

Rosyth
Methodist Church



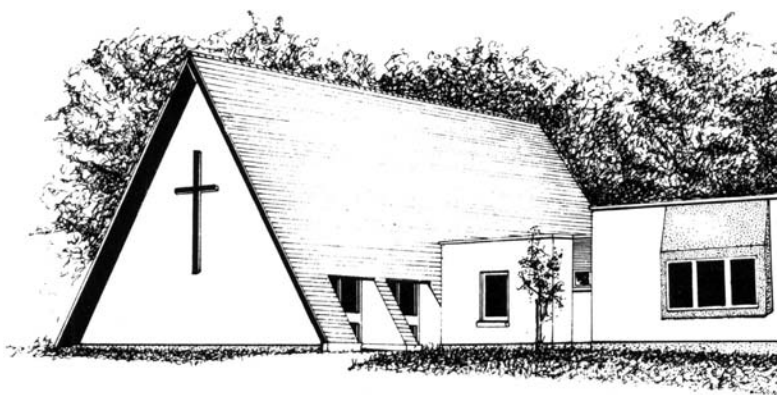
St Margaret's Scottish
Episcopal Church



Contact

the newsletter of the partnership between

Rosyth Methodist Church and
St Margaret's Scottish Episcopal Church



Issue 54

December 2010/January 2011

**Rosyth
Methodist Church**

Scottish Charity SC028559

**St Margaret's Scottish
Episcopal Church**

Scottish Charity SC028426

in partnership

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

Ministers:

Deacon Sarah McDowall
01383 611000

Rev Andrew Letby 0131 663 1545

Senior Steward:

Mary Kidd 01383 872332

Pastoral Secretary:

Gwyneth Kirby 01383 624779

Treasurer:

Howard Kirby 01383 624779

Rector:

Rev Tim Bennison 01383 720532

Curate:

Rev Valerie Walker 07720 327766

Vestry Secretary:

Sandra Young 01383 415021

Treasurer:

Alan Taylor 01383 823902

our regular pattern of worship

Sundays (except 4th)

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

11.00am Methodist Morning Worship
(including Sunday School)

2nd Sundays: for the Young Church

9.00am Breakfast and “Sunday Funday”

11.00am All-age service

4th Sundays: Worship together

11.00am Joint Communion Service

6.00pm “Sunday@Six”

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

From the manse ...

An Advent message from Deacon Sarah McDowall

At this time of year I am reminded that Advent is a time of waiting. There are a lot of people waiting these days; waiting for news of loved ones, waiting for test results, waiting to hear if they have got that job they are after. All of this made me realise how periods of time can feel very different depending on what we might be waiting for.

Five or ten minutes at a bus stop in the cold wind and rain can feel like eternity while a week in the hot sunshine on holiday can seemingly fly by in an instant.

We have all experienced long periods of anxiously waiting for news, sometimes dreading what that news might be when it finally arrives. It doesn't seem to matter how busy we try to be, time still seems to drag along slowly as we worry about what lies ahead. The four weeks of Advent, which should of course be a time of reflection and anticipation of the joy of Christmas, always seem to be so busy that we barely have time to think! Just walk around the shops the weekend before Christmas Day for proof of that!

I wonder how Mary felt in the days and weeks before the birth of our Lord. Was her wait one of relaxation, or one of stress and anxiety? Well, she had the Angel Gabriel giving her the message from God that she was to give birth to His son. I suspect that must have come as rather a shock to say the least, and then she had the reaction of Joseph to deal with. As if all of that wasn't bad enough, she then had to contend with a long uncomfortable and dangerous journey to Bethlehem, before giving birth in a cold and draughty stable.

Alongside all of this she must also have felt joy and honour to be giving birth to the Messiah. No wonder, as Luke says: "Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." (Luke 2:19)

What a mixture of thoughts and feelings must have been going through Mary's mind at this time. Perhaps that is just like Christmas today for so many people. While many enjoy a time of happiness and excitement, many others experience sadness and hurtful memories. Christmas time can be a very lonely and difficult time for many who may not be able to show their true feelings amidst so much celebration. My hope and prayer for all of us is that, whatever Christmas brings, we will feel the love and peace of the Christ-child surrounding us and meeting our needs, whatever they may be.

With love

Deacon Sarah

Our Christmas edition

This issue is full of delights!

See overleaf for details of the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides Christmas concert and coffee evening on **Monday 13 December**.

There are more invitations on pages 4-9, 18, 26, 27 and 38, and challenges about working together on pages 22-25.

Our friends have been busy doing things, as you'll see from pages 17 and 32-37.

And there are the usual items:

- Fellowship News (pages 10-13)
- Conversations (pages 14-16)
- Our Church Building (pages 28-29)

plus the Diary section on pages 19-21.

Enjoy!

Christmas invitations

Christmas Concert and Coffee Evening

Many of you will have enjoyed last year's concert given by the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides of our Church, and will be pleased to hear that all are invited to another concert on **Monday 13 December** at 6.15pm. Once again all three groups will be singing, and the Guides will perform a play.

Interval refreshments, for which there is a nominal charge, will be served by members of the Church, and both before the concert and during the interval there will be an opportunity for you to do a bit of Christmas shopping at various stalls which include a chocolate tombola, a gift stall, and a cake stall. [Note that this event replaces the annual Christmas Coffee Morning]

As well as asking you to support both performers and stall-holders by coming along, do please consider helping practically, as we need both helpers and supplies for the stalls. Home baking is needed for the cake stall, chocolate of all shapes and sizes for the chocolate tombola, and gifts of food for a hamper which will be raffled. Items for any of the stalls would be appreciated, but please remember that we need only new items for the Gift Stall. Home baking for the refreshments (particularly Christmas goodies) would also be very welcome.

If you can help in any way, please speak to Gwyneth Kirby, Jean Hall or Mary Dempster beforehand and they will pass on your offers of help to the appropriate people. Even if you can't come along on the evening, they will be pleased to accept your gifts for the stalls!

Look forward to seeing you there. If you missed the concert last year, don't miss it this year!

Church Christmas dinner

The Church Christmas dinner will be held on **6 January** at Taurasi, meeting at 6.30. As last year the charge will be based on the total bill divided by the number of people attending. A notice has been placed on the notice board, to which you can add your name if you would like to come.

Last year we had a grand time and we expect the same this year.

David Slater and Dennis Cook

Christmas Cards

As usual there will be a post box in the Crush Hall over the weeks up to Christmas. This is a means of exchanging cards with friends in the Church for those who didn't use Contact!

A full address is not required, but please ensure that surnames are included on the envelopes. The cards are sorted and laid out on the worktop in the lounge to be collected after the service. There is no delivery service so **please** do not put cards in the box for people who do not come to Church regularly.

Our Explorer Scouts are taking part in the West Fife Scoutpost and cards can be sent to most parts of Fife for 22p (see poster for further details). There will be a separate post box in the Crush Hall for these cards.

The deadline is quite early (5.00pm on **Wednesday 8 December**) so please "post" your cards in good time. Please put the cards and the money in a plastic bag or envelope. The cards will be delivered by local scouts in the period from 11–19 December.



Christmas invitations

Carol singing and quizzes

I wonder how many readers will remember the Carol Singing round the streets of Rosyth and Pitcorthie Estate?

When the singers came to our Street in Pitcorthie they always stood just outside our door as our neighbours Owen and Eileen Purches (members of the Methodist Church), provided supper of soup and hot mince pies at the end of the evening and their family, Trevor and Mary, were in the group of singers. When they sang for two nights, in different parts of Rosyth, supper was provided at various friends' homes, including David and Thelma Couch, who also took part in the singing.

The Carol Singing took place on the three evenings before Christmas. Generally it was unaccompanied, but from time to time there was the occasional musical instrument, for example Jimmy Lawson and Mary Purches played guitars. At that time, the singers thought they had done well if they collected £100 in one night, but in later years the complete total for three evenings raised about £600, which was donated to NCH (now Action for Children).

When we joined the carol singing in the 90s – Ron to sing and me to persuade people to part with their money – Dennis and Jean Cook welcomed the singers to their home and Chris and David Slater provided supper in the Crush Hall on another night. It stopped for two reasons – firstly, not enough singers, and secondly, the children were not supposed to run and collect money as they had to have an adult with them. This depleted the number of singers, but we still made a “joyful noise” and collected a good sum of money.

The Carol Singing ended in 1998, and the following year Jean Cook started making up quizzes, so that money still went to Action for Children. After Jean passed away, I decided to continue with the quizzes.

This is a “plug” to look out for the next quiz which will be available from me **from 1 December**, so get your brains in gear and sharpen your pencils!

Mary Dempster

Ed: In recent years we have sung carols either in front of the church or outside the Tesco Metro store in Rosyth, and also sung carols at Orchardhead Residential Home.

Dunfermline Choral Union

If you want a break from Christmas shopping, why not attend the Dunfermline Choral Union Christmas Concert?

On **Saturday 11 December** at 3.00pm and 7.30pm in the Vine Church, Dunfermline, the choir, joined by the Dunfermline Junior Chorus, will perform a selection of Christmas and seasonal songs and music. Please come and join us. Tickets from Mary Kidd, Gwyneth Kirby and Myra Tarr are £8 (£7 concession; £25 family ticket).

G&S carols

On **Saturday 18 December**, between 1.00pm and 4.00pm at Tesco, Duloch Park, you will have a chance both to shop and to listen to carols sung by members of the Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan Society. Naturally the buckets will be out, collecting for the Whitefield Day Hospital at Queen Margaret Hospital.

Community Nativity Project

Project update by Alan Taylor

Morag Crawford, Deacon at the Parish Church, suggested back in early autumn that we might be able to tap *Celebrating Fife 2010* funds to help create a nativity scene in the grounds of the parish church. Funding was approved, with the stipulation that this should be a community project. Thus planning got under way, involving all the churches in the St Columba Group, the four primary schools in Rosyth – Camdean, Kings Road, Park Road and St John's – and Carnegie College.

Several planning meetings later, the project was well underway. Each school was allocated a set of figures, such as Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds, the Wise Men and the Angel, with a competition at each school for the best design – for an appropriate prize, and certificates for all the kids taking part. Carnegie helped with the design of the stable and lighting of the scene including some conifers in the grounds, but their *bête noire* was cutting out in wood two-thirds life-size figures to the winning designs, which went back to the schools for painting.

The four main windows of the church overlooking the scene will be converted to “stained glass” created by the schools, and these will be brightly lit from within to create a glowing atmosphere.

