

# Bristo Baptist

## M a g a z i n e

December / November 2006

**Fruitfulness**



Alltnacriche  
Church Holiday

**Bristo Baptist Church**

41 Buckingham Terrace / 1 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 3DJ

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**Copy date for next issue:**

*Sunday 31 December*

for publication on

*Sunday 14 January*

**Theme:**

'Saving Grace'

**website:** [www.bristobaptist.org](http://www.bristobaptist.org)

### Editorial



Autumn is finally with us and as we approach winter and the Christmas season many of us will be busy with frenetic activity. In our workplaces too, we are constantly told to 'maximize productivity' which often means working hard, hard, hard and burning ourselves out.

Is such busyness true fruitfulness? Productivity it may be, but fruitfulness? An American Christian woman in seminary has defined fruitfulness as "what happens when we reach out with hope, courage and confidence from the anchored place of Christ's love and acceptance" and "activity deeply rooted in the soil of God's grace". For true fruitfulness, therefore, we need to be rooted in the Vine of Christ, abiding in His love, and continually tapping into the energy of his Holy Spirit. Then we shall bear true fruit and be truly productive.

*Robert Mill*

Dear Friends,

Jennifer and I had a very good holiday in Bulgaria, and I write this after coming back. It was good to spend time together with the pastor and his wife from the Lom church, Stoicho and Yura. They have become good friends and the time together was delightful. We ate, slept and talked and walked. Very restful and relaxing.

Stoicho and Yura reported encouragements, amidst the challenges and hardships that are always part of life. Significantly, their efforts to bring a caring ministry amidst the poverty and deprivation of people in that poor part of Bulgaria is bearing fruit. People who have a real social conscience in the community – local community leaders and other not-yet-Christians who are involved in social and health care – have been visiting the church on Sundays. The efforts of the church to provide a lunch centre in the community through the hard winter months, together with involvement



in the orphanage and the possibility of developing a medical centre, are not unnoticed. People want to find out what is at the heart of what motivates such servanthood. Our financial support, together with the regular visit of ministry teams from Bristo, are a valued help and encouragement in this ministry. The presence of Christ amidst His people is bearing fruit. I look forward to leading another team to Lom from 1-10 July 2007, in continuing support of this.

We also enjoyed visiting a church in the east of Bulgaria, one known to our friends. We enjoyed fellowship there, and had lunch afterwards with folk from the church. I was chatting to a deacon. As the church was denominationally Pentecostal, I asked if they recently experienced the power of God, through signs and wonders. His reply was that they used to, but in recent years when there had been a lot of change in those attending, and signs and wonders had ceased. Many new people had not yet come to be

baptised in the Spirit and had not yet experienced these deep resources of inspiration and healing that flow from seeking in prayer the intensified presence of the Holy Spirit among us. There had been fruit in the past. But there was need for refreshing and a renewed seeking of God.

Which brings me to my thoughts on fruitfulness. Fruitfulness requires an understanding of the purpose for which we exist. We are to bear fruit, in Christ's name, through our lives. Our purpose is to share in a ministry of help and healing into people's lives. And this requires care, cultivation and nourishment.

It requires pruning and shaping, so that fruit are produced.

And this is how God deals with us as those who name the name of Jesus. Those who claim His Lordship is expressed through our lives. At Bristo, our focus must continue to be on our 'reason for being'. Our desire must be for the continued outpouring of the Holy Spirit to enable us in Jesus' name. In these winter months let us focus on being fruitful, to the glory of God, as we seek and meet with the power, purpose and presence of God amongst us.

In His love,  
*Jim*

## CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR SERVICES AT BRISTO, 2006-07

This year, with Christmas Day falling on a Monday, our times of Christmas & New Year services are planned as follows:

*Sunday 24th December:* 11.00 a.m. All-age Celebration  
11.15 p.m. Candle-lit Watchnight Service

*Sunday 31st December:* 11.00 a.m. All-age Celebration  
11.15 p.m. Candle-lit Watchnight Service

**Jim Purves**

## CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

The Dean Village Association's Christmas Carol singing event is on **Tuesday 5th December** from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. with children from The Mary Erskine & Stewart's Melville Junior School. This will be led by the pastor. All hearty singers welcome!

