

GRAPEVINE

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The Bishop of Brechin writes:

Advent: The Season for a Reason

Shop windows glittering in the darkening afternoons during November and December mark the commercial countdown to Christmas. My grandchildren can already tell me how many 'sleeps' it is until Father Christmas comes. Jesus maybe the reason for the season, but it's sometimes hard for him to find room.

In Dundee we have the excitement of the Christmas Light Night Celebrations with a torchlight procession and Santa switching on the Christmas Lights of the giant Christmas Tree in the City Square together with the attractive street illuminations. Thousands come out for a happy family evening. But, held in mid-November, this Christmas atmosphere does feel a bit premature.

Elsewhere across our diocese similar events take place. We do our best to find the right blend of Christmas Fayres, Carol Concerts and charity raising to reach out to the wider community, together with more devotional opportunities for people to contemplate the true meaning of Christmas and the significance of preparation. And of course Nativity Plays, Christingle and Crib Services which teach children the enduring Christmas story.

Advent is indeed the season for a reason – the Church's timely way of getting ready for Christmas, but finding proper room for it in a secular world can seem hard. It's not that easy to buy an explicitly Christian Advent Calendar although Advent candles with the dates counting down the side to Christmas Eve are more common, no doubt because candle burning in our homes is very popular nowadays.

So it would be great if Advent found a fresh and expanding 21st century place in British popular culture, as in northern European places where advent wreaths, seasonal food and activities are taken seriously in people's homes and in local community life. I was

sharing some ideas recently (maybe for next year) with Sarah Craig our City Centre Manager who seems interested.

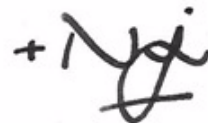
Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the 'advent', the coming of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time. The readings and liturgies not only direct us towards Christ's birth, they also challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement: as in Charles Wesley's hymn, "Every eye shall now behold him, robed in dreadful majesty."

The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – have been traditional themes for Advent meditation. The characteristic note of Advent is therefore expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent. The anticipation of Christmas under commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of alert watchfulness, but the fundamental Advent prayer remains 'Maranatha' – 'Our Lord, come'.

Church decorations in the weeks before Christmas are simple and spare, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour. In the northern hemisphere, the Advent season falls at the darkest time of the year, and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas. The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath was imported into Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century, and is now a common practice in church. The Moravian custom of the Christingle has similarly enjoyed great success in Britain since the latter part of the twentieth century, with the encouragement of the Children's Society and Aberlour Trust.

The Third Sunday of Advent was observed in medieval times as a splash of colour in the restrained atmosphere of Advent (Gaudete or 'Rose Sunday'), and the last days of Advent were marked by the sequence of Great 'O' Antiphons, linking Old Testament hopes with Gospel fulfilment and which continue to inspire modern Advent hymns and meditations: O Wisdom, O Adonai, O Root of Jesse, O King of David.

So no shortage of things to ponder this Advent, especially in a world of jihadist terrorism and ebola epidemic, global upheaval and political turmoil, not to mention the daily challenges of our ordinary lives. Encouraging us to take time out of busy-ness is probably one of the greatest gifts the Christian faith bestows upon us, Strangely, Advent is a bit like an early Christmas present.



ST SALVADOR'S FOOD CUPBOARD

St Salvador's Food Cupboard is open on Sundays from 1.15 p.m. 2.15 p.m. We offer coffee, tea, snacks and a cup of soup. Those needing help with groceries are offered a small bag of messages containing six basic items.

The Food Cupboard is run by Fr Clive Clapson, the Priest at St Salvador's, assisted by Mrs Ann Noltie, Dr Kirsty Noltie, Katie Clapson, and volunteers from Coldside Parish (C. of S.) and elsewhere. A number of our helpers were once themselves helped from our Food Cupboard. Donations of food and funds come

Salvador's almost ten years ago, when someone appeared after the Mass asking for help. As no food items were available that day, some tinned items were stockpiled for the following Sunday. Our average disbursement is now between 60 and 70 bags a week, with occasional spikes as high as 90.

Some of the stories from the last almost ten years of the Food Cupboard outreach can be found in Fr Clive's book *Outpost of Glory*, available from the CLC Bookshop in Dundee and from Amazon.



Interior of St Salvador's Church
photo by Martin Andrews

in regularly from most of the Episcopal congregations in the area, several primary schools, St Andrew's Cathedral (R. C.), and a number of C. of S. parishes.

Fr Clive says: "Although some of those we help are referred to us by voluntary and governmental agencies, we turn away no-one who is not referred to us. Jesus did not say: 'I was hungry and you fed me because I was referred to you'. Ours is a response to need, doing what Jesus told us to do. Are we sometimes being lied to and taken advantage of? Sure. But our responsibility is to respond to those who present themselves to us for help. Whether they are telling the truth or not is their responsibility. Both we and they are answerable to God for what we say and do."

The Food Cupboard began on Fr Clive's first Sunday at St

Salvador's has a long history of service in one of Scotland's most challenging urban areas. Its outreach flows from its highly ornate presentation of the Gospel in its services. Fr Clive has been on voluntary half-pay for the last three years in order to keep the ministry

going, and especially its outreach to those in need. He says: "The Church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. What we do at St Salvador's and how we do it may not be to everyone's taste. It's only for sinners in search of the Saviour."

Supermarkets who are partners in this work are ASDA Myrekirk, ASDA Kirkton, and Morrisons. At Morrisons and Myrekirk there are baskets available for donations by shoppers.

