

GRAPEVINE

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE DIOCESE OF BRECHIN

Canon Fay Lamont writes:

"I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all fullness of God."

This week I have visited several families who have asked to have their children baptised next month. As I go over the baptismal service with them the words, *"God is love. God gives us life. In Christ God reaches out to us. In baptism God calls us to respond"*, always excite me.

As a child I remember asking why God just didn't make everyone a Christian; why did we have to make the decision. Probably because I am not very good at making decisions about anything!

I remember being told that God never invades but always waits for an invitation. This is illustrated in the painting, *The Light of the World*, by Holman Hunt representing the figure of Jesus preparing to knock on an overgrown and long-unopened door. Hunt said: *"The door in the painting has the handle only on the inside of the door, and can therefore be opened only from the inside, representing 'the obstinately shut mind'."*

It is often difficult for us to grasp the fact that the root and foundation of creation is love. It "surpasses knowledge." We are so far removed from the source of creation, especially in our densely populated urban areas. We are very fortunate here in Tayside that we can catch many glimpses of the glory of creation in the urban landscape and in the fields of Angus which are glowing with harvest colours, if we take time to stop and look. Our lives

seem to spin faster and faster and we get caught up in our own human achievements or those of others and so we struggle to catch even a fleeting glimpse of "how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ."

Bishop Lesslie Newbigin declared: *"How is it possible that the gospel should be credible, that people should come to believe that the power which has the last word in human affairs is represented by a man hanging on a cross. The only hermeneutic (text of interpretation) of the gospel is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it"*. (The Gospel in a Pluralist Society)

We know that even our very young children understand the love that comes as a reward for being good, for being kind, for giving gifts, and for well behaved. But this is **not** the love embedded in creation. This is **not** the love that surpasses knowledge. This is **not** the love that Paul prays we might have the power to grasp. It **is** a love that flows freely, without consideration of reward. Our human nature most often tells us to return love for love and

hostility for hostility so this is a love that is not inherent to our human nature. Peter reminds us in his first letter that "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps". Jesus said, "If anyone come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me."

God is love and God gives us life. We need to learn to live the Christian life of love before we talk about it: to walk the walk, before we talk the talk. The church is a community made up of very different people who have been given God's Spirit to help them live together in unity, to develop a new way of life and to live this life out in the public arena. The local church then becomes a provocative church. In what ways can we inspire our communities by living the way of love?



"God did not make the first human because He needed company, but because he wanted someone to whom he could show his generosity and love. God did not tell us to follow Him because He needed our help, but because He knew that loving Him would make us whole."

*Saint Irenaeus
2nd century Bishop of Lyons*

Award for St Salvador's

We were delighted to have been awarded £2000 towards our Sunday afternoon drop-in mission by the Sheila Tennant Trust, *In the Spirit of Mary Slessor*. Many of our helpers were present as Katie Clapson received the award on behalf of the congregation.

Mary Slessor was born in Aberdeenshire in the mid-nineteenth century but her father, moved to Dundee to find work. Finding himself unable to continue the skilled work of making shoes, the whole family ended up working in jute production. As a child Mary worked as a half-timer at Baxter's Mill, progressing to become a fine weaver. Inspired by David Livingstone, she felt a calling to teach, and she set sail for Calabar in West Africa and a life of mission. Life in Nigeria was hard – Mary, a red haired and blue-eyed Scots lass, was the first European to set foot in a land dominated by tribal culture and beliefs. But she earned great respect for her understanding and encouragement of fairer and better lives for the people rather than enforced evangelism; she showed Christian principles by example rather than denigrating native practice. Because of a particular superstition about twins, for example, many such children were abandoned by their parents. Mary was moved to rescue a number of them, giving them a home in the Mission House. Despite several trips back home to recover from malaria, she was doughty in her good works, and after the death of her mother and sister in Scotland, threw herself even more fervently into her life in Nigeria. She earned admiration not only from the local people but also the British Empire, becoming the first female magistrate and a skilled diplomat. She died aged 67 from ill health but continues to be respected both in Africa and Dundee as a true Christian missionary and pioneer. 2015 is her centenary year.

Her philosophy of life and faith was echoed in the life and work of Sheila Tennant, a member of Dundee West Church who died last year. Inspired by the example of Mary Slessor, Sheila Tennant, after a life of altruistic endeavours generously bequeathed money to be awarded to community schemes showing contributions to a simple expression of Christian faith and action in our community.



The Rev'd Andrew Grieve (minister of Dundee West Kirk) and Mary, Countess of Strathmore in centre with recipients

Dundee West Church was packed for an enthusiastic event to mark a number of special occasions. The evening was a concert performed by various members of Victoria Park School and Harris Academy, which was punctuated by a keynote address by Norman W. Drummond CBE FRSE, the presentation of the awards by Mary, Countess of Strathmore, and a farewell to James Thewliss, the retiring head of Harris Academy. We were welcomed by the pipe band, there were strings, a woodwind band, guitars and singers, all providing fine examples of youthful musical talent. The church was decorated with painted cut-outs of African tribal masks in honour of the adventures of Mary Slessor, and one of my favourite performances was a group of very youthful tribal drummers from Victoria Park School. They played with a passion and enthusiasm which would surely have gladdened her heart. Later on, a fine Scottish counterpart was provided by a gifted young fiddler who played a

racy medley of lively Scots tunes to a gentle guitar accompaniment. The inspiring address given by Norman Drummond was aimed appropriately at the many youngsters gathered. Norman Drummond is a widely respected and multi-talented Scot. Formerly a Church of Scotland minister and head of Lorretto School, he was appointed as Governor of the Broadcasting Council for Scotland.

At this point he founded Columba 1400, an organisation to promote the development of leadership skills in youngsters from difficult and challenging backgrounds. He sees his role as eliciting the inner greatness of others and giving voice to those who feel unheard. He emphasised that one could achieve anything if one really believed in it, should always aim high and that it really was not good enough to say whatever will be will be. He burst into a tuneful version of *Que sera, sera* to underline his point! I am always envious of and impressed by charismatic speakers who can produce an eloquent and meaningful flow of words without notes. All this echoed the credo of the two ladies prompting the whole event.

The charming Mary, Countess of Strathmore presented the awards with a genuine enjoyment of the occasion. As we chatted afterwards, I was impressed to learn that despite having 'retired' mainly to the Borders, she paid regular visits back to Angus and retained a keen interest in local activities. The awards of £1000-£2000 were made to half a dozen different worthwhile ventures relating to community activities, and we are duly grateful that our application, thanks to the support of several of our extended family, was successful.

It was a truly happy occasion which concluded with 'Coffee, Cakes and Conversation' in the church hall.

Kirsty Noltie

A MEMORANDUM

TO: Jesus, Son of Joseph
Woodcrafter Carpenter Shop
Nazareth 25922

FROM: Jordan Management Consultants
Jerusalem 26544

Dear Sir:

Thank you for submitting the resumés of the twelve men you have picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have now taken our battery of tests; we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

The profiles of all tests are included, and you will want to study each of them carefully.

