

Rosyth
Methodist Church

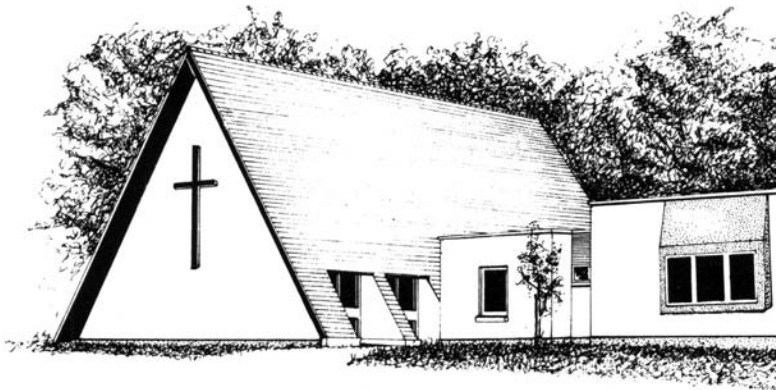
St Margaret's Scottish
Episcopal Church



Contact

the newsletter of the partnership between

Rosyth Methodist Church and
St Margaret's Scottish Episcopal Church



Issue 50

April/May 2010

Rosyth
Methodist Church

Scottish Charity SC028559

St Margaret's Scottish
Episcopal Church

Scottish Charity SC028426

in partnership

Our partnership is formally recognised as a Local Ecumenical Partnership,
with a constitution and Covenant signed on 14 June 2000

Minister:

Rev Eric Potts 01383 851373

Supernumerary Minister:

Rev Malcolm Trew 01383 420949

Senior Steward:

David Salthouse 01383 889212

Pastoral Secretary:

Gwyneth Kirby 01383 624779

Treasurer:

Howard Kirby 01383 624779

Rector:

Rev Tim Bennison 01383 720532

Associate Minister:

Rev Ross Kennedy 01383 625887

Vestry Secretary:

Sandra Young 01383 415021

Treasurer:

Alan Taylor 01383 823902

our regular pattern of worship

Sundays (except 4th)

9.30am Episcopalian Sung Eucharist
(occasionally 9.15am – see diary pages for details)

11.00am Methodist Morning Worship
(including Sunday School)

2nd Sundays: for the Young Church

9.00am Breakfast and “Sunday Funday”

11.00am All-age service

4th Sundays: Worship together

11.00am Joint Communion Service

6.00pm “Sunday@Six”

Quiet space: our premises are busy with a variety of activities throughout the week, but the sanctuary is open for quietness, prayer and reflection on **Thursdays 2.00–3.00pm.**

Our postal address is Queensferry Road, Rosyth, Dunfermline, KY11 2JH, and you'll find us at the junction of Queensferry Road and Woodside Avenue. The car park is behind the church, and limited local on-street parking is available, but there is lots more space in the parking area at the junction with Park Road.

An Easter message

from the Reverend Eric Potts

Normally I would write my own pastoral letter for this edition. The theme would be Easter. It would be about sacrifice and resurrection, the way of Christ and the way of Christians. However this time I want to approach that theme differently.

In recent weeks you may have seen some parts of the press getting into quite a stushie, as a result of an address by the President of the Methodist Conference to the General Synod of the Church of England. In it David Gamble indicated that the Methodist Church was quite prepared to die, in the interest of the resurrection of the Church in a new form, in order to do God's work in our new age.

This was actually one short passage at the end of a long speech, but it seems to have caused some consternation. So the

President, together with the Vice President and the General Secretary, has issued a letter to all the Methodist people. But it is relevant to all of us here, Methodists and Episcopalians alike. It speaks of the needs of our age, and the way in which we all need to respond, and to be open to whatever God is calling us to do and to be.

In that sense it is truly an Easter message. So I am going to stop now and allow you to read it for yourself. It has been abridged slightly, but I hope you will find it encouraging and stimulating. The main point is this:

We are prepared to change, if necessary to die. Is the rest of the Christian Church also willing to risk its life for the sake of the Gospel?

A pastoral letter

from leaders of the Methodist Conference

Is there still a role for Methodism? Yes!

And are we yet alive? Our answer, despite some recent press speculation to the contrary, is a resounding "Yes!". We have seen the evidence in various ways through our complementary roles. As president and vice-president we have represented the care, oversight, authority and support of the Conference as we have visited local churches and situations in different parts of the Connexion. We have seen the Methodist people being faithful, and the Spirit at work in them and through them.

We are all convinced that God is not yet finished with the people called Methodist. We began as a discipleship movement within the wider Church, a society of people seeking holiness and engaging in

worship and mission. In Wesley's time and through succeeding generations we have continually adapted to circumstances to fulfil that calling as effectively as possible. It is still Our Calling today. And mission has never been more needed than it is now.

We live in a world ravaged by war and poverty, and torn apart by questions of how we care for the natural environment and the morality of financial systems. We live in a world where people need to hear the word of God in a language they can understand, where they need to see the love of God through people like us and experience it as good news for themselves. We live in a world where not enough people are being attracted and formed into disciples of Jesus Christ, responding to the promptings of the Spirit.

We believe that God has a role for us in this mission, and we are increasingly embracing it. We have about 265,000 “card-carrying” members, and that number has been decreasing because of the age profile of our members. But more churches are making more members each year; a quarter of our churches are growing; the numbers worshipping with us on Sundays and, increasingly, mid-week is rising; fresh expressions are starting to flourish; we have regular contact with over 800,000 people; and we are part of a growing world-wide Methodist communion of over 70 million. There is a growing self-confidence amongst us, accompanied by an appropriate humility about ourselves, and a releasing of energy for mission.

But we belong to a wider Church of all Christians

But we are not the whole of the Church, and we cannot do it all by ourselves. So we have voted consistently over the years for unity schemes that are designed to increase the whole Church’s effectiveness in mission. This is not a death wish, but a desire to be obedient and a willingness to be transformed. We can countenance ceasing to exist as a separate Church because we know that we will still be the Methodist people within a wider Church.

As our major statement put it in 1999 “the British Methodist Church may cease to exist as a separate Church entity during the twenty-first century, if continuing progress towards Christian unity is made”. Methodism will still contribute some of the riches of its own distinctive history and mission to any future Church. We know from that history that we can be the Methodist people either in our own separate Church or in some wider expression of the universal Church.

Helping to create a wider expression of the universal Church and becoming part of it will require not just us but other Churches to be prepared to move forward together and to leave some things behind in the process for the sake of the Kingdom. So it is not a question of Methodists being submerged or absorbed in the Church of England or any of our other partners. It is not a matter of Methodists returning to the Anglican fold, but of seeing whether together we are prepared to become a “new fold”.

This is not just true of our relationship with the Church of England. We have also signed recently a partnership with other Churches in Scotland. We have many local partnerships with other Churches, the United Reformed Church in particular. And we are all part of wider denominational groupings. For example, the world-wide Methodist communion is over 70 million strong and the world wide Anglican communion about 78 million. Both are faced with questions of how they cohere in the 21st century, and how they deal with situations where there are competing and even contradictory convictions within them. In addressing these we have a lot to share with each other.

When we addressed the General Synod what we were saying was that Methodists have always been committed to unity in order to create greater effectiveness in worship and mission. We said that thinking like this comes naturally from our spirituality. We approach our Covenant with the Church of England in the light of the Covenant Service in our Worship Book which we pray each year. We were gently but urgently asking the General Synod whether the Church of England was prepared to make the same commitment

and allow itself to be transformed for the sake of the gospel. And what we say to the Church of England we say to our other partners.

Looking to the future

So what happens if other Churches are not prepared to be changed in order to become more effective in mission with us? Rather than being groups of Methodist people in a new and wider Church, we shall continue as a Methodist people in a separate Methodist Church faithfully trusting in God's continuing leading of us. We could do that, and we currently do. But even as a separate Church we shall have to continue with our commitment to co-operate with others in mission wherever possible and to whatever extent it is possible.

We have found the Methodist people in good heart, and an increasing sense of the energy of God's love being released amongst us. We are a people of one book, the Bible. We allow the gospel to both comfort and challenge us. We let the love of God both confirm and transform us in the body of Christ through the Spirit.

We are yet alive. We shall be alive in the future in whatever form God wills. God has not finished with us yet!

Rev David Gamble, President
Dr Richard M Vautrey, Vice-President
Rev Dr Martyn D Atkins,
General Secretary

Celebrating our partnership: Our Agape Supper

St Margaret's and Rosyth Methodist Church have been in partnership for ten years this June. Our LEP has flourished. It bears evident witness to our life together in Christ and we have honoured and fulfilled the Covenant signed on 14 June 2000 as best we can. Our partnership is recognised by the Sponsoring Body for LEPs as an example to all, as Rev Lily Twist reminded us when she conducted the Methodist service here on 21 March.

It is fitting that we should join together to give thanks to the Lord as we celebrate ten happy years with an Agape Supper at **6.00pm on Sunday 23 May**. Agape is a Greek word translated in the New Testament as "love" or "charity". The name agape was also given to an early Christian evening communal meal held in connection with the Lord's Supper. You will hear more about the arrangements shortly. Meanwhile, we invite you to make a note of this important date and join us as we look back on ten happy years and look forward to the next ten.

ἀγάπη

Ed: This event was originally planned for June, but has been brought forward. However, the new date is even more appropriate, because on that Sunday we celebrate Pentecost, when the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit and "about three thousand were added to their number that day".

The LEP will be the focus of our next issue, due out the following week.

Queen's Scout Award

by Stuart Fowell, Group Scout Leader

The Scout Group held a ceremony on 2 March for Explorer Scout Stuart Hamilton to be presented with his Queen's Scout Award by the Deputy Lieutenant of Fife.

