

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



Gutcher's Isle, Colvend Coast

St Ninian's Review

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Dear Friends,

In the wake of the EU referendum result our country is in the midst of its deepest political crisis since the Suez disaster of 1956-7 that sounded the death-knell of the British empire. Both the governing and opposition parties are in disarray, and those who engineered the “out” vote are walking away from their responsibilities. We are beginning to see glimpses of the economic consequences of political failure. There is no plan or policy for the UK’s future, and the expectations of the “leave” constituency on the neuralgic points of immigration and the health service have already been dashed—leaving them, I suspect, even more angry and alienated from the political and financial élites.

That perception, that the people don’t matter to their rulers—who are seen as being interested in only their own aggrandisement and enrichment, rather than the common good—is taking root, not just in the UK but throughout the western world. A toxic brew of anger, frustration and alienation is bubbling up into a determination to sabotage the establishment. In consequence, the broadly-liberal, democratic, regulated capitalism that has been our political settlement, arguably since the Enlightenment and certainly for a century, is under pressure from an assortment of right- and left-wing nationalists, populists and snake-oil salesmen, peddling simplistic solutions to the gargantuan socio-economic issues of the 21st century. In the UK the presenting issues are still the Iraq war, the banking crisis and the EU, with a side-dish of immigration, the NHS and the quarter-century civil war in the Conservative party—and the EU was the available target on June 23rd.

So, is the Christian religion able to address helpfully these besetting issues of our time? I believe so. And I believe our best approach may be through St. Paul’s “higher gifts” in 1 Corinthians 13—faith, hope, and charity—not least because almost anyone who has ever been to a wedding will have heard the text.

Charity, from the Latin, *caritas*, is the love expressed in Jesus’ New Commandment: “Love one another, as I have loved you.” It challenges Christians to see the Christ in others. For non-Christians charity may perhaps be represented as a call to respect the humanity of others.

Hope is a defining characteristic of Christians. We see the endless possibilities of new life in Christ who, in the ultimate act of charity, freed us

from our “fallen” nature to fulfil our true destiny through “the glorious liberty of the children of God.” If we can come to recognise that we are all God’s children—in the old Scots phrase, “a’ Jock Tamson’s bairns” - then there is indeed hope for humanity.

Pace St. Paul, I think faith is the Christian gift most needed by the modern world. I don’t mean the endless and fruitless determination of the world’s religions to re-make God in their own image. Too many ruthless men, over too many centuries, have annexed the faith of others to their own ambition and, by a transference I have never understood, it’s God who gets the blame. Rather, I mean the common human understanding, at a much deeper level, of a divine Creator whose purposes for humanity are good and who made us for good.

The ancient Israelite Proverb (29.18) says, “where there is no vision the people perish.” That’s as true today as 3000 years ago, and I believe that our faith in God as enfleshed by Jesus and expressed above by Paul gives us a manifesto for a world that rises above its politics and religions to offer nothing less than humanity’s salvation from itself. In the words of Michael Forster’s best hymn:

“We work with our Creator to keep the vision bright;
in places of oppression we call for freedom’s light:
a glorious new beginning, a universe at peace,
where justice flows like fountains, and praises never cease.”

Yours in his service,



FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptism: 12.06.16 Baylie Geddes Middleton

Funeral: 1.07.16 Michael Beaumont Spence

SAID OR SUNG

The service we variously call the Holy Communion, or the Eucharist, or the Mass, has been the church's central act of worship since the earliest days of Christianity. Our service had found its basic, familiar shape as early as the year 450. The first half comprised readings from scripture, psalmody, the sermon, and the people's intercessions. The second half, the Eucharist proper, consisted of the offertory, Eucharistic prayer, communion, and dismissal. But what of some of the other prayers and songs which form part of the service, and which we sing or say today?

The **Gloria in Excelsis** or 'Song of the Angels' (at Bethlehem): Originally a 'private' morning hymn of praise, the Gloria was first included by Eastern churches, such as Jerusalem and Constantinople, during the third century. Some two hundred years later Pope Symmachus ordained that "on every Sunday and martyr's feast the hymn 'Glory be to God on high' should be said." From the outset the Gloria was always said or sung before the scripture readings, as it is now.

