

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



*Along the Garroch Glen, near Dalry*

*St Ninian's Review*

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*Dear Friends,*

The recent failure of the Church of England's General Synod to endorse in principle the appointment of women as Bishops affects us in Scotland very little: our General Synod passed the measure some years ago. The issue was effectively resolved when the Priesthood of women was accepted—because it has always been axiomatic that any Priest may be a Bishop: if women may be Priests, then women may be Bishops. Full stop. And it is sad that this progressive measure—supported by 42 of the CofE's 44 dioceses—was blocked in their Synod by a determined minority who are not reconciled to the idea of women's ministry at any level. Their time has passed and I absolutely share Archbishop Sentamu's view that "there will be women Bishops in the CofE in my lifetime."

Where it does impact on us, though, is in the general perception of the Church as outdated, outmoded and mysogenistic. A great deal of ill-informed invective has been spouted in the past few days by politicians, journalists and "social commentators—all of it suggesting that the Church is somehow wilfully anachronistic, hostile to women, hostile to society at large and "this dangerous sect" (©The Grauniad). It's all self-serving twaddle, of course. The Church's inherent eccentricities and absurdities have always made for cheap copy: it's much easier to pen 400 words of contrived outrage about Bishops than it is to say something illuminating about (for example) the tragedy that is the Holy Land.

Modern gender politics and newspaper circulation wars are a very long way from the Beatitudes or the New Commandment but, unless the Church corporately and Christians as individuals learn not only to model the faith in ourselves but also how to represent our faith to the modern world, the media caricature will prevail. And I fear it will take more than a tweeting Archbishop of Canterbury to effect that kind of change.

This may sound ridiculously tautological, but we have to begin by having faith in our faith. We know from our own experience that Christ has the ability to transform lives and thereby transform the world, and we need to remind ourselves of that truth if we are to break out of the spiral of

negativity. Advent - a time of new beginnings; of fresh plans for a new year; of anticipation of the coming Christ; of hope for a better world - is the perfect time for that reminder *and for acting upon it*, "for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed."

Yours in Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Bayne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the bottom of the name.

### **WINDING DOWN**

Canon David Main writes:

On my 65th birthday in October 1993 I retired as a stipendiary priest (I had been Rector at Holy Trinity, Kilmarnock, for the previous 14 years) and I came to reside in Castle Douglas. As is customary when a priest retires within the Diocese, the Bishop - in this case Bishop John Taylor - issued me with a Warrant; this licensed me to 'all duties competent to my order as a priest in the Diocese'. During the years since then I have officiated in most of the 'Piskie' Churches in the Dumfries and Galloway Region, principally of course in St Ninian's during two Rectorial vacancies and during the Rector's holidays.

However, last year, I had to surrender my driving licence having failed a peripheral vision test. I therefore sold my car and purchased an electric scooter, but this meant that I could no longer operate at distances without the range of the scooter, which is only a few miles. Fortunately St Ninian's is within that range and many good friends have been very helpful in giving me lifts on occasions when the venue is beyond that range.

Nevertheless, it seemed to me that the Bishop's Warrant (as stated above) was not fully realised any longer in my current situation and I accordingly decided to raise the matter with the Bishop and the Rector. It was then agreed that I should not return my Warrant to officiate but that I should operate only as part of the Ministry Team when necessary.

But as you will have noticed, as a result of ageing, I have of late become more frail and forgetful and, as such, have been less competent to perform priestly functions. I can still 'fill in' in situations where no-one else is available. I am still very fond of St Ninian's and its congregation and will be glad to continue to receive your friendship and support while struggling to maintain a state of normality as much as is possible whilst 'winding down'. I have found helpful in some parts a prayer quoted in the Church Times recently, viz:

'O God, who hast in thy love kept me vigorously and joyfully at work in days gone by, and does send me joyful and contented into silence and inactivity, grant me to find happiness in thee in all my solitary and quiet hours. In thy strength, O God, I bid farewell to all. The past thou knowest: I leave it at thy feet. Grant me grace to respond to thy divine call; to leave all that is dear on earth, and go alone to thee; Behold I come quickly, saith the Lord. Come Lord Jesus.'

God bless you all and thank you for your support in the past. As ever, my house is open to visitors.

**David Main**

### **THOUGHTS ON BIRDS, AERONAUTICS AND GOD**

One of the pleasures of living at the Buchan on the southern edge of the town is looking out at the loch with all its varied life forms, mainly birds. There are three species that catch my eye regularly – cormorants, swans and gulls. There are also many transient species but those three are mainstays of the loch. It is their flying ability that so intrigues me. I have flown rather too many miles these days, thanks to offspring in far flung places, and am fascinated by the alterations to the plane's wings on take off, flight and landing. Birds do the same but so much better.



