

Newton Mearns Church Supplement

JUNE, 1956

THE REGISTER.

Baptisms.

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

Jane Caroline Cope-Lewis, The Old House, Newton Mearns.
Rona Jarvie, Westfield, Clarkston.
Andrew Murray McCance, 120 Kilpatrick Gardens.
Gillian Margaret Peden, 60 Hazelwood Avenue.
James Forrest Cameron Patterson, 2 Deramore Avenue.

New Members admitted 6th May, 1956.

By Profession of Faith.

Miss Mary Mitchell Anderson, 12 Eaglesham Road.
Miss Sheileigh Barbara Campbell, 51 Larchfield Avenue.
Miss Heather Cameron, Rhumore, St. Vigean's Avenue.
Miss Sheila Mary Stark Hollinger, 6 Netherplace Road.
Miss Anne Elizabeth Pope Loudon, 10 St. Vigean's Avenue.
Miss Isabella Mary McGregor, 4 Broomvale Drive.
Miss Alice Margaret Mackay, 10 Tofts Crescent.
Miss Margaret Anne Stewart Russell, Mearnskirik.
Mr. Stuart Allan, 34 Hazelwood Avenue.
Mr. Robert Cowan, 19 Edzell Drive.

By Certificates from other Congregations.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew M. Core, 15 Duart Drive.
Dr. Andrew M. Core, 15 Duart Drive.
Miss Margaret H. Core, 15 Duart Drive.
Mrs. Haston, 75 Ayr Road.
Mr. Duncan McLean, Pinderry, Firwood Road.
Mr. and Mrs. Forbes L. H. Wolfe, 1 Arthurlie Drive.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

PREFATORY NOTE.—*When this letter was started the intention was that it should be a "tail piece" for this issue of the Supplement, but now that I am preparing the copy for the printer, I feel the subject of such importance that I have decided it shall have first place and hope really serious thought will be given to it.*

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

I hope it will not be considered an abuse of privilege because for the time being I am Editor of the Church Supplement to submit a letter that can be published without being censored.

I want to write about the Sunday School.

Very shortly the 1955-56 session will be concluded and there will be an interval of at least two months. Miss Hay in her report last March said, "The Sunday School had had a very successful year," and in many respects this is true, but there are some of us who feel that the work is very much less effective than we wish it to be.

Mr. Menzies has now held the office of Superintendent for a year. He has taken the Office and his duties very seriously and his service is thoroughly appreciated by the staff. He is working hard to bring a high standard of quality into the work for the benefit of the children; just as Mr. Telfer endeavours to bring about an atmosphere of reverence and devotion by the music he chooses. One has to confess that this is lost by movement and noise, but the effort should be continued.

To some extent we are thwarted because of the equipment we possess but meantime that is not the main difficulty. As is possibly known, the seating in the Hall is composed of units of four or three tip-up seats. This really imposes a limit of eight children to a class (or six if the lesser seats are being used).

At the moment I am dealing with the boys' side, but I assume similar conditions obtain on the girls' side.

So far the Hall itself is not overcrowded, for a greater number of classes of seven or eight members could be accommodated if we could staff them. Extra classes, too, could be added (on the girls' side) if the main door was kept closed on Sunday mornings and entrance to the Hall

was by the side door in the passage, and the Hall would be warmer.

A great improvement could be made in the passage if a cocoanut runner could be provided to reduce the noise when people are using it.

My suggestion would be to aim at classes of seven members so that the teacher could sit among the boys and girls. I think this would bring both nearer together even than where the teacher being provided with a chair—and even as it is we haven't chairs to go round.

When you ask five boys to sit on four seats you are immediately asking for trouble—perhaps girls are less truculent, though I have not experience with them.

