

Rosyth
Methodist Church



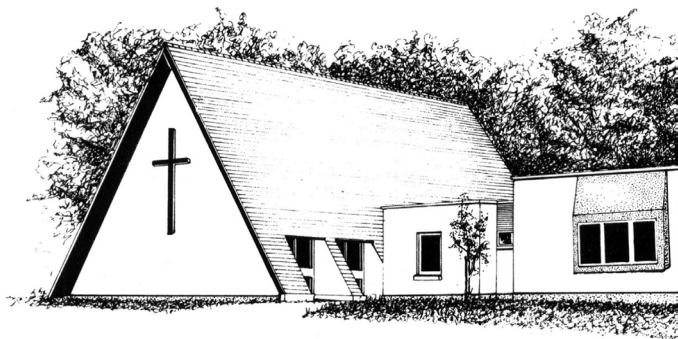
St Margaret's Scottish
Episcopal Church



Contact

the newsletter of the partnership between

Rosyth Methodist Church and
St Margaret's Scottish Episcopal Church



Issue 93
October/November 2017

Rosyth
Methodist Church
Scottish Charity SC028559
www.rosythmethodist.org.uk

St Margaret's Scottish
Episcopal Church
Scottish Charity SC028426
www.stmargaretsrosyth.org.uk

in partnership

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

Minister:

Rev Dr Helen Jenkins
01506 842333

Coordinating Steward:

David Salthouse 01383 889212

Pastoral Secretary:

Gwyneth Kirby 01383 624779

Church Council Secretary :

Sandra Wilson 01383 415885

Treasurer:

Dave Ward 01383 414944

Rector:

Rev Alison Cozens 01383 732654

Vestry Secretary:

Sandra Young 01383 415021

Treasurer:

Gordon Pryde 01383 860450

** An asterisk indicates a change since the last issue*

our regular pattern of worship

Sundays (except 4th)

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

11.00am Morning Worship
(including Sunday School)

1st Sundays:

6.00pm "Sunday@Six"

4th Sundays:

Worship together

9.00am Breakfast and "Messy Church" (during term time)

11.00am Joint Communion Service

where to find us

On the road: our postal address is Queensferry Road, Rosyth, Dunfermline, KY11 2JH, and you'll find us at the junction of Queensferry Road and Woodside Avenue. This is a short walk from Rosyth Rail station. The car park is behind the church. Local on-street parking is limited, but there is much more parking space at the junction with Park Road.

Contact

Newsletter of the Methodist—Episcopalian local ecumenical partnership in Rosyth

Issue 93: October/November 2017

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Editor: Howard R. Kirby

12 Overton Court, Pitreavie Castle, Dunfermline, KY11 8TY

E-mail: editor@rosythmethodist.org.uk

Assistant Editor: Dave Ward

Diary Editor: Sandra Young

Closing date for December 2017/January 2018 issue: Tuesday 21st November 2017

Reflections on the Triangle Coffee Shop

Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet reflects on her encounters

It is a pleasure to support the outreach work of the Triangle Coffee Shop. I have engaged in many richly rewarding and highly varied pastoral encounters since September 2016, as I look to offer encouragement and support to both the group of committed café volunteers and those who are visiting the Triangle. These may be Rosyth Methodist and St Margaret's members, members of other local churches, occasional visitors from afar, family and friends of regular customers or members of the local community who may have no particular church affiliation. The dedication and hard work of the Triangle team is absolutely magnificent - serving teas, coffees and fabulous home-made cakes made by volunteers who have spent considerable time in doing so. This attention to 'customer care' has recently brought about the introduction of some delicious fruit salad options for those who are following special diets or who are counting the calories! Friday mornings can be extremely busy in the kitchen but the team always find time for a smile and a friendly word to those who visit.

The Triangle is one of the most successful church enterprises I have encountered and it is clear that Christian witness, care and hospitality are at the heart of The Triangle's work and are always in evidence. Importantly, The Triangle offers a safe space to talk, share and feel

supported. Relationships and friendships deepen over time and Friday morning at The Triangle is an important part of the weekly routine for many regular customers. In a recent conversation with one customer, I invited some feedback on her experience at The Triangle. She said it was always a welcoming and friendly place to come and she appreciated the space that was available for wheelchair users.

