



# THE PARISH CHURCHES OF MAXTON & MERTOUN WITH NEWTOWN WITH ST BOSWELLS

United in serving God, by welcoming you,  
sharing His love, and reaching out in service  
to our community



Picture by Harry Dalgliesh P7 St Boswells Primary School

DECEMBER 2017 – FEBRUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CHARGE

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<https://www.facebook.com/The-Parish-Churches-of-Maxton-Mertoun-with-Newtown-with-St-Boswells>

St Boswells Church hall & vestry bookings: Mrs Sandra Thomas, Tel: 823518  
Voluntary Hospital Transport Scheme: Mrs Ann Melrose Tel: 01835 822357

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## HELLO FROM THE MANSE

Does Christmas come round earlier each year? I found myself wondering and reflecting on that question recently, and not because the deadline for the newsletter seemed to catch me unaware. I was in a shop in Fife at the end of October whilst on holiday and suddenly stopped as I had started singing Christmas songs – where did that come from? I thought. Then I listened, and playing quietly on the shop sound system were the usual popular Christmas songs that are repeated every year. I then found myself reflecting on that first Christmas.

Over the last few years there have been images on our television screens and in our newspapers of refugees fleeing from their homes and countries, taking risks – most of the time with very few possessions and not knowing whether they will find a place of safety or even a roof over their heads. I wondered how Joseph and Mary coped, with the long journey of around 70 miles on foot, and the help of a donkey for Mary when she was particularly tired – although in the gospel it doesn't say that she rode on the donkey. It is just the image we get from the songs we love to sing. The journey would have been difficult but, once in Bethlehem, finding a place to stay wasn't any easier either.

It is not clear in the gospels how long they were in Bethlehem before they had to flee from harm, and their lives became similar to those refugees today that we have become so aware of. Or are there times we are so busy rushing about, and we have become so accustomed to the images that we don't take them in any longer until something makes us stop, like the Christmas song I heard, making me stop and wonder?

The birth of Christ, certainly for Christians, is a time to reflect, to wonder, to see beyond the tinsel and the cute story, to the painful reality of what it meant to Mary and Joseph to be refugees like those we see on our TV's in makeshift camps, or walking an endless road, with no home and a great sense of fear as to what might happen to them and to the baby they knew was God's Son and was to be the light of the world. The light of the world that darkness (sin, evilness) can never put out.

May you and your families, wherever you are this Christmas, have peace, love and the warmth of the living God around you.

Rev Sheila

# SUNDAY SERVICES: DECEMBER 2017–FEBRUARY 2018

	<b>Newtown</b>	<b>Maxton/Mertoun</b>	<b>St Boswells</b>
<b>3 December</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Advent Sunday	9.30am	Mertoun 9.30am	10.45am <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>
<b>10 December</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent Sunday	9.30am	Maxton 9.30am	10.45am
	<b>United Service of Lessons and Carols</b> Newtown Church <b>6pm</b> Featuring Newtown Primary School Choir		
<b>17 December</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Advent Sunday	9.30am	Mertoun 9.30am	10.45am
<b>24 December</b> Christmas Eve	9.30am	Maxton 9.30am <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>	10.45am
	<b>United Christingle Service</b> St Boswells Church <b>4pm</b> (see page 6 for details)		
	<b>United Watchnight Service</b> St Boswells Church <b>From 11.15pm</b>		
<b>Monday 25 December</b> Christmas Day	<b>United Family Service</b> Newtown Church <b>10am</b> (see page 5 for details)		
<b>31 December</b>	<b>United Service</b> Mertoun Kirk <b>10.30am</b>		
<b>7 January</b>	<b>United Café Church</b> St Boswells Church Hall <b>10am</b> (see page 10 for details)		
<b>14 January</b>	9.30am	Maxton 9.30am	10.45am
<b>21 January</b>	9.30am	Mertoun 9.30am	10.45am
<b>28 January</b>	<b>5pm</b> <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>	Maxton 9.30am <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>	10.45am
<b>4 February</b>	9.30am	Mertoun 9.30am	10.45am <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>
<b>11 February</b>	9.30am	Maxton 9.30am	10.45am
<b>18 February</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Lent Sunday	9.30am	Mertoun 9.30am	10.45am Communion
<b>25 February</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lent Sunday	<b>5pm</b> Communion <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>	Maxton 9.30am <i>Coffee after service</i> <b>see below**</b>	10.45am
<b>** You are invited to make a small monetary donation for coffee in support of The Vine Trust Project: 'Build a House in Tanzania'</b>			