Recently, talking with one of the Elders who was taking a Bible Class—I don't know whether he is a regular or was doing a temporary duty—he said, "It takes me three hours on a Saturday to prepare." I was not surprised for it takes me the same time if I do the job properly and the teachers are supplied with excellent lesson notes issued by the Sunday School Union. But in the case of the Bible Class the members are old enough and, perhaps, interested enough to listen and ask their questions at the end of the talk. In the Sunday School you say something which prompts one youngster to ask a question and you try to answer while the rest, not being interested in the question, take the respite as a time for talking or some other mischief. Then you try to get back to the subject and wonder where the dickens you were; and although you most likely have the Lesson handbook in your pocket you daren't pull it out for then the little rascals would conclude you were just copying from a book.

At the end of the Lesson period you find you have had about five minutes in which you have disjointedly dealt with the lesson subject and go home disappointed and saying you'll give it up and that you are not cut out for that job.

I have done that many and many a time but turn up again the next Sunday, because I believe that any work done for the Master is never useless and without worth.

Although I have not been very long in Mearns I have had the tremendous pleasure of having fine hefty fellows in the street coming up to me and saying, "Hello Mr. Hammond: how are you?" You look up and its one of your old boys: then having a bit conversation. Such an experience warms the heart and is a tremendous compensation for what many a time has been irksome.

An appeal for helpers was made from the pulpit some time ago by Mr. Mackay: there has not been a single response. Truly the duty is exacting, necessitating attendance at each service whether the weather be wet or fine and a lot of thought before hand. Non-attendance puts the "Super" into a fix, which is a great embarrassment.

Mr. Menzies will shortly be making plans for the next session. WHAT ABOUT IT?

Don't forget: they are your children.

GEORGE H. HAMMOND.

FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH.

The Flower Committee desire to thank all members who have added their names to the list. There are a few dates still vacant.

The current list is:—

June	3—Miss E. Osborne.
"	10—Mrs. Cameron.
"	17—Mrs. Mitchell.
"	24—Mrs. Roser.
July	1—Mrs. P. Boyle.
"	8—Mrs. McVean.
"	15—Mrs. Rodger.
"	22—Mrs. P. Wood.
"	29—Mr. J. McCallum.

The list is readily printed but there is always risk of making it a competition. Make it an Offering, of which the Church can have first use.

Choose flowers from your own garden and the blooms you most desire to keep for yourself. Often self-interest de-values what we do and it would be a pity it should happen with flowers.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE MAY COMMUNION.

In Newton Mearns the first week in May—at any rate so far as living memory goes—has always had importance. On that Sunday the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was commemorated.

In the days far back the Church exercised severe discipline and instituted services of preparation from the first day of the week. This was probably to ensure that those who were to "communicate" should be in a proper frame of mind to take part in this very important ordinance.

Perhaps in these latter days we have advanced and become more orderly and thoughtful in spite of the misgivings we often feel. At any rate instead of a week the services of preparation have been reduced to the Friday evening. This time the Rev. Noel Fisher, B.D., of Sherbrooke-St. Gilbert's came and occupied the pulpit.

The Elders foregathered half an hour earlier when the Minister intimated the names of additions to the membership, firstly those from other districts and then the ones from our own congregation who were taking Communion for the first time. It was very heartening to the Eldership to receive ten new communicants as well as eight new friends.

Reports of sickness, happily, were very few.

Thereafter, the Elders were briefed for duty on the Sunday and then filed into Church for the Service. This time there was a small Choir to support Mr. Cuthill and he didn't feel quite so lonely as he has done on one or two recent Communion Preparation Services.

As mentioned earlier, the Rev. Noel Fisher preached and took for his text a portion of Psalm 32, starting with "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." He spoke of the joy which comes from the consciousness of one's sins and faults being forgiven. This made a very fitting and comforting introduction to the Communion season and still left a little time for those of us who were not quite sure about it to take action before the Sunday.

The Sunday morning opened fine but still rather cold for May, and the Church did not seem to have the number usually present when the Session proceeded to the Chancel and the Minister occupied the pulpit.

Mr. Mackay's subject was, "Showing the Lord's death (1st Corinthians 11, 26.)"