This Award is the highest that can be gained in the Scout Movement. For Stuart, the presentation was the culmination of several years of sustained effort to qualify in a variety of activities. He has been a Young Leader with the Cub Pack for the past three years, has been on international Scout camps, participated in several conservation projects in various parts of Scotland over the past four years, and undertaken several adventurous expeditions including walking the West Highland Way. Stuart has taken up the sport of Water Polo as his choice of physical training and is a regular player in the Dunfermline Water Polo team. He has also qualified in handling power boats in the open sea.

In his capacity as Deputy Lieutenant of Fife and Her Majesty's local representative, Mr Graham Bennet presented Stuart with a Royal Certificate signed personally by the Queen and bearing the inscription:

"As a Queen's Scout you have prepared yourself for service to God and other people, and have shown yourself a worthy Member of the worldwide Scout Movement. I wish you God-speed on your journey through life; may it prove for you a joyous adventure."

Elizabeth R



Graham Bennet presenting the award certificate to Stuart Hamilton

The award was made in the presence of Stuart's family and friends, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, Scout Leaders from the local area, the Minister and representatives of the Methodist Church community, and Scout Commissioners from Scottish Headquarters and the Eastern Scottish region. Stuart gave an illustrated presentation on his journey to Queen's Scout, which was warmly appreciated by his audience.

It is every Queen Scout's privilege to be chosen to attend the annual National Scout Service and St George's Day Parade, which will be attended by either the Queen or a member of the Royal Family, at Windsor Castle on the Sunday in April nearest to St George's Day. Stuart will travel to London in a few weeks time, visit some of the attractions, and receive some formal parade training and instruction before joining in the parade with the Scottish Scout contingent. It will be a unique experience for him and we are sure that he will enjoy every minute of it.

Desmond Lloyd

28 February 1919–6 March 2010



Our dear friend Desmond passed away peacefully at home on the evening of Saturday 6 March 2010. He was the husband of Marjorie Lloyd, a very faithful member of St Margaret's and St Andrew & St George's Churches for most of her life.

Marjorie died on 25 June 2005. Desmond picked up after some months, but missed her dreadfully as they had been married for 58 years.

Despite several bouts of ill-health, he was able to celebrate his 90th birthday in 2009 with a large family gathering at the Pitbauchlie House Hotel. Both Betty Terry and myself were delighted to be invited to join them.

Desmond was Treasurer of the local Christian Aid Committee for many years. Many people will remember Des and Marjorie running the bookstall during the week-long Sale for Christian Aid held in Rosyth Parish Church. He had a profound knowledge of the books, and literature in general – he could spin many a good yarn, too. He also had the gift of selling a book to anyone who showed the slightest interest!

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him – family, friends, Dockyard colleagues, Probus Club and St John & St Columba's RC Church, of which he was a long and faithful member.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Lesley Yellowlees

If you hear items of news concerning members of the fellowship, whether for information, for rejoicing, or to inform our prayers, please let the Editor know, and please *don't* assume that someone else will!

To PHEME

Jack Fowell remembers...

It was in the early 1940s that my family and I came to live in Rosyth and we went to the local Methodist Church, then in Parkgate, where we soon enjoyed the fellowship of the congregation, among whom was one PHEME HUTCHISON.

PHEME was a very gracious lady who preferred to be in the background. She did not want to “cause a fuss”, as she would say, and yet, there she was, the leading soprano and soprano soloist in the church choir, and also leader of the primary department of the Sunday School, later known as Beginners’ Department.

She was a working mum, and worked in the Dockyard Finance Department at St Leonards until a new Finance Building was built within the Dockyard, when she and her colleagues moved to the new building. Many people worked in that building, and most of them knew PHEME because of her helpful and friendly disposition.

On the day that PHEME died (25 January 2010), the text on my calendar read: “A good name is more desirable than great riches” (Proverbs 22.1), and PHEME carried a good name all her life. I am certain that she will already have heard those words of our Lord: “Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy lord”.



Opportunities to help Christian Aid

We start off with our annual Daffodil Tea at the Parish Church on **Tuesday 13 April** from 2.00 until 4.00pm. Hopefully by then the daffodils will be blooming! There will be a Traidcraft Stall at which you can stock up with various goodies.

Tickets will be available at the beginning of April, when you will also be able to buy the annual quiz – this year’s subject is “Occupations and Professions”.

Christian Aid week runs from **9–15 May**, and on **Thursday 13 May** in the Parish Church Hall there is to be a concert by the choirs of the different Primary Schools in Rosyth. All the children involved were eager to put on this concert, so please support them.

The list of house-to-house collectors could do with more volunteers, so please offer to do your own street or at least part of it.

Ron and Mary Dempster

Life-long friends

PHEME HUTCHISON AND EMMA SMITH

In 1998 we were about to set off for our second holiday in Vancouver to stay with a friend of Mary's, when by chance Mary got talking to PHEME who was interested to hear where we were going on holiday. Mary said that we were off to Vancouver in two or three days time, and PHEME immediately said that her best friend, Emma Smith, to whom she had been writing for about 50 years, lived there. Both used to sing in the Methodist Church choir from the time they were teenagers, and Emma's mother was the Church organist - we think her surname was Muir or Milne and they lived in Pinkerton Place in Rosyth.

Mary said "Give me her address and I am sure that Jean will figure out where it is. After all there are only about 3 million people who live in the Greater Vancouver area!" We mentioned it to Jean and it turned out to be in a Senior Citizens apartment block where her sister Lucy stayed. When we spoke to Lucy she said that Emma lived downstairs from her and that they were in the same bridge-playing group. Not only that, but Emma had lived in Broughty Ferry in a housing area that both Ron and Mary knew well.

We visited Emma and what a delightful lady she was - just quiet and gentle like PHEME. We visited her a few times during our stay in Vancouver and named many faces in her photograph albums from Broughty which amused all of us. One picture was of her three daughters taken just before they left Scotland for Canada in 1957 and Mary recognized her daughter Wilma. We also discovered that Emma's brother-in-law was a friend of ours who lived in Newmills.

We kept in touch with Emma and often compared bits of news with PHEME. We were back in Vancouver in 2006 and visited Emma at the Residential Care Home where she now lives. She took a while before she remembered who we were, and then she enjoyed hearing about PHEME and her family. We had several visits to her and even managed to take her out for lunch along with her granddaughter, Jennifer.

We do not write to her now, as she is nearly blind and in very poor health, but we keep in touch with one of her daughters and sometimes with Jennifer. This friendship that these two lovely ladies had was wonderful, and we were so pleased to be able to share some of it with them and to bring them a little closer with the help of Ron's camcorder.

Ron and Mary Dempster



Emma with one of her great-grandchildren

From our readers

Thank you

Being jointly awarded MBEs recently impacted shock and surprise on us.

Since then we have been overwhelmed by so many good wishes and congratulations from yourselves and others.

It was never our intention to strive for such recognition, but we accepted the forthcoming award on behalf of all our dancing and other friends for their wonderful support and encouragement. Without them, we could never have helped to such a degree those very disadvantaged children and families associated with Scotland's Children's Hospices and Paget's Disease research among others.

The work carries on regardless because, if you believe that all scripture is inspired by God, then we have to:

- 1 Treat others as we would wish to be treated
- 2 "What you do to the least of mine, you do unto me", and also
- 3 Use our God-gifted talents, two of which for us are dancing and baking.

So we thank you very much, and also for your time and patience in reading this.

Thelma and David Couch

Good home wanted ...

... for a piano! The case is a bit battered, but it stays in tune, and would be ideal for a beginner – much better than a keyboard. Only a nominal charge (for Church funds), but the buyer needs to uplift.

If this appeals to you, talk to Myra Tarr (01383 723989) or drop her an email at myra@mtarr.co.uk

Charities

... and the greatest of these is charity.

When a giant disaster occurs, or a big appeal is mounted, people respond most generously, and this is good, for it shows that there is still much kindness and concern for others in humanity.

Yet it appears that many of the smaller charities, lacking in TV or charismatic appeal, are losing money, and this is tragic.

Let us consider what some of these small charities do. Health charities fund research into diseases and conditions that cannot find money from official sources, children's charities look after helpless children who would otherwise die on the streets, and animal charities look after rejected animals. These and other causes exist mainly because of generous donors.

Please give generously to these small charities. They need help as much as, or more so, than bigger causes.

Audrie Pollard

Unkind words

When unkind words are said in anger,

The hurt is hard to bear;

Life becomes intolerable

As we weep in our deep despair.

Sleep is no longer possible,

For worry tortures the mind;

So we seek a happy solution,

That will never be easy to find.

Unkind words that are said in anger,
Can only cause heartache and pain;
And all of our plans for happiness,
in the end, will have just been in vain.

So we must think before we speak,
And let our words be soft and kind;

Be gentle in our attitudes,

Then we can live in peace of mind.

submitted by Thelma Couch

World Day of Prayer 2010

a report by Mary Kidd

The World Day of Prayer is a world-wide ecumenical movement organised by women, but men and children are also cordially invited to be involved. It is a movement for everyone, and brings together women of various races, cultures and traditions in closer fellowship, understanding and action. It aims to help Christians learn from other countries in order that their faith may be enriched. There is a blessing too, in doing things together, especially at a local level.



This year's service, on 5 March, was written by the women of Cameroon, and entitled "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!" Our local service was held at St. Peter-in-Chains Church, Inverkeithing, and was very well supported. There was praise and reflection on Psalm 150 from the perspective of Cameroon, and from our own country. We praised God for the precious gift of life. It was good to meet our friends from the other churches in Rosyth, Inverkeithing and North Queensferry. Each year there seems to be a reunion with friends and fellow worshippers, and a genuine, prayerful concern for the nation that has written the service. Our own St Margaret's Church will be hosting the service in March 2011. More about this later.

