

Minister

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346 1970

ST MICHAEL'S TOWER

Church Secretary

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Church Office Hours

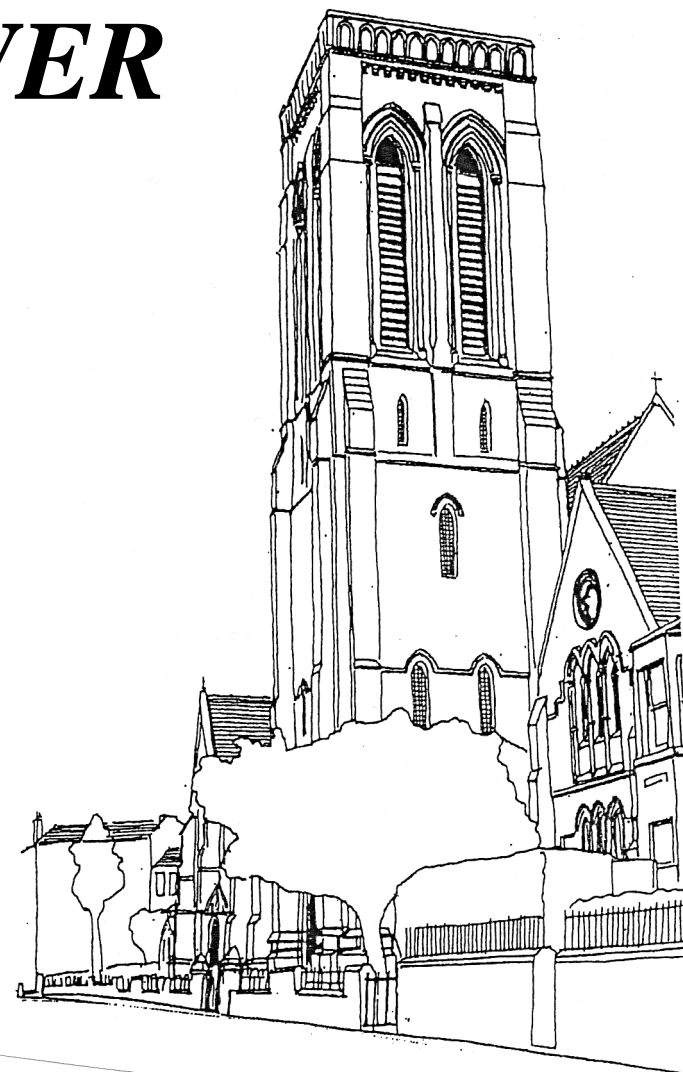
9.15am- 2.15pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
9.15am-12.15pm Friday

Website

<http://www.stmichaels-kirk.co.uk>

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February 2008

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THE WEEKLY CHURCH DIARY

Sunday **10 am** **Choir Practice**
 11 am **Morning Service** **and Blast Off!**

Tea is served in the hall after Morning Worship
The Lord's Supper is celebrated every quarter and after
the service on the last Sunday of the month

6 pm **St Michael's at Six Concerts**

Monday **10 am** **Parents and Toddlers**
 2 pm **Friendship Club**
 7 pm **Yummies**

Tuesday **10 am** **Parents and Toddlers**

Wednesday **10 am** **Parents and Toddlers**
 5 pm **Rainbows**
 6.15 pm **Brownies**

Thursday **10.00 am** **Archives Group**
 1.45 pm **I.O.M. Society**

Saturday **10.30 am** **Coffee Morning**
 10.30 am **The Young Ones**

For further details of all these groups please contact the
church office on 0131 478 9675

ST. MICHAEL'S at SIX

2008 SEASON

*Sunday Recitals from 6 to 7 pm at
St. Michael's Parish Church, 1 Slateford Road,
Edinburgh.*

24th February: Sinfonia Chamber Ensemble
*Howard Ferguson's Octet (1933) and Beethoven's
Septet*

16th March: David Higham & friends
Cabaret, Music Theatre and Swing!

