

# GRAPESVINE

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF BRECHIN

***The Bishop of Brechin writes:***

## **A Red Ribbon Opportunity**

Red Ribbons remind us that 1st December is World Aids Day and Getting to Zero is this year's theme. Over 25 million people have died of Aids since 1981, the most destructive epidemic in history. HIV positivity is in decline and fewer people die directly of HIV Aids in the UK nowadays, such is the level of personal and relational awareness, prompt medical intervention and the availability of anti-retroviral drug therapies. Waverley Care is Scotland's leading charity providing care in this field and last year our Cathedral in Dundee hosted a large event on 1 December. Many people with a diagnosis can now live and work within a normal life expectancy.

However, it can be a different story elsewhere. We appreciate from our Companion Link with the Diocese of Swaziland what a devastating effect socially and economically the HIV Aids pandemic has in parts of Africa. Shorter life expectancy (now just 32 years), many orphaned children and few older people distort every aspect of family and working life, which is a tragedy for Swaziland which I believe is such a beautiful country with an eager people. Cultural stigmatization hinders progress in tackling the problem and the



United Nations has suggested that the pandemic threatens the very longer term existence of the country.

It is unsurprising then that Bishop Ellinah made it clear, both in our Synod held at Dundee University in October, and to me and Bishop Alan meeting afterwards, that HIV Aids is her key urgent concern and one which we can support in prayerful and practical ways. She has explained that current funding from Trinity Church in New York for her diocesan HIV Aids programme is likely to end soon. Bishop Ellinah

sees the initiative, based at the Diocesan Centre in Mbabane (and which Anne and I and Pat Millar visited a year ago), as an effective way of serving all Swazi people and a real mission opportunity.

Here in the Brechin Diocese I am sure we would wish to support her initiative and I will be asking Bishop Ellinah to indicate how help might be best given. It will certainly involve money, possibly with Iowa and Brechin covering aspects of the Aids budget, e.g. staff, resources. Having said that, we all heard Bishop Ellinah's humbling comment at Synod: that money without friendship has an emptiness about it.

I hope that congregations in our diocese will rise to the challenge, especially those who have perhaps not been much involved with the Companionship in the past. Some existing projects and sponsorships from Brechin Diocese to Swaziland will continue, but some may need to end because the original circumstances which occasioned local links have now changed. Bishop Ellinah's fresh challenge is a timely Red Ribbon Opportunity.

+ Ngidi



Menologion (Service Book) of the Byzantine Emperor Basil II, circa 1000 A.D.

Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One,  
And the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One!  
Angels with shepherds glorify Him!  
The wise men journey with a star!  
Since for our sake the Eternal God was born as a Little Child!

*Kontakion for Christmas, Roman the Melodist*

# St Salvador's Food Cupboard

## Update

It is good to report that the Food Cupboard is running to the familiar time-table: Sunday afternoon for just one hour between 1.15 and 2.15 p.m. In that time we offer food to on an average about 60 of our local needy and vulnerable friends each week.

There is a splendid team of helpers about 36 strong, all enthusiastic and bringing so many talents from varied backgrounds. We need fourteen helpers each week to operate satisfactorily.

The range of food has extended thanks to a new helper who brings two pots of home-made soup each week and another new helper has made contact with a local baker and gleans large quantities of rolls, usually some pies and once in a while a quantity of 'sticky buns'. A variety of savoury things like sausage rolls, mini pork pies, sausage and so on appear as if by magic. This development was encouraged by one young male helper who, sadly for us, moved to a job in Glenrothes, but his encouragement to put more emphasis on un-sweet items has lingered. Also an increased amount of fresh fruit is provided. This does not take away from all the scrumptious home baking kind friends produce which is supplemented by bought goodies which someone brings from the astonishing 'Day After' shop and elsewhere. Tea and coffee are served by the gallon, along with soft drinks.

Visitors are always welcome (just let us know you are coming!), invariably visitors slip into helper mode as soon they sense the atmosphere. Interestingly the frequent comments I hear the regular helpers make is either, "I love coming" or "It is a privilege to be able to help".

Those to whom we seek extend our love bring all their distressing problems. Problems with relationships, addiction, money difficulties, health issues, housing, unemployment, post-traumatic stress –

there is always a listening ear, a space, a safe place in which to unburden. It is a time when they can chat with friends from their own environments but lots of them enjoy chatting with helpers about a vast number of topics totally unrelated to their immediate problems and difficulties – helps to spread fields of interest. The sense of fellowship, companionship, warmth, is heartening.

None of this would be possible without our team of superb helpers to whom we have recently welcomed three new, young members. Our age range, background range continues to widen all of which adds to the strength of the whole.

The lighting of candles and offering of prayer has become a regular or occasional practice for some. The Rector's prayer request slips are popular and the church's prayer list has grown markedly.

With regard to the Food Bags, of course each of our visitors is given one of these which contains a modest number of tins, a litre carton of UHT milk and a packet of biscuits. During the Harvest Thanksgiving period donations dramatically increased. Nine Episcopal churches, three Church of Scotland churches made contributions.

