

GRAPEVINE

No 104

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF BRECHIN

The Bishop of Brechin writes:

Keeping Faith in the Referendum

The Scottish Referendum to be held on September 18 approaches and the question is: Should Scotland be a separate country? It is fair to say that a mixture of excitement, anxiety and weariness has touched our lives in recent months, so bombarded have we been by the assertions and arguments of both the Yes Scotland and Better Together campaigns. Faith may not seem be the loudest voice but people of faith are I believe significantly engaged with the issues.

Speaking from our viewpoint, the Scottish Episcopal Church, in common with most other churches and faith groups, is officially neutral or agnostic about issues of constitution and jurisdiction. This does not mean we are



not part of the debate however. We have church members on either side of the Referendum divide and we shall continue to serve our communities across Scotland, as we have done for hundreds of years, whatever the decision turns out to be.

I have three hopes for the Referendum. First, public engagement and a high turnout. The politics of this historic moment are too important to be left with the politicians and we need to encourage everyone to take part. As citizens we should set an example to the 16-18 year olds who newly have a say, and remember those parts of the world where democracy is incomplete, not least our Companion Diocese of Swaziland.

Second, faith's contribution to public debate is a range of

enduring values for society rather than particular political blueprints for the state. Faith values the principles of subsidiarity and of solidarity – two kinds of togetherness. So, Christians affirm the dignity and freedom of individuals within civil society. We celebrate the family, one's locality and relationships borne of shared interests. Equally, Christians also demonstrate a keen awareness of the bonds of interdependence beyond our immediate horizons.

Faith challenges inequality and injustice and believes in the transformation of people and structures, enhancing the common good. People of faith are concerned about wealth sharing and meaningful employment, especially watchful that the poor and vulnerable are properly cared for. We engage in current debates

about bringing up children and their education, the future of marriage and care of the dying as well as challenging secularism.

Third, more than the Referendum result itself, the aftermath could signal the defining character of a 21st century Scotland. The biblical concept of the peaceable kingdom - where the lion and lamb live together, the meek inherit the earth and all those who accept their need of God are blessed - offers an important vision of faith in the future. The fall-out from a close yes or no vote will be a bruising experience. Christians will work for reconciliation, gathering people of good will in practical ways. However, we face continuing turbulence, whether in negotiating separation from the rest of the UK or pressing for major further devolution of powers. These challenges will not eradicate strong feelings so tolerance and patience will be much needed.

The Referendum is about our sense of belonging and about our values. Like many households who will be voting in the forthcoming Referendum my own situation is a complex emotional geography of birthplace, family membership, occupation and residence, of cross border Scottish-ness and British-ness. Faith in our honest convictions is important and I guess that, come the day, for many people it will be quite a head or heart moment – confidence in a self-determining Scotland or fear of too many unknowns. True independence is to vote honestly and we should keep faith in the Referendum.

+ Ngi

Paying the Living Wage

General Synod in 2013 passed the following motion:

That this synod, recognising that the widening gap between rich and poor harms all of society, that in work poverty is now more common than out of work poverty, and that paying a living wage can help people out of poverty:

- a) affirms the Christian values inherent in the concept of a living wage; and
- b) strongly encourages all Scottish Episcopal Church bodies and congregations to pay at least the living wage.

A living wage is the amount that someone working 40 hours a week should be earning in order to be able to provide a minimum standard of living for themselves and their dependants.

A minimum is about more than survival. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's recent assessment of what expenditure should be included in calculating a living wage now includes a computer and broadband access – needed for everything from children's homework to online shopping and applications for benefits. It does not include motoring costs or tobacco but does include one week's holiday a year (domestic not foreign) and something to buy

birthday presents for family members. Full details of the calculation are available on their website.

A minimum standard of living in Britain today includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society.

The living wage is reviewed in November each year. For 2013/4 it is £7.65 an hour. There is a higher rate of £8.80 for London to compensate mainly for higher housing costs.

The legally enforceable minimum wage for adults is currently set at £6.31 an hour and will increase to £6.50 an hour in October 2014.

The motion recognised the widening level of inequality in the United Kingdom. This is both between rich and poor (the richer 40% in adequately paid work; the poorest 40% in minimum wage, insecure employment or dependent on benefits) and also between the top 1%, who have seen a very significant increase in their wealth and income, and the rest.

The motion recognised also that more people are living in in-work poverty than out of work poverty. If people were paid a living wage for

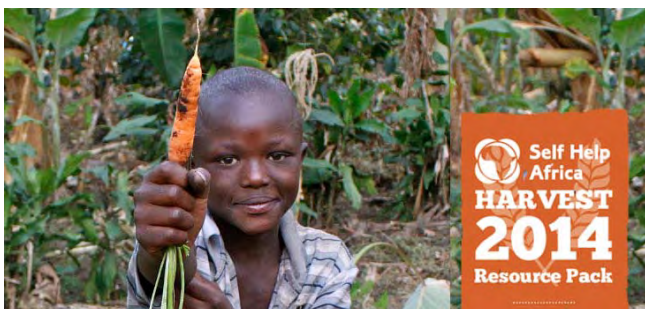
their work, then many fewer would be in poverty. It would also save the taxpayer a substantial amount, for at present significant benefits are paid to people on low pay and these are in effect a subsidy to their employers.

In Faith terms, all economic systems and enterprises come under the judgement of God. There is a long Christian tradition of paying a just wage.

But if the Church is to press for the minimum wage to be raised progressively towards the living wage, then the Church itself must practise what it preaches. And that is what the motion calls for.

In our diocese church and church associated bodies have responsibility for a range of staff. It is not just rectors. It covers those who work in the SEC residential home in Dundee, people employed as cleaners in churches and church halls or as administrators for charges or the diocese or for staff in any projects that the church runs. If your church, or a church associated body on whose management body you sit, is not yet paying the living wage, then please consider adopting policies that will move towards paying it and set yourselves a target date by which the living wage will be being paid.

David Mumford



Matthew Page, Churches Engagement Manager of Self Help Africa, writes:

"If you want your Harvest celebration to relate to the festival's agricultural roots then Self Help Africa has produced a Harvest Pack linking the Bible to the charity's work helping rural families overcome hunger and poverty. Paper copies can be ordered through their office (01743 277170) or the resources, including schools material, can be downloaded from <www.selfhelpafrica.org/uk/harvest>."

Raise the Roof

St Salvador's Church, Dundee has recently suffered on two occasions from the theft of lead from the roof allowing rain to cause damage.

In order to raise funds for repairs to the roof

Cantiones Sacrae

are giving an hour long concert in the church of some of their favourite music on

**Saturday, 20 September
at 7.30 p.m.**

£5 admission at the door (no advance sales)
Additional donations welcomed before or after the concert

Music will include pieces by Byrd, Wilton, Tallis, Padilla, Palestrina, Farrant, Guerrero, Lotti, Dowland, Kwasniewski, Garielli, Taverner and Victoria

Launch of Centre of Mission

At St Luke's, Downfield at 3 p.m. on Saturday, 6 September sees the launch of the Diocese's new Centre of Mission, an event that will also include the ordination to the Priesthood of Reverend Kerry Dixon as Priest Missioner and Priest-in-Charge of St Luke's and the licensing of Church Army evangelist Captain Craig Dowling to which all are invited. This exciting new programme is a partnership between St Luke's, Dundee the Diocese of Brechin, Church Army, the Scottish Episcopal Church and international development agency Signpost International.