As part of our service and for your guidance, we make some general comments, much as an auditor will include some general statements. This is given as a result of staff consultation and comes without any additional fees.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Sincerely yours,

Jordan Management Consultants

Centre of Mission

After a year of foundation building, the Church Army project in Brechin is now well underway.

It all began with the pioneering of St Luke's Café Church last autumn, which has been an exciting development. It has enabled a whole new generation of young people to enjoy a coffee shop style service whilst learning about Jesus; it has been a place for the homeless and addicted to come and find rest, comfort and learn about the faith; and it has been a place for busy families to enjoy a break from the rush of life on Sunday morning and connect with Jesus.



Alongside this we have also launched our *Soup 'n' Soul* projects from St Paul's Cathedral and the Signpost centre in Whitfield. The session from St Paul's has given assistance to the city centre homeless, whilst the Signpost session is catering for people living in a council hostel for the homeless: they both provide lunch

and a friendship group focused around the Bible and the Eucharist. In recent weeks 4 people have come to faith and are enjoying a relationship with Jesus.

This is a really exciting work, which needs a team to enable it all to keep going. We are asking for people to volunteer with us at any of these projects. Skills and experience are not needed, as training will be provided. If you would like to talk about volunteering, learn more about the work, or want to come and see the projects in action you can contact me on 07443489431 or email c.dowling@churcharmy.org.uk.



Milestones

How often has it been said, 'You wait for ages on a bus and then three come at the same time'? Anniversaries are, by their nature, more predictable but it is not often that three come along in the one year. For St Paul's Cathedral 2015 is such a year.

On 13 December 1855 the then St Paul's Church was dedicated. It could not be consecrated at that time since there was still outstanding debt from the building costs. However ten years later the debt was cleared and on 1 November 1865 it was consecrated. In 1905 on 2 November it became the Cathedral Church of St Paul and the mother church of the Diocese of Brechin.

For some time an organising committee has been working on plans to celebrate these anniversaries and a series of events is planned starting on 27 October and culminating with a Diocesan Festal Eucharist on Saturday, 31 October.

The aim is to celebrate the inheritance provided by Bishop Forbes and to mark these milestones in the life of the St Paul's Congregation and of the Diocese. We hope that as many as possible will support the various events which are planned.

On Tuesday, 27 October Iain Flett, Dundee City Archivist, will lead a lunchtime walk, 'From Castle Jetty to V&A Shoreline'.

Later that day a Poetry and Music Evening will be held in the



Cathedral with cathedral poets, Dawn Wood and Andy Jackson and with music from highly regarded 'Cantiones Sacrae'.

The following evening Iain Flett will give an illustrated talk, 'Castlehill: From Castle to Cathedral'.

From 30 October to 1 November (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) there will be an Art Exhibition with original works from many local artists. On display also will be photographs, documents, memorabilia, and vestments illustrating the last 160 years in the life of the Cathedral.

As well as a Cathedral celebration it is also a Diocesan celebration and a Diocesan

Flower Festival with flower displays from churches throughout the Diocese will decorate the building. Carole Spink, our Lay Reader, has already been in touch with all Vestry Secretaries with an invitation.

On Friday at 7.30 p.m. we welcome back the popular 'Sweet Adelines Chorus' from Dollar, 'Hillfoot Harmony' who are no strangers to the Cathedral having performed at our regular Saturday lunchtime concerts on more than one occasion.

The Diocesan Festal Eucharist takes place at 2 p.m. on Saturday, 31 October with representatives from the wider community of Dundee and the Diocese joining us. The preacher will be the former Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Rt Rev'd Dr Idris Jones. All are welcome on this historic occasion.

That evening get out your dancing shoes and come to our Celebration Ceilidh in the Bonar Hall, Dundee University.

We hope that there will be something for everyone and that all in the Diocese can be part of the week of celebration.

Put the dates in your diary now!

Mike Duncan
Vestry Secretary

(A published programme will be available shortly including details of how to purchase tickets for the Poetry/Musical Evening, the Friday Concert and the Ceilidh.)



David Mumford Retires

On 14 June St Andrew's Church, Brechin bade farewell to Reverend David Mumford and his wife Elizabeth at a service of choral evensong.

David is retiring after being priest at the church for over 8 years, and there were a large number of well-wishers to mark this special occasion. They have moved to Dunbar.

James Carnegy-Arbuthnott, on behalf of the congregation, spoke of Father David's dedication and devoted service over these years. He added that David and Elizabeth will be very much missed, wishing them good health and happiness in the future. He made a presentation of a cheque (which may be spent on dining room table and chairs) and some National Gardening vouchers together with a bouquet for Elizabeth.

A Reflection on 'Heaven'

'Heaven' is not a word that people find it natural to use in religious circles. It has been relegated to the secular and there preserved in order to describe the taste of chocolate or the quality of last summer's holiday or the scent of this week's bath oils! Within the church we have become embarrassed by it lest others should detect in us an all too other-worldly streak, an appetite for pie-in-the-sky or a willingness to take to opiate religion in order to avoid reality. We are properly reserved in using such a word as heaven; we know how much it has been used as a means of exploitation in the past.

Nonetheless, it is probably true to say that our religious life has become diminished by the under-use of this word. For the word still has power to stir some recognition deep within our hearts and to awaken a hankering and a yearning for some state that we desire and want to be sublime.

Nowadays, we have, however, tended to replace it by another word: 'Kingdom'. It is the word which Jesus used as he proclaimed and lived the Gospel, the Good News. It really means the same as heaven for it actually means 'God's Reign', the state of being that the world will one day arrive at when God's love will run most freely through the veins of his creation; the point for which everything is being made; the timeless moment when love and peace and justice will intermingle and when all people and all things will be brought into a final union with their Maker. And Kingdom is a good word, for its sound is sufficiently concrete to remind us that we speak of the destiny of this world rather than the attainment of another.

It is, however, that very concrete sound that can be a kind of handicap. Because of the way in which we ordinarily use the word in our English conversation, it can serve to drag our religious gaze back towards the present and to mould all our religious yearnings into the shape of

present action, social or political, as we seek to make the kingdom a reality today.

But Jesus never told us that we must 'make' the Kingdom. He simply promised it and made clear it would be a gift. Our task is to wait for it, hope for it, pray for it, welcome it, live in anticipation of it, and through that anticipation, to taste it now. Nourished by that taste we will, of course, act in this world, politically and socially, in conformity with the promise that is offered, but our action will be a response to the *promise* of Kingdom rather than be the *cause* of the Kingdom's coming.

Precisely because the word 'Kingdom' can be so easily misconstrued and can make us think in far too worldly terms of something that we can actually 'make', we find ourselves qualifying it and refining it with adjectives that try to do some justice to its mystery, to its awesomeness and sublimity, to the fact that, so long as we endure the changes and the chances of this fleeting world, it always lies ahead of us. "Here we have no lasting city but we seek the city which is to come." We use words like 'glorious' and 'marvellous' and (we cannot avoid it) 'heavenly'. In the end we return to that word 'heaven' to evoke, if not to describe, what it is we most profoundly hope for.

