



**Serving Christ,  
each other and  
the community**

- ❖ **Fruits of the Spirit**
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**PRAYER  
FOCUS**

**God is love, and  
whoever lives in  
love lives in God.**

**1 John 4:16**

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

# Harbour Lights

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEWHAVEN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

AUTUMN 2026

## Dear Friends

I love autumn. I love the way the trees change colour even though I realise they are about to lose their leaves as winter approaches. In the country of my birth, South Africa, the seasons aren't as distinct as they are here. They seem to just blend into one another. Spring and autumn, in my recollection, came and went in a blur and were hardly noticeable, whereas, in the UK, as in the rest of the northern hemisphere, they are noticeable. In South Africa it was either hot in summer or cold in winter.

When we lived in Switzerland, in a small village called Buus, not too far from Basel, I used to love spring because the fields were full of wildflowers. After what was usually a cold dreich winter, it was wonderful to witness new life blossoming into being.

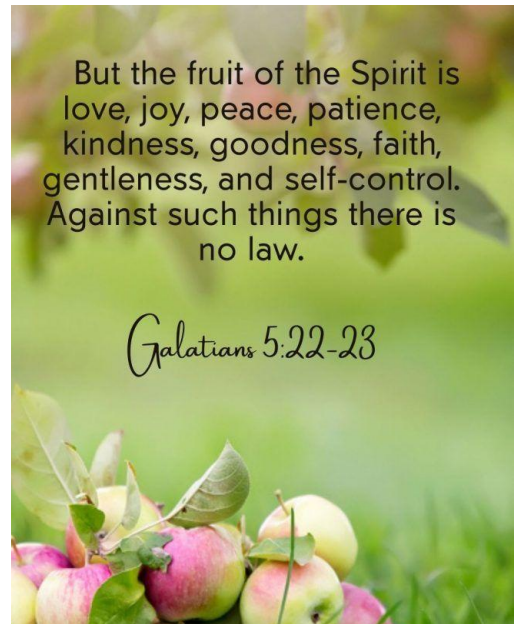
We have an apple tree in the back garden and I've been watching it over the last few weeks as the blossoms have turned into apples. It seems, from what I've seen, that the apple harvest is going to be good.

Thinking of all these things, the changing of the seasons and the ebb and flow of life, I can quite understand why, when the characteristics of the Spirit of God were penned, they were described as fruits. The word fruits conjuring up images of something good and wholesome, something worthwhile. Wonderful gifts of God.

When I was a teenager, thinking about my life and my future, the desire in my heart was for my life to be one that was marked by goodness. I didn't want to squander the gift of life that I had been given. This thought was a huge factor in me coming to Christ because I realised that on my own what I desired to be in my heart was probably never going to happen. I realised my need for God in Jesus Christ.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

*Galatians 5:22-23*



I realised that only through having the Spirit of God dwelling in my heart would I be able to bear the fruits of God's kingdom. And it wasn't about being a good Protestant or because the word 'sinner' had been branded into my conscience. It was about being realistic. In order to bear any fruit I needed a foundation that was stronger, wiser and more loving than I could ever be. I recognised my need for Jesus. I recognised my need to be filled with God's Spirit, to place my entire life into God's hands, in order to be the person God wanted me to be, in order to bear good fruit.

In Paul's letter to the Galatians chapter 5 verse 22 to 23, Paul writes about the Fruits of God's Spirit. He lists them as follows: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. What he was doing was reflecting the nature of God to the people of the church in Galatia, just as he was when he penned his famous piece of writing about agape love in 1 Corinthians 13.

*continued over ....*

Why was he telling them such things? Because he was expressing his frustration that many of the people in the church were disconnecting from the things of God or God's way. They were following a "different" gospel, one that was based on human traditions and social status. In this case, circumcision.

Paul wrote, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." (V6)

What Paul writes echoes the tree in the Garden of Eden in the book of Genesis. It also recalls the metaphorical tree in Psalm 1, which suggests that people can be like strong trees that bear fruit in season if they are rooted by streams of water.

