

GRAPEVINE

No 100

Spring 2013

THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF BRECHIN

From The Right Reverend Dr Edward Luscombe

When I arrived in the Diocese of Brechin forty-two years ago, I was surprised to discover that there had not been any diocesan magazine or newsletter since 1950. It was not until 1982 that the first issue of "Grapevine" appeared under the editorship of the Reverend Ian Hay, then Rector of St Andrew's, Brechin. The primary reason for the long absence of a magazine was financial. We only embarked upon the venture when the Diocese was sufficiently solvent to meet the cost of publication and was reasonably confident that it could continue.

I am delighted that *Grapevine* has now reached its hundredth edition, and I would like to congratulate Michael Turner on his achievement in which he has

played no small part. Between Ian Hay and Michael Turner there have been other editors who have put in many hours of hard work to produce the magazine – Nigel Peyton, the late Jim Bremner, the late Richard Jones and Sidney Fox. To all of them the diocese owes its thanks.

There are inevitably different views about the right content of any church magazine. Debates over the years in the General Synod about "inspires" and its predecessors amply confirm this. It is difficult, if not impossible, to strike a balance that satisfies everyone. My own view is that *Grapevine* is a "house magazine" and should relate to people and places within the Diocese of Brechin. (As a confirmed cruciverbalist I would exclude the crossword from that restriction.) It is often the only place in which we can share in the successes and achievements of our congregations and members, as well as their trials and tribulations. Sometimes, too, it is the one place that records the contributions to the life of the Church by deceased clergy and lay people. *Grapevine* has not always got it right, but on the whole has been remarkably successful.

Now we have reached a hundred, I am grateful for that, and wish the editor and *Grapevine* *ad multos annos*.

From The Right Reverend Dr Nigel Peyton

One of the remarkable joys of returning to the diocese where my ministry and family life began in 1976 is re-joining a continuing story. The story of the city of Dundee and the Brechin diocesan story of people and places and their Christian faith journeys over many years. The photo of Bishop Ted and me below characterises the shared threads of ministry and the passing mantle of leadership. Another picture on the back page illustrates the maturing lives of some 'Cathedral youngsters' thirty years on.



A Brace of Bishops

Michael Turner's research reveals that in the spring of 1985 I edited *Grapevine* No. 10. However my reign was short-lived as I left All Souls Invergowrie in the autumn of that year to become Vicar of inner

city All Saints Nottingham. Bishop Ted reminds us of the background and purpose and benefits of a diocesan house magazine. Back in the Scottish Episcopal Church I now find myself as the bishop member of the provincial Information & Communications Board and a regular columnist in the *Dundee Courier* newspaper – and in *Grapevine*.

Now in 2013 alongside *Grapevine* we have the monthly *Brechin Bulletin* (already at issue 73) and our new diocesan website <www.brechin.anglican.org> where all our publications are archived. Back in 1985 who would have imagined this possible or so accessible? Information technology and social media – Facebook, Twitter and blogs – propel us ever faster into the future. I have looked forward to celebrating *Grapevine*'s centenary and pushing the boat out with a colour cover!

In the same way that the Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament Bible tells the story of the beginnings of the Church, its excitements and struggles, so *Grapevine* continues to tell our story of mission and service amidst the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. Those who follow need to appreciate their roots and *Grapevine* is the Brechin family journal.

+Ngi

One hundred (not) out

A century – a mark of achievement or a measure of survival?

A batsman scoring 100 runs is rightly to be congratulated; the adding of the last penny to complete a pound is hardly worthy of applause. Yet the majority of people seem to be fascinated by numbers. Apart from primitive tribes whose counting system amounted to “One, Two, A Lot”, mankind likes to record, calculate and celebrate.

Remember The Millennium (though for the purist this should have been 1 January 2001, there being no Year 0) and all the celebrations hyped up by the media, and the commemorative artefacts bearing the quasi magical number 2000. In fact this date would not have been marked had it not been that a Scythian monk, Dionysius Exiguus (Dennis the Dwarf) invented the *Anno Domini* era by stating (erroneously) that ‘the present year was 525 “since the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ”’. And so the calendar of the western world has ever since followed.

Grapevine has not been published, however, for a period of decimal years, but this is the hundredth edition. Originally in 1982 there were three editions each year and then four, but, following a period of erratically produced editions in the late 1990s, from 2000 it has consistently appeared three times a year. Initially it was subtitled *The Diocese of Brechin Review*, but after a brief flurry of the description as *The Flagship Diocese*, from 1999 the tag became *The Magazine of the Diocese of Brechin*. This change perhaps more accurately reflects the nature and purpose of the periodical.

Certainly there have been reviews of events which have taken place – meetings of synods and action groups, clergy institutions and significant celebrations, sermons which have been preached and reports of conferences held and quite rightly

acknowledgement of the contribution to the life of the church and society made by those who have died. All these have enabled information of what has taken place in the life of the churches in our diocese to be more widely known. But in addition over the years there has been a sharing of some of the things which have taken place in the dioceses with which we are linked, Iowa and Swaziland.

Grapevine has also been a vehicle for making people aware of what is in the future – forthcoming gatherings, planned social and liturgical occasions, introducing clergy about to take up posts in our congregations, alerting people to challenges and opportunities which are anticipated. However, because of the comparative infrequency of *Grapevine* the late Bishop John Mantle inaugurated the monthly *Brechin Bulletin* to carry news of forthcoming events, thus diminishing this aspect of *Grapevine*.

But *Grapevine* has also served as a medium to share thoughts on a wide variety of subjects connected with the Christian life and faith. So, for example, over the years there have been contributions concerning matters of faith and morality, music and art, devotion and prayer. Sometimes these more general pieces have linked into discussions taking place in the wider church, such as issues of children and Communion and of ordination, gender and sexuality. Hopefully this has enabled readers to be better informed on what is being debated.