Next year's service, whose preparation is nearing completion, has been written by the women of Chile. On the theme "How many loaves have you?" the women of WDP Chile describe times of crisis in Chile's history, and how the people of Chile found in their faith the strength to work together and to share what they had. We have heard recently of the dreadful earthquake there, so this theme has its newest expression as they cope with the consequences of the devastation. Ivonne Pereira, the President of the Methodist Women's Organization, in Santiago, the capital, has said: "The help we as women will be able to give will be very important to get up and help to lift up others, but the most important thing is to remain united in prayer, so that God will give strength to confront this situation in our country in a civilised way, in peace and with a strong sense of solidarity".

The activities of WDP in Scotland are directed and promoted by the Scottish Committee who meet regularly throughout the year at 121 George Street and produce the resources for the annual service which takes place on the first Friday in March. In my first year as your Methodist representative I have enjoyed being a part of this organisation and getting "to know the ropes"!

If you are interested in this world-wide movement, some lovely resources are available for download from our web site at <http://www.wdpScotland.org.uk>. These feature all aspects of the service and include colourful artwork. As well as preparing the service, we also support societies that give physical or spiritual help, and give to a Christian organisation assisting people affected by HIV/AIDS in Cameroon. A donation this year was also made to an Appeal for Haiti.

The Wednesday Fellowship

a report from Mary Kidd

The Wednesday Fellowship is flourishing, and for many of the members the meeting is the highlight of their week. This was brought to mind one Wednesday when we had to cancel at short notice because it snowed for most of the day!

One of the pictures was taken during a highly enjoyable Games Afternoon, a new enterprise for us. Eve Denning very bravely took on Malcolm Trew at draughts; domino players are May Hopper, Audrie Pollard, Norah Lauder and Marion Marshall.



Another week we enjoyed immensely listening to the eight records which Dennis Cook requested as his "Desert Island Discs". Thanks are due to our Editor who transferred all eight pieces of music on to one CD to make life easier for our castaway and the Bose operator. Where would we be without such modern technology?

More recently, on 17 March, our own Alan Taylor (who else?) led us in a Celebration of Saint Patrick and Ireland. He charmed us all! This coincided with the birthday of one of our members, Nessie Corbett, formerly of Jack's Retirement Fellowship, who was celebrating her birthday. See the photo opposite of Nessie with Alan Taylor!

Everyone is welcome to come and share our Fellowship, even if it's only for an occasional visit. We look forward to hearing more about CHAS which we, as a Church, have supported for a long time. I can also recommend an afternoon of learning more about Crime Prevention in our homes and the Community. Please see the diary and notice board for details and dates.

The life of St Patrick

Alan Taylor's yarn, as told to the Wednesday Fellowship on St Patrick's Day, 17 March

Patrick was born in Roman Britain in 387AD, at Banna Venta Berniae, a location otherwise unknown, but possibly in Wales. Some accounts of his life even say he was born near Dumbarton. His father was a deacon and his grandfather was a priest.

When he was about sixteen, Patrick was captured by Irish raiders and carried off as a slave to Ireland, probably landing in the vicinity of Strangford Lough. He was sold to a chieftain named Milchu in Dalriada, a territory of the present county of Antrim,

where he worked as a herdsman on Slemish Mountain in modern Northern Ireland, remaining a captive for six years. He writes that his faith grew in captivity, and that he prayed daily. After six years he heard a voice telling him that he would soon go home, and later that his ship was ready. Fleeing his master, he travelled to a port, probably Westport, two hundred miles away he says, where he found a ship and, after various adventures, returned home to his family, now in his early twenties.

Patrick recounts that he had a vision a few years after returning home:

I saw a man coming, as it were from Ireland. His name was Victoricus, and he carried many letters, and he gave me one of them. I read the heading: "The Voice of the Irish". As I began the letter, I imagined in that moment that I heard the voice of those very people who were near the wood of Focluth, which is beside the western sea, and they cried out, as with one voice: "We appeal to you, holy servant boy, to come and walk among us".

After entering the Church and being trained in the priesthood in France for about 15 years, Patrick returned to Ireland as an ordained bishop in the north and west of the island.

Something can be seen of his mission from his writings. He says that he "baptised thousands of people". He ordained priests to lead the new Christian communities. He converted wealthy women, some of whom became nuns in the face of family opposition. He also met with the sons of kings, converting them too.

Patrick's position as a foreigner in Ireland was not an easy one. He was opposed by the druids, who captured him and his companions on twelve different occasions, putting him to trial, from whence he was released through God's providence.

Patrick died at Saul on 17 March in AD460, a date accepted by most modern historians. He is said to be buried on a nearby hill which later became the site of Down Cathedral in Downpatrick, alongside St Brigid and St Columba, although this has never been proven.

Of course, there is much in legend about St Patrick. I suppose the most popular is that he banished snakes from Ireland,

and if you look closely at many statues of St Patrick you can see that he is treading on snakes, though scholars would say that there were no snakes in Ireland after the Ice Age. Some would also say that the snake was the symbol of the druids, and it was these he banished from Ireland.

But perhaps the most delightful is the story of the shamrock, which credits Patrick with teaching the Irish about the concept of the Trinity by showing people the shamrock, a three-leaved clover, using it to highlight the Christian belief of "three divine persons in the one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit".

Another delightful story concerns his ashwood walking stick. He was in the habit of sticking this into the ground wherever he stopped on his evangelising journeys. It is said that, at the place now known as Aspatia (Patrick's ash), the message of the gospel took so long to get through to the people that the stick had taken root by the time he was ready to move on!

St Patrick is one of the world's most popular saints – but then he comes from Ireland, the Land of Saints.



Music corner

West Gallery Music

Do you remember last November's Sunday@Six, when Sue Masson led our St Cecilia Praise, and enjoying music with a Georgian flavour with voices and instruments? If so, you may be interested in an event being held by the West Gallery Music Association on **Saturday 10 April**.

Led by Mike Bailey, the workshop is at Eyemouth United Church, Albert Road, Eyemouth and runs from 9.30am-4.30pm, followed at 5.15pm by a short informal free concert, and finishing around 6.00pm.

The charge of £6 (£5 concessions) includes the cost of music and break refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits); for lunch, you can bring a packed lunch to share, or there are plenty of eating-places nearby.

All singers and/or instrumentalists are welcome, and you don't have to be a member of the WGMA. Some of the St Margaret's choir hope to be there. If you are interested, please get in touch with Sue Masson as soon as possible.

A big sing!

On the evening of **Wednesday 2 June**, Stuart Muir, a pastoral musician at St Paul's Cathedral in Dundee, is offering a Workshop on Music for Worship to encourage us to use new and more vibrant music (hymns; communion settings...). Stuart has already presented two such workshops in our Diocese, which were very popular, and introduced the worship music at the last two clergy conferences. Everyone is welcome - you don't have to be an organist or choir member! Details later, but put it in your diaries now.

As "Casting the Net" expresses it, the first Mark of Mission is "Worship that renews and inspires"!

Praise Gathering 2010

After 25 years in Glasgow, Praise Gathering is coming to Edinburgh this summer!

Having received encouragement from local churches, and the support of Origin Scotland, a new 400-voice Edinburgh choir will be formed to sing in the Usher Hall on **19 June**. Ian Watson, the Choir Director asks particularly that churches encourage singers to join the Edinburgh choir.

The commitment involves ten rehearsals on Tuesday evenings from 13 April onwards, held in Davidson's Mains Parish Church. Details of rehearsal dates and how to register are on the Praise Gathering web site <http://www.praisegathering.org.uk>.

Other resources can be downloaded from the web site, and a DVD that includes a music sampler is available to borrow from Sandra Young.

Off-duty ecumenism!

A number of you will have enjoyed the recent Dunfermline Gilbert and Sullivan Society production of "The Sorcerer".

Seen behind the scenes are four stalwarts from our congregations:



left to right: Martin Tarr, Mary Kidd, Gwyneth Kirby and Jock Headden

We'll all be pleased to sell you tickets for our summer concerts on 11 June and 25 June!

Invitations and requests

Today's visitors!

At 4.00pm on **Sunday 28 March**, we will receive a visit from two serving deacons for conversation and a presentation on the role of the ministry in the Diaconate orders. Members of Kirkcaldy Methodist church will attend, as will Rev Andrew Letby and Sarah McDowall (our appointed deacon). All are invited to come along and learn more about this ministry that will affect us from September. Refreshments will be served.

Work Day

The Property Committee has arranged a work day on **Wednesday 7 April** (during the Easter holidays) mainly to finish off some re-decoration in the sanctuary but also, weather permitting, to do some outside maintenance jobs, such as cleaning gutters. If you are able to help, please speak to Martin Rogers.

Recognition Service

On **Sunday 4 April** at 6.30pm there will be a Local Preachers and Youth Workers Recognition Service at CEMC (Leith) led by Rev Andrew Letby, at which Will Carroll and Nicola Hilmy Jones will be formally recognised as Local Preachers.

Rosyth Garden City Association

The Association's annual event will be held in the Parish Church from **Saturday 24 April to Saturday 1 May**. The theme is "Shopping through time" but with a particular emphasis on the 1950s. We are attempting to gather together some artefacts from that era in order to give an idea of what shopping was like then. If anyone has items which might be useful, and is willing to lend them for the event, please speak to Martin Rogers.

Calling all knitters!

A new group called "Knit and Natter, Craft and Chatter" is now running at Viewfield Centre Coffee Shop (behind Viewfield Baptist Church, Dunfermline) on Thursday mornings from 10.00–12.00am. It is an opportunity to join together with like-minded folk to enjoy a cuppa and have a chat. You can bring your own knitting or help out by knitting items for charity such as hats, scarves, vests, and jumpers. Some weeks we will be making cards and you will be able to be creative or share your own ideas. Please feel free just to turn up or, if you would like more information, contact Lin Cannon on 01383 730693.

