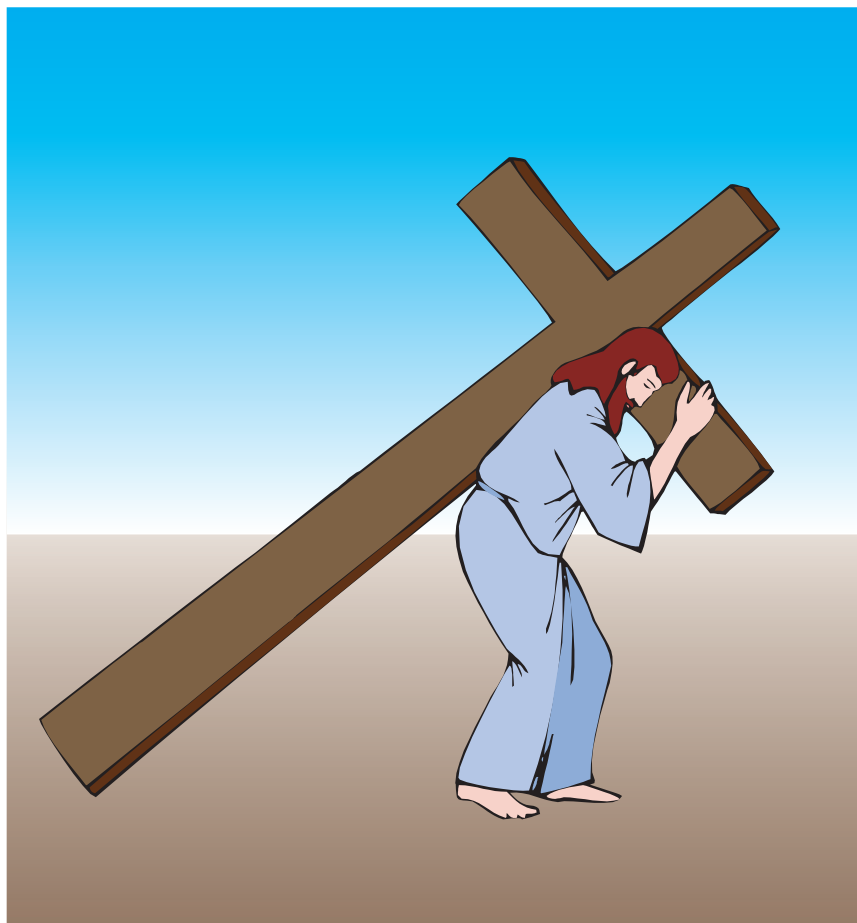


THE OPEN DOOR



*Penicuik North Kirk
Newsletter number 316
March 2010*

Dear Friends

Blame it on the ageing process or perhaps stress and the pressure of work but whatever the reason, Chris, a friend of mine, found himself in an embarrassing position recently.

Chris was speaking at a conference and had got there nice and early to set up and make sure everything was prepared. The guy who was going to be leading worship came up to say hello, introduced himself by his first name and then they chatted for a while before heading off together to find a coffee. They continued to chat but when Chris asked the guy what line of work he was in, he looked a little surprised and just gently explained that he wrote some songs and travelled around a bit with his music. As a fellow guitarist, Chris felt comfortable discussing the merits of various different instruments but didn't really pursue much more about the guy's career. They were sat together on the front row as the guy was introduced at the start of the event. It was then somewhat disconcerting to hear his full name announced. The realisation dawned that he was one of the best known worship leaders in the country, that they'd met before and that if only Chris had read the programme he could have saved himself a good deal of internal discomfort and facial colouration!

My friend Chris decided that cowardice was the best defence, so just pretended he knew who the guy was all the time – the really well known worship leader was very gracious!

We all have stories of how we got it wrong, sometimes resulting in just a little embarrassment but sometimes with devastating consequences. Church was designed for people who get it wrong. I love hearing stories of people finding hope, acceptance and healing through being part

of a believing community that just loves them for who they are. May our places of worship be safe places for believers and seekers alike where, as the old hymn says, we can all get 'ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven'.