This is not surprising, for we are inheritors and products of a culture within which the word 'heaven' has accrued a whole host of associations which are to do with our most profound desires. However much we are told that technically the word might be inadequate, we are left with the knowledge that somehow it still 'works' for us. It is heaven that we long for, heaven that we yearn for, heaven that we ache for. The desire for heaven is in our blood; the hint of heaven is in our hearts.

What though is the power of this word? Why does it haunt us always? How does it exercise attraction, influence and draw us?

To begin with it speaks of rest, "those endless sabbaths the blessed ones see." This is not the rest of disengagement from the world and from each other. It is rather the rest which comes at the end of work well done, satisfaction and completion. It is the rest of God, the Sabbath at the end of the creation. We long for such rest, and rightly so. Such rest is the poise, the eternal breathless contentment to be enjoyed at the completion of the travail of the world and at the end of our own travail through it.

Then it speaks to us of the time when there will be release from the constraints and limitations of our bodies. It evokes a sense of the spiritual and the ethereal. Here lies its greatest danger, for it can beguile us into undervaluing the material world which is God's good world and for which he has a destiny in mind. Yet it can also remind us of God's transforming power, remind us that, in his providence, we shall be changed, and all the world along with us. Everything is made in order to be drawn upwards into an environment that escapes the confines of this present age of death and of decay, and which has been seen by us, so far, in the risen, ascended and glorified body of Christ.

Heaven speaks to us also of community and harmony through its evocation of a sense of peace. And that peace is not the absence of conflict but rather the fulfilment of our wants to be in tune with ourselves, our neighbours, the world of which we are a part, and with God himself. It touches on our need for harmony.

Harmony, in its turn, reminds us of the possibility of worship, the potential for our being lost "in wonder, love, and praise." It reminds us of the music that we have within our hearts and of the desire above all things to express that adoration which we have inside us that, in our giving vent to it, makes us always more truly ourselves.

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Growing together

About 20 clergy and lay readers from the diocese met in Edzell on 18 April for a study day aimed at helping the two strands of authorised ministry explore ways of working together even more effectively. Headed *Growing together in unity and love*, the day was led by Bishop Nigel and Rev Dr Anne Tomlinson, the Principal of the Scottish Episcopal Institute. The sessions used as an analogy the life cycle of plants: sowing, weeding, growing and harvesting.

Bishop Nigel kicked off the day by casting an eye over the 'terroir': the particular contexts in which the two authorised ministries are set and the way in which, whilst being distinct, they can and should operate in a complementary manner. He referred to the various vacancies in congregations and emphasised the demands that are being made on clergy appointed as interim rectors, and the additional expectations being made of lay readers who assume more responsibility for day-to-day leadership in vacancies. Anne Tomlinson also described the new structures and developments in the training and formation of clergy and lay readers in the provincial context.

Then two teams (Montrose with Inverbervie and St John the

Baptist and St Martin Dundee) offered a snapshot of their respective methods of working together. Montrose and Inverbervie had come out of interregnum six months previously, with the two lay readers and other lay members holding the two congregations together, supported by the Bishop and the interim rector. The two Dundee churches remained in interregnum, with the lay readers maintaining worship and other activities supported by their interim rector, the Dean.

Everyone then extracted from these accounts examples of good practice and ways of working which could be copied or adapted by other churches. The value of days such as this was commended. It was agreed that the two teams had been open and honest about the good and the not-quite-so-good and had clearly learned as much from the latter as from the former – and so can we all, if we are prepared to share

stories in this way across charges and not fear conflict.

The value of holding regular team meetings was noted, with a structured agenda, but also allowing for a degree of fun and maybe also a shared meal. Meetings should be for the mutual



Dr Tomlinson speaking about training developments

development and ongoing learning of team members, perhaps by studying a book together, and not just about rotas and admin. Team ministry requires consultation with congregations, in relation to the initial setting up of the team, and during its lifetime; teams need to love their congregations; and team members must avoid the

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The word 'heaven' continues to excite some spiritual nerve. Down through the ages, we have had a way of painting pictures of it. We may now laugh at them. Choirs of angels, ranks of harps, white robes and crowns and all the rest can sometimes seem a little silly to the literal mind that so often fills our heads. Such pictures, nonetheless, should not be easily abandoned, for it is through the painting of such pictures, the telling of such stories, the creating of music and of metaphor, that we allow our imaginations to search after the truth about ourselves, knowing our imaginations to be delicate instruments in the

discerning of reality. We should never underestimate the reliability of our dreams and visions, even though, in reality, they will be translated into a language and a texture that we so far have not imagined.

If, in our imaginations and our hearts and minds, we can ascend to heaven, it is possible that our lives here might be lived within a true perspective. We will not seek to escape from the world about us. Rather we shall seek to draw that world along with us as we wait and hope for all that lies ahead of us. Our action in the so-called real world in which we live will be informed and shaped by the dream of heaven which is

harboured in our hearts. Indeed, we shall only be true citizens of earth if we are also citizens of heaven, knowing that 'here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come.'

Heaven might yet be a well-worn, well-tried word which is not inconsistent with the word 'Kingdom' but which, because of our history and our culture, still speaks to people of what we truly hope for. Of course it needs some checking, but perhaps it should not be too easily relegated to the scrap-heap of religious language. Perhaps we should have greater confidence in using it!

Dennis Smith

in unity and love

temptation to arrogate things to themselves in such a way as to disempower others. Teams might also usefully offer ongoing training and education to the wider congregation. In summary, it was said that the purpose of a TEAM is that **Together Each Achieves More**.

In the concluding session, Bishop Nigel and Peter Smart helped identify what needs to be done to grow new shoots. In response to an observation that 'we are an ageing diocese' Bishop Nigel explained that the Dean is collecting data on diocesan demography and would provide an analysis of these figures in due course so that policies and planning could proceed from hard fact, not anecdote. We need to encourage and enable the formation of younger clergy and readers and to prune the outmoded and the outdated, so allowing new shoots to grow. We needed to be proactively 'getting out more' and be missional – 'being church' in ways that may go against what we have been used to and indeed love.

Readers might become involved in a wider range of activities, such as taking funerals, or become evangelist readers, remembering that we are 'Easter people full of hope'. Then, in silence, we

contemplated what changes in attitude or practice each one of us might personally need to make to bring in this new way of working or to improve our current one.

In the Service of the Word which followed, after a passage from Ephesians urging the community to exhibit humility, meekness, patience and love, Anne said: "You've been thinking about actions that you personally, or you and your fellow minister, need to take to improve your way of working collaboratively. Now I invite you, in the light of the virtues we have heard the writer to the Ephesians urging that community to cultivate, to think about **any inner change in you** that needs to happen to enable better collaborative working. And to pray to Christ, who is the source of everything we do that his Spirit might so continue to nourish us that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love."