The seeds of this venture were sown through Bishop Nigel's recognition that the Church is living through an era of significant change as Scotland is increasingly seen as a 'post-Christian' society. With this comes a renewed need for the Church to be working beyond church buildings, church culture and church structures in order to minister to those who have little or no significant history or links with the Church, and also for the Church to explore fresh ways of being an innovative, relevant and appropriate expression of Christian community. The new Centre will have three key objectives:

- ♦ **To reshape mission and ministry at St Luke's, Dundee;**
- ♦ **To develop a fresh expression ministry at St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee;**
- ♦ **To grow new expressions of Christian community, inspiring mission and evangelism within the Scottish Episcopal Church.**

Of course it is envisioned that there will be a wide range of ways to re-create a Christian community that reflects both the culture and theology of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Church Army, Signpost International, and the unique and diverse culture of contemporary Scotland. But – whatever form that outworking ultimately takes – as lay and ordained Christians living

in Scotland our desire is to evangelise the people of Scotland, and particularly those living in the Diocese of Brechin, so that they can come into a living relationship with God, through Jesus.

You are warmly invited
to
the launch of
the Diocese of Brechin's
CENTRE OF MISSION
the ordination to the
priesthood of the
Rev'd Capt. Kerry Dixon
and the licensing of
pioneer evangelist
Capt. Craig Dowling
on Saturday,
6 September, 3.00 p.m.
at St Luke's Downfield

The Chief Executive of Church Army, Canon Mark Russell explains,

"Church Army is a movement of evangelists working in challenging places, helping to reach out to those who are way beyond the walls of the Church, showing them that they matter to God. We are, first and foremost, a 'doing' movement, with hands dirty from serving others.

"We are excited that our newest Centre of Mission is in the Diocese of Brechin, and we are thrilled to partner with Bishop Nigel and the Diocese.

"We pray that 'doing' evangelism will enable many people to find faith in Christ. However, we also want our Centre of Mission to advocate evangelism, be a prophetic voice to the Diocese and Province and to resource and enable others in evangelism."

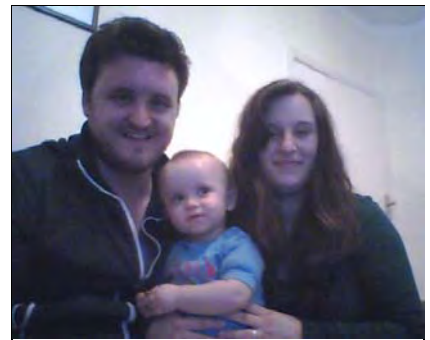
Canon Mark Russell will be in Dundee this September, preaching at the launch service at St Luke's.

Craig Dowling

Pioneer evangelist Craig Dowling, his wife Georgie and their son Noah will be living in the St Luke's Rectory, having moved to Dundee from Plumstead in south London over the summer.

"My job was to search out appropriate ways of doing church for people who do not like church," says Craig of his previous role.

"I pioneered a project called 'The Hope Stop Project', and this included a Wednesday lunch session, a Friday drop-in and a Sunday service, with a lot of individual contact during the rest of the week."



"The activities attracted mainly addicted homeless people," explains Craig, "but they found they were able to explore and even connect with God through Hope Stop.

"We are really excited to be coming to Dundee, and seeing what happens here!"

Kerry Dixon

The Rev'd Kerry Dixon will lead the Centre of Mission and also be Priest-in-Charge at St Luke's.

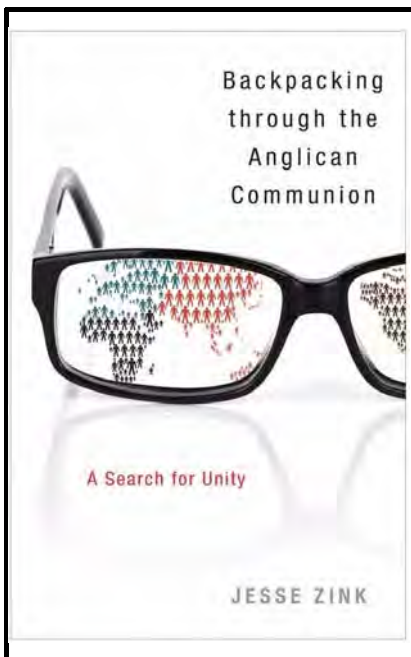
"This not an ordinary parish role," explains Kerry. "It is our job to create new kinds of Church – but probably not Church as you would know it!"

"We will spend our time largely outside the church structures," he says, "with those who have little or no church experience or connections.

"The idea is to create a Christian community that sits more easily within their culture, rather than expecting them to fit into a church culture that is completely alien to them."

Backpacking Through the Anglican Communion

Cyril Garbett, who was the Archbishop of York from 1942 to 1955, once wrote that what he called “the glory of the Church of England” was its *comprehensiveness*. And this, traditionally, has also been a hallmark of the Anglican Communion, the loose federation of churches (of which the Scottish Episcopal Church is a part) that are in communion with the See of Canterbury. Anglicans have prided themselves over the years on their ability to live with diversity, ambiguity and even contradiction; and of course, to bridge the gap between Catholic and Protestant – in what has come to be known as a the ‘Via Media’.



At least, that's how it used to be. Today, regrettably, the purity of that ideal has been significantly watered down, at least in some parts of the Anglican Communion, a classic illustration, perhaps, of the adage that “nothing fails like success”.

There are now some 80 million Anglicans world-wide, and over half of them live in Africa. While on the one hand this is heartening, on the other, it is problematical; for the vast majority of these new adherents have little grasp of or interest in the historic Anglican ideal of comprehensiveness that

Garbett so extolled. Instead, they would uphold a less subtle form of Christianity that is essentially fundamentalist, sometimes highlighted by a kind of ‘prosperity gospel’ – i.e. if you are generous to the Church, God will reward you with prosperity! They are also likely to be totally opposed to what they regard as the corruption of the Gospel (i.e. as interpreted literally) by the Anglican churches of the West in Europe, Canada and the United States. And this is especially so where issues of sexual orientation and practice are concerned.

So what was once a genial federation of churches has become seriously polarized by dissension, so much so that one is tempted to wonder, in the words of W.B. Yeats, if “the centre cannot hold”.

There is at least one Anglican, an American priest by the name of Jesse Zink, who believes the centre can still hold, even amidst our current polarization. And he has written a book on the subject. His solution: keep talking, and listening.

The author currently serves as an Assistant Chaplain at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he is completing doctoral studies. But his solution to Anglican discord is no product of an ivory tower. He has already put it to good use in a kaleidoscopic exposure to various parts of the Anglican Communion, including those who are most opposed to what they regard as Western liberalism. Yet Fr Zink is not interested in talking just for the sake of talking and he would commend an openness to both giving and receiving in shared conversation. He argues that there is a direct link between conversations of this kind and the mission of the Church itself: by this means, the Church is able to bear witness to the importance of *talking* as a desirable alternative to open conflict.

Fr Zink cites some one to one conversations with students at

Bishop Gwynne College, in The Episcopal Church of the Sudan, where he spent time as a visiting lecturer. He was encouraged by the fact that he had helped the students to see how local cultural norms might colour one's interpretation of scripture.

Zink also reports a conversation he had with a student who was vocally opposed to “homosexual bishops”. They were able to agree on such “core elements” as the centrality of Jesus, the application of the Gospel to everyday life and the certainty of life after death, without allowing sexual issues to jeopardize their commonality.

According to Zink, part of the problem is that much of the theology embraced by these new churches is about 25 years out of date. And it does seem that there is little or no awareness of what is sometimes called “Higher Criticism”, which is often taken for granted in the West.

There is also a tendency to be somewhat ignorant of Anglican norms – for example, in Africa, it is widely assumed that the Lambeth Conference sets policy (which it does not).

