

The Eagle



web
version



In the bleak midwinter

Lizanne Mackenzie captured this scene near Durisdeer

St John's Magazine *February to April 2010*

The Scottish Episcopal Church of St John the Evangelist, Dumfries
(Anglican/Methodist)

www.stjohnsdumfries.org

Scottish Charity Number: SC007742

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St John's Pattern of Services and related Groups

at St John's in Lovers' Walk unless otherwise stated

Sundays:	8.00am	Holy Communion (Scottish Liturgy 1970)
(1st Sunday)	9.30am	All-age Worship (Godly Play format) <i>(not in January, July or August)</i>
(2nd Sunday)	9.30am	Mattins (Scottish Prayer Book 1929)
(3rd Sunday)	9.30am	All-age Worship <i>(not in December)</i>
(4th Sunday)	9.30am	Holy Communion (Scottish Liturgy 1970) <i>at Maxwellton Chapel, Moniaive</i>
(5th Sunday)	9.30am	Informal Communion (Scottish Liturgy 1982; Prayer V)
	11.00am	Sung Eucharist (Scottish Liturgy 1982) & Children's Church
(1st & 3rd Sundays)	6.00pm	Choral Evensong (Scottish Prayer Book 1929)
(2nd & 4th Sundays)	6.00pm	Evening Prayer (Iona or Taizé style)/Discussion/Healing service <i>(see weekly notices for details on a particular Sunday)</i>
(5th Sunday)	6.00pm	Compline (Scottish Prayer Book 1929 or Daily Prayer 1990)

Daily Prayer (September to June, omitting the school holiday periods at Christmas and Easter)

(Daily Prayer 1990)

Monday to Thursday

Friday

8.30am Morning Prayer

8.30am Morning Prayer

5.30pm Evening Prayer

4.45pm Evening Prayer

Tuesdays: 6.30pm Holy Communion (Scottish Liturgy 1982)
(usually with incense)

Wednesdays: 10.30am Holy Communion (Scottish Liturgy 1970)

(3rd Wednesday) 1.45pm Holy Communion *at Charnwood Lodge Nursing Home*

4.00pm Youth Group meeting in the hall
(fortnightly in term-time; see weekly notices for schedule)

Thursdays: 11.30am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer 1662)
at the Crichton Memorial Church, Crichton Campus

6.00pm A Time for Meditation
(pattern as indicated in weekly pewnotes)

(1st Thursday) 2.30pm Holy Communion (Scottish Liturgy 1982)
(September to May) - Mothers' Union service, all welcome.

3rd Friday: 10.00am Praise & Play Service for parents/grandparents &
pre-school children *(September to June)*

House/Study Groups: Groups meet at a variety of times to study the Bible and discuss other faith-related material. More details are available from the Rector.

Meet the new Bishop (elect)



On 16th January, 2010, the Very Revd Dr Gregor Duncan was elected the new Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway, following the retirement last year of the Rt Revd Dr Idris Jones, who had served the diocese as Bishop for 11 years.

Gregor Duncan is currently Rector of St Ninian's Church, Pollokshields and Dean of the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway.

A graduate of Glasgow University, he went on to study for his PhD at Cambridge. He was ordained priest in 1984. In 1986 he returned to Scotland to serve as chaplain at Edinburgh Theological College. Before moving to

his present charge in Pollokshields, he was Rector of St Columba's, Largs from 1989 to 1999.

His interests include collecting records and CDs, cooking, entertaining, and reading modern novels, travel and history books.

The election of the new bishop was carried out by an Electoral Synod comprising representatives of clergy and lay church members from the Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway and chaired by the Most Revd David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane, and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The Primus commented, "I am delighted to welcome Dean Gregor Duncan as the next Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway. He has faithfully served the Scottish Episcopal Church and the clergy and people of Glasgow and Galloway for many years. He is widely respected and admired for his faithful pastoral care and the strength of his spirituality. I am delighted that he has now been chosen by the Electoral Synod to serve as bishop of this Diocese."

His service of consecration will be in St Mary's Cathedral in Glasgow. The date will be announced shortly.

[Text extracted from the Diocesan News. Photo from the Diocesan website.]

The Rector's Letter



I'm combining Vestry News with this letter as there is a lot under consideration and being planned by the Vestry, and I take this opportunity to communicate the topics widely. Vestry minutes continue to be available for consultation in the Hall.

First of all, thank you to all those who contributed to the mission consultation via the notice boards by the font. However, few people took up the invitation to speak with Vestry members. To encourage this, a photo of Vestry members is on the back of this magazine.

At the last Vestry meeting a very interesting presentation was made by Dr Jamie Hill, Diocesan Stewardship Convener, focusing on financial aspects. A questionnaire he showed us will be circulated in St John's in the lead up to a focus on these matters in May/June and we also plan to pilot some course material he showed us.

