The Apostle John uses the image of a light shining in the darkness dispelling gloom to describe the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the depth of a dark Scottish winter when we crave the light, this metaphor is particularly poignant. We like light; it means safety, warmth, it is cheering.

We don't like to be left out in the cold and dark. Yet this is the reality for some people today. Every day on our city streets we pass homeless people left out in the cold and dark without light or love in their lives. John tells us that God is love and since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. How can people experience that light and love when they have no contact with it?

As a practical outworking of Christian faith, bringing light to the lives of those in darkness, Bethany seeks to show God's love to people on the fringes of society. Bethany's Winter Care Shelter works with over 60 churches across the city to provide homeless and vulnerable people with a place where they can experience warmth, comfort and love over the coldest winter months.

To help fund the Care Shelter, Bethany run Caring Christmas Trees. The enterprise, run extensively by volunteers, sells top quality Christmas trees that people must order in advance. For the cost of one Caring Christmas Tree, the Care Shelter provides a homeless person with a hot meal, a bed for the night and breakfast.

To support the Care Shelter again this year and make a difference in the lives of homeless and vulnerable people please buy a Caring Christmas Tree, and encourage your friends and colleagues to do the same. The purchase of your Caring Christmas Tree could provide the opportunity for a homeless person to turn their life around and leave the darkness of life on the streets.

In short, by buying a Caring Christmas Tree, you are allowing someone to experience God's love in a practical way and giving them hope - and you get a beautiful tree to enjoy all Christmas.

- Trees can be ordered on-line at <http://www.caringchristmastrees.com> or by phoning 0845 111 TREE (8733) Last date for orders is 10 December.
- Bethany needs 440 volunteers to help with promotions and distribution of trees.

To volunteer visit our website or call the tree hotline above or email [info@caringchristmastrees.com](mailto:info@caringchristmastrees.com)

# NOTICES

## BETHANY CHRISTIAN TRUST

### WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

Since 1996 this initiative has provided homeless men and women in Edinburgh, who would otherwise "sleep rough", with food and accommodation during the winter months.

New Restalrig has been supporting this project for a few years now and has again agreed to open its doors and provide catering on four nights this winter. These dates are 2nd November 2006, 23rd November 2006, 8th February 2007 and 15th March 2007.

The homeless people, usually up to 30, arrive at 9pm, have their supper, which we provide and then sleep in the large hall until 6.30am when they receive their breakfast. They leave the church by 7.30am. Bethany workers are on duty during the night and they ensure that the premises are cleaned and back in order before leaving.

Please pray for the homeless in our city, for this venture, for the work of Bethany Christian Trust, and remembering especially the nights when New Restalrig is involved.

## TEARCRAFT & TEARFUND

Many thanks indeed to all who came along to support the Tearcraft Sale on Saturday 6th October. An amazing £1139 was raised through sales and orders. Tea/coffee/baking donations raised £100. Sunday 7th October, saw the Tearfund Sunday service followed by a soup lunch. This raised a further £435.50. The Lord is good indeed. A total of £535.50 will go to help Tearfund's Bolivian project enabling the people of the mountains to build greenhouses so they can grow a variety of nutritious vegetables for their families. Health and education will also improve. Thank you all so much for your generosity also to those who helped in any way to make it the success it was. May the Lord bless you all.

- Patricia Sharp, Tearfund Church Representative.

## LIFE & WORK MAGAZINE

Orders for next year's "Life & Work" magazine are now being taken. Although the cover price of the magazine is £1.60, we have a 20% discount, which means that a year's subscription costs £15.60, i.e. £1.30 per magazine. If you would like to take out a subscription, please see Audrey Watson

## THE GUILD

Our Speaker on 13th November will be Andrew Randall who will tell us of his journey leading him from secular laws to God's Ministry. On 27th November we will be entertained by Mrs. Millie Gray who will tell us of the 'Funny Side of Life.' Our meetings start at 7.15pm and all are welcome.

## NORTHFIELD & WILLOWBRAE COMMUNITY CARE

As many of you know we operate out of New Restalrig Church and provide support to local people. We have a few groups, one of which is on a Monday at the Community Centre for those with dementia and another on a Wednesday afternoon for mainly frail and housebound.

Both these groups are in desperate need of volunteers. We only require a small commitment, anything from 2-3 hours a fortnight/month for different kinds of help. This could be group work directly with the older people, or more behind the scenes helping in the tea and coffee department.

If anyone feels that this is something that they could do for us, we would be entirely grateful to you! It could mean the difference of maintaining the group or its cancellation of a few days due to lack of volunteers.

Please think this over and if you are able to help or would just like to think about it but would like more information please contact me by placing a note on our board in the Centre or phoning 661 9171 or emailing [heather@northwillow.plus.com](mailto:heather@northwillow.plus.com)