The charities being supported are the shoebox appeal "Operation Christmas Child" run by Samaritan's Purse (<http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk>) and Tools With A Mission (TWAM) (<http://www.twam.co.uk>).

For "Operation Christmas Child", the group are knitting hats, scarves, mitts, gloves, and puppet gloves in the shape of clowns and teddies; for TWAM they are producing baby vests and three types of children's jumpers. All patterns are provided, but the group would appreciate donations of wool (even small amounts) and needles.

Save early for Christmas

"Operation Christmas Child" runs through the year, and the items suggested for collection are:

April/August	soft toys
May/September	pencil sharpeners
June	facecloths and notebooks
July	soap and toothpaste
October	hats, gloves, mitts and scarves

Edinburgh 2010

As we approach the centenary of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, which marked the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement, we are invited to remember, celebrate and be inspired by God's call to mission – to witness to Christ today.

From 2–6 June, 250 church and mission leaders from all over the world will gather in Edinburgh as a culmination of 10 years global conversation – to address how the Church can be more effective in the 21st century. On the theme “Witnessing to Christ today”, and focussing on nine major themes, delegates will meet to share stories of how mission is taking place across the globe.

Edinburgh's celebration of Mission will be held on Sunday 6 June – the culmination of the Edinburgh Conference. Churches in Britain and Ireland are invited to hold their own local celebration of joy, thanksgiving and commitment, and we plan to celebrate the occasion at our **Sunday@Six service on 27 June**. There will be more details in the next Contact, but please note the date in your diary now.

Edinburgh Marathon

On **Sunday 23 May** a number of people, including Geoffrey Baines will be running the Edinburgh Marathon in aid of Leith Acorn Centre YMCA. If you would like to sponsor Geoffrey, please speak to him directly or go to <http://www.justgiving.com/geoffrey-baines>.

Also, if you are able to help with the event, please contact the Leith Acorn Centre YMCA on 0131 553 7877.

Tesco vouchers wanted



Last year Tesco supplied materials and equipment worth an incredible £13.4 million to schools and clubs, and you can help Brambles, our resident playgroup, get a slice of the action . . . unfortunately their play shop doesn't issue them!



But please remember that you can only collect vouchers until 9 May.

Action For Children (NCH)

Keep the date free ...

Saturday 3 July

Cream Tea

at the home of Jean Hall
6 The Willows, Cairneyhill
Tickets £3 available in May

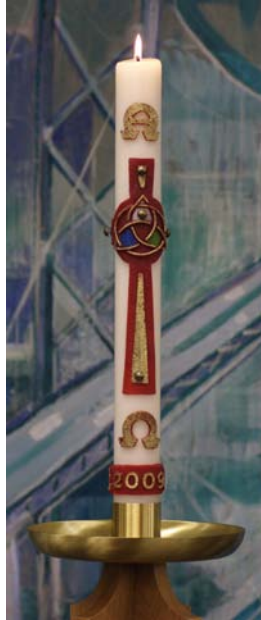
Share your invitations and requests with our readers, preferably by email to martin@mtarr.co.uk

And we're always looking for "Letters to the Editor" and inspirational material of all kinds ...

Our Paschal candle

by Sandra Young

The Paschal or Easter candle is an ancient symbol of the risen Christ and commonly used in churches during the Fifty Days of Easter. It is a very large white candle, the largest and tallest of all sanctuary candles. Paschal candles are always inscribed with a cross, the current year, and the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, signifying that the Lord is present in His church now in the present year and forever in eternity.



Sometimes, five grains of incense, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ, are pressed into the arms and centre of the cross with pins or small nails.

The Paschal candle is lighted at an Easter Eve Vigil Service or at the Easter Day service and placed in the sanctuary.



According to ancient liturgical tradition, it shines continuously throughout the Fifty Days until it is finally extinguished on Ascension Day after the reading of the gospel.

After that, it is placed near the font and is lighted at baptisms to remind Christians that in baptism we are crucified and raised with Jesus. The candle is also lighted at Christian funerals as a reminder that those who die in Christ are raised up with Him.

In 2009 for the first time, St Margaret's had a Paschal candle blessed. This was donated by Eve Denning in memory of her late husband Lawrie. The candle was also used by the Methodists and remains in the sanctuary.

It will be replaced by a new one, which will be blessed on Easter Sunday. This year's candle has a modern cross in dark green, with 2010 around the crossover on the cross itself, Alpha and Omega in the traditional top and bottom place, and the five grains of incense. This should "match" the colours in the mural. The candle has been donated by Martin and Sue Forman in memory of Mark Headden, loved and fondly remembered by all.

Ecumenical events in Holy Week

Christ in the heart of Rosyth

The St Columba Group invite you to join in the Labyrinth in the Parish Church: Monday 29 March until Friday 2 April:

- 10.00am–12noon and 2.00–4.00pm
- lunch-times by appointment
- Monday and Tuesday evenings; 6.00–8.00pm

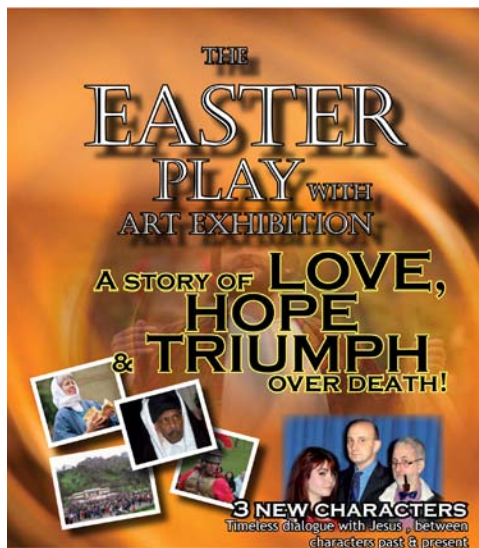
As we explained in the last issue of Contact, the Labyrinth reshapes a 12th Century ritual. Its maze-like path is designed to take people on a symbolic journey, creating space to unwind and think, in particular about our relationships with ourselves, one another, our planet and God. It is designed for young and old alike, and provides a mixture of visuals, words, symbols and media to help guide the traveller. Do join in this unique experience.

Good Friday 'Walk with Jesus' around Rosyth

All are welcome to join in this walk of witness as we remember the holiest of days in the church's calendar. We will meet at St Columba's RC Church at the Crossroads just before 10.00am for this liturgical walk, stopping at various points along the way for a short reading and brief prayer. The walk will finish with coffee and refreshments at the Methodist Church around 11.30am. For those who would like to join in, but are unable to walk, an alternative PowerPoint slide show will be shown in the Methodist Church from 10.00am.

Christ in the heart of Edinburgh

There will be performances of the annual Easter Play at 10.30am and 2.30pm in Princes Street Gardens. This year there will be a modern take on the Easter Story towards the end of the performance, which will show that the message is just as relevant as it always was.



During Holy Week, there will be an exhibition of work by seven artists on the theme "Christ in the Heart of the City". This will be arranged along the top path of the gardens from the Floral Clock.

The Lord Provost, Rev George Grubb, will open the exhibition. Alongside will be art work resulting from an Edinburgh primary schools' competition. If you are in Edinburgh, time will be well spent viewing the exhibition and art work.

More details at <http://www.easterplay.org>

Diary for Holy Week and Easter 2010

- Good Friday 10.00am Rosyth Parish Church Labyrinth
to 12noon (see page 18 for details)
also 2.00pm to 4.00pm
- 10.00am "Walk with Jesus" around Rosyth
begins at St Columba's and finishes at
11.30am at the Methodist Church (see page 18 for details)
- 2.30pm Meditation Rev Malcolm Trew and Mrs Mary Kidd
- Holy Saturday 10.30am Easter Play 2010 in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh
until 2.30pm (see page 18 for article)
- 8.30pm Easter Vigil with the lighting of Paschal Candle
at Holy Trinity Dunfermline

Sunday 4 April

- Easter Sunday **9.15am** Sung Eucharist and lighting of Paschal Candle
- 11.00am Methodist Communion Service Rev Eric Potts
- 6.30pm Local Preachers and Youth Workers Recognition Service
at CEMC (Leith); led by Rev Andrew Letby
(see page 15 for details)
- Wednesday 7 April **all day** Work Day (see page 15 for details)
- 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – CHAS – Alison Rennie

Sunday 11 April

- Low Sunday 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Ross Kennedy
- 11.00am All-age service Mr Laurence P Wareing
(no "Sunday Funday" because of school holidays)
- Tuesday 13 Apr 2.00pm Daffodil Tea for Christian Aid in Rosyth Parish Church
- Wednesday 14 Apr 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Times Past
- Friday 16 Apr 7.00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 18 April

- Easter 3 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison
- 11.00am Morning Worship Rev Eric Potts
- 12.30pm General Church Meeting in the Sanctuary

Diary for April/May 2010

- Tuesday 20 Apr 7.30pm Joint Council/Vestry meeting
8.15pm Council Meeting
- Wednesday 21 Apr 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Rev Gilmour Lilly
- Friday 23 Apr 7.00pm Choir Practice
- Saturday 24 Apr 2.00pm Christian Aid Forth Bridge walk
For more information please contact
Peter Whelpdale on 0131 667 0396

Sunday 25 April

- Easter 4 11.00am Joint Communion Service Rev Andrew Letby
Traidcraft goods on sale after the service
6.00pm Sunday@Six Service – Spring Praise
- Wednesday 28 Apr 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Eric and Gillian Potts
- Friday 30 Apr 7.00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 2 May

- SS Phillip & James 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison
11.00am Morning Worship Professor Morley Sewell
- Wednesday 5 May 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Poetry Please
Mary Kidd and Bill Tulloch
7.30pm St Andrews West Area Council Meeting,
St Columba's Aberdour