It was watching a cormorant gently flying over the house one day that attracted me. It was following the cut from the River Dee to Carlingwark Loch. The bird was in its final approach, still high up but in a perfect glide: body one straight line, wings out at maximum extension. Effortless! Slight adjustments were made with a flick of a feather until a gentle turn led onto the last line up and the descent to the

water. The turn was achieved with hardly a noticeable change to the flight attitude and the descent angle increased yet the speed remained the same. An alteration of a few feathers and round the bird came, and slowed. Finally the water was reached and a quick stall let the bird drop gently onto the surface.

When a big jet is approaching its destination similar features appear. The engines cut to a whisper, the deck slopes gently down and on the wings extensions appear. As the plane drifts down the wing edges flicker, mimicking the feathers of a bird. Just a little twitch and that huge bit of metal alters angle of approach or direction. As the runway comes up the angle of approach changes to more nose up and the pilot gently stalls the plane to touch with the main wheels and then the front. At this more wing extensions reach out vertically acting as air brakes to slow the aircraft. A further refinement that birds have no need of is the reverse thrust from the engines, a loud and rather frightening roar that reduces the landing speed to a dawdle.

Swans are rather like cormorants only bigger. They are most graceful on the water, but a little ungainly in flight. They also make that strange creaking noise as if the joints will shortly seize, plunging the bird into the water. But it is at take-off and landing that they demonstrate coordinated skill. Like a large jet at runway's end, a swan begins with powerful wing strokes lifting its body up in the water until it can begin to paddle over the surface, sort of walking on water. The length of run needed depends on the reason for flight. Being chased requires a quick take off, but often it is simply to change location and the paddling can go on for quite a long way until the bird drops gently onto the water once more. At landing they are much more magnificent. Like the cormorant a gentle glide takes them down towards the water surface, the feet are splayed out under them until they water ski, then finally the wings go into reverse thrust and in a few feet the great bird gracefully sinks down and swims off as if this was quite an easy trick to fulfil. For them it truly is, but for us we can only marvel as our big planes try to do something similar with an awful lot more kerfuffle.

The third bird that excites me is the much maligned gull. A large flock of mixed varieties come to the loch to rest and groom and probably chat about the weather, particularly when it freezes and they are left looking rather upset with cold feet. The acrobatics are quite

outstanding though. If the cormorant and swan are the big jets of the loch, the gulls are the fast jet fighters. I am truly amazed at the way they can drift on the wind, flicking a feather or two to rise or fall. They fly into the wind, even at near gale and make progress whilst we would struggle. Coming in to land they can circle to choose a likely spot, and suddenly tilt onto one wing and drop to the water: from moving flight to static in just a blink of an eye. I never fail to be entranced by the sight. Take off is much simpler than the bigger birds. A few strokes of the wings and they are up and away, gliding gracefully off, maybe joining their family for the next journey.

What has all this got to do with God? Well recently we have had a lot of readings about the wonder of the created world. The Psalmists recognised God's hand in so much of what they experienced. The atheists of this world would have us believe that it is all a big accident, but how much they miss of the sheer beauty, complication and wonder of creation. We humans tend to think that we are at the top end of the chain and how wonderful our inventions are. To watch a bird in flight is a humbling experience as their effort so outclasses ours. God may have created us for many reasons, but we must never forget that He also created birds, animals, rivers, clouds and all the rest in a way that everything fits together to His glory. Take time to stand and look at the wonders around us and give thanks for birds that remind us of the creative skill of our God! On your next flight try to watch the wings when landing. They won't fall off, and the birds may have us looking like amateurs, but God's hand is still there mediated through our brains and brawn. So give Him the glory once again!

***Douglas Allison***

**ST NINIAN'S WEBSITE: <http://stninianscastledouglas.org.uk/>**

**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 3rd March 2013.

Email: [johnsteph@mkcott.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:johnsteph@mkcott.wanadoo.co.uk) or from the website via the 'Contact the Webmaster' link , or tel: 01556 502736.

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

### **FROM YOUR CORRESPONDENT IN CROWBOROUGH ...**

Theo and I have now settled into some sort of routine in Crowborough, this one time small town of 5,000 souls, some 50 years ago, which is now approaching 26,000 and more housing is still required! Our wee close is very quiet with neighbours willing to provide mutual support and not in the slightest bit nosey. We ripped out much of the 1960s elements in the bungalow and can now enjoy an easy to manage home which is nice and warm, having had all the insulations completed. The garden (very small) is next and we await a delivery of roses from David Austin to plant. The soil is heavy with solid clay about a spit and a half down, so good for roses but it makes drainage something of a challenge.

You may have caught up with Theo's fall at the end of August. I will spare you the details apart from three broken ribs, a chest drain which had to be repeated and two spells in hospital. All is mending now but it knocked the stuffing out of her and she is slowly regaining her strength. The Tunbridge Wells hospital, actually at Pembury, is wonderful and one of the new ones built under the PFI scheme. Every patient has a private en suite room etc. It will always be in debt ... so thank you Gordon Brown!!

