

# Newton Mearns Church Supplement

OCTOBER, 1956

## THE REGISTER

### Marriages

*"Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."*

Jean Elinor Grant to James Henry Davie.

Mary Pow to James Auld Nisbet.

### Death.

*"Christ the first fruits of them that are asleep."*

Mrs. Fairlie, 3 Ashview Terrace.

## A PERSONAL NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you all for the kindness you have shown to my wife and to myself in these past days. We have received from you a most generous gift, and for that we would like to say "thank you." It was very good of you, indeed, to hold the social on our behalf, and to come in all your numbers to offer us your good wishes. All this is but one of the many kindnesses that we have received in this district and congregation. You have supported me in all the work that has been done in the name of the Church, and you have never failed. As the Psalmist says, "My lot has been cast unto me in pleasant places," not only in the beauty of the surroundings in which I have been privileged to minister, but in the warmheartedness with which you have received me.

I was glad that it was Muriel Russell that presented the beautiful bouquet of flowers to my wife, for she represented not only a family whose roots go deep into the past life of the congregation, but also the other families in the Church to which I first came. But their successors, you the present congregation, are not a whit behind in your love and devotion, and to one and all of you I would like to express my grateful thanks.

I would also like to say "thank you" to my fellow ministers for gracing the gathering with their presence, and rallying around me in such loyal fashion. As one of our members said to me the following day, "The boys did very well!"

The heaviest burden that evening perhaps fell on Mr. Walter Rodger, but right well did he shoulder it, and he was one of the outstanding successes of the evening.

I would like to say, also, to Mr. Thom who, as Session-Clerk and Chairman of the Committee was responsible for making all the arrangements, extending over many months, how much I appreciate all he has done. He made an ideal chairman on the evening for he kept all running so smoothly and swiftly.

The music, too, was very fine. The playing of Miss Dare was superb, and the singing of the Misses Hunter in their usual fine quality. Something of the fragrance of the moors of Mearns, the heroism and sacrifice of the Covenanters has crept into the life of this congregation. God grant that it may ever shine forth in this parish to the glory of His Name.—W. MURRAY MACKAY

## OBITUARY

### Mrs. Fairlie

Mrs. Fairlie, 3 Ashview Terrace, died at her residence on Monday, 10th September. Mr. and Mrs. Fairlie came to this district in 1941 when their house in Hyndland, Glasgow was damaged by enemy action. They did not, however, come here for the first time as they had been accustomed to make periodical visits in the summer months. After they had stayed at Hazeldean, and Townhead, they finally purchased their present home in Ashview Terrace.

Through all these unsettling years, when they could not find a permanent home, Mrs. Fairlie exhibited that brightness of personality that was one of her outstanding qualities. She lived for others and her life was as an alabaster box of precious ointment in their service.

Amelia for many years was a diligent assistant in the Life Boys.

To Mr. Fairlie, her son and her daughters, and all her kith and kin, we extend the deep sympathy of the congregation.

## VARIA

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be dispensed on the 3rd Sunday of October at 11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. The congregation is asked to note the change of date. The September celebration has been omitted, and the November date brought forward to avoid clashing with Remembrance Sunday. The evening Communion on this occasion will coincide with the opening of the Evangelistic Campaign. Those who have not communicated in the forenoon should hand in their cards as usual, and those who desire to do so again are, of course, cordially invited to do so.

Remembrance Sunday will be observed on the 11th November, and the youth uniformed organisations will be on parade.

*"A Companion to the Communion Service" is the title of a Devotional Manual from which is taken the following:—*

## PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION

The Service of Holy Communion is the Lord's own Service, instituted by Him. It is the supreme form of Christian worship offered to God by the Church as such. It is, therefore, corporate worship. It is not achieved by the minister who celebrates, but by the whole congregation gathered together. You are a member of that congregation. It is, therefore, essential that you prepare yourself for this worship, for it cannot be fittingly offered without real preparation. To come heedlessly is a fearful thing, as St. Paul told the Corinthian Christians. Then we make the Service a pure piece of ritual and nothing more, and we diminish its spiritual benefit, not only to ourselves, but the whole Church. We owe it to our Lord; we owe it to our fellow Christians; we owe it to ourselves, adequately to prepare ourselves for this solemn though joyous act of worship.

