action of churches together in scotland
Action of Churches Together in Scotland is a Scottish Guarantee Company
(number SC348236) Registered as a Scottish Charity under Scottish Charity
Number SC000295. Registered Office: 7 Forrester Lodge, Inglewood House,
Alloa FK10 2HU. Telephone 01259 216980

November edition 2011

TOGETHER

More than Gold
In October a small team from More Than Gold visited 8 of the locations
that the Torch Relay will pass through on its way to Olympic Park for the
Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games on the 27th July 2012.
Throughout the visits, various presentations were made to local
church and community group leaders about how Scottish churches can get
involved with this event. Several denominations were present at these
presentations to hear Games Pastors, Sports Mission and the Torch Relay
programmes specifically.

Many went away inspired and are now planning what they will do in response
to the Games in 2012. Some ideas include supporting the local council
with their Torch Relay community celebrations, participating in social
action projects, running sports themed holidays bible clubs as well as hosting
community events such as sports days during the Games. Of course, many
churches are already praying and some have ideas for their own prayer
relay throughout their towns, and communities.

Pray for Scotland were also present during the More Than Gold visits
sharing their resources.

The Torch Relay will move through almost 100 Scottish towns in June of
2012 and there is something every church can do. Where the Torch will
stop overnight, churches are working together to get involved with local
authorities and volunteering their time and services. In each city, there is a
local person aiming to get all the churches working together to support
this. For more information visit www.morethangold.org.uk or email
torch@morethangold.org.uk.
Royal Highland Show 2012: Planning is already underway for next year’s event from 21st to 24th June. The success of the Churches stand/tent continues to grow, attracting hundreds of visitors to the site each year. Volunteers will be sought to assist in the staffing of the tent – if you would like to be one of them, please be in touch with Lesley Cameron at the Church of Scotland offices, who is co-ordinating the rotas. Her number is 0131 225 5722.

Churches on the Move: The United Reformed Church has recently moved its offices from Cathedral Street, Glasgow to nearby 113 West Regent Street. The Baptist Union of Scotland have also moved their offices from Aytoun Road and are now resident at 48 Speirs Wharf, Glasgow G4 9TH.

The People’s Bible: Reports are coming in about events up and down the country related to The People’s Bible. The Bible Society has offered this exciting initiative in providing an opportunity for people to write a passage from the bible which will be collected in one volume, and presented to the Queen at her Jubilee celebrations. Some churches have made the event an opportunity for ecumenical sharing hosting whole day occasions, with coffees and soup lunches etc, one group even had a bouncy castle, another held a craft fair, while some have marked the occasion in quieter style.

The United Reformed Church has ended its 19 year boycott of Nestlé products when its Mission Council voted to end the ban. The decision was a result of Nestlé’s listing on the FTSE 4 Good Index under their breast milk substitute (BMS) category in March this year. Nestlé has agreed to become more transparent in its reporting and management systems relating to marketing practices in third world countries. The URC Mission Council are now tasked with monitoring the process and will report back to the Council in 2012. If Nestlé were to be delisted from the FTSE4 Good Index then the Council could reinstate the boycott.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year’s theme ‘We will all be Changed’ comes to us from the churches in Poland, reflecting on their experiences as a nation and in particular how they have been changed and transformed as a nation by their troubled history and sustained by their strong faith. Two members of ACTS Church Life Network are part of the Writer’s Group, Revd Andrew Barr of Scottish Episcopal Church and Revd Stephen L Brown of the United Reformed Church. The material offers daily reflections and an order of service which can be downloaded free or ordered from the ctbi website on www.ctbi.org.uk/569
Suicide. Don't hide it. Talk about it.

On the evening of Monday 5th September, about 40 of us gathered on the Beach Boulevard in Aberdeen. With low dark clouds threatening rain from the west, we set off down the steps to the beach, where we wrote the words ‘CHOOSE LIFE’ in large letters on the sand. Candles were then lit, and placed within these letters in the sand left wet by the out-going tide. Some of us lit our candle in memory of a loved one; others lit theirs as a sign of hope for themselves, or for friends going through dark or difficult times.

