



baptist union  
of scotland



May 2015

Serving our Schools and Community

## Service in the Community



The recent Whitley lecture, co-sponsored by the Scottish Baptist College and the Baptist Union of Scotland, explored the meaning of “ministry” in the New Testament. In the lecture, we were reminded that ministry always focuses on the recipient, and does not separate “spiritual activity” from the “mundane”, recognising both the ministry of the Word and the ministry of serving tables as Christian service.

Christian service in the community is a significant act of mission, a demonstration of the love of God, a foretaste of the Kingdom of God and an act of witness by the people of God. Encouragingly, many of our churches are engaged in a variety of programmes which seek to care for and support the vulnerable, oppressed,

isolated and impoverished.

In this edition of Connect, we focus on the significant opportunities for developing ministry in our local schools and the formation of the next generation of Scotland’s citizens. Currently, Scottish Baptist ministers are involved in various ways: piloting [Romance Academy](#) in Broughty Ferry, using Alpha in schools in Glenrothes, leading [Prayer Spaces](#) in Aberdeen and Ayrshire, and offering chaplaincy services across

***“Christian service in the community is a significant act of mission, a demonstration of the love of God, a foretaste of the Kingdom of God and an act of witness by the people of God.”***

the nation. Rev Stephen Younger says, “Schools are committed to engaging in local partnerships and churches are well placed to become among the most significant of partners.”

Our friends at the Message Trust have recently published an excellent guide to chaplaincy opportunities in schools which can be downloaded from our [website](#).

[Serve Your Local Schools](#) is another resourcing group with which we have partnered for many years to equip churches to engage in the formation of the rising generation.

Such forms of service are so significant today; we are keen that they be explored from a variety of perspectives in the coming months. Below this editorial is an advert for the next Catalyst event in Glasgow, and an invitation to the [Baptist Assembly](#) where we will be exploring our calling to be witnesses under the title “Mind the Gap”.

**Alan Donaldson**

### **Christ, Community and Change**



*Moving into the Neighbourhood*

Wednesday 27th May 9:15am - 4pm

Newton Mearns Baptist Church

#### **Speakers:**

Malcolm Duncan - (Gold Hill Baptist Church, London)

Paul Betts - (Hollywood Christian Church, Belfast)

Please register today:

TEXT your name and email address to 07720573911

EMAIL: [office@newtonmearnsbaptist.org.uk](mailto:office@newtonmearnsbaptist.org.uk)



## Interview: Stephen Younger

### Is it just my imagination or are schools more open to church involvement today than they have been in the recent past?

Since the introduction of the Curriculum For Excellence, schools have been looking for community partners who will join them in the character formation of their students, hoping that these partnerships will significantly contribute to the development of young students becoming good citizens, a key aim of the new curriculum. Churches and their ministers are well placed to help schools fulfil these aims. As community leaders who have already undergone a PVG, and with access to a volunteer team who also understand the safeguarding issues, chaplains are seen as a great resource.

**What innovative things are chaplains being offered the chance to do?** Secondary schools are still obliged to hold 6 religious assemblies a year, over and above the major festivals. However, the education guidelines emphasise quality over quantity, which has opened up the possibilities for activities such as prayer spaces and Christian focus weeks.

**Is there scope to do more than just religious classes and assemblies?** Yes, there is opportunity in school to be involved in mentoring students, paired reading, residential trips, pastoral and listening services and extracurricular activities. Many schools have realised that a key person in the transition from primary to secondary school is the chaplain, who is known in both places. Many schools invite the chaplains to attend transition days and be involved in the s1 induction week at the beginning of term.

**What would be a good starting question for churches seeking to get involved in their local school? "How can we help?"** If churches are genuinely interested in engaging with their local school, they are likely to find a variety of opportunities to engage meaningfully with young people.

*Stephen Younger is the Baptist Minister at High Blantyre and is currently studying for a Phd in the area of religious observance and religious education.*

## Serve Your Local School

The Serve Your Local School (SYLS) project aims to help churches in Scotland see the potential they have to play a part in their local school community, making a difference in the lives of the school community in many different ways. It's about helping churches be a blessing to their local schools.

Since 2011 BUS has been involved in a joint partnership with Scripture Union Scotland, the Church of Scotland and Care Scotland. The vision has always been to inspire and equip Scottish churches to engage more in their local schools. The website [www.syls.org.uk](http://www.syls.org.uk) contains useful information for those wishing to engage with



their local school, as well as helpfully unpacking some educational jargon such as Curriculum for Excellence. It's also full of ideas ranging such as inviting classes to visit your church, starting a breakfast club or SU group, or even offering to run a Prayer Space in School event.