In Psalm 1 the water symbolised the Torah or the law, that as we drink of the water and follow God's instruction, we grow into strong trees that produce fruit that brings healing and wholeness to the world around us. The point being, we only do so when we are fed by the water, when we are rooted in God.

I have often heard new atheists, for example, claiming that we do not need God to be good. They speak as if moral goodness and ethics simply bubbled up out of the ground or fell from the sky at some point in time, and fail to recognise that what we consider good and moral in the West are things that are built on the foundation of the Christian faith; that through the inspiration of the Spirit of God, men and women, sought to build that which was good and godly in our world, their foundation being God and the fruits of God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

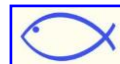
What God does in all of this, through God's Spirit dwelling in us, is to eradicate our egos, so that what we do, in terms of goodness, isn't because we are inherently good, but because the love of Christ in us compels us to love in turn, without seeking reward - the Good Samaritan in the parable Jesus told being a good example of this.

Personally, I believe, when one considers the state of our world and its people, that what our world and all its people need is a healthy dose of the fruits of God's Spirit, and, of course, this will never happen as if by magic. We need to trust in God. We need to follow the teachings of Jesus. We need to let the Spirit of God dwell in our hearts and out through our lives because that's the way God intended/intends it to be.

If you doubt this, consider the name of God in the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures, made up of four consonants YHWH, and say it out loud. What does it sound like? It sounds like a breath in (YH) and a breath out (WH), the very breath of God giving life to humankind, the God in whom we live and move and have our being, the foundation of all that is good and holy.

Much love

**Peter**



## BACK TO SCHOOL 2026

→ with God ←



# CRUMBS!

You are invited to join us

Newhaven church Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September,

crafts at 10am and interactive service 10:30am

Followed by Brunch

We want to pray for the new school year for each child and for each teacher.

We will be lighting a candle for their schools. A new year, a new start – we want it to be a good one.





## Mission and Outreach Group

The Mission and Outreach group has now expanded and includes Iain Borrowman and Richie Biggers. It is good to have new members. We would also welcome anyone else who has a heart for and interest in Mission and Outreach.

As well as setting in motion the Doors Open Day (see separate article), the group has been looking at how to raise the profile of the church and of Jesus in the community. We intend to repeat the Try Church Sunday and have provisionally fixed a date of 20<sup>th</sup> September. Do please consider using this as an opportunity to invite friends and neighbours to try church. It may well be very different from what they remember or think it is!

We have also been thinking, along with Granton, as to what the work will be like going forward. We have the opportunity for a new pioneer minister who will have a different role from Peter's. A key part of this is outreach and we have to work out how we can

build on the existing work of both congregations and how to build on what is already happening and take it forward,

We have also been thinking of how we can take church out into the community. Easter next year will be in March again which means that we are unlikely to have a service in Starbank Park as it will probably be too cold then. We do intend to go carol singing again at Fishmarket Square in the week before Christmas. This has proved to be an increasingly popular local event and we have had to order more carol sheets because of the increasing numbers.

We have also arranged for details of church activities to be placed in the local Premier Inn. This is in addition to the usual Christmas and Easter information.

**John Hodge**



## Doors Open Day

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 1pm to 5pm**

Every year there are Doors Open Days when buildings which otherwise might be shut to the public offer free entry. This year, the Mission and Outreach Group thought that it would be good to open the church to the community. We are conscious that some think that the church is now closed and converted to flats. This will be an opportunity to say that we are still alive and active and to showcase some of the things that go on in the building. We would also offer tea and coffee for those attending.

The theme of this year's Doors Open is "Heritage at Risk: Revive, Resist, Reimagine," highlighting how historical places adapt, face modern pressures, and get protected. This seems particularly appropriate for our building where we can show how an old church building has been reimagined and developed. We are also hopeful that we will be able to offer access into the entrance area to the flats above the church and the residents have indicated that they are supportive of this.

**DOORS  
OPEN  
DAYS 2026**

Church groups will be able to showcase what they offer in the hall and we will also need volunteers to greet people, show them round and explain something of the history of the building and also explain who we are and what we do as a church.