Maxton & Mertoun, Newtown & St Boswells Churches

# CHRISTMAS FOR EVERYONE

**10 DECEMBER  
2ND ADVENT SUNDAY**

**LESSONS & CAROLS**

Newtown Parish Church 6pm

Featuring Newtown

Primary School Choir

**THURSDAY 21 DECEMBER**

**PRIMARY SCHOOLS & NURSERIES**

**END OF TERM SERVICES**

Newtown 9.30am in School

St Boswells 11.30am in Church

Parents & family friends are welcome.

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**CHRISTINGLE FAMILY SERVICE**

St Boswells Church Hall 3.30

(making Christingles)

Worship St Boswells Church 4pm

Take part in an impromptu Nativity play:

Children and adults, are invited to come dressed

as a favourite nativity character:

wise man, shepherd, angel, donkey, sheep....

**CAROL SINGING**

Round the Christmas Tree - Newtown 6.30pm

**WATCHNIGHT SERVICE**

St Boswells Church from 11.15pm

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**FAMILY SERVICE**

Newtown Church 10am

You are invited to bring a toy or gift which  
you have received to 'show to others'.

Retiring Offerings in aid of Midwife Training in Malawi



Maxton & Merton, Newtown & St Boswells Churches

# Carol Singing

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

**Come and Sing  
Come and Listen!**

**Collection in aid of Midwife  
Training in Malawi**

Words provided

Accompanied by  
St Boswells Band

Please share transport

Meet at Milestone  
Garden Centre,  
Newtown. 4.30pm

### Approximate Timing

**4.45pm:** Milestone Garden Centre, Newtown

**5.30pm:** Dryburgh Arms Hotel, Newtown

**6pm:** Buccleuch Arms Hotel, St Boswells

**6.30pm:** Hunters Stables, St Boswells

**7pm:** Dryburgh Abbey Hotel

Further info: Rev Sheila Mol: 01830 822205, [Smol@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:Smol@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Maxton & Merton, Newtown & St Boswells Churches

## Christmas starts with Christingle



Christmas Eve: St Boswells Church Hall 3.30pm

Bring children to make Christingles  
(all materials provided)

Service in Church 4pm      Everyone welcome

**Take part in an impromptu Nativity play.**

Children and adults are invited to come dressed  
as a favourite nativity character:

Wise man, shepherd, angel, Mary, Joseph,  
donkey, cow, sheep, .....

Retiring Offering  
in aid of:  
Midwife Training  
in Malawi



## WHAT'S ON DECEMBER 2017:

Sunday 3 December: **First Advent Sunday**

Worship on Wednesday 6 December, St Boswells Church Hall, 10am.

Sunday 10 December: **Advent Lunch**, St Boswells Church Hall, 1pm

Sunday 10 December: **Second Advent Sunday, United Lessons & Carols, Newtown Church**, 6pm

Thursday 14 December: **St Boswells Guild: Christmas Party**, Church Hall, 2.30pm.

**Worship on Wednesday** 20 December, St Boswells Church Hall, 10am.

Thursday 21 December, **Newtown Hour of Praise**, Newtown Community Wing, 2pm.

Friday 22 December: **Carol Singing for everyone** (see opposite)

Sunday 24 December: Christmas Eve, **United Christingle Service**, St Boswells Church, 4pm (see opposite)

Sunday 24 December: **Carol Singing round the Christmas Tree in Newtown**, 6.30pm.

Sunday 24 December: **United Watchnight Service**, St Boswells 11.15pm (see page 5)

Monday 25 December: **United Christmas Day Service**, Newtown (see page 5)

Sunday 31 December: **United Service, Mertoun Kirk**, 10.30am

## WHAT'S ON JANUARY 2018

Sunday 7 January: **United Café Church**, St Boswells Church Hall, 10am (see page 10)

Thursday 11 January: **Meeting of St Boswells Guild: Blair Cummock**, Church Hall, 2.30pm.

