



Brechin Bulletin

Scottish Episcopal Church, Diocese of Brechin Newsletter. May 2009, No. 31

The worst service I have ever attended - it was dire!

A good friend of mine, who is Church of Scotland, suffered a tragic loss recently and found himself, in his grief, making a return visit to his local church; he almost wished he hadn't.

The story, as he related it to me - and he's a professional folk musician - was that his local church had 'slipped down to the tambourine end of things - if you know what I mean'. I think I did. He was exclaiming that rather than the 'dignified' church he'd hoped for, this one had already abandoned something of its intellectual appeal, and had succumbed to a rather lower point on the liturgical scale. Worse was to come. On Palm Sunday - not always observed by the Church of Scotland - he made another visit. This time he said it was worse, with someone actually dressed up as a donkey, 'floppy ears and all'. In his view, I think, the retelling of Jesus' entry to Jerusalem had been reduced to something akin to pantomime.

I let this go for a week or so until I found myself south of the border talking to another friend - this time a priest. He'd been on study leave at a centre in Wales, where, with two other clergy, he'd opted to visit a local church one Sunday morning.

It happened to be St David's Day, and the three visitors had some expectations that this might have been mentioned, even observed with a sprig of daffs here and there. But there was no mention of St David, no observance, nothing of significance, only a handful of people in an otherwise thriving village. Led by a Lay Reader the service and sermon were described as 'utterly dire' and the visitors made their way back to their study centre dejected and depressed.

I'm telling these stories because what we have here are examples of what appears to be dreadful liturgy, thoughtlessly done, without any recognition that the days were significant and perhaps could have opened up real liturgical opportunities. It is of course very easy to be critical, to ignore the fact that 'maybe it was all done for children' in the first church, and that in the second, the poor old Reader hadn't had time to prepare anything for the Sunday. We won't ever know.

But we cannot really make excuses.. People sometimes come through our doors - complete strangers looking for something significant - hoping for spiritual inspiration. If sloppy ill-prepared worship is found, we do ourselves no favours. Apart from displaying a church that doesn't really care about its Sunday service, it plays directly into the hands of those who believe that the Christian faith and its worship is unappealing, puerile, and utterly irrelevant.

We all need to attend to what we do and say in church. It speaks of what we believe, and should be a time when, even if we bash a tambourine or enjoy the direct participation of children, other parts of the service are given over to stuff that is more constructively serious, giving hope and assurance that are befitting the Christian Story in a very troubled world.

- Bishop John

FROM THE BISHOP'S DESK

MAY 2009	
	19th
2nd	Conference at Kennedy Church Centre, Kemnay.
3rd	St. Margaret's Church. Preside and preach. 11am.
5th	St. Ternan, Muchalls. Meeting with Vestry. 12.30pm.
7th	Visit to St. Mary and St. Peter, Arbroath. 10.30am
8th-16th	Bishop on holiday.
17th	St. Margaret's Church. Preside and preach. 11am.

19th	Clergy CME Day at Edzell. 9.30am.
20th	Meeting with the Church Pastoral Advisory Service (CPAS). 10.30am.
21st	Hospital Radio recording. 11am.
24th	St. Martin's Church. 8.30am and 11am. and meet with Vestry.
26th	Meeting with NHS. 10am.
27th	Visit to St. Ninian's Church and meet with Vestry. 10.30am.
28th	St. Margaret's Church. 10am.
31st	Pentecost. Celebration at St. Ninian's Church. 11am.

MAY MEETINGS

14th	Mission and Ministry Board 6pm.
19th	Administration Board. 6.30pm.
27th	DBAC. 2pm.

BULLETIN DEADLINE

16th of each month
Please send news to:
office@brechin.anglican.org

Scottish Charity No.

SCO16813

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Cathedral of St. Paul, Dundee

Lunchtime Concerts: 1pm

- 2 May Liam Lynch, Violin; Joseph Fleetwood, Piano.
16 May Peter Griggs, Guitar.
30 May Laura Ashton, Oboe.
13 June Derek Buchan, Piano.
27 June Cantiones Sacrae: Tayside's premier Renaissance Vocal Ensemble.