St John's bell is being repaired and should start tolling again soon. This will commence prior to the consultation with the local community about change ringing bells. See the diary pages for Special General Meetings which are planned about this and about updating our constitution.

Dean Gregor, as our Bishop-elect, will need to be consulted about these matters and I hope he will pay St John's an early Episcopal visit. He and the Cathedral Chapter will be visiting St John's on Wednesday 10th February.

Communication is a vital topic in churches as in all communities and the weekly notices play a large part in keeping people up to date. I take this opportunity to remind people that they are available on St John's website for those who aren't able to get to church on a particular week.

In the coming months we will be experimenting with the use of pew bibles to reduce the pew notes to one sheet rather than two. The type of Bible which we think is suitable can be seen in the church office and the cost is being covered by donations. If anyone would wish to donate additional copies perhaps in memory of a family member I would be pleased to provide more information.

Lent approaches and I encourage people to take up the various opportunities for prayer, study and reflection which are traditional at this time. See the information about this provided by the Education Group later on in this magazine. We plan to mark Holy Week and Easter in a similar way to last year and details are given on page 10.

*Yours in Christ,
Robin*

What is Edinburgh 2010?

Edinburgh 2010 is an ecumenical project set up to commemorate the centenary of the World Missionary Conference, and to provide new perspectives on Christian mission today.

In June 1910 the city of Edinburgh hosted one of the most defining and most long-remembered gatherings in the history of Christianity. Edinburgh was chosen as a conference venue since Scotland had an importance in worldwide mission out of all proportion to its size. The 1910 World Missionary Conference drew together more than 1,200 Christians from many churches to think strategically about the worldwide mission of the Christian Church. Participants recognised the need to move beyond colonialism and to welcome the birth and maturing of independent and self-governing churches around the world. Although there were no Catholic or Orthodox delegates present, Edinburgh 1910 is considered to be the birthplace of the modern ecumenical movement. Concerned with advancing co-operation and unity in the study and practice of mission, its most significant achievement was that it raised the vision of the church as a global reality.

Edinburgh 2010 is governed by a General Council, made up of 20 representatives of the Protestant, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christian traditions. Apart from this international body, many groups and organisations are involved on a local level, including a multi-denominational Scottish coordinating team (ScoT).

As in 1910 **a study process is at the heart of the project.** For the past two years study groups have been working on nine main study themes, e.g. foundations for mission; forms of missionary engagement. There are seven 'transversal' themes, e.g. women and mission; healing and reconciliation. These 'transversal' themes run across all the main study themes, but are being developed and integrated with them. Those involved in the study process have met for conferences and workshops all over the world, and are using the Edinburgh 2010 website www.edinburgh2010.org as a platform for discussion and exchange.

The study process will peak in a four-day conference, to be held in Edinburgh from 2-6 June 2010. 70 representatives of the study groups will come together and be joined by 150 mission leaders from all over the world. The aim of the project is a serious, in-depth interaction on both the present and future of Christian mission and on specific missiological themes (missiology is the area of practical theology that investigates the mandate, message and work of the Christian missionary). It is hoped that this discussion will not just take place among conference delegates, but that it will develop into a global conversation before, during and after the conference. Christians all over the world are invited to share their thoughts on mission on the Edinburgh 2010 website and to engage in its growing Facebook community. Moreover, the stakeholders of Edinburgh 2010 encourage Christians worldwide to set up their own events in the Edinburgh 2010 spirit.

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There are various ways of tapping into this project via the Edinburgh 2010 website, including signing up for their monthly electronic newsletter. A printed copy will also be on display on St John's ecumenical notice board in the hall.

You are asked to pray for the conference and for all the ecumenical endeavours which will take place in 2010 using the following prayer at Sunday services and in your prayer groups:

God of Grace,
Your love flows in abundance through your world,
You have come close, touched our pain,
And fired our hearts with hope.
As now we give you thanks,
And celebrate your mission
To reconcile, heal and transform.
Fill us with your irrepressible Spirit of love
Made known among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

From the Editor

John Walker



I am most grateful to all of you who have sent me photographs for use in the magazine. Inevitably at any one time I can only use a few, but I am delighted to have them all by me for the future. I look forward to getting further items, anything relevant to church life, as the months go by. Some people draw or paint when on holiday, or on retreat, and such works of art might well be reproduced in the magazine, while words to go with them would always be welcome. Original artworks will be returned.

My further thanks are sincerely directed to everyone who contributes to the magazine. I particularly appreciate the efforts of those who produce regular items to keep us abreast of various activities and events. No doubt the news that it is time to pull something together for the next issue brings a groan of protest from busy people, but I assure you that your labour is not in vain.

