

*Scottish Episcopal Church
Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway
St Ninian's, Castle Douglas*
(Scottish Charity No: SC011079)



In Malawi - an Anglican Church in need of a roof

St Ninian's Review

Issue No 47

Advent 2013

SERVICES FOR CHRISTMAS-TIDE 2013

Sun 22 December - Advent 4

8.30am	Holy Communion
11.00am	Family Eucharist and Nativity Play
7.00pm	Christmas Carol Service

Tue 24 Dec - Christmas Eve

4.00pm	Christingle and Crib Service
11.30 pm	Midnight Eucharist

Wed 25 Dec - Christmas Day

8.30am	Holy Communion
11.00am	Family Service followed by
12 noon	Holy Communion (Said Service)

Thu 26 Dec - St Stephen

10.15am	Holy Communion
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Fri 27 Dec - St John the Evangelist

10.15am	Holy Communion
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Sat 28 Dec - The Holy Innocents

10.15am	Holy Communion
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Sun 29 Dec - First Sunday after Christmas

8.30am	Holy Communion
11.00am	Matins, followed by
12 noon	Said Service of Holy Communion
	No Sunday Evening Alternative Service

Dear Friends

Since moving to Dumfries and Galloway, some twenty-five years ago, a frequent delight has been the discovery of new (to me) vistas of the beauty of the region: the car will round an unfamiliar bend or crest a rise and, suddenly, a view will open up of such sheer loveliness that I have to stop and drink it in. The top of the pass heading south out of Dalmellington is a prime example; the first time we popped out of that rather-dreary valley on to the moors, with the Galloway hills marching away to the west and Loch Doon glittering darkly, we were stunned—and, hundreds of journeys later, the scene still gives enormous pleasure.

In the world of learning, too, travelling along a familiar path can reveal wonderful new horizons, as I was reminded recently. For many years, I have valued Esther De Waal's writings on Celtic spirituality and, when I heard that she was to speak locally in October, I determined to hear her and encouraged others also to attend. On the day, though, she spoke, not about the Celtic way of faith but about her other love, the Benedictine way.

For me, this was a revelation. Since school, I had no more than an unfocussed awareness that the monastic order founded by St. Benedict in the sixth century had had a significant influence on the post-Roman and mediaeval world but, with her characteristic profound scholarship leavened with sheer charm, Esther opened up for me a whole new way of exploring our faith. Benedict founded an order in which the monastery was not so much a place into which one might withdraw from the world but, rather, a home—grounded in the precepts of obedience, stability and faithfulness—from which to take the faith into the world. The Rule of St. Benedict became not only the foundation of much of the mediaeval church but an instrument of social revolution, in agriculture, education, hospitality, and even after-dinner tipples. Its influence on Cranmer was such that it can be traced in Matins and Evensong and its moderate practicality is still evident in the *"via media Anglicana"*.

Exploring the Benedictine way has been a joy that I hope to share in some part with you in three Advent Reflections, on obedience, stability and faithfulness, details of which are in the notices. (Here endeth the advertisement.) And that joy in discovering new insights from following a known path offers us a metaphor for the following of the Church's Calendar.

As Advent Sunday brings us to the start of a new cycle, we know well the path we shall take by way of Christmas and Epiphany, through Lent and Easter, to Ascension, Pentecost and the rolling acres of Trinity but, at each stage, the God of Surprises will have new things for us. The Advent season is now described as a time of “anticipation”, when we look forward to celebrating Christmas, when we renew our hope for Christ’s coming again, and when we begin with “eager expectation” the adventure of a new year. May it bring you joy in the Lord.

Yours in Christ’s service,



SUPPOSE ONE OF YOU HAS A HUNDRED SHEEP AND LOSES ONE OF THEM. DOESN'T HE LEAVE THE NINETY-NINE IN THE OPEN COUNTRY AND GO AFTER THE LOST SHEEP UNTIL HE FINDS IT?'

They were found in Emsworth, Hampshire, when David and Theo drove down to have lunch with Alan and Zoë on a lovely day in early September with temperatures around 29C. Needless to say there was a lot of chatting and catching up to be done.