Despite these difficulties, Zink feels it is essential to keep talking and keep the lines of communication open, especially when difficult issues are discussed. He was heartened when, after a particularly tense session with some Anglican women in Nigeria (focusing on the “issue” of homosexuality in the Church), “The women still insisted on having a group photograph with me to commemorate my visit.”

So, from the sound of it, to keep talking and listening does have a positive value, even in the kind of conflicted situations that are so common in the Anglican Communion of today.

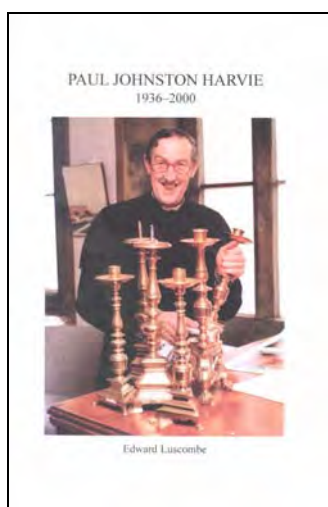
Anyone who cares about that should read this book!

Hugh Magee

PAUL JOHNSTON HARVIE
(1936–2000)

by Edward Luscombe

Last year, Bishop Luscombe published an eighty-page book entitled *All Glorious Within*, a short history of St Salvador's Church, Dundee tracing its history from its founding in the nineteenth century under his predecessor, Alexander Penrose Forbes, to its continued mission to the Hilltown area of Dundee in the twenty-first century. Having sought information about previous clergy from various sources, the amount of material received regarding one previous incumbent, Fr Paul Harvie, persuaded Bishop Luscombe that a separate publication would be appropriate; hence this informative and, for those of us who knew Paul well, evocative booklet.



Divided into seven chapters, it charts Fr Paul's life from his early days in Australia to his ultimate demise in October 2000 whilst still rector of St Salvador's Church following a fairly lengthy – and in its early stages undiagnosed – battle with cancer. Not only do the many contributions paint a picture of this extraordinary individual, the booklet also includes details of the architecture

of St Salvador's and the work undertaken by Fr Paul to restore the interior of this "wonderful Victorian church in the Hilltown".

As well as being a committed priest, Fr Paul was also a talented organist, singer, chef, gilder, restorer, handyman, and consummate organiser and motivator of others. His story is succinctly and eloquently told by Bishop Luscombe in some forty pages which include the reminiscences of many friends and colleagues as well as photographs of him carrying out his multifarious duties with a particularly characterful image on the front page of him polishing heavy brass candlesticks in the sacristy.

Philip Ursell, one time Principal of Pusey House in the diocese of Oxford, concluded his article written shortly after Fr Paul's death by saying, "What a truly remarkable priest he was! A lovely and precious person has departed from this world, a priest whom we could ill afford to lose." Bishop Luscombe's publication provides a fascinating insight into this distinguished priest's life. Speaking personally, Paul was the one who introduced me to the Scottish Episcopal Church, encouraged me to develop my musical and singing skills, and gave me a love for traditional Anglo-Catholic worship. I am just one of the many who thanks God that our paths crossed.

Graeme D Adamson

A Day in the Life of Andrewes

(a poem written by Marianne Dorman to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the consecration of Lancelot Andrewes as a bishop on 3 November 1605, two years after the Union of the Crowns of Scotland and England)

Please do not disturb!
I must be about my Father's business alone.

As the morning breaks
I lift up my eyes to the Father
from whence comes my help.
I lift up my hands for the world
fragile, but in your delicate hands.

My sins confessed,
my praises raised,
Your people held in my heart,
to the Scriptures I now turn
to read, mark and inwardly digest
the Fountain of life, and the Son.

The cross!
Precious are my hours
Spent gazing and gazing
Upon You, O blessed Jesu;
Your life surrendering
To the will of the Father.

There is no greater joy,
no greater comforter
than the words "Come unto me".
I shall give you life.
"Learn of me"
and be my servant.

Your life flowed from Your side
To bathe us in baptism,
Forgiving and sustaining us
in the Blood of Salvation.
Never am I as close to you,
Never my "blessed union" so complete
When like Thomas,
I cry out, "My Lord and my God".

Now to Court;
To preach once again
man's need for repentance,
and Christ's longing to hear,
"I turn".
What greater message to tell
Of the angels' joy
to hear the sinner's song,
"I love you dearest Saviour".

If I have softened one stony heart
my service is well done for the day;
I can lay me down and take my rest
grateful that the Lord's work is done.

The Gardener's Hymn

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

But what we never mention,
Though gardeners know it's true,
Is when He made the goodies,
He made the baddies too.

All things spray and swattable,
Disasters great and small,
All things Paraquatable,
The Lord God made them all.

The greenfly on the roses,
The maggots on the peas,
Manure that fills our noses,
He also gave us these.

The fungus on the goose-gogs,
The club root on the greens,
The slugs that eat the lettuce
And chew the aubergines,

The draught that kills the fuchsias,
The frost that nips the buds,
The rain that drowns the seedlings,
The blight that kills the spuds,

The midges and mosquitoes,
The nettles and the weeds,
The pigeons in the green stuff,
The sparrows on the seeds,

The fly that gets the carrots,
The wasp that eats the plums:
How black the gardener's labour,
Though green may be his thumbs.

But still we gardeners labour,
'Midst vegetables and flowers
And pray what hits our neighbours
Will somehow bypass ours.



PEACEMAKING SUNDAY

This year United Nations Peace Day and the churches' Peacemaking Sunday come together on Sunday, 21 September. This will also be the first Sunday after the referendum. Churches pray for peace all the year round but an annual focus is very important. It gives an opportunity to pray for those caught up in specific conflicts. The churches' ministry of reconciliation can be reaffirmed.

Local churches may join together with an ecumenical or interfaith vigil or service. Religion should be seen as a power for reconciliation rather than conflict or division.

Some churches may mark it by special prayers and hymns and a sermon emphasising Christianity's overwhelming preferential option for non-violence and Jesus's blessing on peacemakers. (Matthew 5:9)

Uniting for Peace are producing special worship resources for this Sunday. If you would like a copy, please send £5 (cheques payable to 'Peace services') to the Rev'd Brian Cooper, 144/1, Whitehouse Loan, Edinburgh EH9 2AN (0131-446-9545).

If you undertake some activity, please let the Rev'd David Mumford know at 9, Castle Street, Brechin, Angus DD9 6JW or email <dmumford@phonecoop.coop>.

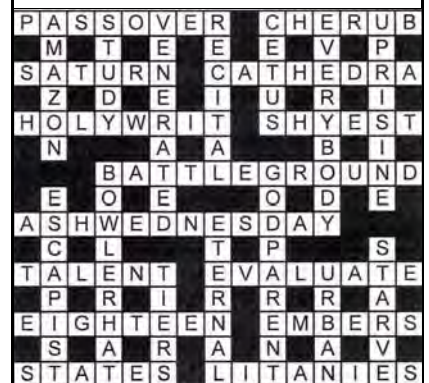
WELL DONE!

Drawn by an independent person (actually a water services engineer!) the winner of the last edition's crossword is Mrs Susie Schofield.

Others who got it right were: Cheryl Birse, Alastair Cruickshank, John Hughes, Dora Hynd, Edward Luscombe, C. M. Mortimer, Helen Sanderson and Graeme Stirling. (Someone asked to see all the names up in lights!)

Unfortunately there were quite a few incorrect entries (no names to avoid embarrassment) and the problematic clue was 2 down: "The woman to go to for a book ... and a lot else!" The proper answer was 'Amazon'.

The full answers were:



There is, of course, another crossword on page 12 to tantalise you as the evenings get longer.

Are you being served?

How often do I ask someone "Can I help you?"

Self-service – Do I help myself to all God is offering me? Am I willing to share freely with others?