The discourse was very moving and the whole congregation must have felt it. For myself, when I considered all that it meant I found it difficult to restrain a tear; to be quite truthful I was not able to do so and am not ashamed to confess my feelings.

The Minister then took his place in the Chancel and the service took its usual quiet, orderly course, and it concluded with the members of the Session assembling in the Chancel when the Session-Clerk informed us that the dispensing of the Bread had taken 3½ minutes and the serving of the Wine 4½ minutes. It seemed very expeditious.

At Church time in the evening there was a very heavy shower, but there was a fair assembly for the service.

Mr. Mackay based his Sermon on a book recently issued, "The Long Journey." It was a story of the war and the hardships experienced by a small party of prisoners of war who were escaping from captivity. It, too, was very moving but in a manner entirely different from the morning. It rather moved to anger at the thought that when men rose to power they used it to cause such distress and anguish.

However, when Mr. Mackay came down from the pulpit and took his place in the Chancel and took the Bread in his hands and broke it and said the familiar words I have heard so often, "This is my body which is broken for

you," I forgot the Sermon and my anger disappeared. Perhaps sometime it will be learned that war settles nothing.

Communion is such a searching service and one can get so near to Jesus Christ when one takes part in it.

I have often been surprised since I came to Scotland why John Wesley made so little use of it. In his organisation of the Methodist Church he made extensive use of the Presbyterian system of Church Government using different names for the departments. Only the Weekly Class meeting seems to have been different and now that has ceased to be carried out, which is a pity, but I shall not say anything against the Methodist Church for I owe so much to it.

Well! The service concluded, the Elders present foregathered in the Chancel, the Session Clerk reported that 500 members had partaken and that the number tallied with that of last year. The Minister pronounced the Benediction and another Communion season had passed into history.

"SHEWING THE LORD'S DEATH (1 Cor. 11, 26).

If a stranger to the Christian religion were to stray into a service at which the Lord's Supper was being celebrated, and saw the bread being broken by the Minister, and thereafter handed to the congregation by the Elders, and in a similar fashion the wine being passed round, until each one had drunk of it, he might well turn to a member of the congregation at the close and say, "What is the meaning of all this? What are the people doing?" Whereupon the participant would refer him to the Bible, and to the verse in 1 Corinthians 11 and 26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till He come." That, says the Apostle Paul, is why we are gathered here to-day to shew forth to each other, and to the world beyond the Death of Jesus Christ on the Cross for our salvation.

Now, of course, there are manifold ways in which we can show forth the Lord's Death. A minister intimated recently to his congregation that next Sunday there would be 3 Dispensations of the Sacrament—at 11, 2, and 3.30 p.m. The last named would be a shorter form of it. It was meant especially for the aged and infirm. Elders would collect them, and bring them to the Church, and take them home at the close in their cars. That was a very practical way of shewing the Lord's Death. Jesus, however, instituted this rite that in a very simple and vivid way we might do so.

We are to do so according to the Apostle, "till He come." In that phrase Paul reminds us that while we celebrate His death, Jesus is still alive. Sometimes people ask—Who was Jesus? The Founder of a new religion? In doing so we ask the wrong question. It is only when we ask, who is Jesus Christ, that we realise the tremendous fact that Jesus is alive to-day, challenging our life, calling us to follow Him, to forsake our evil ways, to work for Him. It is this living Lord whose death we are called on at this feast to proclaim.

To-day Christ offers us in this simple rite an opportunity to shew forth His death. It may seem a very small one. But one can take the slightest occasions of life, and so fill them with love that they become transfigured. No one but the Father may see the love to-day with which you shew forth His death, but He will do so. I want you to make your partaking of the bread and wine such an offering of love and devotion to-day.

"With love to man this Cup is fraught
Let all partake the sacred draught.
Thro' latest ages let it pour
In memory of My dying hour.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH.

The importance of environment in the imparting of the Christian message was the theme of an address by the Rev. Donald McLeod of Castlemilk West, when he conducted the service at Newton Mearns Church on Sunday, 29th April, 1956.

