

GIFT AID - AN EXPLANATION

As Gift Aid Convener for New Restalrig Parish Church, I am writing to ask if you would consider completing a Gift Aid declaration form in respect of your giving to the Church. This does not cost you anything but does mean that money taken from you in taxation can be claimed back for the Church.

For every £1 of your giving we can reclaim 28p. You do not have complicated paper work to deal with and the form does not have to be renewed annually. Furthermore you are not tied in to giving any fixed amount. It simply means that any money that you do give, will be increased by the Treasury in line with the rate of tax operating at the time.

We do need to be able to trace the donations through Standing Orders or Weekly Freewill Offerings envelopes, so if you decide to complete a Declaration could I ask that you apply for 600 Series Offering Envelopes or take out a Standing Order with your bank.

This can be done at the desk at the back of the church, or by contacting me by phone on 0131 669 2472 or by email at acguthrie@blueyonder.co.uk

Any gifts given, e.g. on the twice yearly Gift Days, are also eligible for tax reclaim so long as they too are traceable through identifiable offering envelopes or cheques.

This is a very helpful way of increasing the Church's income without costing members anything. Please give prayerful consideration to using this opportunity.

Miss A.C.Guthrie
Gift Aid Convener

The current Personal Tax Allowance bands are :-

Up to age 65 years - £4895

From 65 – 74 years £7090

Over 75 years £7220

Income above this will be subject to income tax.

Non – taxpayers

If you are sure that you do not pay tax but would find it more convenient to use envelopes for your weekly offerings then please leave your name at the desk and a set of envelopes will be ordered for you.

newrestalrig

an evangelical church of scotland

Address: 1a Willowbrae Rd,
Edinburgh

Phone: (0131) 661 4045
Website: www.newrestalrig.com

PARISH NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2005

FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

A few months ago results of a survey amongst Scottish clergy were highlighted in some newspapers. It did not make encouraging reading. It seems a fair percentage of ministers deny or reject what have always been considered central doctrines of the Christian faith. Many ministers don't know the Ten Commandments. Even amongst those claiming to be servants of God, Bible knowledge appears scanty. And if that is the case with the clergy what of others within the church?

Recent surveys from the USA reveal some fascinating if depressing statistics. In one survey fewer than 50% of people could name the four gospels. 82% of Americans believe that "God helps those who help themselves," is a verse from the Bible! (Amongst "born-again" Christians the results were better, but not by much, 81%!) In another

poll 12% of adults thought that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. A survey of school leavers revealed that over half thought Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife. In one poll a considerable number of people indicated their conviction that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham!

Well we may laugh at those crazy Americans, but I suspect that things may be even worse in terms of biblical literacy here in Britain. I don't think we should be too surprised at an ignorance of the Bible amongst secular people, what is far more alarming, however, is the growing ignorance within the church itself. How often do you read or study the Bible?

I suppose that excuses are easy to find for not reading or studying the Bible. There are however literally hundreds of commentaries, tapes, Bible reading plans and Bible reading notes readily available to help us open our Bibles and read

with understanding.

I suppose that when all is said and done it comes down to motivation. Do we believe the Bible to be God's Word? Do we believe that God speaks through His Word? Do we love God? Do we want to know him better? Is our faith in Christ really the most important thing in our lives? If it is then surely we will want to commit ourselves to reading the Scriptures and enjoying the Bible. If we choose not to, then really we are not better off than those who have no Bible at all!

Let me quote some words written by the Welsh minister Geoff Thomas in his little booklet 'Reading the Bible' (published by the Banner of Truth).

"Do not expect to master the Bible in a day, or a month, or a year. Rather expect often to be puzzled by its contents. It's not equally clear. Great men of God often feel like absolute novices when they read the Word. The apostle Peter said that there were some things hard to understand in the epistles of Paul (2 Peter 3;16). I am glad that he wrote those words because I have felt that often.

Do not expect always to get an emotional charge or a feeling of quiet peace when you read the Bible. By the grace of God you may expect that to be a frequent

experience, but often you will get no emotional response at all. Let the Word break over your heart and mind again and again as the years go by, and imperceptibly there will come great changes in your attitude and outlook and conduct. You will probably be the last to recognise these. Often you will feel very, very small because increasingly the God of the Bible will become to you wonderfully great!

So then go on reading it until you can read no longer, and then you will not need a Bible any more because when your eyes close for the last time in death, and never again read the Word of God in Scripture, you will open them to the Word of God in the flesh, the same Jesus of the Bible whom you have known for so long, standing before you to take you for ever to His eternal home."

What a wonderful prospect that is. Therefore let us open our Bibles and keep on reading.

In His Service,

David L Court

ANNOUNCING...

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Following the success of last year's Assemer Christmas Card Appeal it has been agreed to make this facility available again this Christmas. The appeal raised almost £500 for Assemer last year and seemed to be a worthwhile way of sending Christmas greetings to our friends in the Church. The board and the cards will be available at the back of the Church beginning Sunday the 4th of December.

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

The November issue of the Church Newsletter will be available the first week of November. Please deliver any submissions to Bryce Hales by 23rd October.

CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES 2005

We would like to encourage you to join us this year in providing Christmas boxes for destitute children in other parts of the world whose Christmas will be very simple. There is an organisation, which is coordinating gifts in shoeboxes to be delivered overseas, and we would like to be able to contribute. The uplift is Monday 14th November, which means the last day for collecting gifts would be Sunday 13th Nov. If you feel in your heart that you would like to be participating in this, please involve your whole family as far as possible in deciding what to give. There are two example boxes at the back of the Church to give you some inspiration!

CHURCH TRANSITIONS

DISJUNCTIONS

Mrs. N. Douglas

17 East Suffolk Park

DEATHS

Mrs. I. McLauchlan

11 Wilfrid Terrace

Miss D. Williamson

59 Baronscourt Terrace