The scene will be launched at 7.00pm on **Monday 6 December**, when the schools will process to the parish church. Likewise it is hoped that members of the congregations will process from their churches, to be there by 7.00pm. Each of the processions will have light sticks to create an atmosphere as they walk to the church. A service of hymns, readings, and songs by the schools, accompanied by Rosyth Concert Band, will take place after the official switch-on. Wishes or memorial messages will be placed in the conifer trees. And after all that, refreshments will be available in the church halls! Hopefully the weather will be kind, but if not, the service will take place indoors. And to help people on their way from our end of Rosyth, we will have a banner on the gable end of our church with the slogan “Follow the Star”.

The nativity scene will continue right through the Christmas season, with plans to have it lit from about 6.30am to cheer people on their way to work.

We hope you will find time to take part in this initiative, by either meeting at our church at 6.30pm for the walk to the parish church, or else being at the parish church for 7.00pm. And why not tell your friends what is going on and invite them as well?

Edinburgh Nativity Scene

If you are in St Andrew's Square Edinburgh before Tuesday 4 January, why not take time to stand in the gardens and think about the meaning of Christmas while contemplating Tim Chalk's thought-provoking sculpture?

This graphic and realistic depiction of the nativity represents dispossessed people sheltering in a derelict structure, and

was commissioned in 2003 to challenge common views about the birth of Christ.



Christmas greetings

*Janet Murray
and family send
warmest Christmas
greetings to you all*

*Dennis Cook
would like to wish all
his friends in the Church
a peaceful Christmas and
a happy New Year*

*David Slater
sends Christmas
Greetings to all
members and friends of
the Combined Churches*

*Jock and Audrey
Headden wish
their friends from both
congregations a Happy
and Holy Christmas*

*Pauline Fisher sends
Christmas Greetings
for Joy and Peace to all,
and Best Wishes for a
Happy New Year*

*Tim and Hilary
Bennison send
their greetings and
best wishes to members
of both congregations
this Christmastide*

*Myra and
Martin Tarr
wish all their friends at
church a very Happy
Christmas and a
peaceful New Year*

*Betty Terry sends
Christmas and New year
Greetings to all her friends in
St Margarets' and Methodist
Churches. She will not be
sending cards this year.*

*Malcolm and Frieda
Trew take this
opportunity to send Christmas
greetings to all their Methodist
and Episcopalian friends and
thank them for their support
throughout 2010*

What you'll see on coming Sundays

The Advent wreath

Advent marks the time of spiritual preparation before Christmas and the birth of Christ, and is the beginning of the Church year for most Christian churches in the Western tradition.

The Advent wreath or ring, a Christian tradition used to mark the season, is a popular symbol favoured in churches and homes alike. Its history is not well documented, but some believe that the symbolism was borrowed from German Lutherans in the early 1500s.

The wreath consists of a base circle covered in greenery, adorned with five candles. The circle represents God himself, his eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning and no end. The candles symbolize the light of Christ, who entered this world to scatter the darkness of evil and show us the way of righteousness.

The four outer candles, commonly three purple and one pink, represent the period of waiting, penance and sacrifice. There are variations between different traditions, but purple candles are usually lit on the first, second and fourth Sundays of Advent. Traditionally the first of these purple candles stands for hope or expectation, the second represents love, and the third peace. The pink candle represents joy and is lit on 'Gaudete (Latin = Rejoice!) Sunday', the third Sunday of Advent, when we rejoice because our wait is half-way through. The central white 'Christ Candle' is lit on Christmas Day in celebration of the birth of our Lord, reminding us that his incarnation gives light to the world.

This year we are having a new Advent ring, with the evergreen arranged by Mary Kidd, as the previous wreath has come to the end of its time.

Sunday Funday

Over the last three months we have had great fun exploring the "I am ..." sayings of Jesus – "I am the bread of life", "I am the light of the world" and "I am the true vine". Soon everyone will be able to see the fruits of our work when a lovely banner is completed and displayed in the Church. Look out for it – the children have done really well! We have also baked bread (the smell in Church that day was even better than the usual aroma of bacon sandwiches), built lighthouses with flashing lights, and crushed grapes to produce juice (which tasted better than the shop-bought variety), as just a few of the many activities we have enjoyed.

Our numbers have grown over the three months but there's still plenty of room for more children to come and join us. The only thing we ask is that children should be accompanied by an adult. Sunday Funday works best this way, when children and adults work together, so that even the youngest can manage the activities.

Our next session will be on **12 December** when we will be concentrating on crafts and activities for Christmas. Why not come along at 9.00am for some breakfast, have a go at something new, and enjoy a story and song, finishing at about 10.30. There is no pressure to stay on for the following service.

If you've been before, but haven't managed to come for a while, we would love to see you again. If you've never been before, come and let your children try it out. If you are a 'regular', why not encourage some friends along?

Want to know more before coming along? I will be happy to answer any questions if you ring me on 01383 624779.

Gwyneth Kirby

St Stephen

Boxing Day, or Christmas 1, or Saint Stephen?

St Stephen, one of the saints of the Christmas season, is considered both the first Christian martyr and one of the first deacons of the Christian Church. Stephen's faith and martyrdom are described in Chapters 6 and 7 of the Acts of the Apostles.

Although his name is Greek (from Stephanos, meaning crown), Stephen was a Jew, probably among those who had been born or who had lived beyond the borders of Palestine, and therefore had come under the influence of the prevailing Hellenistic culture.

He was one of the first seven deacons chosen by the apostles, whom they ordained as deacons by praying and placing their hands on the heads of the deacons. The deacons' role was to look after the needs of widows, who tended to be neglected in the daily distribution of charity.

Stephen, "full of grace and power", as Acts describes him, began to serve the poor and preach to the people about Jesus. More and more people joined the Christians. But the high priests of the temple were jealous of Stephen's successes, and his enemies among his former associates plotted to bring about his death. They accused him of planning to destroy the Jewish Temple and had him tried at a trial in Jerusalem. Stephen kept on teaching about Jesus. He told the judges that they were hard-hearted murderers of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. When the crowd heard this, everyone became so angry that they stopped the trial, dragged Stephen outside and stoned him to death. Stephen forgave the people who were stoning him, and asked God not to punish the people. Then he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." and died. Saint Stephen was the first Christian martyr (about 35AD), the first person to die because he loved Jesus so much that he wouldn't stop talking about Him.

One of those present at the scene and who approved of the stoning was a young Jew named Saul, the future Apostle St Paul, whose own conversion to Christianity was to take place within a few months.

The feast of St Stephen on December 26 is celebrated as 'Boxing Day' in the United Kingdom. The name refers to the practice, as legend has it, of nobles and other wealthy Britons 'boxing up' and distributing food and other gifts to their servants and to the poor on the day after Christmas. The feast of St Stephen is also celebrated in the traditional Christmas carol, "Good King Wenceslas" (circa 1850), about a king who goes out to give alms to a poor peasant.

A Boxing Day gift...

Boxing Day was traditionally a day on which gifts were shared. Sometimes the distribution of 'alms' from the Christmas Day church collections, or sometimes employers 'boxing up' left-over food and goodies for their staff who had worked the day before and who now had a day off.

As **26 December** this year falls on Sunday, a unique opportunity to follow this tradition has emerged and the circuit ministers are offering a gift to the circuit. Services for that day have been designated as 'Local Arrangements' but in fact a special resource will be available. The ministers have worked together to produce a service outline with accompanying visual and audio resources which churches and individuals are encouraged to use creatively. Wherever we happen to be that day, in the circuit or visiting friends and family we can all share in the same service using these materials.

Come along at 11.00 and find out how the gift is being interpreted at Rosyth ...

Fellowship News

In the wars

Julie Denning is driving again after her hip operation and is due to return to work shortly. **Audrey Headden** is also making good progress, despite a set back a few weeks ago – diagnosed as a minor heart attack. It was lovely to see her in church on St Margaret's Day (16 November) and now back at the Wednesday Fellowship.

Unfortunately, the broken bones in **Ruby Lucas's** ankle have not knitted together. This has not deterred Ruby for getting around, thanks to Alan being able to drive again after his bypass operation. However, Ruby is patiently awaiting another operation, which will result in her remaining in plaster for another six weeks. Please remember Ruby and Alan in your prayers.

Murray news

The Murray family welcomed the arrival of Iona Ruth on 10 October.

Proud parents Andrew and Christine and sisters Ailsa and Kirsty are all doing well, and, of course, Granny is delighted.

Harvest Supper

Our annual joint Harvest Supper was enhanced by the presence of Valerie Walker and Sarah McDowall, whom we are delighted to have as part of our church family. Mary Kidd welcomed them on our behalf and presented them with beautiful bouquets.

The theme of the evening was Fair Trade. We were treated to a tasty hot meal and delicious desserts, made as far as possible using fairly-traded ingredients, and our wits were tested by quizzes and activities on Fair Trade themes. Thanks to all who made the evening so enjoyable and successful.

Sue and Adrian Masson

Congratulations to Adrian and Sue, who are celebrating their Silver Wedding on 21 December.



They were married in St Nicholas Church, Sutton, and had just two weeks together before Adrian rejoined his ship and sailed for a four-month deployment.

When the 1st Lieutenant asked Sue where they were going for our honeymoon she replied: "He's going with you to the West Indies; I'm going to Portsmouth!"



My friend Joan

Joan Sowerby came to Rosyth from Sunderland in 1939. This was a big change for a little girl of eight who was used to having relatives living near to her home. Especially upsetting was leaving her grandmother, whom she saw every day.

The understanding was that a two-year shore job was there for her father. However, the war changed all that, and her mother decided to stay up north and Joan's grandmother came to stay with them – the family also included Joan's young sister Audrey. Joan was asked by a friend if she would like to go to Sunday school in the Methodist Church and when the church moved to various different sites Joan went too. After leaving King's Road Primary School she attended Dunfermline High School. Between 1947 and 1954 she trained as a tailoress/coatmaker at Darlings, a large Department store in Edinburgh.

Joan entered the National Children's Home (NCH) as a probationer, spending a year each in Newcastle and at Highbury. Joan was then ordained into the Sisterhood of Childcare on 24 June 1956. She spent a short time at Cathkin House, Rutherglen, followed by a longer time at Newton Hall Frodsham. Next Joan became Superintendent at Lytham St Anne's, followed by some years in Pitlochry. She moved there to be closer to her mother who was not in the best of health. Around 1979, Joan left NCH to join Dr. Barnardo's and ran a centre for children under five years of age in Livingston. This enabled her to live at home and provide more support for her mother. She retired in 1989 to look after her mother full-time until she died in 1992.