Diocesan Youth Action Group

'Third Sunday' events

- 17 May Keeping in Faith - a film to watch & discuss.
21 June Feasting in Faith - summer barbecue.

St. Margaret's Church, Lochee

- 26 May Prize Bingo in the Parish Room - 2pm.

St. Mary the Virgin Church, Arbroath

- 15 May Quiet Day, led by the Rev. Canon John Cuthbert on behalf of SECMA - Scottish Episcopal Church Mission Assoc., Diocese of Brechin - LINKS. 'Bring and Share Lunch.' 11am - 2.15pm. Transport details and further information from your 'Links' Congregational Correspondent or from the Diocesan Correspondent, Rosemary Eddy. Telephone: 01382-667119.

St. Luke's Church, Downfield

- 9th May Tearcraft Gift and Coffee Morning being held in the Church Hall. 10.00am - noon.

NEW TO THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH?

Are you relatively new to the Scottish Episcopal Church or to the Anglican Church?

Bishop John intends holding 2 evening sessions on

'Why do we do what we do?'

A question and answer session on some of the features of Episcopal worship, organization and practice. This is intended for those who come from other Christian Churches. He hopes to do these sessions at the Cathedral, but to fix time and date please send your names, telephone and address to the Bishop's office. Telephone: 01382-562244

JAMES GREGORY LECTURE ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION IS ON

'LIFE - CREATION OR EVOLUTION?'

By Professor Kenneth Miller.

The lecture is part of the James Gregory Public Lecture series being held at the University of St. Andrews. Lectures are free of charge and everyone is warmly invited to join us for a reception in the Younger Hall following the lecture which commences at 5.15pm on Thursday, 30th April. Professor Kenneth Miller is Professor of Biology at Brown University, U.S.A.

NATIONAL STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE

The National Stewardship Conference is taking place from the 13th to the 16th of July at the University of Wales, Caerleon, near Newport.

Details may be obtained from Mr. Richard D. Jones, Parish Resources Adviser, The Diocese of Llandaff, The Court, Coychurch, Bridgend. CF35 5EH

College of Preachers

Proposed Training Day in Edinburgh

The College of Preachers was formed in 1962. A proposed 'Day for Preachers' is being planned to take place in Cramond Kirk Hall, Edinburgh on 12th November, 2009 from 10am until 4pm. At this point in time the proposed day is in the planning stage and it is the intention to have 3 main speakers including the Rev. David Day (former Principal of St. John's College, Durham), and Prof. Larry Hurtado, (professor of New Testament Language, Literature and Theology at New College, Edinburgh). Further details of venue and speakers etc. will be issued at a later date. Clergy & Lay Readers welcome.

In Christ Alone

A Musical Celebration

of the Life of Christ

To be held on Sunday, 28th June in the Caird Hall, Dundee at 7.30pm.

Featuring Keith and Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend.

Ticket prices: £14, £12 and £10
Students, Under 16s, Unemployed - £3 reduction in ticket cost.

Tickets available from the Dundee City Box Office (01382-434940), www.cairdhall.co.uk or at Wesley Owen, Dundee & CLC Bookshop.

More details are available at: info@newscottish.org or www.newscottish.org

As the event is on a Sunday evening and may clash with an existing evening service it is asked that you might consider cancelling, if this is appropriate.

CROSSREACH

In partnership with

CARERS SCOTLAND

A free conference is to take place in Dundee at the West Park Centre, Perth Road on **Wednesday, 10th June** from **10am to 3.30pm**

Do you look after someone as an unpaid carer?

Crossreach is keen to meet people from your congregation and community who look after elderly parents, friends or an elderly person in their neighbourhoods. Also people who visit those who are isolated in their communities because they are looking after a child/adult with learning disabilities, or who are struggling to cope with a relative with mental health problems. People who may not know how to support friends who are looking after those with substance misuse problems and their families, or who are offering support whilst a member of the family is in prison would also benefit from attending and receiving advice and help.

To receive more information or to register for the day, please telephone: Maggie Hunt at Charis House: 01316-572000, or visit the website: www.crossreach.org.uk

Posters for display within your church can also be ordered from Maggie Hunt.