The **Nicene Creed**, our main summary statement of Christian belief, agreed at the Council of Nicaea in 325, came to be used, understandably, in baptismal services. It was first included in the mass in Antioch in the 480s, and then its use gradually spread westwards into and across Europe. By the year 800 it had been included in the service almost everywhere.

The **Sanctus** ('Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might,' etc.): This worship prayer, chanted by the seraphim in Isaiah's vision of God (Isaiah, Chapter 6), was certainly being used in the service in Egypt as early as the year 230. From that time it has been said or sung after the preface and before the prayer of consecration.

The **Lord's Prayer** had been introduced into the service after the Eucharistic prayer by the year 350, in Jerusalem. Its inclusion spread quickly. By about 420, as St Augustine of Hippo, writing in north Africa remarked, "Almost the whole world now concludes the Eucharistic prayer with this."

The **Agnus Dei** ('O Lamb of God,' etc): This little prose hymn seems to have originated in Syria where there had long been a special devotion to 'the Lamb of God.' It was first introduced into the Roman rite by Pope Sergius (r. 687-701), himself a Syrian by birth, and was said or sung shortly before receiving communion, as we do today.

So the main content of our service had been pretty well achieved over

a thousand years ago. Since then additions and alterations have come, and mostly gone. It has been the aim of the Western church in modern times, much influenced by the reforming Second Vatican Council, to ensure that we use the very best of our inheritance in our Christian worship.

Paul Campbell

MATINS MATTERS!

At St Ninian's on the fourth Sunday of every month we have a non-Eucharistic service called Morning Prayer, usually referred to as Matins. Where did this come from, what is it for, and why should we continue with it?

Matins is an ancient rite, with roots back to the Jewish synagogue services adopted during the exile in Babylon, when the faithful could not go to the Temple in Jerusalem to make sacrifices. After the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in AD 70, the synagogue service of prayer and praise became the norm. By that time a similar format had already been adopted by the early Christian Church, with psalms and readings and prayers forming a service of preparation for Holy Communion. These non-Eucharistic services became the staple of the early monastic communities, and were regularised by the medieval Church into seven services held at intervals through the day and night. At the Reformation in the sixteenth century, when Archbishop Thomas Cranmer produced the Book of Common Prayer, he re-cast these into two services to be read every day in the morning and evening: Matins and Evensong. These two services became the mainstay of Anglican worship for the next 450 years, although recently they have become rarer, thanks to changes in liturgical fashion, and especially the establishment of 'parish communion' as the standard Sunday service from the middle of the last century.

The form of Matins included in the 1929 Scottish Prayer Book is identical to that in the English Book of Common Prayer, as revised in 1662. It falls into four sections. First come the Introduction and General Confession, where we accept our sinfulness and ask for forgiveness, and are then pardoned by the minister on God's behalf. This is the necessary preparation for the second element of the service, which praises God by means of sung 'canticles' mostly drawn from the Old Testament. This usually means singing the Venite (Psalm 95) and the Jubilate (Psalm 100) and in between the glorious hymn of the early Church, the Te Deum Laudamus. The psalms appointed for that day are said or sung, the whole Psalter being read in the course of a month. The third part of the service, interspersed among the second, is formed of the Lessons -

readings from the Old and New Testaments – which allows those attending Matins and Evensong every day to hear the whole Bible read in a year. The Creed, which comes after the canticles, is a personal statement of assent to the faith of the Church. The fourth and final section is formed of prayers: the collect for the day, two set prayers, intercessions for the Queen and the Royal Family, the clergy and people, followed by the ancient prayer of St Chrysostom. The service ends with the Grace.

This is the basic structure of Matins, but at St Ninian's we have slight variations in line with modern use. The service usually starts, not with the Introduction and General Confession but at page 7, with a shorter confession. The Lessons are derived from the modern Lectionary rather than the Prayer Book calendar. This means they are in the New Revised Standard Version rather than the Authorised (or King James) Version of the Bible, and the yearly round of Bible readings and monthly cycle of psalms is not followed. We sing three hymns (at the beginning, middle and end), and replace some of the final prayers with additional intercessions presented by a member of the congregation. Another (added!) extra is the sermon.