The Food Cupboard needs non-perishable donations, especially: tinned soup, tinned baked beans, tinned tuna, tinned meat, pasta and pasta sauce, toilet paper, UHT milk, biscuits, soap, and shampoo.

St Salvador's website is: www.stsalvadors.com

The Winner

Someone with the initials AHC (he wanted recognition and brownie points!) noticed an error in one clue in last edition's crossword. 19 across should have read "The first cardinal", not "The firs cardinal". The editor tenders his apologies.

Whether that caused the slight reduction in entries is no discernible, but the winner is Mrs Mortimer of Brechin.

The complete answer is:

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

There is another crossword to tax readers' brains over the Christmas pudding on page 8 – with no spelling errors!

Qualified Chapels

Bishop Luscombe has just produced another small book which is entitled *Reunion, Qualified Chapels in the Diocese of Brechin, 1712-1920*. It is perhaps a largely overlooked aspect of the Scottish Episcopal Church's history during and following the 'wilderness' years after the 1715 Jacobite rising.

Although the Episcopal Church suffered numerically and financially, various congregations were set up throughout Scotland ministered to by clergy who were qualified to act having taken oaths of allegiance in Ireland or England. In the Brechin Diocese there were five such. Four entered into union with the Episcopal Church in a relatively short timespan after the 1804 Convention at Laurencekirk agreed to the terms of the Repeal Act of 1792. But it was not until 1920 that the two congregations in Montrose united, hence the dual name St Mary's and St Peter's.

Parables in everyday life

Just before leaving South Wales, a friend invited my husband and me to dinner. The next day, I was getting dressed when I realised that the centre sapphire stone of my engagement ring was missing. Probably not of enormous value, but obviously very precious to me. We thought it must have come out at my friends' house. She swept her sitting room all over by hand, and felt down the sides of the cushions and everything – no sign of it. The next day, when I got back from work my husband was grinning – he had had a brainwave, and emptied the Hoover bag out on to a piece of paper and went through the contents. And lo and behold! there was the missing sapphire. I was so happy – as you can imagine. And he was pretty pleased, too.

Now this is like the way that God seeks out those of his people who have lost their way – and once he has found them, he rejoices. He doesn't pre-programme us never to make mistakes, or to be always faithful to our religion. Just as in creation he said 'let there be...', his creation of us was another 'letting be' – we just have to make up our own minds. But when we do, then his grace is abounding. Absolutely amazing, in fact. Which brings me to my main theme, in a roundabout way.

Amazing Grace, the popular hymn written by John Newton for New Year's Day 1773. And he was writing from personal experience.

John Newton had what we might call an unsettled childhood and was known as a turbulent youth. He had a number of religious experiences that came to nothing, and as a young teenager was forced to join the Royal Navy. He escaped and landed up in West Africa, as the virtual slave of a European slave-trader's African wife. For two years, he was hungry and had nothing. He became involved in the slave trade. Then he managed to get aboard a trader bound for England.

Of course, ships didn't sail in straight lines then, and the ship traversed the Atlantic before setting sail for its home port of Liverpool. Halfway across the Atlantic they became caught up in a storm that lasted days. The ship was in no great condition and became waterlogged. It nearly sank, and John, on deck duty, found himself clinging to the wheel and praying – he knew not what. Except that he knew his prayers were being heeded. This was the moment when he knew in his heart of hearts that God was listening to his prayers, and that God loved him. That God's grace was for him, despite his ne'er-do-well life.



Contemporary portrait of John Newton

It would be nice to say that he 'immediately' went to do God's will. But miracles take a little longer. In fact he continued in the slave trade until 1755 when he became influenced by some of the abolitionists. He gave himself over to his Christian convictions and trained to become a priest.

He was appointed curate of Olney in Buckinghamshire in 1764 and became a friend of William Cowper, the Christian poet and hymnwriter. They wrote a number of hymns together: some of John Newton's own hymns survive in our own hymn book. And the first – alphabetically – is *Amazing Grace*, but you will also find the well-known *How sweet the name of Jesus sounds* and *Glorious things of thee are spoken*.

That terrible Atlantic storm formed an indelible memory. John became well known as a powerful preacher about the incredible love of God, and the boundless grace available to all who turn their lives around. He was a great influence upon William Wilberforce, who was the political activist largely responsible for bringing about the laws to abolish the slave trade.

So let's look at the hymn in our hymn book. (John's original had six verses, of which most hymnbooks have the first four.)

In the first verse he praises God for his grace. He was lost ... but now is found – like the sheep in Jesus's parable. Was blind – like the Pharisees, who were spiritually blind, but, unlike them, John was now able to see where he had gone wrong.

In the second verse he shows how it was God's grace that brought him out of his former, wretched life, and taught him to trust in his belief. And in the third verse he hints at the dangers and dreadful aspects of his experience in the slave trade. But also how it is in trusting in the grace that has opened his eyes, and restored him to life, that he can continue in his new life of service.