Two local primary schools, Dens Road and Mill o' Mains, also made donations, thanks to the good offices of two of our Coldside colleagues. It is fascinating that we have been able to re-connect with Dens Road School in this way since St Salvador's own school (founded by Alexander Penrose Forbes in 1856) was housed in the original 'church in the upper room, school downstairs' building on the south side of the later Bodley masterpiece which was consecrated in 1874, the year before Bishop Forbes died.

In the early nineteen hundreds several state of the art (at the time) schools were built to

educate the increased number of children. When Dens Road Primary School opened its doors the children from our school were shipped off there. What a tremendous adjustment the children must have had to make: the transition from a small building with many youngsters packed into a small space, like the proverbial sardines, to the high ceilings and big windows and space to move around. Progress on a scale which would have warmed Bishop Forbes' heart.

Dundee City Council is printing a new version of a leaflet providing information about available services and we expect to receive copies for distribution very soon. On one side there is an updated list of all sources of free food and on the other a list of the most important help lines plus a useful little street plan.

Please continue to pray for us and our beloved ones; prayer is a vital element of our support system. Thank you.

Ann Noltie

### WORD-CROSS WINNER

*(the original name for a crossword)*

The lucky (and clever) winner(s) of last edition's cryptic crossword are Mr & Mrs Hughes of Tayport. Congratulations to them!

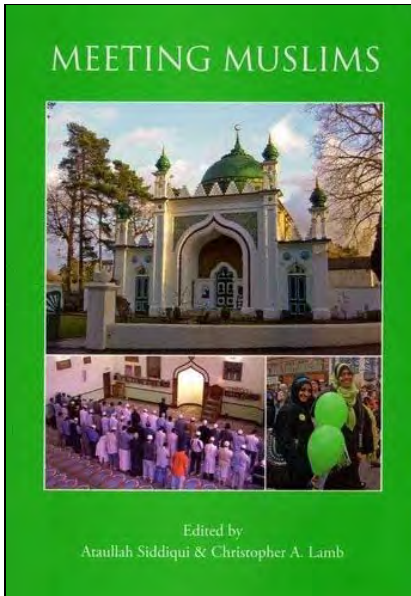
The solution was:

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

There is another one to solve on page 11. Best of luck!

# ‘Meeting Muslims’

A review of a book with this title in *Grapevine* is quite timely: only this autumn a group of us from the Diocese of Brechin paid a visit to the Central Mosque in Dundee. Among other things, the group met with two imams (worship leaders) and were invited guests at a prayer service.



No one who has attended such a service can doubt the sincerity and commitment of those who participate. The self-imposed discipline that this form of worship entails is both remarkable and impressive (though liberal-minded Anglicans might balk at the idea of men and women being required to worship separately!).

At the same time it is hard to reconcile this peaceful scene with the violence that is so often associated with Muslim extremism – i.e. those who push the Jihad ('struggle') idea to the limit. One thing to keep in mind here is the fact that the vast majority of Muslims say they do not sanction acts of violence, even if such acts are justified by the perpetrators on supposed Islamic grounds. In Britain, for example, an opinion survey conducted among Muslims after the July 2008 ("7/7") Jihadist-inspired bombings in central London revealed that a vast majority (88% of the respondents) did not support such criminal behaviour.

In spite of these kinds of disclaimers, British society appears to have become more polarized in the wake of such events: while there are those who meet and work amicably with Muslims, there are others who, following 9/11 and 7/7, are totally opposed to the Muslim religion, culture and people.

For their part, Muslims often feel marginalized in British society. Their living standards tend to be low and relatively few of the women work. Since the growth of Islam in Britain is largely the result of immigration, Muslims may also be subjected to insulting behaviour from those who are opposed to the multiculturalism that is a hallmark of contemporary Britain.

Clearly there is a need for communication and dialogue with Muslims. And surely Christians, who share the same Abrahamic roots, can be of assistance here. How? Well, according to *Meeting Muslims*, and as the title suggests, much good can come from a simple willingness to meet and get to know some of our co-religionists.

The book was designed to encourage people to experience that "simple willingness" and put it

into practice in some way – by befriending a Muslim neighbour, for example. The book is sensibly organized and there are useful chapters on The Life of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslim Beliefs and the vexed question of Shias and Sunnis.

Clearly there are those within the Church who are doing what they can to relate to Muslims. Hopefully there will be more of this to come.

In the meantime, *Meeting Muslims* does seem to fill a real need.

Speaking personally, I came away from the Central Mosque in Dundee convinced that Islam was here to stay. I also recalled this comment from Eliza Griswold: "Religions, like the weather, link us to one another, whether we like it or not."

*Hugh Magee*

Copies can be ordered directly from the publisher, Christians Aware, for £10:

Christians Aware  
2 Saxby Street  
LEICESTER  
LE2 0ND

It is also listed on Amazon's website.



This imposing building is the largest of Dundee's three mosques. It was built in 2000 at a cost of £2,000,000, all raised from local sources. It can accommodate a thousand worshippers at a time.