From 1st September 2017, I have also been helping with pastoral care at Rosyth Methodist Church. This specifically means being aware and up to speed regarding those people who are in special need of a phone call, a card or a pastoral visit and then following these up. The Triangle is a good place to obtain such information as I will often be updated on pastoral needs whilst I'm there.

It is a privilege to share in The Triangle's ministry, building relationships with both volunteers and customers and I hope that I can be involved in this work for the duration of my appointment in the Forth Valley Circuit and especially pray that the good work of The Triangle will continue to flourish.

Elizabeth Harfleet

[Ed: thank you Elizabeth for making the 64-mile round trip from Tranent each week in support of everyone!]

“Let them all sing”

Martin Tarr introduces our next Sunday@Six, “Luther 500”, on Sunday 5 November

Most centenary celebrations commemorate the year of the celebrity’s birth or the year of his/her death. But Martin Luther was born in 1483, and died in 1546. So why is this service badged as “Luther 500”?

The son of a copper miner in Eisleben (a town in Saxony in former East Germany), Martin Luther was an Augustinian friar whose studies led him to become a priest and the professor of Bible studies at Wittenburg (some 70 miles to the north-east). Having visited Rome, and been appalled by the corruption he found there, Luther became increasingly angry about the clergy selling ‘indulgences’. These promised remission from punishment for sin, either for someone still living or for someone who had died and was believed to be in purgatory.

On 31 October 1517, Luther published his ‘95 Theses’, inviting everyone interested to a public discussion on papal indulgences. Legend has it that he nailed his document to Wittenburg’s Castle Church door! Whether or not that actually happened, Luther’s attack on papal abuses and the sale of indulgences went down in history as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

Luther’s studies had led him to a conviction that Christians are saved through faith – the free gift of God’s grace to the believer– and not through their own efforts, running counter to

the practices of the medieval Catholic Church. He also taught that the Bible is the only source of divinely-revealed knowledge from God, which challenged the authority and office of the Pope.



In 1518–20, Luther wrote a series of pamphlets developing his ideas, and his writings were able to spread quickly, thanks to Gutenberg’s invention eighty years earlier of moveable type and the printing press. Reaction was swift. In January 1521, Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther, and later that year Holy Roman Emperor Charles V declared him an outlaw and a heretic, forcing him temporarily into hiding in Wartburg.

In 1522, Luther returned to Wittenberg and in 1525 married Katharina von Bora, a former nun, with whom he had six children, their marriage setting a precedent for Protestant clergy to marry.

During his time in Wartburg Luther began his translation of the Bible into the German vernacular, enabling lay

people to read the Bible in their own language. The translation, completed in 1534, helped develop a standard version of the German language and also influenced Tyndale's English translation.

Martin Luther played many roles, from monk, student, professor, and priest to husband, father, translator, and reformer. He was also a poet and musician, believing in the important contribution that hymns could make in worship, with everyone taking part. Before Luther's time, congregations rarely spoke let alone sang during a church service. The very first collection, which appeared as early as 1523/4, was of *"Canticles and psalms according to the pure word of God from the holy scripture, made by several learned people, to be sung in church as already practised in part in Wittenberg."* Luther contributed over half the texts, and some of the tunes.

The little hymnal was distributed in Europe, and Luther's adversaries complained that *"the whole people are singing themselves into his doctrines."*

While we will be talking about Luther's beliefs and their influence, it is on his contribution to Protestant music that our celebration will focus. Where would we be without *"A safe stronghold our God is still"* and the many hymns produced by the movement he inspired. Come along at **6.00pm on 5 November**, find out more, and enjoy a good sing!

Martin Tarr

Book review

Martin Forman reviews

'Making Sense of Religious Pluralism'

This book, by Alan Race, is sub-titled *Shaping theology of religions for our times*. With 549 pages, it was published in 2013 by SPCK in the Modern Church series.

As far as I am able to ascertain, the purpose of the book is to explain the current state of the relationship between Christianity and the other great religions, the pluralism of the title.

Therefore it sets out to explain rather than entertain, despite using a pertinent passage from *The Life of Pi* in the introduction. Pi, during his journeys, sees good things in three of the great religions, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, and is disappointed when three priests from these religions insist he choose one.