Anyone interested in helping should contact me. It would also be good if those with a detailed knowledge of the building could help with the historical narrative. We will have an agreed text so there is only one story told!

**John Hodge**

# Steering Group Update

**We're on a journey – working toward union with Granton Parish Church**



As we continue moving forward on our journey toward union, the joint Steering Group is delighted to share some encouraging updates from our recent meetings and shared events.

## Steering Group Progress

The Steering Group is working hard behind the scenes to map out our shared future. Current discussions are focused on two major areas.

- **Service Schedules** - The Steering Group and the Team Ministry subgroup have been giving some thought about how worship will take place once the two churches have united. Ultimately, of course, this will be for Peter Bluett, the new Kirk Session and any new Worship Group to agree upon. It is likely to evolve over time, particularly after the calling of an additional minister to make up the Team Ministry.

- **Mission Initiatives** - Aligning our strengths to serve our wider communities.

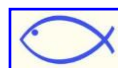
## Celebrating Recent Successes

We have had wonderful opportunities to gather recently, and we are incredibly grateful for your enthusiastic participation.

- **Coffee and Cake at Granton in July** - A massive success, filled with wonderful fellowship and conversation.
- **Joint Service at the beginning of August** - Well attended, fostering a great sense of community and shared faith.
- **Coffee and Cake at Newhaven at the end of August** - The printing deadline for Harbour Lights means we can't report on this – but at the time of writing we're praying that it will be a time of good fellowship and getting to know one another.

Thank you for your continued prayers, patience, and support as we discern the path forward together.

**Colin MacNeill**  
Session Clerk



# Talk and Quiz Night

Both congregations are warmly invited to a special joint social event on **Saturday, October 3rd at 7:30pm.**

Hosted in the main church at **Granton**, this evening is designed purely for fellowship and another step towards getting to know each other.

There will be a short talk from Fergus Cook, followed by a fun, lively quiz to test everyone's knowledge. There will be tea, coffee, and snacks.

The event is entirely free, and no advance tickets are required - simply come along and enjoy the friendly company.



## News from Granton Church



**We are thrilled to have started our new weekly Soup and Sandwich Lunch.**

Every **Wednesday from 12 noon until 2pm**, our doors are open to everyone in the community.

Come and enjoy delicious, freshly prepared food in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. It is the perfect opportunity to catch up with neighbours, meet new friends, and share a warm conversation.

Entry to the lunch is completely free. However, a small donation of £2 is encouraged to help support our running costs.

**We cannot wait to see you there!**

**Granton**  
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND



## Be still. He is our strength

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging...

'He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.' (Psalm 46:1-3, 10-11)

The picture is terrifying.

Roaring oceans and whole mountains collapsing. Solid ground giving way.

Out of control.

And yet...

'Be still,' says God. In the midst of all of this? How can that make sense?

And the word is even more confounding in the original Hebrew. It doesn't just mean stop moving, it literally means 'be weak', 'let go', 'cease striving'. In the midst of the chaos, God says, 'stop doing and be'.

But, there's more. The reason, and the solution to the danger, comes directly after...

'And know' it says – and the word 'know' here refers to knowing not just with your mind, but through lived experience – 'that I am Elohim'. The supreme authority. The one who is unmatched in power.

'Stop trying to do the battle,' God says. 'Experience has shown, and will show again, I am almighty. Your fortress.'

Stop. And remember that he has proven – and will prove again – that he is the answer.

**[from Tearfund - One Voice in Prayer]**

# Harvest Thanksgiving

Our Harvest Thanksgiving service will be held on **Sunday 4th October.**

This year we are focussing on real-life stories from the Losakucha community in north-east Uganda, showing how Tearfund's local partner (CAFRAHD) equipped a church to launch cooperative farming, irrigation, and local business initiatives to overcome drought and hunger. We will hear first-hand stories from community members Esther, Rakele and local pastor Pastor John.