Have a look at the Serve Your Local School [Facebook page](#) for more ideas and updates. Whether you have lots of experience in schools and would like to see some fresh ideas, or your church is wondering where to start, the project can help you as you bless the schools in your area.



## Serving our young people



iGnite Youth Ministries is a Christian Youth Project based in Broughty Ferry Baptist Church but serving young people in 3 local churches. It was launched in January 2013 and I was employed as the part-time Youth Worker. It has developed a range of provision for young people in these churches including Bible Classes, Youth Fellowship, Sticky Faith Discipleship, Romance Academy, Youth Praise Band, social events, participation in youth services, trips to Christian youth events such as Powerpoint, Strictly Come Praying, Strictly Deeper, Commission with SU and mission trips to Romania.

As well as this, iGnite has also sought to establish a presence in the local community.

This has been done mainly through my work as a Chaplain at the local secondary school, Grove Academy. I have been taking Assemblies, engaging with some classroom interaction with pupils and helping to run the excellent Prayer Space last June. Last Summer we had a Step Out Team come to the church for the first time and embarked on

a community project in the mornings. Through this we developed links with the local Communities and Youth Work Departments and during the Step Out week we painted the fence at the Go-Kart Track in the local park.

These links then developed further; the local Senior Youth Worker was very interested in our Romance Academy programme. Romance Academy is a UK based Christian Relationships & Sex Education programme which seeks to educate young people in how to develop healthy positive relationships, and how to grow in confidence and resilience to make the right decisions for themselves. They encouraged Grove Academy to use Romance Academy in the school and it was agreed to run a pilot programme earlier this year with a class of S3 pupils.

The pilot has been hugely successful with excellent feedback from the enthusiastic pupils and

Guidance staff. One of the teachers commented: "These lessons cover many of the Health and Wellbeing Outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence and help the pupils to develop many skills for life. They are learning some valuable lessons about the nature of relationships and how to set their own boundaries. I believe Romance Academy is already having an impact on these pupils. They are starting to question their own beliefs on topics such as the portrayal of sexuality in the media and what is needed to form successful relationships."

Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that you might have life, and have it to the full."

I believe it is our role as Christians to reach out into the community, to be "salt and light". To do this as a Church we must tackle issues which are affecting the local community; in this case, the pressure on our young people with increasing sexualisation amplified by media and social media.

After the very successful pilot programme, I am now running the next Romance Academy with another class of S3 pupils. I am also in discussions about how this collaboration can be developed further. In particular, we are looking at extending Romance Academy programmes, looking at self-esteem, body image and confidence and providing support for young people who are struggling with mental health issues.

Please pray for us as we develop this exciting new opportunity to serve young people in the community of Broughty Ferry.

If you would like to find out more about how Romance Academy and SelfharmUK can help you establish presence in your local communities, and support young people, please get in touch.

**E-mail: [garytorbet@btinternet.com](mailto:garytorbet@btinternet.com)**



# May Prayer Link

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## Sunday 3rd

**Rev Al Nicoll (Acting Senior Chaplain at RAF Brize Norton)** - Please pray for the 4 members of our chaplaincy team (Al, Craig, Andi and Dave) as we minister to the 6000+ personnel and their families at RAF Brize Norton. In particular pray for wisdom as we support people through complex pastoral situations, and for courage and clarity as we continue our ministry of evangelism and discipleship.

**Dedridge Baptist Church, Livingston** - Easter Day was extra special as we celebrated new life and baptised a lady who had been drawn here and felt loved before she gave her life to Jesus. Others have come into membership and there is growing fellowship. We give thanks for Bill Slack, our interim moderator, as he helps us seek God's will for the future.

## Sunday 10th

**Adam Plenderleith (Chaplain, Glasgow Royal Infirmary)** - NHS Chaplaincy continues to provide wonderful opportunities to bring meaning to the words of Jesus as found in Matthew 25:34-40. Please pray that in my role as an NHS Healthcare Chaplain I will continue to seek opportunities to serve according to the expressed wants of the individual facing me, lest I ever make assumptions about what someone needs. Even Jesus asked blind Bartimaeus, 'What do you want me to do for you?', Mark 10: 51. May I grow in my ability to listen twice as much as talk.