The front cover reminds us that not long ago we were singing "Snow had fallen, snow on snow", as well as experiencing it in full measure. Beneath that wintry blanket, the earth was preparing for the glories of spring. Just so, as Lent approaches, we should think about how best to prepare for the glory of Easter. You will see that page 9 carries an article about the various Lent groups, and page 10 is devoted to information about Holy Week and Easter.

ETERNITY?

J. Paul Burbridge

One member of our congregation asked me “Why do preachers and speakers say so little about ‘Eternal Life,’ bearing in mind that Jesus never hesitated to refer to it?” And that is a fair question.

Put most simply, I believe this is because neither speakers nor hearers have the necessary language, or the shared experience with which to speak about it meaningfully. After all, our very word ‘eternity’ is pre-loaded with overtones which (I believe) are basically misleading. My dictionary defines ‘eternity’ as “infinite or unending time” – and that is certainly the way that word is generally understood. But, to my mind, this suffers from a fundamental defect, because it includes the limiting word ‘time.’ Personally I always prefer to speak of “that timelessness which we call eternity”, if only because *timelessness* is my deep conviction about the real nature of eternity. I simply do not believe it to be time going on and on and on and on. It was the nineteenth century Anglican priest, Professor Frederick Denison Maurice, who so very wisely wrote that “eternity has nothing to do with time or duration.”

Of course, it might very reasonably be argued that since clearly we live in a world bounded by the constraints of space and time, how can we possibly conceive of anything else? We are now accustomed to atomic clocks, and even to the availability of radio-controlled clocks and wristwatches mysteriously guaranteed to be “correct to within a second over a million years” *[though quite how this is ever proved must remain an open question for me!]* Therefore it could be argued that timelessness is a meaningless concept – and for many people it is precisely that.

However, I want now to move into the related issue of our subjective perception of time, which is not at all the same thing. Whilst I personally accept the present objective reality of measured time, I have also to say that my own perception of time (even within this world) has not always corresponded precisely with measured time. There are occasions when time somehow seems to expand, and others when it seems to contract. I would even go so far as to say that I believe that I have even on very rare occasions momentarily glimpsed something of that timelessness of which I speak. These occasions are exceptional, and certainly cannot be created to order. But I am equally aware that they may sometimes be triggered – in particular by beauty, whether of sight, sound or emotion. [I have also to add that I am never too happy with our current blanket condemnation of anything that might be described as ‘subjective’ – not least because my awareness of myself (or indeed of anything else) ultimately can never avoid being subjective!]

Furthermore, I believe that the eternal life of which Jesus speaks is not confined simply to life after physical death. I believe it actually begins in this life, and centres on our relationship with God. I believe this begins here and now; it then continues through some intermediate state and grows to fruition in the final vision of God – that is the full enjoyment of our closer presence to God. (I grant that

any suggestion of 'growth' also appears to imply some sort of time factor – if only because within our present earthly experience, growth and time seem inextricably interlocked. We simply do not know the mechanics of growth in the hereafter, and therefore we don't possess either language or the thought forms capable of expressing it.) This is yet another aspect of attempting to describe the indescribable!

Because of this basic difficulty, many have attempted to try and describe certain aspects of the timeless hereafter in illustrations which mortals can understand. Hence we are presented with images of Judgement very much in terms of an earthly court of law. Personally I have no doubt whatever about the reality of Judgement: however, I do not think that the picture-language of the courtroom (coupled with its counsels for the prosecution and counsels for the defence and all the rest of earthly legal paraphernalia) is really helpful. My personal conviction about judgement in the hereafter is that we shall each of us be shown ourselves as God sees us, rather than in the way we like to see ourselves. Since we are all of us sinners to a greater or lesser degree, this may not be an entirely pleasing experience – especially if we have successfully deceived ourselves about ourselves during our earthly existence! And yet we believe in a long-suffering and merciful God – a God who is loving and forgiving (that is, as long as we are willing to accept forgiveness). I suspect that this may constitute a very real problem for any who have been determined persistently to deny even the very existence of God during their time on earth. I can well understand that this could indeed be a painful experience for such folk – though I certainly don't pretend to know.

Again, I believe that religious art has not always been helpful in its admittedly impossible task of trying to picture the timeless life hereafter in this-world terms. Neither art nor intellectual speculation can ever say anything totally meaningful to us about 'eternity' within the parameters of our present earthly experience. Perhaps I may give an illustration. Personally, I believe strongly in the reality of angels as God's messengers. I believe they come sometimes appearing in ordinary human form and sometimes they are purely spiritual beings. However, I am not remotely surprised that many people nowadays do NOT believe in them. Why? – simply because our picture-language is inadequate and misleading. Artists or hymn writers have done us no favours at all by overloading angels with floppy wings, flowing white robes, long golden tresses, crowns and harps [for good measure] – however well-intentioned!