# Many a mickle ... the power of prayer

A few weeks ago it fell to my lot to deliver an address on the reading from Luke 11 where the disciples asked 'Lord, teach us how to pray'. The 'hook' or introduction I used was a story from the Rabbi Mark collection by David Kossof, where the rabbi was having difficulty getting his community to pray – they always seemed to leave it to him. This led me into a general discussion about prayer, but the point I really wanted to make is that God does answer prayer. And, yes, it's alright to ask for help with material things.

This was how it happened for us at St James, Stonehaven. You may have read an article in the Spring edition of this magazine about the BBC's visit to record and broadcast their programme. At the time the church was in something of a state of disarray, because we were having major work done to prevent the total collapse of our roof – at least that is what we were facing.

In February it was noticed that we had large mushroom-like growths in the timbers, and urgent help was sought. As we feared, dry-rot. The plasterwork of our church was of the 'lath and plaster' variety, so depended on

wooden laths, as well as the roof timbers that kept the lid on the church, as it were.

Our Buildings Convenor and our Finance bod (Laura Christie and Peter Sharpe respectively) sought suitable builders and quotations, and then went about seeking funding. £20,000 plus was what we had to raise as our contribution. And this at a time when we had just contracted for work on our kitchen in the Hall. So, yes, we prayed. Now it could be that some folks thought God would send us a win on the Lottery, or some kindly-disposed soul would conveniently shuffle off this mortal coil and bequeath us a tidy sum. It didn't work that way. What did happen was ...

Teams of members – many of them in their 60s and 70s – set to with the moving of the large Victorian pews from one side to the other, in order to facilitate the scaffolding. We held worship in the Hall, which meant lugging the liturgical goods across each Sunday and Wednesday. Teams of people again! Setting up a make-shift altar and rows of chairs each service. And a local super-market lent us a brand-new trolley for the said moving.

Then there was the

fund-raising. Book browses, coffee mornings, evening events such as a Body Shop evening, and a combined craft and art display and sale with book stall – and a wonderful display of quilting in our church, when every pew was draped with the myriad colours of the textile artwork of our Patch and Pud club – all these sorts of things, each raising a few hundred pounds – but eventually reaching towards the – what seemed to be – almost impossible target. We are nearly there.

And, coming soon, a cheese and wine-tasting evening in November.

I was reminded of the old saying 'Many a mickle makes a muckle' (please forgive me if I have it slightly wrong\*). But this pulling together, everyone doing their bit, all in response to the prayers of the congregations and a demonstration of the power of prayer – if we give it a chance.

*Anne Geldart*

\* Though often heard, this phrase is actually nonsense, since the words 'mickle' and 'muckle' are variant spellings of the same word meaning 'a large quantity'. More correctly it should be 'Many a little (or pickle) makes a muckle'. *Ed.*

## Baptism at Montrose



William Duncan Stansfeld, son of Nicholas and Annabel Stansfeld, was baptised by Bishop Nigel, assisted by Bishop Ellinah on Sunday, 20 October.

The baby is the grandchild of Jonny and Ros Stansfeld of Dunninald, and Jonny was himself baptised in St Mary and St Peter's at Montrose.

## James Gregory Lectures

The series of public lectures on Science and Christianity at St Andrews University have recently recommenced.

The next one will be given by

**Professor Edmund Robertson**

on

**Monday, 2 December at 5.15 p.m.**

in the

**Physics Main Lecture Theatre of the University**

The lecture is entitled

**James Gregory: an Extraordinary Scientist**

*Entrance is free*

Two further James Gregory lectures have been booked, one by Tom Wright, former Bishop of Durham and the other by Professor Mark Harris, a biologist at Leeds University. Other lecturers will include Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ronald Numbers, an American historian of science.

## Archdeacon Bheki at Lathallan

Archdeacon Bhekindlela McDonald Magongo of the Diocese of Swaziland stayed on in our diocese for more than a fortnight after the Celebration Synod, whilst Bishops Ellinah and Alan left for the USA.

On 31 October he spent the daytime at Montrose, visiting the Seafarers' Centre and the Lifeboat Station. Since Swaziland is a land-locked country, bordered by South Africa and Mozambique this was something totally different for him to experience: a maritime town, where the churches offered their services to seafarers who may themselves be thousands of miles from home, and the essential work the lifeboat service does.



Archdeacon Bheki with some of Lathallan's musicians

In the evening, by the kind invitation of the headmaster of Lathallan School, there was a social event in Archdeacon Bheki's honour. The evening included musical performances by some of the students at Lathallan, including a welcome to guests by two of the young pipers from the school's pipe band. Archdeacon Bheki was thrilled at the effort put in by the young people, and said, 'It was such a surprise to be greeted at the door of the school by the bagpipes. I felt very honoured by this gesture, and by all the musical performances. The young people are very talented.'

In a very personal talk about his own family background and experiences growing up and living in Swaziland Archdeacon Bheki spoke about the social and demographic problems of his country and the contribution that the church makes to its life. Compared to Scotland, which has an aging population, almost 60% of the Swazi population are under 25, because of the effect of HIV/AIDS. The Diocese of Swaziland is heavily engaged in providing basic health and social care, because the kind of education, health and social work services that are provided in Britain do not exist in his country. Along with the Diocesan Office he is responsible for overseeing the work of the Neighbourhood Care Points. These provide the poorest children with a basic meal, some care and safety. They also manage the Home Based Care Teams which look after those who are terminally ill and are at home with little or no support.