Mr. McLeod, whose Church is at present a schoolroom in the rapidly expanding Castlemilk rehousing area, is prominent in Church Extension affairs and is well known in Newton Mearns from his connection with the Week-End Retreat enterprise in the grounds of Pcllok Castle estate.

"Notice," said Mr. McLeod, "the pains Jesus took to create environment for his significant encounters with people."

"Take the incident when the daughter of Jairus was raised from the dead. Nothing is done and nothing is said till all the protesting husbands and wives are got out and Jesus can be alone with three of his trusted disciples."

"When a man is to be cured of blindness nothing is done until the peace of God's own countryside is reached."

"Not in the Temple, not in Jerusalem did Jesus say who He was, but at the side of a well in Samaria."

"When important work had to be done, Jesus took his little group right away from Jerusalem, leaving hostility behind him and seeking the seclusion of what to-day might be called a Week-End Retreat."

Again and again, said Mr. McLeod, Jesus went to great trouble to create a specific environment, and this very thing was the key to an understanding of the importance of Church Extension in the Church of Scotland to-day.

If Church Extension was seen merely as a holding of ground already won, the whole point would be missed. It had to be seen as a tremendous opportunity for positive gain.

One in ten of our people had been moved from situations more or less squalid to the new housing areas. The prime characteristic of these areas was the total absence of a sense of community and the one organisation which could provide a sense of community—THE sense of community—was the Church.

"A year ago you could look from the Lynn Park to Cathkin Braes and see nothing but green fields. To-day the whole space is packed tight with great tenement buildings most with brave gardens and windows gay with colour."

"When I was inducted six months ago, 1,000 families had moved into the area. Now there are 1,700 in my parish alone and to the east of mine there is another great parish. The army of builders moves at incredible speed."

"Where the bulldozers press forward with the work of clearing, houses will be rising in a few weeks."

"Beyond this section all the activity and change gives place again to green fields. In one of them the other day I saw a sower scattering his seed and the work seemed to be almost a gesture of revolt against the revolution all around."

"I thought what a harvest these Cathkin slopes could bring—not in wheat or barley but in Christian life and good-will and love and peace . . . if we win."

"If we lose, what a harvest will crystalise in crime and selfishness."

If a new community were allowed to settle down with no centre except the Community Centre ("which has no soul"), how incredibly difficult it would be in later years to break into the hard crust of materialism.

In the fight to win these new areas, said Mr. McLeod, the Church had many allies, some perhaps rather strange allies.

The Church in these new areas brought a sense of parish ("I know the man I meet in the street and he knows me though he may not be a member") and the sense of parish was a sense deeply ingrained in the Scots character.

Great opportunities were presented by the movement of population to win converts from the Church of Rome.

There was a steady, alarming gain in R.C. strength in Scotland and the authorities of that Church now believed that by 2000 A.D. Scotland would be a Roman Catholic country.

Yet what opportunities there were when people were brought out of predominantly Catholic environments and placed in a new, "neutral" environment.

"In my first charge, six of my new communicants were Roman Catholics."

In the new housing areas there were no traditions and it was therefore possible to take the best of the traditions which people brought with them.

The new housing areas exemplified in a marked degree present day social trends. It used to be that the West End Congregation and the Bridgeton or Calton congregation were almost different species. Now people from widely different backgrounds were living together on the same stair and worshipping together in the same church. "And worship is a great leveller."

It was sometimes startling to discover people's ideas about the aim of the Church. "Is it to raise funds that the Church exists?" Some of the aims attributed to the Church were right enough but they obscured the real aim which was to get men and women living by faith.

This did happen. An illustration will show how. "At the beginning I conducted services in what had been a workers canteen. One day as I was getting ready in what served as the 'vestry' a man appeared and said he wanted to see me. He wanted to join the Church. He hadn't been in a Church for years and years, but, standing at a bus stop some days before, an acquaintance had said to him, 'I didn't see you at the kirk.' 'No.' 'You on the other side?' 'No.' 'Well, then, I want to see you at the kirk.' And so he had come."