We will also hear about Tearfund's Transforming Communities programme, which has so far involved 1000 churches, equipping 10,000 households to diversify, strengthen and protect their assets through economic sustainability programmes, leading to 100,000 people being supported to access safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Uganda's current population is nearing 41 million, and the country has one of the fastest growing and youngest populations in the world – 54% of the population are under 18 years old. There is an increase in demand for health, education, and employment, while harvests are affected by climate-related emergencies, including flooding, drought and



landslides. Uganda is also hosting almost 1.5 million refugees from neighbouring countries such as South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and Somalia.

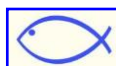
Please remember the work of Tearfund in your prayers. There will be the opportunity to donate at the service, and you can also donate at any time at [www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org) or by cheque to:

Tearfund,  
Challenge House,  
29 Canal St,  
Glasgow G4 0AD

or by bank transfer:

Account number: 5380 3058  
Sort code: 20-00-00  
Account name: Tearfund

**Poverty is not God's plan. You are.**



## Trinity Academy Hub

Are you involved in or praying for any of the schools in the Trinity Academy cluster?  
Then you are invited to join with others in the area to share and pray for all the work going on in these schools.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Newhaven Church

7 Craighall Road, EH6 4ND

8.00-9.00pm

For more information contact:

[heather.merriman@suscotland.org.uk](mailto:heather.merriman@suscotland.org.uk) 0131 445 6919



# Youth Update

## Mega Makers Holiday Club

We had a great holiday club in July with about 58 children over the week, and an amazing talented and committed team from City on a Hill, Ebenezer, Granton, Leith Baptist and Newhaven churches. It was wonderful to have 8 teen helpers, who had "graduated" from holiday club 1-3 years before.

The children were divided into 6 groups according to age. The day included, songs, crafts, games, archery, messy challenges, prayer times and all centred round finding out more about God's love. We spent some time in groups unpacking the Bible story discussing and asking questions. Our theme was Mega Makers, and we had the most amazing Mega Machine made by the extremely talented Lisa from City on a Hill church. We found out how God's love was mega and just got bigger and bigger, wider and wider, stronger and stronger and lasted forever, all through different Bible stories from Matthew's gospel. Ella and Manuella were our junior presenters, 'Brainwave' and 'Boffin', who led us to discover what the Mega Machine could do and linking it to our stories each day. Wednesday afternoon brought Bruce Lockhart from SU to organise Circus skills for those in P3-7. We learnt how to juggle, spin plates and had the big ball roll over the children.



We had an amazing kitchen team from a variety of local churches who prepared a sandwich lunch for us each day with fruit, crisps and home baking. As well as feeding the team, this was a free lunch which many families came to, and we had opportunities to chat more and get to know them (80-100 lunches daily). It was hugely appreciated by all.

New this year was our invitation for parents to come and join us for the last half hour of the club on the

Friday and find out what had been happening over the week. At the end of the morning each family was given a lovely, illustrated book of Mark's gospel from the Scottish Bible Society.

The week ended with a barbeque on Friday evening as a thank you for the leaders and teen helpers in Park Road Park. Even the rain didn't dampen the fun of the evening. Many, many thanks to all those who prayed, supported the fundraising afternoon tea, were on the kitchen team, the children's team and others who were involved in so many different ways. It's so important for churches to work together and holiday club is a happy example of this.

Our **Back to School with God** service is on **Sunday 6th September** when we especially remember our children at school and also the school staff. The theme this year is Jesus the team captain, and we will be looking at the story of the feeding of the 5000. As usual we will be lighting a candle for each school asking Jesus to shine His light into the schools and make a difference. We will also have a prayer tree where families and children can write a prayer on a label and tie it on to the tree. We will use these labels to pray for each situation in the weeks to come.



Our **Shoebbox service** will be on **Sunday 1st November**.

Blythswood is celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Their mission is to show God's love, and offer the compassion, relief and hope that can change lives for good and forever. They bring good into times of crisis and extreme poverty through acts of kindness and the provision of immediate relief and help people to change their longer-term futures for good through education and rehabilitation. As well as the shoebox appeal, Blythswood work with partners in Eastern European countries, Kenya, Pakistan and India. They are based in Inverness where they have foodbanks and charity shops too.

We hope you will support the Shoebox appeal again this year. Last year we collected 119 shoeboxes for children, teenagers and adults.