**Worship on Wednesday** 17 January, St Boswells Church Hall, 10am.

Thursday 18 January: **Newtown Hour of Praise**, Newtown Community Wing, 2pm.

Friday 19 January: **Ceilidh Dance**, St Boswells Village Hall, 8pm. (see p16)

Wednesday 24 January: **Meeting of Newtown Kirk Session**, Newtown Vestry, 7pm

Thursday 25 January: **Meeting of St Boswells Guild: Open meeting: Mr John Roberts and Widget, 'Hearing Dogs for the Deaf'**, Church Hall, 2.30pm.

Tuesday 30 January: **Meeting of Maxton & Mertoun Kirk Session**, Mertoun Kirk, 7pm.

Wednesday 31 January: **Meeting of St Boswells Kirk Session**, Vestry, 7pm.

## WHAT'S ON FEBRUARY 2018

Monday 5 February: **Editorial deadline for March/April/May Newsletter**

**Worship on Wednesday** 7 February, St Boswells Church Hall, 10am.

Thursday 8 February: **Meeting of St Boswells Guild: Mrs Ann Smith, 'Trip to the Holy Land'**, Church Hall, 2.30pm.

Saturday 10 February: **St Boswells Church Coffee Morning**, church hall, 10am. Cakes, bric-a-brac & book stalls. All contributions greatly appreciated.

Thursday 15 February: **Newtown Hour of Praise**, Newtown Community Wing, 2pm.

Sunday 18 February: **Communion, St Boswells**, 10.45am

**Worship on Wednesday** 21 February, St Boswells Church Hall, 10am.

Thursday 22 February: **Meeting of St Boswells Guild:** Mrs Gillian Harrap, 'Her time as a Policewoman', Church Hall, 2.30pm.

Sunday 25 February: **Communion, Newtown,** 5pm

## WEEKLY:

Mondays: **Art Group,** St Boswells Church Hall 2 - 4pm

Tuesdays: **Praying Together,** St Boswells Vestry, 9.30am

Wednesdays: **Craft Group,** St Boswells Church Hall, 1.30 - 3.30pm

Thursdays, **IMPACT After School,** St Boswells School, 3.15 - 4.15pm (in school term)

Thursdays: **Praying Together,** St Boswells Vestry, 6.30pm

**Future Focus:**   
**THE WAY AHEAD**

## UPDATE

In other places in this Newsletter, you will see information about three initiatives which have come about as a result of our Future Focus discussions:

**Praying Together**  
**Café Church**  
**Carol Singing**

Fridays: **Lunch Club,** St Boswells Church Hall, noon – 1.30pm. Repeat Prescription Forms for Newtown Surgery may be left in the box inside Lunch Club on Fridays in the Church Hall; Borders Churches Emergency Foodbank: donations

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

I hope you enjoy the Christmas Card which is enclosed with this Newsletter. I am grateful to the pupils and teachers of Primaries P4-7 in Newtown and St Boswells Primary Schools for providing an amazing selection of pictures for the judges to choose from. It was extremely difficult to eliminate any of the entries, but ultimately a decision had to be made! The overall winning design, shown on the front of the Newsletter, was drawn by Harry Dalglish. This and the other winning designs have been made into cards and distributed around our parishes with the 1700 Newsletters. They were drawn by Chloe Jamieson, Freya McKeown, Rosa Yuill, Hannah Cargill, Abby Tindall, Teigan Brown and Finlay Jenkinson.

**Rev Sheila**

## ST BOSWELLS CHURCH COFFEE MORNING



our first in 2018 will be held on  
**Saturday 10th February**  
from 10.00am in the church hall.  
There will be cakes, books and bric-a-brac. Contributions will be much appreciated.



Maxton & Merton, Newtown and St Boswells Churches

## Praying Together

### *What is Praying Together?*

A time of quiet reflective prayer, listening for the voice of God as revealed in the Scriptures.

### *What happens?*

We begin by reading a Bible passage slowly, then silently reflect on those words within it which speak to each of us the most, to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal God to us as individuals.

We then spend time in silent personal prayer and rest in God's presence.