**Dingwall, Willie Miller** - There are three new ministers in the town, including Dingwall Baptist, and the ministers of the local fraternal are keen to encourage their churches to work together for God's Kingdom here in Dingwall. Please pray for us as we start a series of Alpha Courses, on Mondays in May, along with four other churches in Dingwall.

## Sunday 17th

**Dumbarton, Brian Mulraine** - Please pray for our church at Dumbarton as we enter in to a time of vacancy. Pray that God's plan in the days ahead would be known as we seek to honour and serve Him as a church family. We are thankful for eleven years of ministry with our Pastor Brian and wife Christine and remember them in prayer as they move on to a new ministry.

## Sunday 24th

**Jim Simpson (Lead Chaplain, Grampian NHS)** - Thank you for your ongoing support through prayer. Two challenges may help focus your attention: from the beginning of April all NHS Grampian properties became 'smoke free', for patients in mental health this was not easy – and for staff as they come to terms with 'the integration' of local authority and the NHS, replacing two distinct bodies with one new entity.

**Dundee Central, Jim Turrent** - Pray for the church plant at Carnoustie BC as they move towards charitable status; for Lochee Vision evenings as Andrew and Lauren Mathieson begin to make community connections; for Central as we embark upon a period of reorganisation to support outreach/planting; give thanks for those coming to faith through Christianity Explored.

**Dunfermline West BC, Douglas Whyte** - Of particular encouragement of late has been the wish of the local primary head teacher for a greatly increased chaplaincy input at the school involving regular visits round the classes as well as speaking at assemblies. The challenge is one the pastor relishes. Please pray for young lives to be touched by the Word of God and the claims of Christ.

## Sunday 31st

**Dunrossness, Ian H Thomson** - Please pray that we might be able to use the 200th anniversary of our Church in 2016 in an effective way to reach out to the many in our community who have had links with us in the past. In a very rural area, we are unlikely ever to be a large Church, but pray that we can be



an effective Church in our community, known as a place where lives are changed.

**East Mains, Jim McGillivray** - Please give thanks for our new Student Pastor, Charles Maasz. Please pray for him as he settles into his new part time role here at EMBC whilst still studying at the Baptist College. Please pray for the leadership as they continue to discern the way forward with regard to our increasing congregation and lack of space in the church. Please also pray for our Village Centre and all the organisations that use the premises, that we might build bridges with the people and show the love of Christ.



## Pray too for the National Team

**Jacqueline** - Colin and I should have been in Nepal for the first half of May visiting friends, visiting the project Tillicultry Baptist Church is linked with, and having a wee holiday in the middle of it. This has obviously had to be amended following Saturday's earthquake. We are still going to take some time off, but our hearts, minds and prayers are with our friends (still in Kathmandu) and all the people of Nepal. The BUS staff are involved in things in our own churches (to varying degrees) as well as the wider BUS work, and both areas are mutually resourcing. Please pray that I will serve well in my own community (working in Alva Academy with SU, children's outreach and involved in community events).

**John** - The coming weeks will be fairly full with preaching engagements, planning for the Board of Ministry in early May, and preparing for the handover to my successor Martin Hodson later in the year. Pray for a clear sense of direction from God's Spirit for the various speaking commitments, and, as I work with my colleague Ivy on important administrative matters, for wisdom to discern and prioritise. Thank you.

**Alan** - This month will see me visiting 4 island churches, 3 in Orkney and the congregation in Colonsay. I will also be supporting the college at their thanksgiving service, interim board meeting and search group for a further lecturer. The resource grant group meets this month to consider two further grant applications. It will also be my privilege to represent the Baptist Union of Scotland at the Church of Scotland Assembly for a few days and to be present at the Eden conference.

**Mo** - I'm on maternity leave from 16th May and would value your prayers as I finish up and hand over. Please also pray for Yvonne Faddes as she takes over the role, I'm excited she's able to do this again! Sports Day desperately needs more volunteers to be able to run, so please pray for this and consider if you can help. Final preparations are also under way for Step Out so please pray for the plans, the young people preparing to come on and the churches partnering with teams.

**Jim** - Please pray for those in leadership, among our churches when, at this time of year, the busyness of ministry and work can lead to exhaustion, frayed nerves and mistakes being made. Pray for patience, grace and focus on the way of Jesus for us all. Pray too for preparation and planning for mission activity during summer and plans being laid for developing outreach, beyond the summer, into the coming year.