It was wonderful to see Alan looking so well, and Zoë had not changed at all. David and Theo were not so bad either, albeit the camera seems to have exaggerated his girth! Afterwards we went round to their delightful house, just a couple of minutes walk from the shops and enjoyed coffee in their small courtyard.

David Steward

**'GROWING YOUR CHURCH' - A ONE-DAY CONFERENCE WAS HELD
ON SATURDAY 31ST AUGUST AT ST GEORGE'S TRON CHURCH IN
GLASGOW**



Representatives from across the Diocese attended, including a small group from St Ninian's: the Rector, Roger MacDonald, Jenny Wright, Sheila MacKenzie and Stephanie Dewhurst. We met up with others from Christ Church, Dalbeattie and St John's Dumfries to travel by minibus to Glasgow and, on arrival, were queuing for coffee when the fire alarm went off and we all had to wait outside. No fewer than three fire engines arrived but, after ten minutes we were given the 'all clear' - it was the build-up of steam in the kitchen from the tea urn that had set off the alarm!

**Revd Liz O'Ryan, Curate at St John's,
Greenock, gives her impression of the
event:**

FACING THE FEAR

Michael Harvey, a well known author and speaker, led our thinking about the nature of our God. This is a God who is not content



to leave us where we are with all our limitations and weaknesses, but who constantly leads us, calling us, asking things of us, in order for us to continue to grow and become more the people we are created to be. But there is a problem, Michael suggested: because we are human, God's calling sets up in us a natural reaction of fear - fear of failure, fear of rejection. Remember Moses, Jeremiah, Jonah. God asked them all to do something for him and they all reacted with fear. But God's reply remains the same: "Do not be afraid. I am with you always." It is significant that this reply appears 366 times in the Bible.

Inviting people to church sets up that fear-filled reaction. We are scared to do it. We make excuses. But it's what we are called to do. We are called to 'Go and make disciples'. It matters not if we are rejected. It matters not if the response to our invitation is negative. That is Christ's way. That is the narrow way. But if we go out and invite, invite and invite again, Michael suggested, we are being obedient and faithful, walking in the footsteps of Christ and we will grow and mature spiritually just through the very action of inviting.

Hearing Michael speak was inspiring. He delivered three sessions about how to become an invitational church, and he was honest about the problems that may be encountered. But he also spoke words of encouragement for the task ahead. At the end of the conference we were asked to take his message back to our churches and try to put something of what he said into practice.

WINGS - the Development Team for **W**elcome, **I**ntegration and **N**umerical **G**rowth has already set up the channels for such support and the sharing of experience resulting from the day, and has received many replies and positive comments from the people who attended the conference. It was a very good day.

Revd Liz O'Ryan

(The Growing Your Church Conference was organised by the Development Team, of which Liz is a member, and is giving excellent presentations across the Diocese as part of the Diocesan Growth Strategy.)

SOUDA BAY, CRETE

Summer 2013 was truly spectacular. Sunny day succeeded sunny day until some of us were reduced to finding a shaded and draughty space in which to escape the heat. Nonetheless, an October holiday in Crete held out the promise of a last shot of sunshine before Grey Galloway lived up to its wintry name.

The Cretan weather more than came up to expectations. Umbrellas were used as parasols and we could set out each day without worrying whether we should take our wet gear with us. We had a busy programme but there were moments of relaxation as well. Perhaps the most enjoyable was lunch in a remote hillside village where we sat on the terrace of the taverna enjoying a view that seemed to stretch for miles at our feet.

But, as we sat there, we were suddenly jogged by three distinct shocks and we realised that we had just experienced an earthquake. It was over in a matter of seconds but it brought home to us how the people of Crete had always lived with the knowledge that the ground might open literally under their feet. The renowned palace at Knossos and the township of Akritiri on the island of Santorini had not been destroyed in battle – archaeologists have looked in vain for evidence that they were razed to the ground by fire – but had fallen as a result of some natural disaster such as a major earthquake or tsunami.