From this synopsis it is already apparent that Matins, even with the omissions and additions, is a well-thought out, dignified service, suffused with prayer and Scripture. But there is more. The language of the Prayer Book services has long been acknowledged as one of the glories of English. In part this is because the text of the service draws so heavily on the Authorised Version of the Bible, composed at a time when English language was at its zenith. Cranmer himself was a master of beautiful prose which can be seen throughout the service, from the General Confession ('We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts') to the translation of the prayer of St Chrysostom ('when two or three are gathered together in thy name thou wilt grant their requests'). The collects are particularly splendid. The Church year begins, on the first Sunday of Advent, with an exhortation to 'cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light', and ends, on the 25th Sunday after Trinity, with the wonderful petition: 'Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded'. Many of these passages are justly famous – though few nowadays know where they come from - and are included in every book of quotations. Matins, like the other Prayer book services, is certainly memorable. Nowadays, such considerations are often swept aside. We are told that Matins is too old-fashioned, its

theology too antiquated, its language too challenging for ordinary people today. In truth there is little in Matins that would trouble an adult of average intelligence, with a basic grasp of English literature, a passing interest in theology, and an open mind. Nor is the theology outlandish. Matins might lack the feel-good factor of some modern services, but it is refreshingly honest about our weakness and failure and need for God's Grace. It is also firmly focused on God and not on ourselves – which may not be such a bad thing. Attempts to formulate alternative non-Eucharistic services have not been a resounding success. Remember the Service of the Word we tried recently? It fell down on grounds of structure and language – precisely the areas where Matins triumphs. Thankfully, at St Ninian's, at least, there is no need to resort to such unsatisfactory alternatives. For a deeply moving, prayerful service that has stood the test of time, come to Matins!

Patrick Little

NEWS FROM BETH MACQUARRIE

Hello everyone!

I have just finished my four years at Strathclyde University. I have graduated with a "Bachelor of Education in Primary Education with First Class Honours"... a HUGE surprise! I am currently in the process of applying for a Master's as I was granted a £400 scholarship for being one of the top twenty students in the year. I will fund the rest of my course with the wages I will get working at Kirkcudbright Primary!



Beth (L) and best friend Ashley (R).

I have been so lucky to be placed at such a fabulous school, with an excellent Head Teacher (our own David Stevens). I will be teaching a class of 25 Primary Two children which should be a huge amount of fun, though hard work - especially alongside a Master's. However, I'm up for the challenge and I look forward to keeping you all informed throughout the year.

Beth says: "Some of you met Ashley when she attended our service on Easter Day. I wouldn't have got through university without her!"

Despite being a fully qualified teacher, there is no doubt in my mind that I will still be the donkey in this year's church Nativity, though maybe

I could persuade my P2's to take my place!

Thank you all very much for your support throughout my time at university. Mum and Dad passed on all your interest and concerns whilst I was away and this was a great reassurance to me. I also have to thank the Vestry for the financial support I received in my first two years, which enabled me to buy those resources which helped me pass my exams and will prepare me for my year ahead.

Beth (a.k.a. "Miss MacQuarrie")

And congratulations from all the congregation! We wish you well in the coming year - and look forward to seeing our favourite donkey in this year's Nativity Play. (Ed.)



All the family at Beth's graduation ceremony: From (L): Euan, Katy, Ian, Beth, Rosie, Jack

TWO EXTRAORDINARY STROKES OF LUCK

Judi Rumble

Watching the coverage of the centenary of the first battle of the Somme, I was struck by the fact of two strokes of chance or maybe luck in my immediate family, without which (in one case) I wouldn't exist.

