

# CANONBIE CHRONICLES

Edition 1

News from Canonbie United Parish Church

Spring 2009

## **NEW LIFE**

Welcome to the first edition of our newsheet. We hope it will serve to keep you informed of all what's happening at the church in Canonbie. The last few months have been a period of considerable change in the life of the church. But Christians can celebrate all that Easter brings, the hope of new life and new beginnings....

### **A NEW BUILDING**

We moved back into our redeveloped church building at the end of November last year. Of course, Christmas was a time of real celebration, but particularly so for us, enjoying all our new facilities. We staged a very successful **Christmas Tree Festival** which involved many organisations and individuals from across the Canonbie community. On January 22<sup>nd</sup> a **Rededication Service** was held to mark the opening of the new building. As we are an Associated Congregation of both the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland, Moderators of the General Assemblies of both churches were present. A week later on 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> January an **Open Weekend** was held to allow prospective users of the new facilities a chance to view the building and all it has to offer. A number of music concerts, a Presbytery conference and workshop are planned this year and there has been interest in using the building by a number of non-church organisations.



### **NEW ELDERS**

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2008 was a day of joy and sadness for our Associated Congregation. During the Morning Service in the United Free Church, 5 members were ordained as Elders. They were: - Charlie Foster, Lis Findlay, Chris Jackson, Anthony Lane and Leoniek van Belzen. Please remember them in your prayers as they start their important work in the village. In the evening, a Songs of Praise service was held as the last service in the United Free Church. We had been using this building for worship since the beginning of February last year when work on the £600,000 redevelopment contract for the Parish Church building started.

### **A NEW MINISTER?**

Reverend Alan Reid left the linked churches of Canonbie United Parish Church and Liddesdale Church (Newcastleton) at the beginning of this year to take up the charge of minister in Kinross, Perthshire. Alan had been with us in Canonbie since 2003 following the linkage arranged between the churches in Newcastleton and Canonbie. He supported the association between the Parish Church and the United Free Church. He encouraged us to fulfil the vision long held by church members in Canonbie to redevelop the church building and make it more welcoming and available to the wider community. Along with his pastoral gifts and work in local schools he will be missed.

Now that we have a vacancy the work has begun in earnest to find a new minister. At a meeting of the Associated Congregation on 18<sup>th</sup> January, a Nominating Committee was formed. The work of this committee is guided by representatives from the Presbytery. An Interim Moderator has been appointed to oversee affairs in the linked charge. Ronnie Clark is an Elder from the Border Kirk in Carlisle and has led worship with us on Sundays several times since Alan left. If you need the services of a minister urgently during the vacancy, please contact Ronnie in the first instance on tel. 01228 560866. His address is: Syke End, Plains Road, Wetheral, Carlisle, CA4 8JY. Ronnie introduces himself to the people of Canonbie in a letter overleaf.

Please be under no illusion about the ominous task before us in appointing a new minister to lead us. If YOU know (or know someone who does) of a minister who might be looking for the challenges that come with a parish such as ours, then pass his/her name on to Ronnie or any member of the Nominating Committee: - Lorraine Jardine; Ruth Foster; Leoniek van Belzen; Lois Lane; Elisabeth Findlay; Sam Shipley.

### **A NEW WEBSITE**

To help spread our news, advertise our events, give details of what's on offer in our new building and tell the world about our church, Alastair Davies built our new website last year. It's at:  
[www.canonbiechurch.org.uk](http://www.canonbiechurch.org.uk)  
Go on! Give it a click!

### **AND NOT FORGETTING OUR PAST.**

On the morning of 30<sup>th</sup> November last year we walked through Canonbie before our first service back in the redeveloped parish church building. This walk of witness started with hymns and prayers under the oak tree at The Hollows where the first members of the Canonbie United Free Church met after the Great Disruption in 1843. We then proceeded to the United Free Church where the last act of worship had taken place on the previous Sunday. It has served a faithful congregation until the end of November 2008.

In his address that morning, in the new United Parish Church, Alan said that the roots of the United Free Church could be found in the church of the day "...taking it's eye off the ball". This, he said, should be a lesson for us all. It is a situation, repeated so often within churches both locally and nationally. It results in much division clearly evident in the Christian churches in Scotland and throughout christendom.

When both churches in Canonbie were looking for new ministers in 2002, the proposal to form an Associated Congregation was pursued. This came to fruition and was followed by the linkage with Liddesdale Church under Alan's ministry in 2003.