This does not mean that Crete was untouched by hostilities. Its strategic position in the Mediterranean meant that a series of great powers were prepared to fight to gain dominion over the island and so control the busy shipping routes of the Mediterranean. We can still visit the ruins of the forts built by the Venetians to repel the Turks, only to see the way in which the Turks modified them when they finally conquered the island and changed the Venetian churches into mosques.

And what of the people of Crete while great powers fought over their island? The land still had to be tilled, the olive trees cultivated and the goats milked, while the sea still offered a rich harvest to the fishermen. Cretans, however, believed that they were Greeks and that whatever power prevailed over their island was a usurper. By the

mid-nineteenth century the people of Crete were ready to challenge the Turks and the monastery of Arkady became the centre of their resistance.

It is difficult for a visitor today to visualise the monastery at that time, crammed full with refugees from the surrounding countryside, with a small band of fighters led by the Abbot Gabriel and his priests, determined to resist the Turkish army sent to destroy them. When after three days of fierce fighting, the Turks finally broke through the outer gate, the defenders set a match to the arsenal. The huge explosion destroyed both Turks and Cretans and became an inspiration to all who valued the cause of Cretan freedom.

Today the monastery has a desolate beauty. Only a small area has been refurbished to modern standards; maintenance work on the rest of the site is limited to keeping the building safe and secure. But someone in the community just has the instincts of a gardener for the visitor finds a rose in bloom in an unexpected spot or a large pot overflowing with plants which are obviously regularly tended.

Crete, of course, was involved in World War II. The Battle of Crete took place between 20th May and 1st June 1941. German forces, having swept through Greece, concentrated on Crete, which was defended by soldiers from Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Greece. This force numbered 40,000, ten thousand of whom were without weapons. Nonetheless, the defenders inflicted heavy losses on the invaders before they were finally forced to admit defeat. Numbers of British and Commonwealth troops were taken off the island by submarine; others were made prisoners of war and some escaped into the mountains where they joined guerrilla bands. But what of those who died?

Visitors to the island can visit Souda Bay, where the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has established a military cemetery. At its centre, a tall white cross draws the eye upward and then beyond it to the sea, which stretches into the distance. Row upon row of simple white headstones commemorate the fallen. They are set in immaculate grass and each row is relieved by low-growing flowers, for the most part deep red roses and dark blue veronica. The engraving

on each of the headstones follows the same pattern: the regimental insignia, the name and rank of the serviceman, his age and where he was killed; and then at some distance below a personal tribute, some heart-breakingly simple like 'a much-loved son and brother'. Perhaps most moving of all is the inscription for those who could not be identified: 'Known unto God'.

It is a very peaceful place, quiet, understated, a total contrast to the violence, fear and mess of battle. It was a subdued group who left Souda Bay for the next stage of our tour.



The cemetery at Souda Bay

While thinking about the cemetery at Souda Bay, I remembered reading that there were military graves at Troqueer Church in Dumfries and so I went to see if I could find them. I looked for graves dated in the 1940s but without success. It was only when I had climbed to the top of the graveyard and looked back that I saw the precisely positioned white headstones set quite close to the Nith. There are about fifty in total: the majority commemorate Scotsmen but other names belong to Norwegians, to men from the Commonwealth and, I think, Poland.