Unlikely as it may sound, my father fought in the First World War. I was born when he was over 60. He left the family home in Old Kilpatrick as a young man and travelled to India to work for the East India Company and, whilst there, joined the army stationed out there. I presume this was The Royal Welsh, as I have been told this is the regiment he served with. This explains why he was not a member of a Scottish regiment. I know he returned to the UK and fought as part of the British Expeditionary Force (the Old Contemptibles). He fought at Mons and later in Gallipoli. And then the stroke of fate or luck. He was wounded and sent home on 29th June 1916 ... and so avoided that dreadful battle at the Somme by two or three days.



The other event happened to my uncle. He ran away to sea when he was 14, serving on the big battleships. During the Second World War he served on HMS Hood. Thankfully he was not on board on her last fateful voyage although he lost many of his best friends when she was sunk. As he was my foster father for the first three years of my life, he was the nearest thing to a father I had. (My real father having returned to his first family, I have no actual memories of him and the information of his career in the army has been gathered from family and research).

Judi Rumble

**MONDAY 20 JUNE 2016 IN THE GORDON MEMORIAL HALL:
“A BISHOP REFLECTS ON OUR LITURGY: RICHNESS, COLOUR
AND NOT A LITTLE PERSONAL PREJUDICE!”**

Over fifty people from all corners of the region – from Portpatrick in the west to Annan in the east, and from Moffat in the north to Dalbeattie in the south, attended the lecture.



Bishop Gregor explored such questions as:

- ♦ *Just how relevant is our Episcopalian liturgy to the people around us?*
- ♦ *Can it introduce them to the living God?*
- ♦ *What about its language, its ceremony, its symbolism; does it connect or does it alienate?*
- ♦ *Does it express a relationship with God or is it an anachronism?*

As always the Bishop gave a fascinating talk, inviting people to ask him questions as his lecture progressed. He gave many examples to illustrate the points he was making. It was interesting to hear of his pet hates as well as his favourites. Having learnt what he does *not* like to happen before and during a service, it could make some of our clergy quite nervous next time he visits their church!

Muriel Palmer
Christ Church, Dalbeattie

ST NINIAN'S MOTHERS' UNION

Our Mothers' Union year here in St Ninian's is composed of various elements, from member-led worship and a soup and bread lunch through to talks by a great variety of speakers. A most caring fellowship enfolds all of this. Each of these elements in 2015/2016 has been both interesting and memorable. Many members have brought their own (often poignant) ideas to our worship together, and this has been followed by still more innovative ideas for soup varieties for all to enjoy. All of our members have brought the food components for our special communal meals at Christmas and June (see photos), and many have had the courage to perform favourite "party pieces" too.

Our speakers this year have been varied and uplifting, some home-grown like Stephanie Dewhurst, Alison Bayne, Kirsty Allison and David Bayne, and others guests from across the region, like David Wishart, Brian Morrell and a representative from "Chariots of Fire."

Our year has been completed by the enrolment of two new members:- Sheila Gadsden and Marguerite Robb. We now look forward to the new session, beginning on 20th September. We meet as always in the hall from 12.30 to about 3.30pm, and we extend a very warm welcome to all who would like to come along and try us out.

Before then, may you all have a very happy summer.

Ann Gault and Alison Bayne



***Tuesday 14th June - the Mothers' Union Enrolment Service:
From (L): Alison, Sheila, Ann, David, Marguerite***



***Four photos of members
enjoying their lunch in the
Rectory garden following the
Enrolment Service***



***Above: The ladies from
Christ Church, Dalbeattie***

Right: The whole group



THE CEILIDH

by our young reporter, Katie Eddyshaw



We had a ceilidh quite recently. It was great because (1) I loved the food because Alison and everyone who did the food are brilliant cooks and (2) the dancing was brilliant. I think the animal dance was highly entertaining, [the Bishop really wanted to join in.] The band was great, their music was fantastic and I loved everyone who came because they were all happy. My favourite dance was the one with the basket, because it was hilarious and entertaining and I enjoyed going up the middle with the partners I got and I liked watching other people going up the middle.

Now, back to the food. We had lasagne, sausages, salad, and other really delicious things to eat. For dessert, we had jelly rabbits, meringues, ice-cream cake, fudge cake with lovely smooth sticky warm toffee sauce and a couple of cakes with raspberries on top and a few more. The drinks were also very nice and everyone was friendly. I really loved the ceilidh. Thank you, David and Alison for a great night.