20th April: William Coleman & Claire Liddell
recital for baritone and piano

18th May: Lucy Cartledge & Stuart Montgomery
recital for flute and piano

22nd June: Inchcolm New Music Ensemble
*Heriot-Watt University's Contemporary Music
Group*

Sundays at 6pm

admission £7.00 (under 15's free)

Dear friends,

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

Happy New Year! I hope you had a good Christmas and New Year season. I know that there were a lot of bugs and flu going around, but I hope you managed to avoid those, or if not I hope you are over it now!

There is much to look forward to in the coming year. This year we will celebrate St. Michael's 125th year birthday! That will give us an opportunity to celebrate St. Michael's presence in this parish over all those years and an opportunity to remember everyone who has made St. Michael's what it is over the years as well as all of us who still do today.

People and parish will be one of the themes of this year and we have begun the year by once again opening our hall to those who in Edinburgh have no home. This is the second year we have offered the use of the hall to Bethany Christian Trust's Care Shelter. This year we also volunteered a catering team to provide those who sleep in the shelter with a hot meal for the night. You can read more about the success of that venture elsewhere in the Tower. Hopefully we can build on that success and there will be more opportunities during the year for us to think about how we can best serve those who are amongst the poorest in our communities.

Last year we started Second Sunday Soup, the Film Club and the Issues Group. These opportunities for fellowship, learning and fun continue to grow from strength to strength. This year we will hopefully continue to add more strings to our bow. During the six weeks of Lent there will once again be Lent Study Groups on offer. This year the theme is Pathways of Prayer. I would encourage you to join one of these groups. Following on from that I hope we can begin to include more opportunities for people to pray in church on a Sunday morning, both during the service and in a small group before or after the service.

After 125 years St. Michael's continues to be a lively, worshipping community focused serving its people and the people of its parish; that truly is a witness to the love we have for other people reflecting on the love we know we have from Jesus Christ.

James

News of the Church Family

Deaths;

Jimmy Smith on Sunday 13th January 2008 aged 82. Jimmy was a faithful, committed and popular member of St. Michael's. Many will remember him giving out the hymn books on a Sunday morning or coming along to the Friendship Club on a Tuesday. Jimmy served his country during the war as a Bevan Boy, and afterwards worked as a coal miner, a coal man and finally at Wiseman Dairy. Jimmy was a life-long Hearts fan and was well known at Tynecastle. Our prayers are with his son John and daughters Maggie and Isobel.

Baptism

Annabella Rose Middlecote on the 3rd February. Annabella has been coming regularly to St. Michael's with her parents Andy and Jennifer who live locally.

THE ISSUES GROUP

The Issues Group now meets on the **first Sunday of the month**. The Issues Group is an opportunity to chat with others about current issues that come up in the news, in the sermon, in life. However, although many people expressed an interest in coming along unfortunately after Second Sunday Soup the second Sunday of the month wasn't the easiest time to get to for most people. So the Issues Group has moved; no longer on the second Sunday of the month, from **Sunday February 3rd** it will meet after coffee in the church and thereafter on every **first Sunday of the month**. Why not come along and share with others your thoughts, interests, concerns, hopes and fears about the world, the church or our lives.

Greetings Card Campaign

Thanks to everyone who contributed cards, cash and signatures to the Amnesty International Campaign to aid prisoners of conscience, their families and support groups.

Thanks to your habitual generosity we were able to send 315 cards this year.

If you are fortunate enough to receive a reply, please inform Amnesty and myself with details. A.I. can use this information in monitoring individuals.

DW

ST. MICHAEL'S AT SIX

Sunday Recitals from 6 to 7 pm at

St. Michael's Parish Church, 1 Slateford Road, Edinburgh.