*continued over ....*

It would be wonderful if we could do the same and maybe fill even more boxes. Why not ask your friends and neighbours to fill a box or help you fill one? A shoebox doesn't solve poverty, but it does share God's love, showing families and adults they have not been forgotten. All the contents are much appreciated by those who have so little. We will have leaflets to tell us what is needed and to make sure we follow the rules of the customs authorities too. The boxes are for boys and girls from 3 years old to adults of all ages. Please note, no baby boxes.

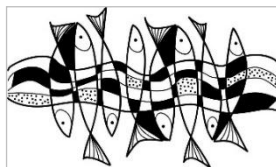


This 2025 shoebox went to seven-year-old Ana, the youngest of four children in a village 20km from the city of Gjakova, Kosovo. In poor health and without employment, her parents, Gëzim and Saranda, survive by scavenging through other people's rubbish for cans and scrap metal.

None of the children are in school. They are extremely poor, and don't get any government support as a family. Ana was excited to find sweets and colourful notebooks, and apparently still treasures them and looks after them with great care.

The parents said, "Your shoeboxes were a great help." In the packages they found important items for daily use, including hats, socks, scarves, gloves and hygiene items." These items of clothing are valued in a region where, for three months of the year, average night-time low temperatures can be below freezing.

**Christine Hodge**



## Timothy

We recently received a letter from Timothy Masasi, Supported by Newhaven Church in his studies at Blessed Generation in Kenya.

Timothy has moved up a year in school and has made new friends.

*...coming with them. I say thank you for the Christmas and birthday gifts that you send to me. I really appreciate those gifts and may God bless you in everything you are doing*

"I say thank you for the Christmas and birthday gifts you send to me. I really appreciate those gifts and may God bless you in everything you are doing"

Please keep collecting your pennies and small change, and give to me any Sunday. Thank you!

**Jackie Souness**



## Newhaven Connections Café News

### Latest from the café

It's hard to believe we are coming to the end of summer already. The year seems to be going by so quickly. As the change in seasons approaches, so there will be a change in the café too. Liesanne, our manager, is expecting and will be going on maternity leave later in October. We are in the process of arranging cover in order to keep the café operating as normal. In the meantime, it is nice to see the regular routines return as schools have started again after the summer holidays. The café will continue to serve the community, remaining consistent in its purpose.

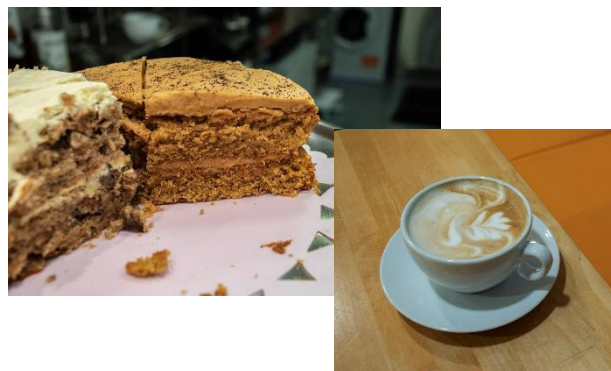
### Partnerships

As you may know, we are just down the road from Trinity Academy secondary school. One of their staff reached out and we have now got one of their students on our volunteer team and potentially another to join. Our café offers them a placement opportunity, providing them with experience and welcoming the students in a safe and friendly environment.

Meanwhile, we continue to provide traybakes to Granton Baptist Church for their coffee mornings. It's great to be supporting other ministries and the community with the services we can provide.

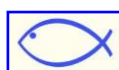
### Volunteering opportunities

Over the last year, and also over the summer, we have had some lovely younger volunteers help out in the café. Unfortunately, they are not able to continue



on with us as they will be moving onto pursue further education. We are so appreciative of their help in this last season and wish them the very best as they go on from here. That means we have some opportunities for new volunteers to (re)join the team. Please let us know if you are interested in supporting the café by dropping in and telling us or dropping an email. We would like to see it continue running smoothly, even while Liesanne goes on maternity leave. Volunteer shifts are scheduled in two-hour time slots and cover a variety of stations, including dishes, drinks, the till, and serving orders. Whether you're keen to learn a new skill or simply want to support the team and be part of the community, there's something for everyone.