Katie heads the queue for the food

***Katie's favourite
Animal Game!***



The Bishop dances ...



MEMORIES OF ZAMBIA

In the late 1970s, I left England for a proposed three years out in Zambia. I left a cold snowy Heathrow in January with three small children in tow. They were aged six and four years, and 7 months old. Ten hours later we arrived at Lusaka airport to a hot, humid temperature of 40 degrees (which reminded me of the hothouses in botanic gardens!!) and then endured the long delays and bureaucracy of Zambian officialdom.



Judi and her three young children

Having finally got our ID cards, we spent a night in a guest house and then had another very long journey to the small mining township which was to be our home. The spacious bungalow and garden were lovely. Not so lovely were the lack of a cot for the baby and the sparse furnishings!

I have lots of memories (good and bad) of my time out there. The baby developed whooping cough two days after we arrived. The houseboy spoke French rather than English. There was just a small trading shop to buy food from ... with not many staples to be had. At this time the copper price had crashed and Zambia as a whole had real currency problems. It was a three-hour drive to a township with shops, library and hospital. When you got there all there was on the shelves was Polish jam and, sometimes, dried milk powder. Feeding the children was a distinct challenge! When you could get flour, there was no yeast or milk or margarine. When you could get margarine there was no flour (you get the picture!!) If you bought large sacks of flour, after a week or so you had to sieve it for weevils. Eggs were easy to get and some green veg grown by villagers. Meat was more of a problem and tended to be rather tough! If you were sold lamb it was definitely goat - from the large flocks kept by the villagers. Mind you, it was delicious goat!

The two older children went to the local school (where frogs and snakes lived in holes in the classroom walls). Our houseboy took them at 7am and fetched them home at 12.30 when the school day ended. The township had a wonderful pool which we all enjoyed. Other entertainment was the weekly film shown at the golf club. As there was only one film it was shown to everyone regardless of age. Sometimes it was not at all

suitable for the children (who watched it regardless) and I had some rather strange questions to answer afterwards! I supplied our garden boy with flower and veg seeds to plant. I later discovered he had made off with the veg seeds and all I had to show for his efforts in the garden were flowers. We had papaya trees and bananas in the garden. We adopted two kittens and, when we left, the local nuns had the cats. The only church in the area was the Roman Catholic one, so I got used to unfamiliar services.

The township was very close to the shore of Lake Kariba and bordered what was then Rhodesia over the other side. As it was during the struggles going on in Rhodesia at the time, we had frequent visits from the “freedom fighters” who were often drunk, or high on the local version of “hash.” This could be a little scary and there were occasions when we had to barricade ourselves in our houses. All houses had security bars on the windows and doors and, at night, we locked the doors between the living areas and sleeping areas of the house for safety.



The bungalow



***Livingstone:
“WARNING - Do not feed the
friendly elephant -
She is not always friendly”***



***Miriam hides from a curious zebra -
which tried to put its head through
the car window***

We travelled to Livingstone and visited the Victoria Falls. I bought an elephant stool there which I still have. Sadly I suffered several bad bouts of malaria while I was out there and was eventually advised to return to the UK but, good and bad, I have many memories of my time out there.

Judi Rumble

JENNY WRIGHT DESCRIBES SOME OF HER VISITS TO LONDON

As a young child I was close enough to London to visit my grandparents there on a regular basis and was familiar with the Thames, the underground and various tourist hotspots. When I was eight years old, we moved to Cumbria and I loved the countryside around Brampton and the Lake District and no longer visited my grandparents; they always came to us and then eventually moved close to us.