It's also comforting to know that, unlike some of us, Jesus never forgets a name or face! 'I will not forget you. See, I have engraved your name on the palms of my hands.' (*Isaiah 49 verse 16*) Wow!

Your friend and minister



The Boys' Brigade

The Anchor Boys (*for boys in Primaries 2 and 3*) meet in the Back Hall on Tuesday nights, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. Activities include games, handicrafts, stories and singing.

The boys entered the Battalion Colouring Competition and John Sprott took 3rd place in the P3 age group. The recent transfer of Margaret Wolfenden from the 2nd Bracknell Company has been a very welcome boost to the section's staffing.

The Junior Section (*for boys in Primaries 4, 5 and 6*) meets in the North Hall on Tuesday nights from 6.30pm to 8.00pm. Activities include badge work, figure marching, games, football and handicrafts.

The boys played very well in the Battalion Junior Section Indoor 5-a-Side Football Competition, reaching the quarter finals. The boys are now practicing for the Group Indoor 5-a-side Football competition and the Battalion Junior Section Figure Marching Competition, which our Company will host in Penicuik North Kirk.

The Company Section (*for boys in Primary 7 to S6*) meets in the North Hall on Friday nights, from 7.30pm to 10.00pm. Activities include Christian Faith, badge work, physical training, sports and games.

In December, we entered two teams of six boys for the Battalion Physical Training Competition. Our 'B' team beat 10 other teams to win the trophy for the 5th year running. This was a great result as our boys were much younger than most of the other competitors. Also in December, our recruits won the Mid and East Group Compass Drill Competition and then went on to win the Battalion final in February. The boys are now practicing for other Drill and PT Competitions, in addition to working hard for their badges.

Neil Wolfenden recently transferred from the 2nd Bracknell Company and has already put a lot of work into creating a new Company Section programme which, when implemented, will be much more relevant and enjoyable for today's boys.

For information about any Section, please contact Alan Anderson on tel. (01875) 853281 or Email alanandcarola@aol.com

Penicuik Post

The Christmas season has well and truly past and I am clearing away the Penicuik Post stamps. I would like to thank everyone most sincerely who assisted with this fundraiser - especially those who took 2 districts to deliver as volunteers were thin on the ground this year. £126 was handed over to PNK General Fund from this venture. If you do have an empty delivery wallet, I would appreciate it back ready to fill again this December.

Aileen Smith

From Heather Christie

Hello

Just a short email to let you know I am still alive. I am staying in Kalimpong at the moment. It is so beautiful here. I returned from Sikkim yesterday which is further up in the foothills of the Himalayas, the scenery was spectacular. The team and I lived in a shack halfway up a mountainside and spent the week teaching basic healthcare and hygiene to a group of young people. We had a great time together. The area was so beautiful. At night you didn't know where the mountains ended and the sky started. The lights of the homes dotted around the mountainside looked like stars. On Monday we go off again to another village for 3-4 days, then more trips in the weeks to follow.

Hope you are all doing well. Will email a longer newsletter with photos and stuff when i can access the internet more easily, securely and privately.

God bless, lots of love

Heather

News From Swaziland

You can read the complete letter from Swaziland on our website. I will also print it off and place it on the noticeboard in the Welcome Area

At last – news from Swaziland! We are so thankful for all your love, prayers and support for us and are sorry not to have written before. However it gives us the opportunity to say how much we wish you a very blessed and joyful Christmas.

It has been a tough few months in many ways, although we know most of us experience difficulties of many varieties. Our main problem is that we are far from home, family and friends and live and work in a culture with very different values which is very much

reflected in the life of the church. We have also been facing the difficult decision as to whether we should stay in Swaziland, move to another USPG assignment or come home to work in England. After much prayer we felt that we should stay for another year to continue trying to get the Life Skills Programme and the Sunday School teaching material into all parishes. Apart from continuing the general training work we are also needed for the Farm Project if it should go ahead. We are pleased to be able to say that we have just had confirmation from USPG that they will support us in Swaziland for a further year so that we should be here until February 2011. At the same time we have been facing practical difficulties as our wonderful little RAV 4 has now done 225,000 kilometres, has been costing us a fortune in repairs and we are very thankful each time we return home after being out in it! Our house has been requisitioned by the government for a Toll Gate and we have no idea when we will have to move or where we will go although we are assured by Bishop Meshack that we will have somewhere to live. However we naturally hope that it will have a good supply of water and electricity, will give us some privacy and will not be too noisy!