Printing technology has developed considerably over the past 30 years. Although the earliest editions had some clear illustrations, photographs were not so distinct. Now, however, images, as long as they are of decent quality, can be reproduced with high resolution. And if it is true a picture can say as much as a thousand words, that is all to the good.

The archive of past editions does have a few gaps. Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 29, 30, 53, 55 and 56 are missing. Perhaps some or all of these are lurking at the back of a cupboard or in a rarely opened drawer. If you come across any of these please let the editor know so that the records may be made more complete.

Achievement or survival? I leave you, the reader, to judge; but hopefully something some time in *Grapevine* gets you thinking or makes you smile.

MT

The Judas Tree

In Hell there grew a Judas tree
Where Judas hanged and died
Because he could not bear to see
His Master crucified.

The Lord descended into Hell
And found His Judas there,
Forever hanging on the tree
Grown from his own despair.

So Jesus cut His Judas down,
Took him in His arms,
It was for this I came, He said,
And not to do you harm.

My Father gave me twelve good men
And all of them I've kept,
Though one betrayed and one denied
Some fled and others slept.

In three days' time I shall return
To make the others glad,
But first I had to come to Hell
To share the death you had.

My tree will grow in place of yours
Its roots strike here as well.

There is no final victory
Without this soul from Hell.

So when we all condemn him
As of every traitor worst
Remember that of all His men
Our Lord forgave him first.

Ruth Etchells

Honest to God

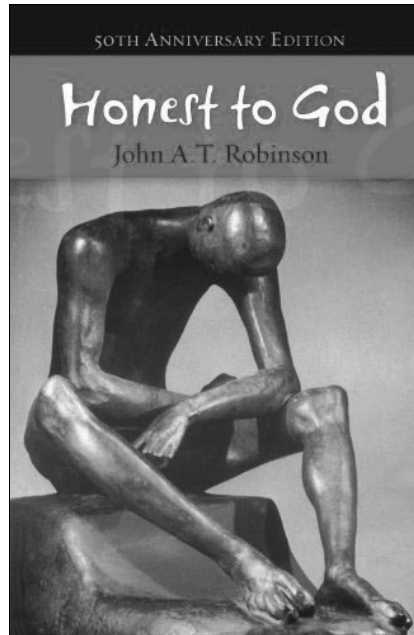
It's not often that the publication of a theological book receives much public attention. For most people, theology remains a specialized field that is unlikely to be of interest to anyone but academics and a few clergy who may still read the stuff. (There's an old saw that claims that if you look at clergy bookshelves, you can tell where their theology died!)

But there are exceptions. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of a theological book that was rightly described as a bombshell at the time, condemned by some and greeted with relief by others. The fact that it was written by a leading figure of the Church of England added to its impact. The book was *Honest to God*, by John A.T. Robinson, the Bishop of Woolwich, and it has just been reissued in a 50th Anniversary Edition.

In this groundbreaking book, Bishop Robinson advocated new ways of interpreting traditional Christianity and conceiving of the supernatural. In doing so, he was influenced by a number of others, notably the late Paul Tillich, said by some to be the greatest theologian of the 20th century.

One of Tillich's central ideas was making a clear distinction between form and content in the way we approach the idea of God.

While the form of such conceptions is understandably anthropomorphic (i.e. having human characteristics), the content must ultimately be more abstract, since when we use the word "God" we are referring to That Which ultimately lies beyond our comprehension. Thus, in a famous definition, Tillich identified God as "the ground of all being".



Bishop Robinson developed this idea in such a way as to discourage people from thinking of God in personal (Theistic) terms or as existing "up there" or "out there". For him, these conceptions

were outdated simplifications of the nature of divinity. Instead he encouraged the notion of a God Who was beyond time and space, yet immediately present in human experience. Such a God could be said to be less a 'Being' than a State of Being or, if we prefer, a kind of 'Light Energy'.

In his Preface, Robinson said he was convinced that there was "a growing gulf between the traditional orthodox supernaturalism in which our Faith has been framed" and the way people actually think in our time. He thus called for "far more than a restating of traditional orthodoxy in modern terms", and called instead for a re-examination of "the most fundamental categories of theology – of God, of the supernatural and of religion itself". In so doing he helped to usher in the era of post-Theistic thinking that we are entering today.

In the end, *Honest to God* sold millions of copies, more than any religious book since *Pilgrim's Progress*. Translated into almost every language, it succeeded, as few books have ever done, in initiating world-wide theological debate, not just among Christians, but the public at large. And for this we can surely remain grateful, 50 years on.

Hugh Magee

EASTER PEOPLE

Evil is that with which we always have to deal and for that reason God gives us the strength for victories that are seemingly difficult or impossible. One who would despair of humanity would be sinning against God. Of course one is not called to believe that tomorrow morning wolves will become lambs; but that one can and must fight with the strength of a lamb, of the sacrificed lamb. And that if one is the victim in this struggle, it will be as if Christ were the victim. In other words: that God will manifest his power of resurrection, will give us life.

From now on and until the world has taken on the final form of the agony of Christ, the divine strength which enables us to go through time is the very strength of the risen Christ. It is the present mystery of the eternal Son made flesh

which opens in our history the path to resurrection.

But there is a way to understand this which is somewhat mythical – like the time when people speak of better tomorrows. People then say: "He is risen: it is all over then."

But in reality "He is risen" means that you Christians have the strength to enter into the Passion of Christ. For his power of Resurrection will enable you from now on to be united to his death. Thus you will yourselves be the Easter of the world. Remember what Paul said to the Colossians: "What you are is not yet apparent, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:3).

Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger

A World Away . . . in our world

I'm sitting at the airport waiting for a bus into Dhaka, among heavily bearded men. To pass the time, they recite the Koran. A strike has been called by the opposition, from dawn till dusk, which no-one dare break. Everything, even the airport, closes down from dawn till 6 p.m. One of the men, his hair and beard dyed a bright henna, asks if I am a Muslim. He is disappointed at my reply, but wishes me welcome. "Salam Eleyakum" and I reply "Eleyakum Salam". After 3 hours, there is transport into Dhaka.

I'm on my way to visit a project, financed by the RSPB, to re-introduce captive vultures, from a breeding programme, into the wild. The number of vultures in the Indian sub-continent, has tumbled from around 35 million to only 110,000, with tragic effects.

It means that vultures, which are nature's scavengers, are no longer cleaning up rotten animal carcasses. Feral dogs, jackals and rats have replaced them, and are thriving. Dog attacks on livestock and people have increased, as has the incidence of rabies. Carcasses pose an increased threat of disease. To dispose of animal carcasses is expensive, which Indian villagers can ill afford.

And if there are no vultures the Parsees cannot dispose of their dead. Corpses are normally left

out in special sacred sites, and are consumed by the birds very quickly. It is forbidden in their religion to bury their dead, as this pollutes the earth, or to cremate their dead, as this pollutes the sky. The decline in vulture numbers has caused great human suffering.

The Culprit: Diclofenac. This medicine is used widely by farmers and vets for a variety of animal ailments.

Vultures which eat meat from carcasses containing Diclofenac quickly die from kidney failure and a kind of gout.

Most cattle in India are considered sacred, and are not consumed by people, but die naturally, and are consumed by vultures. It has been shown that even if 1% of animal carcasses contain lethal levels of the drug, it is enough to have caused the almost total collapse of vulture numbers. Diclofenac is now banned, and a substitute, Miloxicam has now been patented.

The project is headed by a local couple, Tania and Munir Khan. They guard an area of rain forest where vulture numbers have risen to around 26. I stay at their home, where they have ten cats: among them a pair of orphaned fishing cats, which are fed in a special cage as they will kill the other cats if set free. They are still tiny, and will be reintroduced into the wild after 6 weeks.

A girl of 13 visits the house to clean. She has been withdrawn from school as they cannot afford the school fees. I offer to pay, but Tania tells me it is too late. So what is her future? I ask. Already they are looking for a suitable husband!

Bangladesh is not for the faint hearted. Visitors are unusual, and are stared at from very close range: the comfort zone seems to be around 2 feet, but this is a country with 1,100 people per square kilometre.

There are beggars everywhere, often in a pitiable condition. At the railway station a young man, whose remaining leg is covered in open sores, bleats for alms in a plaintive voice. He drags himself along the platform, clutching a few taka, as Muslims are obliged to give to charity. Others live exactly where they have been born – on the little islands which separate the tracks. Blind men sing verses from the Koran, young children in rags crowd around and plead for hand-outs. It's impossible to give to them all, and guilt kicks in with a vengeance.

And I think of the angry man who knocks on my door to complain that a parishioner has parked their car on a Sunday morning (for 1 hour) in *his* street!

Canon Peter Barry
St Francis of Assisi Church,
Mannofield, Aberdeen

Dr James Urquhart, 1918-2013

Before coming to Dundee Jim Urquhart had served as Medical Officer in the RAF, during which time he had assisted the chaplains and encouraged all ranks to participate in church services. On leaving the RAF he went into medical administration setting up a new hospital in Northern Ireland.

Then he was appointed District Medical Officer in Dundee, but this did not interfere with his church commitments. He became part of the congregation of St Margaret's Lochee, eventually becoming Treasurer and Lay Elector. He not only served the congregation but participated in the Diocesan Synod, was on the Diocesan Executive Committee and convened the Diocesan Restructuring Committee. He

could be relied upon to express his views amicably yet forcefully and after giving careful thought to any matter he was wont to say "the Lord will provide".

On a personal level he was a good and caring friend to many, generous with his time, talents and indeed his cash! He often scooped prizes in raffles, simply because he had bought so many tickets in support of the various charity events. He continued his work with the RAF, being involved with the RAF Benevolent Fund and he also chaired the Tayside Pre-Retirement Council.

His interests ranged widely as evidenced by his bookshelves and he loved the Scottish countryside and heritage. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.



Have you seen the new Diocesan Website yet?

No, then go to <www.thedioceseofbrechin.org>

See the latest news and archived materials, history and resources, future events, details of churches and much more.

INSTALLATION



On 13 January the Rev'd Dr Francis Bridger was installed in St Paul's Cathedral as Dean of Brechin. The Dean of Edinburgh, the Very Rev'd Susan Macdonald, was the guest preacher.

Victorious Verbalist

A good number of entries came in for the last crossword. Unfortunately a couple had a mis-spelling ('miscellanious' instead of 'miscellaneous') and had to be disqualified.

The correct solution was:

C	A	R	O	L	O	N	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y
H	E	A				I	E	E					
R	I	C	H	T	E	R	G	O	D	E	T	I	A
I	T	E	E			H	A	A					S
S	N	O	W	S	C	A	L	P		H	I	N	T
T	R	B	O			A	T			L			
M	I	S	C	E	L	L	A	N	E	O	U	S	
A						A	L	D	R				A
S	P	E	R	P	E	N	D	I	C	U	L	A	R
						R	S	C	R	H	E		P
G	A	O	L			S	T	E	E	R		A	C
H	B	O				I	S	O		T			N
A	L	L	E	G	R	O		S	E	R	P	E	N
N	E	R				N				A	R	E	
A	I	M	L	E	S	S	L			L	I	N	E

The correct answer picked out by an independent person (one of the tenors in Tayside Opera!) came from Judy and David Robinson. Well done!

There's another crossword on page 10.