Peter Smart

Warden of Lay Readers

POSTSCRIPT

The following day Anne Tomlinson wrote:

"Being a stranger in your midst and so not recognising any of your handwritings, I took the liberty of typing out what you had written on

your 'seedlings' (below), and as I did so I prayed for each writer in turn, that God might indeed answer her/his prayer – that together you might build an even more vibrant and missionally collaborative community for the furtherance of God's work in your particular part of God's earth. Thank you deeply for the privilege of being with you yesterday."

- to learn I'm not always right
- holy commitment of place at this time
- courage for outreach
- love and encourage
- hope
- be more patient and encouraging
- intentionality
- stop being judgmental; give kindness
- more listening
- enthuse and/or assure the unsure
- hope through difficulty
- patience
- Lord, help me to encourage
- prioritising time for God
- challenging; permission-giving; patience
- sharing
- encouragement for thinking outside the box

The Leprosy Mission

The Dundee Branch of the Leprosy Mission Scotland hold their meetings on the last Friday evening of the month at 7 p.m. in Hillbank Evangelical Church, Cotton Road, Dundee, DD3 7BS.

Friday, 25 September: Alison McDonald, a former physiotherapist will speak on 'Bangladesh revisited'.

Friday, 30 October: Jamie McIntosh who visited Thailand in March 2015 will speak on 'Thailand and beyond'.

Friday, 27 November: Swarthick Salins will speak of his sister's work in Velemegma Leprosy Hospital in Karnataka, India.

Christmas cards, calendars and diaries will be on sale at each meeting. All are welcome. Further details from Judy Robinson (01382 645305)

Surprise link in Trondheim

The 11th century Nidaros Cathedral in Norway was ravaged by fires and lightning many times over the centuries. Restoration began in 1869 but was only completed in 2001. In excavating the ruins

many headstones were found. Some of the less damaged ones have been put on display in the crypt.



Among these is one "in Memory of Cap: William Miller shipmaster in Dundie (sic) who died 11 July 1765 Aged 32 years in Drunthor in Noraway." The stone was erected by his brother, also a Dundee shipmaster, with the consent of his widow and daughter.

Walking to Clothe the Children

Readers will remember that in the previous edition of Grapevine I wrote about Fiona McDade and myself going to Swaziland last December to participate in the Diocese of Swaziland's Annual Youth Conference. Bishop Alan Scarfe of Iowa was also there with a group of young adults from our other companion diocese. In that article I drew attention to the work of the Neighbourhood Care Points, but I want to describe another pressing need.

After the end of the Conference Bishop Alan and I were able to have several in-depth discussions with Bishop Ellinah and some of her clergy. We talked about needs that Bishop Ellinah has identified as priorities for her diocese, about ways of strengthening our tripartite Companion Link and of considering its future roles and aspirations. We seek to work together with our Swazi Companions in ways that Bishop Ellinah and her team deem most appropriate and that are manageable for us as a small diocese. From these and earlier discussions we all recognised that a particular need is to seek ways of involving our young people in shared ventures and projects.

One of Bishop Ellinah's priorities is to find a way to provide school uniforms for the poorest pupils in the Anglican church schools. At first sight this may seem a surprising priority when we are still supporting basic feeding programmes for many of these same children. In Britain we may feel ambivalent about, or even disapprove of, a requirement for school uniforms, but in Swaziland the church and church schools believe it is important to demonstrate commitment to their community and church identities. To own and wear a school uniform is a matter of pride and dignity for these children and their families: it marks them as members of the

church and as receiving an education. In Swaziland these factors are recognised as worthy of encouragement and respect.

In Swaziland, a school uniform costs between £25 and £30. Perhaps to some that may seem expensive when we can buy school clothing at knock-down prices in any of our local supermarkets; however, I have just bought a pair of school shoes and a pair of trainers for my 11 year old grand-daughter and that cost me over £70! In Swaziland, school uniforms have to be ordered in and are not as cheap

means of supporting themselves. They often go barefoot and without proper uniforms and many children go dressed in what Bishop Ellinah once described as 'rags and tatters' – or are unable to attend. For them, life itself is a daily struggle.

I felt that this project was something manageable that we, in Brechin, might be able to help with and, with Bishop Nigel's approval, I have asked for support from across our diocese. Fiona and some of the group from Iowa also made a commitment to support their new Swazi friends by fundraising for this initiative.

Following the Youth Conference and our decision to support a school uniforms' initiative, a group of 12 young adults from the Swaziland Diocesan Youth Group came forward and volunteered to help highlight the plight of the poorest children by making a long trek across their diocese. They undertook a 200 km walk, over a 7 day period from 7 to 13 April.

This would have been a real challenge under any circumstances, but was particularly so given the

remote and mountainous terrain in parts of Swaziland, the lack of proper roads in rural areas and the fact that most of the group lacked clothing or footwear that we would consider essential for any hill walking or trekking expedition.

Their efforts earned them great respect from the communities they visited and from their diocesan and Youth Group colleagues – so much so that they are now known across their diocese simply as 'Bahambi' - The Walkers.

This was a sponsored walk, but its purpose was also to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by most children who want to attend school in the rural areas. The money raised from sponsorship pledges and



Some of The Walkers at a homestead with a widow and her daughter-in-law (wearing hats). There are no men in the family and she has small children to support.

as those to be found here, but the cost I've given covers everything from clothing, footwear, track suits and sweaters for the colder weather.

It used to be the case that each Anglican church school in Swaziland had its own uniform colours, but now all the church schools have adopted a standard uniform and that change will help with costs when larger orders are placed.

This need to provide uniforms applies mainly to children from rural areas, starting with Primary aged children. These children are so eager to learn and they understand the value of education, but most live below the poverty line and many have little or no adult input in their lives and no

collections during the walk was to be used to purchase school uniforms and shoes for the most needy children.



Boys and girls in their uniforms at Mnyokane Anglican Primary School

They aimed to walk 200 km to provide uniforms for 200 children – although we all recognised that the number in need is far higher. The Walkers were given food and shelter by homesteads and small communities along their way and the walk impacted on the communities visited as the group met with children and young people and talked about life skills, personal well-being and the importance of education. They also got involved, often unexpectedly, in other practical community projects – but that is for another article.

I have been bowled over by The Walkers and how they 'walk the talk' in every sense. They are able, articulate, highly motivated young men and women, trying to find their way in a society where there are few job opportunities even for those with the best educational achievements. Their commitment to their diocese, their communities and the children is truly inspirational and their efforts deserve our support and encouragement. We have already sent funds to support this project and are preparing to send more: they are so appreciative of our interest in their efforts and of our belief in the value of what they are doing.

As well as on-going contact through funding support, The Walkers, the group from Iowa and Fiona in Brechin keep in touch with each other regularly through

a group Facebook page. Fiona plans to develop this idea further and to establish, through Facebook, a 'Companions' resource, specifically for our young people, where they can chat and share news, views, ideas and concerns. We are also ready to launch a trial link between pupils of two church Primary Schools in Swaziland and two Primary Schools here in

Monifieth.