It is a very small world, with one of our neighbours having a daughter who farms just to the north of Dumfries, and this area used to be known as "Little Scotland" because of the surrounding countryside. There are some beautiful walks to be taken in the Ashdown Forest and many National Trust properties within easy reach. One of the gems is Sheffield Park, which is nothing short of spectacular in the autumn (see photo).



*Sheffield Park in Autumn*

Church life is very busy. You could be involved every day doing something, but I am happy to take my pew at the traditional service at 9.15 and leave the happy-clappy and family service at 10.45 to others, including my family! We have however just finished a week-long festival with Roger Carswell doing live interviews every night. One such interview was with a former UFV terrorist who came to Christ while in prison. Another was with a Muslim, who converted to Christianity. All very interesting, so look up All Saints' Church, Crowborough on the web and get all the details.

We both think a lot about life in CD, which we did so enjoy, and what you are doing, and with luck will make every effort to come and see you all during next year. In the meantime Theo and I send our love.

***David Steward***

### **MOTHER'S UNION REPORT**

The Rector introduced our September meeting with a Service of Dedication and a renewal of what the work of the MU worldwide represents. We enjoyed our lunch, followed by a résumé of this year's programme and any other business.

In October, we welcomed Mr Tommy Henderson, who gave an illustrated talk entitled 'Titanic', celebrating the Titanic centenary. We said goodbye to Shirley Tuke, a long-term member, who has settled down south, and wish her well.

We are always pleased to welcome new members to our branch, and it would be great if members would invite a friend to join us. INTERESTED? DID YOU KNOW?? Membership is open to all – men and women, single or divorced, young or old, if you are a Christian and believe in the aims and objectives of the Mothers' Union and Christian care for families. Please do not be put off by the name: we have moved forward and all are welcome. There is more information at the back of the Church. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday every month, September to June, 12.30-3.30pm approximately, in the Gordon Memorial Hall.

Together we can make a difference through nurturing 'family' in its many forms and this is our intention – to work, pray and respond to the needs of families world-wide and around us. Do come and join us.

***Jenny Spence and Elizabeth Woodburn***

### **THE MU REGIONAL RALLY, 20 NOVEMBER 2012, AND BEYOND**

We have just hosted the Regional Rally at which MU members from Dumfries and Kirkcudbright joined us for a service conducted by David, followed by a delicious soup and sweet lunch. As always when we get together in the Memorial Hall, the ambience was superb and we all enjoyed catching up with our friends from the other branches. We were particularly pleased to welcome Ann Glenesk, our Diocesan President, who gave a very thought-provoking speech on the aims of M.U. and how we can all contribute to our community. The handsome sum of £70 was raised for the M.U. Relief Fund and a further £40 came from the Sales Table.

The highlight of the afternoon was David's illustrated talk on St Margaret of Scotland. Her genealogy was complex but it was amazing to learn just how interwoven were the ancient Royal Houses of Europe in that era. Born in Hungary, and eventually finding her way to the protection of Malcolm 3rd of Scotland whom she eventually married, she contributed much to education, travel and charitable causes, with the support of her husband. For example, they served breakfast to the poor each morning before they broke fast. Queensferry owes its name to her. She was canonised by the Pope in recognition of her devotion to the Church and community. Her personal Chapel can still be seen at Edinburgh Castle.

In January, Jenny Armstrong will take us on a "Journey through the Seasons" and in February, we shall have a talk by Megan from Wigtownshire Women's Aid, one of the projects that we support. In March, Canon Stephen will talk about Lent, then comes "Songs and Stories" by Mary Wilson, and finally, "Gardening for Wildlife" by Pam Pumphrey, which takes us to our final meeting of the session, still to be arranged. So there is plenty to look forward to in the New Year!

***Jessie Lockhart***

## SOME PHOTOS FROM THE MU REGIONAL RALLY

*Photos taken by Jessie Lockhart*



## **SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2012 – ANOTHER FAREWELL**



Tim and Shirley Tuke have moved to Northamptonshire to be nearer their family. The Rector thanked them both for their contributions to the life of St Ninian's, including Tim's period of service as one-time Secretary to Galloway Regional Council and Shirley's involvement with the Mothers' Union for many years. The Rector presented them with a photo-montage to remind them of St Ninian's, and Mrs Jenny Spence presented Shirley with a gift from the Mothers' Union.