Saturday evening, as well as Sunday morning, is a good time for such preparation.

We can best prepare ourselves by:—

- (1) Quiet, and self-examination;
- (2) Bible Reading. Read such passages as St. Matt. xxvi, 14-46; St. Mark xiv, 10-42; St. Luke xxii, 15-46; St. Luke xxiv, 13-35; St. John vi, 32-71; St. Matt. v, 1-12; St. John xv; St. John xvii;
- (3) Prayer.

Every one ought to find some time of quiet to prepare themselves, however busy their lives are.

## THE RECREATIONAL GROUP

The Badminton Club has resumed activities and membership is on the increase. There is still, however, a shortage of male members and the committee invite the young men of the congregation to participate in the Club. It is realised that at the present time the demands of study and National Service preclude many young men from Club membership. Although this is perhaps the most secular of all church organisations, the committee feel that an important link is forged when an "adherent" of the congregation joins the Club. He becomes, through association with congregational members, familiar with the organisation of the Church and in course of time this association frequently leads to Church membership.

The Dramatic Club have no plans at this time for a play but they intend to provide entertainment at congregational socials and similar functions.



## THE SEMI-JUBILEE SERMON

*On the occasion of the completion of 25 years' service by the Rev. W. Murray Mackay as Minister of the Newton Mearns Church the preacher was Professor W. D. Niven, D.D., of Trinity College.*  
*Professor Niven said :—*

I'll take two short texts together. They seem firstly to contradict each other. The first is in the Old Testament lesson which I read, the 8th chapter of Deut., 2nd verse. "Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God led thee," and the second is in the Epistle which I read, Philippians 3, verse 13: "Forgetting the things that are behind." *Thou shalt remember all the way forgetting the things that are behind.* But you know it is only a very superficial mind that will believe that the Apostle is contradicting the Prophet, and ask if we are to forget, according to St. Paul, what has passed. Why does God command us, through Moses, to remember it? There is a godly and right way of remembering, that is calling to mind. There is a no lesser godly, right, wise and sensible way of forgetting; that is, of putting things out of the focus of mind and not dwelling upon them; not brooding upon them; not gloating over them. Now, as to remembering, there are many things which the ordinary and decent person keeps in mind. If he or she be godly, he or she will daily give thanks to God for them. Not only so; for many blessings there will be a special act of thanksgiving; on the anniversary of their first coming together. Decent, normal parents have their children constantly in mind. Not a day passes without their thinking of their children, planning for them; giving them what they require. If they are godly parents, praying for them. But one day calls for special celebration, for special gifts, for special prayers, that is the birthday. To keep still within the domestic realm, a happily married couple are day by day remembering what wealth of blessing and enrichment of life they constantly find in each other. The wedding anniversary is something special. What pain it must be to a child if its birthday be forgotten; what pain to a wife, if the cares of business perhaps make her husband forget that to-day is the wedding anniversary. So nationally, there are anniversaries which the nation observes. It was so in ancient Israel, and so national observance has divine sanction. There were national celebrations divinely ordered for Israel. The great annual festival may have had a far back natural origin; something in nature which was commemorated, but, by divine command they commemorated something outstandingly new. By divine command they commemorated something outstanding in the progress of the people. Thus, the Passover, commemorated the mighty deliverance from Egypt. The feast of Tabernacles commemorated the nomadic wanderings of the people of Israel. The feast of Purim commemorated the deliverance from Haman's Lot, recorded in the book of Esther. And so in the Church.

The Church has her great festivals. The three great festivals of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost are universally observed; except by a few of our splinter sections of Presbyterians. A congregation, too, has its history; happenings which are held to be well worth celebration, and commemoration. In God's providence you, and your minister, have arrived this week at a very special occasion which is well worth special celebration.