We finish with the opportunity to share what God has said to us (but there is no obligation to do this)

### *Why do we do this?*

By praying in this way, we learn to listen to God's voice in our lives and allow Him to guide us.

*All are welcome to join us.  
Come along and give it a try!*

*St Boswells Church Vestry  
Tuesdays 9.30am,  
and / or Thursdays 6.30pm*





## New for 2018

Sunday 7 January  
St Boswells Church Hall  
10am

**Who is it for?** Everyone! We understand that weekends are precious times for families to be together so we want to create a fun, engaging space where children and young people can feel welcome too.

### **What is it?**

- church with a difference - seated round tables
- drinking coffee tea - eating croissants
- discussing faith - reading the Sunday papers

### **Is it still a service?**

- Yes, we will sing a few songs, hear a bit of a talk, say some prayers
- We're relaxed about it all. If your kids are running around grabbing another muffin that's fine.
- If you don't believe in God and want to come and see what's going on, that's fine too.

### **Why are we doing Café Church?**

We want to try to make Church a place that is relaxed and accessible. We know that lots of people want to talk about faith, even want to come to Church, but find a traditional service hard to understand, or boring to sit through, or just plain confusing. We are hoping to develop Café Church as a place where everyone is welcome.

## PLEASE COLLECT YOUR STAMPS

Every year at this time I have the great privilege to ask you to keep your stamps for me. I give them to Keith Scott, a retired stamp dealer, who enables the World Mission Council of the Church of Scotland to do wonderful things with the proceeds.

Recently I have received a thank you from the Church of South India as monies from last year's appeal helped install a solar plant at the CSI: Eden Eco Spirituality Centre in Othera.

*This year the Stamp Appeal is for books and other materials for the Giffen Institute of Theology, South Sudan. This institute has had*

*to relocate to Kakuma, which is a refugee camp in Kenya after the violence started in South Sudan. Their library was burnt to the ground. Any monies raised will help with resources needed for the institute to get up and running again.*

So please collect stamps for me. I will be very grateful for any stamps and I wish to thank you all for keeping collecting stamps for me throughout the year. I recently gave Mr Scott a batch and he said that he had not received many this year so let's see if we here in this bit of the Borders can help.

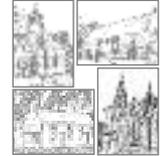
I wish you all a very happy Christmas when it comes.

**Ann Smith, Old Schoolhouse, St Boswells.**

## SHOEBOX APPEAL

Many thanks to all those who took the time to fill a shoebox for this year's appeal and to those who collected them and delivered them to the Blythwood Care van. Well done also to Mary from St Boswells who undertook to cover shoeboxes in exchange for a donation to Blythwood Care. This raised a total of £52, which was donated to the appeal along with a total of 57 filled shoeboxes and 7 boxes of hand-knitted garments, toys etc

## CHRISTMAS PRESENT OPPORTUNITY!



Pale blue cotton, gusseted, long handled shopping bags, depicting all four Churches. £3.50 each – profits to Churches in the Charge. Available at Church events and from:

Maxton & Mertoun: Kathleen Bertram 23781  
Newtown: Winnie Milligan 01835 823457  
St. Boswells: Mary Sargent 01835 824261

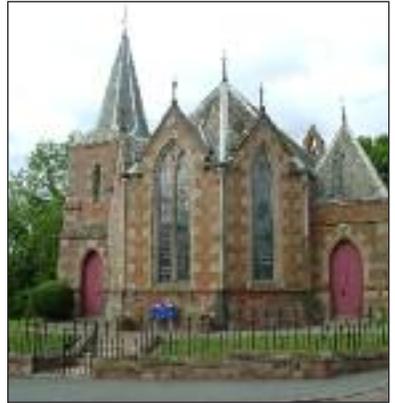
## CONGRATULATIONS!

Brian Evans, St Boswells Church Treasurer, was honoured recently with a British Empire Medal for his community, voluntary and local service, particularly for his work with the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Church. The award was presented at Scottish Borders Council Headquarters by the Lord Lieutenant of Roxburgh, Ettrick and Lauderdale, the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry.