I got to know Joan in the late eighties and met her mother too – Joan was very caring of her mother. After her mother died Joan and I would go out to various places wherever we fancied – one day we went



to Broughty Ferry, as Joan had taken her children from Pitlochry for a holiday there. They stayed in a Church Hall – this was interesting for both of us as I belong to Broughty Ferry. We also visited Pitlochry and Joan showed me where she had lived and worked.

Joan was a first class needlewoman; she knitted

lots of garments including some for my grandchildren. She did tapestry, and joined Dunfermline Quilters, where she produced beautiful quilts, and other things that could be sold for the Children's Hospice in Kinross. Joan and our friend Jean went to classes to learn découpage, which she thoroughly enjoyed. Joan and I used to go swimming together and even took my grandchildren on one or two occasions. Wherever we went you could be sure that we would be laughing most of the time.

Joan made a beautiful lectern fall which we use at Christmas time. Church members gave Joan clothes to alter, which she did so beautifully, and all the money she collected was given to the church. Joan was also a willing helper when the church was holding a Fayre, Coffee Morning or a social event, and her baking was always in demand, especially her scones, gingerbread and lemon cake. She was also very good at telling us what to do although she always denied being bossy, but I think that was second nature to her – it didn't matter anyway as we just did what we were told.

Now she is resident in a Care Home as she has problems with her memory. Ron and I still enjoy visiting her, when we speak of the past with great affection. On 20 January 2011 Joan will be 80 so we look forward to sharing that day with her. I am so glad that I have lots of happy memories of Joan.

Mary Dempster

Margaret Shaw

9 August 1941 – 23 September 2010

We reported last time on the death of Sue Forman's mother Margaret, someone well known to those who use the Tesco store in Rosyth. Her funeral was attended by very many of her colleagues, as well as a goodly number of folk from our LEP, and a collection for Marie Curie raised almost £200. We've adapted below extracts of the eulogy given by Rev Tim Bennison.

When I met with Alistair, Sue and Martin, one of the things that immediately struck me was just how much they had loved Margaret, and how important she had been to them. She had so clearly touched each of their lives, and the lives of many other people too, in many different ways.

The eldest of three, Margaret was born in Musselburgh. At grammar school it soon became clear that she had a particular talent for playing hockey, and she eventually played for her county.

Her first job was at the Co-op in Musselburgh, and it was during her time there that she first met her husband-to-be at the Old Palais Dance Hall in Edinburgh. Alistair remembers that, after he'd finally plucked up the courage to ask her out, he had the shock of his life when she actually said 'Yes'! He admits now that really he'd been chancing his arm, because he'd thought she was far too good-looking for him.

They got engaged just over a year after, but Alistair was almost immediately sent by the Navy to Malta for 18 months, which was very difficult for both of them. Alistair was scared that the relationship wouldn't survive the separation, but happily it did and they finally got married on 5 September 1964 in St Ninian's Church, Musselburgh.

After living for a while with Margaret's parents, where Sue was born in 1966,

and then briefly in Holyrood, Alistair was posted to Singapore. Although he was often away at sea, Margaret loved living there, an experience enhanced by the fact that, for the one time in their lives, they had a servant! [Is that the reason that one of Margaret's passions was going on holiday and she loved to travel and to sight-see?]

But all good things have to come to an end and after two years they moved back to Rosyth where they lived happily, first of all in naval married quarters and then in Ramsey Place. After a while, Margaret decided she should go back to work and so, after a stint at Customs and Excise in Rosyth, she started working at Tesco about 16 years ago, a job that she stayed in ever since.

I think that working at Tesco was one of the best things she ever did. It sounds as though she loved working there, and had a great time – somehow she felt as though she just slotted in perfectly and, over the years, she made lots of good friends.

Though Margaret could be shy, she also made friends easily and was well liked – and part of the reason for that, no doubt, is that she was a very warm and caring person, protective of her family and supportive of her friends. Sue, I think it was, said of her: "She just looked after everyone. She was Number One Auntie, and that was it". And that care wasn't limited just to family and friends – after she had died, Alistair discovered a long list of various charities that she'd been supporting over the years.

It's difficult to find the words to sum up someone who was clearly so important to so many people – and touched so many lives in so many ways. But one of the last things Alistair said to me about Margaret was simply this: "She was special!" And I can think of no better way than that of summing what she meant to so many people.

The Wednesday Fellowship

Since our last report in the Contact we have enjoyed a trip to Oberammergau with Lesley and Irene, two of our Fellowship members, when they told us about the Passion Play. Games afternoon is always enjoyed when we get out the dominoes, scrabble, draughts and boggle – much hilarity and excitement, with dominoes a clear favourite this time.



Next we heard all about the Mission to Seafarers from Commander Jim McRae RN, who was delighted to be back in Rosyth where he lived as a child. After that we changed to comedy, when it was the turn of three gentlemen against three ladies in a game of 'Call my Bluff'. This turned out a win for the boys – hope that does not mean that men are better at telling “porkies”; anyway it went well. We had an illustrated history of Rosyth given by Martin Rogers and Sandy Masterton. This was very interesting indeed and brought back memories to some present of the earlier days of Rosyth Dockyard.

We were then treated to a Cookery demonstration using the Microwave by Jean Hall (our own Delia Smith!) – we all enjoyed the red pepper soup, vegetarian bake, and jam sponge. Some of us have tried making the soup and found it quite easy to do and so quick too. We had a Members' Afternoon when various folks talked about “Past Times” – Malcolm’s colourful jersey, Betty’s medals, Alan’s favourite ornament, Sandra’s Toby Jug, Eve’s medals and special coin, and Erica’s beautiful tapestry.

A talk by Lou Davidson, nurse practitioner at Charlestown Surgery, moved us all deeply. In 2009 Lou was one of three nurses from Fife who volunteered, through Dunfermline-based LemonAid, to go to LaGonave in Haiti to immunise children. They were shocked at the deprived conditions, particularly at the orphanage, and when they went back in 2010 (after the earthquake) they took clothes and toys for the children. Lou told us their heart-rending story, something we will never forget.

The nurses have formed their own Haiti Help (www.HaitiHelp.org.uk) to support the orphanage – especially by the sponsorship of children – as it gets no money from any of the big charities. When they go again next March, they plan also to visit a “Poor House”, where 18 destitute elderly people live, to see what they can do to help.

If you read this and find it interesting, why not come and join us in the fellowship which always starts (2.15pm) with a short devotional time and finishes with a hymn and a prayer. We do not meet in January but will be back again on 2 February 2011, so how about making a New Year resolution to come along? You will be made most welcome.

Ed: You can read about the trip to Oberammergau on pages 34–35.

Such was the interest in ‘Call my Bluff’ that a queue of ten members had formed outside the church before 2pm!

Ross Kennedy – a retrospective!

Notes on a conversation with the Editor

Following articles in recent issues on people new to the Methodist side of the Partnership, we thought readers might appreciate learning something more about Ross Kennedy, who is well-known to most of us as he has served the congregations of St Margaret's and Holy Trinity, Dunfermline as honorary assistant priest since 2005.

This article has been called a “retrospective” in acknowledgement of Ross's recent 70th birthday, and we congratulate him on reaching three-score years and ten, wishing him every happiness for the future.



Ross Kennedy was born, the fourth of five children, in Kilmun, near the side of the Holy Loch in Argyll, but moved to Dunfermline as a baby when the family followed his father's job as a shipwright in Rosyth Dockyard. Although his parents had Episcopalian backgrounds, Ross was christened in the local parish church as a Presbyterian.

In those days of “working class respectability, behind the lace curtains”, children were always expected to go to Sunday School, and not to enjoy themselves: he remembers the swings in Brucefield Park being chained up on a Sunday! Finding St Leonard's dull, he was pleased to follow his pals to Viewfield Baptist Church, where he “discovered that religion could be fun”, and joined enthusiastically in Sunday School and Cubs.

Ross remained spiritually-minded, reading his Bible regularly, but drifted away from Viewfield after growing too old for the Cubs. However, he was attracted by the Seventh-Day Adventists, who advertised a Sunday night evangelistic service with “filmstrip sermon”: he longed to operate the projector! Ross became committed to this “very homely” church, with its lovely people and good fun, even though the sermons were long: “I like High Church, and I like Low Church, but I can't stand *long* Church!”

Ross was encouraged to go on Youth Camps, during one of which he made a definite Christian commitment, followed by baptism by immersion at the Seventh-Day Adventist church in Edinburgh in 1954, on Christmas Day, which happened to be a Saturday (the “seventh day”).

Educated at St Leonard's Primary School, Queen Anne (then a Junior High) and Dunfermline High (where he hated the technical course but enjoyed the weekly after-school Christian Fellowship), Ross just missed National Service. So his next move, at age 17, was to Newbold College in Berkshire, an international Seventh-Day Adventist training college run on American university lines. This was “evangelical, bordering on fundamentalism”, but gave a good Bible-based grounding in Christian fundamentals, and was a very positive experience, despite 16-hour days that included physical work as well as worship and study. The college was keen to promote culture, and Ross traces his love of classical music to the concerts he attended then.

Although students were destined for the ministry, Ross was one of several taken aside and asked to get some experience in the world before following their vocation.

Now his best friend's father was a nurse, and the nursing profession commended itself as being one which gave people experience *and* one where one was paid whilst training, so Ross went to Barnet General Hospital to study for his SRN, although he had to spend a gap year in Watford as a wages clerk earning money to support later studies.

Whilst at Barnet, as far as his shifts would allow, Ross attended morning worship at a thriving Anglican church, where he liked the liturgy and "discovered nothing is absolutely black and white". But, after a post-registration year at Barnet, he moved to Edinburgh to take a course in psychiatric nursing, but this he found boring, in the sense that he was not kept physically busy. After the course ended it is possibly not surprising that, at 25, he "got fed up with poverty" and "sold my soul to the pharmaceutical industry", where he became a medical representative, visiting GPs and hospitals, and his church attendance became spasmodic.

During his 18-year career in pharmaceuticals, Ross worked for different companies, eventually becoming a field training officer at Roche. In 1980 he was sent to New York for a conference, and ended up on Fifth Avenue one lunch-time during Holy Week. He saw a crowd going into St Thomas's Episcopal Church, and a poster advertising Handel's Messiah. Of course, the event was not a mid-day concert, but a eucharist! While Ross doesn't remember the name of the preacher, he does remember that "his heart was strangely warmed" and this Wesleyan experience was a turning point in his life. After that he "couldn't get enough of liturgy, worship, and reading, both spiritual books and the Bible".