In the fourth verse we have a look to the future: one which we can all carry with us today:

*The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
as long as life endures.*

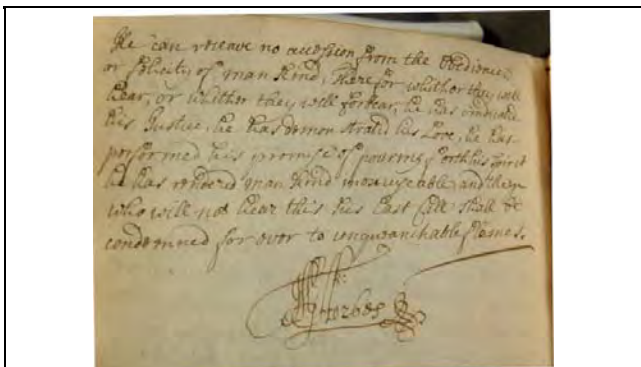
Not promises of riches in this world, nor of some pie-in-the-sky, but of knowledge of the presence of the Lord, who will be our shield and protector against the evil of this life. When he says 'his word my hope secures' I think we may understand this to be: God's word is true and his promise is sure. It is God's grace that enables us to go forward with confidence, secure in the knowledge of his love. The love of God, who rejoices in the return of the penitent, the restoration of that which was lost.

Anne Geldart

DUNDEE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVE SERVICES

Earlier this year, clergy from across the Diocese paid a visit to the University Archive to view the collection of Brechin Diocese manuscripts. The Diocesan Library was founded in 1792 to collect books and manuscripts for the improvement of the clergy. In 1962 the library and archive was deposited with Dundee University where it has since been professionally cared for and regularly added to.

The collection is rich and wide-ranging, covering the personal papers of individuals including Bishop Alexander Penrose Forbes and Dean William Leslie Christie, the administrative records of the Diocese itself, and records from various churches across the See, such as the congregational registers and minutes of St James' Church, Stonehaven and papers of the Sisterhood of SS Mary and Modwenna. Dating from the mid-fifteenth century to the present day, the collections include correspondence on issues such as the 19th century Eucharistic controversy, as well as records of the churches and their congregations, including baptismal registers and communicants' rolls, building plans, seat rent collections, ledgers and fundraising records. Since arriving at the University over 40 years ago, this rich pool of information has been constantly examined and used by academics and students, local and family historians.



Extract from commonplace book of J.H. Forbes, which includes transcripts of discourses, sermons and prayers, 1709-1711

The clergy visit to the Archive was an opportunity to learn about the kinds of records that have been saved and how they can preserve the records of their own parishes by depositing them with the Archive. A general table discussion about the benefits, was followed by a 'behind the scenes' tour of the Archive. The tour demonstrated how the records had been wrapped or boxed in special archival-quality material and shelved in a locked store room— all measures guaranteed to preserve the papers and volumes securely in the long term, while providing access to them in the Archive Search Room, where readers as diverse as theologians, historians, experts in illuminated manuscripts and family historians can view them. As some of the visitors noted, this environment was a far cry from the damp attics and unlocked cupboards where many church records are still currently housed.

The display highlighted the range of material in the Brechin collection. Great interest was shown in items such as the 1914 transcriptions of Old Deer baptism register, 1681-1695, that includes explanatory annotations and the genealogy of Keith family. Photographs of church buildings and past clergy also gleaned a lot of interest, as did correspondence between Forbes and Gladstone. Perhaps, though, the most precious (and certainly the most beautiful) item on display was the illuminated Book of Hours from the mid-fifteenth century and written for use in the Diocese of Tournai. The display underlined the variety and range of the records that are likely to be found across the parishes, and if deposited with the Archive, would not only benefit from professional preservation and management, but would also offer information and insights about the people, buildings and activities of each parish and the Diocese as a whole.

The Brechin collection of manuscripts comprises 17 separate sub-collections, plus collections for books and pamphlets. Each are listed and can be searched online via the Archive's catalogue at <http://arccat.dundee.ac.uk/>. Herewith is a summary, giving the Reference number, the Collection title and the dates covered.

- BrMS 1 Diocese of Brechin: Correspondence of Alexander Penrose Forbes, Bishop of Brechin and George Frederick Boyle 1844-1875
- BrMS 2 Brechin Diocesan Library: Miscellaneous Papers and Volumes 1600 - 2008
- BrMS 3 Transcripts and papers of Dean William Leslie Christie c 1900-1927
- BrMS 4 Records of the Diocese of Brechin 1774-1995
- BrMS 5 Records of Brechin Chapel 1800-1807
- BrMS 6 Records of St. Mary's Church, Arbroath. 1812-1977
- BrMS 7 Records of St Margaret's Church, Lochee, Dundee 1861-1982
- BrMS 8 Records of the Church of the Holy Rood, Carnoustie 1854-1998
- BrMS 9 Records of St James' Church, Stonehaven 1756-1880
- BrMS 10 Records of St Ternan's Episcopal Church, Muchalls 1727-1934
- BrMS 11 Records of Tarfside Episcopal Church, Lochlee 1840-1914
- BrMS 12 Records of the Chapel of St Ronan's Home, Dundee 1928-1974
- BrMS 13 Records of St Laurence's Church, Laurencekirk 1752-1790
- BrMS 14 Records of the Sisterhood of SS Mary and Modwenna 1902-1988
- BrMS 15 St Mary's Church, Broughty Ferry 1848-1985
- BrMS 16 Records of St Andrew's Episcopal Church, Brechin 1820-2007
- BrMS 17 Bishop Skinner (currently being listed)

Former Diocese of Brechin Connections

On 8 October 2014 within the Trades House of Glasgow, the former Primus and Rector of St Mary's and St Peter's in Montrose held his Choosing Dinner on becoming Deacon Convener of the Trades of Glasgow.

The original Constitution of the Trades House is contained in a Letter of Guildry dated 1805, which created the Deans of Guild Court with 8 councillors – 4 merchant rank and 4 craftsmen. It is against this old historical background that Bishop Idris as Deacon Convener has become the leader of the Trades House.