SINFONIA CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

H. Ferguson: Octet (1933) opus 4

for String Quintet, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon

Moderato

Allegro Scherzoso

Andantino

Allegro Feroce

L.v. Beethoven: Septet in E flat Major (opus 20)

for String Quartet, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon

Adagio - Allegro con brio

Adagio cantabile

Tempo di menuetto

Tema con variazioni

Scherzo

Andante-Presto

SUNDAY 24TH FEBRUARY: 6pm

admission £7 (under 15's free)

St Michael's at Six

The St. Michael's at SIX concert series for 2007 made a profit for the church of £1500. This is the largest amount raised in any of the four years that the series has been running. I'd like to thank all those from the Parish who came along to hear the various musical items on offer. As before 2008, our fifth year will have something for everyone with a myriad of styles and sounds. Do please try and come to some of them if you haven't been before.

After four years running the series it is great to know (and to hear) people well away from our church speaking of the concert series and the church by name.. It's really marvellous how St. Michael's at SIX is now well known in the City of Edinburgh and beyond.

All good wishes,
Stuart Montgomery

Notes from The Session December 2007

- The Superintendance Report was thought to be satisfactory
- A Retiring Collection is to be taken to purchase a new wreath for next year's Remembrance Service.
- Christmas Offerings are going to the Bethany Trust
- Catherine Glen's retiral from the eldership was announced.
- Parish Grouping Conference – it was thought there was a lack of publicity.
- Shoe Box Appeal – our boxes had gone to Belarus.

- Issues Group – timing is to be re-considered

Outreach Group - Bethany Night Shelter

As you know, St Michael's hall acted as a night shelter for Bethany Christian Trust on 20th January. This was the second time the church had done so, but it was the first time that we also supplied the catering team to provide the evening meal and leave a buffet breakfast for those homeless in Edinburgh that particular night.

And so it was that Douglas Bannatyne, Judith Merten, James Aitken and Fiona Punton of the Outreach Group, along with Bill and Sheila Bremner turned up that surprisingly fairly mild Sunday night to cook and serve the food so willingly provided by members of the congregation. We had a team talk from the BCT care staff who would have responsibility for the shelter and appreciated their open door policy – all are welcome if they have need of their services. After a time of worship, James set off with one of the staff in the van to collect folk for the shelter. The first load of 15 arrived, followed shortly by the second. It was hectic making sure everyone got fed, as well as trying to ensure we would have plenty for those to follow. And it was sobering to realise we fed 28 in total – six of whom were women, and one who was pregnant. Most quickly ate their food and chose a bed for the night – a mat and two blankets on the floor of the hall. Before we knew it, we were clearing up and tiptoeing out to avoid waking those who were already asleep.

Thanks to amazing generosity of those who donated specific items of food, and to those who donated money for the other items we required, we were able to ensure that everyone who came to the shelter was able to have as much as he or she wanted (one chap loved the macaroni so much I don't know how much he had!), which was a comforting thought – better than not having enough! The remaining money will be going to BCT for the continued work of the shelter.

The BCT team leader said to James that we had all done surprisingly well for first timers – nice to hear, so after not messing it up this time, we will be even more on the ball next time! (And maybe that was his plan!!). Thanks to everyone whether on the catering team, or donating food or money for all that they did to make life a tiny wee bit easier for 28 folk that night in January.

FP

LENT STUDY GROUPS

From **Sunday 10th February** Lent Study Groups will meet at St. Michael's, St. Martin's and St. Colm's. Please choose whichever meeting time suits you best (or mix and match as your busy schedule allows).

St. Martin's, 7:00 p.m. every Sunday from 10th February

St. Michael's 10:30 a.m. every Wednesday from 13th February

St. Colm's 7:00 p.m. every Thursday from 14th February

This year we will once again use material supplied by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. ***Pathways of Prayer***

'Exploring six major traditions of Christian spirituality – join us on a spiritual journey through Lent with this prayer guide from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, in partnership with BBC Radio 4. We'll be exploring six pathways to come to God, each offering a different perspective on approaching God through prayer.'

Week 1 The Path of Holiness

Week 2 The Path of Social Justice

Week 3 The Devotional Path

Week 4 The Sacramental Path

Week 5 The Contemplative Path

Week 6 The Charismatic Path

If you are interested in joining one of these groups then sign up on a Sunday morning or phone Karen in the office (478 9675) or James (346 1970).