It is our intention to incorporate as much of the United Free Church heritage into our new church building as we can. Ideas were sought to make use of the beautiful stained glass window which was set above the pulpit in the United Free Church. We have not been able to find a suitable location or use for the window in the new United Parish Church. Instead we have commissioned some carpenters from Ancrum, near Jedburgh to design and make chancel furniture (communion table, lectern and ministers chair) from wood retained from the pews in the United Free Church.

Nationally, the association between the United Free Church and the Church of Scotland in Canonbie has been regarded as an exemplar ecumenical project. It is held as a prime example of what can be done by the established Scottish churches working together to keep the message of the Gospel alive in rural areas.

#### **SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP**

Worship on Sunday mornings will be led by a variety of people whilst we have a vacancy. 'Pulpit supply' will come from ministers available, the Interim Moderator and Readers from within the Presbytery. Communion will be held at roughly the quarterly cycle as usual, but as this is dependant on a minister from elsewhere being available. Consequently, it is unlikely that the usual dates will be met i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in March, June, September and December. Our first Communion to be held in the vacancy was on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

#### **TRAIDCRAFT**

Our Traidcraft activities had their best year yet in 2008, helped considerably by a Fairtrade Evening with a fashion show staged in Gilnockie Hall in the autumn. The shop in the church will be relocated shortly into a bespoke storage and display cabinet made by local craftsman Rainer Lohmann from pew doors and pew wood. This will be paid for by a successful application for a grant (£370) from the Scottish Fair Trade Forum. We always have tea, coffee, foods, gifts and household goods for sale at prices which guarantee a better deal for Third World producers. The Traidcraft catalogue for Spring/Summer 2009 is out now. Copies for you to take away are available in church or phone Leoniek van Belzen (71391) or Kirsteen Davies (71725) for a copy.

#### **FROM THE INTERIM MODERATOR**

Three months have elapsed since my appointment as your Interim Moderator. For me, the highlight to date was the rededication of Canonbie United on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, in the presence of the two National Moderators. A few days earlier, we elected members to serve on the Joint Nominating (Vacancy) Committee. The work of the committee has commenced, and they are actively seeking a Nominee who will one day conduct worship in both churches, with a view towards the election and call of a minister. The task is formidable with approximately 190 vacant charges at present within Scotland. This is reflected not least within our own Presbytery. We have 34 places of worship served by 12 Ministers Charges, of which 15 places of worship within 5 charges are currently vacant.

I extend my grateful thanks to all in Canonbie and Liddesdale who are maintaining the life and witness of the Church during this period of vacancy. I remain optimistic that the 'right person' will eventually be called to serve as your Minister. Your prayers and continued support at public worship are greatly appreciated. Ronnie Clark.

#### **PARISH SURVEY**

In the middle of last year, the Kirk Session decided that establishing ourselves as a new church in the village presented an opportunity to find out what local people felt about the community they live in, their church, and making the most of the new facilities. A Church of Scotland Congregational Facilitator, Pauline Steenbergen worked with the Kirk Session to develop a survey to find out. It was used during the Christmas Tree Festival and can be adapted for use by other methods to reach a wider number of participants from across the community. 39 people took part in the survey. The results have been analysed and reported to the Kirk Session. These details will help the church target its ministry locally and identify gaps in community provision enabling us to maximise the impacts of our work. Many thanks to those who participated in the survey.

#### **CHURCH LINKS WITH MOLDOVA**

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2009 we welcomed Dr. Peter Law, Vice-President of Cross-Over International Ministries to lead us in worship. Much of Peter's address described the persecution and sacrifice that Christians face in the countries across the world where his organisation works. A few years ago, Alan Reid went on a study trip to Moldova that was organised by Cross-Over International Ministries. Through that visit the churches in Eskdale & Liddesdale formed a link with young churches in the former soviet state where Christianity is not encouraged. Alan was keen to see those links maintained beyond his departure. Interested? Want to ensure the links develop and that the people in Moldova know we are praying for them? Contact Anthony Lane on 71386 for more information.

**That's all for now!** We hope to get another edition of Canonbie Chronicles out in the summer. But .....in the meantime....

**TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.....**about this newsheet, about the church, about our search for a minister. Comments, criticisms, questions to: Anthony Lane, Beechwood, Canonbie, DG14 0SY. Tel. 013873 71386, e-mail: antolane@hotmail.com

**This document can be made available in accessible format for partially sighted and blind persons.**

**Please contact the Editor, Anthony Lane. Tel. 013873 71386.**

#### **Church furniture, pews and associated items for sale.**

Crafted to household size using the wood from the Parish and United Free Churches.

On display in the Gallery in the church. Have a browse and feel free to purchase. Further items will be added as they become available.

Profit from sales will go to the redevelopment fund. Please contact Alex or Elaine Pryde 71435.