It is an honour for both Bishop Idris and the Scottish Episcopal Church that he has become Deacon Convener of the Trades of Glasgow, and the occasion of his Choosing Dinner was very much a celebration of his appointment with people from different parts of his life in attendance. Dr Joe Morrow, in his capacity as Right Honourable Lord Lyon, was a speaker at the dinner and was honoured to toast the City of Glasgow. It was also noteworthy that Grace was said by Rev'd Dr Laurence A. B. Whitley, the Minister of Glasgow Cathedral, who was at one time Minister in Montrose while Bishop Idris was Rector there.



The early functions of Trades House included the management of the Crafts Hospital until 1790 and benevolent work not only towards the craftsmen and their dependants, but also to "other good and godly work, tending to the achievement of the common-wealth". Now the Trades House and its 14 associated trades are charitable with an annual giving of over £600,000. It focuses on the promotion of craftsmanship through the School Craft Awards, in particular the support of further education colleges and the Modern Apprentice of the Year Award.

In becoming Deacon Convener Bishop Idris also becomes the new 'Third Citizen' of the City of Glasgow and it was a pleasure to share in his celebratory Choosing Dinner. I am sure that many of the members of the Diocese of Brechin – and in particular of Montrose and Inverbervie – will be delighted to share in the excellent news of Bishop Idris' appointment. His work continues to reflect the extent and influence of activities through the Diocese of Brechin.

Dr Joe Morrow

Russians Raise the Roof in Song!

The highly acclaimed Voskresenije (Resurrection) Choir from St Petersburg presented an awesome programme of sacred and folk music to an audience of about 100 in St Mary's and St Peter's Montrose on 11 November. The choir consists of eight voices: two sopranos, two altos, a counter-tenor and a tenor, a baritone and a basso profundo, a rarely heard voice. It performs a capella under the leadership of conductor and founder of the choir, Jurij Maruk.



The first half of the concert took the form of short pieces of sacred music by composers as different as Handel and Rachmaninov, including a tear jerking performance of Ave Maria. Most of the settings were scored to introduce each of the singers in turn as soloist, from Alina and Juliia, the two sopranos, to Anatoly, the basso, during the programme. The sheer power of their singing is memorable. The excellent acoustic in St Mary's and St Peter's meant that each note was as clear as a bell (and there were several songs during the evening where the voices imitated bells!)

During the second half of the concert, the choir 'lightened up', presenting a range of Russian and other folk songs, some performed with theatrical actions to the amusement of the audience. On the demand of the audience, the choir performed two encores and then, after a vote of thanks, a final encore.

Peter Smart, Lay Reader at Montrose, was struck by the relative youth of the choir. In a conversation with Leonid, the young baritone, he confirmed that every member of the choir is a Christian. ('Yes, of course,' answered Leonid with a very matter of fact Russian intonation!). They discussed the ranges of the different singers: four octaves for the counter-tenor, at least three for the baritone, who can also manage falsetto, and that the basso reaches a full octave lower than the great Paul Robeson.

Holy Trinity, Monifieth

Bishop Nigel will license the Rev'd Kenneth Gibson as Priest-in-Charge of Holy Trinity, Monifieth, on Sunday, 21 December at 3 p.m. Please come and join us; light refreshments will follow in the church hall.

The sacred art of icon writing

The Christian Icon in a media controlled world

People probably associate icons with the Orthodox Churches; and they do indeed play a significant part in those churches and their liturgies. But recently there has been a rise of interest and use of icons in the Churches of Western Christendom.

Pope John Paul II wrote:

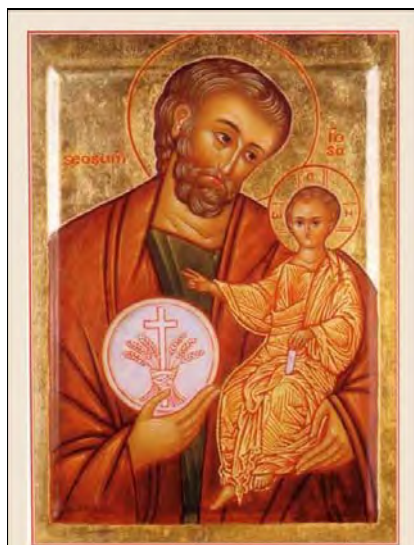
"The re-discovery of the Christian icon will help in raising the awareness of the urgency of reacting against the de-personalising and, at times, degrading effects of the many images that condition our lives in advertisements and the media, for it is an image that turns us towards the look of another invisible one and gives us access to the spiritual and eschatological world."

He realised that the icon is an important counter cultural witness, providing a Christian alternative to images promoting profit, porn and spin. Images bypass the workings of the mind and arouse feelings and passions on a subconscious level: they shape our society, our expectations and our world view, but we largely ignore their power. Anything can be sold, from nose stud to lifestyle with the right image behind it.

Although an ancient tradition icons appeal to the modern world by combining abstraction and the language of light. Young and old respond to them.

When God says, "Let us make man in our own image" (Genesis 1, v.26) the word used in Greek is 'icon'. Throughout the Old Testament period we read of God's icon becoming defaced through sin. God's throne is an empty seat between two sculptured cherubim. We can make images of anything else except God, provided we don't idolise them. After God was born as man in Bethlehem, we have his self portrait to copy – Jesus, 'the icon of the invisible God', as St Paul describes him in Colossians 1 v. 15. Not only that but God restores his defaced image in us, and the saints are the first pictures of what we truly look like as children of God.