Sunday 9 May

- Easter 6 9.00am Breakfast and "Sunday Funday"
9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison
11.00am All-age service Dr Anne Pennington
- Sunday 9 May to Saturday 15 May Christian Aid Week
- Tuesday 11 May 7.30pm Concert by the Woodmill Singers in Carnegie Hall
Tickets £8 available from Marc Tempelhoff or Myra Tarr
- Wednesday 12 May 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Crime Prevention –
Kenny Greig

Diary for Ascension to Trinity 2010

Thursday 13 May

Ascension Day 7.00pm Christian Aid Concert in Rosyth Parish Church involving the Schools

7.30pm Sung Eucharist

Friday 14 May 7.00pm Choir Practice

Saturday 15 May 10.00am "Casting the Net" All-Age Gathering
to 4.00pm St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth
(see page 37 for details)

Sunday 16 May

Sunday after Ascension 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison

11.00am Morning Worship Rev Eric Potts

Wednesday 19 May 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Rosyth Chinese Church

Friday 21 May 7.00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 23 May

Pentecost 11.00am Joint Communion Service Rev Ross Kennedy
Traidcraft goods on sale after the service

6.00pm Sunday@Six: LEP 10th Anniversary Agape supper
(see page 5 for details)

Edinburgh Marathon (see article on page 16)

Wednesday 26 May 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – AGM, Tea and Close of Session
(Meetings resume on Wednesday 8 September)

Thursday 27 May 7.30pm "Spring Serenade"
to Saturday 29 May The Kingdom Singers present a varied selection of work
Music Institute, Carnegie Hall, Dunfermline
Tickets £5, £4 (associate members) Tel 01259 752668

Friday 28 May 7.00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 30 May

Trinity Sunday 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison

11.00am Morning Worship Mr Iain Hampson

Fifty days and fifty nights...

A reminder of the origins of some of our practices from Easter to Pentecost

The fifty days from Easter to Pentecost are traditionally divided into two parts: the forty days till Ascension Day, followed by ten days waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

The season is a glorious celebration of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. During the forty days which followed that first Easter, Jesus appeared to his followers several times. The story of Doubting Thomas, the Apostles fishing all night without success until Jesus told them to cast their net, are well-known reminders of this.

In most churches, the decorations are white or gold. White represents the angel who announced the resurrection, while gold symbolises triumph.

Rogation Sunday is the sixth Sunday of Easter. The name Rogation comes from the Latin word *rogatio*, to intercede, ask or beseech. It is traditionally a time when prayers are made for God's blessing on the land, livestock, seeds and crops in the hope of a good harvest. The Thursday following Rogation Sunday is Ascension Day.

Ascension Day, the 40th day after Easter Sunday, marks the last appearance of Jesus to the disciples after his resurrection. The name 'ascension' comes from the accounts in the Bible in Mark's Gospel and Luke's Gospel that tell of Jesus being taken up into heaven – he ascended. Jesus told his disciples that he would always be with them, and promised them the gift of the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost). At Ascension, Christians celebrate the kingship of Jesus.



Pentecost, celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of flames to the followers of Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, is derived from the Greek for Fifty. The disciples received the Holy Spirit and then began to go out and preach about Jesus. Pentecost, known also as Whitsun, is recognised as the birth of the Christian Church.

The liturgical colour for Pentecost Sunday has historically been red, symbolising the fire of the Holy Spirit.

For Christians, because Pentecost celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit from heaven and the birth of the Church, it is a season of evangelism and outreach.

Ed: We see May out with Trinity Sunday, the first Sunday after Pentecost. This celebrates the Christian doctrine of the Trinity – the three “persons” of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as St Patrick explained with the aid of a shamrock. And Trinity has lots of Sundays *after* it, as we shall see in our next issue!

Back to Church Sunday 2010

a challenge from Rev Eric Potts

In 2009, Back to Church Sunday mobilised around 6,000 churches across the world (4,650 in the UK) to invite their friends to church.

As a result over 80,000 extra people attended church on Back to Church Sunday in the UK alone, with a long-term result of around 10,000 people added to the church in one day.

Back to Church Sunday works in partnership with Traidcraft to ensure that all resources are ethically produced.

Back to Church Sunday began in the Church of England and now takes place in churches across denominations in countries around the world. Our partners include Churches Together in Scotland; the Church in Wales; United Reformed Church; Methodist Church; the Baptist Union of Great Britain; Elim Pentecostal Churches and the Salvation Army. BTCS now operates in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Argentina and continental Europe.

Back to Church Sunday attracts significant media attention as tens of thousands of Christians offer an invitation to their friends, and often the size of a church's congregation is doubled in one day. When this is profiled in the media, personal invitation is encouraged and increased, and a small but significant proportion of people come to church under their own steam with no personal invitation at all.

What church leaders have said:

- In 2008 a young woman came to BTCS. A year later she has helped us to set up a youth group, and is helping lead it. It just takes one new one – a whole load of difference can be made.

- I can't understand why all churches aren't involved; it's such an easy mission opportunity not to be missed.
- 77 people turned up of which about 50 were returning or new!
- I have not seen so many people at St James' before.
- One elderly lady (aged 92!) brought by a church member was quite overcome with the experience of love and acceptance.

This year Back to Church Sunday will be held on 26 September. That may seem a long time ahead but, if we should wish to take part, we may need to start thinking about it now.

There's a lot of information on the web site at <http://www.backtochurch.co.uk>. Why not take a look and, if you think we should be involved, discuss it with other members and ask for it to be on our future agendas, such as that of the joint Vestry and Church Council Meeting on 20 April.

But – this is always important – don't just ask *others* to do something! You need to take action too!

From the BTCS web site home page:



A New Day by Nigel Done

Nigel Done is an Anglican priest and artist living in Somerset

Back to Church Sunday 2010

an invitation from Alan Taylor

Most of us have heard of Back to Church Sunday because it does get quite good media coverage. Well, I wanted to learn more, so I went along to a seminar in the Church of Scotland Headquarters on George Street on 1 March. This was organised by ACTS and was one of two seminars, the other being in Aberdeen. The speaker was Michael Harvey, from BTCS HQ in Manchester, where it all started in 2004, and has since spread worldwide.

The idea is very simple. Individual members of congregations which decide to take part, invite a friend to come to church with them on Back to Church Sunday, which this year is on 26 September. It is that simple!

In 2009, 4,700 churches across the UK took part, with an average of 19 friends or former church members coming to each church. That's almost 90,000 people who wouldn't otherwise have come out to church that day.

Of these, almost 20% are still attending church, so the retention rate is quite good. Slogans like "Come and See" (John 1:39) and "Come As You Are" are used in publicity material.

If we wanted to take part in Back to Church Sunday this year, both Vestry and Church Council would need to agree, probably separately, though it would be nice if both congregations took part together. Registration is required by 15 June, and this costs £20, for which a set of posters (a sample is on St Margaret's notice board), 100 invitations and 100 postcards are supplied. This would be enough for both congregations.

More information is on the BTCS web site <http://www.backtochurch.co.uk>, which even contains three skits on Back to Church Sunday from the popular Armstrong and Miller TV show! And if we decide to take part, I would be pleased to take those interested through a short training session on how to pop the question!

From the BTCS web site



"Come as you are" in action

Back to Church Sunday is now the largest single local-church invitational initiative in the world. It is based on the simplest and shortest step in evangelism - that we should invite someone we already know to something we love; invite our friend to our church. The initial focus was to invite 'back' those who used to attend, but we want to ensure that anyone who doesn't currently attend can be guaranteed a specially warm welcome.

BTCS has grown beyond all expectations since the first one in Greater Manchester in 2004.

Stained glass windows

by Martin Rogers

When I was preparing my historical display for the Church Anniversary, I came across an article about the stained glass windows and thought I would share it with you. The time is August 1959 and the place is our former Church in Parkgate. The Church had recently been given a face-lift inside and out and the final item was the unveiling of three stained glass windows in the recess behind the stage. Miss Jenny Watson, a trustee and long-standing member of the Church (and sister of the late PHEME HUTCHISON) performed the ceremony.



The windows in the Parkgate Church in 1962 with some of the Sunday School in the foreground. Jenny Watson is the lady in the hat second from the right.



The window in September 1969

The person who wrote the article then describes the light streaming through the many-coloured panes in a torrent of rich jewel colours – ruby, emerald, sapphire and amber.

One of the side windows has as its centre the Greek letters Iota, Eta and Sigma, the first three letters of the name Jesus. The other has the first two letters of the name Christ, and Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet declaring that Christ is Lord, the beginning and the end. The centre window has the cross, the symbol of the Christian faith.

When we moved out of the Parkgate Church at the end of 1969, the windows were removed and put in storage. They were later installed in the corridor of our present Church which, at that time, extended across where the coffee bar is today. Interestingly, and no doubt accidentally, the two side windows were transposed when the windows were installed. When the premises were extended in 1981 with the creation of the coffee bar, crush hall, and Rooms 3, 4 and 5 the windows were moved yet again into their present position in the lounge (Room 4) and in the correct order.

In the Parkgate Church, the windows could only be enjoyed by people in the Church. In the corridor of the new Church, they were largely for the benefit of passers-by. In their present location they can be enjoyed by all. Next time you are in Room 4, why not take the time to have a closer look at them and enjoy them!

Ed: If you remember the old days, don't forget Martin's request on page 15 for shopping-related artefacts from the 50s..

Our new font

by Malcolm Trew

Our new font was dedicated by our District Chair, the Rev Lily Twist on Sunday 21 March.



During the last ten years we have added various items of oak furnishings to our church which have been crafted by Mr E Garland. We began in November 2002 with a “Welcome” Table, then followed a glass-topped display cabinet to house a Memorial Book and our audio equipment, then two book cases, all at the back of the church.



Last year we obtained two lecterns, and most recently a Pascal Candle stand for the sanctuary area (**Ed**: see page 17). The stand bears a small engraved plate in memory of former members of the congregation.