Your minister has reached that interesting milestone of a minister's journey; his semi-jubilee. Not only so but he has been your minister for the whole of the time he has been a minister; the whole of the 25 years. Of the students whom I have passed through my hands only three have spent the first 25 years in one charge, and in the Presbytery of Glasgow only six ministers have done so. In these days, short ministries are so distressingly common; so much so that the Church has been compelled to enact that a minister, except under very exceptional circumstances, must remain in his first charge for at least five years. It is refreshing to know that there are a few who have proved their qualities in a first charge for 25 years, or over, and have come to command the respect

of the community at large and firmly embedded themselves in the hearts of their own congregation.

The last 25 years have been very difficult. The world has never been out of confusion and turmoil. The dreadful pain of the second world war put such a strain on the faith and hope and love of so many. The war was preceded, and it has been followed, by an age of insecurity and unrest at home and abroad. What to preach and how to put the Gospel across to a bewildered, confused and frustrated generation has teased and tested every minister.

Your minister would be the first to tell me that whereas there have been difficulties, darkness and perplexities in the way there has been no less, much encouragement. Certainly there has been! Newton Mearns in itself it a most charming place in which to work. The lines fell to Mr. Mackay in pleasant places when he became your minister! In his time he has seen it grow tremendously. The congregation has trebled in numbers since he was inducted and finances have risen correspondingly. The Church buildings make it practically a new church. I was at the induction in the old church 25 years ago and what a change there is in the building. There are all the visible and outward signs of progress, and even more important, Mr. Mackay when he came found a warm-hearted people, with arms outstretched to receive him and support. A long ministry brings certain great privileges to a minister. I have no doubt Mr. Mackay has baptised and married the children of parents he himself baptised and married. That means a great deal.

The minister who keeps moving every five years or so never has a chance of knowing that joy. He has been with you in your joys and sorrows and all that life's varied scene has meant for you for a long time. He knows you and you know him (much better than an occasional visitor like myself possibly can) as a faithful minister, diligent pastor, a wise and true friend. You know also what Mrs. Mackay has been, in the manse, in the community, in the congregation. So it is only right and fitting, indeed it is your bounded duty as well as your highest joy to mark an occasion so interesting and so impressive.

As the sole survivor of the teachers who prepared your minister for his task in Trinity College I am highly honoured and privileged in that he asked me to be with you to-day. It is a duty to remember all the way by which God has brought us. You have abounding cause for thankfulness!

And now about forgetting. In what sense are we to forget the things that are behind?

Not for a moment did St. Paul mean or approach meaning that we should wipe the past from our memories. He did not do that himself or try to do it. In his Epistles there are numerous references to his own past. Common sense indeed teaches us that to try to be completely oblivious of the past would be sheer folly, if indeed we could do it. We cherish the past and we should be thankful for it and we should learn from it. Without the past to learn from, human science, human knowledge of any kind could not possibly grow. For all of us in the past there have been some, I hope, many precious things which it would be monstrous for us to forget or try to forget. St. Paul knew that perfectly well and he was grateful himself for many things in the past. Yet the Apostle gave sound and much needed advice about the past. It is this. We must never allow ourselves to be ensnared by the past. We must not, as we say, "live in the past," or on the past. That is fatal! and more obviously in the light of business than in the spiritual life.

Consider the life of business. In the 18th century advertisements were very much looked down upon and were called puffs. The man who went in for puffing was looked down upon and some firms tried to avoid it too long. Advertising had come to stay and good business means good advertising. We all know that. We are astonished that there should ever have been a time when it was doubted. The firms who were too dignified to move with the times just went under. Living in the past is one of the most deadly and paralysing things in any walk of life.



I have seen some students, not only in theology, but students generally who, having won distinction in early study, failed to maintain the effort. Forgetting the things that are behind is often a very sound maxim.

Another aspect of the same thing is the power of tradition. I have a great respect for traditions. Every regiment, every school has its splendid traditions. They are all worthy. We would be foolish to throw away tradition.