Comment

I have friend who is involved, possibly over-involved, with a mish-mash of New Age beliefs. One of the more intriguing is that the universe is expanding at such an amazing rate that all the impurities of thought and action are being shaken to the surface, which would explain all the less pleasant recent revelations about senior figures in church, politics, and entertainment.

Maybe at eighty-one years of age I have grown more cynical, and I find it curious that revelations of comparatively ancient ecclesiastic and political 'inappropriate behaviour' are suddenly brought to light just before important elections in both fields. I also think it very unjust that people who have been thus accused should have their names splattered all over the press before they have been arrested and charged. Whether they are guilty or not, the bad publicity will

hang over them afterwards for a very long time. I also think that a lot of stuff that can be described now as sexual harassment, is, in many cases, something that we knew in the 'forties and 'fifties as flirting.

Going back to the wonders of the universe, it is interesting to note that astronomy, with such concepts as black holes and negative matter, is becoming less and less materialistic and much more esoteric in its images. The Darwinian evolutionists have also had their cast-iron concepts of natural selection somewhat bruised by the fact that a once discredited experiment that sought to prove the Lamarckian theory of evolution has been done again recently and found to be sound.

Jean Baptiste de Lamarck, a French scientist, believed animals evolved because they wanted to. For example, giraffes grew long necks because they realised that

they needed them to reach and eat the higher foliage; thus demonstrating the power of animal will power, as opposed to natural selection, as the dominant factor in evolution. Very briefly the experiment which demonstrated the truth of this theory, involved taking Midwife Toads, and removing them from their dry habitats and putting them in a wet environment. This caused the toads eventually to spawn naturally in water, rather than the male wrapping his mate's eggs round his back legs and hopping about on land until they hatched – the habit from which these little amphibians gained their name.

Both these new astronomical findings and recent biological research shows that the conflict between religion and science is much less than once was feared; something we Christians should be glad to note!

Francis D. Bowles

DIOCESAN SYNOD

The Brechin Diocesan Synod held its statutory meeting on 2 March at Chalmers Ardler Church, Dundee. It commenced with a celebration of the Eucharist during which Bishop Nigel delivered his Charge, the theme of which was 'Growing Church'. This was based upon the two Scripture readings of Acts 4:1-22 (the witness borne by Peter and John before the Sanhedrin) and Luke 10:1-12 (our Lord's sending out of the seventy). The full text of this is printed on page 9.

After refreshments had been taken the scheduled business took place in due order with no matters being contentious. Reports of statistics were duly received as were the major reports of the Administration Board and the Mission & Ministry Board presented by their respective convenors. And some minor proposals for amendments to certain canons were passed without objection.



The Provost speaks on canonical amendments to the gathered Synod

Appointments to various diocesan posts were made and elections to the General Synod were swiftly carried through. It was also announced that Ms Ann Johnston, a long-standing Scottish Episcopalian, had agreed to be the Diocesan Secretary and that Mr John Thom, of Miller Hendry, was to be Diocesan Registrar in succession to Mr Alastair Dorward, whose stalwart contribution to the life of the diocese was noted with gratitude.

Scattered through the agenda, however, there were some significant presentations.

Secretary General

First among these was information given by Mr John

Stuart, Secretary General of the Scottish Episcopal Church. He drew attention to the Provincial website which now had a section on Vestry Resources, replacing the older printed Vestry Handbook. He thanked all who had contributed their views to the consultation on the problems regarding the funding of pensions and said that following further meetings a report of decisions reached would be published soon.

In the context of the current political and social discussion on same-sex marriage, he said that the bishops initiated a discussion through the Church's Mission & Ministry Board on this issue. (In the light of this a Members' Motion on the subject was withdrawn later in the synod meeting.) He also said that, although the General Synod last June had voted not to adopt the proposed Anglican Covenant, ways needed to be found to affirm a sense of communion in a meaningful and practical fashion. Lastly, he reported that, partly in response to debate in wider society, the Scottish Episcopal Church would shortly be publishing a booklet in the Grosvenor Essay series on dying.

Companion Dioceses

The presentation on our Companion Dioceses was given jointly by Bishop Nigel and Mrs Pat Millar. The Bishop assured everyone that the links with our companion dioceses of Iowa and Swaziland were safe in his hands; perhaps these relationships may have been 'sleeping' a little and now needed to be re-energised. He spoke of his October visit to Iowa where he attended their Annual Convention. A range of visits took him to all parts of the diocese, but he dwelt particularly on time spent at Sioux City where



Mr John Stuart

at St Paul's Indian Mission he was given an embroidered garment looking something like an eiderdown. Wrapped around people together it was a powerful symbol of how through baptism we are made into relatives with one another in the Church.

He spoke of the pleasure he derived from participating in the consecration of Ellinah Wamukoya as Bishop of Swaziland on 17 November, the only white bishop there. He travelled extensively to churches and parishes including Usuthu, site of the original Christian mission, which celebrates its centenary this year. It was his first visit to Swaziland which he described as a beautiful country but with enormous challenges. He reminded people of the fundamental meaning of the word 'companion': someone who shows where bread is to be found. Whatever the differences between Brechin and Swaziland, we are joined in searching for and receiving that bread of life given in the Gospel.

Pat Millar took up the story. This had been her fourth visit to Swaziland and she observed a number of changes in fortunes and circumstances. She quoted some alarming statistics:

- 15% of families in the 1 million population are headed by children.
- there are at least 130,000 orphans and vulnerable children.
- 70% of the population are at or below the absolute poverty line.
- at least 40% are infected with HIV Aids.
- 20,000 fall sick annually, but there are only 2,000 hospital beds.
- Life expectancy is 32 years.