**Jim Purves**

## THE CREATION OF "DESCENDING GLORY"

*Many of you will have read in the previous issue of the Magazine of the presentation to Mel and Janice Clarke of a painting commissioned from Will Revolta, titled "Descending Glory". Will here tells how this painting was inspired.*

Will has for several years also played the piano in Bristo on Sunday evenings and occasionally in the mornings. Recently he has become involved in Struthers Memorial Church in Edinburgh, and on the evening of Sunday 22nd October he played in Bristo for the last time. We thank Will for his fellowship and music ministry over the last few years. He originally came to us as a pre-teenager, brought by David Purves, and on 22nd October he shared how Bristo had been formative to his faith. We bless you, Will, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ as you move on.

**Editor**

It is now about five months since I was originally commissioned to create the

painting for Mel and Janice – and what a honour and privilege that has been. Not only was it a very thoughtful gesture on behalf of the entire church but also, it was to be for a couple who have been instrumental in both the life and work of Bristo and undoubtedly, in my own Christian life as well.

With the intention of creating an image that would bring blessing to look upon as well as God filled memories of their faithful years of service with us, I set out upon this unique and challenging commission. Yet, it was this aspiration that brought me to the point of discarding my original idea for the work as it simply did not do it justice. To have continued with that idea would have been, in my opinion, a let down to our dear brother and sister for whom the painting was intended, as it did not fully achieve the original goal. And, I decided, I would not settle for anything less than that. At this point I realised, I was therefore dependent on the Lord for inspiration. To digress slightly for a

moment, this process has taught me a invaluable lesson for future paintings I intend to make – to God be the glory.

So, bringing things swiftly to a point: one very early mid-summer's morning as I was returning home from (not going to!) the art studio, I noticed a beautiful glowing twilight sky with a horizon in the distance waiting patiently for the coming sun. Caught by its beauty and knowing that it could change any minute if I lingered, I quickly took a photograph and carried on my journey home which by that point was not far at all. Upon developing the image, I noticed that one of the clouds stood out particularly from the rest as it had the appearance of an angelic bird like creature. And I thought, wow!

Knowing what to paint after that was a very simple and natural next step as the Lord had provided the inspiration for the commission and that was that. I realised that to emphasise the angelic bird like form and to superimpose the surrounding morning sky with a silhouette of the church building, would capture everything I had sought to convey in my original hopes for the painting - and in fact, even more than I could have imagined as the Lord was in the image. May the Holy Spirit, about whom the painting gives rise, bless Mel and Janice as they continue serving the Lord in the new church and community that eagerly awaits them. Blessed be His holy name.

Yours in appreciation,

**William Revolta**



*Descending Glory*

**ALLTNACRICHE HOLIDAY WEEKEND**

Over fifty folk from Bristo and the Arch School of English and their friends spent the Edinburgh September holiday weekend at Alltnacriche near Aviemore. The weather was kind to us

with lovely sunshine and marvellous starlit evenings. Our devotional times focussed on 1 Peter 3: 8-12, and our weekend theme was

“Captivating Community”. We had a ceilidh on the Friday night where we had Scottish country dancing, played games and had entertainment spots. One Taiwanese girl from the Arch School showed the Scots amongst us how bagpipes should be played, and there was a virtuoso violin solo from a Japanese Arch School student. Terry taught us an ‘Irish broom trick’ but Jim couldn’t quite get the hang of it and had to be given a helping hand.



**ceilidh**



**‘broom trick!’**

Saturday was more or less free and many folk chose to go to the Landmark Centre with its theme park, treetop trail and other attractions. On Sunday morning we

had workshops in dance, prayer / worship, drama and arts / crafts; each workshop prepared something for the evening service. Sunday afternoon was again

free time; quite a lot of folk went to Loch Morlich for water sports or just enjoying a scenic walk round the loch shore. On Sunday evening we had a very special time of worship, with contributions from a very international choir; a sacred dance routine performed by Lucy and her team; a presentation of ‘Living Stones’, hand decorated by Matt and the arts and crafts workshop, to everyone present as a

reminder of our weekend’s theme; a moving prayer, worship and message from the prayer workshop; and a marvellously humorous drama. On Monday morning we had to clean the centre and leave quite early, but we had time for an open-air communion service. This was a very special time in a backdrop of early morning mist and sunlight. Even the centre’s dog came to take communion!