Many young ministers found what a burden was put upon them when they went to a congregation that was proud of its congregational traditions. The dead weight of a dead tradition hampered his doing what God put it into his heart to do. I'll never forget that verse in Revelation in a letter to one of the Churches: "Thou hast a name that thou livest but art dead." If you are living on your traditions you are living on your past. You are going under the steam generated long ago and there is no real life in you. A congregation needs to guard against that. No person, or group of persons, secular or church, can live on the past. We must cherish what is good in the tradition of the past, passing it on undamaged to those who come after but we must never allow the dead hand (if it is a dead hand and it often is) of the past to prevent us going forward.

On this occasion your minister on his very interesting mile-stone may sit down and look at the past and thank God for it. But the way still stretches ahead.

Your minister is not at the end he is only at the "half time," and you know that in a football match the game is often won or lost in the second half. The victory in a cricket match is often won in the second innings.

I have known scores of ministers, as I have known scores of men in other occupations, whose best work was done in the second half.

There is still a great work for God to do here. Your minister is just at the height of his powers. If you support him as you have done in the past, enabling him to realise that in doing God's work he is not alone because you are all with him, your future will be even brighter than the past. Our view must be forward not back! "Forward be our watchword, steps and voices joined, seek the things before us, not a look behind."

My prayer for your minister and you is that as God has richly blessed and guided you and made you prosperous in the 25 years that have passed He will still be with you in the still more wonderful things for your minister and you to do together in the years, be they few or many, which God grants you together.

### THE CHURCH KITCHEN

**As it was.**—Out of date, unattractive and inclined to dampness, for a long time our kitchen has been the Cinderella of our church amenities. Plans for renovation and modernisation have been considered on several occasions, but always the available funds had to be used for urgent and necessary repairs to the Church or Manse fabric, and the kitchen had to wait.

Then the Fairy Godmother, in the guise of a committee of ladies under the convenership of Mrs. Sinclair, Firwood House, undertook the organisation of a Christmas Fair to provide the money for the job of renovation. Upwards of £300 was realised, and the work was commenced when the Church organisations and social events closed down for the summer months.

**As it is.**—Now back in use, the kitchen has been transformed. With improved ventilation, a steam extractor fan; new gas cooker and gas urn; formica-topped table; shelves and draining board; three-point lighting; together with a bright scheme of decoration.

We learn, from those who ought to know, that work in the kitchen is now a real pleasure.

Apart from the improvements which meet the eye, the north wall and the concrete roof have been lined with insulating hardboard, adequately ventilated, with the object of preventing the steam condensation so injurious to paintwork.

We congratulate the ladies on the success of their project, and the practical and attractive way in which they

have carried out their plans. The trim appearance of the kitchen will surely encourage the users to keep it attractive.

### WINTER PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH

We feel that it might be helpful to the congregation to have a note of the work that is being carried on amongst the youth.

Sabbath School on Sunday at 10.15 a.m. in the large hall.

The Primary meets at the same hour in the upper hall. The Bible Class, supervised by the Minister, meets in the Session House at 10.15 a.m. (ages 12-16).

The Youth Fellowship (ages 16-21) meets in the upper hall on Sunday at 5.15 p.m.

The Brownies meet on Thursday from 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. The Girl Guides meet on Thursday from 7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

The Life Boys meet on Friday from 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. The Boys' Brigade meets on Friday from 7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

The Recreational Group meets on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 7.10 p.m. for Badminton, etc.

A Beginners' Class used to function during the hours of Morning Worship. As most of the young children are attending the Primary at 10.15 a.m., it is doubtful if this is necessary. Miss Judith Bain is meantime in attendance in Church to go out with any young children who would desire to use it.

### A HAPPY OCCASION

The Congregational Social on Wednesday, 26th September, was indeed a happy occasion. Between 7 and 8 o'clock the Hall, when tea was served, presented an animated appearance as members of the Church assembled with a real intent to enjoy themselves.