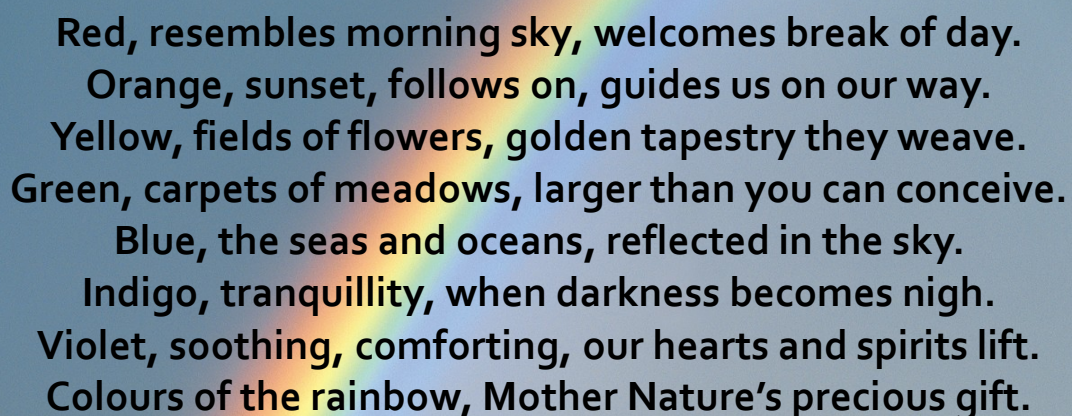
A small group of headstones set slightly apart commemorate German servicemen, probably shot down after a bombing mission that went wrong. Seeing this group of graves, austere and dignified, reminded me of Wilfred Owen's poem, 'Strange Meeting'. Two soldiers facing each other in a sort of no man's land realise that they have fought on different sides. The poem ends with the words:

I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this dark
Let us sleep now.

Sheila MacKenzie

Bishop John and Edna wish to express their thanks to the congregation for their prayers and concerns expressed during Alison's illness, and for the many messages of love and sympathy received on her death. They also wish to express their gratitude to David, our Rector, for his surprise and comforting presence at the crematorium in the Forest of Dean.

RAINBOW CHASER - A FAVOURITE POEM OF JENNY SPENCE



Red, resembles morning sky, welcomes break of day.
Orange, sunset, follows on, guides us on our way.
Yellow, fields of flowers, golden tapestry they weave.
Green, carpets of meadows, larger than you can conceive.
Blue, the seas and oceans, reflected in the sky.
Indigo, tranquillity, when darkness becomes nigh.
Violet, soothing, comforting, our hearts and spirits lift.
Colours of the rainbow, Mother Nature's precious gift.

A REPORT FROM STUDENT BETH AT STRATHCLYDE UNIVERSITY
(sent in early November)

Here I am, five weeks to go before I finish my first term of second year... Crazy! Primary Education at Strathclyde has been all it promised to be and more... A lot of work! I passed first year and had a very successful placement out in East Kilbride at a lovely primary school with excellent children. This week I start my second year placement, out in Airdrie. I only found out where I was going a couple of days ago! I am hoping I have as enjoyable a time as last year but I'm very nervous as I could be working with any class from P4 to P7...and P7's are scary!



Thankfully I've managed to get a very good work/life balance. Well, I say balance! I'm not as crazy as some students but I do enjoy a cheap night out!

I've been enjoying weekly home visits this term which have allowed me to stock up on food, party with some friends from home and not forgetting, get to work on this year's Sunday School Nativity. Yes, I said it... This year... we are prepared!

Beth MacQuarrie

THE NEXT EDITION OF ST NINIAN'S REVIEW will be published just before Easter next year. If you would like to write an article or submit anything, it would be most welcome. The deadline will be around 23rd March 2014. Email: johnsteph@mkcott.wanadoo.co.uk or use the *Email form* link on the left-hand side of any page on the website or phone me: 01556 502736.

Current and recent editions of the Review can also be read on the St Ninian's website: stninianscastledouglas.org.uk/st-ninians-review/

If for any reason you are unable to get to St Ninian's on a Sunday(!) the notices for the week are also published on the News page of the website a day or so later.

ST NINIAN'S WEBSITE can be found at: stninianscastledouglas.org.uk/

One of our Servers, Peter Little, wishes to become a vet and has been spending some of his spare time gaining useful experience...

A VET FOR A WEEK



Between the 5th and the 9th of August 2013, I had the opportunity of doing work experience at Dunmuir Veterinary Group, Castle Douglas. The vets allowed me to see many sides of a vet's work, including operations. One of the more interesting cases was a dog that had been bitten by an adder. It was rushed into the surgery and was given a check up. Thankfully, it was fine afterwards. I was also allowed to go with the vets to emergencies, for instance a horse with a punctured artery. It needed stitches and anti-inflammatory drugs, and recovered after a few days. There were also some wild animals, such as a swan which was brought in by the SSPCA. It had no feeling in one paralysed leg, and it was also very ill. Sadly, it had to be put to sleep.