Another of the spin-off benefits of this school uniforms' initiative is that the Ezulwini Women's Group ladies who are now properly trained, well equipped and very skilled dressmakers, are able to make high quality tracksuits and other items of school clothing. These they sell at a very reasonable cost and so this school uniforms' project will help to support another diocesan project that the Brechin Diocese has helped to establish and develop.

The first batches of the new uniforms have been received and distributed to three of the church Primary schools and I'm delighted to have permission to share some photos of the children looking very smart – if a bit bemused! The fundraising continues and batches of uniforms are being ordered as funds become available.

I am most grateful to those church friends across our diocese who have taken this project to their hearts and are supporting it. I have been heartened too by some unexpected and extremely generous contributions.

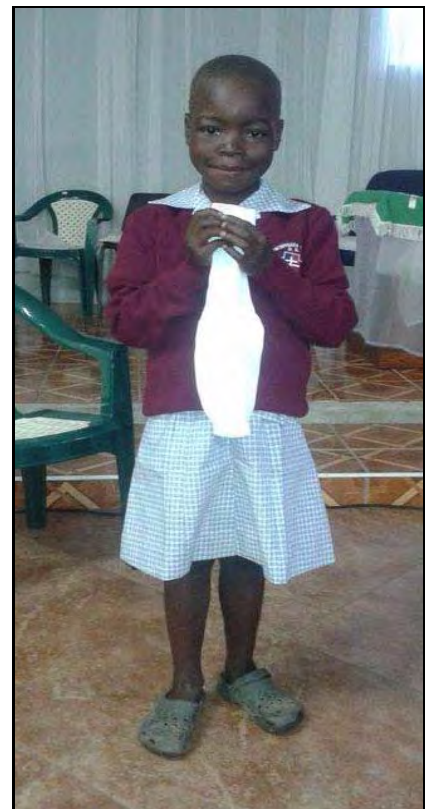
I recently had a wonderful surprise in the form of a large, most generous cheque from the OHP Sisters from Whitby – I know that Swaziland is always close to their hearts, but I'm not sure how they found out about this initiative. Maybe they read our web pages.

I also made a grant application to SECMA for this initiative and

have just heard that a grant has been awarded to us specifically to support this work – and for a far larger amount than I had dreamed possible.

It's all very encouraging and worthwhile. We will need to keep this going for some time to come.

As you know, Keith Florence, the Treasurer at Holy Trinity Church Monifieth, and I work together to manage all the funds collected for projects in Swaziland. We plan to transfer funds to their Diocesan Office soon, so, if there are any monies waiting, please send cheques to me made out to Holy Trinity Church, or get cash to Keith or to me in person. My contact details are in 'the red book'. Please make clear how you would wish donations to be designated. Keith will arrange the bank transfers and I will ensure



She is happy with her new uniform, but she can't wear the new socks because she still has no shoes

that the Diocesan Office in Mbabane knows how various donations are to be disbursed.

Together we can and do make a difference.

My thanks.

Patricia A Millar
Companion Links Officer

The Bishop Skinner Papers: arranging and listing his collection

The University of Dundee Archive Services has, among other Brechin Diocese collections, the papers of Bishop William Skinner.

When he succeeded his late father as Bishop of Aberdeen in 1816, William Skinner's elation was conspicuously tempered. Accusations of nepotism had abounded, not only from embittered rivals, but from the Primus of his Church, George Gleig. Nevertheless, when Skinner died in 1857, commentators mourned a bishop "assiduous and exemplary in the discharge of his duties, who did much during his primacy to consolidate the episcopal party in Scotland". His talents had won many admirers, seen him assume the late Gleig's position, and ensured that he left a lasting mark on the Episcopal Church of Scotland. Among these talents, however, avoiding controversy cannot be cited. Like his immediate predecessors in Aberdeen and the primacy, his staid, conservative obstinacy drew criticism from peers. Finding expression through his prodigious letter-writing, the resulting conflict spawned an abundance of correspondence.

Skinner's letters comprise the bulk of what has been deposited with the Dundee University Archive by James Wilson. These reflect the manifold responsibilities of a bishop and primus. Turned to daily to provide advice, resolve disputes, and assist stricken colleagues, he was an active, learned scholar whose strident opinions saturate his every letter.

Despite having formerly been in the possession of administrator and diplomat Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, the bundles have little sense of order. When motifs are discernible the breadth of Skinner's influence quickly becomes apparent. In the early 1820s, Englishman Matthew Luscombe desired to become a Scottish Episcopal bishop for France – echoing the Seabury consecration of decades prior – but the young Bishop of Aberdeen opposed the move, forcefully

challenging the authority of the then Primus, George Gleig. Voicing his stance most openly in these private writings, his hitherto unrecorded apology to Luscombe is among the most remarkable of his many copy-letters.

As his influence grew, such 'defeats' appear to have diminished in frequency. In repeated disputes over proposed interpolation of the English and Scots Communion Offices, Skinner – along with a number of lay and clerical supporters – staunchly defended the primacy of his native form. For the Bishop of Edinburgh and future Primus, Charles Terrot, preference was a "matter of taste not faith"; for Skinner such practice was "heretical". Years later he again found himself defending the Scottish Office prior to the establishment of Trinity College at Glenalmond in 1844. In the name of what was arguably Skinner's greatest achievement, he debated extensively with various subscribers – most active among them being William Ewart Gladstone – to ensure that episcopal education would be in his mould.

The collection shows a vibrant community of readers – the most avid among them surely Bishop Alexander Jolly – with drafts, ideas, and critique freely shared. However, Skinner's criticism extended to those charged with holding heretical positions: from Irvingites, to reportedly tactless ministers, all the way to George Gleig, for whom a misguided footnote was deemed to have terminally 'imperilled' his church. Further examples of clerical critique can be found in theological tracts from Scotland and abroad. Manuscript lecture booklets provide singular insight into the completion of a process, by which the latest interpretations of contemporary devotional literature were selectively incorporated by their most rigorous critics.

William Skinner's output comprises an exciting and wide-ranging body of material, but he is not the only member of the

family amply represented in the collection. Commencing in the closing decade of the eighteenth-century, Skinner's father and predecessor as Bishop of Aberdeen, John, proffered a less voluminous but equally well-informed interpretation upon the state of the Episcopal Church, with similar emphasis on the centrality of the Scottish Communion Office. Skinner's son-in-law and Dean of Aberdeen from 1865 to 1880, David Wilson, might not be represented so amply, but some acrimonious and increasingly terse notes – the products of an attempt by Skinner's successor in Aberdeen, George Suther, to eject Wilson from his position – colourfully reflect the realities of internal strife.