It was a splendid idea to enlist the services of the Guides, who wasted no time in seeing, as guests arrived, that they were supplied with the good things provided.

The arrangement of roses and other flowers on the platform indicated at once that John Russell had made a contribution which added beauty for all to see.

As the hall seating became overcrowded, the friends made their way to the Church and listened to Mr. Walter S. Cuthill playing selections on the organ.

There was a large attendance when the main proceedings opened promptly at 8 o'clock and the principals took their places in the Chancel. The Chairman, Mr. C. J. Thom, announced the 100th psalm which was heartily sung. After which the Rev. T. J. O'Hara Thomson offered prayer in appropriate and well chosen phrases eminently suited for such an occasion.

At this point a sweet little figure, dressed in pink, carrying a large bouquet of carnations which matched her dress, walked forward and presented it to Mrs. Mackay in recognition of the Silver Wedding Anniversary. It is very unlikely that Muriel Russell, grand-daughter of Mr. Andrew Russell (who has been 48 years an Elder in the Newton Mearns Church) will ever forget this honour.

Expressing thanks, Mrs. Mackay said it was difficult to realise that she had been in Newton Mearns for 25 years.

There were several apologies for absence and a characteristic one from Mr. Gilbert MacVean in spite of his present indisposition.

In his remarks, the Chairman mentioned that the last time they had celebrated the semi-Jubilee of a Minister since the congregation was founded over 200 years ago, was in the year 1800: that was for Andrew Thomson, who was Minister from 1775-1817.

The Rev. J. Stuart Cameron, Moderator of the Presbytery of Glasgow, recalled that he had been present at the discussion regarding the building of the present Church and he was glad to be back to see this beautiful building and to be present on this auspicious occasion.

Mr. Cameron went on to say how pleased he was that Mr. Mackay had accepted the Convenership of the Social Problems Committee. He was sure he would go from strength to strength in the Presbytery.



In exhorting the congregation to give encouragement to the Minister, Mr. Cameron said we should always remember in our hearts that we are ambassadors of Christ. In many respects the world in which we dwell is a foreign land. It does not acknowledge the love of Christ by which we live. You are accredited representatives of Christ, he said.

The other Ministers present were intimate friends of Mr. Mackay and associates during student days, and their talks became reminiscent and humorous and gave lightness to the proceedings, which were much appreciated.

The Rev. Hamish C. MacKenzie of Orchardhill Church represented the local Ministers. He was not a whit behind the others in story-telling and his excursions into the Highland and Welsh vernacular produced laughter.

Mr. Walter Rodger pleased us when he rose to do his part in making the presentation of the gift from the congregation by the fluency with which he spoke and one wondered whether the pause for the word "reflection" was a lapse of memory or just done for effect! His speech was very good.

Mr. William Craig, for 50 years an Elder in the Newton Mearns Church, who was associated with Mr. Rodger, actually handed over the gift, but his retiring nature made it impossible for him to speak at length.

In his response, Mr. Mackay showed himself moved, but he was reminiscent and mentioned the names of leaders past and present who had helped him during his ministry in Newton Mearns.

For the musical items it was a particularly happy choice to have a 'cellist to play as a variation to the duets so excellently done by Misses Flo and Margaret Hunter, for whose work in the Church we owe a debt of gratitude.

Marie Dare's instrumental contributions enhanced the evening immeasurably. The blend of the rich sonorous cello cantabile against the organ background was as especially pleasing and must have given satisfaction to all who heard.

Mr. Walter J. Davidson proposed an omnibus resolution of thanks which was unanimously approved.

The meeting terminated with the Doxology and Benediction.

### THE AUTUMN EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN

The congregation will remember that the Sessions of Mearns Parish, the Broom, and this Church, in collaboration with the leaders of the Christian Brethren in the district, are holding a series of meetings from 21st October until 4th November inclusive, with the exception of Saturdays. These will be conducted by the Rev. Arthur Fawcett, Ph.D., of Johnstone High Church. The meetings on the Sundays will be held in our Church at the hour of evening worship, 6.30 p.m., and on the other nights at 8 p.m. The first week the location will be in Mearns Parish Church Hall, and on the second in our Church.