Young People

Since we came back from England in January Andrew had been trying to get the Sunday School Coordinator to get the Sunday School teachers together for a training weekend to launch the material very kindly given by Chelmsford Cathedral. This finally happened at the end of September.....

Training

Since we last wrote, training has been going on as normal at parish and archdeaconry levels. The September School Holiday programme studied the subject of evil and the church's response.....

Schools

January 2010 sees the beginning of free education for children which will allow many children who do not yet go to school the opportunity for education. You would think that we would be rejoicing at this long awaited development, but because of shortage of money the government is introducing free education for Grades 1 and 2 only but without any age limit so that people even in their twenties are hoping for education.....

Children, mothers and grandmothers

The church has recently received a promise of money for a new pilot project. We shall be introducing this programme in three parishes to measure the effectiveness of working with grandmothers and mothers to help them train their children in basic skills and behaviour.....

USPG Ireland and the Farm Project

We were very excited to have Jan and Linda from USPG Ireland come to spend two weeks in Swaziland to see more of the work of the church here and research in order to put together their application for funding for the Farm Project. Ken Gibson, a member of their board, also came as he has a lot of experience in these funding applications. We have been involved in a lot of work to get as far as we have with the project and hope that it will actually happen as it will bring employment for about 200 people, provide training in agriculture for many but particularly will generate income for working amongst those who are most in need so that the Diocese can become self-sufficient. USPG Ireland has also managed to get two vehicles for Swaziland, one for us, to replace our dying RAV, and one for the Farm, but it is a nightmare trying to find out about how to apply for Tax Exemption on importing them as the duty is 37% and to get the necessary documentation for an application. It was a wonderful encouragement to us to have Jan, Linda and Ken here with us.

The Weather

Like many of you we have been having a tremendous amount of rain but ours has been for about three months. It is a great blessing to have as we are in such need of it for filling reservoirs, softening the ground for planting crops and for making the grass grow for the cattle. The countryside looks so beautiful in fresh Spring green everywhere. Sadly it has brought a lot of hardship as many cook outside on wood fires so have been unable to cook their staple 'meallie' and have hot food. Children walk miles to school without shoes or umbrellas and sit through school being very wet and last weekend many bridges were washed away so that children could not get to school to take their end of year exams. People have to walk to work and just to be out for a minute gets you soaked through. As usual it is the disadvantaged families who suffer most. Those of us with cars do not have to get too wet and the full reservoirs means we have water coming out of our taps. (hopefully!) We are not used to cloud for so long here and most of us are very miserable and longing for blue skies! But we are so thankful for the full reservoirs and the beauty.

Work Load

Apart from all the training and other additional duties given to Andrew to administer/organise, the Board of the Thokoza Church Conference Centre 'gave' him the responsibility of overseeing the construction of a new conference facility on behalf of the Board. This has meant that we have not really had a day off for several months, so you may be able to imagine a little of how we feel!

Ants, Ants, Ants!

We are in the season of ants – ants of so many different varieties, sizes and colours. There are not as many as in Bangladesh but there are still millions! They march in armies around

		2	5	3	1			
8		3		7		6	4	
	8	1				4	2	
2	5						6	3
	3	4				7	9	
1		5		4		9		7
		9	8		1	3		

Sudoku No 25. Solution on page 7

the kitchen work surfaces which creates havoc when preparing food, especially when making pastry. I have to wipe them away until they stop coming for a minute, make and roll out the pastry very quickly before the next invasion arrives. It gives me a good excuse for not producing top quality pastry!

Cultural differences!

We suffer from a great deal of noise around our house from the church, preschool and orphans feeding station next to us but the other day there was some additional 'disturbance'. A church member had washed his car seats and was, with great noise, taking them out of his car and despositing them to dry in the sun on a slim border of concrete outside our bedroom/study window. After exchanging the usual polite Swazi greetings I suggested he move them!