During the summer, there is not so much farm work as it is not the breeding season. However, I saw some cows being treated, including a calf with congenital heart failure, which had to be put down. There is still plenty of small animal work, however. This meant that I saw some people from St Ninian's, including David Bayne, with Betsy,

and May Fraser with Penny. Betsy had a nasty insect bite. Penny had diarrhoea, and required several types of medication. Overall, I really enjoyed the work experience, and am more determined than ever to become a vet.

Peter Little

O TO BE A SACRISTAN.....

Some time long, long ago, I went off to the Episcopal Church's rather lovely College in Edinburgh, now the Yehudi Menuhin Music School, to learn my trade for the ministry. I duly completed the four years' hard labour, obtained my degree but decided to earn my keep as a youth leader rather than as a priest. The old saying comes to mind – Man proposes; God disposes. He disposed of me to run a club for teenagers in Dumfries, and I never escaped again from this airt.

Having come from an alternative Christian environment I had a lot to learn about the ways of Piskies, including all the preparations for a service. I first had to be measured for a cassock, and am very pleased to say that I still fit into and thus wear regularly that same item. But my main education into the finer points of worship came under the auspices of a bluff Geordie who had a love of all things liturgical. He introduced me, and others, to the technical complexities of what colour to wear, when and why, and I still make mistakes today! We had a well-stocked selection of chasubles etc and each student had a time of assisting to see that the priest was suitably equipped for the service.

On occasions of great ceremonial we were sent down to St Mary's Cathedral, usually at some hideously early hour, to perform a special Eucharist. That frightened me silly at first as the Principal was an austere man who required things to be just so. We had simply gorgeous robes to wear for this and again each student had a turn on stage so to speak. As there was a Deacon and a Sub-Deacon at least – memory rather blanks out here – there were a lot of people involved and a lot of things to remember, what to do and say when and where. Nerve racking! The Sacristan had a duty to see that everyone appeared correctly attired, and we always did it rather well.

But the point of all this is that the last thing I ever wanted to have anything to do with was as a sacristan. Now if I had entered the priesthood I would have had to do something no doubt and I would have just got on with it. It would have been part of the contract so to speak. So it is with some surprise that I find myself in this role at St Ninian's and furthermore I enjoy the work and feel fulfilled by so doing. It was with some hesitation that I offered to David that I take on some of the role and just see how that went. After all I feel that our Rector has enough to do without counting out wafers every Sunday. Steadily over the year or two I have been in harness I have taken on more responsibility and now look after most matters to do with worship preparation.

So what do I get up to that is so significant? A clue is in the title. If you remember your Latin, you will know that "Sacristan" comes from the word "sacer" translated as sacred. So the sacristan deals with sacred utensils, mainly the vestments and chalices and such like. My key task is to prepare for communion. That is where counting out fifty wafers comes in – which can be fun if a conversation starts up in the vestry! But there are also the wine and water flasks, and the various linen towels, all to be laid out or set upon the altar in the correct place. Occasionally things are missed or forgotten and a little confusion ensues! After the service everything has to be taken back to the vestry and put away or prepared for the next service. At some times of the year, Christmas and Easter, that can be frequent.

Then the chasuble has to be laid out so that it can be slipped on over the priest's head. Chasubles can be ungainly things and rather heavy and slippery. That is where the required colour comes in and it helps to have a guide to hand. You will have noticed red for martyrs and times to do with the Holy Spirit such as Pentecost; purple for times of solemnity and Advent and Lent; white for times of celebration and remembering saints who were not martyred; and green for most of the year, ordinary times. The chalice veil matches the colours, and the altar frontal changes too though not as often.

Other wee jobs to come my way include a monthly polish of the silverware and the weekly wash of the small altar linens. David was amused at first that I would happily see to this task which involves ironing afterwards. I find great pleasure in this. It takes about ten to

fifteen minutes and it can be rewarding watching a criss-cross piece of cloth change into a smooth neatly ironed napkin. When it does not can be a different matter! I often then go on to do some of our own linen to the surprise and thanks of Kirsty!