"They also serve who only stand and wait." Serving is not only "doing things": sometimes it is being quiet and receptive to others and to God.

After-sales service – God gives me all I need to keep me strong and working as he wants me to.

Silver service – I am special in God's eyes so he gives me his very best; nothing is ever too much trouble. Do I do the same for him?

Emergency Services – Always on hand when needed; waiting in readiness at a moment's notice. Would people feel able and willing to turn to me in times of need and would I be able and willing to respond?

Church services – Our corporate worship and witness to God in the community where we are called to serve him.

General Synod, Edinburgh 12-14 June 2014

A change came over the General Synod this year – a new location at St Paul's and St George's, York Place. Just outside is the terminus of new Edinburgh tram line which had come into service only a few days before. Hopefully, prophetically speaking the Church was embarked on a new beginning and had not reached the end of the line.



The Rev'd Matthew Ross of *Action of Churches Together in Scotland* speaking of ecumenical activity as a journeying in faith rather than reaching a destination

Certainly the Primus in his charge to Synod indicated three areas which would engage members' minds during the meeting and in the future. In saying that the season of Pentecost was a search for, and a guiding into truth he referred to the setting up of the new Scottish Episcopal Institute for training for ministry, the forthcoming Referendum on Independence and the impact of the passing of the Marriage and Civil Partnership [Scotland] Act 2014.

In contrast to the meetings of General Synod previously held in the constricting pews of the Church of Scotland church in Palmerston Place, the new location provided expanse and flexibility which was profitably used. On arrival members were arbitrarily assigned to a table of eight people. This allowed for a better view of proceedings, more comfort and less formality, and ease in group discussions. Findings from discussion groups were later displayed on the walls.

The first such discussion

followed the launching of the latest Grosvenor Essay *The Church and Scottish Identity*. Groups were invited to consider three questions related to the forthcoming referendum and the life of the Church.

Another publication was highlighted by the Inter-Church Relations Committee – a study document emanating from the 2013 meeting of the World Council of Churches entitled *God's Gift and Call to Unity – and Our Commitment*. This was commended for use by dioceses and congregations.

The Friday morning was largely devoted to reports from, and proposals of the Mission and Ministry Board. With an increasing vision and emphasis on the primacy of mission in the life of the Church the governing structures needed to be modified. The dioceses and congregations are the locations where the mission of the Church is primarily carried out rather than by direction from the centre. In all of this, of course, there needs to be co-ordination through networks to hold everything together. With this in view it was agreed that there would be a transition period which would see the establishment of a Mission Board and a separate Board of the Scottish Episcopal Institute.

The report of the Theological Institute was presented: this advocated in the training for ministry in the Church a move of focus from educational attainment to one of formation in discipleship.

There was then group discussion on four set questions regarding qualities, skills and training methods most appropriate.

The afternoon was largely given over to information on how the process of discussion of Same-Sex Relationships had developed. A Cascade Conversation had commenced in April at Pitlochry with some 60 participants of widely differing views gathering to listen to each other. An insight of what took place was given as four of those participants spent half an hour in carrying out a similar respectful but courageous conversation in front of the synod.

Group discussion then took place to consider two questions: 'What has shaped your views about same-sex relationships over the years?' and 'What considerations should the Scottish Episcopal Church take into account when exploring whether to incorporate same-sex marriage into its life?'

In bringing the discussion to a close the Primus said that such problems and questions are not solved by win or lose voting, nor with a diversity which produces an unbridged chasm between viewpoints.. Rather it is discovering how we may move forward in relationship, even with those with whom we disagree.



The Bishop of Edinburgh reporting on the Diaconate Working Group

Much else of significance was discussed and agreed at this meeting. It was, though, a good gathering which bedded down well in the new surroundings.

BooksWalkFood for St Salvador's Food Cupboard

Q. What connects Frankenstein, Bob Servant and Desperate Dan with St Salvador's Church, Dundee?

A. BooksWalkFood

Still mystified? Let me explain.

Earlier this year some of my colleagues at the Central Library in Dundee decided that they wanted to do a sponsored walk on a Sunday in the summer, so after discussion the idea of plotting and producing a literary map for the city of Dundee emerged. Research began and it soon became apparent that Dundee has a long list of authors and characters with links to the City of Discovery. From Bob Servant, Desperate Dan and Frankenstein to William McGonagall and Maureen Reynolds the list grew longer and longer, including works of non fiction and fiction.

Living authors were contacted and asked where on the map of the city they wished to be represented and some decided to join in with the walk too. The map was finally revealed and a route plotted to include many of the places in Dundee with literary associations.

On Sunday, 29 June a number of staff from across the city

libraries and some of their family members set out on the 19 mile route, stopping to take photographs at each designated location. From Broughty Ferry to the West End they walked, taking in St Salvador's, the centre of town and Balgay Hill among other places, en route. Their final stop was at a pub, the suitably named George Orwell, for a well earned drink and a much deserved rest.



It was suggested that the money raised from the walk should go to a charity helping to feed local people in these difficult times and one of my colleagues who had heard about our Sunday

afternoon ministry mentioned that we would be grateful for their support. The Head of Library Services agreed that, in June, collection boxes could be placed in each of the local libraries to receive donations in kind from those who wanted to donate food and other practical items.

These items have now been collected together at Central Library and at the last count there were at least 50 boxes to be delivered to the church. So far £1,100 has been raised through sponsorship and gifts and we are amazed and delighted at such generosity. Gobsnacked was the way I put it when I was told.

The BooksWalkFood project has resulted in the production of an excellent literary map for the city which will be on view sometime soon on the library's website:

leisureandculturedundee.com/library. Why not check it out and take a moment to see what else the library service offers.

To all my colleagues and everyone who contributed money or goods to this venture a very big thank you from all involved with the Food Cupboard Ministry.

Katie Clapson

JAMES GREGORY PUBLIC LECTURES ON SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY

5.15 P.M. PHYSICS LECTURE THEATRE, NORTH HAUGH, ST ANDREWS

'Monday, 29 September 2014

Professor John Wyatt

"What is a person?"

Insights from neuroscience and Christianity"

John Wyatt is Professor Emeritus of Ethics & Perinatology at University College London. He has a clinical background as an academic neonatologist working on the mechanisms, consequences and prevention of brain injury in critically ill newborn infants.



His work is now concentrated on ethical issues raised by advances in reproductive and medical technology at the beginning of life, research ethics and governance and the philosophical basis of medical practice.

Monday, 10 November 2014

Professor Ron Numbers

'Darwin and God: The Historical Relationship'

Ronald L. Numbers is Hilldale Professor of the History of Science and Medicine and a member of the department of medical history and bioethics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he has taught for three decades. He has written or edited more than two dozen books, including, most recently, *Darwinism Comes to America* (1998), *Disseminating Darwinism: The Role of Place, Race, Religion and Gender* (1999) co-edited with John Stenhouse, *When Science and Christianity Meet* (2003) co-edited with David Lindberg and continues to co-edit *the 8-volume Cambridge History of Science*.



St Mary's and St Peter's, Montrose Annual Young People's Picnic and Fun Day

How many bishops do you know, who are prepared to stand in the stocks and have wet sponges thrown at them? Well, we can name one – along with two lay readers!



The revellers assembled

On 22 June, St Mary's and St Peter's held its annual young people's picnic and fun day. There was the inevitable bouncy castle with the inevitable bouncing bishop, and a host of games which spilled out from the church and the churchyard on to the green outside.

Nancy Scott, the leader of our young people's activities, put together a number of creative activities to keep young and old alike on the go, including a Bible quiz and a 'touchy feely game' where players had to guess what

awful things were hidden away in a series of boxes – gooey, jelly-like, and downright yuk! But then, aren't the old games the best? There was not a single i-pad or computer game in sight.