She reported that some of the projects which had previously seemed to be going well had been scaled back. At Mpaka there were fewer children and faces looked sadder. Although Neighbourhood Care Points had been set up providing safety, a little food, advice and education, so far this

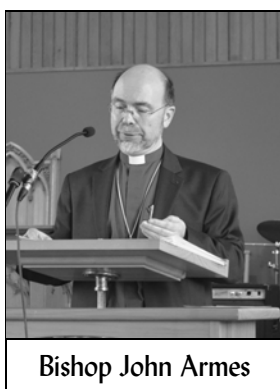
year no money to run them had been received. However, building on a previous initiative a Women's Craft Group was earning an income from fabrics and sewing, whilst older women with poor eyesight were raising poultry for eggs and meat.

Incredibly difficult as the circumstances are, one person, having learnt that some younger people seem to be able to cope and live with HIV Aids, remarked, "It looks as if we might have another generation after all."

The Diaconate

The Rt Rev'd John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh, introduce a discussion document entitled *Truly Called ... Two*.

It is 26 years since the SEC produced a report entitled *Truly Called by God to Serve as a Deacon*, and 10



Bishop John Armes

years ago the Church of England published a report on the permanent, vocational diaconate. Now, the Porvoo Communion, which comprises Anglican and Lutheran Churches in British, Nordic and Baltic countries, committed itself in 1994 "to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry".

Diakonia, Bishop John reminded us, as the caring ministry of the Church, was the Gospel in action, expressed through loving one's neighbour, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggling for justice. It is not an optional extra, but is intrinsic to all of us in our calling as baptised disciples. Nonetheless individual people who are ordained deacon focus in worship the diaconal nature of the Church and may increasingly articulate this serving role in society at large. A deacon may be a catalyst for a congregation's outreach.

Bishop John commended the document for further study and comment.

Growing Church

The last major element in the Synod agenda was the Bishop's Report. Continuing the theme he had marked out in his earlier Charge, he said that the published statistics, which had revealed a steady decline in numbers over the last 20 years, showed this had been halted. He now looked forward to reversing the trend. He had completed his initial visitation to all congregations and had received the majority of responses from them to his enquiry as to how growth had taken place over the past year and what was envisaged for this year.

He affirmed that there were many ways in which progress had been made and identified some of the resources which could be appropriately employed to promote this. But he also acknowledged that in a variety of ways and for many reasons difficulties were still present.

Regarding personnel he recalled the sadness felt at the death of the Rev'd Joyce Mumford, but also his delight at instituting the Rev'ds Francis and Helen Bridger to Broughty Ferry. Looking forward he was pleased to announce that Felix Smith, currently in training at Cuddesdon Theological College, would on June 29 be ordained to serve in the Cathedral and there were advanced discussions with the Church Army for them to establish a centre for mission in Dundee.

He concluded his report by saying, "Luke records that people took notice of the apostles because 'they had been with Jesus' – my prayer is that it may be so for us in our diocese."

The full text of the Bishop's Report can be found on the diocesan website:
<www.thedioceseofbrechin.org>

It had been a very full day, but Synod closed on a positive note with a feeling that it had been a profitable and informative occasion and a sense that the diocese can go forward with confidence.

Andrew McHutchison

Andrew was born and raised in the Arbroath area. His professional life was spent in some form of accounting work. Much of this work was done for the educational departments of local councils, but after he retired from this he became freelance and was latterly working for a local garage. But he was best known as an organist and amateur organ builder.

He started playing in a number of Arbroath churches and then moved to the Lowson Memorial Church in Forfar. He then moved to the Scottish Episcopal Church and was organist for many years at St Luke's, Downfield where his long-term project was to install the organ he had acquired from the now demolished church of St Luke's in Lochee. He was active in the Tayside Organists' Society. His organ playing was well above average and he gave advice to churches on the upkeep of their instruments and the rebuilding of them. He was also a very keen DIY man who was more than capable of servicing his own car.

He suffered from long term ill-health so his sudden death was not a total surprise. He will be much missed. Though honest about relationships with some clergy he was totally without malice.

Robert Lightband

St Mary's Church, Arbroath

April Concerts

Thursday 18, at, 7.30 p.m.

CRIES of LONDON

Esther Brazil, Ben Williamson, John Cuthbert, Peter Foggit and Laurence Williams

*Close harmony group singing
a wide variety of music*

Tickets £8 (concessions £6)

Thursday 25 at 7.30 p.m.

Bruce Davies

Singer-Songwriter from Fife
Tickets £6 (concessions £5)

Saint Salvador's Food Cupboard

alias The Sunday Afternoon Drop-in

St Salvador's drop-in session for the local needy and vulnerable of the Hilltown area is held every Sunday afternoon from 1.15 to 2.15. It follows in the tradition of Alexander Penrose Forbes who was responsible for the building of our beautiful church in the squalid surroundings of the mid-19th century Hilltown. He built a splendid church which would lift people's hearts to the Glory of God: the setting up of a mission to these same people and the provision of a school to educate the children.



We hope that the drop-in session is a practical expression of Bishop Forbes' mission to the still very needy and vulnerable folk of the Hilltown as it exists in 2013.

The drop-in has developed over about eight years and currently we try to help anything up to sixty plus needy people each session. No conditions apply, anyone and everybody is welcome, all ages, and we are all equal during that hour, as we are in the eyes of the Almighty always. Food of all sorts which has been given (and once in a while piping hot soup) is served, along with gallons of tea/coffee and fruit squash; also everyone leaves with a modest bag of groceries to take away.

We aim to have a minimum of thirteen helpers, at least six of whom circulate and hand round the food so that each person can choose what he/she eats. We are scattered round the back of the church and in the nave. This

mingling gives the opportunity for one-to-one chat. Up to date advice may be given – for example details of organisations who can give specialist help with problems, such as information on Benefits.

This informal mixing, sitting and talking about anything and everything provides an opportunity for problems to be spoken about if anyone wishes this. Naturally these conversations are confidential.