### **LESLIE SCARBOROUGH HAS RECENTLY MOVED ADDRESS:**

**He is now at:**

Room 15  
Uvedale Hall  
Coddensham Road  
Needham Market  
Ipswich  
IP6 8AX

Tel: 01449 721925

## THE MOTHERS' UNION CONFERENCE



On the bright morning of 5<sup>th</sup> October, four members of St Ninian's Branch – Ann Gault, Jenny Spence, Jenny Wright and myself – set out to join other Mothers' Union members from all over the country at The Scottish Gathering, held at Kincardine, overlooking the Firth of Forth.

Apart from an initial disappointment that we were *not*, after all, to be housed in a castle as promised, but in the adjoining Conference Centre of Tulliallan, owned by the police, the organisation was extremely efficient. I remarked to one of the staff that not a minute was wasted. 'No,' she replied, 'that was the idea. The committee has been planning it for a year!' We were asked not to remain with the people we knew but to mix, and that became easy as everyone was so friendly and helpful. We were divided into groups and given a certain time to discuss questions, then gathered together in the Lecture Theatre for periods of 'feedback', our main leader being Marian Pope, whose official job is training. Then, back we went again to our groups to discuss the next set of questions. I found it difficult at first to find my group, as there were long corridors – seemingly stretching for miles – and many rooms! But eventually we all managed to get to where we were supposed to be.

Our bedrooms were pleasant: looking through my window the sunrise was a joyful beginning to Saturday morning. Meals were excellent, with plenty of choice, and chairs everywhere very comfortable. My only trouble was getting completely lost when I went through the wrong door after crossing the Parade Ground and wandering along the maze of corridors in another part of the Centre – sadly missing Morning Prayer!

The two days were divided into the headings: what the Mothers' Union used to be like, from its beginnings, by Mary Sumner; what it is like now; and what it could become. I was impressed and humbled to hear what

some branches are doing but above all, as the time went on, the feeling came over me that we were a *family* within the Church, which extended almost world-wide and we were united most strongly by prayer. I felt I was blessed to have Bishop Mark Strange, from Moray, Ross and Caithness, to guide our group; a lovely man, full of wisdom – and a great sense of humour! He presided over the Eucharist at the end of the Conference (in which our Jenny Wright read one of the lessons) and preached movingly.

I am so glad I went to The Scottish Gathering, a precious time I'll always remember.

***Sylvia Elliott***

### **A CHORAL WEEKEND AT THE CATHEDRAL OF THE ISLES ON THE ISLE OF CUMBRAE TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE**

I was kindly invited to this celebration, which took place on 18-19 August 2012, by Canon Joyce Pow, who was formerly a non-stipendiary minister at St Columba's, Largs, which used to be my Mum's church. Joyce is now one of the Honorary Canons at the Cathedral of the Isles, Millport on the Isle of Cumbrae.

The easiest way to travel from Castle Douglas is by car, enjoying the scenic views along the coast between Ayr and Largs, looking towards the Isle of Arran, but I went by bus. It took over four hours, via Dalmellington and changing buses at Ayr, but the sea views were fantastic. At Largs I met up with Joyce and the boat trip across to Cumbrae took just ten minutes. We caught a bus to Millport and then had a short walk to our accommodation in the College. After booking in and being shown to our rooms the Warden, David Todd, and his staff laid on a cold buffet lunch for 120 people in the cloisters and gardens – and the sun shone! At three o'clock on the Saturday afternoon we attended a Diocesan Choral Evensong led by the Rt Revd Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, and sung by the Cathedral Choir directed by Alastair Chisholm. It was a splendid afternoon of music! The choir was made up entirely of adults, many of whom are local, together with others from further afield.

After Evensong there was time to relax in the common room in the comfortable leather chairs. Guests who were staying the night enjoyed a

fine dinner in the historic old dining room before browsing through some very old books from shelves reaching up to the ceiling. (The Warden remarked that all the books need to be listed – any volunteers?!) Then it was time to turn in after a memorable day.



*The Cathedral of the Isles and the College*

The following morning we tucked into a well-cooked breakfast with much-enjoyed chats over the coffee pot. Sung Eucharist in the Cathedral followed at 11am, the Celebrant and Preacher again being Bishop Kevin Pearson. During the Eucharist the Cathedral Choir sang excerpts from Mozart's 'Coronation Mass' accompanied by Jonathan Cohen on the organ. I very much enjoyed their singing of 'All people that on earth do dwell' in the setting by Vaughan Williams, and of the Anthem, which was Handel's 'Zadok the Priest' in honour of the Queen's Jubilee. In an afternoon concert we were treated to more Mozart in church when the Telemann Ensemble played the Serenade for 13 Wind Instruments, the 'Gran Partita'. Then there was time to walk in the woods and take some pictures before supper. I did enjoy it all!

On Monday morning, we left the Cathedral grounds for the Cumbrae Pier and soon docked at Largs.