St. Michael's at Six: Finlay Hetherington and Stuart Montgomery, 9th December 2007

The 40th St *Michael's at Six* concert took the form of a recital by a young trumpeter, Finlay Hetherington, accompanied on piano and organ by Stuart Montgomery. The programme promised an evening of stimulating and diverse music, but unfortunately the standard of performance was rather inconsistent. Stuart was, as ever, well prepared, but the soloist was visibly nervous and seemed to struggle with his instrument.

The opening Torelli was let down by messy trumpet entries, and Finlay's tone lacked confidence. Nevertheless, the piece admirably retained much in the way of character. Stuart played particularly elegantly in the third movement (*Grave*), and made good use of contrasting colours in his registration of the organ.

The *Andante* from Hummel's Trumpet Concerto was altogether a more effective performance. Although the problems from the Torelli remained, the trumpet phrases were generally well tapered and the execution was cleaner.

The highlights of the concert, for me, were *Blue Window* and *Green Window* by the recently deceased composer, Petr Eben – two pieces that were a complete contrast to the preceding items. The first of the pair opened with a wonderfully rasping pedal line and squiggly flourishes on the manuals. This dramatic introduction led into conflict and angry discourse between the trumpet and organ, which eventually resolved into a bright and brilliant homophony.

The second of the pair was equally exciting, and by this time the togetherness of the players seemed vastly improved. Isolated fragments gradually built into a trembling, tension-filled wall of sound.

Stuart's organ solo – Henri Mulet's *Carillon Sortie* – was highly accomplished and thrilling. Stuart, like the audience, obviously enjoyed the spiky, bouncing music, and he injected a lot of fun into the dance-like rhythms.

The concert concluded with arrangements, for trumpet and piano, of three Gershwin preludes. The sound of the trumpet did much to augment these well-known pieces and evoke atmosphere – particularly through the sleazy wah-wah (or harmon) mute. Stuart's piano was laid-back but had a definite groove as he played in styles such as soulful blues or lazy ragtime. These pieces were full of energy, but unfortunately suffered from some poor execution and misjudged rhythms by the trumpet.

Lewis Forbes.

Music at St. Michael's for Sunday services
played by Stuart Montgomery
Organ & Piano

FEBRUARY 2008

Sunday 3rd February

J.S. Bach; Prelude & Fugue in D Major (BWV 532)

Music for Reflection: Chorale Prelude by J.S. Bach

R. Vaughan Williams; Tune for Ann

L. Boellmann; Toccata in C minor

Sunday 10th February

G. F. Handel: Concerto in G minor (opus 4 no. 1)

Music for Reflection: Chorale Prelude by J.S. Bach

S. Myers; Cavatina

G.F. Handel: Allegro, from Concerto in B flat (opus 4 no. 6)

Sunday 17th February

E. Grieg; Sarabande and Gavotte

H. Sumsion; Saraband & Interlude

Music for Reflection: Chorale Prelude by J.S. Bach

T.S. Dupuis; A Concerto Movement

W. Harris; Processional

Sunday 24th February

J. Haydn; Eight Musical Clocks for Organ

J. West; Impromptu

Music for Reflection: Chorale Prelude by J.S. Bach

A. Dvorak; Humoresque

R. Vaughan Williams; Prelude 'The New Commonwealth'

Jim Fallon reports on Church Fabric, Gardens & Restoration

With the Restoration Re-dedication and Christmas Party celebrations behind us St Michael's will, in 2008 be focussing on People and the role of the Parish in the Community. For the various Committees however, 2008 also means more of the same "business as usual" as we seek to redecorate and upgrade the interior, recover the grounds and gardens and of course, continue in our efforts to fund all of this.

Fabric

Over the Christmas break we sanded the Hall floor and applied 4 coats of varnish which we hope will be sufficient until 2 further coats at Easter followed by more in the summertime. The floor cannot be sanded again so it is imperative that we all take great care in how we use the hall e.g. not dragging tables, and notify all damage immediately.