The collection has an international flavour spanning generations; correspondents from mainland Europe, North America, Asia, and Australasia offer fascinating external perspectives upon the church's long reach. Most intriguing are the extensive writings of William Skinner Wilson, one of two 'William S. Wilsons' then active in Episcopal Church circles. Sketching his efforts at establishing a parish in Merriwa, New South Wales, he pushes the boundaries of what can be termed 'Episcopal Church history'; roving preaching, community building, flooding, and the legendary bush-ranger 'Thunderbolt' all figure in his lively depictions of colonial life. With little material in existing scholarship, Wilson's may supersede Richard Boodle's account of preaching in nearby Newcastle as the most extensive depiction of this short-lived way of life.

Providing a nuanced picture of four decades of the Skinner line, this is a collection with appeal not limited to ecclesiastical historians. Whether controversial for their obstinacy or their straying from the established line, holding together a stricken institution or trying to establish a new one, the Skinner papers convey a singularly broad spectrum of episcopal opinion from which much can be gleaned.

Patrick Adamson

Diocesan Barbecue – A Day of Fun and Fellowship

Over seventy members of the Diocese and friends came together at St Drostan's on 12 July for an afternoon of Fellowship and Fun. Some Facebook users had been eagerly awaiting the arrival of Hector Haggis and his hurling team and they were not disappointed!

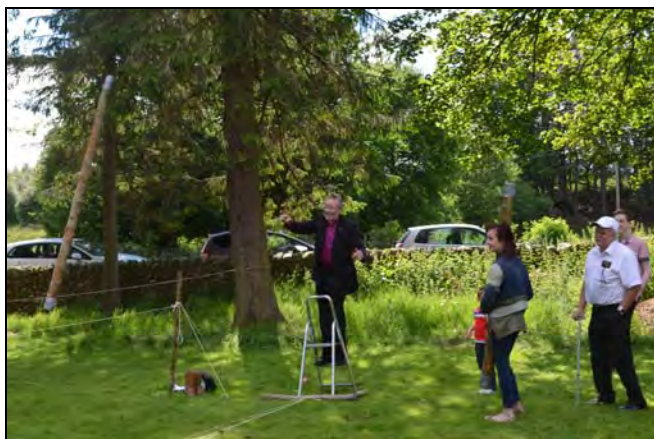
The afternoon commenced with a welcome cup of tea or coffee in the Lodge or Gazebo at about 1 p.m. and at 2.30 a group walked up to the Cross Stone to have a brief meditation about St Drostan.



Haggis Hurling

involved. The church was also available for quiet meditation, with a table top labyrinth being available in addition to prayer cards. Many also took the chance to have a look round the excellent facilities we have at St Drostan's Lodge and were surprised to find that it is so well used by so many other groups apart from our own Diocese.

As we were blessed by excellent weather and great fellowship, the day somewhat overran, but the informality and flexible programme contributed to the success!



Caber Tossing



Burger Flipping

This was followed by the Mini Highland Games, and it was great to see that all ages were getting involved, particularly the very competitive women from Montrose! Chocolate gold and silver medals were awarded, and every competitor received a "Certificate of Participation". One highlight was the mini-caber which provoked keen debate over style and scoring. However, the hurling of the tartan Haggis proved very popular as did the wellie throwing.

Meanwhile, the burger flipping team from St Drostan's were hard at work and soon everyone was enjoying the burgers, bangers, salads and great strawberry cake, not necessarily in that order!

It was good to see all of the various groups mixing in together and getting

So which church will pick up the baton to organise a Diocesan Day for 2016? St Drostan's is available on Sunday, 10 July if you wish to use the grounds as we usually have our patronal festival around then, but why not something different?

Jane & Peter Nelson



Salad Crunching

But this didn't happen at Tarfside !

A woman woke her husband one night and said, "There's a burglar in the kitchen eating my homemade steak and kidney pie!"

"Oh dear," said her husband. "Who shall I call – police or ambulance?"

I to the hills will lift my eyes

Back in 2008 I was wondering how I should celebrate my 66th birthday which fell on 24 June, only three days after the summer solstice so there would be plenty of light. I had been monitoring the Mountain weather Forecast and it looked as though there was going to be a good weather window from 23rd through to late afternoon on the 24th. What could be better than an overnight stay in the mountains – little did I know what treats lay in store.



I left the car at Dalwhinnie just before midday on the 23rd and rode on my mountain bike the 16 km to the Culra Bothy – a remote bothy north of Loch Ericht and east of Ben Alder. It was, as promised, a beautiful sunny day. So having had lunch at the bothy I set off to climb Ben Bheoil which has commanding views up and down Loch Ericht and the surrounding mountains.

Back in the bothy someone else had arrived who was also staying the night. I had an early supper before easing into my sleeping bag, as I planned to set off at 4 a.m. to climb up on to the ridge to the north of the bothy to watch the sunrise and then walk due west along the ridge climbing four Munros on the way.

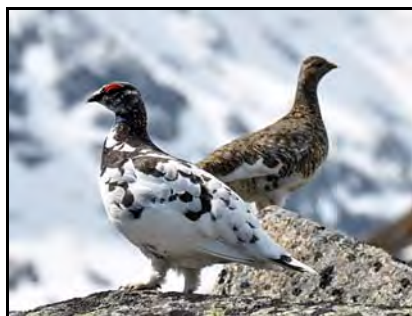
The night did not start well as my 'sleeping partner' fell asleep on his back: the noise was deafening! At about 3 o'clock, having tossed and turned most of the night, the door and windows of the bothy began to rattle. I leapt out of my sleeping bag and threw open the door to be confronted by

a herd of red deer – what a magnificent start to my birthday!

It was already half daylight, so I quickly put on my clothes, donned my rucksack and went out again. The deer were still there quietly grazing. As I started to move the hinds called in their calves, hidden in the grass, and the herd then led me all the way up to the top of the ridge where they said their farewells – what an escort they had been over the last hour or so!

As I turned to head west along the ridge so the sun rose behind me. I was a red sunrise and, with the hoarfrost on the grass, the mountains also glowed red. There was no wind and, nestling below the second Munro either side of the ridge, were two lochs which acted like mirrors, reflecting the mountain in all its early morning glory. I was truly blessed and thanked God for my birthday present.

Could things get any better? As I walked further along the ridge I came across some more red deer and then a pair of ptarmigan with their chicks – my favourite bird.



By 8 o'clock I had arrived on top of the last Munro and settled down for some much needed breakfast. To the west I was looking across Rannoch Moor and towards Glen Coe. To the south I could see rain clouds gathering and the wind was beginning to pick up – time to drop down into the glen and head back to the bothy. As I was re-packing

my rucksack a shadow passed over me: a golden eagle soaring on the thermals. My start down was delayed as I watched this beautiful bird hunting for its breakfast.

I was back in the bothy by midday, picked up my bike and set off for Dalwhinnie. I arrived at the car as the first drops of rain began to fall.

I could not have asked for a better birthday present. I will remember it vividly for the rest of my life. God was certainly with me that day. I tend to climb the mountains on my own and I know that He is always there, keeping a watchful eye over me.