The literature about The College of the Holy Spirit at the Cathedral of the Isles says, 'The beauty and tranquillity of the island and Cathedral grounds gives guests the opportunity to relax throughout the day and offers an added dimension to your retreat or holiday experience. Three-star accommodation is provided in the College adjacent to the Cathedral. The College is set in eight acres of woodland close to the sea: a historic building with modern facilities, it can sleep up to 30 and boasts good home-cooking.' Further information can be obtained from the Warden, Tel. 01475 530353 or from the website: <http://www.island-retreats.org/cumbrae.html> The 2012 programme of events is still running and the Warden is hosting Christmas at the Cathedral with a House Party! I could be tempted!!

*Donald Sommerville*

### **THE STRENGTH OF FRIENDSHIP**

I attended a talk given by Lucinda Scott at a Christian Viewpoint meeting entitled 'The Strength of Friendship'. Lucinda and Alex, having invited some people to stay in their holiday cottages who would otherwise not have had a holiday, became friends with them and later the wife invited Lucinda to visit Romania with her to see what was going on there. Lucinda met a couple in Romania who have since become close friends. Although of Christian upbringing, Dan(one of the couple) stated, as did James (James 2.14-18) that faith without works was a waste of time. He didn't hold with all this talking about their faith if you didn't do something that mirrored that faith.

Following the downfall of Ceauşescu's regime, this couple, although well educated, Dan, a doctor and Simona an engineer with a wish to be a primary teacher, wanted to do something for their country rather than move abroad. Under the regime, families had been separated, the elderly being housed in multi-storey blocks, some unable even to get out of bed, and with no help at all. Children in school had to be quiet and weren't allowed to leave their seats; the 'teacher' would be carrying out a second job at their desk as they weren't paid for being a teacher. The few toys were kept locked in a glass-fronted cupboard, to be looked at only.

Dan used to visit the elderly where he could at least change their beds and help them keep clean; he had no access to drugs or medication. Simona started a nursery in their two-room apartment to give children a chance to play, to have some freedom. She started with a dozen children. Attempts to expand by renting further accommodation didn't work out. While Lucinda was there they took her to look at a plot of land Simona had been given; there was also a plot next door which had mains electric, water and drainage; that was the plot she would like. They prayed not only that they would be able to find the funds to build a nursery on the plot they had been given but also be able to get the plot next door. In the meantime they had said to Lucinda that all they wanted from her was her *friendship*; someone who would walk alongside, who would be there to listen to them, someone to bounce ideas off, to hear their woes and their celebrations.

The nursery was built on both plots but they didn't stop there. When a primary school and then a secondary school were needed they happened. Enough you might think, but they went on to build an international school in Cluj ( <http://www.scoalainternationala.ro/> ) and have plans to build another in Bucharest and then in another country yet to be chosen that has similar needs.

They are supported by friends and parents (who become friends). Some offer practical help such as painting or training in finance. It hasn't all been plain sailing: at one point they were left with a huge debt when promised money didn't appear. However their work and vision has blossomed and all supported by the strength of friendship without which it wouldn't have happened.

In St Ninian's we have some strong friendships; we also have people who don't just talk about what needs to be done but go and do it. A lot of it is done with fellow Christians from other denominations. It would be interesting to identify all the different projects that St Ninian's congregation is involved in and then look at where the gaps are. What else could we be doing in the Castle Douglas area: where are friends needed? Perhaps closer to home.

***Jenny Wright***

## OUR TRIP TO NORTH WALES

At the end of August, Ian and I went to Llangollen in north Wales for a week. We had not been before and there were lots of interesting things to do. We stayed at the Chainbridge Hotel which was in a beautiful setting with the Shropshire Union Canal at the back. At the front is the River Dee with a railway line above and a steam train which runs a few times each day.



We walked to the Horseshoe Falls, just two minutes from the Hotel, and the start of the Llangollen Canal. It is a weir constructed by Thomas Telford in 1808 and is 460 feet long, feeding into the canal. Going in the opposite direction from the hotel, you can walk into Llangollen. We took a ride on a horse-drawn barge along the canal.

We went a run in the car to Snowdonia and the weather was beautiful on this particular day. The views were breathtaking and magical. If you so desired there is a train which takes you up into the Snowdon Mountains - we might do that next time.

At the hotel, Ian and I looked at the leaflets to see what might be of interest to us and discovered that at Plas Newydd there was a historic re-enactment in words, song and dance, which happens once a year, about Lady Sarah Ponsonby and Lady Eleanor Butler, who became known as the 'Ladies of Llangollen'. It described what it was like to live in Llangollen in the eighteenth century and was about how they met in Ireland, where Lady Sarah was Lady Eleanor's pupil and they became good friends. One day they decided to run away together and set up a new life living at Plas Newydd in Llangollen. Lady Sarah's parents tried to persuade their daughter to come

back home and to end the relationship with Eleanor but she did not and she rejected her family. Ian and I learned a lot through the re-enactment. There was one woman dressed as an Irish maid who was playing musical instruments. I had a go with a post horn and it was a hard instrument to play as you need a lot of air from your lungs to play a tune and I just seem to make a pumping noise. We would like to go back again – it was a good day.