During the first centuries of the Church the Christian icon became the banner of Christians who believed Jesus to be God and man. It was so important to them that many died as martyrs. They realised that, when people stopped using icons, it was often a sign that they did not really believe that God had become a real man, and that gradually eroded their belief in the sacraments and the resurrection of the body.



Icon of Saint Joseph by Sister Petra Clare, a Benedictine hermit in the Scottish Highlands

After Islam (which accepts Jesus only as a prophet, so does not have icons) came out on top in its first clashes with Christianity, political expediency and religious disillusionment sadly led to bonfires of icons. In the eighth and ninth centuries eastern bishops were exiled, monks and lay people were tortured and killed because they kept icons as a sign of faith that God really did become man.

After these martyrdoms the Church, especially in the east where persecution had been most bitter, developed the theology of the icons and began to design whole cycles of images to witness to the faith. The icon is a part of the liturgy, not of the art world. It is the Gospel made visible, so we speak of writing the icon. In the eastern Church, icon workshops are a part of children's and adult

spiritual education. Even the technique is developed in a special way to show the changes made in our lives by the Gospel.

Most important of course are large icons of Our Lord and Our Lady. The primary story of the Church became a series of 'statements' of the life of Christ for those who could not make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and such a range of icons may be found in many Orthodox churches. In a parallel way, scenes of events in Our Lord's life may be found in the stained glass windows of many western churches.

The aim of icons is to make the building itself a 'window into the kingdom of heaven'. So not only are there icons of Our Lord but also of the saints who already inhabit the kingdom – the monks and ascetics known for renouncing the world with all sorts of saints around the walls and apostles nearer to the sanctuary. The church becomes a visual litany.

Together with development of the icon as a sacred technique is the formation of the iconographer as a sacred person. Already in the Old Testament artistic craftsmanship was seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Moses tells the Israelites that the Lord has filled Bezalel and Oholiab 'with the divine spirit' in order to make what is needed for the tabernacle.

In the eastern Church today iconographers recognised by the Church must be known for a morally upright way of life, obedience to the church's teaching and follow the liturgical calendar of feasts and fasts, regularly participating in the office and liturgy. Many are monks and nuns – the iconographer in the eastern monastery is as much a part of the life as the cantor. It is a hidden life but the fruits of that solitary prayer and manual labour go out to be used by many as part of their prayer life in church and home. Icons are a homily in paint available to anyone from a cleaner to a bank manager.

The Mouse in the Stable

One night, at a stall, where horses are kept,
Out on a rafter a little mouse crept
And sniffing and glancing and nibbling a straw,
Looked down at the ground — and here's what he saw:
A small human baby laid out in a trough
Of animal feed, as it played with the cuff
Of its mother's blue robe, set under its head.
The wondering mouse sat thinking and said
"Instead of a house they've brought it in here
Now what would **they** want to escape — or be near?"
For the life of a mouse, by night and by day,
Is finding its food — or running away.

From up in the rafter he studied the scene,
He nibbled his straw, thought, what it could mean
That people should pass by the beds at the Inn
And lie with the animals — couldn't they get in?
And then, a kaffuffle of noise at the door,
He flinched and he jumped, but stayed to see more.
In blew a draft and behind it there came
Three travelling men, foot weary and lame,
And grinning and smiling laid gifts at the stall:
Then left the child's father bemused by it all!

And hardly had these shuffled out to the night,
When the mouse jumped again at the sound and the sight
Of a rough looking lot, barging, pushing, four deep,
Come in at the door — stinking of sheep.
They shuffled and mumbled, they stared and they peered
Some tugging their clothes, one pulling his beard,
'Til once came a moment, some reverence, some calm
And the foreman stepped forward — and laid down a lamb.
And then they were gone, in a bustle of noise:
They stirred up the street — and babbled like boys.

The mouse in the rafters sat still on the beam,
His little eyes glinting at what they had seen.
Then, up in a scurry, through holes in the tiles,
To the roof, where a star lit the country for miles,
He sat himself up, with his face to its light,
And his grey fur was turned — to a silvery white!
Then the little mouse gasped and ran back to his place
And looked down again at the human child's face
And, 'though he was hungry, he reached out a paw
And held up an offering — his small piece of straw.
And down in that stable the mystical child
Looked up to the rafters — and, faintly, He smiled.

B. Gowans



The gathered congregation at St Mary the Virgin, Arbroath after Evensong on 31 August which concluded the celebrations for the 160th anniversary of the consecration of the church. The preacher was the former Primus, the Rt Rev'd Bruce Cameron.



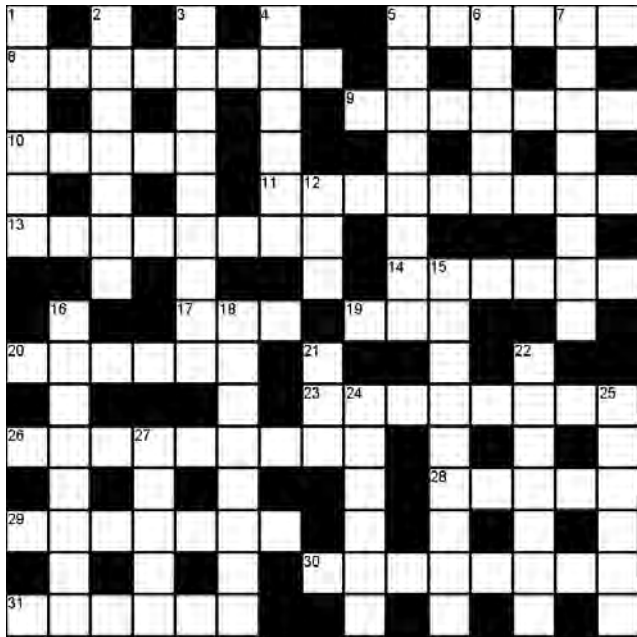
On 4 September the Registrar, Mr John Thom, read the Deed instituting the Rev'd Samantha Ferguson as Rector of St Mary's and St Peter's, Montrose and St David of Scotland, Inverbervie.