So what started as a passing thought has changed into a very meaningful task in which I feel that I am repaying some of the effort that went into my training. Two more passing thoughts "God works in a mysterious way..." and "who sweeps a room as for thy laws, makes that and the action fine".

Now that we have full sacristan service for St Ninian's it is great that Jenny Wright has joined to take over when I am not around. David will not have to count fifty wafers again if we can help it!

Douglas Allison

ST NINIAN'S MEN'S GROUP

On Monday 4th November, St Ninians Men's Group met for their last supper of the year. It was delicious and, as usual, prepared and served by Haining Catering.

Numbers were down to twenty and this is the minimum that the caterer says it is viable for him to cater for. We are not in the first flush of youth and we are constantly looking for new members, as people move away and sadly some pass away and some are not always well. We have members from all faiths so if you know of someone who might like to join us please get in touch (01556 505910). The group is more about fellowship than anything else.

Our speaker on this occasion was Fred Coulthard who gave us a power point presentation on the Dumfries Rowing Club and said how he had only taken up rowing nine years ago. These craft are very narrow and Clem Gault asked how Fred thought he would fair in one of these as they are they are quite unstable and can easily capsize. (I can't quite recall what his answer was!)

This was, as you can imagine, a most informative and enjoyable talk. We all went home realizing you don't have to be young to start up a new hobby or a new sport.

***Ian Mather
(Chairman)***

This report was submitted for the Annual Congregational Meeting at the end of October. A copy is now also on our website.

GROWTH STRATEGY REPORT

Our first congregational meeting with our facilitator Sandra Walsh, looking at 'Why are we going for Growth?' was held at the end of May and a first report following that meeting was received and studied at our Vestry meeting at the beginning of August. A further meeting at the end of August started the ball rolling.

From the report, a review of our present identity was of a talented, committed and friendly/welcoming congregation with a Rector and wife who were highly regarded, a building that felt like the 'House of God' and strengths included good preaching and high quality music.

The range of services was appreciated, the facilities excellent and shared with other groups. Mothers' Union, the Men's Group and the Thursday Club were listed as adult outreach and 'Little Fishes' as outreach both to young parents and children.

Although the congregation as a whole appreciated the liturgy, there was an awareness that this, the high church vestments and 'county' reputation could deter the uninitiated.

The report has a long list of our strengths under each of the strands and then a much smaller list of our weaknesses with thoughts on how some of these could be approached.

Prayer and Spirituality

Intercession training is needed. This was recognised as something that could be done straight away and the Rector ran a session that was also attended by other congregations in the diocese and was much appreciated. For those unable to attend, the Rector has copies of the presentation he used which could be made available.

More regular fellowship and study groups are needed. A group is now running in Bothwell House. This group is full but another group could be arranged if and when there is the demand.

There is no prayer group. Jenny Wright is looking into starting one. Private and contemplative prayer could be developed by inviting in outside specialists to give instruction.

Encourage personal spirituality through daily prayer and scripture readings. e.g. study with Bible Reading Fellowship notes.

Learning and Discipleship

We need more teaching and studying. The Rector is looking into this. We have meetings about four times a year where invited speakers are covering a topic. There is a possibility that a series could be run in the region using a similar range of speakers. He will lead an Advent Course this year.

It has been suggested that he produces a reading list for those who wish to study alone.

Missional Leadership

Do we look outward enough? A community audit may identify areas where we can serve the community. This may in turn lead to opportunities.

Subscribe to mission work abroad. Watch this space!

Numerical Growth, Welcome and Integration

Although we see ourselves as a welcoming congregation our numbers are falling as we lose people to age or job related events. There were quite a lot of ideas to help put this right including publicity, invitation, hobby/interest related events and a welcome pack for newcomers. (These have been put together and include a magazine, a guide to St Ninian's and one to the Scottish Episcopal Church).