Ian and I went to Sygun Copper Mine in Snowdonia which was awesome. You firstly go to the visitor centre and when you have paid you get an audio guide so you can press the appropriate numbers during the tour. When you enter the mine it is cold and very slimy. We did the tour at our own pace. It went through the life of the miners and what a day consisted of for them and the money they were paid - it was not a lot. Our main reason for going to the mine was because Ian at some time in his life went pot-holing and he wanted to educate me further.

We did loads of other things as well but all in all it was a very educating holiday and I learned loads of new things.

**Steven Dill**

### **BRAN FLAKES (via email from Jenny Wright)**

Fred and Yvonne were 85 years old and had been married for sixty years. Though they were far from rich, they managed to get by because they carefully watched their pennies. Though not young, they were both in very good health, largely due to Yvonne's insistence on healthy foods and exercise for the last decade.

One day, their good health didn't help when they went on yet another holiday

holiday and their plane crashed, sending them off to Heaven. They reached the pearly gates, and St Peter escorted them inside. He took them to a beautiful mansion, furnished in gold and fine silks, with a fully stocked kitchen and a waterfall in the master bath. A maid could be seen hanging their favourite clothes in the closet. They gasped in astonishment when he said, 'Welcome to Heaven. This will be your home now.'

Fred asked St Peter how much all this was going to cost. 'Why, nothing,' St Peter replied. 'Remember, this is your reward in Heaven.'

Fred looked out the window and right there he saw a championship golf course, finer and more beautiful than any ever built on earth. 'What are the greens fees?' grumbled Fred.

'This is Heaven,' St Peter replied. 'You can play for free, every day.'

Next they went to the clubhouse and saw the lavish buffet lunch. 'Don't even ask,' said St Peter to Fred. 'This is Heaven, it is all free for you to enjoy.'

Fred looked around at Yvonne and nervously asked, 'Well, where are the low fat and low cholesterol foods and the decaffeinated tea?' 'That's the best part,' St Peter replied. 'You can eat and drink as much as you like and you will never get fat or sick. This is Heaven!'

'No gym to work out at?' asked Fred. 'Not unless you want to,' was the answer.  
'No testing my sugar or blood pressure or...'  
'Never again.'

Fred glared at Yvonne and said, 'You and your .... Bran Flakes. We could have been here ten years ago!'

***My young grandson called the other day to wish me Happy Birthday. He asked me how old I was, and I told him 80.***

***My grandson was quiet for a moment, and then he asked,  
“Did you start at 1?”***

## ABBA'S REST REPORT



*Children at Muona*

Between us we are still managing to sponsor our three children in Malawi – Dorine, Humfury and Kevin – so that they receive food and an education, and are keeping healthy.

Instead of sending Christmas parcels this year, as it is so expensive, I've donated on your behalf with instructions for them from ARO to receive £5 each to spend as they wish on clothes, books etc. I wish it could be more, but it will seem like a fortune to them and, without your continued support, this would not be possible. Donations are always very welcome. Thank you all.

(There is a lot of information on the Abba's Rest Orphans website: <http://abbasrest.org/> )

*Jenny Spence*

## **ANDREW STEWART'S 2012 LONDON TO PARIS BIKE RIDE IN AID OF CHRISTIAN AID**

There were some differences about this, my fourth, annual cycling event. Firstly the good news: my two nephews, Matt and Hamish, decided to join me in the firm belief that if their uncle could do it then it can't be that difficult. The other minor modification was that about six months previously I had upgraded my faithful steed of a Ridgeback hybrid to a Bianchi Infinito 105 road bike and, for those less interested in the technicalities of bikes, let's just say it was certainly a lot less tiring.

The first day was also different in that previously we had started at Bexley; this year we cycled from South Croydon to Dover, a total of 85 miles, making it the longest day's cycling. Somewhere between the two was a very steep hill, the bottom of which was completely flooded due to the recent torrential rain. I am reluctant to admit that, about half way up, this was the one and only place in the 312 mile total that I had to get off my bike and walk. Before all my kind and generous sponsors come asking for a refund I would like to point out that this hill was steeper and longer than my usual training hill and I was certainly not the only one to dismount.

There were some similarities to other years, as I soon remembered the 2010 experience of being hot and sweaty having arrived at Dover and then drenched as we waited for over an hour in a cool wind at the port to board our ferry; a little shelter for cyclists on this exposed holding area would have been appreciated. Nevertheless, with a little help from the hand dryers on the ferry to Calais, we soon warmed up. The remainder of the route through Arras (the second night stop) and on to Compiègne was similar. The final day to Paris started with a lovely ride through the local forest, and ended with 35 of us all in Christian Aid livery cycling up the Champs Elysees to the Eiffel Tour, where a welcoming reception party was awaiting.