Richard and Christina Potter, our regular executive chefs, supervised the barbecue and feeding station, with burgers and other delights, and the church's marquee provided just the right degree of shelter.

But the highlight of the day was – yes, you've guessed it –

the opportunity to lob wet sponges at Bishop Nigel and Lay Readers Harold and Peter. This became an open invitation to some of the adults (sorry, some of the men) to show off their prowess at hitting a static target from about three metres. Yes, it was great fun, whether you were throwing or on the receiving end, until the sponges got impregnated with



Caption deleted

grit from the churchyard.

Once again, St Mary's and St Peter's proved that not all church is dull and boring, and a good time was had by all.



One Lay Reader looking to lose his licence?



Bishop Nigel baiting the spongers

Illustration of the devil on folio 290 of the Codex Gigas (or Giant Bible), the largest extant medieval manuscript in the world. Thought to have been created in a Benedictine monastery in Bohemia (modern Czech Republic) in the early 13th century it is preserved in the National Library of Sweden. It is known as the Devil's Bible since legend has it that the codex was created by a monk who sold his soul to the devil.

Disclaimer: Any similarity to any person living or dead is merely coincidental.



July at Stonehaven

The last weekend of July was a busy time for St James': a successful Craft Fair on Saturday, and a visit from the Bishop of Brechin to our Patronal Festival on Sunday.

Bishop Nigel came to lead the worship at 10.30 when he preached on the calling of James the Great, the church's Patron Saint, to be a follower of Jesus. Then he blessed the new altar frontal, created specially for St James' Lady Chapel altar. This wonderful piece of church embroidery was purchased as a memorial to the late Chrissie Guild from funds she bequeathed specially for this purpose in her Will.

Bishop Nigel led prayers to bless and receive this wonderful new piece of church broidery. Chrissie Guild was a life-long member of St James' congregation and this is a fitting memorial to her. Chrissie's granddaughter, Rachel and her husband Jonathan, as well as great-granddaughters, Holly and Annabelle were there for the occasion.



The Bishop led the children, together with other children from the congregation, in identifying and explaining the symbols in the embroidery. "The sun and the cross are obvious – but what about the sea and the fishes?" The children were quick to reply that these are both symbols for Stonehaven, being an historical fishing port, and also because Jesus made his disciples fishers of men. There is also a lovely crab – though this is not mentioned in the Gospels. It is however another symbol that links with Stonehaven.

The Bishop then asked about the two lovely flowers silhouetted against the sun on the frontal. "What are these?" he asked. "Flowers," came the reply. "But what sort of flowers?" There was a hesitation until an adult member identified them as freesias. "Why freesias?" he asked. "Because they were my grandma's favourite flowers," replied Rachel. "And what a good choice," replied the Bishop with a huge smile for the children.

The altar frontal, which is mainly white in colour, will be used whenever there is a festival when the liturgical colour is white or silver – Easter, Christmas and the festivals of Mary.

Anne Geldart

Mearns Faith Matters

How many of you know that Stonehaven and the Mearns has its own community radio station? Well, it does. Its name is Mearns FM and it can be found between 105-107MHz on the FM band of your radio depending on where you live in the area. Mearns FM has been on air for almost five years and recently had its licence renewed for a further five years.

In its early days it was looking for presenters, so in November 2009, Louisa Greenwell and I were invited to a committee meeting at Mearns FM, and left with the idea of starting a religious programme on Sunday afternoons.

On 17 March 2010, Mearns Faith Matters took to the air to promote "news, views and interviews" from the churches in the Mearns area. Originally we thought an hour would be enough, but we were persuaded to go on air 3.30-5 p.m. and soon we were asked to fill the whole two hour slot from 3-5 p.m. It seemed daunting at the time, but now two hours just flies by!

Our first interview was with Rev'd David Stewart, then minister at Stonehaven South Church of Scotland who was easy to interview, having been involved in the original Stonehaven Radio project several years earlier. Since then we have interviewed everyone from charity workers to the former Bishop of Brechin, the late Rt Rev'd Dr John Mantle who granted us an interview just before he retired.

At first we co-presented each show, but now we take it in turns to present a mixture of: old and new musical favourites; poetry; prayers; Bible readings; children's and adult talks; and of course, "the news and views" from churches in our area.

Running a community radio station costs money. Money which is raised by: membership fees; fundraising events; advertising; and sponsorship of shows. We are lucky in that over the years we have received sponsorship from local churches, and are presently sponsored by Dunnottar Parish Church in return for regular reports and updates. However we welcome information on church and community events from any church in the area.

Louisa and I are very grateful for their continued support, but we are also seeking sponsorship for the local church services that are broadcast at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Sundays. Fetteresso Parish church and Bervie Parish Church currently provide recordings, but we would welcome other contributors.

We also do requests; so, if you want a mention, please let us know in good time for your special birthday or anniversary. This is especially important if you want to hear a particular hymn, piece of classical music or rock gospel number. There's always room for one more in the studio, so if you would like to help us present a programme, or be interviewed, either contact us or join us in the Mearns FM studio at the back of the Stonehaven Town Hall, 3-5 p.m. on Sunday afternoons.

Margaret Hodder, Co-presenter
<mshodder@btinternet.com>

Letter from Aberdeen . . .

"It is an honour and privilege," writes the Rev'd Samantha Ferguson, "to be appointed as Rector for St Mary's and St Peter's Church, Montrose and St David's Church, Inverbervie. As I write, I am surrounded by chaos, packing boxes are strewn everywhere. You would have thought I would be used to moving by now as this is my 14th move in 43 years, but every time it seems to get harder.

"Change is good but change is also challenging. It has been very hard to say fond farewells to those we know and love in Aberdeen. They certainly never warn you about the perils and stresses of transition at TISEC (the now extinct Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church) and probably that is for the best. Beginnings and endings are part of who we are and what we do in the church, so it should be no surprise when our own personal ministry journeys begin to reflect them.

"We are so pleased to be coming back to the Diocese of Brechin. I did most of my TISEC placement training in Dundee. First it was seven months at St Margaret's Lochee with the Rev'd Canon James Milne, followed by a 3-month placement with the Rev'd Professor Annalu Waller at the Chaplaincy at Uni of Dundee. We were stationed at RAF Leuchars at the time after being posted from the real 'down south' back in 1998. I have very fond memories of my training in Dundee and am looking forward to renewing friendships.

"So who am I? This mad English female cleric with a liking for red nails, red shoes and of course, red handbags? Born in Dartford, South London, I grew up in Guernsey. In 1993 I married Scott, who was serving in the RAF at Brize Norton. My working background is in Administration, having run various offices for several large companies including Shell and the Engineering Department for Oxford Instruments – the company that built the magnets for the Hadron Collider. I have always joked that

in some small way my God-given filing skills helped in discovering the God-Particle, the Higgs Boson.

"In 1998 we moved to Scotland when Scott was posted to RAF Leuchars. When our daughter, Robina, started school in 2002, I could not ignore God's call any longer and so began a 4-year full time Master of Theology Honours Degree at St Mary's College of Divinity, University of St Andrews.



"After I graduated in 2006, I began my 2-year ministry training through TISEC and in my second year met my new Lay Reader at Montrose, Harold Jack, as he began his training as well as Peter Smart! I received my call to ministry in 1998 just after we moved to Leuchars, but that, as they say, is another story!