# Newtown: Building for the Future

Since 2011, members in Newtown have been engaged in different aspects of stewardship with the ultimate goal of ensuring that Newtown Church building will be a 'building for the future'. In 2018, we will also be thinking of the building's past as, in the summer of 2018, we will celebrate and mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of the present building.



As part of these celebrations, we hope to stage a display of christening robes and wedding dresses which have been worn in ceremonies in our building. Were you baptised or married in Newtown Church – or perhaps both? Do you still have your christening robe or wedding dress and, if so, would you be willing to loan it for display? Please contact Winnie Milligan (01835 823457) if you would like to donate an item for this celebration in the summer of 2018.

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## THANKS TO ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We are very grateful, as always, for the support we have received for fund raising events held since the last edition of the newsletter:

### Coffee Mornings:

Newtown 26th August ~ £592.39

St Boswells 9th Sept ~ £331.00

Maxton & Mertoun 16th Sept ~ £501.80

Vine Trust Quiz in Newtown Community Wing ~ £311

Harvest Thanksgiving (Border Children's Charity) ~ £202

Remembrance Sunday (Poppy Scotland) ~ £115.90

In addition, the non-perishable foods which were donated in the churches and from Harvest Assemblies in both

Newtown and St Boswells Primary Schools were distributed to local foodbanks where they were much appreciated.

We look forward to your continuing support at the events featured within this issue of the newsletter.

## NEWTOWN ORGANIST

Sadly, Newtown congregation will say farewell to our organist, Jamie McKenzie, when he moves to Glasgow at the end of the year. We are looking for anyone who would be interested in playing the organ for Sunday morning services, either weekly or as part of a rota. If you would be interested, please contact the minister, Rev Sheila Moir (01835 822255) or the Session Clerk, Mrs Winnie Milligan (01835 823457) for further details



*Life and Work is the magazine of the Church of Scotland*

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN POSTERS**  
Churches are to be asked to display posters giving women details of how to access services they might need if they

have experienced domestic abuse or sexual violence. The poster is the first resource from the Church of Scotland's Violence Against Women Task Group, which is working on a series of practical resources that will help the church deepen its understanding of violence against women, respond pastorally and appropriately to those affected by violence, and advocate on behalf of gender justice. The poster will be launched on the first day of the 16

Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, on November 25, and the hope is that churches will display it on the inside of toilet doors.

The Rt Rev Dr Derek Browning, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said: 'The physical, emotional and spiritual damage that is sometimes perpetrated against women, leaves a scar across the lives of too many people. All of us should not only be working towards but also living out every day the principles and the practice of understanding and kindness that will unite our world and provide a safe and affirming environment in which we live fulfilling and loving lives. I am delighted to offer my support for the Violence Against Women Task Group's campaign'. The poster will be sent out to all churches and will be available to download from the Violence Against Women Task Group on the Church of Scotland website at [www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk).

## ST BOSWELLS VILLAGE HALL

2016/17 has been both a sad and successful year for the Hall – sad that our Treasurer, Jennifer White, became seriously ill and passed away. Jennifer was not only a long-time Treasurer but a staunch supporter who ran a Soup Club for older people as a fund raiser and a social service.

Our Booking Secretary, Kate Warner, helped Jennifer and eventually took over as Treasurer. Not an easy task.

Despite this Kate manages one of the successful aspects which is an increase in bookings. There have been a number of Wedding Parties held recently and more are booked. While they are a welcome source of income it is the policy not to let them dominate. The Hall is for the Village and local bookings will continue to take priority.

There have been the usual problems with an old building, notably a small amount of dry rot and a few roof leaks. These are being attended to using local traders wherever possible. In addition, parts of the Hall have been repainted and small improvements carried out.

The Hall is not owned or run by the Scottish

Borders Council. Being a registered charity it needs to raise enough income to cover both immediate and longer term costs. We may have to look at the hire charges but will keep those for local groups and charities to a minimum.

As with any voluntary organisation we always welcome anyone who would like to keep this lovely local facility going.

If you have any comments or would like to volunteer, then please contact Kate via the Village Hall.

**Cliff Ellershaw**

## *Extend Exercise Class for the over 60's*

Tuesdays 9.15–10.15 am  
St Boswells Church Hall  
in school term time

For more information call  
Amanda 07712 587 516.