There is also a useful chapter on scripture, and the problem of interpretation and the weight that a small passage has to bear *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14: 6). Words taken as proof of exceptionalism by some Christians, but as the book makes clear, capable of more than one interpretation.

It is, however, also full of awkward titles: Exclusivist-Repudiation, Inclusivist-Toleration; Pluralist-Acceptance, Particularist-Refusal; these seem to be the invention of the

author, who finds them useful. I do not. These are ugly titles, clunky categories, it is hard to read through the fog provided by these titles and some of the sentences that abound in this short book. Here is a small example of what I feel is the problem:

"In this way Inclusivist-Tolerationists seek to solve the issue of how God's presence throughout time and space coheres with that same presence in the presence of Jesus the Saviour, yet without the negativity of the Exlusivist-Repudiationist."

Too much prose of this type made it difficult for my mind to get beneath the surface of these sentences.

To close: this is a book that sets out to explain, and there is too much explaining and not enough showing. Which is a pity. Since underneath the bad sentences and the stagnant explanations is a book with a positive message: that all religions have a great capacity for good, which could be released through self-criticism and dialogue.

Martin Forman

BBQ parachutists

Some 30 people enjoyed the BBQ in September at the church, Inside when it rained, children and Mandy had fun with the parachute game.



40 Years' service

Alan Taylor records a local celebration

Saturday 23rd September marked 40 years' service as a Deacon in the Church of Scotland for Morag Crawford. Her Commissioning and her work was celebrated at Morning Worship in Rosyth Parish Church on Sunday 24th, when the congregation was swelled by those who have been on that journey with her, in its many forms. Former colleagues were present in great numbers, filling the church. Martin Rogers, Jan Benvie and Bridget and I were there.

The theme of the celebration was "A Place at the Table", both in a spiritual sense and in a practical sense. The retiring collection - which came to over £1,300 - was to help provide food for Syrian refugees and to help bring Deacons from other parts of the world to the next Diaconate Conference in Britain. And we all had "a place at the table" at a celebratory lunch afterwards.

Morag's work in Rosyth is well known, not only in the parish church, but also ecumenically, in the schools, at the Dockyard, with the Garden City Association and the Rosyth Waterfront Liaison Group. She led our worship at the opening session of the Wednesday Fellowship on 6th September. Congratulations, Morag, and bless you for all you do.

Alan Taylor

What's on in the Diocese

Sung Compline

All churches in the Area Council are warmly invited to take part in a Sung Compline on **Sunday 22 October**, organised jointly between St. Paul's, Kinross and St. Finnian's, Lochgelly. This service will be held in St. Paul's Kinross starting at **4.30pm** with a rehearsal, followed by refreshments with the service at **6.15pm**. For catering purpose please let Rev Margaret Dineley know if you are planning to attend, but if you just turn up on the day you will be just as welcome. Margaret can be reached on 01592 358933 or 07931483906 or via margaret.dineley@gmail.com.

Taize Service

At St Finnian's Lochgelly on **Sunday 12th November at 7.30pm**, Rev Margaret Dineley will lead a Taize service, followed by fellowship and refreshments in the hall. All are welcome to attend. Remembrance Sunday offers an opportunity to worship in this quiet meditative way and it becomes especially beautiful in candlelight as the evenings become darker.

Area Council next meeting

The next Area Council Meeting will be on **Thursday 23 November** at St Peter's Inverkeithing, when the speaker will be from the Diocesan Oversees Committee. During the evening we will also plan our programme for 2018. The meeting starts at **7.30pm** and all are welcome.

Sandra Young

Area Council report

The annual West Fife Area Council service took place in St Peter's Episcopal Church in Kirkcaldy on Sunday the 10th September. The young people who make up the youth Fellowship of Holy Trinity, Dunfermline and St Peter's Kirkcaldy did a marvellous job putting together a very impressive first half of the Holy Communion service. They picked the hymns, played the piano to the first hymn ('Shine Jesus shine') and the Taize chants during communion. Then we were treated to a review of the Provincial Youth week at Glenalmond. The Film shown was both entertaining and wondrous to see. It is heartening to see that the young people of the Episcopal church are faithful and enthusiastic about their relationship with God and finding new ways to come together in friendship and love to the glory of Christ.