The police have been called in regarding the systematic destruction, by vandals, of the round leaded window above the Vestry door.

Springtime should see redecoration of the Vestry area commencing.

An electrician is now investigating the intermittent electrical problems with the organ, the church lights and emergency lighting. The Church boiler, which remains under scrutiny, is operating efficiently. The experiment - to supplement the Church heating with gas heaters has been most effective in raising the temperature.

Various options for remedying the “dub” problem at the foot of the ramp are currently under consideration.

Gardens and Grounds

Approval has been given to purchase a new Lawnmower and a donation has been most kindly offered to cover the cost. Over the winter Bernard is continuing to make good, areas not accessible throughout the restoration period.

Replanting of the front borders of the Church has been completed and we can look forward to a splash of colour in the coming months. Work currently continues in the rear garden and volunteers will be made most welcome. A quote for pointing the lane boundary wall has been requested.

Restoration

There is a considerable list of "Restoration" issues to be resolved with the contractors.

The insurance claim for the water damage to the Upper Hall floor remains unresolved, as does the claim for the numerous items stolen from the Church.

Parish Grouping Logo

After much discussing, and designing the Parish Grouping Coordinating Committee has launched a logo for the Parish Grouping. Look out for it around the church and the neighbourhood! We hope it will continue to inspire us as we work together,



*‘...not to do alone
what we can do better
together...’*

Baby Martians

are the pre-school children from St Martin's who will be meeting (with their parents) in the church on the first Mondays of the months. They are still in the early stages of thinking about this but are looking for volunteers to help occupy the children and/ or support the parents. Obviously everyone would need to be disclosure-checked if they haven't been already but it would be good to see how feasible the venture would be. If you can help in any way please contact Sophia Marriage at St Martin's.

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SOUP SUNDAY

What happens every second Sunday of the month? It's "Soup and a Roll Sunday"

From Sunday 9th September 2007 until May 2008 we plan to have Soup Sunday.
A chance to share fellowship and enjoy a bowl of tasty soup with a roll after the service and raise a little cash with voluntary contributions.

Dates for Soup Sunday to put in your diary are:

February 9th 2008
March 9th 2008
April 13th 2008
May 11th 2008

Please come along and take part!

If you are willing to donate a big pot of soup once a year or are willing to help serve now and again, we would love to hear from you. As usual volunteers are always needed and very much appreciated. Please contact Debbie Baxter or Judith Merten

Tower

Items for next month's magazine should be with the editor by Sunday 20th February.

ST MICHAEL'S FILM CLUB



SUNDAY 17TH FEBRUARY

A tragic love story

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

At 7pm in the Church Hall. Entrance free
(Donation to cover cost of refreshments)

Report on the latest Parish Grouping Co-ordinating Committee (PGCC)

The Committee charged with helping St Colm's, St Martin's and St Michael's develop their mutual relationship met on January 10th. It reflected on the Congregational meeting held at St Martin's last November and heard how the Community audit is coming along.

The main item of business concerned the proposed scheme for a Church Related Community Worker, largely funded by the United

Reformed Church, to be based within the Parish Grouping. The issues raised by this possible appointment are complex: they were given a good airing in a frank discussion. Some misunderstandings were cleared up about the nature of the appointment and the PGCC's role in that but it became clear that we have considerable work to do in clarifying what we hope for in a Parish Grouping - what it is that we seek to do together and what apart; and the channels of communication needed to achieve that. The CRCW scheme itself will need to take account of this complexity - thinking through what it means for a worker to be 'based' in a grouping and not a single congregation.

At the end of the meeting, people were invited to reflect on the discussion: there was an awareness that it had been a difficult evening but people were grateful that everyone had felt able to speak out and been listened to. The frank and honest discussion was a sign of our growing maturity and testament to our shared desire to make the grouping work. Others acknowledged the generosity of the URC which lay behind the proposed CRCW project.

