

Stonelaw Church Magazine



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Letter from the Minister...

Dear Friends

Q. What do you call a Scot at the World Cup?

A. 'Ref'

Actually, that's unfair; I think Scotland also produces some of the best football *supporters* in the world. Why else would the English be so keen that we are cheering for them? We are a nation of world-class spectators and second to none in armchair criticism. Pity about the playing – but then we can't excel at everything. Can we?

I'm glad to say what is true of football is increasingly untrue of Church. Here we are genuinely learning to get the talent off the stands and onto the field. We are moving from an historic place of professional clergy supported (or not) by the man in the pew – to rediscovering that Church is the people of God – no more and no less.

Full-time ministry will always have an important place. (And, in the coming year, we shall explore enhancing it with a local outreach worker.) However, such ministry exists to support the people of God in *their* mission – and not the other way about.

At Pentecost, the twelve well-trained apostles preached a message. That message was heard and received. But one of the truly amazing things about the growth of the early church was that those that heard the good news quickly became speakers themselves. A few pages into the book of Acts the names of the familiar disciples are intermingled with countless other names. Some like the apostles would go, travel and preach, but most would simply be the witnessing church right where they were.

We have been the Church together this year: as Guild, praise group and managers; as elders, visitors and flower arrangers; in prayer, in praise and in friendship. We have cried together (and how) and we have worked together. Next year, God willing, we will do more – plans are already afoot. But in truth, our most important work is not planned by Session, or funded by managers; it is done as we each play our parts as witnesses to the truth in office, school and bowling-green, across the neighbourly fence and on the train to work. Being self-consciously Christian in all these places is what it means to play on this team.

Thank you for your participation in the Gospel (and, yes, for your 'support' too) in the year that's past.

With every blessing for the summer.

Alistair

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