St Margaret's was well represented at the service, and we were all very impressed by the effort the young people put into it. The singing and clapping along was both enthusiastic and invigorating, and at the end of the service they stood at the door to shake each person by the hand. A really inclusive and nice touch. We look forward to the time when St Margaret's youngest member qualifies to join the YF and looks forward to going to Glenalmond!

Blaze, spirit blaze, set our hearts on fire!

Valerie Leslie

Musical events

RSCM Singing Day

On **Saturday 4 November** do come along and join with other singers at the annual RSCM Singing Day in Dunblane Cathedral directed by the Cathedral's Director of Music, Kevin Duggan. The day starts at **1.30pm** and after a 30 minutes break at 3.30pm, there will be a short service at 4pm with the music we have learned in the afternoon. To ensure there are enough copies of music and for catering, those attending are required to register with Kirsten Mann at kirsten@rscmscotland.org. Myra has kindly offered once again to co-ordinate this for those attending from Rosyth so please let her know if you wish to attend. This is always an enjoyable day with lots of fun and a chance to catch up with other singers and friends, old and new.

Voskresenije Choir

Those of you who attended one of the two wonderful concerts last year will be delighted to know that Jurij Maruk will soon be bringing his Voskresenije Choir (the name means Resurrection) back to West Fife for their fifth visit.

As usual, this award-winning a cappella ensemble of former students of St Petersburg Music Conservatoire are presenting a programme of traditional sacred music and folk songs. The first half of will feature music from the Orthodox Church tradition, with a set of Russian folk songs after the interval. And you will

be pleased to hear that this year's programme, for which we have just received the running order, will be entirely different from 2016's!

The 2017 concert is on Sunday **19 November at 3.00pm at St Margaret's RC Memorial Church** in East Port, Dunfermline, KY12 7JB. So keep the date, and look at <http://russianchoir.stmargaretsrosyth.org.uk/> for booking details, or email us at russianchoirfife@gmail.com.

The Scottish Chamber Choir

The 2017/18 season for this choirs starts on **Saturday 25 November** when they will be joined by the Meadow Chamber Orchestra in a performance of Mozart Requiem at **7.45pm** in St Serf's Church, 280 Ferry Road, Edinburgh, EH5 3NP. The programme also includes works by Stravinsky and the Swedish composer Schnelzer. Talk to Martin Tarr for further information.

Dunfermline Choral Union

Rehearsals are well underway for the annual Christmas Concert of seasonal music at the Vine Venue, Dunfermline on **Saturday 9 December at 3pm and 7.30pm**. Watch out for the posters!

Sandra Young

One minute , please What did Jesus say?

"Peace be with you"

Luke 26: 36

Mary Sumner Day in the Diocese of Edinburgh

On Thursday 9 August I was invited by our dear friend and Mothers' Union (MU) member, Patricia Gordon, to attend their service in Edinburgh to celebrate Mary Sumner and the Mothers' Union. Pat is a very good friend of mine. She was a member of Holy Trinity, sang in the choir as well as a MU member when the family lived in Garvock.

This was held at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield Avenue, Edinburgh. MU members had travelled from all parishes in the Diocese, some as far afield as Kelso, to attend this annual celebration. Also, as the Good Shepherd is in an Ecumenical partnership, they were joined by their United Reformed and Church of Scotland friends as well as Methodists and Baptist supporters. Unusually for August, the weather was sunny and warm. The service was conducted by the Rector, the Rev Dr Canon Dean Forteskew, assisted by the MU Diocesan Chaplain, the Rev Christine Barclay.

In his address, Canon Forteskew reminded us of the dedication and enormous contribution of MU members throughout the world. In an ever growing world where society has changed, Mothers' Union has embraced those changes while remaining to its true vision – transforming the lives of half a million people each year. It continues to flourish from members' energy, generosity and prayer. We put our

faith into action, often quietly and humbly through the projects we run and the support we provide. Mary Sumner had a vision, led an ordinary life, yet touched the life of ordinary people. And the service wouldn't be complete without that great hymn of Mary "Tell out my Soul".