In the long run I believe that life in eternity is one that is unmeasured either by space or time: an existence in which we are enabled to enjoy God because we have shed the sin which at present divides us from him. I believe that eternal or timeless life will bring us the full enjoyment of God. I do not honestly believe that we can either imagine or describe it adequately here 'within time,' and I do not believe it helpful to speculate. I am quite convinced that the symbolic language used in the last book of the New Testament (*The Revelation of St John*) and some other books in the bible is not intended to be taken *literally*, if only because the reality implied is ultimately beyond human expression.

/ I believe

I believe that we shall be totally happy and fulfilled in doing God's will, and that the changelessness which seems so difficult to combine with happiness will become the condition of perfect joy. To put it in St Augustine's most famous words "Our souls are restless till they find their rest in Thee."

PS. It could, of course, be fairly argued that this is something of an 'evasion'. By employing the argument about 'timelessness,' we have introduced an element that is plainly contrary to our limited earthly experience. That is perfectly true. But then equally one might argue that the whole notion of God as Three in One and One in Three also contravenes our normal mathematical understandings both of Unity and Plurality. It is also equally hard to grasp that in the Incarnation Jesus Christ was both Man and God – which normally seem to be at different ends of the spectrum. These intellectual difficulties are real: but simply because they are difficult to grasp, I do not believe that this compromises their reality.

Lent 2010

Winifred and Paul Wilson

The Education Group has again arranged activities for Lent, which begins on 17 February. Two Lent Talks are planned for Saturday mornings, plus the usual range of Lent Groups over the 5 weeks from 22 February to 26 March. **Please sign up on the sheets on the Education notice board in the Hall if you would like to attend the Talks or join a Group.**

Lent Talks: Both talks are at 11.00 in the Hall, with coffee from 10.30, followed by a light lunch provided of soup and rolls.

Saturday 20 February: Revd David Batson – *How we got the New Testament*

Saturday 13 March: Revd Dr Ian Meredith – *Irish explosion in the Scottish Episcopal Church in the 19th century* (Ian is South Ayrshire Team Rector and was Associate Priest in St John's, 2002-6; his PhD thesis on this topic is in the Church Library.)

Lent Groups: *Tuesday mornings* (23 February-23 March) 10.45 (coffee) for 11.00-12.30 in the Church Meeting Room: Olive Burbridge/Winifred Wilson – *York Course When I survey ... Christ's cross and ours.*

Tuesday evenings (23 February-23 March) 7.15pm for 7.30-9.00pm in the Church Meeting Room: Steven Ballard – *Five works of Art.*

Wednesday mornings (24 February-24 March) 11.30-1.00pm (following coffee after Communion) in the Church Choir Vestry: Ann Shukman/Andrew Mackenzie/ Paul Wilson [course to be arranged].

Wednesday evenings (24 February-24 March) 7.30-9.00pm at a home venue to be arranged: Neale Lawson/Andrew Ratnam [course to be arranged].

Further Groups may be arranged. Details of these and of courses not yet decided will be given in the weekly Pew Notes.

Lent Books: A selection of books suitable for personal Lent reading will be on display in the Church Library in the Hall.

Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday 28 March	8.00am	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Godly Play Informal Worship
	11.00am	Sung Eucharist
	6.00pm	Evening Worship
Monday 29 March	8.30am & 5.30pm	Morning & Evening Prayer
	<i>At Morning and Evening Prayer each day, there will be a focus on the events in Jesus' life on that day in Holy Week</i>	
Tuesday 30 March	8.30am & 5.30pm	Morning & Evening Prayer
	6.30pm	Holy Communion
	7.15pm	Stations of the Cross
Wednesday 31 March	8.30am & 5.30pm	Morning & Evening Prayer
	10.30am	Holy Communion <i>Followed by Coffee & Fellowship</i>
Maunday Thursday	8.30am & 5.30pm	Morning & Evening Prayer
	11.30am	Holy Communion at Crichton Chapel
1 April	7.30pm	Institution of Holy Communion
	~ 9.00pm	Stripping of the Altar & Vigil
Good Friday 2 April	8.30am	Morning Prayer
	Noon to 3.00pm	Meditation on the Cross <i>People can come and go during the hymns</i>
	4.45pm	Evening Prayer
	8.30pm	Solemn liturgy of Good Friday including Veneration of the Cross
Saturday 3 April	8.30pm	Candlelit Vigil
	11.00pm	Paschal Vigil Mass
<i>The Candlelit Vigil is complemented by the Dawn Service at 6.00am on Easter Sunday</i>		
<i>The Paschal Vigil Mass is an alternative to these two services</i>		
Easter Sunday 4 April	6.00am	Dawn service, Holy Communion & Breakfast (<i>see note above</i>)
	8.00am	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Sung Eucharist
	6.00pm	Evening Prayer
	<i>Please place a flower on the cross outside the church today</i>	