The PGCC will meet again on January 24th to plan the joint Kirk Session/Vestry awayday.
John Conway

SHOE BOX APPEAL

Wonderful reports are arriving from our teams distributing shoe boxes to some of the poorest children in Europe in Belarus, Serbia and Romania. Many of our overseas partners are lost for words when they see the extraordinary impact these shoe boxes are having on some of the poorest and most needy children. Never before have they felt such intense joy and exuberant hugs from children – many of whom have been deprived of love during their young lives.

I can't thank you enough for making these special moments possible.

Your shoe boxes are a powerful reminder to these children they are not forgotten this Christmas

To encourage you, I'm pleased to share a brief story from Romania. We are regularly adding new reports to our website, so please keep visiting! I hope these reports will inspire many others to join you in giving a shoe box in 2008.

Angel from Heaven

At the end of a hospital visit in Romania we had one shoe box left for a boy aged 10 –14. We were taken to a side room to meet a boy of 14 who had been in a car accident the previous day that had killed both his parents. The boy was still in deep shock following major surgery. His grandmother was at his side overcome with emotion. One of our team members held his hand and gently helped him unpack the contents of his shoe box. The love that came out of the box at that moment was overwhelming. The boy said a very heartfelt 'thank you' in English. A member of our team hugged the grandmother and with tears running down her face she exclaimed, 'You are an angel from heaven'. Without a doubt, this shoe box provided an opportunity to bring joy and hope at the most traumatic time in their lives.

Thank you again for your tremendous generosity and support in 2007. Be assured that your shoe box will bring great happiness to a child and will have its own special story in the weeks and months to come.

On behalf of everyone at Samaritan's Purse, may I wish you God's joy and peace as you celebrate His message of hope this Christmas.

I look forward to sending you more stories in the New Year with our special Thank You Report.

With warmest thanks.

Simon Barrington, Executive Director, Samaritan's Purse, International (UK)

More information at: <http://www.samaritanspurse.org/>

St Michael's on the World Wide Web

Blogspot

We now have a "Blogspot" so that we can enjoy some lively discussions. This can be viewed via our website at www.stmichaels-kirk.co.uk (go to *Viewpoints* in the menu) or directly at <http://stmichaels-kirk.blogspot.com> Anyone will be able to access the blog through our website, however only those invited will be able to add items for discussion or comment on what is already there. Please contact me if you would like to join.

We would like to invite the children to join in the discussions as they have a lot to contribute, however as they would be able to view other blogs from our blogspot, it is recommended that an adult supervise the activity. We would value their contributions and I hope that parents will encourage them to join.

St Michael's Web Site

Recently I was asked for some statistics and thought you might be interested in hearing how many people look at our web site, and how far round the world it reaches. During October & November 2007, we had 4,763 visits. These have come from a variety of countries. As expected, the UK led with the most visits: UK 81%, USA 10%, Ireland 2%, and France 2%. The following have 1% ~ Japan, Spain, Cote d'Ivoire, Argentina, United Arab Emirates. This amounts to quite a number of visits from each of these countries.

A useful and easy method of helping asylum seekers

How would you cope if you had no cash? If you only had vouchers for one supermarket and no money to get the bus there? This is exactly the case for people refused asylum who are on "Section 4 Support" who get £35 in supermarket vouchers a week. Many people choose to sell their vouchers for just £20 cash to unscrupulous sharks just so they can buy bus tickets to attend college, or report at immigration reporting centres or to attend medical and legal appointments.

We have recently joined the Jesuit Refugee Service in buying Tesco vouchers from them to help asylum seekers. This scheme works. The Jesuit Refugee Service in London have set up a simple scheme to exchange these vouchers for cash at face value. If you shop at Asda, Tesco or Sainsbury you can buy the vouchers (which come as gift cards and tokens) through JRS for the cost of a stamp using the form at

<http://www.churchpoverty.org.uk/campaigns/livingghosts/vouchers.pdf>.

This quick, simple action can make a massive difference to the life of people refused asylum. The tokens could make an excellent present for somebody.

If you are not connected to the internet, please see Mamie Donald if you would like a copy of the form.