At the conclusion of Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral on 12 October marking Bishop Forbes Day the Bishop gave a presentation to the Rev'd Canon John Cuthbert, who is leaving at the end of November, in recognition of his roles of Synod Clerk and Warden of Lay Readers; also to Mairi Cuthbert as Convener of the Youth Action Group in the diocese. Mrs Janet McKinnell, Warden of Lay Readers in the Edinburgh diocese, preached.

CRYPTIC PRIZE CROSSWORD

To give a little help, 9 answers will be found in the carol 'O come, all ye faithful' (full 7-verse version). Send your entries to the editor at the address on the back page by Friday, 27 February at the latest putting your name and address in the box provided.



- 28 Was Napoleon made of wood? (5)
- 29 Stone circles made of cords (7)
- 30 Is that fellow up a tree a councillor? (8)
- 31 Positively charged (6)
- 7 Northern girlies drink in Germany (8)
- 12 One of seven that Shakespeare said man has (3)
- 15 The place where the river of forgetfulness brings me a medium hard pencil (9)
- 16 Procreated for the gent to be (8)

CLUES DOWN:

- 1 Full Sue needs to lose fifty to be beneficial (6)
- 2 Hold tight, MacBeer! (7)
- 3 Can you her the soft poets coming? (9)
- 4 The chicken recites a Hail Mary in here (6)
- 5 A neat five hundred were present with Ted (8)
- 6 Shear like a rabbit (5)
- 18 Readjusts an angel, sir (8)
- 21 My French friend (3)
- 22 Discloses that he has entered to get a manuscript (7)
- 24 See them from different angles (6)
- 25 Telling of a gay sin (6)
- 27 Can he sit in the House of Lords with one hundred and fifty-one? (5)

CLUES ACROSS:

- 5 Can't stand the ash orb (6)
- 8 Called the demon back in addition (8)
- 9 Red salt guided the magi(7)
- 10 Rifts occur to begin with (5)
- 11 Ardently gives a nasty leer (9)
- 13 Finding the whereabouts of a fish with no feline inside (8)
- 14 Initially Bob's heavy drinking is receding (6)
- 17 Peer into a quiet railway (3)
- 19 Poem about a female deer? (3)
- 20 Reject the rubbish - doubly (6)
- 23 Implements to mine cash? (8)
- 26 Earthenware moulded from nicer opal (9)

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

Welcome, Tracy Dowling

The mighty leap from Wimbledon to Dundee feels enormous from a geographical perspective and yet it seems like a very natural step in my journey of faith and ministry. What is this ex tax inspector from London doing in Brechin Diocese? It was on Ettrick Bay (Bute, where we have a family home), that my call to ministry became clear and now having served three years as a non-stipendiary curate with the Merton Priory Team in Wimbledon, I have returned to Scotland.

I trained with SEITE (The South East Institute of Theological Education) whilst working for HMRC – a tough choice that gave me great time management skills! It also gave me the opportunity to

learn alongside Anglicans of all traditions, Methodists and a Lutheran – there were many theological and doctrinal discussions late into the night.....

I served my curacy in a team of three churches whose congregations encompassed just about



every social and ethnic demographic. It was a great place to learn; to minister in a wide variety of contexts and to get to grips with the wonderful privilege of serving church and community.

My spare time is taken up with an interest in all things equestrian, particularly racing and bloodstock breeding and I follow Arsenal Football Club. My other Scottish connection is my partner, Fiona, who is delighted to return to her homeland after many years in London. I have one son, James and a black panther that passes for a domestic cat, called Annie. We are enjoying making our new home in Carnoustie and looking forward to meeting the people of this exciting diocese.

On keeping churches open

(Who are our members?)

Stonehaven is a popular holiday resort and as a result the congregation of St James' Church drop our leaflets at the caravan park and the Visitor Information Centre as a regular activity. We hold frequent events in the evenings and at weekends that appeal to a wide range of folk and often people attending are not regular worshippers – but nevertheless they are part of our extended church family. At a recent 'Ladies Pamper Night' it was remarked that more than half our visitors were from other parts of Aberdeenshire.

We also keep St James open during daylight hours every day of the year. As a result many people from all over the world come to visit and spend some quiet time in our church. A glance at our visitors' book shows that since Easter this year we have had visitors from most European countries, as well as the USA and Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Some leave messages thanking us for leaving the church open, as well as appreciation of the architecture and beauty of 'this place'. A visitor from Poland and another from Dortmund in Germany expressed their thanks for the peace and silence. Even an agnostic from Aberdeenshire was moved to remark gratefully on 'a place of peace'.

Sometimes I do not understand the messages, for example...

...a visitor from (I think) Italy, left a message 'ultra lecce'. I am told this almost certainly refers to a beautiful town in the very south of Italy, and that maybe it means "even more beautiful than Lecce" which is nicknamed 'the Florence of the south' – some praise indeed! There is also a comment from a visitor from Hungary that is difficult to read and we are waiting for a Hungarian student at Dundee University to let us have a translation.