Realising that he needed to forge a church relationship, but not wanting to get involved, Ross sought a city centre church with a large congregation, and linked up with St John's in Edinburgh's West End.

But the following year, after joining the Lent Group, found him saying to himself: "What on earth are you doing? You said you weren't going to get involved!"

Ross was confirmed, to formalise his Episcopalian status, and in 1983 became a mature student at Coates Hall in Edinburgh, then a theological college.

Ross's training included a parish placement, unusually in Newcastle, which convinced him that he wanted to minister to a parish and not just to a congregation, so it wasn't surprising that his first appointment was back in Northumberland, at Hexham Abbey. Here, as deacon and then priest, he actually learnt how to be a minister, under the tutelage of the Rector, Michael Middleton.



Ross's ordination – he's the one on the left, with the beard!

Michael later became a canon of Westminster Abbey, which led to an invitation to Ross to preach in the Abbey in January 2000. For his "eight minutes of fame" Ross tried to obey the instruction: "Our congregation are tourists and pilgrims, so you make just *one* point!"

On leaving Hexham in 1989, Ross then enjoyed the Northumberland country parish of Eglingham and South Charlton, before moving in 1993 to spend 12 years as Team Rector of the Team Parish of Christ

the King, which is situated on the northern edge of Newcastle, close to the airport. The parish comprises four churches – St Columba’s Parish Church, Wideopen, St Aidan’s Parish Church, Brunton Park, St Matthew’s Parish Church, Dinnington and St Cuthbert’s District Church, Brunswick – and has a team of three vicars.

Ross described his time there as “very happy and fruitful”, although it didn’t start well health-wise. Soon after moving, Ross needed emergency heart surgery, and was given 5–10 years to live, *if* he survived the operation!

Not only did Ross live, but he was able to recall the time as a wonderful spiritual experience . . . one of the churchwardens had visited Ross before the operation, and left a card quoting some of the Apostle Paul’s words: “If I live it is unto the Lord, and if I die, it is unto the Lord, so whether I live or die, I am the Lord’s.” (Romans 14:8). This confidence in the one thing that does not change gave Ross a sense of “utter and complete peace and dependence on the Lord”.



Ross and younger brother John (who you’ll see at Holy Trinity, and possibly mistake for Ross!)

Retiring back to home and family in Dunfermline, although still living on “borrowed time”, Ross got stuck into service locally – As well as the work we see, he helps out at Lochgelly Episcopal Church. In view of his recent significant birthday – “I can’t believe I’m 70!” – and of Valerie’s arrival, Ross feels it’s an appropriate time to phase out, though we’ll still benefit from his ministry from time as holiday relief and giving sickness cover. We hope he has a long and happy second retirement!

“Deacons reshaping Methodism in Scotland”

This is the title the Methodist Church web site used in an article that features interviews with two folk we are now getting to know!



Deacons Sarah McDowall and Belinda Letby offering a new kind of ministry

... Sarah and Belinda are keen to bring their individual skills and experience into play ... Both see potential in making stronger connections with groups that

use their church buildings during the week, and Belinda speaks of developing partnerships “with those agencies who already work with the very people we want to welcome into church ... I want people to work with the church not merely alongside it.”

“With” and “not alongside” describes the two women’s way of ministering perfectly – both as colleagues and within their communities. It’s precisely what their congregations asked for; only time will tell in what new directions the diaconal influence will take them.

Full article at <http://tinyurl.com/3yh4lfg>

Scout Group activity weekend

In October, our Cubs, Scouts and Explorers enjoyed an activity weekend at the Lochearnhead Scout Centre which is a converted railway station. This was the first time the Group had held a camp involving the three sections.

Taking part were 34 youngsters and nine leaders, and they were ably supported by four members of the Group Executive Committee who did an excellent job in providing the catering. The activities on the Saturday included archery, a six-mile cycle ride along the line of the old railway, and water-skiing. For those who didn't fancy water-skiing in October, there was the option of a fast boat trip up the loch.

On the Sunday, a visit was made to the McLaren Leisure Centre in Callander, where the sports hall provided facilities for football, badminton and basket-ball. The youngsters also had the opportunity to try the indoor climbing wall. The cost of the weekend was subsidised by the Christie Trust fund administered by the Church for the benefit of its Scouts and Guides and by a grant received from the Scottish Government's "CashBack for Communities" scheme.

Martin Rogers



LEJOG

Do you remember the picture of Dave Rankin (of Viewfield Baptist Church) in our August/September issue? Well, we're pleased to say that Dave made it from Land's End to John o'Groats, and the walk took him *only* 45 days.

When he arrived on 15 October, he had a new pair of boots, a much reduced backpack, and was 1½ stone lighter. And he had raised £3,000 for Prospects, which supports people with learning disabilities, and Operation Smile, which provides free surgery to repair facial deformities for children around the world.

More about Dave's adventures, with cuttings from the Dunfermline Press, and details on how to contribute to these good causes at <http://daverankin-lejog.blogspot.com/>.



The Great Coming

from Advent to Epiphany

Advent is a term from the Latin word ‘adventus’ which means ‘arrival’ It is a time of preparation, waiting and hope as Christians across the world prepare for the celebrations of the arrival of our Lord into the world through the birth of his Son, Jesus Christ.

The characteristic note of Advent is expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent – purple is the traditional liturgical colour. The anticipation of Christmas under relentless commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of alert watchfulness.

Advent comes at the end of the calendar year, but it begins the Christian year. In the northern hemisphere Advent is the season of the darkest days and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas heralding the rise of the “sun of righteousness” (Malachi 4.2).

Amongst the customs of Advent, the lighting of the candles on an Advent wreath (see page 8) is probably the most important. For children and some adults, an Advent calendar, marking off the days before Christmas, can be an aid for living the season.

Christmas remains the most observed and most popular festivals of the Christian Church year. But it is much more than simply the celebration of Jesus’ birth. We are reminded amid all the joyful customs and celebrations of Christmas of the self-revelation of God to the world in human form for the reconciliation of humanity to Himself (“the Word made flesh for our salvation”).

The Christian Christmas season is just the 12 days ending at the Epiphany (6 January), but commercial pressures have led to much of the Christmas celebration being displaced into Advent. This presents a challenge for us to keep up the Christian momentum of Christmas through the 12 days.

New Year’s Day is perhaps more important in the civic rather than the Christian calendar, but it provides the original occasion for the familiar Covenant Service of the Methodist tradition (see page 22).

The **Epiphany** (‘manifestation’) is the occasion when Western churches celebrate the visit of the far-travelled magi. Matthew’s account speaks simply of “wise men from the east”. But later tradition fixed their number at three, made them kings – Casper, Melchior and Balthazar.

The season of joyful celebration that begins at Christmas continues through successive Sundays of Epiphany and the cycle ends with Candlemas (2 Feb). The child who has been made manifest to the magi at his birth is now recognised by Simeon and Anna when he comes to be presented in the Temple according to the law of Israel. He is both “a light to lighten the Gentiles” and “the glory of God’s people Israel”.

Engage with the real Christmas!

Peter Graystone of the Church Army reports that the BBC/Red Planet series *The Nativity* is wonderful television, and something we can recommend with total confidence to everyone.

The four episodes of this new production by Tony Jordan will be broadcast on BBC1 in mid-evening in the week leading up to Christmas Eve. Don’t miss it, and spread the word!

Diary for November/December 2010

Sunday 28 November

Advent Sunday 11.00am Joint Communion Service Rev Ross Kennedy
Worship Leader: Deacon Sarah McDowall

Traidcraft goods on sale after the service

6.00pm Sunday@Six Advent Meditation – Sue Masson

Monday 29 Nov 7.30pm Ecumenical Study Group, St Columba's
(see page 23 for details)

Wednesday 1 Dec 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship – Martin Rogers sets the scene
for the celebration of the church building's "Big 40"

Friday 3 Dec 7.00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 5 December

Advent 2 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison

11.00am Church Anniversary Service Rev Linda Bandelier
Worship Leader: Deacon Sarah McDowall

7.00pm Fellowship House Group at the home of
David and Gill Cochrane, Dalgety Bay
(see page 27 for details)

Monday 6 Dec 7.00pm Launch of the Community Nativity Scene in grounds of
Rosyth Parish Church, Queensferry Road.
(see page 6 for details)

Note: no Ecumenical Study Group

Wednesday 8 Dec 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship Visit by Brambles
Playgroup and Christmas Quiz

Friday 10 Dec 7.00pm Choir Practice

Saturday 11 Dec 3.00pm Dunfermline Choral Union Christmas Concert
and 7.30pm in the Vine Church, Dunfermline.
(see page 5 for details)

Sunday 12 December

Advent 3 9.00am Breakfast and "Sunday Funday"
(see invitation on page 8)

9.30am Sung Eucharist
Rev Tim Bennison and Rev Valerie Walker

11.00am All-age service Dr Anne Pennington

3.00pm Service at Orchardhead House, Rosyth

Diary for December 2010/January 2011

Monday 13 Dec 6.15pm Rainbows, Brownies and Guides Christmas Concert
with Church Coffee Evening and stalls
(an open invitation on page 4)

Monday 13 Dec 7.30pm Ecumenical Study Group, St Columba's
(see page 23 for details)

Wednesday 15 Dec 1.00pm Wednesday Fellowship
Christmas Lunch in the Elgin Hotel, Charlestown

Note: No further Wednesday Fellowship until 2 Feb 2011

Friday 17 Dec 7.00pm Choir Practice

Sunday 19 December

Advent 4 11.00am Joint Communion Service Rev Andrew Letby

6.00pm Sunday@Six: Joint Carol Service by candlelight
Offertory uplifted will be in aid of CHAS
(CHAS Gift Aid envelopes available from Alan Taylor)

7.00pm Fellowship House Group at the home of
David and Gill Cochrane, Dalgety Bay
(see page 27 for details)

Monday 20 Dec 7.30pm Ecumenical Study Group, St Columba's
(see page 23 for details)

Note: Next meeting on 10 January

Thursday 24 Dec 4.00pm Family Service
Rev Andrew Letby and Deacon Sarah McDowall

11.30pm Midnight Mass at Holy Trinity, Dunfermline
Rev Tim Bennison and Rev Valerie Walker

Christmas Day 8.00am Holy Communion at Holy Trinity, Dunfermline
Rev Tim Bennison