Many have addiction problems, alcohol or drug abuse or a combination of both, and others. All of these inevitably lead to general living problems.

No religion is preached but we try to be as sensitive as possible to anyone who looks as if they want to go off to the Lady Chapel to pray or be prayed

with. Quite a few choose to light a candle and pray by the statue of Our Lady, again on their own or accompanied. There is always a supply of simple prayer cards at the prie-dieu which they are encouraged to take away.

Some are interested in the building itself and a tour can lead to indirect teaching when we look at the figures in the stunning reredos or the stained glass, particularly in the Lady Chapel.

Some people come at times of acute emotional or financial stress: some simply because of problems trying to budget for two weeks at a time or because there has been a 'hiccup' with their Benefits. The latter is, sadly, common and is becoming increasingly so with the changes being made. Once one of them has 'given us a try', he/she tends to come back to a safe, accepting, companionable atmosphere. An occasional one may come back a

year or two after life has settled down, just to say hello, thank-you; and occasionally, tear-jerkingly, one little lady appears with an envelope containing several bank notes because "I am grateful for what you did for me and want to give something back!" and then she slips away as inconspicuously as she had come! There are other similar heart rending stories but this isn't the place to recount them!

There are some new faces every week; old friends reappear from the past; some come for weeks on end; some come just once; quite a few come as much for the companionship and acceptance and chat as for the food. A few are desperately hungry – not a pretty sight! The ages range upwards to 'three score years and ten' though few reach that age. A lot of the guys seem to be in their late thirties.

The age range of helpers is wide, from our young medical students to wrinklies like me (mid-80s), males and females. Our backgrounds and experience are equally varied! The whole operation is truly ecumenical plus non-aligned friends who provide a stalwart proportion of the whole group.

If you would like to come along and see what happens on a Sunday afternoon, please let me know beforehand. Visitors usually like to join with the other helpers. New or potential helpers normally start off behind the second table which serves cold drinks and has a selection of the food that is on offer that particular day. There are always two helpers stationed behind this table, so no visitor in this position feels alone!

Please pray for the work that is done, for the helpers and the needy who come. We rely greatly on this source of strength!

Further information or for a chat, please contact Ann Noltie, 30a Windsor Street, Dundee DD2 1BL; tel. 01382 643832; or email <ann.noltie@blueyonder.co.uk>.

Growing Church

The Bishop's Charge to Synod

When they saw the courage of Peter and John ... they were astonished and took note that they had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

It has been said, if someone accused you of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict?

Clearly the apostles had shared Jesus' life and all too brief ministry. But when confronted by the Jewish council in Jerusalem they grasped the moment and demonstrated a courage which is the hallmark of the birth of the Church.

'Being companions with Jesus' nowadays, as the Church of Chapter 2013 of the Acts of the Apostles, is the challenge of contemporary discipleship that we have to get our heads around.

The Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles is a celebration of fulfilment and mission – light for the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. A single-authored, two volume account of the ministry of Jesus and of the beginnings of the first century Church in which the life blood is the activity of the Holy Spirit.

Recent biblical scholarship (Luke Timothy Johnson) has emphasised the prophetic qualities of the accounts of Jesus' message and the mission of the early Church. It is not just that Jesus and the Church are the fulfilment of God's promise but that each individual Christian now embodies that fulfilment, in our words, our deeds and being.

Moreover, the Church that Luke envisions will develop in a prophetic spirit of shared wealth, itinerancy, prayer and servant

leadership: themes abundant in Luke-Acts and which we catch a glimpse of in our readings this morning.

Such characteristics proved attractive and generated the growing faith, numbers and influence the fledgling Church.

Luke convinces his readers that things are meant to happen this way. The working of God's Spirit in human freedom did not cease with Jesus but continued in the life of the disciples and continues in us today.

'Salvation is found in Jesus Christ, the cornerstone.' In multi-cultural Jerusalem this bold and clear message of the apostles was heard and believed.

Again, the sending out of the 70 provides a glimpse of the missionary urgency, method and scope of the first followers of Jesus, sent out in twos (an approach much copied down the centuries). We note the theology of the potential harvest, and anxiety concerning such a meagre labour force, and the Kingdom message: the mixture of courage, stamina and pragmatism which keeps the disciples moving forward, travelling light, and unafraid (as we might say in these parts) 'to be a wee bit sharp' with stubborn folk along the way.

So Luke-Acts can inform the challenges of today by providing us with a language, with the conviction and courage and with a method for mission.

The opportunity therefore is to understand our Christian discipleship as a quietly subversive alternative fellowship serving, challenging and

convincing the world in which we live today.

Going where growing discipleship leads us, not only in the life of the Church but, more importantly, beyond sacred walls, in serving the world. Responding to community needs grasping the possibilities of public space. Reaching out to seekers of faith, to the uncommitted and the simply curious. Challenging doubters and the timid who say it can't be done.

My clear charge to us in our diocese is to grow in faith, in numbers and in outreach, a programme based on a lively discipleship in our congregations, vestries and clergy and the ways in which we relate to wider society. It's an approach that has to be intentional, honest and possibility, not problem, driven. We must ensure that our clergy flourish and are effective. That our vestries are vibrant and visionary. And where this not the case be honest and deal with it.