**Liesanne Craib**  
Café Manager



## Community Council

I'm the representative for Newhaven Church on the **Trinity and Newhaven Community Council** so do contact me if you have any matters, you wish us to consider. Currently, we are keeping an eye on the impact of Craighall Road being closed. As a community council we understand why it's been closed (parts of Trinity Academy are being rebuilt) but do understand the impact this is having on residents. If there is any change to the timescale (summer 2028), I'll let everyone know.

We are also aware of various planning applications that have been made (and approved) by the Council. The main one being fencing next to Heriots playing



**Trinity & Newhaven**  
Community  
Council

fields on Ferry Road. This will be similar in height to the ones already there but there is some debate about the loss of view that this might incur. Again, we will keep a close eye on things and question the Council directly, if need be.

**Alister Greig**  
Newhaven Church Rep.  
TNCC

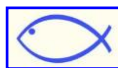
# Church Membership

The Church Roll is more than just a list of members - it is a means of identifying those who have professed their faith in Christ and who are part of his Church at Newhaven.

It is also a vital means of communication. For this reason, it is important that the Church Roll is kept as accurate as possible. Please notify the Roll-Keeper, of any changes/updates.

Is now the right time to consider membership of the Church? We don't talk much these days about formal membership of the Church. However, there are reasons why someone should join the church even if they are already a regular attender. Perhaps the most relevant reason right now is that it gives the person a formal vote on any proposed union of congregations.

If you would like more information on what 'membership' means and involves, please speak to the Minister or Colin MacNeill.



**Committed to Serving Christ,  
each other,  
and the Community**

Newhaven Church of Scotland  
7 Craighall Road  
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Email: [enquiries@n-c.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@n-c.org.uk)  
Website: [www.n-c.org.uk](http://www.n-c.org.uk)  
Charity No. SC019117

## Newhaven Church Roll

### Baptism

Edie, daughter of  
Richie and Jo Biggers

### Admission by Certificate of Transference

Caren Hart

\*\*\*\*\*

### Deaths

Peter Neill  
Christie Morrison

### Transference Certificate

Chris and Lynn  
Galbraith

\*\*\*\*\*

### Copy Deadline

Please send any items for inclusion  
in the next issue of *Harbour Lights* to  
the Editor, Elaine Greig, by 15  
November:-

[editor@n-c.org.uk](mailto:editor@n-c.org.uk)

Printed by Crawford Print and Design  
[info@crawfordprint.co.uk](mailto:info@crawfordprint.co.uk)

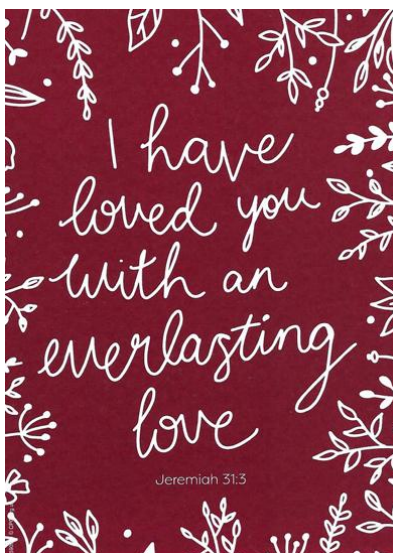
# Try Church Sunday

## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September

Last year we had a try church Sunday. It resulted in three or four new regular attenders. This is a Sunday when we encourage those who may have got out of the way of going to church, or perhaps have never been before, to come along and see what we are on about.

We have arranged for 150 invitations to be printed and we hope folk will invite any friends and neighbours, particularly if they have shown interest in why we go to church, to come along and find out for themselves. Why not start now praying that God will show you who to invite?

Also, pick up an invitation or two so you have one ready if someone shows interest.



Our job is to give out the invitation. Leave it to the Holy Spirit to get them to come!



[www.n-c.org.uk](http://www.n-c.org.uk)