## Prayer of a Confused Man

And as I light a candle to pray  
My daily prayer for the World,  
I cry, I cry to myself silently.  
Lost and confused, no Saint am I,  
No theologian, no brilliant mind,  
Only being simple and ordinary.

Dear God, Sweet Jesu, I come to you  
As a child, though adult I be.  
Forgive me,

If I don't understand your ways  
Through ignorance, not understanding  
What I should know;  
But in my heart of hearts  
I know you love me still.

Remembering what Jesus did say,  
"Feed my Sheep" –  
And still how many starve,  
Man, Woman, Child,  
In this World that has so much –  
What can I pray, what can I say?

Also to love my fellow man,  
And to have forgiveness,  
Oh Lord, I try,  
Though confused at what they do –  
So much wickedness and evil as I see.  
But still, Oh Lord, Sweet Jesus, I believe in Thee.

So with humility and honesty I sing to thee  
Benedicite Omnia Opera,  
The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis,  
And recite the Lord's Prayer.  
Oh Lord, not only for me,  
But your worldly World,  
Grant that we may learn  
Respect and unity.

*Francis Wilson*

*from A Small Anthology of Poetry  
sold in aid of the children of*

*St Mary's & St Peter's, Montrose Sunday Club*



If God created all this, does he still have to pay  
the electricity bill?

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# Companion Dioceses Celebration Synod

## Report

I have to admit that usually diocesan synods are a little dry and dull apart from the chat between business. The companion diocesan synod held in Dundee in October was neither of these. It was a celebration of our links with the dioceses of Iowa and Swaziland and was an uplifting and inspiring day. Bishop Alan Scarfe (Iowa) and Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya (Swaziland) were both at the synod and gave moving talks on the challenges and opportunities they face in their respective dioceses.

It was entirely appropriate that we started the day with the Eucharist as the word companion is from the Latin *com* (with) and *panis* (bread). Bishop Nigel gave the homily (*the full text is on the opposite page*) in which he used the phrase *glocal* to describe the relationship between the three dioceses. Whilst we are in regular contact through the use of modern technology there is no substitute for meeting face to face and worshipping together. Christian mission is difficult but it is made easier with support from our companions. We are all in this together and have the same message to share.

One piece of Synod business should be noted; the diocese is currently seeking a Protection of Vulnerable Groups Officer. It is very important that this post is filled.

In November 2012 Bishop Nigel posed 5 questions relating to church growth to each of the congregations in the diocese. Every church responded and Canon Fay Lamont and Ann Johnston (Diocesan Secretary) spent a considerable amount of time compiling the answers. The responses have been categorised into the following groups:

Persuasion (building effective disciples and congregations) and Prayer; Proclamation and Presence; and, Resources and Plans for 2013.

A copy of the report *The Growing Church* has been sent to each vestry secretary in the diocese. We are encouraged to take time to review the document and see how appropriate it is to our church. I would encourage you all to look at document; it is not just the responsibility of the Rector and vestry to think about growth it

Often we focus too much of our energy on our buildings rather than the church beyond our walls. I would recommend that you have a look at the Diocese of Iowa website (<http://www.iowaepiscopal.org>) which has a lot of information entirely relevant to us in Brechin.

Bishop Ellinah also outlined some of the challenges in her diocese; 69% of the population is under 25 and one third of the population is unemployed. There are many challenges in the diocese but through direction not interference ("You can't dance and beat the drum") Bishop Ellinah will rejuvenate the diocese.

Archdeacon Bheki also spoke. Church in Swaziland is not a hobby but a space which brings hope in people's lives. He also explained the difference between a partnership and companionship; the latter is rooted in love and has no expectations: "We are here for you". A very heartening and supportive message.

The day was completed with Choral Evensong in the Cathedral and the installation of Bishop Ellinah and the Rev'd Michael Turner as honorary canons.

Stuart Muir (Pastoral Musician at the Cathedral) had chosen an excellent selection of music entirely appropriate for the day. African music and words arranged by the Iona Community which one could not help but sway to.

These are just my observations from the day; for a fuller description I would recommend you look at the Diocese of Brechin website ([www.thedioceseofbrechin.org](http://www.thedioceseofbrechin.org)). Also, there are regular articles on our activities in Swaziland on the *Groups* page of the site.

Karen Findlay



Administration of Holy Communion at the Synod's Opening Eucharist

is yours too. We all have different skills; let's use them wisely together across the diocese.

Canon Lamont gave an excellent illustration to instigate discussion on *The Growing Church* Report. Imagine, she said, your church has 12 eggs and 4 baskets with the labels Persuasion, Prayer, Presence and Proclamation. Where are your church's eggs now and where do you think they should be? How many might get broken on the way? Are all your eggs in one basket?

Bishop Alan explained that one of the main challenges is the demographics of his diocese; it is enormous. However, we must not get caught up in the tackle of fishing but actually get on with it.