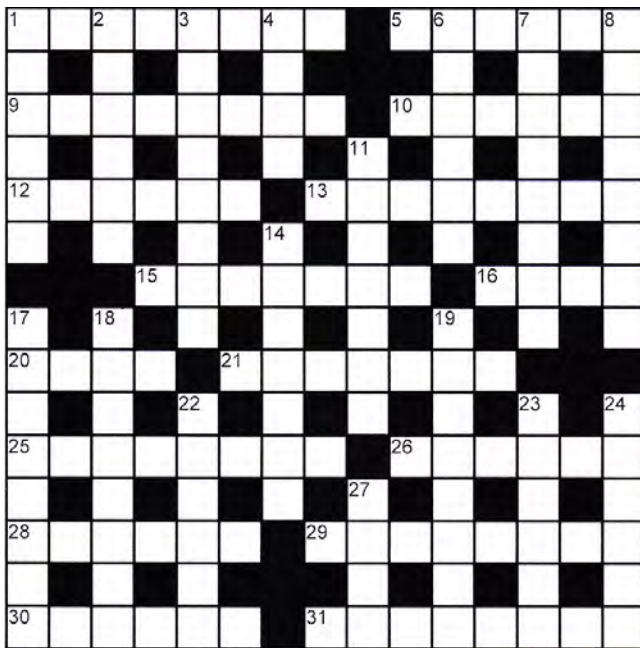
My theological college principal (and former Provost of our Cathedral), Alastair Haggart was elected Bishop of Edinburgh aged 60 after three decades in orders. He described himself as 'an old man in a hurry' – echoing the words of Pope John XXIII. I share his sentiment and urgency. There is much to do in our diocese. And there is a vulnerability both in our moments of despair and our moments of optimism.

However two things I know. Firstly I have as much enthusiasm for the power of the gospel to transform lives as I did the day I was ordained. And secondly, that whatever we strive for, we ultimately live in God's time.



CRYPTIC PRIZE CROSSWORD

For this centenary edition at least six answers are close to home! Send your entries in to the editor at the address on the back page by Saturday, 3 August at the latest and make sure you put your name and address in the box provided.



CLUES ACROSS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Incinerate a wary bun (4,4) | 12 Nothing clear about this prophecy (6) |
| 5 New York shark in episcopal guise? (6) | 13 There's a harbor at this port (8) |
| 9 Assumed it was used so very quietly (8) | 15 Incorporated text no longer exists (7) |
| 10 A lender stutters after us (6) | 16 A real tragic king (4) |
| | 20 A thousand are in five hundred (4) |

- | | |
|--|--|
| 21 They write on a point about British Standard rice (7) | 4 A mean agreement (4) |
| 25 One storm devastates the town (8) | 6 Make certain the runes point to the east (6) |
| 26 Denude the waterfront (6) | 7 Tear then! Or ... (8) |
| 28 A poser figures in them (6) | 8 Boreal destination of R. N. Hornet (8) |
| 29 Five hundred near the supporter (8) | 11 British Rail had a niche there (7) |
| 30 A tree bends south at this season (6) | 14 That is where the codes operate (7) |
| 31 Brothers' cars are on a boy's bicycle (8) | 17 Robot men play it (8) |
| | 18 Spaniels aren't hurt (8) |
| | 19 Do they take fur and geese from home? (8) |
| | 22 One rat is exceedingly decorative (6) |
| | 23 Braved a part of speech (6) |
| | 24 Governor of a recreation ground on a peak (6) |
| | 27 Jewish month is a bit off the radar (4) |

CLUES DOWN:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 His lead comes to nothing (6) | 2 Give the tea rep the same order (6) | 3 Year a lax pope had a loss of control (8) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|

Name

Address.....

Brazil – where the nuts come from?

On Saturday, 26 January this year, Cicero Guedes was shot dead as he cycled home. Why? Because he was the leader of the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) – the landless people's movement.

Christian Aid's country manager for Brazil, Mara Luz, said Mr Guedes had worked tirelessly for Brazil's poor. "Cicero Guedes is one more peasant leader murdered in recent years only because he was defending the distribution of land and resources in one of the most unequal countries in the world," she said.

The shooting took place near an abandoned sugar plant which MST members have occupied amid a legal battle between the landless and the heirs of its

deceased owner. MST, who had occupied the land for six years before being evicted by police in 2006, launched a second occupation of the same site in November.

The Christian Aid report *The Scandal of Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean* outlines the scale of inequality in the country: "(In Brazil) just three per cent of the population own two-thirds of all arable land. Although there has been progress – the Landless Movement (MST) has resettled more than one million poor people since 1984, while the Quilombolas have gained collective land titles for 185 communities – there is no doubt that the 'agrarian aristocracy' is still firmly in place in Brazil."

Since their foundation in 1984, MST (a Christian Aid partner) has helped more than a million people to get land of their own. MST helped Rui Barbosa (62) and his wife Fátima (53) to stake a claim to some land that was formerly part of a massive estate, owned by just one person. The land had lain fallow and unused for years. It is now home to 204 families, who each own a 14.5 hectare plot.

To access further information about Christian Aid's involvement in Brazil, where more than 16 million people live in extreme poverty, and the Landless Peoples Movement, visit <http://www.christianaid.org.uk> and follow the links through to 'What we do' to Brazil.

Stonehaven gets an airing

St James, Stonehaven has been in upheaval since the beginning of February to enable repairs to the roof to be carried out. The pews and soft furnishings had to be moved out of the way. Meanwhile services have been held in the adjacent Church Hall.

However, the congregation worked hard to put the church to rights for 1 March, as on that day BBC Radio Scotland's broadcast of the *Big Debate* took place. Led by Brian Taylor, Political Editor of Radio Scotland, the panel of speakers comprised Professor Rita Marcella, Dean of Faculty of Aberdeen Business School, and three local MSP's – Richard Baker (Labour), Alex Johnston (Cons) and Nigel Don (SNP).

The press announcement of the programme raised a degree of excitement – not least because Stonehaven residents had suffered two serious floods just before Christmas and were still trying to come to terms with the damage. So strong feelings might have been expressed.

In the event, an audience of about 100 was very orderly and opinions were expressed politely – though with a degree of fervour. It was interesting to note the age-range of the participants – Mackie Academy sent three or four representatives. The topics covered quite a range.