10.00am Family Service Deacon Sarah McDowall

Sunday 26 December

Christmas 1 11.00am A Boxing Day 'gift' Local arrangements
See page 9 for more about this service with a difference!
Note: No 9.30am service or Sunday@Six

Sunday 2 January 2011

Christmas 2 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Ross Kennedy

11.00am Morning Worship Professor Morley Sewell
Note: No House Fellowship Group

Diary for January 2011

Thursday 6 Jan 6.30pm Church Christmas Dinner
at Taurasi, Carnegie Drive, Dunfermline
(see page 4 for details)

Sunday 9 January

The Baptism 9.00am Breakfast and "Sunday Funday"
of our Lord 9.30am Sung Eucharist
Rev Tim Bennison and Rev Valerie Walker
11.00am All-age service Dr Deirdre Homer
Worship Leader: Deacon Sarah McDowall
3.00pm Service at Orchardhead House, Rosyth

Monday 10 Jan 7.30pm Ecumenical Study Group, St Columba's
(see page 23 for details)

Monday 10 Jan to Diocesan Clergy Residential Conference
Wednesday 12 Jan at Green Hotel, Kinross

Saturday 13 Jan 10am "Meet with Matthew" Workshop
to 12.30pm Threshold Centre, St John's Church, Princess Street,
Perth (see invitation on page 27)

Sunday 16 January

Epiphany 2 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison
11.00am Worship Service Rev Eric Potts
7.00pm Fellowship House Group at the home of
David and Gill Cochrane, Dalgety Bay
(see page 27 for details)

Sunday 23 January

Epiphany 3 11.00am Joint Covenant Service
Rev Tim Bennison and Rev Andrew Letby
Rev Valerie Walker and Deacon Sarah McDowall
Traidcraft goods on sale after the service
6.00pm Sunday@Six

Tuesday 25 Jan 7.30pm Methodist Council Meeting in Church Lounge

Wednesday 26 Jan 7.30pm St Andrews West Area Council
at St Margaret's Church, Leven

Sunday 30 January

Candlemas 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Tim Bennison
11.00am Morning Worship Mrs Mary Kidd

The Covenant Service

Andrew Letby challenges us to prepare and reflect

Sometimes described as the “jewel of Methodist worship”, the annual Covenant Service is an important marker of the new year. It is an opportunity to consider our commitment as disciples of Christ and dedicate ourselves afresh to that task. But where did the idea come from?

The idea of Covenant was basic to John Wesley’s understanding of Christian discipleship. He saw the relationship with God in Covenant as being like a marriage between human beings (both as a community and as individuals) on the one side and God in Christ on the other (cf. Ephesians 5.21-33).

His original Covenant Prayer involved taking Christ as “my Head and Husband, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, for all times and conditions, to love, honour and obey thee before all others, and this to the death”.

Wesley recognised that people needed not just to accept but also to grow in relationship with God. He therefore emphasised that God’s grace and love constantly prompts and seeks to transform us, and so we should continually seek and pray to grow in holiness and love. Wesley saw the need for some regular ceremony which would enable people to open themselves to God more fully. He looked for some means of helping them to hear God’s offer and challenge ever more deeply, and to allow God to prompt and enable them to respond.

In 1755 Wesley created a form of service adapted from the works of Joseph and Richard Alleine. These works came from the Puritan tradition of pastoral and spiritual guidance. Wesley therefore insisted that the Covenant Service be located in a framework of pastoral care, preaching and guidance.

This framework dealt with the corporate needs of a particular society of Christian disciples, and within that with the needs of individuals within that group. It therefore linked personal devotion with corporate worship.

There would be a series of meetings about the Covenant involving sermons, explanations and exhortations. An invitation would then be issued for “those as will” to come to the Covenant Service. After a day’s ‘Retreat’ for people to prepare themselves in prayer, fasting, reflection and self-examination there would be the Covenant Service itself. This would be held in the context of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. Wesley thought that this Sacrament brought into the realm of experience and made real all that was said in the Covenant. He therefore urged Methodists to pay it the highest regard, to put it at the centre of their spiritual life and to share in it frequently.

The process did not end with the Covenant Service. People were encouraged to continue to work out the implications for their lives of the fact that their relationship with God had been renewed in and through Christ. It was accepted that people might find this difficult to do without help, and might ‘backslide’. There would therefore be further pastoral guidance offered to both groups and individuals in the weeks that followed the service.

Each January we return to this tradition and make our commitment over again. We have perhaps lost some of the serious preparation, which is a shame. Could our further resolution this year be to prepare and reflect more carefully around our service on 23 January?

Working together

A reminder – World Day of Prayer

Friday 4 March is the World Day of Prayer 2011. St Margaret's is privileged to host the local service for the area in the church at 2.00pm.

The theme is "How many loaves have you?" and the service has already been written by a group of Christian women who live in Chile. As we know, a massive earthquake occurred off the coast of Chile last February, causing widespread damage, and triggering a tsunami. Nearly 500 people were killed and around 500,000 homes were damaged. It is all the more poignant that we remember Chile when, as Christians of many traditions and all ages and from 180 countries, we celebrate a common day of prayer.

Mary Kidd is honoured to represent the Methodist Church on the Scottish Committee, and is co-ordinating the 2011 event, whilst Lesley Yellowlees has been involved locally for many years on behalf of St Margaret's.

As hosts, we are looking for members of the congregation to act as stewards and help with refreshments after the service. Your help will be much appreciated and Lesley or Myra Tarr will be delighted to have your name now.

Full details in our February issue ...

Ecumenical Study Group

Made up from members of churches in the area, the Group held its first session of the Advent season on Monday 22 November. The material being studied this year is "Journeying with the Magi", a book by Keith Duke, which is based on a fresh approach to thinking and praying about our own inner journey through Advent, using themes from the Celtic tradition.

The group meets in St Columba's Church in Torridon Lane, which the parish church is fortunate to be able to use whilst vital maintenance and remedial work is done on their own church on Queensferry Road.

The Group meets each Monday evening in both Advent and Lent and usually the first Monday of the months in between. "Journeying with the Magi" will be used each Monday up to Christmas – with the exception of 6 December, when the Community Nativity Scene will be launched – with a final session on Monday 10 January. Evenings start at 7.30pm and finish around 9.30pm, with refreshments towards the end. This is a very happy study group, it's ecumenical, and its members have become good friends over the years – it's even been known to exchange Christmas cards, so something is working. Do come along, and if you would like more information have a chat with Lesley, Jack or Alan.

"The Hub" Cafe

In Rosyth on a Wednesday lunchtime? If so, why not come along to the Parish Church Hall, Queensferry Road from 12 noon until 2pm for some healthy home-made food? Highly recommended by Wednesday Fellowship members! You can enjoy a three-course meal of soup, pasta, and a hot pudding, followed by tea and coffee, at very reasonable prices. For the less hungry,

there are appetising filled baked potatoes, toasties or filled rolls. Due to the efforts of Deacon Morag Crawford and her band of helpers (cooks, waitresses and washer-uppers) since the 'café' opened in the summer, over £1,000 has been raised for the church restoration fund. This venture is worth our support so please give the café a try – you will not be disappointed.

“Casting the Net” News

An update on our plans

There is a strong commitment from both congregations to work together at mission and growth and we had hoped that Bishop David would come to talk to the joint Vestry and Council before the end of the year. However, with the changes in the ministry team at the Methodist church, all our clergy have agreed on a slightly different approach to what is going on in the Diocese. This will be tailored specifically to our two churches' particular needs and will draw on resources from both “Casting the Net” and the Methodist Church.

We will begin with a “Storytelling day”, a Saturday in January or February (see opposite). This will provide an opportunity for us to share our stories and events in the life of the churches, which we hope will provide an impetus to take us forward in our partnership and ecumenically in Rosyth. This presents an exciting challenge for us and we would encourage as many people as possible from both congregations to get involved.

Watch the weekly notices for further details!

Liaison Officer's Meeting

There was a good turnout at the Casting the Net (CTN) Liaison Officer's NetWorking meeting at St Columba's Church Crieff, on 31 October, with representation from most churches in the Diocese. This proved a useful and enjoyable get together led by Susannah Silver, (the new CTN officer) and Karen Gaskell (Convenor of the Congregational Development Group). We had the opportunity to get to know each other and to share experiences. This was done through discussions in Area Council Groups of which there are four – St Andrews East, St Andrews West (ours) Dunkeld and Dunblane – about the awareness of CTN and the reactions to it, followed by a series of workshops of our choice.

It was interesting to learn that most churches are keen to raise their profile in the community and ecumenically with other local churches. For instance, St Columba's Aberdour hosted a stall in a large marquee during the Aberdour Festival last August, with the emphasis on church weddings and baptisms; St Serf's Comrie is the venue in late November for an exhibition of paintings, prints and cards by Jonathan Sainsbury, a recognised wildlife artist, with

10% of sales being donated to the church; and St Anne's Coupar Angus is holding an 'authentic' Christmas in a local charity shop.

Some churches have already embarked on actions in Mission, with formal plans covering up to three years and others, like us, are yet to make a start. However, it is gratifying to know that some of our current initiatives such as the Wednesday Fellowship, the various Bible Study groups (particularly the ecumenical study group), and Sunday@Six, are very similar to what some churches have identified as part of their plan to become more engaged both as a church and personally as individuals, in the mission of the church of Christ.

Bishop David was also with us. His reaction to the feedback from the group discussions, the workshop he led and his comments interjected throughout the day, were helpful and thought-provoking. He very much endorsed the message that came through at the meeting – that the churches need to work together in the community to deal with the secularisation of society and the turning away from religion.

From the Superintendent's desk ...

The best is yet to come ...

So often we look back wistfully to a golden age in the lives of our churches, convinced that they will never be like that again. As Rosyth Methodist and St. Margaret's celebrate significant anniversaries for our building and the ecumenical partnership, we reflect on times past and wonder about the future.

Over the years I have done a lot of work on something called 'Appreciative Inquiry' – a tool used by consultants in business and voluntary sector to re-engage with what has been and learn how to use it to build a better future. The basic questions are to ask – what has gone well in the past and how do we do more of it?

With those things in mind we then plan a future which is filled with hope and potential using a very positive strategy. That strategy is not new – indeed it was used to great effect by Jesus. When he said so many times "The kingdom of God is like ...", he highlighted the wonderful promises and acts of God and pointed to a future that would be built on those. There was no might or maybe in this – this is what it is like – and what it will be more like. We know because it always was.