"This man, a father and a grandfather, was now working for the Church with the enthusiasm of a youngster. He had kept his eyes open and had found a site for one of the Church's projects, and just that—using one's brains in the service of God was FAITH.

"There is a First Century atmosphere about a Church Extension charge."

"Finally, I should say that the Holy Spirit is interested in young churches. History teaches that opportunities come and pass and must be seized at the flood if they are not to be lost.

"Paul heard the call to Macedonia and Christianity came to Europe."

At the time of Marco Polo, requests were made for 100 missionaries to go to the East. Only two could be found and they turned back half way. And so the East became Pagan and Buddhist and Hindu.

In 1792, William Carey said that missionaries should be sent to evangelise India and was told to sit down, and the great opportunity of India was lost.

To-day you and I are on the crest of a great wave of opportunity. On how we respond will depend the future of our Church in Scotland for years and years to come.

For this excellent report I am indebted to my helpful friend Edward Campbell.—Ed.

BAPTISMAL RECORD?

On Sunday, 13th May, no less than four babies were brought to Church for baptism. It certainly was the largest number during my connection with Newton Mearns, but I don't know whether it constitutes a record.

It was not surprising that our Minister, being a grandfather to one of the boys, should preach about giving a name and say some worthwhile things on the subject. Here follows a summary of the Sermon:—

"Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." Phil. 2, 9.

Paul in this beautiful passage in his letter to the Philippians Church thanking the members for the gift that they had sent to him, a prisoner in Rome, gives 3 reasons why the name of Jesus is above every name.

The first is that Jesus was God. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." There are historical ripples on the lake of the New Testament that point to this tremendous fact. Jesus was never conscious Himself of having sinned. His words were such that people said—"Never man spake like this man." His hands were full of healing power. He had a unique sense of communion with God. Yet, however strong that historical evidence is, that is not how Jesus said we should come to the knowledge of Who He was. After Peter had made his great confession at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus said that flesh and blood had not revealed that to him but the

Father in Heaven. Even so the conviction that we have that Jesus is God comes not from the historical ripples of life but from God Himself to our heart. We shall save ourselves a lot of needless worry if we remember this.

The second reason why the Name of Jesus is above every other name is because He comes to meet His people. Never before had any god come down to the earth to draw near to mankind. "He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of man." He was found constantly in the midst of the sick laying His wonderful hands upon them. He took the children in His arms. He sought out the publicans and sinners and sojourned with them. Jesus is the Name above every other name because He was God Who drew near to save His people. Propinquity is the soul of love. If we want to be disciples of His we must draw nigh to others to help and to save.

The third reason St. Paul gives is because Jesus was obedient unto death. God laid upon Jesus this task and He was obedient to the Will of God even unto death. The cardinal virtue of the Christian life is obedience to the Will of God. Jesus has shown us that it is in losing our life that we find it even for His sake. It is because He was obedient to the death of the Cross that He gave to us the way of salvation. Are we obedient to His Will? Do we seek day by day to know His Name. Canon Green tells of a wealthy woman and her husband, with two boys of 10 and 8 years, who had given up God altogether. One Sunday when she was standing at her bedroom window she saw a young girl passing. Next Sunday she saw her again at the same time. She knew she was a governess and she found she was returning from early morning communion. She said—"That girl who has little time for leisure finds time to honour God, and I who have all the time in the world never give God a thought." She wrote to Canon Green asking him how she could get back to God. He said she lived too far away but gave her the name of a good minister in the town in which she lived. That woman and her husband are now pillars of the Church. One son is a medical missionary, and the other a clergyman at home. That governess little knows what a rich harvest she gathered for God by being obedient to the Will of God.

THE BOYS' BRIGADE.

We are pleased to report that one member of our Company, Private James Loudon, gained 100% in the Bible Knowledge examination arranged by the Glasgow Battalion.

Other results are:—

Pte. Thos. Marchant 96%, Pte. E. Jones 80%, Pte. D. McDougall 79%.