**FUN TIMES AT BRISTO**

Apart from Alltnacriche we’ve had several other occasions in the past few weeks where the members of the fellowship have had some really good times together.

**International Night,  
7 October**

Alltnacriche was a very ‘international’ weekend, reflecting the large number of nationalities represented in our fellowship and the Arch School. This inspired us to follow the weekend up a few weeks later with an International Night in early October.

The walls of the large hall upstairs were decorated with pictures of flags of numerous nations and a wide variety of international dishes was available for us all to eat and enjoy, cooked by folk from the church and the language school. Most of the evening folk simply chatted as they ate the delicious food and enjoyed fellowship together. Thanks to Jennifer, the interns, and everyone who brought food.

To those who didn’t manage this year, or who have come to the fellowship since September – make the church holiday a date next year, wherever we go!

**Robert Mill**

**Kids' Fun Day,  
18 October**

One afternoon during the October schools holiday week, our interns Matt, Tima, Yulia and Lesley organised a fun afternoon for local kids. Quite a few of our own IT youth club turned up and a few others. There was a bouncy castle and lots of fun activities.



**Kids enjoying crafts activities ..... and the bouncy castle**

**“Alternative Halloween”,  
31 October**

Our most recent fellowship event has been the “Alternative Halloween” on (not surprisingly) Tuesday 31st October. We played a mixture of traditional games like “dooking for apples” and more modern ones like the “newspaper game” . Once again there was lots of great food. Thanks to Linda and Paul Watson for organising the evening and preparing much of the food.

**And the fun hasn't ended .....**

On *Friday 24 November* we shall be having a ceilidh in the evening. Everyone is invited to attend. More details on the weekly information sheets.

**Robert Mill**

**TREASURER'S REPORT OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2006**

I've had a few comments that there have been a few too many figures in these Treasurer's reports for the church magazine. This month I'd like to concentrate on what I consider to be just one or two of the most significant figures from the church accounts. I'm quite happy to receive feedback as to how these reports are presented.

The minimum income for the church for the year April 2006 to March 2007 to meet our agreed and budgeted expenditure for the year is £56,700. Of this Income from church general offerings is expected to total £40,000. This works out at about £770 per week.

At the end of October our income from general offerings just about matched that required to meet our budget:

Annual Income	Weekly Average	Required budgeted income at week 28	Actual income at week 28	Actual - Budgeted
£40,000	£770	£21,569	£21,838	269

The majority of our expenditure is well within budget, and even expenditure on the intern programme is currently less than the interest gained on our Fair Trust fund, so all in all we seem to be doing quite well.

However I did say the majority of our expenditure is within budget!

By far the largest proportion of the assets of our church is made up of our church property, and property needs to be maintained to keep it habitable. This year we have already had to make significant unbudgeted improvements to the manse. The church faces further maintenance repairs to the manse to prevent the property degrading during the winter. As

many of you know the windows of the church overlooking the car park are in a poor state of repair, and these require urgent repair before more large pieces fall off.

The Fabric Fund will meet the costs of these repairs, but the Fabric Fund doesn't contain a huge sum of money and when it is gone unbudgeted repairs will have to be met from the church reserve funds.

In summary we're doing quite well. Income is meeting budgeted expenditure. We do need to be careful though not to let essential maintenance eat away at our reserve funds without our establishing a method to replenish these funds.

**Paul Watson**

## ADVENT THANKOFFERING

We shall be having a special Advent Thankoffering on the first Sunday of December. This will be for the work of the church beyond Bristo, specifically the church at Lom in Bulgaria. Once again they are running a winter soup kitchen, which we plan to support. Please give generously. An envelope can be obtained from our Treasurer, Paul Watson. Please remember to add either your weekly envelope number if you have one, or your name and address, so that tax can be reclaimed on your offering through the Gift Aid scheme.