Children and Young People

It is recognized that, although we do quite a lot for younger children, we don't cater much for the teenage/young adult category. This needs to be rectified.

Imaginative Outreach into Communities

Although it was recognised that we are not very confident in this area, there were quite a lot of ideas including visiting the housebound, church open days, encouraging ecumenical relationships with other churches and joining in with what's already going on; sharing resources and using the website and other avenues for publicity more.

We are starting a community audit to find out where the needs of the community are. Ann Gault, Ian MacQuarrie and Jenny Wright are forming a sub-group to move this on. We are in the process of producing a town map and an OS wall map where we can identify

meeting places, places that serve the community, where people live etc. We will also use statistics found online and use questionnaires to this end. The first questionnaire is to our own church community but there will be others targeting the police, social services, schools, healthcare, other churches and the general public.

The Vestry has identified **Children and Young People** and **Learning and Discipleship** as the two strands to focus our efforts on and hope that numerical growth will also come from this.

Jenny Wright

GALLOWAY REGIONAL COUNCIL - WHAT'S THAT?

You will occasionally see reference on the weekly pew sheet to 'a meeting of Galloway Regional Council' - you may remember that one was held at St Ninian's in mid-November when a request was made for some volunteers to help making and serving food (see photo) . A few people recently have commented that they have no idea what it is, not even that it is something connected with the Scottish Episcopal Church. It is, in fact, the local i.e. Dumfries and Galloway body, one of several in the Glasgow and Galloway Diocese with clergy and lay representation on both Diocesan and (Scottish) General Synods. These representatives may attend Diocesan and/or General Synod meetings and then report back to our region as well as take matters forward to higher level if required. It also enables face-to-face communication between all the Charges in our region, which is no bad thing! (For the benefit of people from south of the border, its equivalent in England would be the Deanery Synod.)



Demolition of the buffet gets under way

Galloway Regional Council meets four times a year and its AGM is held in November - usually at our church because it is fairly central to the region. (Other meetings may be held anywhere in the region.) The AGM is always preceded by a Sung Eucharist in church while the other meetings begin with a short service of prayer, or finish with a said service of Compline. Those attending come from all the region's Episcopal churches, from Portpatrick in the west to Gretna in the east and Moffat in the north of the region, a total of 14 Charges, and it currently has a potential membership of over 60 people, although usually only 36-40 attend meetings. Visitors are also welcome.



Members gather for the meeting

After a buffet and before the business part of the meeting, an invited speaker gives a talk - currently representatives from each strand of the Growth Strategy are being asked to give a presentation which will help charges in their Mission Action Planning. Regional Councils now also have opportunity to recommend funding from the Diocese for any Growth Strategy projects which charges may wish to carry out. Clem Gault is currently St Ninian's Lay Rep, but he said at our Annual Congregational Meeting in October that he would continue for

the current year but would then stand down. Perhaps someone would like to think about replacing him next year ...

Just five years ago, I was appointed Secretary to Galloway Regional Council and, while that first meeting was quite a baptism of fire, I now find meetings to be quite enjoyable, not least because everyone is so friendly. Also it is interesting visiting other charges and seeing how the church works in the broader picture.

Stephanie Dewhurst

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

13.09	Albert Brown
23.10	Irene Cowperthwaite

Marriages

9.11	Mary Pounder and Daniel Thatcher
30.11	Sharon Mc Murdo and Stephen Murray

MOTHERS' UNION MEETING - 19 November 2013



At the latest meeting, MU Branch Leader Jenny Spence welcomed Judi Duck to give a talk about her recent visit to Africa - see the following article

OUT OF AFRICA

My husband, Jim, and I spent six weeks this autumn in Tanzania and Malawi, working with two charities, both of which use their volunteers to augment the work of their projects.

The first was the Lutheran Church of Tanzania, supported by Vine Trust in Scotland and for which we had been raising money all year. There we really saw where the money is going and had the opportunity to help with building very basic houses for HIV/AIDS orphans. We dug and painted and passed bricks in chains, and got sweaty and dirty along with the 23 in our Scottish group, and local workmen. Each evening we returned tired and happy to our hostel in Moshi, within sight of Mount Kilimanjaro.