A red London bus crosses Battersea Bridge, with St Paul's Cathedral in the background

In later life I had a couple of brief business trips, which left me with no desire to go back, and I wasn't too keen on driving south of the Lake District. Even when we lived in South Wales I hated travelling to the north, breathing a sigh of relief when we got the Birmingham - Preston stretch out of the way. When Chris, my younger son, moved to London three years ago, I wasn't expecting to visit very often, hoping he would come up here. However, I

ventured there to see where he lived, and that turned out to be a lovely quiet terrace with a walled garden, which he shares with five other people. I had thought we might do a show. However, it was September and the weather was glorious, far too nice to be inside, so instead we walked through all the famous parks, took a paddle boat on the lake, ate ice-cream, saw the Victoria Memorial, Buckingham Palace and the Royal



Hyde Park



The Tower of London

The pillars of the old bridge still remain at one end and one tale told is that it carries the railway from Platform 9¾ of Harry Potter fame!

We followed that by a ride on the London Eye at sunset which was a wonderful spectacle; it moves so slowly you hardly notice and we watched London gradually lighting up as it got darker. We then enjoyed a meal on one of the many restaurant boats moored close by. A magical couple of days.

I've returned a few times since: to a Classic FM concert in the Albert Hall which was wonderful, with the cherry on the cake being that James Galway was playing. I returned later in the year to watch the tennis pros play; I didn't know the Albert Hall was used for that but it's a fantastic venue and the tennis was more entertaining than Wimbledon.



One of my favourite spots that Chris introduced me to was Camden Sunday Market, an absolute buzz of sound and colour, with the appetising smells of cooking from around the world. Lunch here was followed by a very peaceful, relaxing trip on a gondola-style punt, from Camden Lock along Regent's Canal to London Zoo, serenaded by a lovely guy on a stringed instrument. You

wouldn't know you were in the middle of a city. Known as the Music Boat, I can recommend it.

As I write this I'm about to go again; this time to Wimbledon and the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. I go by train which is quick and easy, using public transport when I get there – anything from the underground to river taxis. I thoroughly enjoy it and the train isn't too expensive if you book ahead: I've even travelled First Class on special offers, where you get more leg room and are served delicious food. I never thought I would connect trains with good service and good food!

No, I wouldn't move to London, but it's a great place to visit.

CASTLE DOUGLAS COMMUNITY AUDIT

Some of you may have noticed the display boards in the hall and will remember filling in questionnaires a couple of years ago. This was produced as part of the Growth Strategy proposed by the Bishop to encourage the churches in the diocese to plan their growth in six areas:

- ♦ Children and Young People
- ♦ Worship, Prayer and Spirituality
- ♦ Learning and Discipleship
- ♦ Numerical Growth, Welcome and Integration
- ♦ Missional Leadership
- ♦ Imaginative Outreach into Local Communities

The purpose of the audit was to identify the needs of the community both within and outwith the church, and to find out what is already being done to meet those needs, where we're already involved, and if there's anything else we can help with. I hope you will take time to look at it.

One of the things that came out of the audit was being able to help the New Life Church with their Food Bank initiative. Some things have happened anyway such as a Bible Study Group, which began with a need that some of the ladies in Bothwell House identified. As a result, a Baptist minister, resident in Bothwell House and who had been recently widowed, wanted something to do and began a fellowship group. He has since died, but the group which started from this has grown and those of us who attend benefit greatly from it. Some members of the congregation are using Bible Reading Fellowship notes and there are sample copies of some of

these with the display. We in the Bible Study Group are using the “Guidelines” notes as a starting point for our reflections.

The group has stopped meeting for the summer but will recommence at the beginning of September, meeting in the Hall at 10.30am on Saturdays. If anyone is interested, please contact me.

Jenny Wright

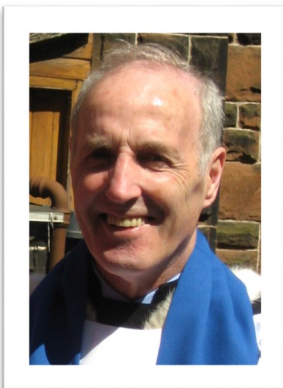


“Our growth consultant thinks the term church sounds outdated.”

Is this something we should think about in our next Mission Action Plan??

(only joking! Ed.)