It is hoped that the congregation will attend some or all of these services, and that they will help to deepen the religious life of the community.

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The month will see us immersed in work to make this venture a huge success. A glorious opportunity is presented to us to put the Church and its claims before the attention of those who are still "without the pale," and we hope and pray this this serious call to strive for this end will be accepted by us all.

Inspired by the motive that we have something to offer which will prove of lasting benefit, we should go forward to this task with vigour and zeal.

We believe that if we were able to read the minds and hearts of many we should find an "aching void" exists, which the world and its attractions can never fill or satisfy, and only religion and its power can.

The district is divided into convenient areas, and our churches are greatly encouraged by the whole-hearted co-

operation of our Christian Brethren of the Gospel Hall. By the time this is in the printer's hands the meeting of office-bearers will have taken place, but we look forward to a strong demonstration at the Youth Rally on 17th October, addressed by Dr. James Kelly. These meetings will serve to consecrate our efforts in our approach to young and old for the larger campaign from 21st October till 4th November.

### PRESBYTERY NOTES

The visit of the Moderator of the General Assembly to the Presbytery's most recent meeting was more than an incident. It proved to be a resounding success, worthy of Dr. Scott himself, and from every point of view, we were thrilled by the vigour of his speech, its utterance and subject matter. We have had many men of great capacity and standing in the Church filling this high office, but none with more forceful personality and compelling presence than the present occupant. The effects of his energetic tour and visitations to church extension areas will be felt well beyond the bounds of our Presbytery, in the sense of willingness on the part of older congregations helping the new. It is pleasing to note how impressed he was by the enthusiasm he encountered on the part of congregations generally, in the new housing areas. The fact that he has covered such extensive ground during his tour proves that he has not spared himself or in any way stinted his efforts.

Anent the question of Church Extension, the Very Rev. Dr. Pitt Watson gave a comprehensive survey of the work of his Committee at the last meeting of Synod. The figures he submitted in support of his appeal for contributions were revealing. There exists a tremendous debit balance, added to the fact that church building has not kept pace with house building. In particular, the large number of children in the new housing areas emphasise the provision of new churches for Sunday School work. This large movement of population has, in the words of the Rev. Professor, determined that it is not one of the many schemes of the Church. It is an emergency enterprise which has to be treated as such.

An event of considerable importance took place during Assembly, viz.:—The Accession of the Original Secession Church to the Church of Scotland. This has occasioned widespread approval, as being yet another step towards unity in the Christian Church. The addition to the roll of Glasgow Presbytery consists of 3 ministers and 4 elders, who received a most cordial welcome. The name of the minister of Shawholm Church, Pollokshaws, Rev. Robert L. Findlater, M.A., is specially dear to all Scottish Sunday School workers, in that he has identified himself closely with the Sunday School, and is still a contributor to the compilation of the "Teachers' Magazine," besides being a member of the parent council.

A Committee, whose Convener is the Rev. John M. Munro, B.D., was appointed early in the year, "To review the resources of the Presbytery in relation to the religious needs of the various areas within the bounds." Mr. Munro submitted a preliminary report giving a list of streets, etc. for each parish to be sent to each minister for confirmation or correction. This work has entailed, and will further entail some laborious industry in securing information, but it will serve a very useful purpose. Incidentally it will disclose to a very great extent the strength of the Roman Catholic Church in Glasgow.

It was gratifying to know that the Social Problems Committee, of which our minister is convener, had been asked by representatives of the Old Age Pensioners' Association to commend to the Presbytery their "H" scheme. This is a scheme by which pensioners who require help put a card with "H" on, in their window. This matter was submitted to the Presbytery by the convener, also commending all other work among old people, such as the Old People's Welfare Committee, and the good work done in that connection by many congregations. The report was cordially received and adopted by the Presbytery.