All this has been accomplished through a legacy and through the generosity of a number of our present church members. We have opened a “Font Fund” and any contributions, large or small, will be greatly appreciated by our treasurer, Howard Kirby.



The original heavy stone font will be moved to a new home within the next few weeks. This will enable us to reposition the lecterns so that they will be more stable and allow better access to the communion rail.

We also plan other minor adjustments including moving the organ to the opposite side of the sanctuary, which should give us greater flexibility and a more open feel.

Ed: Grateful thanks to Malcolm for all the time and energy he has put into this and the other furnishing projects.

We're listening to you...

a report from David Cochrane and David Salthouse

A questionnaire was made available from September until the end of January 2010 and was designed to gather views from anyone entering the church premises for Church and other activities. A total of sixteen completed forms were returned, but there were no respondents between the ages of 16 and 35 and eight respondents were over the age of 66.

The following is a summary of the feedback as given to the Church Council in February.

From a list of possibilities, the most common reasons for entering the building were regular Sunday services and national events such as Christmas, Armistice.

Asked about the welcome, the majority of respondents considered the Church to be "warmly welcoming".

Some questions were put to elicit views about the layout of the church premises, but these brought no consensus of ideas or comments. Some suggestions about the layout at the front of the sanctuary concurred with plans already being implemented by the Church Council.

The question "Is there anything outside or beyond the church building that you think could be done to help people realise what Rosyth Methodist Church stands for?" returned some constructive suggestions:

- More publicity needed for specific Church events;

- Large outside notice-board to advertise events and let the public get some information about what goes on in the church;
- Use of local web sites where possible;
- Ecumenical use of community centre for events where people would not want to go into a church;
- Efforts made to engage with the Baptist Church in ongoing work (if we have enough folk to do this);
- Perhaps more 'outgoing' events – for instance a Christmas Fair – that involve all the organisations which meet in the church.

Again, some of these are already in place or are in the course of being introduced:

- There is a new notice board outside that passers-by and others may see, but the publicity for events to put on that notice board needs to be generated;
- A new web site is being created for Rosyth Methodist Church which will be linked to St Margaret's and the Edinburgh and Forth Circuit as well as local search sites.

We are keen to address issues raised either from the questionnaire or at any other time, so if anyone would like to discuss their specific point in more detail they should speak to one of the Stewards.

General Election ahead

To help Christians engage with a range of important issues facing our country, whatever party they may decide to vote for in the General Election, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) have produced "Faith in Politics", a document that covers a range of the most important policy areas, with sections on subject background, the main issues, and suggested questions to candidates. Download it at <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/442>.

Ecumenical study

an invitation from Alan Taylor

For the last seven or eight years, maybe longer, an ecumenical group has met at St Columba's Church in South Rosyth to study what the Bible teaches us, mostly through the medium of Group Study Courses. We have come to be known as the St Columba Group – which actually makes a lot of sense. I can't somehow see it being called the St Michael and All Angels Group, but just maybe ...

The Group originally met during Advent and Lent, when meetings were held every Monday evening. A few years ago, we wanted to meet outwith the two main seasons, and so a monthly Monday evening meeting takes place throughout the rest of the year.

Members come from the four main churches in Rosyth: Church of Scotland, Methodist, Roman Catholic and Episcopal. Folk originally came from the Baptist Church also, but that has fallen away in recent years. Maybe we can encourage them to rejoin us?

The Group originally had about 25–30 folk, but we have now stabilised at between 12 and 15, though we attract new members every so often. Three new members have just joined us from the Parish Church.

The format of the evening is very relaxed. We meet at 7.30pm, opening with an act of worship, invariably from the study material. Occasionally one of our members

leads, but it is usually Morag Crawford, the Church of Scotland Deacon, who leads, taking us through the material. We use a lot of symbolism, such as candles at Advent and Lent, but also cloths and other artefacts appropriate to the topic. The material allows for a lot of interaction, and this aspect of our study is very vigorous. Occasionally we break into one or more groups, to pursue different aspects, before gathering again for a sum-up and final act of worship.

The evening usually ends about 9.30pm, but not before a very welcome cup of tea or coffee and some delicacies!!

During this Lent we have been using material from the Just Church organisation, looking at the Churches' Action on Poverty programme. This is a large subject, which we will continue to explore after Lent at our monthly meetings.

We would love to have more new members. So come and meet new friends, renew old acquaintances, take part in modern worship, study material written by dynamic authors and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. For further information, see Lesley Yellowlees, Jack Fowell or me.

And just for good measure, the St Columba Group organises the Labyrinth, first used in Advent 2009. The next Labyrinth, in the parish church in Rosyth, is in Holy Week. That is a real experience!

Ed: At the time of going to press, no dates of future meetings of the St Columba Group were available. Ask Alan, or keep an eye on the weekly notice sheet.

New ways of being Circuit?

a letter from Andrew Letby

Dear friends

One of the questions that has been asked of the Methodist Church across Great Britain in recent times has been – “how can we find new ways of being circuit?” I understand the reasons behind the question, but am not entirely convinced that it is the most immediate question we need to answer. I think the question we actually need to face is “how can we be a circuit at all?” The circuit system is one of the key defining features of Methodism, and provides structure for all that we do. The official definition is: “The Circuit is the primary unit in which Local Churches express and experience their interconnexion in the Body Of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help.”

Our circuit faces challenges of geography and is made up of churches of very different sizes and traditions. In light of that we might feel that we cannot realistically be a circuit in any meaningful sense. I am however keen that the Edinburgh and Forth Circuit is more than an administrative convenience. I believe we can develop a shared sense of purpose and gain support and encouragement for one another. Above all we can share precious resources in a way which moves forward our understanding of sharing in God’s Mission in our communities and beyond. It is the development of these characteristics which I see at the heart of my role as Superintendent.

As I look at all that has happened in the 18 months since I joined the circuit I would say that we are achieving some of this. There have been some hard decisions to make along the way and I am aware that along with my colleagues and the circuit stewards we have challenged the accepted

ways of doing things. This has meant that we have all needed to revisit our historical understanding of how the circuit should be run. From my perspective I want to share a number of the things which have given me confidence that we are moving in the right direction.

One very practical example has been the establishment of the Circuit Office within the Lady Road Manse. This has become a hub for the ministers and other staff, a place of meeting and importantly of prayer. This is particularly true on Tuesday mornings when various meetings occur. These include a regular gathering of the city staff team and my supervision sessions which support Helen Jenkins’ probationer studies, followed by a circuit staff meeting and then a chance for me to have lunch and conversation with one of my colleagues. On other days along with Joanne taking an increasing load of the administration there are small group meetings, pastoral interviews and colleagues from circuit and district using the space to work.

Lady Road is also home to the newly appointed youth worker, Hayley Dunn, who is working amongst the churches and schools in East Lothian alongside a role at the Leith Acorn Centre. Hayley along with Kerry Reilly the manager of the Acorn centre have brought a new dimension to our circuit staff meetings. They are an example of how we need to explore carefully the joint ministry of lay and ordained. Sometimes we get stuck in thinking that only presbyters and deacons can lead and support our churches. Yet, the truth is our lay staff have a vital role in the ministry of the whole people of God, and enhance what can be achieved.

Key to the life of any circuit are those who have responded to the call to be Circuit Stewards. In Edinburgh and Forth we are blessed with an incredibly committed team of stewards who work closely with the staff team. Their courageous and creative decision making has made a massive contribution to the sense of circuit and open collegiality that has developed amongst the ministers.

We cannot afford for individual congregations to believe they can do everything on their own. Together we can be what God asks of us, a living, energetic and spirit led community. We can be a circuit – a circuit that works together in love, the body of Christ in all its constituent parts – living, breathing and working for the Kingdom.

The Diocesan Synod

a report by Alan Taylor

Tim Bennison, Lesley Yellowlees, Betty Terry and I attended the Diocesan Synod in Perth on 13 March 2010. As always, we started the day with the Eucharist in the Cathedral at 9.30am, before formal business at 10.30 – coffee and biscuits in between, of course!

The business of synod is usually quite routine. It takes something like the ordination of female priests to get us excited – but nothing like that this year. We don't even get excited over the budget or how much each congregation has to give to diocesan funds! Self-assessment of Quota is on the way in – good? Possibly? Income and expenditure are £291k, with a budget surplus of just over £3k.

Needless to say, the “Casting the Net” (CTN) initiative always attracts much attention and Bishop David – who as most of you know is now Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church – spent some time on this during his Bishop's Address.

Statistics are often interesting. We have 50 “charges” in the diocese, which includes the Chapels at Glamis Castle and at Blackruthven, and the Chapel at

Glenalmond College, which is an Episcopal school. The number of priests in the diocese has reduced from 42 to 40, with four vacancies.

Some more: we have 5,704 members in the Diocese, which is up a little on the previous year, but total communions in the year are down slightly at 107,539. Isn't that an amazing figure? More later of why communions are down! The number of marriage ceremonies and baptisms is up. And finally there are two women for each man – statistically speaking, of course!!

The Bishop's Address usually encapsulates our year. This time Bishop David did not disappoint, though we started on a sad note this year, recalling the premature death of our dearly loved former Dean, The Very Rev Randal MacAlister, who died in the first year of his retirement. Randal was a great man, very supportive of Bishop David, and from a similar background. I asked Randal once how he came to be so fluent in the Gaelic, expecting him to say “at night school”. His answer was “in the Glens of Antrim”. Says it all.

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In addressing “Casting the Net”, David said that the worst thing is to engender hope, only to bring disappointment. But he went on to say that we have a sacred trust in moving forward, in faithfulness, applying rigour to the processes and exercising hope. Dioceses in England have had encouraging results, so there are precedents for what we are doing and already we can see tentative growth in our diocese.

David said that the process challenges the inner life of our congregations. It challenges the leadership skills of our clergy. It challenges our capacity for change. And it creates individual challenges.