R.I.R.

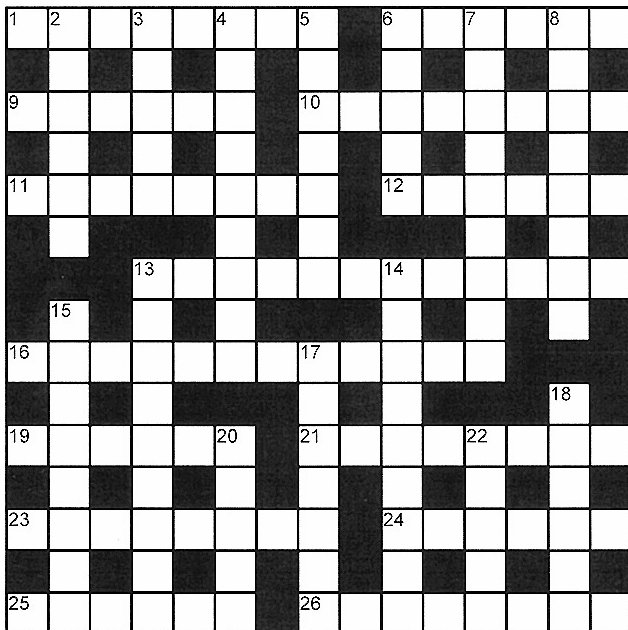
Will you see the infancy of this sublime and celestial greatness? Those pure and virgin apprehensions I had from the womb, and that divine light wherewith I was born are the best unto this day. By the Gift of God they attended me into the world, and by His special favour I remember them till now. Verily they seem the greatest gifts His wisdom could bestow. Certainly Adam in Paradise had not more sweet and curious apprehensions of the world, than I when I was a child.

All things were spotless and pure and glorious: yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. I was entertained like an Angel with the works of God in their splendour and glory, I saw all in the peace of Eden; Heaven and Earth did sing my Creator's praises, and could not make more melody to Adam, than to me: All Time was Eternity, and a perpetual Sabbath. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared which talked with my expectation and moved my desire.

*Thomas Traherne
from Centuries of Meditations*

CRYPTIC PRIZE CROSSWORD

As we prepare to enter the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness", eleven of the answers are to do with plants and trees all of which are mentioned in the Bible. Send your entries to the editor at the address on the back page by Saturday, 31 October at the latest putting your name and address in the box provided.



CLUES ACROSS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Poisonous plant guaranteed to end karma (8) | 11 Visit our skilled artists (8) |
| 6 Family tree of the fool found at the heart of the US Security Service (6) | 12 An antelope downing a beer? OK! (6) |
| 9 Leaner in charge of an inferior newspaper – tasty! (8) | 13 A strange poem puzzled Eve when she ate these (12) |
| 10 I dread no one in holy orders (8) | 16 A pearl with no sides gained a human quality (12) |
| | 19 Odysseus' home with a canary inside! (6) |
| | 21 Nothing – past, present or |

- | | |
|---|--|
| future (8) | 6 Raced to the top of the tree (5) |
| 23 You'll find a thin pal in this tribe (8) | 7 The perfume for kidnapers? (9) |
| 24 Brings it on oneself by a vain curse (6) | 8 Where to put one hundred and eleven obese people (8) |
| 25 Has the old man gone nuts? (6) | 13 Is it a chop? No, it's a nut (9) |
| 26 Do coy mares shelter under it? (8) | |

CLUES DOWN:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 Two first class accounts of a tree (6) | 14 It teaches one to be appreciative of beauty (9) |
| 3 It needs a skilful student to make glazed earthenware (5) | 15 Eat a lamb and teal fricassee (8) |
| 4 To be a person of stability a monarch needs the north (9) | 17 Beans stored in the north-east still (7) |
| 5 No ridge is staying high for long (7) | 18 Does the lender reuse the rouble (6) |
| | 20 The prize is a drawback (5) |
| | 22 Deputy descending a mountain pass uncertainly (5) |

Name

Address.....

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The Voluntary Poor: Religious Communities and the Scottish Episcopal Church

by Bishop Edward Luscombe

This is a short (66 pages) and well-researched book from the pen of the ever busy Edward Luscombe, retired Bishop of Brechin and Primus. At the outset, he acknowledges the work of several others who have written on this subject, in addition to his own personal knowledge and research. He gives details of about twenty Communities and Orders who have worked in the Scottish Province or have had strong links with Scotland. Each Community is given about three pages of history, founding, objectives and the religious who worked within the community. There are various photographs which assist the text.

The text flows easily and one can read the short chapters, a few at a time, and reflect on the subject.

After reading the complete book, many people, and certainly this reviewer, will be left with a feeling of sadness that most of the houses and communities have either ceased to exist or, in the case of others, have of necessity had to draw back to their mother houses in England. As the Bishop points out in his introduction, out of 17 or so houses 50 years ago, there are now only 3 small Communities in Scotland and 4 solitary Religious. Within the Bishop's own Diocese (and also

well known to the reviewer) the Community of St Mary and St Modwenna came to an end with the death of the last Sister, while the Order of the Holy Paraclete withdrew to the Mother House in Whitby. But do read and enjoy this book.

As a postscript, on the day of completion of this review in late July, the writer was saddened to read that the Little Sisters of the Poor are leaving Dundee due to a shortage of nuns willing to join the Order. So the problem affects vocations in the Roman Catholic Church as well as our own.

A.H.C.

The Church In The Community

Earlier this year, during the season of Lent, Bishop Nigel took the opportunity to get out into the community and meet some new people in fresh ways – notably in some of the pubs and clubs of the Diocese.

One of these 'Saints 'n Sinners – Meet the Bishop' events was held in the Downfield Arms in Dundee, a pub where Dundee Centre of Mission evangelists Kerry Dixon and Craig Dowling had been holding informal men's meetings for some weeks previously.



"We had an amazing response from the pub landlord when we told him what we'd like to do," remembers Kerry. "He had absolutely no problem in allowing us to use the front room of his pub, and to bring in some sound equipment and musicians, too."

The event came as a bit of a surprise to the pub regulars, with one posting on Facebook, "Just having a Father Ted moment – there's a bloke in a dog collar in the pub!" And then – a few moments later – "I don't believe it, now there's a Bishop here too!"

Despite their surprise, the evening was really well received by the pub regulars. There was live music and food, Craig and Kerry interviewed the Bishop about issues of life and faith, and there were opportunities for questions and discussions.

"It was just a great opportunity to bring 'church' to where the people are, and demonstrate its continuing relevance to the issues and situations that we all face in life," says Kerry.

"When the Bishop talked about the impact that the death of one of his children had made on him and his faith – you could have heard a pin drop!"

Facebook feedback at the end of the evening also demonstrated just how people had been impacted, with one regular commenting, "I never thought I'd say this, but that was really good!"

Do they know its origin?