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Regular weekly/fortnightly/monthly events in St John's

Choir Practice Wednesdays weekly at 6.30pm (*Hall*)
except for Wednesday 17 February & 7 April

Dumfries Fairtrade Group at 7.30pm (*Meeting Room*)
Wednesday 24 February, 24 March & 28 April

Dumfries Flower Club at 7.30pm (*Hall*)
Tuesday 9 February & 13 April

Dumfries Music Club *All concerts will start at 7.30pm prompt*
Friday 12 February - Chaconne Brass
Thursday 4 March - Steven Osborne & Jean Johnson
Friday 26 March - Sharona Joshua & Thomas Guthrie
Saturday 27 March - Sharona Joshua

Fairtrade Stall

Fairtrade foods and crafts on sale between and after Sunday Morning Services
on 7 February, 7 March, 4 April & 2 May

Mothers' Union

Beginning with lunch in the Hall at 1pm unless otherwise stated

Thursday 18 February Speaker: Graham Barrie - 'Tai Chi'

Thursday 18 March Speaker: Pat Duncan - 'Mercy Ships'

Thursday 15 April Speaker: Tom Laird - 'The Survivors'

St John's Fun Quiz Night 7.30pm (*Hall*)

Friday 26 February (see Pew Notices for March date)

YAHAB (Youth Group - Young **A**t Heart **A**nd in **B**ody)

Meet at 4pm on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month in Term Time in the Hall

St John's Vestry

Meetings: 7.30pm in the Meeting Room Tuesday 2 March & 27 April

Focus Meeting: Sunday 7 February at 1pm

Away Day: Saturday 20 March (venue to be confirmed)

St John's Congregation Special General Meetings

Tuesday 23 March 7.30pm - St John's Draft Constitution

Tuesday 18 May 7.30pm - Bells Project

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Special services in St John's 2010

Sunday 14 March Mothering Sunday

Thursday 13 May 7.00pm Galloway Regional Ascension Day Service

Lent, Holy Week & Easter services

Ash Wednesday 17 February

10.30am Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes followed by Coffee & Fellowship

7.30pm Sung Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes

Weekly Lent Bible Study Groups (*week beginning Monday 22 February*)

- see article on page 9 for more details

Holy Week & Easter services - see page 10 for details of all services

Special Events in St John's in 2010

(more details can be found on noticeboards in the Hall)

Shrove Tuesday 16 February 7.30pm onwards, Pancake Party

To be confirmed in the Pew Notices

Saturday 20 February 10.30am (coffee) for 11am followed by light lunch

'How We Got The New Testament' - a talk by David Batson

Saturday 6 March 10am - 4pm

'Feasting on the Word' - Diocesan Training Day for Readers, Eucharistic Assistants & Worship Leaders

Saturday 13 March 10.30am (coffee) for 11am followed by light lunch

'Irish Explosion in the Scottish Episcopal Church in the 19th century' - a talk by Revd Dr Ian Meredith (South Ayrshire Team Rector)

Saturday 20 March

National Organ Players Training Day 10am - 4pm

Christian Aid Lent Lunches with Sales Table - 12 noon - 1.30pm

Friday 19 & 26 February & Friday 5, 12, 19 & 26 March

Christian Aid Week Sunday 9 May - Saturday 15 May

Magazine Deadline

The deadline for the **May/June/July 2010** magazine is **Monday 19 April 2010** but earlier submission would be much appreciated.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

What's Happening In and Around Dumfries Churches in 2010

Fairtrade Fortnight Monday 22 February - Sunday 7 March

For more details see the article on page 17
or visit www.dumfriesfairtrade.org.uk

Dumfries Christian Council

Thursday 25 February 7pm for 7.30pm

Annual General Meeting at YMCA, Castle Street, Dumfries including adoption of new Constitution & Name

Holy Week Evening Services - Monday 29 March - Friday 2 April

full details will be published in March

Good Friday 2 April 10.30am Walk of Witness from Troqueer Parish Church to the Fountain, High Street, Dumfries

Easter Sunday 4 April 8am Sunrise Service at Mill Green by the River Nith in Dumfries followed by breakfast

What's happening in the Wider World in 2010

Saturday 27 February Glasgow & Galloway Diocesan Synod - venue to be announced

Sunday 14 March 6.30pm Mothering Day Evensong - St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow

Thurs-Wed 20-26 May Church of Scotland General Assembly, Edinburgh

Thurs-Sat 10-12 June Scottish Episcopal General Synod, Edinburgh

For further details of all future events, please check the Pew Notices and St John's website (www.stjohnsdumfries.org) each week or contact the Church Office

What are you giving up for Lent?