Outwith CTN, David said problems for the church in the current deep, lasting recession pale into insignificance when compared with people who have lost their jobs, lost money and lost self-esteem. David is very people-sensitive, though he did say in his sermon during the Eucharist that he doesn't have much time for tiresome people. Is that not a lesson for us all?

His election to the role of Primus – first among equals – was a great personal responsibility, which brought honour on the diocese as well. However he said that his primary role is to the diocese and in this he is supported by many good people.

In closing, David said that this was a time of opportunity for the Diocese, for Scotland and for the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Probably the most interesting other report came from Canon Val Nellist – whom we all know – when she told us that there is a possibility of a Link with the Diocese of Calcutta, which has 25 full-time stipendiary priests.

And why are there fewer communions? Well, we have a number of new, younger priests, who are stricter in applying the “rules”!

Final throwaway line from Bishop David: “children operate in a critical mass”. Work that one out!

Safeguarding our children

information from Martin Rogers, the Methodist Local Church Safeguarding Officer

Child protection and safeguarding children are expressions which crop up frequently these days. In recent years, legislation has been put in place to try to protect children who are involved in youth activities such as youth clubs, sports clubs, scouts and guides. This mainly centres on the recruitment of leaders requiring them to go through an appointment process which the Disclosure Scotland vetting system. The aim of this is to prevent those adults who are known to have committed

offences against children and young people from being involved in a leadership role in a youth organisation.

The legislation also applies to Churches and the Methodist Church nationally and the Scotland District of the Methodist Church have drawn up procedures and guidelines which local churches are required to follow. In our Church, adults who help with the Sunday Funday and Sunday School have gone or are going through the appointment process as have

leaders and helpers in the Scout Group. In the Guide Movement the requirement to go through the Disclosure Scotland vetting system only applies to new leaders.

Once the latest appointments have been processed, 26 people involved in youth activities in our Church will have gone through the Disclosure system. All our Sunday Funday helpers and Sunday School teachers have been given a booklet containing a Code of Conduct for workers with children and young people and guidance on handling concerns of possible abuse. The Scout and Guide Movements have their own equivalents. As yet, no training on child protection has been offered by the Methodist Church but that is changing and soon there will be training packages both for those working with young people and also for members of Church Councils.

Another ongoing procedure is that people appointed to certain offices, duties and responsibilities in the Church must sign a form confirming that they have not been convicted of or received a formal caution from the police concerning sexual offences against children. This applies not only to duties which involve or may involve contact with children but also to duties where the persons concerned are seen as representing the local Church (members of the Church Council); are involved with the liturgical or pastoral life of the Church (organists, pastoral visitors, Contact distributors, communion stewards) or are keyholders. Currently 66 people in these categories have signed the form.

A recent policy document issued by the Scotland District recommended that each Church should adopt a safeguarding statement and policy and this was done at the last Church Council meeting. The statement reads:

“We believe that Rosyth Methodist Church should be a caring, safe and welcoming place for all people. We work together to take steps to try to ensure that children, and others who may be vulnerable, are not put at risk of harm. We will protect anyone who we believe could be at risk from abuse or harm and will work with relevant agencies to do this.”

Copies of the safeguarding statement and policy are displayed in the youth section of our church notice board in the crush hall.

When we talk about safeguarding children, the emphasis is on protecting them from physical or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also wish to prevent them being injured in accidents and, indeed, this concern applies to all those who use our premises of whatever age. Wearing my other hat as Chairman of the Property Committee I do try to keep an eye out for potential hazards which might cause accidents. This is something which we should all be mindful of and your help would be appreciated.

If anyone would like any further information about the Church's policies and procedures on safeguarding children I should be pleased to help.

Ed: The Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Officer at St Margaret's is Marc Tempelhoff.

If you wish to share ideas or information with the whole of our readership, please send them to the Editor, preferably by email to martin@mtarr.co.uk.

Giving to others

Haiti appeal

In the February issue of Contact, we reported on how our two congregations were responding to the Haiti earthquake disaster by raising funds in support of the Wesleyan Hospital on La Gonarve, a small island just off Haiti. The £262 raised by the retiring collection at the jointly-supported Covenant Service on 24 January was augmented considerably, both through a well-supported coffee morning held in early February by Mary Kidd at her home, which raised £359, and by other donations from both congregations, tea-bar takings and others.

The total raised through the generosity of Rosyth friends and forwarded to Lemon-Aid, the local charity that helps get medical supplies and local medics to the hospital, was £906.14, with a further £25 received subsequently. Of all this, £796 was gift-aided, which means that once the tax refund is received a further £224 will be forwarded to Lemon-Aid. A letter of thanks has been received, giving news of their relief efforts. If you have internet access, then you can keep-up-to-date with the work by visiting their web site (<http://www.lemonaid.org.uk>).

Meantime, another opportunity for supporting disaster relief in Haiti is through the Diocese of Haiti, which the Bishop has decided should be the subject of the Lent Appeal. This will be taken up as the collection during the Maundy Thursday service at St Margaret's.

Methodist Home Mission

Home Missions are not doing well financially this year. Part of our remit as Church members is to support the Home Mission Fund, and I would like to thank those collectors who keep the fund going with boxes and donations.

Home Mission funds cover such things as grants for Church buildings, rural and urban missions, chaplaincies and work with young people.

Please reconsider your contribution to the funds. Everything we give is a very important contribution to the Church work.

Audrie C Pollard
Home Mission Secretary

Retiring collections and tea-bar

At the 11am service, the retiring collection in January raised £90.96 for Scottish Churches Housing Action (of which £14.70 was from the special "£1 for coffee" appeal on 31 January), and that for February raised £100 (of which £86 was from just two donors) for Mission in Britain (formerly Home Mission).

Donations by individuals or from the tea-bar (from 1st January to 21st March) amounted to £183.88 for Action for Children; £14.78 for MHA; and £170 for World Mission.

Falling incomes – what can be done?

from our Treasurers

A recession brings about a fall in income for many people and organisations, and the church is not immune to the consequences. Since January Rosyth Methodist Church has been conscious of a shortfall in income of about £2,000 compared with the same period a year ago. Happily, that has not got worse – the response to our Anniversary Appeal exceeded expectations – but a £2,000 shortfall is still expected. St Margaret's are expecting to dip into their limited reserves in order to meet their commitments this year. For both churches, an increase in regular giving would be welcome!

That increase can of course come about in a number of ways. For example, you can:

- join the envelope scheme, if at present you just give in the loose offering, as this helps predictability and regularity of giving;
- make sure that no envelope is missed in the year – only about half of those in the Methodist envelope scheme adjust their giving to make good any gaps;
- give direct by standing order, which has the same benefit of regularity, but makes it easier both for the treasurer and for you – no money to hunt for on a Sunday morning!
- make sure that all your giving to church and other charities is Gift-Aided (assuming that you pay income tax);
- review when it was that you last changed the amount donated, and whether some change to your giving is appropriate now, in the light of different circumstances.

Of course, reviews of the kind suggested here may have adverse impacts elsewhere; for example, a rise in personal income in the past might have led you to increase your giving to other charities rather than increase the regular commitment through the local church, so there could be a change in that balance. Or you might find that your giving now needs to be reduced, because when you last considered how much to give, you could more easily afford it.

We are asking you to consider these things now, not just because of the currently expected shortfalls, but also because we are aware of the reduction that will occur next year in the amount of tax recovered through Gift Aid. From April 2011 that will be reducing from 28 pence for every £1 donated to 25 pence. So total income is likely to reduce next year by another £600 for that reason alone, and it is therefore desirable that our regular giving is by then in a more robust position.

Howard R. Kirby
(Treasurer, Methodist Church)

Alan Taylor (Treasurer, St Margaret's)

The Anniversary Appeal

In March, the inclusion of special Gift Day envelopes in the previous Contact meant an early and good response to the Methodist Church's Anniversary Appeal, so far reaching £3,095 in personal donations, surpassing the £3,000 budget and only just less than last year's total of £3,159. Three of our internal organisations contributed a total of £775 (as last year) and three others, having found it would be easier to make donations by standing orders, are now contributing a total of £360 over 12 months, a most welcome increase.

LEP Gathering – “Getting to know you”

as reported by Sandra Young

On Saturday 13 March the 3rd Gathering of Local Ecumenical Partnerships in Scotland arranged by the National Sponsoring Body for LEPs under the auspices of ACTS, was held at Augustine United Church Edinburgh. Mary Kidd, Jack Fowell, Malcolm Trew and I attended.

In the morning, conversationalists from different denominations focused upon “Traditions in Conversation”, recognising that on our journey together we learn much from others, both about their traditions and our own. Our conversationalists were:

- Rev John Humphreys, Moderator of the United Reformed Church, National Synod of Scotland
- Very Rev Sheilagh Kesting, Ecumenical Officer, Church of Scotland and a former Moderator of the General Assembly
- Right Rev Brian Smith, Bishop of Edinburgh, Scottish Episcopal Church
- Rev Lily Twist, Chair of the Methodist Synod in Scotland

This was an interactive conversation between our guests and participants, with the conversationalists reflecting on topics such as:

- What they valued most in their particular tradition
- The barriers thought to divide them
- What each has gained from the other traditions
- What is specific to their tradition in terms of worship that they value most, and what they like about other traditions

- Their vision for the future of change in Ecumenical context

With such pertinent topics, the conversations were interesting and thought-provoking. What was noticeable, but perhaps not surprising, were the similarities between the different denominations. The conversationalists stressed they all belonged together and accepted the differences between the churches as good, despite possible tensions. Their common desire to be more ecumenically focused, whilst recognising Christ in others, came over as a strong message of hope and encouragement to us all.