Religion

In view of the Pope's resignation and hints that Cardinal Keith O'Brien had been required to leave just a month before he was due to retire, the question was asked: "Is there still a place for religion in public life?" Alex Johnston stated that a member of a religion is expected to live up to a particular standard; citing the example of the Dalai Lama who managed to combine his religious position as head of the world's Buddhists, with an active role in world politics. Rita Marcella stated that religion might be a force to encourage moral behaviour, but was "not a proxy to send a message to those in public life". Many speakers from the floor

agreed that religion was not a necessity for morality and in some circumstances might be hijacked to impose particular attitudes and values. One of the young speakers stated that "people can be moral even if they are not religious" and others added that morality should not be confused with religious belief, though Richard Baker asked whether most people who claimed not to be religious had in fact inherited Christian attitudes and morality.



One speaker from the floor worked among the street-dwellers in Aberdeen and remarked how much they rely on the churches for their charity donations.

A single Police Force for Scotland

A Mackie Academy speaker asked about the effect of a single police force. The proposals produced problems not only in the merging of police forces into a unitary force, but in also staffing – police officers being required to carry out duties currently performed by civilian staff for instance. All seemed to agree that the main problem would be the pooling of police numbers in high crime-rate areas, leaving the countryside bereft of officers, who would have to travel huge distances to cover their 'patch'. An example was given of the ignorance of city administrators regarding the large distances in some rural parts: someone had phoned an office in Aberdeen and asked them to send someone to collect an official at Aberdeen Dyce airport at 9.00 a.m. and take him to his 10.00 a.m. meeting at Inverness.

More seriously, concern was

expressed that local councillors would lose contact with the police and all the power would be in one pair of hands and this could lead to too close a relationship with the Government resulting in our police force being 'politicised'.

Flooding

The question about flooding produced a most lively discussion: "What will the Government do to protect Stonehaven, in view of three floods having occurred within 3 years." It was pointed out that SEPA was only paying attention to part of the East Coast and seemed to be neglecting Stonehaven. One speaker pointed out that we don't need discussions and 'models'; we need action – sea and flood defences. Another said that there had been no floods for 170 years while the weir and flood gates were effective – but SEPA *hadn't even known about this*. Major work had been identified in 2009, but nothing had been done.

Apart from frustration due to red tape, Aberdeenshire has a big underspend, so why don't they use some of this money for flood defence work and not just giving people sand-bags? The panel all agreed that what was needed was a change of culture. And the problem is – if it's everyone's problem, it's nobody's problem.

Independence

The final question concerned Scotland's potential independence. In particular, was there really going to be such a problem with membership of the EU? The panel all agreed that it will be a tortuous process and Scotland would almost definitely have to re-apply. But (something we had not thought about) since the United Kingdom without Scotland would be a different entity from the United Kingdom including Scotland, might they have to re-apply too?

Altogether the programme was agreeable, but definitely lacking in fire. Surprising how the three different political parties agree on so much!

Anne Geldart

Together again!



Amongst those who gathered at St Salvador's to celebrate Candlemass on the evening of 2 February were old friends from 30 years ago, who then worshipped at St Paul's Cathedral.

Pictured together with Bishop Nigel – the one in the purple cassock! – are (from left to right) Sally Rodger who now lives at St Maddoes, Ann Johnston who trained as a solicitor and who at the Diocesan Synod was announced as having agreed to be the new Diocesan Secretary, and Dr Craig Cassells who teaches physics at St Andrews University.

The first New College

Church, Academy, Society Conference



Mission and the Church

Friday 10th May 2013 09:45 - 16:00

New College, Mound Place, Edinburgh

Professor Grace Davie, University of Exeter

- author of *Religion in Britain since 1945* and *The Sociology of Religion*

Dr John Flett, Kirchliche Hochschule Wuppertal/Bethel

- author of *The Witness of God*

Dr Doug Gay, University of Glasgow

- author of *Reminding the Church: Towards an Emerging Ecclesiology*

Professor Alison Milbank, University of Nottingham

- co-author of *For the Parish: A Critique of Fresh Expressions*

Register online at: <http://bit.ly/UySoFx>

Contact Details:

Dr Paul T Nimmo

paul.nimmo@ed.ac.uk

Registration:

£30 / £20 unwaged

Places limited

Baptism at St James the Great, Stonehaven

While we still had the church 'tidy' after the 'Big Debate' broadcast it was good to welcome Bishop Nigel for the baptism of our youngest member – Annabelle – second daughter of Jonathan and Rachel Hammond, and sister of Holly, on Sunday, 3 March. In his address before the baptism, Bishop Nigel unrolled what at first appeared to be a giant duvet – bearing a wonderful patchwork 'star' design. Four children helped him to hold it up for the congregation to see. The Bishop explained that this had been given to him on a recent visit to a Native American community in Sioux City and that it represented a kind of giant cuddle – a tepee for all the family. He said how important family was and that baptism made people members of one family.

After the Baptism and Eucharist everyone went to the Church Hall for lunch and Christening Cake.

As the lunch party was leaving, the Buildings Convenor, Laura Christie, accompanied by Rachel, invited everyone to donate to the Roof Fund – and this was done, very generously.



But the best part was:

On returning home, one of the children, a little boy, who had helped with the patchwork tepee, said to his mother, "I didn't have much money to give for the collection, Mum, so I just put in what I had in my pocket. Was that all right?" Mother was very proud. "How much was that?" she asked. "Seven pence," he replied. The Widow's Mite comes to mind.

The next issue of **Grapevine** will be coming out for 25 August 2013.

All articles, letters, comments should be with the Editor by 5 August 2013.

Preferably articles should be no longer than 500 words.

The Editor of Grapevine, Beattie Lodge, Laurencekirk, Kincardineshire, AB30 1HJ
(E-mail: office@brechin.anglican.org or mjturner@btinternet.com)