Robin Paisley

This oft asked question should be accompanied by "What extra devotions will you undertake in Lent?" In this regard I commend the Education Group's courses as detailed on page 9; the Lent books described in the Church Times' article displayed by the church library; and regular Daily Prayer, either at home at a convenient time, or in church as detailed in the middle of page 2.

To give the eleven o'clock Coffee Rota folk a rest, we are giving up organised refreshments after the 11.00am service from 14 February to 11 April, inclusive, with the exception of Mothering Sunday 14 March.

Please use the time to continue to socialise in other ways, reflect on the value of the weekly fellowship to you, and consider volunteering for the Rotas from 18 April.

Certificate in Christian studies

Deirdre Holding

If the title makes it sound too much like formal education with an exam at the end - it's not!

During the Autumn about eight of us met to discuss the first, introductory module of this course. Although it is possible to decide to do the written assignments most of us opted not to, studying the material purely for interest and to enhance our understanding of our Christian faith. The module looked at the text of the Bible and subjects touched upon included the various English translations, the Old Testament as Jewish scripture, the variety of types of literature in the Bible (history, poetry, letters, stories etc), and the different perspectives from which the Bible can be viewed, for example from a social or feminist standpoint. The section on ways of analysing a passage from the Bible gave an unexpected glimpse into how sermons could be constructed!

We enjoyed the first module so much that we have decided to continue with the second module. This looks in more depth at the New Testament. Having had a quick glance at what seems to be the very readable course book provided, this second module promises to be interesting and informative. As someone new to St John's I have also appreciated the opportunity the group gave me to begin to get to know some members of the congregation. I was made to feel very welcome.

On the practical side, we meet at approximately fortnightly intervals for two hours, with a coffee break in the middle. There is some reading to be done beforehand, the two chapters of the course book to be discussed at the meeting. Because each module stands alone one can enter the course at any point. It is not necessary to have done the first module before starting the second.

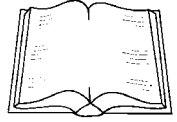
If the idea of exploring Christianity further appeals, do come and join us. Dates for the next meetings are currently being arranged and will appear in the pew notes, or contact Paul Wilson (01387 252696).

Abigail McLellan (Wallace)

from Ruth McLellan

To my many many friends in St Johns, may I thank you most sincerely for all the wonderful cards and letters I received from you all on the sad occasion of Abigail's death. They have been of great comfort to all the family and have helped us greatly at this time. The fact that the Art World has also acknowledged Abigail's wonderful talent means that memories of her will continue for a long time. Thank you for your kindness and support.

The Register



Wedding Blessing

9th January

Ronnie and Madge IRVING (Golden+ anniversary)

Funerals

30th October

Peter Tulip NELSON

20th November

James William PEARSON

19th January

Gladys FAMILTON

Another side of J.M.Barrie

Shirley Starkey

The following passage from J M Barrie's Rectorial Speech on Courage, (St Andrews University, 3rd May, 1922), seems to encompass experiences that come to us now and again and, with the local interest in J M Barrie, shows another side of his interests and character.

"Sometimes beauty boils over and then spirits are abroad. Ages may pass as we look or listen, for time is annihilated. There is a very old legend told me by Nansen the explorer – I like well to be in the company of explorers – the legend of a monk who had wandered into the fields and a lark began to sing. He had never heard a lark before, and he stood there entranced until the bird and its song had become part of the heavens. Then he went back to the monastery and found there a door-keeper whom he did not know and who did not know him. Other monks came, and they were all strangers to him. He told them he was Father Anselm, but that was no help. Finally they looked through the books of the monastery, and these revealed that there had been a Father Anselm there a hundred or more years before. Time had been blotted out while he listened to the lark."

That, I suppose, was a case of beauty boiling over, or a soul boiling over; perhaps the same thing.

SMILE PLEASE

With Valentine's Day in mind: Slippery ice, very thin; pretty girl tumbled in. Saw a boy upon the bank - gave a shriek, and then she sank. Boy on bank heard her shout, jumped right in and helped her out. Now he's hers – very nice; but she had to break the ice.

Service in the restaurant was abysmally slow. The husband was getting very tense, so his wife tried to distract him with small talk. "You know," she said, "our friend Christine should be having her baby anytime now." "Really?" her husband snapped. "She wasn't even pregnant when we walked in here."