In the new year we are asking members of our congregations to come together to share our stories and begin planning a future which we can reach. We can reach it because the elements are already there. The first stage of the process will be facilitated by Rev Linda Bandelier, a Methodist Minister and professional storyteller.

The date is still to be confirmed but will probably be a Saturday early in 2011. Watch out for news ...

An Advent message

"But that's no life for you. You learned Christ! My assumption is that you have paid careful attention to him, been well instructed in the truth precisely as we have it in Jesus. Since, then, we do not have the excuse of ignorance, everything—and I do mean everything—connected with that old way of life has to go. It's rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life—a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you." Ephesians 4:23-24 (The Message)

As we enter the season of Advent and prepare ourselves once again to receive the incredible good news of 'God with us' – I ask that we might all spend time in prayer with these words of Paul at the heart. Too often we reduce faith to a set of doctrines and rules. But in the end these have little to do with being a Christian disciple. To follow the way of Jesus; is to seek to become more like him, to be transformed. To believe is easy, to allow that belief to permeate every corner of our being is something altogether more serious. That asks us to look at our relationships with one another – do we really respect and care for each other? It asks us to look at world and consider how we make it a better place for those on the margins, the victims of abuse and addiction, those who seek but cannot find justice and fairness.

This Advent – will you with childlike grace and trust – welcome the Child who offers renewal and transformation. Will you allow yourself to be totally re-formed to live together with peace, love and respect? Lives characterised by bickering, gossip, intolerance, suspicion and jealousy have no place amongst us – rather we seek to be 'renewed from the inside, that our outward selves be radically transformed.

The world's favourite book

Every Day With Jesus

As I write this I realise that in a few days it will be Sunday 24 October 2010- the day many of our Churches refer to as Bible Sunday when our thoughts are predominately centred on the Word of God. Some people think that perhaps we should be thinking about that more often than once a year!

Well, of course, there are lots of people in our churches doing just that – every day in fact and there are many publications of daily Bible readings to be had. In our church one or two of these are used. Probably most of us use the “Every Day With Jesus” series, which we find helpful in our everyday lives but sometimes very perplexing, so some of us gather together monthly to discuss what we have read in the previous month.

This group, known as the EDWJ group, meets in Rosyth, and there are two other house groups in our Church: one meets in Dunfermline and is at present studying “Women of the New Testament”; the other meets twice a month in Dalgety Bay to discuss “Time to Talk of God” (see opposite).

There is also an Ecumenical Group in Rosyth at which most of our churches in this area are represented. This meets monthly at St Columba's Church of Scotland in Torridon Lane, and has just started its Advent studies, as you will see from page 23.

Come and join any of these Groups – you will be most welcome.

Jack Fowell

It started in Fife!

2011 is the 400th anniversary of the “Authorised Version” or “King James Bible” and events will be taking place throughout the UK during the year to celebrate the occasion.

In May 1601, King James VI of Scotland attended the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at Burntisland Parish Church. At that meeting it was agreed by all present, including the King, to commission a new translation of the Bible. Two years later James VI of Scotland also became James I of England and in 1604 about 50 scholars were appointed by the King to write the new translation. Most of the work that led to the publication in 1611 took place south of the border: but it started in Fife.

Despite more modern versions of the Bible, such as the Good News Bible (which we use in church), and the New Revised Standard Version, the King James Bible is still widely viewed as the most authoritative translations ever written – as well as one of the greatest works of literature in the English language.

On a Sunday yet to be announced in January 2011, BBC Radio 4 UK will devote most of the day to readings from its scripture. The event will last for seven hours, broken up into 28 readings of 15 minutes. Each reading is promised to be one of “the most powerful stories in the Bible”, and will start with an introduction to explain its significance.

Ed: Given Jack's well-known love of the scriptures, it was appropriate that he should devise and lead our Sunday@Six worship for Bible Sunday on 24 October.

Jack chose as his theme the great prayer of Jesus as told in Chapter 17 of St John's Gospel, and offered us his own thoughts on this profound teaching of our Lord.

Invitations and requests

Say it with flowers

May I thank everyone who has supplied, given money for, and arranged flowers in church during this year. I feel this is a very important part of the ministry of our church. Not only do they add beauty to our worship area in the sanctuary, they are also appreciated by recipients afterward, maybe in the comfort of their home on a day when a visit is made.

Thanks are also due to our Church Treasurer, Howard Kirby, who 'manages' the Flower Fund. Any contributions to the Fund may be passed to him – inform him of your gift envelope number if you are a 'Gift-Aider'.

The new list will appear on the notice board in the Crush Hall any day now, for you to add your names for 2011. Please indicate if you are willing to supply the flowers, or arrange them, or maybe both. Perhaps you have a special date, an anniversary or a birthday you wish to commemorate in this way?

Please let me, or the Duty Steward on a Sunday, know of anyone who is ill at home and would appreciate flowers. Sadly they are not always accepted in hospital wards – it's best to check first.

Pastoral Visitors, please do feel free to take flowers when making a home visit. There is a record book and visiting cards kept in the Flower cupboard in the back entrance room. These will be helpful to those distributing these messages of good cheer with love from our Church.

Mary Kidd (Flower Secretary)

Ed: St Margaret's is responsible for Church flowers on the 4th Sunday: see request on page 31.

Fellowship House Group

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Sunday evenings of each month at 7.30pm, with the aim of concluding the evening at 9.00pm.

We have been working our way through a Methodist book "Time to Talk of God", but anticipate we will conclude that in the near future. It has taken a while, as the material has given rise to interesting exchange of views and provided interesting and stimulating debate.

Fellowship is open to anyone who wishes to come – once, or regularly, or to 'dip in and out'. Discussion is open and free, and can take us in lots of different directions. A welcome awaits you, so please join us at the home of David and Gill Cochrane in Dalgety Bay.

Ed: This House Group is one of the opportunities for study referred to in Jack Fowell's article "Every Day With Jesus", which appears opposite.

Gospel Workshop Opportunity

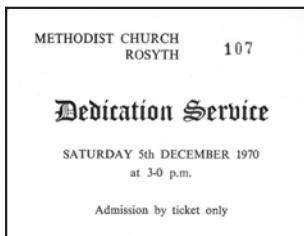
You are invited to "Meet with Matthew" and explore the Gospel we will be hearing most of in 2011, and to deepen your understanding and enrich your worship with Bible study and discussion. Gospel workshops are to be led by members of the Ministry and Education Group of CTN and are open to all.

The St Andrews West Area Council hopes to host one on Saturday 19 February at St Luke's, Glenrothes. More details in the next edition of Contact. If you are unable to make that date, or feel you cannot wait until February, there will be a workshop on **Saturday 15 January** at 10 for 10.30am–12.30pm in the Threshold Centre, St John's Episcopal Church, Perth. Ask Sandra Young for more details.

Our Church Building

the fourth in a series of articles by Martin Rogers
celebrating 40 years of the present church building

During 1970, the congregation had watched the site for the new Church premises being cleared, the foundations being laid, the walls being erected and the finishing touches being put to the building. The date of the opening was fixed for Saturday 5 December.



It was not possible for everyone to fit into the sanctuary for the service despite the stage being pressed into service as well. Each family was allocated one ticket and those who did not have a seat in the sanctuary were able to join in the service in the hall by means of a closed circuit TV link.



Mrs Dutton at the door of the Church with the architect Alan Mercer; VIPs lining the path

A number of VIPs were invited for the occasion including the Provost of Dunfermline, the Port Admiral, and representatives of churches in the circuit and from Rosyth. The opening ceremony was performed by Mrs Eva Dutton, wife of the former minister at Rosyth, Rev Tom Dutton. It was during Tom's time at Rosyth that the building scheme had been conceived and launched. The hymns sung during the service were "All people that on earth do dwell", "We love the place O God", "Be with us gracious Lord today" and "O Thou whose hand has brought us". After the service, a high tea was provided in the Parish Church Hall.

The cost of the new premises and furnishings was £35,000. The sale of the Church in Parkgate raised £14,000 and various grants were received including a large one from the Rank Trust. Over £11,000 was raised



Provost Crawford and Rear-Admiral Ridley with Rev Ian Cowie (Parish Church) and Rev Colin Preston-Thomas (Episcopal Church) following



Group of ministers

Back row: Rev Roger Tate, Rev Norman Robertshaw (Granton Methodist Church), Rev Frank Foxon (former minister at Rosyth)
Front row: Rev Tom Dutton, Rev Haddow Tennant (Chairman of Scotland District)

by the congregation and organisations either by direct giving or fund-raising. Two fund-raising schemes which ran for a long time were the collection and sale of waste paper and the sale of morning rolls. For the latter, a team of volunteers were responsible for collecting 200 dozen rolls from a firm in Alloa and distributing them to customers' houses in the early hours of a Sunday morning.

It was good to have our own Church premises again and the congregation and organisations settled into their new surroundings. The initial plans had envisaged a much larger suite of premises but this had needed to be curtailed for financial reasons. The result was that the new premises were virtually at full capacity from the outset and it was difficult for the various departments of the Sunday School to meet separately. The answer? To build an extension! But more about that in the next edition of Contact.

Labour of love

She was very tired,
the girl,
too tired to be hungry.
All she wanted
was to sleep,
to close her eyes
and rest her weary bones,
her aching back.

The straw looked soft
and inviting.

The animals' broad
bodies shielded her
from the cold night,
their breath
warmed the icy air.

Then the pains began.

She was afraid, the girl,
but undaunted.

She closed her eyes
and focussed
on the task ahead,
responding to the
rhythms of her body.

It was a long, long night.

The end came
with the dawn,
her labour of love
accomplished.

She rested at last,
the girl,
whilst angels sang
and shepherds adored
– and God curled
His tiny fist
in her hand.

Jo O'Farrell (2009)

Ed: The 40th anniversary service is on **Sunday 5 December 2010** and Martin Rogers will be talking about the building at Wednesday Fellowship on **1 December**.

Doing and talking!

Property Matters

Some further work on the property has been completed recently and there is more to follow. Perhaps the most noticeable change is in the sanctuary where the floor has been sanded and re-varnished. This has made a big difference to the appearance of the floor which looks a lot brighter. Our thanks to Dougie and Suzie Knight for doing this and to Mandy and Dave Ward who helped in the cleaning up operations. When taken together with the other work done in recent years (on lighting and re-decoration) and the new lecterns, the sanctuary is looking fresher and brighter than it has for many years.

We are gradually getting Room 3 into better order. The first stage was the erection of the new cupboards and we have now disposed of the redundant piano in that room which frees up some floor space. The St Margaret's congregation have kindly agreed to take on responsibility for the decoration of this room and new notice boards have been purchased.