After hearing a few words of reflection and sharing in a moment of silence, we mingled together to share our experiences and support one another. Everyone there on the beach spoke of how important it is that we listen to each other’s worries and are prepared to give help where it is needed. We can ‘hold the Christ-light’ for one another, and together ‘walk the mile and bear the load’ (from the hymn *Brother, sister, let me serve you*). The message ‘talk about it’ is as important when we are bereaved by suicide as it is at any dark stage on the journey of life.

*Rev Lorna Murray*

**Choose Life:** the national strategy and action plan to prevent suicide in Scotland

www.chooselife.net

**Breathing Space:** 0800 83 85 87 Lines open 24hrs at weekends - (Fri–Mon: 6pm–6am) and 6pm to 2am at other time (Mon–Thurs). www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

**Samaritans:** 08457 90 90 90 Lines open 24hrs every day

---

*Photograph by Linda Paterson, Choose Life Co-ordinator for Aberdeenshire*

Suicide Prevention Week takes place each year in Scotland in early September. This year, once again, Choose Life in Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen city joined together to organise a Beach Walk to promote the Choose Life message.
The Way to Freedom is the title of next year’s Lent Course available from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland at www.ctbi.org.uk written by Keith Clements. The course takes its theme from the poem ‘Stations on the Way to Freedom’ by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran pastor and theologian, penned during his time in prison before being executed for his resistance to Hitler. The six-week course is offered to local congregations, parishes and ecumenical groups.

Speak Up Speak Out is a resource from the joint project between Churches Together in Britain & Ireland and Council of Christians and Jews, prepared for 2012 Holocaust Commemoration. Material available from www.ctbi.org.uk

Scottish Churches House – Thanksgiving Service, Sat 21 Jan 2012, Dunblane Cathedral. A Thanksgiving Service for the contribution of Scottish Churches House to the work of ecumenism in Scotland and beyond will be held in Dunblane Cathedral on Sat 21 Jan 2012 at 2.30pm Details are being finalised and will be posted on the ACTS website (www.acts-scotland.org) and sent out by email alert. The service takes place on the Saturday during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and will use its theme ‘We will all be changed’. We encourage as many people as possible to come along to the service and to remember the occasion in their local Unity Week celebrations.

ACTS 21 Service Over 200 people took part in the ACTS 21 Service of Praise & Prayer, Reflection & Recommitment held in Coatbridge Calder Parish Church (CofS) on Wed 26 Oct 2011. The celebration brought together local churches, ACTS Members Meeting Representatives and ecumenical friends from across the central belt. Many thanks to members of local congregations who led the singing: Coatbridge Calder and Old Monklands (CofS) and St Mary’s Whifflet (RC) singers, the organist from Calder and the Airdrie Salvation Army Band. The singing was powerful and reflective. And, the hospitality after the service was warmly appreciated. Elizabeth Templeton (CofS), Pamala McDougall (RSF), Joe Constantine (RC) and Doug Aitken (SEC) offered reflections on different aspects of the ecumenical journey since the Swanwick Declaration of 1988 and the foundation of ACTS in 1990. Other highlights were the reading of Luke 24:13-35 (the Emmaus Story) in four voices and Praying for the Nation and the World making imaginative use of the St Andrew’s Cross. The service acknowledged the ecumenical hopes and enthusiasm of 1990, the many achievements and some disappointments of the last 21 years. Participants were asked to re-commit themselves, and encourage our churches to engage afresh, for the ecumenical road ahead, and in the work of ACTS. We are grateful to all those who support ACTS and wider ecumenical fora by their prayer and action.

Rural Ministries If funds have prevented you from starting an outreach initiative then, to celebrate 50 years of Rural Ministries, three grants with a maximum of £3,000 each are available to support the most enterprising applications. Rural Ministries will be looking for projects with imagination and the ability to see the gospel impact on community. Awards will be presented in June 2012. Closing date for entries is 1st March 2012 to be sent to Rural Ministries, Wellingborough Innovation Centre, Church Street, Wellingborough NN8 4PD. Check out competition rules at: www.ruralministries.org.uk/what-we-do/outreach-grants