Obviously, not everyone who visits the church signs the book, but even these examples show the value of simply 'being there' and the peace of silent contemplation. Keeping open is a risk, and we don't leave money available for simply picking up. However, we are fortunate that there is rarely any theft or damage.

Anne Geldart

A Landmark Birthday

On Sunday, 16 November a large congregation came together in St Mary Magdalene's Church, Dundee for a service of Choral Evensong to celebrate the 90th birthday of Bishop Ted Luscombe.

This year was also the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood and the 39th of his consecration as a bishop. Apart from his active service in the Second World War, he has distinguished himself as an accountant and historian, but it was most particularly for his faithful priestly ministry, touching not only the diocese of Brechin but the whole Anglican Communion, that so many people had gathered to mark with appreciation.



Bishop Ted surrounded by (*l. to r.*) the Rev'd Canon Hugh Magee, the Rev'd Canon Ian Michael, the Rev'd David Shepherd and Bishop Nigel

In his address Canon Ian Michael emphasised the theme of thanksgiving, mentioning the variety of people who were profoundly grateful for Bishop Ted's friendship and the many aspects of his life for which all present and those who were unable to come were greatly appreciative. Later in the service, in his own words Bishop Ted responded with generosity, referring to various moments and people who had significantly contributed to him during his 90 years.

The singing from the augmented choir and Cantiones Sacrae was uplifting and the refreshments afterwards, generously provided, provided an opportunity for people to meet and reminisce.

Forthcoming James Gregory Lectures on Science and Christianity

5.15 p.m. in the Physics Lecture Theatre, North Haugh, St Andrews

16 February 2015 – Professor Tom McLeish

"The science-and-religion delusion: towards a theology of science"

Professor Tom McLeish's research interests include molecular rheology and processing of entangled polymeric fluids, macromolecular biophysics and issues of theology, ethics and science and the history of science. He is also involved in science-communication with the public via regular radio, TV and schools lectures, discussing issues from the Physics of Slime to the interaction of Faith and Science.

13 April 2015 – Dr Rowan Williams

"What is Consciousness?"

Rowan Williams is an Anglican bishop, poet and theologian. He was the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury, Metropolitan of the Province of Canterbury and Primate of All England from 2002 to 2012. Williams was previously Bishop of Monmouth and Archbishop of Wales, making him the first Archbishop of Canterbury in modern times not to be appointed from within the Church of England. He spent much of his earlier career as an academic at the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford successively.

New Chapter at Downfield

It was certainly a full house at St Luke's Church, Downfield on Saturday, 6 September as the church's usual congregation was joined by large numbers of Brechin's clergy, visiting Church Army personnel, members of other Episcopalian congregations and several other well-wishers! This special service was a triple celebration to launch the new Church Army Centre of Mission in Dundee, together with the licensing of Church Army Evangelist Craig Dowling and the ordination to the priesthood of Church Army Evangelist Kerry Dixon.



The congregation gathered on 6 September

Neville Willerton, Church Army's National Operations Manager, said of the event at St Luke's, "I loved the service and think it is a good model for the launches of other Centres of Mission that will take place elsewhere. I am full of hope for what God is going to do in Dundee and the Diocese!"

The Dundee Centre of Mission is made up of an exciting and innovative partnership between Church Army, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Brechin, St Paul's Cathedral and St Luke's Downfield in Dundee, and the international development agency Signpost International. In practical terms it will see Kerry and Craig both based at the new Centre of Mission with three key objectives:

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

Bishop Nigel Peyton says of this new project, "Our exciting new partnership with Church Army brings fresh ideas and personnel. The contrasting projects at St Luke's and the Cathedral Dundee are a beginning. My vision is for the whole Diocese to become a more effective centre of mission!"

Since the launch in September St Luke's is now hosting 'Café Church' on Sunday mornings – for people who don't like church, and don't attend church.

"As you can imagine, that is as much of a challenge as it sounds!" laughs Kerry. Nevertheless the church sanctuary is slowly being transformed with

A Centre of Mission sees a community of evangelists working together to pioneer a fresh expression of church, or a new piece of evangelism, with the aim of bringing people to a living faith in Jesus Christ.

comfortable sofas and café-style seating, and the smell of freshly brewed coffee and croissants fills the air. Each week has seen new faces join the existing St Luke's congregation to join in the informal discussions.

"Our aim is to attract people to church by providing a familiar, comfortable and non-threatening place where they can be themselves," says Kerry, "because it is only in that environment that they can feel safe enough to share their stories and ask the life-questions that impact them."

There is also the exciting news that the Rt Rev'd David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church will be visiting St Luke's with the Archbishop of Canterbury, while he is on a brief visit to Scotland at the end of November. It will be a fantastic opportunity to meet the Most Reverend Justin Welby who will share his thoughts on being missional over coffee and cake!



(left to right) Church Army Chief Executive, Canon Mark Russell, Church Army Evangelist, Kerry Dixon, The Bishop of the Diocese of Brechin, Nigel Peyton, Church Army Evangelist, Craig Dowling, Church Army Operations Manager, Neville Willerton.

So it is very much early days for the new Dundee Centre of Mission, but there is anticipation and excitement to see what God has got planned!

"Not just for Christmas . . ."

The French Artist Jean-François Millet was the son of a farmer in Greville and left home to study painting in Cherbourg when he was 20 years old. In 1837 he received a scholarship to study in Paris. Fighting against great odds and suffering a period of extreme hardship, Millet exhibited at the Salon for the first time in 1840.

His paintings on rural themes attracted growing acclaim: in 1857 he painted *The Gleaners* and between 1858-1859 he produced the famous *Angelus* (now both in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris).