DOUGLAS ALLISON REVIEWS 40 YEARS AS A READER



One of the results of long life living is the number of serious anniversaries that come by. Not long ago it was 50 years married to Kirsty. This year it is 40 years as a Reader. I am always a little surprised by these anniversaries as I always thought that three score years and ten was the limit. Now that has passed, and the age for a free TV licence, I go forward in some curiosity. However my potential life expectancy was given a bit of a jolt recently with my trip to the Golden Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank to have stents fitted. That turned out to be rather a close call from which I am still recovering.

These 40 years have divided up into three segments. I spent four years at Theological College and gained a degree from Edinburgh University but decided in the end that full time ministry was not for me. I came to Dumfries and took on a youth club of local hard cases. After three years of that I trained as a teacher and took a post in Maxwelltown High School, at that time very new and relatively empty. Again I had a class of the local less educable, and introduced rock climbing and other less academic pursuits. The Chaplain to the school was the Minister of Greyfriars Church in Dumfries and so we joined his congregation, having rather fallen out with St John's. He quickly suggested that I could become a Lay Reader, there being a need locally. The procedures for this were unknown and had to be almost made up on the day. But the service of licensing was very meaningful for me with assembled clergy placing hands on me in blessing and dedication. That was on 25th March 1976.

Almost immediately I was put to work. A local minister had had a bad car crash and was unfit for work. Somehow I was drafted in and took virtually all the services for a period of months. The highlight was at Easter when all the children came and I handed out a cream egg to each. Greatly appreciated that was! Over the following years I must have visited most of the local churches. This was a fascinating experience with all the little variations there are between churches. One strong memory was visiting Cummertrees, Ruthwell and Mouswald with services at 10am, 11am and noon. If you look at a map the three churches are in a line, but of course the services involved some back tracking. Somehow I managed to make the timings with some decidedly hairy driving in between. It did not help that only one church had a toilet! I made some good friends in those churches and leading worship was always a pleasure. This particular treadmill lasted for several months during a vacancy, though I had one Sunday in four off!

Another memorable church is at Dunscore. There the pulpit was high up and not really connected to the main body of the church. The vestry was at the back, up a floor, and entry to the pulpit was through a door and down a sort of ladder. Once in, that was that, with the click of the door behind sealing your fate. On another occasion I visited Kirkbean on the Solway coast. The church is at the end of a long driveway with the elders duly posted at the door to welcome people. I turned in on my motor bike all dressed in suitable gear, crash hat and all. I was carefully ignored until I parked the bike, took off my helmet and introduced myself. The welcome was fine. On a second visit someone decided to make their feelings known and threw a stone at the

window behind the pulpit. I never even blinked which duly impressed the congregation.

After about ten years my association with the church fell into a bad patch and I withdrew from membership. It was a curious year or two as I tried hard to become an atheist. I can assure everyone that it is not an easy thing to do. You can decide to give up on God, but He does not give up on you. I had fallen out not for theological reasons, but for more personal matters. Eventually I began the return process. I still had gripes, so I spent some time in alternative fellowships. But they never had the pull of the main-line church and I rejoined St George's Church to which we had moved some years before. After a while I applied for the restoration of my Readership licence which was in due time agreed.

This period was somewhat less hectic than before. One big change came when we moved from Dumfries to Castle Douglas where I had a cycle shop. I began to take services locally. Again one or two stand out. I was asked to go to Carsphairn one snowy day. It is a long enough journey at the best of times. But after Dalry the snow began to get deeper and other traffic less. I had a van with good front traction and in due course Kirsty and I arrived at the church. They had all but given up on my arrival and I was warmly welcomed. We had a lovely service and Carsphairn remained one of my favourite destinations, even on the Sunday when I lost track of time and spoke for too long by a good fifteen minutes! Only one member looked upset, which was a measure of their kindness

I was by now a member at Twynholm and became friendly with the Minister, Chris Wallace. I took quite a lot of the services for him when he was unwell. A Christmas Eve service stands out with a full church bringing in Christmas Day. As Twynholm was linked with Balmaghie, across Loch Ken from Crossmichael, I often took services there. Again one memory is of driving to the midnight service in a full gale and driving rain, with trees and branches everywhere. But the congregation got there and we had an atmospheric service! Crossmichael was also on my beat. A lovely church but hard work with three legs of pews to look down.