Nothing could be less likely than the origin of one of the most popular hymns: *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind* by the American Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier. The verses come from a poem entitled *The Brewing of Soma* written in 1872.

The poem deals with various kinds of intoxication – by alcohol, drugs or fanaticism. Soma itself was a sacred drink mentioned in ancient Sanskrit books of Indian religion, imbibed by Vedic priests. This hallucinogenic concoction sent them into a stupor in which they imagined they had religious experience and made contact with the spirit world.

The first eleven stanzas range over such ancient hallucinations, the dance of the Islamic Dervish and the trance of the medieval Christian flagellant and other "sensual transports".

The poem makes a strong statement against the highly emotional evangelicalism of revivalist Christianity that Whittier encountered in his own day. How curious, then, that these same Protestant churches should have extracted the last stanzas, commencing "Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways" (by which he meant the foolishness of evangelism), and made them their own.

Music in the Cathedral

Saturday lunchtimes at 1 p.m.

12 September

Raymond Spasovski, piano

26 September

Svitlana Esplin, piano

10 October

Strathmore Singers, choral

24 October

Nancy Crook & Andrew Lees, violin & organ/piano

7 November

Marie Downes & Walter Blair, clarinet & piano

21 November

Loadsaweeminsingin, women's choir

And also:

Friday, 20 November

Christmas Light Night in Dundee – live music in the Cathedral from Harris Academy Music Department and Wighton Singers after the Christmas lights have been switched on.

Tuesday, 24 November

(in collaboration with *The Steeple Church*)

A night with John Bell of the Iona Community – word and song in preparation for Advent.

Sunday, 29 November

6.15 p.m. – The Cathedral Advent Carol Service.

Congratulations!

The crossword entry of Mr G. Stirling of Broughty Ferry was drawn as the winner by a Post Office employee (when the editor was renewing his car licence!).

The correct answer was:



Stonehaven Book Browse ... *Plus!*

St James' Stonehaven held their regular Book Browse on Saturday, 1 August. After a week of very unsettled weather they were fortunate to be greeted with a bright, sunny morning. There were all sorts of books set out in the hall, sorted by genre and authors, for people to look through and well over 300 volumes were sold, which was a **Plus** for the church funds. Coffee/Tea and biscuits were provided free.

But another **Plus** was that the fine weather meant that the bouncy castle could be set up and lots of folk had great fun with a slide and a bounce.

Visitors were treated to an exhibition of quilting by the 'Patch and Pud' club and one lucky person won a lovely quilt in the raffle at the end of the day. A **Plus** for them!



For the really hungry Lynne was kept busy outside under a gazebo cooking for the sausage sizzle – another **Plus**.



From 12 noon to 3.30 visitors were entertained to a variety of musical talents. The Swannies brought a variety of Scottish and Irish melodies. Then Emily entertained at the piano with a selection of tunes from the shows. John Gove, visiting organist, also brought us a selection of well-known organ pieces to keep us entertained. Alison, Maggie and Irene played and sang a variety of tunes – traditional and popular – on Scottish harps. There was also a performance by the Kilwhang handbell ringers. (For the uninformed, Kilwhang is the oldest known name for Stonehaven.) That made a five-fold **Plus**.



When all the takings were counted up and expenses paid the day had raised over £620 – a resounding **Plus** for the congregational coffers!



James Gregory Public Lectures on Science and Christianity

5.15 p.m., Main Physics Lecture Theatre, St Andrews University

28 September 2015

'Why should free scientific inquiry matter to faith? An historical case study'

Randall Zachman

Professor of Reformation studies at the University of Notre Dame

9 November 2015

'Towards an Integration of Science and Christianity'

Eric Priest

Professor of Theoretical Solar Physics in the Maths Dept at the University of St Andrews



**"We're giving away clergy shirts...
but not to you!"**

Butler & Butler is a company that manufactures clergy shirts and they say,

"We're looking to give away some of our stock to clergy and ordinands in the developing world - so if you have any links with individual clergy or Dioceses in the developing world who might like some shirts then please let us know. Previously we've sent shirts to clergy and ordinands in Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique and several other countries. As our sales grow we can afford to give more away so if you have a suggestion please email us:

info@fairtradeclergyshirts.co.uk. Thank you!"

**St Mary Magdalene's Church
Constitution Road, Dundee**

A Coffee Morning

will be held on

**Saturday, 7 November
from 10 a.m. until 12 noon**

**Come and try our scones and cream,
and spend all your excess money
at an amazing variety of stalls.**

Bring your friends!

**This is also an opportunity to have a look at the
interior of the church.**

Well, I never !

A farmer from Aberdeenshire fell down a well. His shouts brought his wife to the scene. She took one look and told him she would fetch a couple of workers to haul him out.

"Hold on," he shouted, "What time is it?"

"Half past twelve."

"Oh well, there's only half an hour till their lunch."

Goodbye, but not Gone

I want to record my feelings and reactions to the most amazing service and lunch held for me on 31 May at St James the Great, Stonehaven, marking my retirement as Lay Reader there and at times at St Ternan's Muchalls.

When I spoke to Bishop Nigel and to Peter Smart of my intention to retire for both private and personal reasons, I had no idea my final day of service would result in such an overwhelming feeling of love, fellowship and friendship directed at both Peter and myself from the congregations of both Churches. On that day we prayed together, worshipped together, and shared a meal together – it was memorable! My association with St James is a long one covering more than 30 years. We lived in London, but always came to a rented cottage near Stonehaven for our summer holiday. In my childhood my parents had a caravan in the town and I wanted my children to enjoy the same holidays as I had enjoyed.

When we came for our holiday I always worshipped at St James, always at the 8.30 a.m. service, and when Peter retired and we moved to Stonehaven for good, I became a regular worshipper, making friends with Jack and Moira Emslie. Through that friendship I became more involved in the life of the church in different ways and eventually was voted on to the vestry.

About 1997 the Rev'd Gerald Paisey asked me to become a pastoral visitor and also a eucharistic assistant, both of which I enjoyed both very much. In 1999 with the support of my priest, the vestry and the diocese I started to train as a Lay Reader.

Well, the rest, as they say, is history. For the last 15 years, I have in that role met many friendly and supportive people in the congregations of St James' and St Ternan's, leading services, preaching and running a small but faithful 'Prayer and Spirituality Group'.

31 May 2015 will be a day etched in my memory for ever. I felt so truly humbled by the presence of so many friends from both churches who came to bid me 'goodbye' and presenting me with such lovely gifts. Although I will no longer be on 'altar duties', I hope still to contribute to the life of St James, serving on vestry, visiting the sick and housebound and of course worshipping there.

I have had notice from Bishop Nigel who, in recognition of my serving the Diocese faithfully since 2000, has appointed me Lay Reader Emeritus – truly an honour.

Arma Iles

The next issue of **Grapevine** will be coming out for 29 November 2015.

All articles, letters, comments should be with the Editor by 6 November 2015.

Preferably articles should be no longer than 500 words.

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