After the service we all assembled in the hall for a buffet lunch, a chance to catch up with friends old and new. It was nice to see Barbara Hand, who was equally delighted to see me!

We rounded off the day with a tour of the Garden of Contemplation reading the various stations of wisdom and poems. There is also a 'Peace Pole' (known as 'The bit') at the entrance of the church. It is written with the words "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Danish, Swahili and Romanian. It represents the languages of those nationalities who worship at the Good Shepherd. But for me the wisdom that spoke to me is 'The 'bit' between the church and the hall, where it was aptly situated. I would like to share it with you...

Dorissia Forsyth

[Ed: For those who may not be familiar with Mary Sumner (1828 to 1921), she founded the Mothers' Union, a worldwide Anglican women's organisation, in 1876 and is remembered annually on 9 August when its members, friends and supporters celebrate her life and work]

Experimenting with different styles of worship

During the summer months we have been trying out different styles of worship for the 11am service. We have kept to the second Sunday of each month and tried to make sure that everyone knew what to expect so that there were no nasty surprises !

Helen started us off in June with a service in the style of the Community of Iona. In July we had Café Church led by Edward Idle in a relaxed but thought provoking manner. Our newly formed Praise Band led the service in July (I bet you never realised how many talented musicians there are in our two congregations !)

And by popular request the Praise Band played for our All Age Worship Service in August, which was led by members of our own congregations.

I have received quite a lot of feed-back following these services, most of it very positive, but also some helpful critical comments. The Leadership Team feel that it would be good to continue with these services and have planned for November to February.

We will start in November with a Remembrance Day Service in which it is hoped that members of our Uniformed Organisations will take an active part. In December we will have Café Church, with the Praise Band, and lots of popular carols instead of the Advent hymns that we usually sing at this time of year. In order to tie in with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity our special service will move to the

third Sunday (21 January) and it is hoped to arrange an exchange of pulpits with another denomination. In February we will be focussing on Action for Children in an All Age Service, led by members of our own congregations, but including a representative from Action for Children. And I hope the Praise Band will be able to play for us again.

I know that not all these services will appeal to everybody but I hope there will be something there for everyone to feel they are able to come along and worship God in a different way once a month. A good opportunity to bring someone with you !

Gwyneth Kirby

Traidcraft opportunities

A big thank you to all those who buy regularly from our Traidcraft stall, and especially to those who purchased the craft items that we brought a few weeks ago. If you missed these, I'm always happy to order items **from the catalogue, many of which would** make splendid Christmas gifts. Please order early!

In October, our Traidcraft stall will be a week earlier, on **15 October** between the services. Do have a look at what we have on display, which will include a selection of sample Christmas cards for you to order.

Myra Tarr

Harvest Suppers help others

Martin Tarr and Valerie Leslie report on how two events related to each other

At our 2017 Harvest Supper on 23 September we welcomed Ross Stirling from St Finnian's and Fiona McLeod, his colleague from Fife College, who spoke about the work of the Arunima Hospice in Kolkata (Calcutta). The hospice helps children who are either HIV positive or have AIDS, or whose



parents have died of AIDS. Ross and Fiona had already raised funds to support Arunima, and visited Kolkata

in April. Their aims were to build new relationships between the hospice and Fife College, and to continue established links with our Diocese.

In a joint presentation they shared their experiences and told how the money raised so far has been helping Arunima. The talk was full of interest

and humour, but it was also heart-breaking at times – the needs of these disadvantaged children are very great.

Val Leslie introduced the speakers, and also presented the handmade prayer blankets for the children that had been blessed at our service the previous Sunday. [Ed: See opposite.]

The audience of over 50, which included a heartening number of young people from across the West Fife area, enjoyed both the talk and the home cooking that had preceded it. They were generous in their response, and the amount collected on the night was £423 – over £500 with reclaimable Gift Aid.

Special thanks go to Myra Tarr, Pam Pryde and their team for the delicious food and to Val Leslie for overseeing the evening.