Almost all participants in this event are reluctant to attempt this more than once as they all say they would have difficulty with raising, for a further time, the minimum required sponsorship (£1,300). Well, thanks to my very loyal band of generous sponsors like you at St Ninian's, I do not have this problem as you so kindly keep giving each year to this very worthy cause: a huge source of encouragement. Thank you to everybody for their prayers,

support and generosity and I have a certificate to say that I have raised £1,650 for Christian Aid - group total £63,087 – THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

**Andrew Stewart**



The six-wheel Stewarts – Andrew (C) with his nephews Hamish (L) and Matt (R)



**FROM DECEMBER'S 'DIOCESAN NEWS':**  
*Ready, willing and able to help!*

**WHEN the new Development Teams** were created from the former Action Groups in order to support the strands of the diocesan strategic intention for growth, *writes ANNE TOMLINSON*, each was given the following remit by the Bishop. Firstly to respond to requests for help and support from charges whose Mission Action Plan (MAP) priority falls in the area covered by the Team's expertise. And secondly to initiate work: to prepare suitable study materials to be made available to charges both online and in print; to train Team members to help deliver such materials in charges, and to organise annually at least one diocesan and one Regional event in the areas covered by their particular strand. The Development Teams have been extremely pro-active this past year, preparing workbooks on 'Missional Leadership' and 'Integration', laying on Saturday training days on Liturgy ('The Service of the Word'), Bible Study ('Seeing Scripture Today') and children's work ('Core Skills for Children's Work'), and producing diocese-wide information ('Faith in Action'). But they would love to receive more approaches from charges as they work through their MAPs, getting involved in helping with the discernment of MAP goals or the outworking of the targets chosen. To aid this process of making contact with the right Team, these are listed below with their conveners and areas of expertise.

**Development Team for Prayer and Spirituality** — Growth in prayer, reflective living and spirituality; contemplation and meditation; opportunities for Quiet Days and Retreats; labyrinths; pilgrimage.

*Revd David Wostenholm, david.wostenholm@hotmail.co.uk.*

**Development Team for Learning and Discipleship** — Deepening everyone's discipleship and growth in faith through educational opportunities; doctrinal, ethical and scriptural theology; theological reflection skills; connecting faith and daily life.

*Revd Gordon Fyfe, gordon.fyfe@virginmedia.com.*

**Development Team for Welcome, Integration and Numerical Growth** — Developing skills in invitation, welcome, inclusion, and integration; growing welcoming teams; improving gifts discernment techniques and ensuring that all talents are used, supported, evaluated and appreciated.

*Revd Drew Sheridan, drew@frsheridan.fsnet.co.uk.*

**Development Team for Imaginative Outreach into Communities —**

Growing in understanding of the local community and connecting with it in ways that are appropriate for the context; doing a community audit; building partnerships; being creative in making links.

*Revd Kenny Macaulay, frkenny@btinternet.com.*

**Development Team for Children and Young People —** Exploring new ways of doing children's and youth work; training leaders; Godly Play; Messy Church events; offering resources; connecting groups across diocese.

*Mrs Lorraine Darlow, lorraine.darlow@sky.com.*

**Development Team for Worship and Liturgy —** The Team has the expertise to help any charge as it seeks to see how its chosen MAP strand is lived out liturgically; help with experimental re-ordering; thinking about new ways of worshipping; learning about worship; training worship leaders.

*Revd Canon James Milne stbrideglasgow@btinternet.com.*

**Development Team for Missional Leadership —** Growth in the kind of leadership that thinks missionally at all times and encourages congregations to be bravely generous about the use of their God-given resources (people, money and buildings). A missional leader is one who sees mission as the driving energy behind all the congregation does; the missional congregation looks outwards at all times and considers every aspect of its ministry through that lens. *Convenership vacant.*

**DIOCESAN GROWTH STRATEGY**

Much is being made of the Diocesan Growth Strategy at present; much is being discussed about Mission Action Planning (or MAP-ping, for short) and it now has its own designated website at: <http://map.glasgow.anglican.org/>  
The Vestry of St Ninian's will be meeting with our appointed facilitator, Sandra Walsh from Gatehouse, in the new year to look at ways in which St Ninian's might 'grow'.



**THE GROWTH STRATEGY PRAYER**

Spirit of our Loving God  
In your mercy and compassion  
Inspire, encourage and empower us  
To live and work together  
As a Diocese  
To allow your mission for us  
To take flesh  
Through Jesus Christ  
Our Living and Eternal Lord. Amen.