# Companion Dioceses Celebration Synod

## The Bishop Nigel's Address at the Eucharist

### "Come over and help us"

"The harvest is plenty but the labourers are few" (Luke 10.2). "Come over and help us" (Acts 6.9). The disciples are sent out in pairs to proclaim that the Kingdom of God has come near. The Early Church grew as the good news of Jesus Christ travelled with the faithful by land and sea. St Luke's Gospel and Acts of the Apostles is a record of that story from the old covenant to the new.

Luke the Evangelist is a master of combining the personal with the contextual and conveying theological meaning. So how appropriate are St Luke's words for us here in Dundee today as we welcome Bishops Ellinah and Alan and Archdeacon Bheki, and celebrate our 21st century relationships as the Companion Dioceses of Brechin, Iowa and Swaziland. Enduring friendships over many years as part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Brechin with Iowa since 1982, and the two of us with Swaziland since 1989.

Today the global and the local come together. It is a 'glocal' event. We have our mobile phones and the internet, but there is no substitute for meeting face to face and experiencing first hand. The personal, contextual and theological converge in a powerful way. We know how tough Christian mission and service is in our dioceses and regions – we often feel that not only are there

inadequate workers or resources, but we are not too optimistic about the harvest either.

And yet we must press on. A companion literally is someone who shows another where bread may be found. 'Come over and help us' is the mission and ministry covenant we share as dioceses. We want to inspire each other, and to assist each other, and we are in it for the long-term. Because of our ecclesial and cultural differences across three continents, graciousness and patience, sensitivity and trust are paramount. Only then do we earn the right to say prophetic things to each other.

I sometimes think we learn as much by welcoming visitors to our country (as opposed to visiting overseas) and listening attentively to their questions and polite critique of what they experience here.

I hope we might achieve something of this at our Synod and in the coming days before +Ellinah travels on with +Alan to the Iowa Convention. We certainly look forward to Archdeacon Bheki's longer time in this diocese, during which a lot of sharing and learning is anticipated. We have tried to enable as many folk as possible in the diocese meet our companions in the time available.

In our Synod today, following a small amount of diocesan

housekeeping business, we shall engage across the Companionship with several questions: what are the opportunities and challenges in each diocese, what help does each of us need, and what gifts can we offer each other? Maybe we need to stop some things, try different things, or expand others. Everyone can ponder these questions and offer ideas, not just at Synod, but back in your churches and among your circle of friends and contacts. As our Scottish Episcopal Church communications officer is always reinforcing, the Who? What? Why? When? and Where? of companionship needs populating out if our good news is to commend itself.

We begin our Synod with bread-sharing around the Lord's table here in the University of Dundee Chaplaincy Centre and conclude the Synod with Choral Evensong and the Installation of Honorary Canons in our Cathedral, followed by customary refreshments. My hope is that everyone will gain insights and fresh encouragement and confidence from the day, leaving with a glad heart for being part of something bigger than ourselves. Christian discipleship is a pilgrim journey. We are companions on the way, and under God a work in progress.

Come over and help us. Amen.



Bishops Alan Scarfe, Nigel Peyton and Ellinah Wakumoya



The newly installed Honorary Canons with Bishop Nigel

# THE REAL SAINT WENCESLAUS

Probably all that most people know about Wenceslas comes from the carol written by J. M. Neale in 1853, but of course there is much more.

Wenceslas was born in 997 near to Prague. His grandfather, Borivoy, ruler of Bohemia, and his grandmother, Ludmila, had been baptised but that did not mean that this was followed by the conversion of all their subjects. Indeed there was strong opposition from many of the powerful Czech families.

From before 800 A.D. Great Moravia had emerged as a unified state of Slavic peoples, but by the very beginning of the 10th century it had collapsed and there were frequent conflicts and incursions between Slavs, Magyars, Bohemians and Franks. This was the political and social context in which Wenceslaus grew up.

Duke Borivoy's son, Vratislav, became governor of Bohemia in 915. He had earlier married Drahomira from a Slavic tribe. She had been baptised prior to the marriage, but it seems likely that this was just a formality. She bore two sons, Wenceslaus and Boleslaus.

In 921, when Wenceslaus was just 13 years old his father died fighting against the Magyars. His mother assumed government and began pursuing an anti-Christian policy, most likely to gain support from the semi-pagan elements of the nobility. She strongly resented the fervent Christian influence that Ludmila had over her son and suggested that Wenceslaus was more suited to a monastic life than taking the throne.

But Ludmila, afflicted at the public disorder and full of concern for promoting the Christian faith which she and her husband had established with great difficulty, showed Wenceslaus the necessity of taking the reins of government into his own hands.

Furious about losing influence on her son Drahomira arranged for two nobles to go to Ludmila's castle at Tetin and there strangle

her. If she thought that without his grandmother's guidance Wenceslaus would not undertake the government of his people she was sorely mistaken and in 925, with the support of many leading families, Drahomira was exiled and Wenceslaus proclaimed ruler.