"In 2006 I became Church Administrator for St Andrew's Church, St Andrews (Bishop Bob's Gillies' previous charge). The two years spent working there provided me with a useful insight into how a church is run. However, when I started the job I didn't realise that +Bob would disappear off to become Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, leaving me with an interregnum! Following Bishop Bob up north, I was deaconed and priested by him and placed as Assistant Curate at St John's, Aberdeen and St Peter's, Torry for two years. In 2010 after my curacy was completed, I was appointed Priest-in-Charge at St Ninian's Church, Seaton, King Street.

"As part of my role at St Ninian's, I have been Hon. Anglican Chaplain at the University of Aberdeen for the last

5 years as well as Episcopalian Hospital Chaplain. I was also very involved as School Chaplain for the local Seaton Primary School and an active member of the Local Ecumenical Partnership – The Donside Christian Partnership. I also help run the monthly services in the local Sheltered Housing Complexes and Nursing Homes. All in all it has been a very busy and productive, God-Filled Spirit-Led four years of ministry here.

"Scott is now Engineering Manager for Woollard and Henry in Dyce. having retired from 22 years in the RAF last year. Our only child, Robina, is 16 years old and attends Queen Victoria School Dunblane. She will complete her schooling in S6 this August. She is a member of the School's Pipe Band as a drummer and enjoys raising money for CHAS. We have two dogs, Mason and Mungo, who is very naughty. Our hobbies vary from swimming to singing, but don't be surprised if you see your new colleague with her nose in a trashy detective novel!

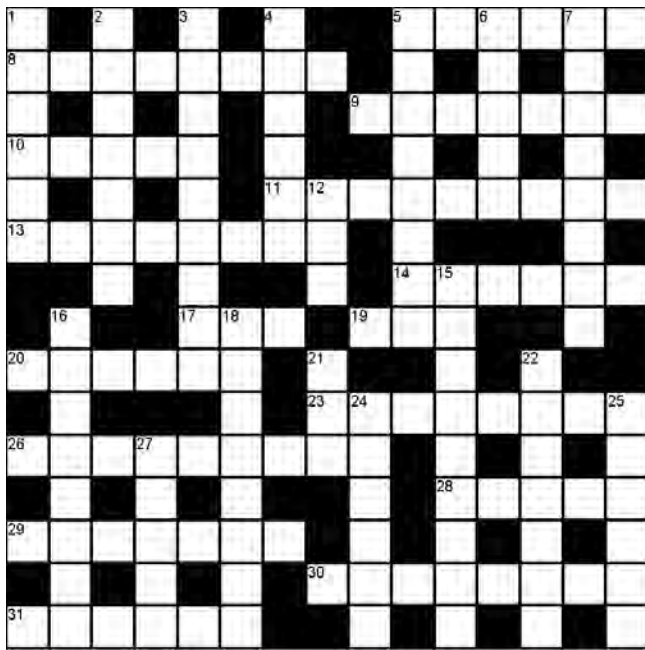
"I have been a Christian since a child and my faith has been a fundamental force throughout my life. I am passionate about Celtic spirituality; both Taizé and Iona have been very special places in my spiritual journey. I also love to write and you may have seen some of my articles in 'inspires', especially about my passion for crafting!

"We feel truly blessed that these two special churches have called us to continue with our ministry and further the Kingdom of God there at this time. There are so many plans for the future of both churches I don't think I am going to have time to breathe, but please do say hello if you see me out and about in the Diocese as making new friends is all part of the fun of moving.

"So, it is back to the packing and looking forward to seeing you at St Mary's and St Peter's, Montrose, on Thursday, 4 September 2014 at 7 p.m. – I will be the blonde with the red shoes, red nails and big smile!"

CRYPTIC PRIZE CROSSWORD

To give a little help, 10 answers will be found in the hymn 'Love divine, all loves excelling'. Send your entries to the editor at the address on the back page by Friday, 31 October at the latest putting your name and address in the box provided.



- 28 Old coin reveals a line in a credit note (5)
- 29 Man found amongst women (7)
- 30 They cut the sac with a spell (8)
- 31 Fly into a set twice (6)
- 7 Mice race for chilly milk (3,5)
- 12 The Khan's cooker? (3)
- 15 Flee to the crypt completely (9)
- 16 A pet's loss but not like a leopard (8)
- 18 An artistic person ate these (8)

CLUES DOWN:

- 1 Cropped a mad ref (6)
- 2 Transformed suspend in the last month (7)
- 3 You will be unsteady if you get a NT limb (9)
- 4 The bird takes a road to bliss (6)
- 5 An erotic fabrication (8)
- 6 Dad has hand on a custard apple (5)
- 21 For an amateur? No! (3)
- 22 Chemical treatment to make a hog lean (7)
- 24 The nicest invertebrate (6)
- 25 A marine creature in the end (6)
- 27 The index acts as the source of an accurate demand (5)

CLUES ACROSS:

- 5 Prefer 201 in Egyptian (6)
- 8 Strongly disliked her board (8)
- 9 Is the step made of elm in these buildings? (7)
- 10 Same note played either way (5)
- 11 Mow rather than burrow (9)
- 13 Abode in a wild glen (8)
- 14 A poser may be found in such works (6)
- 17 Pick up a prohibition (3)
- 19 The first cardinal (3)
- 20 No pegs hold water (6)
- 23 Uncultured aria performed twice very loudly (8)
- 26 Erect posture sounds like a strain (9)

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

Volunteers needed for Bishop's House, Iona

Mrs Joan Smith of Dundee recommends working for a few weeks as a volunteer (single or couples) alongside the permanent staff at Bishop's House, the 1894 Episcopal retreat house on the shores of Iona.

The House is fully open from March to October. Some weeks are given over to organised retreats. Individuals or groups can book at other times. During these months volunteers assist in a variety of ways both in the House and outside in the garden. Each has their own room and joins with the staff for meals. There is daily worship in the chapel, but volunteers are not under an obligation to participate. Working hours (roughly 39 hours per week) are usually in split shifts with the middle of the afternoon free. Volunteers also have two days off each week.

This is an opportunity not only to spend time in a peaceful environment with a variety of things to do during spare time but also to assist in showing hospitality to the guests. Further details can be got from the website <www.island-retreats.org>.

* * * * *
Dundee Nativity 2014
 * * * * *
 Now in its fifth year, the Dundee Nativity is a great opportunity to present the real meaning of Christmas to the crowds at the Christmas Light Night event. The play takes place on the evening of Friday, 14 November in a great open air venue in the city centre – and it's fun!
 * * * * *
You can:
 * Sing in the Choir
 * Act in the Play
 * or help backstage or with the costumes
 * Rehearsals begin on Friday 12 September, at Meadowside St Paul's Church Halls,
 * 114 Nethergate, Dundee,
 * each Friday evening from 7 till 9 p.m.
 * If you are interested please contact Allan Webster
 * Tel. 07546 276725, email allanfwebster@aol.com
 * * * * *

Anniversary of Saint Mary's Church, Arbroath

450 years ago, the church in Scotland was determining its form and future – the main argument being whether it should have an Episcopalian or Presbyterian form of church government. The argument raged here in Arbroath as it did elsewhere, though along this east coast and further north there was a preference for Episcopacy.

At the time, St Vigean's was the parish church for all of Arbroath, but it had a Chapel of Ease at the harbour for the folk from the Fit o' the Toon. That chapel, situated beside the bridge over the Brothock Burn, was dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, hence the name Lady-bridge Street for the road leading from the High Street to the harbour.

But Arbroath was growing and the parish was divided, with a new Town Church to be built at the Tron. This was built about 1590, though destroyed by fire and rebuilt in the late 18th century as the Old Church. This in turn was linked with the Abbey Church to become the Old & Abbey.

The chapel at the harbour was closed in 1590; but it is interesting that those who preferred to remain as Episcopalian retained the name of St Mary the Virgin for their congregation which was constituted in 1596. (Actually around 1610–1620, the new parish church housed the Episcopalian congregation).