**“TO HELL WITH YOUR METAPHYSICS” - GOD IS “NOT POWER, BUT POWER OF LOVE”** - the title of a talk given by Revd John Martin from Sandgreen, and held at lunchtime on 26 November in the Maxwell Rooms of St Peter’s Church, Dalbeattie. It was the first gathering of an ecumenical group which hopes to meet several times a year, the idea of local Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Episcopalian clergy, and inspired by the ‘Church and the Academy’ monthly seminar meetings in Glasgow. About 40 people arrived for the meeting, including Bishop Gregor, from many traditions and from an area covering Dumfries to Kirkcudbright, and there was a lively exchange of ideas afterwards.

John’s subject was the radical twentieth century vicar Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy - ‘Woodbine Willie’ - whose honest and human theology was fired and developed when responding to need in the slums, and then as a padre in the trenches of the First World War, and expressed so naturally in his poetry. A transcript of John’s talk, a distillation of material he had prepared for an MA dissertation at St Andrew’s University is available to read on: <http://md.glasgow.anglican.org/2012/11/church-and-academy-in-the-fields/>

*Judi Duck*

The next meeting is planned for Tues 29 January 2013, same time and venue, when Fr William McFadden will speak on “Vatican II – a Council of Reform or a Council of Continuity?”



**FROM THE REGISTERS:****Baptisms**

12.08.12 Freddie Simpson Kay  
4.11.12 Evie Ann Barbour

**Marriages**

15.09.12 Anne Wilson and Neil Broome  
10.11.12 Marianne Tweedie and Alan Brown  
(at the Crichton Memorial Church)

**Funerals**

21.08.12 Angela Smith  
28.08.12 Joan Francis

**EXTERNAL GIVING:**

As agreed at the recent Annual Meeting of the Congregation, the Vestry would like nominations from the congregation for charities they would like to see supported. The money available is usually shared between several local, national and international charities. If you would like to nominate a charity, please give details, preferably with some background information, to any member of the Vestry, for consideration at its meeting in January 2013.

**HAVE YOU CONSIDERED STANDING FOR GENERAL SYNOD?**

MEMBERSHIP gives you a real insight into how the Church is governed, and you meet a lot of fascinating people with an interest in making the church more relevant and responsive.

You don't have to be a member of Diocesan Synod (although if elected, you become a member of Diocesan Synod). Nominations may be made for most clergy in the Diocese, and lay communicants of the Diocese aged 18 or over. The commitment is to attend General Synod in June, and Diocesan Synod in February / March, and possibly a couple of other times, for four years. Or you could stand as an alternate member, with a good chance of being called, for one year only. If you are interested, contact Diocesan Secretary Gib FitzGibbon: [gibfitzg@aol.com](mailto:gibfitzg@aol.com).

## Who's Who

<b>Rector</b>	:	The Revd Canon David Bayne	01556-503818
<b>Hon Assistant</b>	:	The Revd Canon David Main	504669
<b>Lay Readers</b>	:	Mr Alan Stewart Mr Douglas Allison	660215 504279
<b>Lay Worship Leader / Pastoral Assistant / Hon Secretary</b>	:	Mrs Jenny Wright	502184
<b>Hon Treasurer</b>	:	Mr Fred Coulthard	502965
<b>Property Convenor / Lay Rep</b>	:	Mr Clem Gault	502583
<b>Alternate Lay Rep / Freewill Offerings Convenor</b>	:	Mr Ian Mather	505910
<b>Third Lay Rep</b>	:	Mrs Ann Gault	502583
<b>Vestry Members</b>	:	The Rector (Chairman), Hon Secretary; Hon Treasurer Property Convenor	
<b>Elected</b>	:	Mr Ian MacQuarrie Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst Mr Ian Mather Mrs Sue Beddows Miss Sheila MacKenzie Mrs Brenda Shapeero	01557-820122 502736 505910 670286 01644-420623 670666
<b>Organist</b>	:	Mr Maurice Till	620619
<b>Sanctuary Guild</b>	:	{Mrs Audrey Pointon {Mrs Audrey Slee	670494 01644-420466
<b>Co-ordinator for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups</b>	:	Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01644-420623
<b>M U Branch Leaders</b>	:	{Mrs Jenny Spence {Mrs Elizabeth Woodburn	01557 330010 610519
<b>Thursday Club</b>	:	Mrs Ann Gault	502583
<b>Men's Group Chairman</b>	:	Mr Ian Mather	505910
<b>Hall Bookings / Admin Asst / Magazine Editor / Webmaster</b>	:	Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst	502736
<b>Magazine Distributor / Traidcraft</b>	:	Mr John Dewhurst	502736
<b>Sunday School Leaders</b>	:	{Mrs Rosie MacQuarrie {Mrs Ann Gault {Mrs Roz Stevens	01557-820122 502583 503589
<b>Little Fishes</b>	:	Mrs Roz Stevens	503589