Work has started on painting the black woodwork on the outside of the A-frame. This has been progressing slowly as it is dependent on the weather which has not been good of late.

The windows in the corridor have been deteriorating in recent years and replacements have been ordered. Hopefully these will be fitted before Christmas.

A work session a few weeks ago enabled us to get on top of a number of small jobs requiring attention and thanks are due to Alan Taylor, Ron Dempster and Dave Ward for giving of their time.



Last, but by no means least, a big thank you to Alan Lucas who has stepped down as a Property Steward after many years of service. Alan's specialism was on the electrical side but he was able to turn his hand to many DIY tasks. We will very much miss his input.

Martin Rogers
Chairman, Property Committee

St Margaret's AGM

At the meeting on 21 November, Alan Taylor and Lesley Yellowlees were re-elected Lay Representative and Alternate Lay Representative respectively to serve for a further year. Peter Hutchings (Holy Trinity, Dunfermline) was re-appointed as independent examiner of the church accounts.

Members of the Vestry for the next year are: Rev Tim Bennison (Chairman, ex officio), Sue Forman, Mary Kidd, Myra Tarr, Alan Taylor (lay representative, ex officio), Marc Templehoff, Lesley Yellowlees, the Rev Valerie Walker and Sandra Young. Howard Kirby attends as the Methodist Council representative.

Finance corner

St Margaret's finances

We had a look at our finances at the AGM on Sunday 21 November! Thankfully most matters appear to be quite healthy. Our congregational income at the end of our year on 30 September was showing real growth, despite a shaky start to the year after we had appealed for more money to finance expected expenditure increases. So that gave us a headstart into the current year, and I am pleased to report that the momentum has been maintained.

We took a step of faith when we made a substantial increase in our monthly contribution to the Methodist Church, increasing the payment by a third again. This is in anticipation of some upcoming expenditure - speaking with my Secretary of the Property Committee hat on now!! - but, knowing how good Martin is at winking out funds from all sorts of mostly Methodist sources, if the expenditure does not become a burden on local funds then we see it as an indication of the high regard we have for our relationship with our Methodist friends. Andrew Letby just happened to be in our AGM when I reported this to the congregation - so he heard it from the horse's mouth.

We have been delighted to have Valerie with us for the past six months as our Diocesan Curate. She has such a ready smile, a friendly disposition and makes such a unique contribution to our worship that we are very pleased to be associated with supporting her in her training by making a financial contribution to her costs. We wish her every success in this new phase of her life and look forward to her next 18 months with us.

Finally, we look forward to receiving a new chasuble, burse and veil (vestment and altar items) in memoriam of some members of the congregation.

Alan Taylor

Volunteer needed!

Audrie Pollard has stepped down as our co-ordinator for fund-raising for 'Home Missions' (now called 'Mission in Britain Fund'). If you are prepared to take on that role, please let Howard Kirby know.

Blythswood Care Appeals

Thank you all who brought along lots of the items needed by the Highland Food Bank at Harvest Thanksgiving. All of it will be greatly appreciated by the poor and needy in the Highland area.

For the Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal 2010 we have received about 34 boxes, which is wonderful. The Parahandies Group filled a number of boxes and, by all accounts, they thoroughly enjoyed doing so.

My grateful thanks to all who participated: I am sure that the children, the teenagers, the ladies, the elderly women, the elderly men and the young men who receive a box will be pleased too.

Bless you for your kindness.

Mary Dempster

More about flowers

St Margaret's is responsible for Church flowers on the 4th Sunday (except Advent and Lent) with the cost provisioned for in their budget against the Flower Fund. However, some of the congregation may also wish to donate flowers for an anniversary and this gesture would be much appreciated. You can either buy the flowers yourself or give a donation to Lesley Yellowlees who will buy and arrange the flowers on your behalf. Whatever you decide, please talk to Lesley at the appropriate time.

Pedal for Scotland

How two generations of Salthouses raised money for charity

On 24 May 2006 Dunfermline Carnegie Hockey Club were shocked with the news that one of their promising young players, Andy Stewart, had died following a very short battle with leukaemia having been diagnosed only 14 days beforehand. He was just 15.

Andy's twin brother, Jamie, and his family were devastated, but wanted to do something to remember Andy and also to raise money for Leukaemia Research. Pedal for Scotland seemed the ideal opportunity to accomplish both aims as the event's principal charity was Leukaemia Research.

In September 2006 the first Team Andy Stewart set off from Glasgow to Edinburgh with about 90 members and friends from the hockey club. The distance was 55 miles along canal paths, cycle tracks and public roads. Ed and David joined the team for the following three years completing the trip in increasingly faster times. Despite being an enjoyable ride, the serious matter of remembering Andy and raising much needed funds for Leukaemia Research was always the team's main focus.

In 2010 the organisers announced that there would be a 'sportive' route of 100 miles. Having recently taken up track and road cycling on a more serious basis Ed decided he definitely needed the challenge. Dad wasn't so sure! Ten other members of the club decided they relished the challenge of the longer distance so before long we were in training for the longest cycle ride most of us had ever taken.

There isn't really much alternative when it comes to training for a ride like this other than getting out on our bicycles. Most rides tended to be fairly unscripted. We would set off from home and at each junction, decide



which way we to go and see where we ended up. This could be Kinross, Stirling, Edinburgh or anywhere in between. One popular run was to turn left at the end of our road, head south over the Kincardine Bridge, turn left again and then head for the Forth Road Bridge and turn left again and end up home. It seemed like a long way but when we actually rode it we discovered this was only half the final distance we would need to ride on the day.

Eventually however there comes a time when the training ends and the real event takes over. We left the Rosyth Civil Service Club just before 06:00 on 12 September and set off for Glasgow Green for the start. The riders on the bus were quite subdued, not only because of the early start but also as it was dawning on everyone just how far the ride was and how long we would be in the saddle which are never the most comfortable for any period of time let alone for up to eight hours.

Ed and David crossed the start line round about 07:50 and headed south out of Glasgow heading for the first food stop at Loudoun just outside Kilmarnock. A quick 10 minutes with the mechanic had David's gears



behaving properly again. We then turned east at Galston for the first time on the route heading for Newmilns. A right turn saw up travelling south again towards Smallburn where we again turned east once more and headed for Douglas where the second stop was at 51 miles. We met up with Bob Stewart, Andy's father, at this checkpoint as he has split with his riding partner. We set off from the checkpoint and met our only mechanical problem of the whole ride. Bob's chain had slipped off the front chain set and got totally wedged between the small gear and the bottom bracket. It took about 25 minutes and a lot of oily fingers before we were able to set off again.

The third and final feed station was at 74 miles in the village of Carnwath. Ed had slipped the leash during this stage and had left David and Bob in his wake reaching Carnwath about 10 minutes ahead of the older pair. We set off again together and about 5 miles into the final stage Ed 'hit the wall'. We had been travelling at around 15mph up to this point and all of a sudden Ed's legs and 'get up and go' had deserted him. Having someone other than dad talking to him worked the trick and after about 4 or 5 miles we managed to pick up the pace again. The home straight was almost in site at this point and after quite a long slow climb up the A70 we crested the final hill of the day and were met with sight

of Edinburgh and the Forth of Firth. This was the push that we all needed and we were able to get back to our previous speed.

The last few miles through the outskirts of Edinburgh and finally into the finish

at Victoria Park were quite emotional for all three of us. We were all feeling the pain towards the end and it was possible at times to forget why we were doing the ride in the first place. However the shirts we were wearing as members of Team Andy Stewart put our own pain in focus. It was also easy to forget after 100 miles that Ed was only just 14 and this was a great effort on his part and you could almost excuse his mental block at 80 miles!

Thanks to the generosity of many friends, family and colleagues – including many from the Church – Ed and David raised just over £700 this year which makes about £2,000 we have raised since we joined the team. In total Team Andy Stewart has raised about £60,000 which has been put in a special dedicated fund for Leukaemia Research.

Having never done this distance before it was hard to equate how far we had cycled in one go. Obviously the route shows how the miles added up but it was put in perspective a couple of weeks later when my parents came to visit for a few days. They stay in Ballater and it is a route I have driven many times in the car. When they arrived they pointed out they had just driven 100 miles from their home to ours. This brought it home just what we had achieved. We will be back next year for another 100 miles? Why ever not!

Oberammergau 2010

as told to the Wednesday Fellowship by Lesley Yellowlees

I had long held an ambition to witness the Passion Play at Oberammergau in Bavaria but, whilst working, the time never seemed right or the funds available. When, in 2000, I discovered that I had missed it yet again, I was determined not to do so in 2010 as it might be my last opportunity.

After watching a BBC TV recording about the play in 2009, my friend Irene May and I decided to look for a suitable trip. Eventually, we found a good one and duly booked it.



On 6 July this year, we flew to Zurich via London. After a marathon through the airport, we met our Tour Manager, Karina, who is German but has lived in Vancouver for 20 years. After arriving at Engelberg, a ski resort in the Swiss Alps, we met our fellow travellers. I was astonished to discover we were such a large group – 37 in all, 31 from the USA and 6 from the UK. However, a very nice group of people.

We spent three days in Switzerland, visiting Interlaken, Berne, Lucerne and Mount Pilatus, said to be the burial place of Pontius Pilate – one of several theories. It was a wonderful experience.

We then travelled to Austria, with a short stop in Liechtenstein, and arrived in Innsbruck, another ski resort and a good centre for our visit to Salzburg, where the “Sound of Music” was filmed and Mozart was born.

After leaving Innsbruck, we set forth for Oberammergau but made a short stop at the Wies Church as it is fairly close. This has been a World Heritage site since 1983 and a place of pilgrimage since the early 1700s, when tears were seen falling from a statue in a small chapel there, and word spread quickly in that very devout Catholic area of Germany. It is an astonishing church, quite plain on the outside but “wow” when you go inside. The decoration is truly breathtaking wherever you look.



At last, our final destination was reached, Oberammergau, in Bavaria. It is much bigger than we anticipated. We arrived the day before the play and had a brief tour and then our hotel, which was situated about 10 minutes from the centre.

The following morning we had time for shopping before lunch and preparation for the play. The play is in two parts. This year the timing was changed to afternoon and evening, as the producer felt that the Crucifixion scene would be more atmospheric in the twilight.



Inside the Oberammergau play house

The first part started at 2.30pm and lasted 2½ hours. There was a break for dinner and the second part at 8.00pm. There are 2,500 actors, including all ages from babies to 80s, and lots of animals. All come from the village either by birth or marriage. There are two orchestras, a wonderful choir and superb music – absolutely breathtaking, and so professional.