**The Deacons**

## CHURCH MEETING

Please note that there will be a Church Meeting on *Wednesday 17 January 2007*. This will take the form of a 'vision casting' meeting where we will focus on what God has in store for the Bristo fellowship in 2007 and beyond. This should be an important and significant meeting so put the date in your diary now and make every effort to attend.

**The Deacons**

## OUR LINK MISSIONARY IN NEPAL

*This report appeared in the November/December edition of BMS World Mission:*

A new teacher training programme run by an international school in Nepal, headed up by BMS worker Judith Ellis, aims to impact tens of thousands of Nepalese teachers over the next five years.

The project, initiated by the Kathmandu International Study Centre (KISC), has really taken off in the last six months, and is already helping hundreds of Nepalese teachers. The goal is to have ten full-time teacher trainers in place in Kathmandu, and ten in rural areas, by 2011.

Aside from the Nepali teacher training programme, KISC's other main achievement this year was starting a primary section in July, which is in addition to the established secondary school for mission workers' children. It is here in the secondary school that Judith is currently the principal, but the aim is for her eventually to

become the director of all three KISC projects.

Judith's hope is that in five years' time KISC will finally have its own land, that 100,000 teachers and teacher trainers will have been impacted by the training programme, and that the school will be open to Nepalese Christian families.

Judith has worked in Nepal since 2000, initially as a volunteer, and her home church is Elim Pentecostal, Loughborough.

### **Please pray:**

1. that the teacher training programme will develop, and have a lasting impact on many Nepalese schools,
2. that KISC primary section will really take off this year, and for more teachers to be recruited,
3. that Judith will continue to depend on and trust in God in all her decision-making. Pray too for her now, on home assignment until April.

Judith will be visiting Edinburgh churches in early December. She will talk to us during the evening service on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, and the following week will be available to visit cell groups and talk about her work in a more informal way. Cell-group leaders who would be interested in this should contact me.

**Gill Schärer**

### ‘JESUS IS MY REASON’

Edinburgh City Mission (ECM) has launched the ‘Jesus is my Reason’ campaign which aims to challenge all Christians to ensure Jesus is central on every Christmas card they send this year. Jesus is getting crowded out by the secularisation of Christmas, and ECM wants to encourage Christians to be bold enough to assert their faith. To help people do this, we are offering free sheets of specially designed stickers.

At ECM we are passionate about evangelism, and we'd be delighted to hear from you if you'd like to find out more about us, or explore opportunities of working together to reduce spiritual poverty in our communities. Please do all you can to raise awareness in your congregation of the ‘Jesus is my Reason’ campaign this Christmas.

Thanks

**Bill Chalmers, Church Relations, ECM**

Tel. 0131 554 6140

<http://www.ecm.org.uk>

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### CARING CHRISTMAS TREES FROM BETHANY

*“Yet in thy dark streets shineth the  
everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.”*

The nights are drawing in and the hours of daylight are getting fewer, a sure indicator that Christmas is getting closer. As the darkness increases we begin to make festive plans to dispel the gloom of winter.

With decorations and seasonal lighting we bring cheer to our homes and communities. Candles, sparkling tinsel, Christmas trees and strings of lights appear in homes, shops and offices to mark the birth of the Christ in the world.

The Apostle John uses the image of a light shining in the darkness dispelling gloom to describe the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the depth of a dark Scottish winter when we crave the light, this metaphor is particularly poignant. We like light; it means safety, warmth, it is cheering.

We don't like to be left out in the cold and dark. Yet this is the reality for some people today. Every day on our city streets we pass homeless people left out in the cold and dark without light or love in their lives. John tells us that God is love and since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. How can people experience that light and love when they have no contact with it?

As a practical outworking of Christian faith, bringing light to the lives of those in darkness, Bethany seeks to show God's love to people on the fringes of society. Bethany's Winter Care Shelter works with over 60 churches across the city to provide homeless and vulnerable people with a place where they can experience warmth, comfort and love over the coldest winter months.