He straightway announced that he would support God's law and his Church, punish murder severely, and endeavour to rule with justice and mercy.

Writing less than 200 years later one chronicler stated: "His deeds I think you know better than I could tell you; for, as is read in his Passion, no one doubts that, rising every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by every difficulty, so much so that he was considered, not a prince, but the father of all the wretched." Although this may be an embellished account, Wenceslaus undoubtedly demonstrated strong compassion as well as strong governance.

Early in 929 Prague was attacked by the joint forces of the Bavarian and German leaders and Wenceslaus was forced to resume paying tribute and to acknowledge King Henry I of Germany as his overlord. Much to the surprise of many of the attending princes that Wenceslaus was giving offence to Henry by keeping him waiting – probably he was saying his prayers – Henry respected his devotion and granted his request for a relic of St Vitus which would be enshrined in a church Wenceslaus intended to have built in Prague. St Vitus' Church was soon to become his own final resting place.

When Wenceslaus married and had a son, his brother Boleslaus realised that his chance of succession had gone. And because of Wenceslaus' policy of accepting Henry as his over-lord, and the severity with which he checked oppression and other

disorders in the nobility, he raised a party against him. In September 935 (although some old records put it a few years earlier) Boleslaus with a group of nobles plotted to kill the duke. He invited Wenceslaus to his castle to celebrate the feast of St Cosmas and Damian.

On the evening of the festival, after the celebrations were over, Wenceslaus was warned he was in danger. He refused to take any notice. He proposed to the assembly in the hall a toast in honour of "St Michael, whom we pray to guide us to peace and eternal joy", said his prayers, and went to bed. Early the next morning, as Wenceslaus made his way to Mass, he met Boleslaus and stopped to thank him for his hospitality. "Yesterday", was the reply, "I did my best to serve you fittingly, but this must be my service to-day", and he struck him. In the ensuing struggle friends of Boleslaus ran up and killed Wenceslaus, who murmured as he fell at the chapel door, "Brother, may God forgive you".

At once the young prince was acclaimed by the people as a martyr, and at least by the year 984 his feast was being observed. Boleslaus, frightened at the reputation of many miracles wrought at his brother's tomb, caused the body to be translated to the church of St Vitus at Prague three years after his death. The shrine became a place of pilgrimage, and at the beginning of the eleventh century St Wenceslaus was already regarded as the patron saint of the Bohemian people.

## POSTSCRIPT:

Neale's familiar carol perhaps reflects as much the emotional piety of the Victorian period as the reality of Wenceslaus' faith. He set his poem (described by some as 'doggerel') to a Finnish dance tune which had verses for springtime. This annoyed various musicians, including Vaughan Williams, who hoped "that it would pass into disuse." How wrong can you be!



## Magnificat of Acceptance

*My soul trembles in the presence of the loving Creator  
and my spirit prepares itself to walk hand in hand  
with the God who saves Israel  
because I have been accepted by God  
as a simple helpmate.  
Yes, forever in the life of humankind  
people will sing of this loving encounter;  
through remembering this moment, the faithful  
will know all things are possible in God.  
Holy is the place within me where God lives.  
God's tender fingers reach out from age to age  
to touch the softened inner spaces of those  
who open their souls in hope.  
I have experienced the creative power of God's embracing arms  
and I know the cleansing fire of unconditional love.  
I am freed from all earthly authority  
and know my bonding to the Author of all earthly things.*



*I am filled with the news of good things;  
my favour with God,  
faithful trust in the gentle shadow of the Most High,  
the mystery of my son, Jesus,  
the gift of companionship with my beloved kinswoman,  
Elizabeth. who believes as I believe.  
The place in my heart that I had filled  
with thoughts of fear and inadequacy  
has been emptied and I am quiet within.  
God comes to save Israel, our holy family,  
remembering that we are the ones who remember,  
according to the kinship we have known...  
remembering that we are the ones who remember  
and that where God and people trust each other  
there is home.*

Mary Johnson

## International Peace Day

Members of churches from Brechin and Edzell gathered for a service at the Peace Pole in the grounds of Brechin Cathedral on Sunday, 22 September to celebrate the International Day of Prayer for World Peace. The service was led by Father David Mumford from St Andrew's Episcopal Church and national convener of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Scotland.



The Rev'd David Mumford, Morag Dale, Philip Potter, Kay Potter, Gill McKnight, Beryl White and Doug White

Prayers were said that conflicts could be resolved without resorting to violence, particularly Syria. Nine out of ten deaths in modern armed conflict are civilian and half of these are children. Innocent victims of war and those forced to become refugees were especially mentioned in the intercessions.

## A New Read

The Rev'd David Shepherd has published a new book entitled "Jemima: Against the World".

This is a story set during the Second World War. Jemima is a difficult but somewhat endearing evacuee, who is sent to stay with a young couple who work at Bletchley Park. Incorporating Jemima into their lives has very unexpected results!

This book would make an ideal Christmas present. The price is £4 for one book, £10 for three books, and if you are lucky enough to have more than three friends £15 for five books! Copies are available from Meadowside Publications, 14 Albany Terrace, Dundee, DD3 6HR. Telephone 01382 223510.