## PRAYER

'IF YE SHALL ASK...'

'The Gift of GOD is eternal life through JESUS CHRIST...' *Romans 6:23*



It was Christmas eve, 1958. The frost sparkled on the ground as I walked down the hill. I looked up, the night sky glittered with stars. I suddenly realized in awe that this was the night HE came so long ago into the world.

One night, the following Spring, someone asked me whether I would like to invite CHRIST into my life. I did.

HE came in. In that instant HE brought me to life in a new way. My spirit came to life. HE filled me with HIS love.

HE brought my mind into focus with HIS truth and I knew HIM! All in an instant! I had an immediate hunger to get down on my knees and pray, and a great need to read HIS Word. I was like a baby gasping for air!

What had happened to me was what JESUS spoke of to Nicodemus who came to HIM under cover of darkness, when HE said 'you must be born again'. It had happened to me because I took HIM at HIS Word and asked.

HE came into my heart and life that night on the last Sunday in March in 1959.

The ONE WHO came in that night was described by Isaiah in his prophesy in *Isaiah 9:6*. when he wrote 'He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty GOD, The everlasting FATHER, The Prince of peace...'

'The Gift of GOD is eternal life through JESUS CHRIST.' wrote Paul in *Romans 6:23*. If ye shall ask...

'For unto you is born this day in the city of David a SAVIOUR WHO is CHRIST THE LORD...' *Luke 2:11*

A Blessed Christmas to you, and may the coming year be filled with HIS answers to your prayers.

**Rev Winnie Munson**



## ST BOSWELLS GUILD NEWS

Our new session started with a Chrysanthemum Tea which was a very pleasant afternoon. At the meeting members were given details

of forthcoming speakers and about the Guild Project for the year – 'All Friends Together'. This is a small organisation which helps people with disabilities to be included in the life of the church.

Mrs Fran Selkirk spoke at our second meeting about her life and work experiences which led her to become a reader in the Church of Scotland.

Our Christmas party will be held on December 14th to which all members as well any former members from the charge are invited. We look forward to seeing you all in the Church Hall at 2.30pm on that date.

**Elizabeth Kitchin**

## MAXTON MEETS

Maxton Meets is a programme of open Talks that runs between October and April in Maxton Village Hall.

### Dates to come:

December 4th 2017 - Maxton Meets at Christmas: Join us for a Christmas Social Evening with seasonal refreshments, 7-9pm. Donations to our 2017 charity, Borders MS Society.

February 12th 2018 – 'Come awa wi me': a presentation of Poetry, Stories and Music of the Borders with Roddy Johnston, Seonaid Lynn and Nancy Marshall. 7.30 pm

March 12th 2018 – 'A Bird in the Hand – the Art and Science of Bird Ringing', an illustrated talk by Mike Fraser. 7.30 pm.

## Hooray!!! We have built ONE House

In 2015, the congregations of Maxton and Mertoun, Newtown and St Boswells Churches made a commitment to a 3 year fund raising programme in aid of the Vine Trust's 'Build a House in Tanzania' project. (SC017386). We pledged to raise the £3700 required to fund the building of one family home.

Thanks to the generous support of our communities, we have raised £3795, well ahead of our 3 year target!



Fund raising will continue until at least the end of the 3 years, in September 2018. Maybe we will manage another house, or at least the foundations of a second!

**UPDATED AMOUNT RAISED**  
as at 5<sup>th</sup> November 2017  
**£3795**

### WAYS TO DONATE:

- Donations may be handed in to all churches
- Please sign a Gift Aid Declaration for large amounts
- Donations by cheque, payable to:  
'The Vine Trust Tanzania Appeal'
- Add 5p coins to Newtown Church's collection

Maxton & Merton, Newtown and St Boswells Churches

Scottish Charity Numbers SC0461, SC0097, SC0020

# Ceilidh Dance

Friday 19th January 2018

St Boswells Village Hall

8pm - midnight

(doors open 7.30pm)

Dance to:

Neil Hardie's  
Scottish Dance Band

Please note  
**NO BAR**

**RAFFLE**

Tickets £11  
(Hot supper included)

**BYOB**  
(don't forget  
your glass!)

Advance  
Booking  
Essential

tel 01835 823286





# What is Alpha?

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith, typically run over eleven weeks. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. Alpha is run all around the globe, and everyone is welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, universities, homes – you name it. No two Alphas look the same, but generally they have three key things in common: food, a talk and good conversation.