Martin Tarr



The Prayer Blanket



The idea for the blanket took shape after last year's Harvest Supper when the congregations of St Margaret's and Rosyth Methodists gave so generously for Patricia Robert's projects in Malawi. After donating a sizeable amount of money we received a letter from a parish priest in Malawi whom Patricia had given the money to, he told us that he had used the money to buy a brick machine so that the people in his village no longer needed to cut down trees to build homes and clinics for themselves, reducing the risk to their environment and making life a little less precarious for them. He finished off by asking the congregations to pray for him and his parishioners. The prayer blanket idea arose from thinking about how we could go about praying for those less fortunate than ourselves and do something practical as well; a sort of Martha and Mary moment.

Sue Masson made a lovely knitted blanket which she lined and lovingly marked "Made with Love". Mary Kidd

and her daughter-in-law Andrea knitted and crocheted squares and I also crocheted enough squares to make a second blanket. (Indeed there are enough squares left over to make a third blanket at a later stage.)

Ross Stirling is a good friend and the lay rep for St Finnian's Lochgelly. He has already raised a huge amount of money to help build a children's hospice in the diocese of Kolkata, a sister diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane.

Ross has been out to India and met with many of the young children and young people in need of our support and showed us his photos of his time with them at the 2017 Harvest Supper.

Ross is a real inspiration and a very brave soul. Many of you will know that Ross is battling the return of cancer. I am humbled by his bravery and give thanks to God for our friendship.

I give thanks to all those who said a prayer as they made the knitted or crochet squares and thought of a little life that needed love. As Sue has eloquently stitched on her blanket, 'Made with Love'.

The picture above was taken at the blessing of the blankets at the church service on 17th September.

If anyone fancies making some more squares to do another 'prayer blanket' please let me know. We could make one to send to Malawi as well.

Valerie Leslie

Fellowship News

Events

St Margaret's Annual General Meeting will take place on the morning of **Sunday 15 November** at about **10.45am** in the church lounge after the 9.30am service. Please make a note of the date now and join us at this very important event, and share your views on matters affecting the running of our church.

Bring and Share Lunch will follow the AGM at 12.30pm in the Church Hall. This is the first lunch we have had since March 2016, when we got together after the service celebrating 100 years of Methodism in Rosyth As we celebrate our patron, St Margaret of Scotland, at the 9.30am service, it is appropriate for us to come together in fellowship and friendship on **15 November** and give thanks for the close relationship we enjoy between our two churches. Everyone is welcome. Further details will appear in the weekly notice sheet .

An **RAF Benevolent Fund Coffee Morning** is being held at Rosyth Parish Church on **Saturday 11 November** from **10.30am to 1.30pm**. Enjoy Tea/Coffee & Home Baking. There will also be Handcraft, Books, Tombola, Cake & Candy.

Old £1 coins (the round ones) cease to be legal tender on **15th October**. If you find you have any after that date you should be able (for a short time) to get them paid into your account or exchanged at a bank or post office.

People

Thelma and David Couch

celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary on the 27th August this year with all their family and many friends, also their Dancig Club, which helps the to keep as fit as possible.

They would like to thank everyone for their good wishes , and also our loving Creator for all the blessings bestowed on them over their fortunate lifetime, also looking forward to the next.

Thelma and David

David Slater wishes to thank everyone for the care and attention they provided not only whilst he was in hospital but also when at home recuperating. Your visits, cards and prayers have been a source of strength and joy.

David

Evelyn Kenny will be moving to Edinburgh on 25th October and asks one more time whether anyone knows to whom this magnificent wooden nativity set, might belong. It was left unclaimed after featuring in her Exhibition of Nativity scenes last December. Contact Howard Kirby (01383 624779) if you recognise it.



Diary for October to early December

Sunday 8 October

| | | | |
|------------------|---------|---|----------------------|
| Pentecost 18 | 9.30am | Sung Eucharist | Rev Alison Cozens |
| | 11.00am | Morning Worship | Rev Dr Helen Jenkins |
| | | Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet (Worship Leader) | |
| Tuesday 10 Oct | 10.15am | EDWJ meets at Mary Kidd's home in Limekilns | |
| Wednesday 11 Oct | 2.15pm | Wednesday Fellowship | |
| | | Guest speaker: Lou Davidson - Haiti Help update | |
| Friday 13 Oct | 9.30am | Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall | |
| | onwards | tea, coffee and home baking | |
| | 7.00pm | Choir practice | |