Jesus before Pilate: some of the cast of thousands

The first performance in 1634 fulfilled a vow made to God the previous year when Oberammergau had been threatened with decimation by the plague. Most survived

and the play has been performed every decade since except in 1940, and also in 1984, the 350th anniversary.

I think it was the most extraordinary experience of my life. I know the Bible rendition well, but I felt I was really there in Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday. The following Holy Week scenes spoke to me as never before. Words are one thing but actions really do speak louder. My favourite scenes – the entry of the choir, so dramatic, Jesus in front of Pilate, the Last Supper, Judas's tear-jerking performance of guilt and, of course, the Crucifixion.



It was breathtaking seeing three people suspended on the cross for 20 minutes and the gentle way Jesus's body was taken down. So many more one could mention.

I could go on for hours about the play, but all I can say is thanks be to God for this opportunity. How I loved it, and Holy Week will never be the same again for me.

Would I do it all again – you bet I would!



West Gallery Music

as enjoyed by Sue Masson

On Friday 22 October I joined an eclectic mix of people in Swanwick, Derbyshire, all taking part in a weekend workshop organised by the West Gallery Music Association. As some of you know, I found out about this style of music from a chance meeting with Mary Kidd on a train from Preston to Edinburgh, and it is becoming somewhat of a passion with me.

But what is it, I hear you ask? Basically it is music of the church from 1700–1850 and so called because it was performed by a band of singers and instrumentalists from a gallery in the West end of the church.

The gallery band is well described in Thomas Hardy's novel "Under the Greenwood Tree", and they led the congregation in metrical psalms, as this quote from the "Mayor of Casterbridge" shows:

"I want you fellows of the choir to strike up a tune; and what with that and this brew of Stannidge's, I am in hopes of getting altogether out of my minor key."

"With all my heart," said the first fiddle. "We've let down our strings, that's true: but we can soon pull 'em up again."

"I don't care a curse what the words be," said Henchard ... "tis all the same to me if 'tis good harmony, and well put out."

"Well – heh, hey – it may well be that we can do that, and not a man among us that have sat in the gallery for less than 20 year," said the leader of the band.

"As 'tis Sunday, neighbours, suppose we raise the Fourth Psalm, to Samuel Wakely's tune, as improved by me?"

As the purchase of large bass instruments was beyond the means of tradesmen and artisans, the parish often saved to buy a bass viol, serpent or trombone. They also paid for the maintenance of instruments, bought reeds and strings, and would buy one copy

of a hymn or anthem. The musicians would then copy the music into their own personal tune book, often adding the popular dance tunes of the day at the back.

The choir was paid, mostly in kind, one set of accounts from Shropshire recording a payment for "cider for the choir" followed by "repairs to the trambone 1s 6d"!!

As well as psalms there were also hymns, anthems, canticles and some very lively Christmas carols – too joyful indeed for the reformers of the Oxford Movement in the mid 19th century, who sought to replace the fiddles, clarinets and bassoons with an organ, and the singers in the gallery with a robed choir in the chancel. The psalms disappeared and a wedge driven between choir and congregation – the latter being limited to Hymns Ancient and Modern, and the former being given the anthems and expected to be more professional.

The genre survived longer in nonconformist chapels as many choirs, fed up with their tune books being destroyed, simply crossed the road to the welcoming Methodists; others sang in the street or moved into the pub, where the music became part of the folk tradition. It was too good, too vital, to be allowed to die. Now, with the formation of the West Gallery Music Association, it is increasingly heard in the communities where it belongs.

Sadly there are as yet no "quires" north of the border, but who knows – one day soon we may well see a "Quire in the Kingdom". It is good music, easy to play and sing, and great fun to perform; and as one old player said: "Just pass us that rosin, George, and we'll show 'em who's the King of Glory."

The quotations are from articles by Peter Moger from the RSCM and Francis Rodes from the WGMA.

RSCM “Meet, Eat and Sing”

as reported by Sandra Young



“Eat, Meet and Sing”, a concept which has a familiar ring for our two churches, was an event organised by the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) Scotland Committee and held in Dunfermline Abbey on 23 October.

This was a joyous occasion when Myra Tarr, and non choir members Sandra Young and Janet Murray, joined some 30 people of all ages and singing abilities, from churches and musical societies in West Fife and Edinburgh. That the event was enjoyable was evident in the number of messages the organisers subsequently received from many of the participants.

We were ably led by an enthusiastic and helpful Matthew Beetschen (Chair of RSCM Scotland and Director of Music, Dunblane Cathedral) through a series of warm-up exercises, and then introduced to six settings of old and new church choral music from “The Bronze Collection”, an RSCM book with a varied selection of anthems that could be used as repertoire for anyone wanting to sit the RSCM Voice for Life Bronze medal.

Matthew’s ‘taster’ for us included the well-known “Ave Verum Corpus” by Elgar, arrangements of a plainsong melody, and John Bell’s evocative hymn “We cannot measure how you heal” set to the tune “Ye banks and braes”.

Whilst the singing was not to performance standard – it was never intended to be – we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and hopefully benefited from the occasion. We were accompanied throughout by Dr Norman Mitchell, organist of Dunfermline Abbey. The afternoon finished with an excellent hot supper (prepared by the husbands and friends of the participants from Dunfermline Abbey) and an opportunity to hear about how the RSCM plans to improve its profile in Scotland.

Founded in 1927, the RSCM has existed in its present form since 1945. It is an educational Christian charity “enabling the best use of music in worship, church life, and community” and supports a world-wide network of 8,500 churches, schools and individuals. It is seeking to enlarge its ecumenical mission and to serve the needs of the wider Church.

Scotland is a separate region, and the RSCM Scotland committee, all volunteers, organise events such as festivals and local courses, summer schools, workshops and training days. Their newsletters, the latest dated October 2010, can be downloaded from their website www.rscmscotland.org.

St Margaret’s is affiliated to the RSCM and we have attended events in the past. Having now made new contacts, we look forward to participating in future events.

Music corner

Sunday@Six

It is now 18 months since the name "Sunday@Six" was given to our evening Sunday worship, and we changed from always holding a traditional evensong to having a different theme and format each time. Now, we have that different theme each month, the worship is led by a lay member from either St Margaret's or the Methodists, and our attendances have increased. Sue Masson has been largely responsible for planning the themes to reflect the seasons and other special occasions, and we appreciate her continued involvement in this important form of joint worship.

Sue has some ideas for 2011, and traditionalists will be pleased to know that Evensong has not been forgotten altogether and there will be an opportunity for this style of worship, as there was twice in 2010.

Also by way of keeping with tradition, on **19 December** (the third Sunday, not the fourth) we are holding our annual candle-lit carol service, which will involve members of both congregations. This is an ideal opportunity to reflect and anticipate the birth of our Lord. All are invited to attend, and of course to bring their friends too! An offering will be uplifted in aid of CHAS, Kinross, and your gift may be Gift-Aided if you use one of the special envelopes available from Alan Taylor.

One minute, please

What did our Lord say?

"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

Singing the Faith

"We are pilgrims on a journey, and companions on the road" is a line from one of my many favourite hymns: "Brother, sister, let me serve you". We express our faith journey as a pilgrimage towards perfect love. It is a personal pilgrimage shared with, and among, our friends.

For Methodists, singing glory to God is at the heart of our Methodist story, and our hymn books have always accompanied us on our journey. They have supported us in public worship and in our private devotion. Our history and experiences bear witness to the power of poetic music. The language of our hymns inspire, encourage, comfort and challenge us on our journey. I'm so glad "Brother, sister..." has been included, even though it's not a new one to us who sing from Common Ground, or listen regularly to "Songs of Praise" on TV.

"Singing the Faith" begins a new chapter in this journey. We look forward to this brand-new authorised collection of hymns which will appear next year with a launch at the Methodist Conference. From the inception of "Singing the Faith", the vision of the Music Resources Group has been to create a collection that reflects the whole of the Methodist Church; that it is sensitive to our Methodist heritage, but also to the needs and practice of our contemporary fellowships. It presents a renewed opportunity for us to journey together in faith and understanding. It has one aim – to lift hearts and voices to God in perfect harmony.

A web site www.singingthefaitth.org.uk has just been launched and will be updated regularly. You will be able to view and listen to sample material, meet the Music Resources Group, scrutinise the contents list and find answers to possible questions you may have.

Mary Kidd

Contact points

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

Church activities

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

Property matters and letting enquiries to
Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers13@talktalk.net

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

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

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

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

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

Wednesday Fellowship
Mary Kidd 01383 872332
cmarykidd@btinternet.com

Organisations meeting in our premises

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

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

Scout Group

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

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

Cub Scouts
Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers13@talktalk.net

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

Explorer Scouts
Terry O'Neill 01383 842695
terryoneill2003@yahoo.co.uk

Guide Unit

Rainbows
Susan Warren 01383 414355
Young Leader, Melissa Peel

Brownies
Suzy Knight 01383 416087

Guides
Mandy Ward 01383 414944
thewards_197@talktalk.net

Assistant Guider, Susan Warren
Young Leader, Nicola Byrne:

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

Advent Calendar

He will come like last leaf's fall.
One night when the November wind
has flayed the trees to bone, and earth
wakes choking on the mould,
the soft shroud's folding.

He will come like frost.
One morning when the shrinking earth
opens on mist, to find itself
arrested in the net
of alien, sword-set beauty.

He will come like dark.
One evening when the bursting red
December sun draws up the sheet
and penny-masks its eye to yield
the star-snowed fields of sky.

He will come, will come,
will come like crying in the night,
like blood, like breaking,
as the earth writhes to toss him free.
He will come like child.

Archbishop Rowan Williams

Rosyth on the web

You can view or download this issue of Contact, and zoom in to look at text or photos in colour, at <http://tinyurl.com/2ukj84g>.

To our contributors

Thank you for all the inputs that are so helpful to us in our task of creating an interesting and informative newsletter. Please keep the ideas coming! We love having articles with photographs, but suggest 350–400 words + two images as the easiest fit onto a page.

The **next issue** of Contact will be published on Sunday 30 January. Contributions please by **Sunday 23 January** to Martin Tarr (1 Methven Drive, Dunfermline, KY12 0AH; 01383 723989), preferably by email to martin@mtarr.co.uk. Please give information for the diary section at any time to Sandra Young (sandrayoung39@btinternet.com or 01383 415021).