ST JOHN'S CHURCH LIBRARY

Winifred Wilson

Last summer, I was asked to take on some of the work of looking after the church library, alongside Steven and Elizabeth Ballard. Since then you may have noticed a few changes in the way the books are displayed and organised, and at present I'm updating the list of holdings. The amended list will eventually appear on the church website, with an indication as to which section of the library to look in for a particular book.



Colin and Sean working on the church library - see below

Richard Starkey has very kindly built some additional shelves to accommodate the taller books and box-files, and give us a bit more room for expansion, and the occasional small display of, for example, books to read during Lent, or new titles.

Of the recent additions to the library, here is a sample:

- *ANDAMENTO*: the journal of the British Association for modern mosaic, vol.3, 2009, with an article about the mosaics we see every time we worship in our church.
- BRUCE, F.F. *The hard sayings of Jesus*
- FRANKLAND, Mark. *Stoppage time*. A novel for young people set in Dumfries
- GAARDER, Jostein. *The Christmas mystery*. An intriguing novel about a magic Advent calendar. Not just for children!
- MOORE, Lucy. *Messy Church and Messy Church 2*. Have a look.
- PEART-BINNS, John S. *Gravitas with a light touch*. This is a new biography of Bishop Ted Luscombe, kindly donated by the subject, and will be of great interest to his many friends here, as well as to anyone interested in the recent history of the Scottish Episcopal Church.
- TAYLOR, Anne. *Background to the Scottish Episcopal Church*. More church history, by our very own author.
- TAYLOR, John V. *The Easter God and his Easter people*. A collection of sermons by the late Bishop Taylor.
- YOUNG, Wm Paul. *The Shack*. A popular new novel.

Since last summer, a young man called Colin has been working with the office staff on a Monday afternoon under the auspices of the Council's Supported Employment Service. Along with his work coach, Sean, Colin does some tidying in the church, and then comes to help me in the library, which he especially enjoys.

If you think you might have some church library books lurking somewhere at home, would you kindly dig them out and return them, to keep our records up-to-date. Thank you very much.

Lastly, lost and found. It's amazing what librarians find in books, but this is a precious photo inscribed: 'After Grace's baptism – wearing the robe Norman (Grafton St) & Stephen were baptised in'.

FAIR TRADE NEWS

Sandra Watson



Fairtrade Fortnight 22 February - 7 March 2010

Dumfries Fairtrade Group will be supporting the Take One Action Film Festival at the Robert Burns Centre Theatre (RBCT) on Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 February.

Take One Action is Scotland's global cinema project inspiring shared solutions to global problems through film & discussion.

- 'HOME' - planet earth filmed from the air in over 50 countries. Discussion: Where do we go from here?
- 'YES MEN FIX THE WORLD' - the Yes Men take up the case of the 1984 Bhopal chemical disaster. Discussion: Building justice out of crisis.
- 'CRUDE' - the epic story of the controversial \$27 billion 'Amazon Chernobyl'. Discussion: cleaning up investment.

As part of the festival a workshop will be held at the Gracefield Arts Centre on Wednesday 24 February 2-5pm to help us discover the power we have to make a difference on global issues. The workshop is free but ticketed, reserve seats through the RBCT booking office. For more details of the film festival see the RBCT programme - copies available at the back of church.

A selection of the entries to our Fair Trade Poster competition, chosen by a panel of judges, will be on display at the RBCT, and members of the public will be invited to vote for their favourite poster.

On Saturday 27 February the Dumfries Fairtrade Group will be in the town centre as part of THE BIG SWAP, encouraging people to swap their usual brand of tea (or coffee) for a Fairtrade brand.

Friday 5 March: Come along to St Andrew's R.C. Church Hall for a fair trade afternoon tea dance with fair trade refreshments.

Saturday 6 March: Traidcraft will have a stall at The Environment Fair at DGOne.

It has been announced that Fairtrade melons will soon be available at both Morrisons and Asda.

St John's fair trade stall will be open in the hall on the first Sunday each month.

MOTHER'S UNION

Margaret Bone



The last two months of 2009 were fairly busy for the MU. On November 17th members travelled to Castle Douglas to attend the Regional Rally. Members from across the Region met for a lovely church service and a waist-expanding lunch provided by CD members. On November 19th we had our usual lunchtime meeting at 1pm. The guest speaker was Rolf Buwert from Fairtrade who gave a very interesting talk about the work the charity does and projects it is involved with. After the talk there was time for some retail therapy when members could purchase items from the Fairtrade stall; this was a good opportunity for some early Christmas shopping. The Christmas party held on December 17th was a departure from normal. We decided to become "Ladies who Lunch" and twenty-eight members enjoyed a very good lunchtime meal at Sinos on English Street.