Sunday 15 October

| | | | |
|------------------|---------|---|-------------------|
| Pentecost 19 | 9.30am | Sung Eucharist | Rev Alison Cozens |
| | 11.00am | Morning Worship | Rev Keith Pearce |
| | | David Salthouse (Worship Leader) | |
| | | Traidcraft goods on sale between services | |
| Monday 16 Oct | 7.00pm | Property Committee meeting | |
| Wednesday 18 Oct | 2.15pm | Wednesday Fellowship | |
| | | Mary Kidd - St Luke's Day | |
| Friday 20 Oct | 9.30am | Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall | |
| | onwards | tea, coffee and home baking | |
| | 7.00pm | Choir practice | |

Sunday 22 October

| | | | |
|----------------|---------|---|-------------------|
| Pentecost 20 | 9.00am | Messy Church and Breakfast | |
| | 10.00am | (tbc) Holy Communion (said) | Rev Alison Cozens |
| | 11.00am | Praise Service | Rev Alison Cozens |
| | 4.30pm | Rehearsal for Sung Compline at St Paul's Kinross, followed at | |
| | 6.15pm | Sung Compline (see page 8 for details) | |
| Tuesday 24 Oct | 10.00am | EDWJ meets at Mary Kidd's home in Limekilns | |
| | 7.00pm | St Margaret's Vestry Meeting in the small lounge | |

Diary for October to early December 2017

Wednesday 25 Oct 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
Guest speaker: Alison Pendlewski - Hearing loss and lip reading

Friday 27 Oct 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
onwards tea, coffee and home baking
7.00pm Choir practice

Sunday 29 October

| | | | |
|--------------|---------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Pentecost 21 | 9.00am | Sung Eucharist | Rev Alison Cozens |
| | 11.00am | Morning Worship | Ms Julia Reid |

Wednesday 1 Nov 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
Erica Lock – Forgotten Festivals

Friday 3 Nov 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
onwards tea, coffee and home baking
7.00pm Choir practice

Saturday 4 Nov 1.30pm RSCM Dunblane Singing Day Rehearsal followed by Service in Dunblane Cathedral (see page 9 for details)

Sunday 5 November

| | | | |
|------------|---------|--|-------------------------|
| All Saints | 9.30am | Sung Eucharist | Rev Dr Michael Paterson |
| | 11.00am | Morning Worship | Padre Stewart Young |
| | 6.00pm | Sunday@Six “Let them all Sing” – a celebration of Martin Luther, monk, musician and reformer, in the year of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation (see page 5) | |

Monday 6 Nov 7.30pm Ecumenical Study Group, Rosyth Parish Church

Tuesday 7 Nov 10.00am EDWJ meets at Mary Kidd's home in Limekilns
 7.30pm Coffee, Cake and Crafts - a monthly evening craft club run by Jean Hall and friends

Wednesday 8 Nov 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
Guest speaker: Lynn Hill - Fire Safety in the Home

Friday 10 Nov 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
onwards tea, coffee and home baking
7.00pm Choir practice

Diary for October to early December 2017

Saturday 11 Nov 10.30am RAF Benevolent Fund Coffee Morning in Rosyth
Parish Church
until 1.30pm Tea/Coffee and home baking, stalls (see page 14)

Sunday 12 November

Remembrance **9.15am** Sung Eucharist Rev Alison Cozens

10.50am Morning Worship Rev Dr Helen Jenkins

7.00pm St Finniains's Lochgelly. Taize service followed by fellowship and refreshments in the hall (see p 8).

Wednesday 15 Nov 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet

Friday 17 Nov 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
onwards tea, coffee and home baking
7.00pm Choir practice

Sunday 19 November

St Margaret 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Alison Cozens

10.45am St Margaret's Annual General Meeting in the Church Lounge

11.00am Morning Worship Mr Donald Caldwell
David Salthouse (Worship Leader)

12.30pm Bring and share lunch in Church Hall

3.00pm Concert by the Voskresenije Choir of Russian Choir
in St Margaret's RC Church, Dunfermline (see p 9)

Tuesday 21 Nov 10.00am EDWJ meets at Mary Kidd's home in Limekilns

Wednesday 22 Nov 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
Speaker to be confirmed