As Episcopalian fortunes waxed and waned over the next 170 years, the Arbroath congregation, sometimes referred to as Episcopalian and sometimes as the Jacobite Congregation, met in a variety of places in the High Street and Hill Street. For a time in the 18th century after the Jacobite risings, when the Episcopal Church was outlawed and congregations could number no more than 5 by law, the congregation met in the town house of the Ouchterlony's of the Guynd (possibly No 60 High Street) which had many rooms; and so 5 people could be in each room with the minister and 4 others in the hallway.

During the 18th century, there were for a time two Episcopalian congregations – the Scottish Episcopalian who were loyal to the Jacobite cause, and the Qualified Chapel (or 'English' Episcopalian) whose allegiance was to the British Crown. These two united in 1806 after the Penal laws had been repealed in 1796.



Interior of St Mary's by Patrick Allan-Fraser

The Qualified congregation met first in a house at the foot of the High Street, but then built a chapel in 1791 – the red sandstone church which still stands next to the car park and until recently was the United Free Church.

After the coming together of the two Episcopalian congregations, this church became too small. So in 1852, the Vestry having accepted the proposal of the incumbent Rev' William Henderson that a new church should be erected, the foundations were laid for the new St Mary's Church in Springfield Terrace, designed by the Edinburgh architect John Henderson, William's brother.

The Service of Dedication at the laying of the foundation stone was conducted by Bishop Alexander Penrose Forbes. A cavity was prepared in the foundation stone to hold a hermetically sealed jar which contained a number of documents including a parchment with the words of Dedication.

"...The Chapel which for many years was occupied by the Episcopal congregation of Arbroath as a place of worship, situated near the sea, on the east side of the High Street, having

become inadequate for the accommodation of the increasing worshippers, the congregation, encouraged by the munificent contributions of the Family of Mudie of Pitmuies, resolved to erect a new Church of larger dimensions, and in a style more becoming the name and service of Almighty God, which might be set apart for ever by consecration for public worship in communion with the Scottish Episcopal Church..."

The new church was consecrated on Thursday, 31 August 1854, and one commentator in describing the gathering of the people before the service remarked, "We doubt whether anything like the coming ceremony had been seen in Arbroath since the consecration of the Abbey in 1233."

The prayers of consecration were recited by the Bishop, and the formal publication of the sentence of Consecration was read out by one of his chaplains and then laid on the Holy Table to be subscribed by the Bishop. This was followed by daily morning service including a sermon delivered by the Very Revd Edward Ramsay, the Dean of Edinburgh; and then by the celebration of Holy Communion – concluding at three o'clock.

And so, this year, we mark our heritage of 160 years of Episcopalian worship in our church, as part of over 400 years of Episcopalian worship in Arbroath; which itself is part of a longer history of Christianity in this area. It goes back beyond the 13th century consecration of St Vigean's church; beyond the building of the abbey; beyond the 8th century local Pictish stones which show Christian images; perhaps beyond the arrival of missionaries sent out around Scotland by Columba in the 6th century or Ninian in the 5th century.

It is a heritage which has had its moments of darkness as well as its moments of rejoicing. Let us make our celebration this year one of great rejoicing.

A Few Thoughts on Gender

In all the talk about sex and gender issues lately the underlying assumption is that people can, or should, be divided into two distinct groups namely, male and female; girls and boys.

In my ignorance I would have agreed with that until I heard a moving real life story on the radio, given by a woman who had been born as neither male nor female.

She had been put down as female and had been brought up by her parents as a girl but her internal reproductive organs were actually testicles, not ovaries. With no consultation and little information given to her parents she was surgically transformed into what is effectively a female eunuch at the age of eight. The discovery of this has had a profoundly disturbing psychological effect on her. Perhaps there were good medical reasons for the operation but she wishes they had left her to be as she was born: an intersex person.

The cost in terms of trauma to the individual are nowadays better recognised and principles in force aimed at protecting the child. Too late, unfortunately, for the sad lady on the radio. And there are many more such cases recorded.

That horror of things to do with sex still appears to pervade some sections of British society today. As Christians commanded to love our neighbours we should spare a thought for those who have to hide their gender or who feel they must pretend to be Male or Female against their inner feelings, simply because society regards intersexuality as a disorder and homosexuality an aberration. These things ought to be regarded as normal variations and statistically uncommon rather than defects or mistakes of nature.

However, sexuality is not just defined by physical attributes, but is partially a state of mind. It is a measure of how far our society has changed in its comprehension of human sexuality that the younger generation is often astonished to learn that not so long ago homosexuality was a criminal offence and lesbianism regarded as non-existent. In more enlightened societies the com-

plexities of gender assignment are more tolerably recognised.

The S.E.C's essay on "Marriage and Human Intimacy" supposedly deals with these gender issues in relation to marriage. In one section it is acknowledged that "scientific studies of human sexuality indicate that nature is considerably more complex and subtle than the traditional view might suggest". The essay's authors, however, ignore the intersex states in subsequent discussions on the grounds that sexuality is almost completely bimodal.

Basing arguments about what constitutes a canonically acceptable marriage on Biblical precedents is fraught with difficulties. Moses, who himself brought down the Law from the mountain, had several wives simultaneously. Clearly, adultery (not allowed in the Ten Commandments) just means not having sexual relations with someone married to someone else. King David had many wives but the only marriage of which God disapproved was that to Bathsheba; not because of its polygynous nature but because David had engineered the death of her husband.

In New Testament times the status of marriage in the afterlife is discussed (Mark 12:18-25). Who is married to whom in the case of legitimate serial marriages? Jesus replies that the term "marriage" will be irrelevant then. He does not question the legitimacy of the rules governing marriage of widows.

The social norms that define marriage have always changed from place to place and over time. Marriage rules are often driven by environmental pressures, demographics, observed genetic effects and inheritance laws. In many cultures polygyny is still common. In our own culture, where polygamy is illegal, serial monogyny and serial monoandry are largely accepted as normal, as is parenthood of the unmarried.

The question now is what forms of marriage should be regarded as acceptable in the Church. In today's world the purpose of marriage is not primarily about

procreation. It is more about providing companionship, well-being and economic advantage, which is acknowledged in the ceremony's wording. So-called "same sex marriage" is one of many possibilities for facilitating these features of the married state more inclusively. Unfortunately we are stuck with just two officially recognized gender classes.

So, consider the following imaginary scenario.

Suppose Santhi Soundarajan asks to be married in church. She was an Indian middle distance runner who won a silver medal in the women's 800m event at the 2006 Asian Olympic Games. Her performance was so outstanding that her gender was questioned. Extensive examinations by medical professionals determined that she had been born with a female body without female internal organs. Because she had the body of a woman Santhi had never thought of herself as anything other than a woman. Officially humiliated and psychologically damaged, stripped of her medal, Santhi attempted suicide in 2007 and now reportedly works as a labourer.

Had Santhi asked to marry a man in our Church, would she have been subjected to the same humiliating tests that she suffered after her Asian Games performance? Would marriage have been refused on the grounds that she was not 100% female?

So, if it is insisted that only male-female marriage should be permitted, how will the Church decide who is male and who is female? Will it be from birth certificates? Clothing? Physical appearance? Might there be gender testing before granting permission?

Given that the Church acknowledges "mutual society, help and comfort" as a legitimate reason for marrying and that this is probably the main reason for people marrying these days, perhaps it is time for the Church to allow any mutually supportive couple to marry, be they male, female or of intermediate gender.

Ken Tonge

From the Cradle to the Grave?