Now the New Year is here and for our first speakers of 2010 we were delighted to welcome Lizanne and Andrew Mackenzie with a talk entitled "Wanachi Wa Kenya". The Mackenzies were visiting Kenya in 2007 as a return trip for Andrew, who was there as a young minister in the early 1960s, and a first visit for Lizanne. The talk began with Lizanne giving us a humorous travelogue of the country and of the people they met, painting a picture of a land full of contrast, wealth and poverty literally side by side. Noise, confusion and pollution in the cities compared to the vast open peace of the Masai Mara and a friendly welcoming people with a great thirst for education. The talk was illustrated with slides, Andrew proving an adept projectionist. Andrew then spoke about returning to Lavington church, which he had helped build in 1964 (both the bricks and mortar and spiritually) and how it has moved forward with giant strides since then. The church now encompasses three churches, Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian. Three people the Mackenzies met had links with and had visited St John's, here in Dumfries. Andrew hopes to take the links with Lavington Church forward and promote dialogue with St John's with a view to perhaps promoting visits or "twinning" for the mutual benefit of both communities.

On Saturday February 13th at 11am at St Mary's Cathedral Glasgow, a commissioning service will be held for the new MU Scottish President, Hilary Moran, and the Glasgow and Galloway Trustees. Tea and coffee will be available after the Eucharist and commissioning service, anyone

/ attending

attending should please take a packed lunch. More details for transport at MU Eucharist on Feb 4th, or contact Ruth McLellan on 01387-255283.

Looking ahead there will be the usual Eucharist service at 2.30pm on the first Thursday of the month, followed by tea in the hall. For details of the lunchtime meetings and speakers please see "Dates for your Diary" in the magazine.

As usual we extend a warm welcome to anyone wishing to attend any of our meetings.

WOMEN'S AID

Margaret Bone

The MU would like to thank everyone who contributed so generously to WA over the Christmas period and since. Twenty toilet bags, plus miscellaneous gifts were handed over to WA the week before Christmas and were gratefully accepted. The Hostels were busy over the holidays and sadly thirteen children spent Christmas in the refuge. **The WA basket remains in place at the back of the church.**

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN AID

Margaret Morton



At the deadline for this article the earthquake in Haiti is uppermost in many people's minds. Christian Aid already had an office there which was destroyed by the earthquake. Although happily all the staff were safe, they and their colleagues from the local partner agencies are having to deal with their own tragedies as well as co-ordinating disaster assessments and responses.

Christian Aid has already sent £250,000 for emergency relief to help those affected, and hopes to send more. With its partners its priority is sourcing and distributing food, tents, hygiene kits, blankets, jerry cans for water and water purifiers for more than 15,000 people in eight communities. It is targeting areas that are getting little help from other agencies. A further cause for concern is the financial impact of the disaster on Haiti in the future. For 200 years, Haiti has made huge payments on servicing its foreign debt. However, more than \$890m remains, owed mostly to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Inter-America Development Bank. While the World Bank's announcement that it will waive repayments for five years is welcome, Christian Aid and other agencies

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[Text taken from a longer article by Fiona Thomas (MU)]

Catalogues are available from Ruth McLellan, or you can purchase online from www.makeamothersday.org

News from Christian Aid - continued from previous page

take the view that what Haiti needs from the Bank and the IMF is concrete commitment that all its debts will be cancelled in full and that future aid will be a grant and not a loan.

Sadly, at a time of such great need, Christian Aid is not without its own financial problems because of the recession, and has concluded that not all its planned work throughout the world may be able to be funded. Please pray for Daleep Mukerji and his colleagues as they decide what to do - or perhaps, more poignantly, what cannot be done.

November seems a long time ago, but thanks to Getsy Ratnam and her team we had a very enjoyable Indian Meal, the proceeds of which came to over £1150 which we have sent to Christian Aid. This was followed in December by a successful afternoon's carol singing at Homebase, a photo of which was in the Hall. The collection from this with other money received, including Ann Taylor's very generous donation from the sales of her book, has enabled us to send another £570 to support the work.

Looking forward: the Lent Lunches begin on 19th February in the Hall. There will be further information in the pew notices. As this is the last magazine until May, please make a note that Christian Aid Week runs from 9th-15th May. It's not too early to volunteer to collect! I'd love to hear from you.



ST JOHN'S VESTRY

Back row:

Robin Paisley, Kate Lidwell, Linda Scott, Lea Wilson,
William Clark-Maxwell, David Kerr

Front row:

Alicen Byers, Carol Finlay, Christine Ratnam-Roarty,
Alan Reville, Rosie Rutherford

Inset left:

Peter Johnson

Inset right:

Ann Toner