Please pray for:

Swaziland as corruption and injustice is increasing causing suffering to the most vulnerable

Clergy will be motivated and empowered to implement the Life Skills training

A suitable new home for us and strength to carry on

Funding for the Farm Project.

Full recovery for Bishop Meshack after a hip replacement operation

Thank you again for all your love, prayer and practical support for us – we need it!

With our love and prayers

Andrew and Rosemary Symonds

P.O. Box 2324, Mbabane, Swaziland

Email: ajsymonds@posix.co.sz

Tel.00268 4161874

Appeal

This is a note for any one who has served, either as an officer or a boy, with Mr. Alan Anderson in the Company Section of the 48th Edinburgh Company of the Boys' Brigade, which meets here in the North Kirk.

Alan has been involved with Boys' Brigade all his life. He was both a boy and an officer in the 4th Company, which was attached to St. Mungo's Parish Church, and he came to the 48th when the two companies joined forces. He has been an invaluable member of staff, serving as Officer in Charge of the Company Section and as Treasurer of the company as a whole. Latterly, although he did not wish to be known as Captain, he has nevertheless served as acting Captain in order to allow the company to continue to run.

For personal reasons, Alan is standing down from his roles in the company and we hope to acknowledge the huge contribution he has made at our annual Parents' Night in May this year. If you, or someone you know, would like to make a contribution to Alan's presentation fund, please place it in an envelope marked 'Boys' Brigade, FAO Fiona Charleson' and hand it to any of the officers currently serving in the company (except Alan of course!) or

place it in one of the Minister's confidential boxes in the Welcome Area in the church.

Alan will be very sorely missed by all who have served with him and we thank you for any support you may wish to give in this matter.

Fiona Charleson, Lieutenant, 48th Edinburgh Company

Tel 01968 672754

PiNKies

PiNKies is the name of a group for pre-school children and their carers which meets in the North Kirk on Friday mornings from 9.30 till 11.30 during school term-time.

We currently have about twenty children from about ten families attending PiNKies. When everyone comes on the same day it can get quite busy, but we are very lucky because we are well supported by Pat Duncan and Alison Troup as well as our caretaker Frank Peacock.

We usually begin the morning in the Back Hall by playing with all the toys, and are very grateful for being allowed to share the toys which are used by the PINK Children's Music Group. At about 10.15 we have a time of singing and a Bible story in the Sanctuary, then it's back to the hall for craft and snack, and a cuppa for the grown-ups.

There is usually time for another play before everyone helps tidy up at 11.30. Recently we had two fund-raising efforts. In June 2009 we supported Action Aid's PoverTee Day by wearing our favourite T-shirts, and in September we donated our subs for the day to the Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning.

We are always pleased to welcome new families - it's a great way for the children and

9	1	5	6	2	7	8	4	3
2	4	3	1	5	8	6	9	7
7	8	6	9	4	3	5	2	1
1	6	7	5	8	2	4	3	9
3	9	8	4	6	1	7	5	2
5	2	4	7	3	6	1	8	9
4	5	9	2	7	6	3	1	8
8	7	1	3	9	5	2	6	4
6	3	2	8	1	4	9	7	5

Answer to Sudoku 25

the grown-ups to make new friends. Come and join us!

Fiona Charleson Tel 01968 672754

Thanks

David and Linda McDonald would like to thank their many friends in the North Kirk for the very welcome practical support and kindness shown to us on the day of our move to 26 Broomhill Avenue

PNK Ramblers – Programme For 2010

At our annual meeting held on Saturday, 21st November 2009 it was agreed that in 2010 we should have:

- monthly walks on the 2nd last Saturday of each month from February – April and from June – November.
- the walk in May will be a weekend walk and will be on the 3rd Saturday and Sunday of the month (15th and 16th May 2010)

The following programme for 2010 was agreed:

Feb 20th: Gladhouse Reservoir – Leader: Edna Sommerville

Mar 20th: route to be confirmed
– Leaders: Alice and David Symington

Apr 17th: Pentland Hills – Leader: Hazel Liddle

May 15th/16th: weekend in Braemar area
– Leader: Ian Roy

Jun 19th: route to be confirmed –
Leaders: Ruth and Colin Herd

Jul 24th: route to be confirmed –
Leaders: Jan and Alan Naylor

Aug 21st: Ochil Hills – Leader: Morag McLeod

Sept 18th: Little Glenshee – Leader: Ian Roy

Oct 23rd: Perthshire Colours – Leaders: Jan and Alan Naylor

Nov 20th: short local walk and annual meeting – Leaders: Alice and David Symington

For Information:

PNK Ramblers is NOT an organised club or group with experienced walker leaders and first aiders. PNK Ramblers is simply a group of friends who enjoy walking in the countryside and have decided to undertake various regular monthly walks and who also welcome others with similar interests.

The person organising the walk may or may not have already undertaken the walk – they are simply organising the distribution of the details of the walk ie start time and route and MAY NOT know the pitfalls or otherwise of the walk in advance and will most probably NOT be an experienced walker leader.

If you have a medical condition which requires you to take medication please ensure that you have that medication with you. THE RESPONSIBILITY IS YOURS.

Also if you have any medical condition which may make you unfit to undertake certain walks please remember that THE DECISION TO DO THIS WALK IS YOUR OWN.

Good footwear, waterproofs and a packed lunch are essential. Please bring any other equipment eg sticks which you feel that you require.

The Lighter Side

“How many church members does it take to change a light bulb?”

Whaddaya mean CHANGE???

That light bulb was given in memory of my Grandmother!

My father installed it with his bare hands! He donated his time AND the use of his ladder to do it, too! My family's been members of this church for four generations! And if you think you're gonna come in here and make a bunch of changes all of a sudden, Pastor, you've got another think coming!

Things you never hear in church...

- Hey! It's my turn to sit in the front pew.
- I was so enthralled, I never noticed your sermon went 25 minutes over time.
- Personally I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf.
- I love it when we sing hymns I've never heard before!
- Since we're all here, let's start the service early.
- Pastor, we'd like to send you to this Bible seminar in the Bahamas.
- Nothing inspires me and strengthens my commitment like our annual stewardship campaign!
- I couldn't find space to park outside. Praise God!

A child came home from Sunday School and told his mother that he had learned a new song about a cross-eyed bear named Gladly. It took his mother a while before she realized that the hymn was really "*Gladly The Cross I'd Bear,*"

Easter Celebrations

United Holy Week Services

Sunday 28th – St Mungo's at 7pm

Monday 29th March – South Church at 7pm

Tuesday 30th March – North Kirk at 7pm

Wednesday 31st March – Sacred Hearth at 7.30pm

Thursday 1st April – St James the Less Church at 8pm

Saturday 3rd April – Easter Vigil in St Mungo's Church at 9pm

Sunday 4th April – Dawn service, starting at the Old Cemetery at 6am

North Kirk Services

Palm Sunday 28th March

11am Morning Worship on Palm Sunday

Good Friday 2nd April

7pm All-age Worship

Easter Sunday 4th April

9am Celebration of Communion

11am All-age Worship

7pm Celebration of Communion

News Of The North Kirk Family And Parish

FUNERALS

"Death is destroyed! Victory is complete! Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" Paul's first letter to the Corinthian Christians chapter 15, verses 54 and 57.

30 Dec 2009 George McIlwain, Lilybank, Howgate

13 Jan 2010 Alex Milne, 9 Kirklands

25 Jan 2010 James (Jazz) Baillie, 69 Cuiken Avenue

29 Jan 2010 William Milne, 7 Kirklands

11 Feb 2010 Betty Henderson, 195 Eskhill

Next Newsletter

Copy for the next newsletter should be with the editors on or before 11th April for publication on 2nd May. Copy can be sent as a Microsoft Word attachment to either email address or hard copy (preferably typescript) can be handed to either editor

Editors

Jim Caird

Email: jim.caird@btoopenworld.com

☎: 678223

Robert Ramsay

Email: rbr44@tiscali.co.uk

☎: 674448

Please visit us at our Church Web Site:

www.pnk.org.uk