First up there's

**Food** - Whether it's a group of friends gathered around a kitchen table, or a quick catch up over coffee and cake, food has a way of bringing people together. It's no different at Alpha. Most sessions start with food, because it's a great way to build community and get to know each other.

Then a

**Talk** - The talks are designed to engage and inspire conversation. Usually around

thirty minutes long, they can be given as a live talk or played as a video. They explore the big issues around faith and unpack the basics of Christianity, addressing questions from: Who is Jesus? and How can we have faith? to Why and how do I pray? and How does God guide us?

Followed by

**Discussion** - Probably the most important part of any Alpha: the chance to share thoughts and ideas on the topic, and simply discuss it in a small group. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing you can't say (seriously). It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest, friendly and open environment.

You are invited to come along to the Manse on Wednesday evenings from 14th February 2018 on a journey through Lent and Easter exploring our Christian faith through an Alpha Course.

## ABILITY BORDERS & CITIZEN'S ADVICE DROP INS

Ability Borders is an information and signposting service for adults with a physical disability or long-term condition. Together with the Citizen's Advice Bureau we are providing drop in sessions within your local community.

We have already started helping people following our first drop in session on the 25th September and would like the

opportunity to help more.

Come along and talk to us about things like benefits and grants, warmer homes, scam awareness, priority services register, local support groups, care and support services, transport services and much more.

Our next drop-in is on 18th December

Time: 1:30pm – 3:00pm

Meeting place: 1 Orchard Park, St.Boswells, TD6 ODA

## LIFE EVENTS IN OUR CHARGE AND SERVICES ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

**Funerals: 'In Life, in Death, O Lord,  
Abide with me'**

**In Remembrance.....**

1st September 2017: Mr Andrew David Knox, Earlston, formerly Newtown. Service held at The Borders Crematorium on Friday 8th September 2017.

2nd September 2017: Mrs Mary Jane Gilroy Somervaille, Newtown. Service held in Newtown Church and cremation at The Borders Crematorium on Friday 8th September 2017.

### *Newtown Flower List*

The flower list for 2018 will be available at the beginning of the year in Newtown Church. If you wish to provide flowers – or donate to the cost of flowers – on a particular Sunday, please put your name on the list or contact Carol Hunter, our Flower Convenor.



### *St Boswells Church Flowers*

Please sign up for next year. The flower list for 2018 is now in the church vestibule. Anyone is welcome to provide flowers for the Church. If you wish, you can give a donation and someone else will do the arrangement.

Flowers for December are kindly being provided by Linda Ovens.

**Sarah Cummock** [Tel: 823166]

26th September: Mr Thomas (Tom) Mitchell, Newtown. Service held in Newtown Church and cremation at The Borders Crematorium on Wednesday 4th October 2017.

30th September 2017 Mrs Norma Cargill Johnston, Gullane, formerly Newtown. Private Service held in Newtown with interment at Wairds Cemetery on Wednesday 11th October 2017.

13th October. Mrs Nan L Ruthven, Newtown. Service held in Borders Crematorium on Friday 20th October 2017

21st October 2017: Mrs Flora Margaret Allam, Galashiels nursing home, formerly St Boswells. Service held at The Borders Crematorium on Friday 27th October 2017.

### **Marriages U2R1**

In St Margaret's Chapel, Edinburgh Castle on Friday 15th September 2017

Miss Laura Ruthven to Mr Luke Payne, Peebles

### **STAINED GLASS AND HUMBLE BRICKS**

*Copies of this book by Haisley Moore are now available at £5 per copy from Edna Wands Tel: 01835 822442 and Winnie Milligan Tel: 01835 823457. All sales proceeds will go to the Children's Charity – The Smile Train.*

### **MATERIAL FOR THE MARCH, APRIL MAY NEWSLETTER**

#### **Monday 6th February**

is the deadline for submission of material. It should be given or sent, preferably by e-mail, to the editor, Blair Cummock, at the address on page 2.

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