On their own traditions, and of particular interest to us, Brian Smith instanced Choral Evensong as specific to the Episcopal (and Anglican) tradition, whilst Lily Twist mentioned hospitality (especially cakes) and hymnody, including all the Wesley hymns, as being special to the Methodists.

In the afternoon, the National Sponsoring Body introduced its proposed new method of reviewing a LEP. We were the first LEP to be involved in quinquennial reviews in 2007. Our feedback has been taken into account by the Sponsoring Body as they consider the shape of future reviews. There will inevitably be changes, which are still at the consultation period.

To his delight, Malcolm learned that the agreement which he drew up for shared buildings (as part of our binding Partnership in 2000), has been adopted by the Sponsoring Body as the “model” for LEPs.

The day started and finished with brief worship and we enjoyed a generous buffet lunch arranged by our friendly hosts. Altogether a worthwhile day.

“Casting the Net” News



Unfortunately, nobody from our churches was able to attend the taster session in Perth on 20 February for congregations wishing to take forward the “Casting the Net” Mission planning process in 2010. This was due to work or Dunfermline G&S commitments!

A “Casting the Net” All-Age Gathering will be held at St Ninian’s Cathedral, Perth on Saturday 15 May from 10am to 4pm. This is open to all members of congregations across the Diocese.

A variety of workshops are planned to run throughout the day to give a flavour of what is happening in “Casting the Net”, including:

- Sharing stories of what God is doing
- Consulting about “Casting the Net”
- Workshops on Mission Action Planning, the Compass Course and other materials for spiritual nurture

There will be youth and children’s programmes throughout the day, and the Gathering will conclude with an all-age Eucharist. Bring your own lunch!

As reported in the article on the Diocesan Synod (see page 31), Bishop David mentioned the “Casting the Net” initiative in his Synod address. Some churches, including Holy Trinity, Dunfermline, are moving ahead with their commitment and hope to organise Mission Action Planning workshops with their congregation in the summer. We are waiting to hear whether we will receive support from the “Casting the Net” team to help us identify how we can proceed.

The blessing below is a thought from Aileen Ramsay, a member of St Mary’s Kirriemuir, which she has shared with a number of influential folk, including Barack Obama. It has been passed on to churches to encourage the work of “Casting the Net”, as we each think about our own mission, and what we are called to do.

A Celtic Blessing

May the light of your soul guide you.
May the light of your soul bless the work that you do with the secret love and warmth of your heart.

May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.

May the sacredness of your work bring healing, light and renewal to those who work with you and to those who see and receive your work.

May your work never weary you. May it release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration and excitement.

May you be present in what you do. May you never become lost in bland absences.

May the day never burden you. May dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams, possibilities and promises.

May evening find you gracious and fulfilled.

Rosyth Waterfront Liaison Group

by Alan Taylor

The Rosyth Waterfront Liaison Group (RWLG) has been around for almost 3 years now. Who are we? What do we do? And have we achieved anything in that time?

We all love our wee town, especially its past, both long ago and more recently – particularly its association with the Royal Navy at both HMS Cochrane and the Royal Dockyard. Indeed, most of you will know that St Margaret's rose like the phoenix when HMS Cochrane closed in 1996 and the Rev Malcolm Trew offered us a home with Rosyth Methodist Church.

When the base closed, approximately 230 acres of the former site, including the massive fuel storage facility, were acquired by the Scarborough Muir Group (SMG). Before any construction takes place, it is necessary to decontaminate the land and remove the enormous concrete bunker which previously contained most of the fuel. This is a huge, ongoing task, on which SMG has already spent approximately £6M. You can see the bunker as you come over the bridge.

SMG has plans to develop the site for mixed use: commercial, retail, office, leisure, hotel and some mixed housing (not more than 25% of the site). Public access to the shore will be created; some land will be made available for port-related activities; the "footprint" of the new Forth Crossing will be facilitated; and about 6,000 jobs could be created on site.

That is great, but Forth Ports Authority (FPA) wants the whole of the site designated for port-related activity only, which – with little evidence of development – might mean that the site remains derelict for the next 20 years. Babcock's has all the land it wants already. Fife Council (FC) supports FPA in its aspirations. So where does RWLG come into all this?

What is RWLG? We are a body of local citizens, chaired by Jim Spowart – the renowned financier who created the Intelligent Finance bank and almost rescued HBOS – and representatives of most people-centred organisations in Rosyth. Howard Kirby represents the Methodist church, Alan Taylor St Margaret's and Martin Rogers represents Rosyth Garden City Association. It is an independent body that seeks to canvas public opinion and represent its views to the authorities, both Fife Council and the Scottish Parliament, and to influence SMG's ideas.

We have attracted much attention, including support from local politicians. Indeed, FC Planning Officers agreed that SMG's modified proposals had much merit, and recommended that mixed-use development be permitted. This view appeared to have a measure of support from national authorities. However, at its meeting in October 2009, FC Planning Committee did not accept the recommendations of the Planning Officers.

Where are we now? Well, it might go to Formal Objection or Public Inquiry. But prior to that, SMG intends to send a letter and questionnaire to every household in Rosyth, and to stage an Exhibition in the Parish Church Hall in mid-April which will be supported by SMG Senior Management.

Our big concern at the moment is that SMG might stop its remediation work at the site if its proposals do not receive support – RWLG intends to draw the public's attention to this issue through the media.

So, still a long way to go before we have an attractive development at the waterfront – but watch this space!

Contact points

This list supplements the list of formal contacts given on the inside cover, and is for the activities and organisations run by the Methodist Church Council and St Margaret's Vestry, and by affiliated but independent organisations.

Church activities

Methodist Gift Aid enquiries to
Ron Dempster 01383 721252
ronmary.dempster@tiscali.co.uk

Property matters and letting enquiries to
Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers@ukgateway.net

Rosyth Methodist Toddler Group
Elaine Lambert 01383 417071
elaine.lambert1@sky.com

St Margaret's Choir
Myra Tarr 01383 723989
myra@mtarr.co.uk

St Margaret's Gift Aid enquiries to
Marc Tempelhoff 01383 410151
marct@talktalk.net

Sunday School and Sunday Funday
Gwyneth Kirby 01383 624779
gmkirby@hotmail.com

Traidcraft
Myra Tarr 01383 723989
myra@mtarr.co.uk

Wednesday Fellowship
Mary Kidd 01383 872332
cmarykidd@btinternet.com

Organisations meeting in our premises

Brambles Playgroup
Lesley Hynd
(play leader) 07758 877284
Becca Murphy
Tracy Stephens (chair)
bramblesplaygroup@hotmail.com

Parahandies Disabled Club
Peter Merckel
(secretary) 01383 822940
peter.merckel@yahoo.co.uk

Scout Group

Group Scout Leader
Stuart Fowell 01383 823936
stuart.fowell@ukonline.co.uk

Beaver Scouts
Stuart Fowell 01383 823936
stuart.fowell@ukonline.co.uk

Cub Scouts
Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers@ukgateway.net

Scouts
Alan Connery 01383 731391
alan.connery@virgin.net

Explorer Scouts
Terry O'Neill 01363 842695
terryoneill2003@yahoo.co.uk

Guide Unit

Rainbows
Susan Warren 01383 414355
Young Leader, Melissa Peel

Brownies
Suzy Knight 01383 416087

Guides
Mandy Ward 01383 414944
thewards_197@talktalk.net
Assistant Guider, Susan Warren
Young Leader, Nicola Byrne:

Please let the Editor know of any changes or additions to this list, preferably by email to martin@mtarr.co.uk

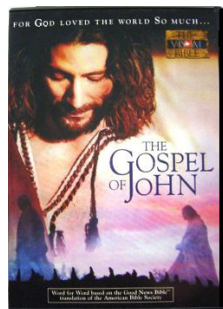
The Bookcase: No.14

our regular feature from Jack Fowell

Many people believe that the Gospel of St John is the best of the four Gospels. I certainly feel that the writer was “here at the time” when I read it, and you may feel the same.

However, in the Bookcase we now have a DVD entitled “The Gospel of St John”, which is a full-length film some 3 hours in length. Yes, it is long, but you can always ‘pause’ it to get the tea!

This powerful film stars Henry Ian Cusick as Jesus, and is narrated by Christopher Plummer. This adaptation follows word for word the Gospel as presented in the Good News Bible.



Methodism on the internet

If you haven't yet discovered it, the Methodist web site can be found at <http://www.methodist.org.uk>.

The section of the site called “Open to God” offers daily Bible studies, prayers and other aids to develop our relationship with God. Rather hidden on the site, but available at the shortcut <http://tinyurl.com/yk2wqk6>, is “The Buzz”, a newsletter that reports inspiring stories of ventures by churches across the UK. If you would be interested in getting this in your in-box each month, you can subscribe at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=contact.subscribe>.

“The Church expects that each one of us, young and old, will grow and develop in our Christian discipleship.”

Methodist Conference 2001

“Scottish Methodists together”

Have you seen this latest District publication? As the Chair, the Rev Lily Twist, says in her Welcome “Travelling far and wide across Scotland to our Methodist churches, I am privileged to engage with concerns and celebrations in each. It is good to be able to share news and stories as I go from one to another and, I hope, bring encouragement through the good things which are happening and support in the difficulties. I am delighted that these exchanges will be increased through this new District Newsletter which will be sent out three times during the year”. Issue 1 is now out and is available on the table at the back of the church. It is also available in electronic form.

Our web version

We can't afford to print Contact in colour, but you can view the original, and zoom in to look at text or photos in colour, at <http://tinyurl.com/ybuok6v>.

The **next issue** of Contact will be produced at the end of May 2010. Contributions please by **Sunday 23 May** to Martin Tarr (1 Methven Drive, Dunfermline, KY12 0AH; 01383 723989), preferably by email to martin@mtarr.co.uk. Please give information for the diary section at any time to Sandra Young (sandrayoung39@btinternet.com or 01383 415021).