To help fund the Care Shelter, Bethany run Caring Christmas Trees. The enterprise, run extensively by volunteers, sells top quality Christmas trees that people must order in advance. For the cost of one Caring Christmas Tree, the

Care Shelter provides a homeless person with a hot meal, a bed for the night and breakfast. To support the Care Shelter again this year and make a difference in the lives of homeless and vulnerable people please buy a Caring Christmas Tree, and encourage your friends and colleagues to do the same.

The purchase of your Caring Christmas Tree could provide the opportunity for a homeless person to turn their life around and leave the darkness of life on the streets. In short, by buying a Caring Christmas Tree, you are allowing someone to experience God's love in a practical way and giving them hope - and you get a beautiful tree to enjoy all Christmas.

Trees can be ordered on-line at <http://www.caringchristmastrees.com> or by phoning **0845 111 TREE (8733)**. Last date for orders is *10 December*.

Bethany needs 440 volunteers to help with promotions and distribution of trees. To volunteer visit our website or call the tree hotline above or email [info@caringchristmastrees.com](mailto:info@caringchristmastrees.com)

**Bethany Christian Trust** (<http://www.bethanychristiantrust.com/>)

## 'IT TAKES TWO'

As part of its ministry to married couples, Care for the Family is organising "It Takes Two", presented by Katharine Hill and Richard Hardy. It will explore the ups and downs of marriage in the 21st century. There will be lots of examples of how to make married life better and you will discover the potential you have to build the best marriage you possibly can.

*Date:* Wed. 29 November. *Time:* 7.30–10 p.m. *Cost:* £6 per person.

*Place:* Faith Mission Centre, 548 Gilmerton Road, Edinburgh EH17 7JD.

## BAPTIST UNION NEWS

Rev. David Gordon, Baptist Union Mission Advisor, has accepted a call to be senior pastor at Kirkintilloch Baptist Church. His service with the Union will conclude on 31 December. We thank God for David's ministry among the Scottish Baptist Churches and pray for him as he begins this new area of service.

We also pray for Bill Slack and the others who will lead the Union in seeking a successor as Mission Advisor that the person of God's choosing may be appointed.

**Christine Lumsden**

## A CHRISTMAS HYMN FROM BAPTIST HISTORY

The following hymn (see p.16) was written by Sir William Sinclair who founded the Baptist Church in Keiss, Caithness in 1750. His collection of sixty hymns, published in 1751 for the use of his congregation, is among the earliest hymnbooks in Scotland. Here Sir William concentrates on the birth of Christ as the fulfilment of prophecy and the Law. His imagery is drawn from :

Luke 2: 13-14 *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*

Exodus 19: 16-18 *And it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceedingly loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.*

(Both quotations are from the Authorised Version which Sir William would have used.)

**Christine Lumsden**

**Song of praise to God, on the birth of Jesus the Saviour**

(Spelling and punctuation as in original)

1 This day in Bethlehem is born  
a child, the Wonderful!  
His name is Jesus Christ the Lord,  
God's truth in him is full.

2 Mercy looks down from heaven high,  
truth from the earth doth spring,  
All ends of th'earth salvation find,  
Hosannahs gladly sing.

3 All the Prophets have foretold  
in him accomplished are;  
Kings from the east to worship him  
are brought by a new star.

4 A multitude of heavenly host  
praises to God doth sing;  
The gladsome tidings rent the skies,  
peace and good will they bring.

5 No more the thunders of the law  
with dreadful terrors fright;  
No more Mount Sinai all on fire,  
amazing stands in sight

6 Do this and live is blotted out,  
fulfill'd all law he hath;  
To heaven's high courts he hath us shewn  
a sure and beaten path

*Service Times*

*Sunday*

Morning Celebration (including Junior Church) ..... 11.00 a.m.  
Evening Celebration ..... 6.30 p.m.

*Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday*

Cell Groups (refer to weekly sheet for times / locations) .....

*Monday*

Prayer Meeting ..... 10.00 a.m.  
International Soup ..... 12 noon  
Badminton Club ..... 6pm - 10pm

*Tuesday*

Home from Home ..... 1.00 p.m.

*Friday*

IT Youth Club ..... 7.30 p.m.

*Saturday*

Morning of Prayer ..... 9.30 a.m.

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