We are very proud of these boys who have done so well in a subject which takes first place in the B.B. curriculum.

A REMINDER.

You received a letter a while ago advising that our Minister attained his Semi-Jubilee this year and that also he and Mrs. Mackay were married on 21st September, twenty-five years ago. The Congregational Board desire the membership of the Church to recognise this rather unique event.

Has the letter got snowed under?

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.

Important date to keep in mind is Sunday, 21st October, the commencement of our Campaign of Evangelism. This will last for two weeks, one week in Mearns Parish Church Hall, the other in Newton Mearns Church, with a closing meeting in Giffnock South Church on the evening of Sunday, 4th November. It is pleasing to record that Dr. Fawcett, who preached with such great acceptance at our last campaign, will again be the missioner for the Newton Mearns area.

PRESBYTERY NOTES.

A crisis which came to a head recently in Springburnhill Church, and which called for drastic action by the Presby-

tery, proved to be quite a unique case of its kind. It is not often in the history of the Church that a congregation, which of itself cannot come to a decision in the choice of a minister, had had the matter taken out of its hands by the superior court, and the vacancy filled without reference to the congregation. This action has the authority of church law, a duty devolving on the higher court. Extension after extension of time had been granted by the Presbytery to enable the congregation to elect a minister, but failure to reach agreement still obtained. It seems that a section of the congregation wished to have a strongly evangelical type of preacher, but this was opposed by the remainder. Naturally, this dispute, however vigorous, could not continue indefinitely, and an Advisory Committee was instructed to submit to the Presbytery the name of a suitable nominee to preach, after which a paper would be sent round the congregation asking for signatures in support of him, and if this was reasonable in any way, then the appointment would be confirmed. A case of controversy requiring an arbiter.

It is unfortunate and regrettable when a Church has to make confession of its inability to utilise the accommodation it possesses for any religious or social purpose which it may feel disposed to take. This was the case of Trinity-Duke Street congregation who presented a petition asking for authority to sell the buildings of the former Wellpark Church and to use the proceeds of sale for the repair of other property belonging to them. The difficulty was such that a condition existed whereby this ecclesiastical building could not be sold or otherwise disposed of except by consent of the General Assembly. Another complication ensued by reason of the fact that the only interested party was a firm of brewers who were open to buy. There was also a touch of irony on the occasion, that a member of this firm had, some 100 years ago, presented this church to its then members. Considerable opposition was made to the petition, based on the fact that a building dedicated to the worship of God, and "hallowed by the prayers of a faithful congregation," as one prominent speaker said, should be used in the interests of the drink trade. This would shock many members of the Church. But the plea that the congregation had had this problem under consideration for some years now, and had failed to get support from the Church at large to employ the building as it ought, prevailed, and permission was granted by the Presbytery to allow the congregation to petition the General Assembly for its approval.

A question which sharply divided the Presbytery was raised by the Rev. Mr. Galbraith, St. George's-in-the-Fields Church. He proposed that ministers holding terminable appointments should receive an income from all sources of not less than the minimum stipend. (At present, ministers holding such had one-eighth of their minimum stipend deducted.) He submitted that the appointment, which could be brought to an end by the Presbytery after three years, was one that could test a congregation's vitality by determining whether or not that congregation might be restored to full status. As such these men had been given a challenging job of work to do and should not have financial troubles as well as insecurity of tenure. And yet a strong case, pushed in a vigorous way for the rejection of this overture, was put up by the Convener of the Maintenance of the Ministry Fund, and which received the support of not a few prominent figures in the Presbytery. It was felt that while ministers holding terminable appointments were rendering useful service in special circumstances, there was a danger in extending this type of ministry, and that some deterrent should be imposed on ministers who were unwilling to take their full share of the responsibilities and work of an ordinary charge, but who would welcome such an appointment provided a full minimum stipend were received. It was further suggested these appointments should be reserved for older men. Notwithstanding all that was said in opposition, the overture was approved and Mr. Galbraith appointed to present the overture to the General Assembly.