# Ordination of Kerry Dixon

On Saturday, 21 September (St Matthew's Day) Kerry Dixon was ordained to the Order of Deacons.

Whilst serving as Honorary Assistant Curate to St Mary's, Arbroath he will have special responsibility for St Luke's, Downfield, Dundee and also be Diocesan Missioner.

In his homily Neville Willerton (National Operations Manager of the Church Army) made reference to the challenges which face the Church. Five years ago he was given the task of developing fresh expressions of the Christian community that the Church Army is pioneering to reach people not engaged with the traditional modes of Church life. In his many years as an Evangelist in the Church Army he has known and admired Kerry's work also as a Church Army Evangelist for the past 26 years.

His work of living out the faith has been particularly exemplified in the work of Signpost International. In response to his experience 20 years ago in living in a shanty town in the Philippines, surrounded by poverty,

malnutrition, disease and death, Kerry sought to do something to help and from small beginnings Signpost

International was born and has developed with a presence in communities not only in the Philippines, but also in countries in South America, Eastern Europe, Africa and India; everywhere seeking to help communities develop solutions to their own needs.

Also present at the Ordination Service was Catherine Wellingbrook-Doswell who was honoured with an OBE for serving the administration of justice in north-east London and who was for 10 years Chair of the Trustees of Signpost International.

Of course, communities which experience deprivation do not exist only in

other parts of the world; they are in our land also. So Kerry's skill and dedication to establishing Christian communities to eliminate violence, poverty and injustice are indeed the core of the call to be a deacon – to be a servant to God's will. The kingdom of God is the establishing of *shalom*, wholeness, true peace.



Kerry Dixon and Bishop Nigel with, on the left, Catherine Wellingbrook-Doswell, and on the right, Neville Willerton

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## Christian Aid Reports

So often Christian Aid and other large charitable bodies come to our notice when some crisis or disaster has struck and there is a call for donations. But only about 5% of Christian Aid's income of over £95 million went on emergency relief. Most was spent on a very wide and positive range of projects across the globe as its annual report reveals.

Here are just four examples.

### Land rights for marginalised groups

The Dalit communities in India are historically denied land and the means to make a dignified living due to deep-rooted caste-based discrimination. In Andhra Pradesh in 2012/13, Christian Aid's partner Watershed Support Services and Activities Network helped 2,250 households

get more than 50 days of paid work and helped 137 people secure entitlements to land.

### Maternal and child health

In Kenya, more than 99,500 women and children benefited from vital maternal and infant healthcare in 2012/13. They received lifesaving services including the skilled support of a health professional during childbirth, ante- and post-natal care, immunisation and advice on nutrition.

### Malaria

Malaria kills 600,000 people in Africa every year, and yet it can be prevented with something as simple and inexpensive as a mosquito net. Our partners across Africa – where 90 per cent of the world's malaria deaths occur – are working hard to educate people

about the importance of using a bed net. In Nigeria's Benue state, for example, research shows the education campaign is paying off. Of the households who own nets, 57 per cent were using them in 2012, compared with just 29 per cent in 2011. Similar trends are being seen in Burundi, Malawi and Ethiopia, contributing to a fall of more than 33 per cent in the number of people dying from malaria in Africa since 2000.

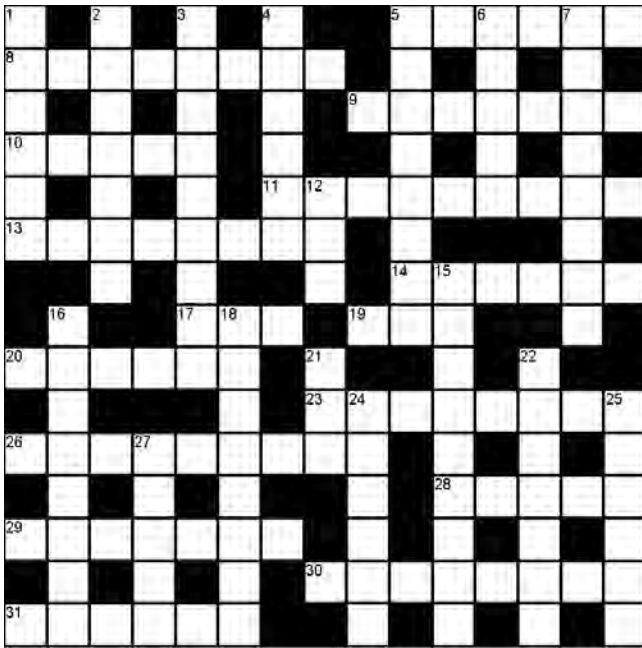
### Equality for women: no exceptions

In Cambodia, Christian Aid's partner Cambodian Women's Crisis Centre provided support in 2012/13 to approximately 1,500 women and girls who have lived through severe physical or sexual violence, trafficking and other forms of abuse.