Though Flemish artists of the 17th century had depicted peasants at work Millet was the first painter to endow rural life with a dignity and monumentality that transcend realism, making the peasant an almost heroic figure. *The Angelus* was commissioned by a wealthy American, Thomas G. Appleton, and completed during the summer of 1857. However, when Appleton failed to take possession in 1859 Millet added a steeple and changed the initial title of the work from *Prayer for the Potato Crop* to *The Angelus*. The painting changed hands several times, increasing only modestly in value, since some considered the artist's political sympathies suspect. But after Millet's death a bidding war between the US and France ensued, ending some years later with a price tag of 800,000 gold francs. The disparity between the apparent value of the painting and the poor estate of Millet's surviving family was a major impetus in the invention of the *droit de suite*, intended to compensate artists or their heirs when works are resold.

In the painting a man and a woman are reciting the Angelus, a prayer which commemorates the annunciation made to Mary by the angel Gabriel. They have stopped digging potatoes and all the tools used for this task – the potato fork, the basket, the sacks and the

wheelbarrow – are strewn around them. Millet wanted to catch the immutable rhythms of peasant life in a simple scene. Here he has



focused on a short break, a moment of respite. In 1865 Millet said: "The idea for *The Angelus* came to me because I remembered that my grandmother, hearing the church bell ringing while we were working in the fields, always made us stop work to say the Angelus prayer for the poor departed". Alone in the foreground in a huge empty plain the two peasants take on a monumental quality, despite the small size of the canvas (22 x 26 inches). Their faces are left in shadow, while the light underlines their gestures and posture. The canvas expresses a deep feeling of meditation.

The Angelus

V. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings unto Mary.
R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.
Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.
V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it unto me according to thy word.
Hail Mary,
V. And the Word who made flesh.
R. And dwelt among us.
Hail Mary,
V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of His Resurrection; through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Salvador Dalí was fascinated by this work, and wrote an analysis of it, 'The Tragic Myth of The Angelus of Millet'. Dalí was of the opinion that the two figures were praying over their buried child, rather than praying the Angelus. He was so insistent that eventually an X-ray was done of the canvas, confirming his suspicions. It showed a shape that looked like a coffin had been over-painted with the basket. However, it is unclear whether Millet changed his mind on the meaning of the painting, or even if the shape actually is a coffin. *The Angelus* has been frequently reproduced and become something of an icon.

The Angelus is rooted in the monastic prayers of many centuries ago and originally was said at Compline (night prayer). Over the years the morning and mid-day recitation was added.

The Angelus is a short devotion in honour of the Incarnation. The name is derived from its first word *Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae* (The Angel of the Lord brought tidings unto Mary). It consists of three Biblical verses alternating with the *Ave Maria* (Hail Mary). It reminds us that celebrating the birth of Christ is not just for Christmas, but for every day.

Gone ... but not far

The congregation of St Andrew's, Brechin said goodbye to the Rev'd Jane Nelson and her husband, Peter, at the end of October. Jane has served St Andrew's for some 11 years, first with Canon Sidney Fox, then, together with the Rev'd Ursula Shone, during the vacancy and since 2007 working with the present Rector, Father David Mumford. Jane will continue to work at St Drostan's and Tarfside, to contribute on spirituality and spiritual direction and to take on some additional work nearer their home in Newtonhill.



Peter has served on the vestry and as Lay Representative; and his work for St. Andrew's has covered everything from producing the church magazine to overseeing the installation of a new heating system and disabled toilet. They will both be greatly missed by St Andrew's but we are all only too pleased that they will continue to make a major contribution elsewhere in the diocese.

David Mumford

Having the Last Word

Eleven people were hanging on a rope under a helicopter, ten men and one woman.

The rope wasn't strong enough to carry them all, so they decided one had to leave, because otherwise they were all going to fall.

They weren't able to decide who that person was going to be, until the woman gave a very touching speech.

She said she would voluntarily let go of the rope because as a woman she was used to giving up everything for her husband and children and men in general, and was used to always making sacrifices with little in return.

As soon as she finished her speech, all the men started clapping.

Events happening at ...

St James the Great, Stonehaven

Saturday, 6 December

Christmas Coffee Morning 10.00 – 11.30 a.m.
£2 entry to include tea/coffee and mince pies. There will be stalls offering cake and candy, knitted goods, books and a Christmas tombola and a special 'Christmas Stall' with seasonal goods and gifts.

Saturday, 13 December

A busy day: 10.30 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. All are invited to decorate the 'Tree of Life' with commemorative baubles remembering family members who have passed on. Tea/Coffee are available.

On the same day we have another of our well-known Book Browsers – no entry fee, tea/coffee and biscuits gratis. Over 2,500 books and this time – FATHER CHRISTMAS!!!

Holy Trinity Church, Monifieth

Wednesday, 24 December

10 p.m. Christmas Eve Eucharist

Thursday, 25 December

10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist for Christmas Day

Sunday, 4 January

10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist

6.30 p.m. Epiphany Service (Party to follow)

St Salvador's Church, Dundee

CANDLEMASS

Our Annual festival honouring Our Lady and her patronage of the City of Dundee will take place on **Monday, 2 February, 2015** at 7 p.m. with all the customary rites and ceremonies.

Everyone is invited to join us for the service and to share our hospitality afterwards.

The next issue of **Grapevine** will be coming out for 31 March 2015.

All articles, letters, comments should be with the Editor by 5 March 2015.

Preferably articles should be no longer than 500 words.

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