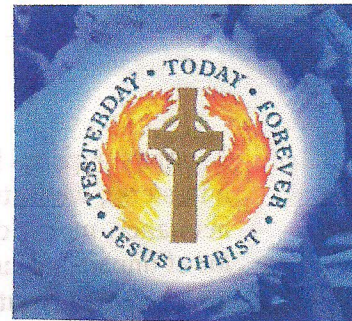




# Saltcoats : North Parish Church



## STEWARDSHIP

The General Assembly has decided that every congregation should have an annual Stewardship Month – which for us is mid-Sept. to mid-Oct. So we would ask you to consider doing several things even more than you have been doing already. This will benefit yourself individually and benefit the congregation.

- 1 Attend Church services, organisations, groups, events etc.
- 2 Play a fuller part in the on-going life of the congregation.
- 3 Pray and read the Bible more individually, in groups and in Sunday services.
- 4 Contribute more of your time, talents and money for God's work.
- 5 Bring others to Church.
- 6 Speak more to other people about the Gospel and try to win converts, new disciples.
- 7 Help others and do good in Jesus name.

Catch the vision! Jesus and His 12 disciples changed the world. He is still alive and kicking and we are his current crop of disciples here and now. Together in Him we can grow personally, as a congregation and as a community. We can be part of miracles and life-changing experiences. We can really make a difference. We can be part of the Kingdom of God right where we are!

So, please think and pray about what exactly you might do. To help you prayerfully consider these things .....think about some of these interesting things:-

- 1 The North Parish has its very own, set aside, dedicated, holy place of worship. Every community does not have a place of worship. In our parish it is the only church building. However church buildings need maintenance, heat and light and cost a lot of money. Do you think it is worth it? Our church is used seven days per week by many different groups e.g. Prayer Group, Adult Christian Education, Boards and Sessions, Creche, Sunday School, Youth Group, Teas, Girl's Brigade, Guild, Choir, Badminton, Zumba, Bokwa, Children's Dance Classes, Craft Fairs, Weight-Watchers and recently even dog training. The church is the venue for baptisms, weddings, funerals, communions, ordinations, admissions of new members, school services, special one-off services, celebrations of Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance etc. It is a holy place with a long history of special, precious holy moments in our lives. Isn't that worth us giving more towards its upkeep and improvement. By the way it costs £1100 per week, £60,000 per year to run! It also takes a lot of hard work by the property team, the cleaners and the gardeners (all unpaid volunteers) How about helping them?





2 Many parishes have places of worship but no minister in post (because there is a chronic shortage of ministers); we fortunately have a minister. Full time clergy ministry costs a lot too – stipend, pension, insurance, manse etc. By the way, all the costs included it costs about £40,000! Is it worth it? We also have a lot of unpaid, voluntary ministering being done eg Elders pastorally visiting their districts; Sunday School Teachers and Youth Leaders teaching our young; individual Members caring for neighbours; the Congregation raising money for various charities (about £5,000 each year for Christian Aid, the Poppy Appeal, the Harbour Centre, the Bible Society, the Girls' Brigade etc). We also have ministries by way of giving flowers, free CDs and recordings of Church services. All our different forms of ministry costs a lot of time and talent and effort as well as money. Isn't it worth it though? Shouldn't we be doing a lot more in Jesus' name? How can you help?

3 Praying and Bible reading are fairly cheap in terms of money but very enriching! New church members vow to "be faithful in reading the Bible and in prayer". Are you? How about doing it together? We have adult Christian education usually in the form of Manse Groups and Lent Groups and there is a weekly half hour of praying together on Thursdays at 11am. There is no Church life without prayer and Bible reading.

4 Any congregation is made up of a series of rings – like the ripples on a lake when you drop a stone in it. At the centre is the core, then there are circles of people of diminishing degrees of involvement till you get to the lapsed and those outside the circle altogether. Where are you in this regard? How about coming in one ring closer to the centre this year? Keep improving every year and both you and the Church will grow.

5 Let us work with Jesus our Head to build up His Body the Church. Bring folk to Church so that they can hear God's Word to them, so they can meet Jesus, so they can be part of the family of God. There is no salvation out-with the Church is one thing that all denominations agree on. God made us for life together as His family, flock, vine, living stones, salvation army (always corporate not individual notice).

Do you feel you belong? When is the last time you brought a new person to Church? Isn't it the job of parents and grandchildren to bring up their children to know and love Jesus and all His Church?

6 The Church breathes in and out – bringing people, prayers and needs in to God and taking God's grace out to the needy people. Worship and service go together. (One way breathing just chokes!) The church is not a cosy nest so much as a launch pad. We come in for spiritual nourishment to be built up to go out to witness and serve. The church needs not so much "pillars o' the Kirk" as propellers! How about it?

7 We reach out not only in words but in actions. Jesus' fine words always were accompanied by mighty miracles. He didn't just say "I am the Light of the world", He opened blind eyes. He didn't just say "I am the Bread of life", He fed the 5,000! So we now contribute to the local food bank for example. We are proud to be "do gooders" in Jesus name (for His glory not ours of course). Together we can achieve more when each person contributes to the common kitty their unique contributions of time, talents and money. And when we give our loaves and fish to Jesus He is able to do miracles with them!

So please think about these things.  
Thank you. God bless you.