This period of my ministry came to an abrupt halt when I fell ill with ME. It was so severe I had to sell the shop and spent nearly six months in bed or near to it. This enforced break led to a review of church membership and again I visited around to find a new "home". I became a member at Christ Church, Dalbeattie, until one day I wondered why I drove past one church to

attend another. One Sunday I crept into the 8.30 service and I have never got away. I had found a spiritual home and a spiritual leader to follow. One Sunday David preached a sermon which touched me deeply and I spoke with him about my lapsed Readership. I had come to St Ninian's looking for a haven to hide. It was not to be and on the 30th May 2009 I was licensed yet again by Bishop Idris – by chance a fellow student with me.

The Lord works in mysterious ways.....

Douglas Allison

***Another photo from
the Ceilidh - Mahala
takes some time out
on Sheila Churm's lap.
Everyone content!***



ST NINIAN'S REVIEW - Advent 2016

If you have anything you would like to contribute to the next edition of "The Review" it would be most welcome.

Please give or send it to Stephanie by sometime in early November. The deadline will be published in the weekly notices nearer the time.

Email: johnsteph@mkcott.wanadoo.co.uk or phone: 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 a Service at St Ninian's, the current notices are also published on the News page of the website.

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



On 5th September,
Jim and I will again set
sail from Mwanza on
Lake Victoria,
Tanzania, for ten days
working on Jubilee
Hope.



It will be good to see how things have changed and improved on this small ship, taking Primary Care to the islanders and fisherman, since we were there eleven months ago.

We would value your prayerful support once more, as we travel. Practical help might include giving us pairs of reading glasses to take - non-prescription and preferably new or unused. I'd love to tell more to anyone who is interested, or would like to keep in touch while we are away.

Judi Duck

Tel: 01556 502797; email: judiduck@hotmail.com



*In the Lake's Tanzanian waters
alone there are over 150 island
communities, perhaps as many as
500,000 people without access to
healthcare.*

Numbers and isolation make these communities difficult to assess and provide for – and so they are, for the most part, neglected. Our medical ship allows us to reach these communities with a regular primary healthcare service, aiming to serve over 100,000 people annually.

(See: <http://www.vinetrust.org/>)



WHO'S WHO

Rector	: The Revd Canon David Bayne	01556-503818
Hon Assistant	: The Revd Canon David Main	504669
Lay Readers	: Mr Douglas Allison	504279
	: Mr Alan Rumble	01644 420250
Lay Worship Leader/Pastoral Assistant	: Mrs Jenny Wright	502184
Methodist Associate	: Revd Joy Margerison	505476
Hon Secretary	: Mr Patrick Little	690507
Hon Treasurer	: Mr Fred Coulthard	502965
Property Convenor	: Mr Clem Gault	502583
Lay Representative	: Mrs Jenny Wright	502184
Freewill Offerings Convenor / Alternate Lay Representative	: Mr Ian Mather	505910
Third Lay Representative	: Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Vestry Members	: The Rector (Chair) : Hon Secretary : Hon Treasurer : Property Convenor : Lay Representative	
Elected Vestry Members	: Mrs Sue Beddows	670286
	: Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst	502736
	: Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01644-420623
	: Mr Ian MacQuarrie	01557-820530
	: Mr Ian Mather	505910
Organist	: Mr Maurice Till FRCO LTCL ARCM	620619
Sanctuary Guild Convenor	: Mrs Alison Bayne	503818
Co-ordinator for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups	: Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01644-420623
MU Branch Leaders	: {Mrs Alison Bayne	503818
	: {Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Thursday Club	: Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Men's Group Chairman	: Mr Ian Mather	505910
Administrator / Hall Bookings / Magazine & Website Editor	: Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst	502736
Magazine Distribution / Traidcraft	: Mr John Dewhurst	502736
	: {Mrs Rosie MacQuarrie	01557-820530
Sunday School Leaders	: {Mrs Ann Gault	502583
	: {Mrs Roz Stevens	503589
Little Fishes	: Mrs Roz Stevens	503589