*Judi and Jim painting together
(or perhaps dancing cheek to cheek!)*

We saw other initiatives that the church here supports – and we were intrigued to find health education lessons being given – opportunistically – during church services, with eye tests and BP checks being offered to the congregation afterwards!



Jim demonstrates his iPad to an appreciative audience

In Malawi we were volunteering with RIPPLE Africa, a small charity which serves a lakeside area in education spheres, medical services and environmental projects. They employ 150 Malawians, and mature volunteers from many countries work alongside them, offering suggestions and ideas from their own areas of expertise.

Our accommodation was idyllic, and we bathed - and washed! - daily in the clear fresh water of the lake. With no electricity or mobile reception, we enjoyed a fortnight of digital detox!

We were fortunate that, at both sites, we worked in lovely supportive teams of interesting folk. I think the benefit of plunging into developing world travel is meeting people one would rarely come across at home, and we made many wonderful friends.

Jim and I travelled from Northern Tanzania to the Malawian lakeside by local buses, which are alternately exhilarating and terrifying modes of transport. We stopped off in Dar es Salaam, a city of six million, for rest and relaxation, then stayed with a young man we have helped through college, who now has a job in TB research, and we also stayed with good friends at the Mission Hospital where I worked as a midwife in 2006.

The whole trip was exploratory for us – looking for retirement ideas! We felt welcomed, safe, healthy and privileged throughout the six weeks. On Mwaya Beach we attended St Barnabas Anglican Church twice. They hold services in a primary school room because the church they have built lacks a roof. A proposal to St Ninian's has resulted in approval by the Vestry for forwarding the cost of roofing materials so that they can get the work done before the Rains come (*see footnote). This is very exciting for us, and I hope will begin a happy relationship with the Mothers' Union there.



The school room currently being used as a church with MU member on the left proudly wearing her MU uniform

I must thank all who have given us interest and support, prayers and help. There will be further fundraising efforts to cover the cost of the project.

Judi Duck

Relevant websites: www.vinetrust.org/ and www.rippleafrica.org/

(* The Vestry has given approval for a sum of up to £2,500 from the Endowment Fund to be paid up front to enable this work to be carried out speedily and this will be repaid through subsequent fundraising events.)

Stephanie Dewhurst

Who's Who

Rector	:	The Revd Canon David Bayne	01556-503818
Hon Assistant	:	The Revd Canon David Main	504669
Lay Reader	:	Mr Douglas Allison	504279
Lay Worship Leader / Pastoral Assistant / Hon Secretary	:	Mrs Jenny Wright	502184
Hon Treasurer	:	Mr Fred Coulthard	502965
Property Convenor / Lay Rep	:	Mr Clem Gault	502583
Alternate Lay Rep / Freewill Offerings Convenor	:	Mr Ian Mather	505910
Third Lay Rep	:	Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Vestry Members	:	The Rector (Chairman), Hon Secretary; Hon Treasurer Property Convenor	
Elected	:	Mr Ian MacQuarrie Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst Mr Ian Mather Mrs Sue Beddows Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01557-820122 502736 505910 670286 01644-420623
Organist	:	Mr Maurice Till	620619
Sanctuary Guild	:	{Mrs Vivien Bremner {Mrs Audrey Slee	01644-470239 01644-420466
Co-ordinator for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups	:	Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01644-420623
M U Branch Leaders	:	{Mrs Jenny Spence {Mrs Elizabeth Woodburn	01557 330010 610519
Thursday Club	:	Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Men's Group Chairman	:	Mr Ian Mather	505910
Hall Bookings / Administrator/ Magazine and Website Editor	:	Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst	502736
Magazine Distributor / Traidcraft	:	Mr John Dewhurst	502736
Sunday School Leaders	:	{Mrs Rosie MacQuarrie {Mrs Ann Gault {Mrs Roz Stevens	01557-820122 502583 503589
Little Fishes	:	Mrs Roz Stevens	503589