# CRYPTIC PRIZE CROSSWORD

*Just to help you, eleven answers are words found in the carol 'Once in royal David's city'. Send your entries in to the editor at the address on the back page by Saturday, 1 March at the latest and make sure you put your name and address in the box provided.*



## CLUES ACROSS:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 5 An intelligent lemming hides the bluebottle larva (6) | 11 Zealously sent early (9)            |
| 8 Without hydrogen wealth may evaporate (4-4)           | 13 Almost boiling a couple of fish (8) |
| 9 Somehow ten trap this model (7)                       | 14 Afraid of Eastern Cards (6)         |
| 10 What the devil did! (5)                              | 17 Its lid is upside down (3)          |
|   | 19 What's left in the tea-shop (3)     |
|   | 20 He rang me from the foodstore (6)   |

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 23 Offspring of the rich lend to them (8)                    | 6 Aides-memoire on broken stone? (5)                                 |
| 26 A grandee covered with foam icing? (9)                    | 7 Drill in the ore for a more noble activity (8)                     |
| 28 A quiet owl wails (5)                                     | 12 Final stage following canonisation (3)                            |
| 29 The end of the epoch is here (7)                          | 15 Ho, ho! 651 just got a penny in their youth (9)                   |
| 30 Does he rue an open continent missing the last point? (8) | 16 Manchester City Council sail a boat in a subterranean passage (8) |
| 31 A subsea crash hurts (6)                                  | 18 Make apertures of icier material (8)                              |

## CLUES DOWN:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 I'm less happy, aren't I? (6)               | 21 One thousand two hundred cricketers (3)          |
| 2 Streaming 'flu put in a vial (7)            | 22 Put the finishing touch to a new cord (7)        |
| 3 Though possibly dead, it can be elected (9) | 24 This is no hour for glory (6)                    |
| 4 A dame in former days (6)                   | 25 Inquisitively searching without music (6)        |
| 5 Sad glens are transformed into jollity (8)  | 27 The aspen quivers on the back of their necks (5) |

Name .....

Address.....

## Colour in the Pews at Stonehaven

"Now, that's what I call the Wow factor," was the reaction of the Rector, Maggie Jackson, as she came into the church Saturday, 4 October to see the exhibition of quilting put on by The Patch and Pud Club from the Church assisted by the Johnshaven Patchwork Group.

Over 100 handmade quilts filled the whole church with colour and design. The bright autumn sunlight filtered through the church windows on to quilts, which were laid out over all the pews and the choir stalls. In addition there were over 50 other quilted items

decorating all the fixtures in the church.

There was a steady stream of visitors throughout the day to see the spectacle. They also had a chance to win a quilt in a raffle, which raised well over £400 for

the Church Roof Fund. The raffle was drawn at the end of the day, and the winner was a lady from Newtonhill and a great supporter of the church. She was thrilled to win.

The quilts were the result of over two years of effort. The sources of inspiration ranged from 'a strip quilt challenge' where members each contributed a strip to each quilt, a child's quilt featuring spacemen, to the celebration of a Ruby Wedding. Also displayed was the Seminole quilt, which was one of the quilts completed for the Hampden Park Alzheimer Challenge.





## **GOING PLACES . . .**

I have been in many places, but I have never been in Cahoots. Apparently you can't go there alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there.

I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport. You have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my family, friends and those where I have worked.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump and I am not too much on physical activity anymore.

I have also been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go and I try not to visit there too often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm.

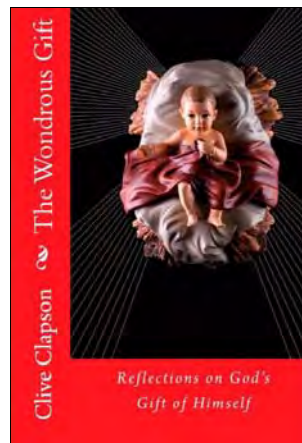
Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favourite places to be is in Suspense. It really gets the adrenalin flowing and pumps up the old heart. At my age I need all of the stimuli I can get.

Now if I can just avoid getting in Continent ...

## **"The Wondrous Gift"**

This is the fourth book from the pen of Fr Clive Clapson. "The Wondrous Gift" reflects on the Christian season from Advent to Epiphany. It is available both in paperback £3, and Kindle £1.91 formats, from Amazon.co.uk. Its ISBN number is 9781482082265



A drunk pharmacist. A toy pony. A crummy old Christmas tree. A depressed engineer. Bible smuggling. A collection of very different memories and thoughts, linked in some way by the subject of giving.

Christmas gifts: we all like to give and receive them. "The Wondrous Gift" reflects on God's gift to us at the Incarnation that Christmas celebrates, through a series of reflections on more than thirty years of ministry.

*Coming next year . . .*

## **DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**SATURDAY, 1 MARCH**

AT CHALMERS ARDLER CHURCH

**St Mary Magdalene's Church**

## **Spring Coffee Morning**

**Saturday, 29 March**

**10 a.m. - 12 noon**

*.. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done... and God if your will could match MY will today it would be MUCHO appreciated!*

When Susie recites the Lord's Prayer she likes to add her personal touch

The next issue of **Grapevine** will be coming out for 30 March 2014.

All articles, letters, comments should be with the Editor by 4 March 2014.

Preferably articles should be no longer than 500 words.

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