During the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th, John Moschos travelled around the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean collecting stories of Christian holy men and women. *The Spiritual Meadow* was the record of his journey at a time when the whole area was in turmoil and under attack from the Persian Empire. In 614 A.D. his home monastery of St Theodosius near Bethlehem was burned to the ground and hundreds of unarmed monks put to the sword.

Living in such turbulent times with the Byzantium Empire falling apart, Moschos, the Eastern Orthodox monk, had a gloomy view of the future and envisaged the diminution and attrition of the Christian Church.

In 1994 William Dalrymple travelled for several months in the footsteps of John Moschos and recounted his experiences and encounters from Turkey to Egypt in *From the Holy Mountain*. Time and again he met with people and circumstances which could only echo Moschos' sad outlook. At the end of his book sitting outside the monastic ruins at Kharga in the far south of Egypt, Dalrymple wrote:

"These tombs, I realised, must have been the last thing that John Moschos saw before he left the Great Oasis on the Alexandria road, en route to his final exile in Constantinople. Sitting there, looking out over the temple-monastery where his friend Abba Leo had lived before being carried off into slavery, Moschos must have known that his whole world was crumbling. But I wondered whether even he realised the extent to which he was witnessing the last days of the golden age of the Christian Middle East.

"Soon after his return to Alexandria, the city was to fall to the Persians. Briefly recovered by the Byzantines, it fell again in 641 A.D., this time to the Muslims. Islam has held it – and most of the rest of the Middle East – ever since. The Christian population that Moschos knew and wrote about – the monks and the

stylites, the merchants and the soldiers, the prostitutes and the robber chiefs – all the strange and eccentric characters who wander in and out of the pages of The Spiritual Meadow, were conquered and subjugated, their numbers gradually whittled down by emigration, intermarriage and mass apostasy. With occasional intervals of stasis, such as the early Ottoman period, that process



Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi Christians face an unprecedented humanitarian crisis after fleeing from Islamic State militants

has persisted ever since, greatly accelerating in this century. It is a historical continuum that began during the journeys of Moschos and the final chapter of which I have been witnessing on my own travels some fourteen hundred years later. Christianity is an Eastern religion which grew firmly rooted in the intellectual ferment of the Middle East. John Moschos saw that plant begin to wither in the hot winds of change that scoured the Levant of his day. On my journey in his footsteps I have seen the very last stalks in the process of being uprooted. It has been a continuous process, lasting nearly one and a half millennia. Moschos saw its beginnings. I have seen the beginning of its end."

In 1900 about 32% of Ottoman Turkey's population was Christian, but the genocide of Armenians, which commenced in April 1915 after Turkey sided with Germany in the First World War, reduced the proportion to 1.8% by 1927. At least 1.5 million Armenian and Assyrian Christians died in the tragedy that Armenians call their "Golgotha". Many were killed;

many others died of exhaustion, illness or deprivation as they trudged across the Middle East, seeking refuge. News of the terrible events of 100 years ago was sent to the West as they developed, but the response was silence.

Now again we are confronted with persecution on a horrendous scale as news reports have shown in recent times. It is not merely civil wars and tribal conflicts. There is the direct targeting of Christian communities as well as other faith groups.

Christians in Syria are singled out for atrocities by Islamist rebels and church buildings have been deliberately destroyed. An estimated 600,000 Christians in Syria have already fled the country or lost their lives. Those remaining face violence and persecution.

The ongoing story in Iraq is one of terror. The threat to Christians has been intensifying as the 'Islamic State' has expanded its territory and driven people out of Mosul. Church property has been seized and Christian symbols destroyed.

"I don't wish my experiences in Mosul on any human being on earth," said one Iraqi Christian woman speaking on an Assyrian TV channel. "They threatened us with death. They forced us to pay *jizya* – knowing that we can't, since for years we have lived close to poverty. In our emergency we Christians looked for help everywhere, but they didn't help us. I plead to the international community, to churches, to human rights organisations, to the UN, to all who promote peaceful living together – to help us!"

Christianity's birthplace is in the Middle East. Churches and communities there can trace their history back nearly 2,000 years – long before Christianity reached much of Europe, the Americas, Australasia and other parts of the world. Yet Christianity in many parts of the Middle East is facing the real possibility of extinction, while Christian people face virtual genocide.

Reviving Memories . . .

I read with interest the Spring 2014 issue of *Grapevine* and remember my late father, William A. Anderson, who was Brechin Diocese registrar until his sudden death in 1963, talking about Canon Joseph Jobberns, rector at the Church of the Holy Rood in Carnoustie. I've just found the marriage certificate there of 2nd Lieutenant Charles Anderson, Royal Engineers on 28 January 1918 and the officiating minister was Joseph B. Jobberns with William G. Anderson (Edinburgh University OTC cadet/student) and Gertrude M. Anderson as witnesses. William and Gertrude were Lieutenant Anderson's brother and sister. My uncle, Lieutenant Patrick W. Anderson, Black Watch, was on attachment to the RAF in France and sadly in 1921 he died of wounds at home in Arbroath. He was a member of St Mary's, Arbroath. I remember my late father talking about Canon Edward Millar serving as a Padre in France during the Great War although he was officially the Rector of St Mary's, Arbroath.

My late father was for many years Secretary /Treasurer at St Mary's Church, Arbroath as was his cousin Colonel Charles Anderson at Holy Rood, Carnoustie until their untimely deaths during the 1960s .

I note too that like many churches in Scotland there is a war memorial listing the names of their dead from the Great War at Holy Rood in Carnoustie and at St Mary's in Arbroath. Lieut P. W. Anderson is listed on the memorial at St Mary's, Arbroath.

Patrick W. Anderson

St Mary Magdalene's Church, Dundee

Coffee Morning

**Saturday, 1 November 2014
10 a.m. - 12 noon**

Come and sample our scones with jam and cream. Plenty of shopping to be done, including stalls selling Christmas gifts, nu 2 u goods, home-baking, jams and chutneys, toys, books, raffle, tombola and freshly baked pancakes!

An occasion not to be missed!

Musical Moments

Saturdays in St Paul's Cathedral at 1 p.m.:

(Tickets at the door: adults £4; students £3; accompanied schoolchildren free)

- 13 Sept. Frances Cooper, *soprano* and Joanna Nicholson, *clarinet* – 'Of Blacksmiths and Butterflies'
(The core piece of the programme is a set of settings of six poems written by children in Auschwitz, by American composer, Lori Laitman, called 'I never saw another butterfly'.
27 Sept. Northern Lights Wind Quintet, Graeme Brown, *bassoon*
11 Oct. Raymond Spasovski, *piano* (USA)
25 Oct. Feargus Hetherington, *violin*
Gavin Brady, *piano*
8 Nov. Alastair Savage ensemble
22 Nov. Hillside Harmony, *barbershop ensemble*

ALSO:

Saturday, 6 September at 4 p.m.

The RSCM Scottish Voices Choir are singing **Choral Evensong** in the cathedral. All are welcome (*refreshments served afterwards*).

ALSO:

Sunday, 12 October at 6.30 p.m.

Bishop Forbes' Evensong

(followed by wine and nibbles)

It couldn't happen now!

"The strike of choirmen at St Paul's (Episcopal) Cathedral, Dundee. arising from the dismissal of the organists and choirmaster, is over. At the principal service, seven choirmen were in their places. Last Sunday morning the choirmen sat among the congregation as a protest, although they returned to the choir stalls for evensong when they learned the provost was out of town. The provost, the Very Rev. A.I.M Haggart had dismissed the organist, holder of the post for 10 years, because he felt the general performance of the choir could be better."

Dundee Courier-Advertiser, 50 years ago

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

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

Preferably articles should be no longer than 500 words.

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