Thursday 23 Nov 7.30pm St Andrews West Area Council meeting at St Peter's
Inverkeithing
Speaker from the Diocesan Overseas Committee

Friday 24 Nov 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
onwards tea, coffee and home baking
7.00pm Choir practice

Saturday 25 Nov 7.45pm The Scottish Chamber Choir with the Meadows Chamber Orchestra perform Mozart Requiem in St

Diary for October to early December 2017

Serf's Church, 280 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 3NP
(see page 9 for details)

Sunday 26 November

- Christ the King 9.00am Messy Church and Breakfast
 11.00am Joint Communion Service Rev Mark Jason
 Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet (Worship Leader)
 Traidcraft goods on sale after the service
 Monday 27 Nov 7.30pm *tbc* Advent Study Group at Rosyth Parish Church
 Wednesday 29 Nov 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
 Reflections – Susan Taylor
 Friday 1 Dec 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
 onwards tea, coffee and home baking
 7.00pm Choir practice

Sunday 3 December

- Advent Sunday 9.30am Sung Eucharist Rev Dr Michael Paterson
 11.00am Morning Worship
 Note: No Sunday@Six
 Monday 4 Dec 7.30pm Advent Study Group at Rosyth Parish Church
 Tuesday 5 Dec 10.00am EDWJ meets at Mary Kidd's home in Limekilns
 7.00pm *tbc* Christmas Nativity Event, Rosyth Parish Church
 ticket only event (details later)
 7.30pm Coffee, Cake and Crafts - a monthly evening craft
 club run by Jean Hall and friends
 Wednesday 6 Dec 2.15pm Wednesday Fellowship
 The Feast of St Nicholas with Martin and Myra
 Friday 8 Dec 9.30am Triangle Coffee Shop in the Crush Hall
 onwards tea, coffee and home baking
 7.00pm Choir practice
 Saturday 9 Dec 3.00pm Dunfermline Choral Union Christmas Concert
 and 7.30pm at the Vine Church, Dunfermline

Nicodemus's mind

The sermon given by Professor John Sawkins on Sunday 16 July 2017

The readings were 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11; John 3: 1-21

From the Gospel of John, chapter 3 and verse 1, *"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night."*

Introduction

"Remember, remember the 5th of November, gunpowder, treason and plot."

However if you live in Hull or the East Riding of Yorkshire you would be better advised to remember the night *before* bonfire night, the night of the 8th November, known locally as 'Mischief Night'.

With its historical roots reaching back to the late 18th century, Mischief Night is an occasion for the young, the foolhardy and the plain stupid, to engage in what is mostly low level anti-social behaviour. Emptying bins, covering shiny new cars in eggs and flour, and a prank that happened with depressing frequency in the part of the East Riding where I lived, gates being lifted off their hinges and carried down to the end of the road.

I recall one particular Mischief Night when the perpetrators of that little trick were caught in the act of removing the gates from in front of the house of an elderly neighbour. I remember also my father, catching the group of lads in the act, and explaining to them (in I think a rather convincing way) that there would be a lot more

mischief if the gates were not put back. They were returned intact and not touched again.

Hide your bins, put away your car, don't answer the door and hold onto your gates were the rules to follow on Mischief Night in Hull.

Lots of things, not all of them good, happen under cover of darkness, at night.

Gospel Reading

And so to our gospel reading. Jesus is in Jerusalem for the Passover when he receives a visit, at night, by a Pharisee called Nicodemus.

A night-time visit in the Gospel of John is unlikely to be a good thing. One of the great contrasts in this Gospel is light versus dark, day versus night. Night is the time for hiding things. For activities that might not stand the light of day. The fact that the night-time visitor is a Pharisee only makes matters worse.

Remember that Pharisees were, by and large, members of the well-read, educated, middle-class. In today's terms they would rub shoulders with teachers, lawyers, civil servants – we might be surprised at how much we had in common with them. And they were not all reactionary stick-in-the-muds. Some were keen to update the intricate legal code, on all manner of things from tithing, to what you

should or should not do on the Sabbath.

And of course they have a bad press in the Gospels. As a group they were naturally suspicious of Jesus, and at different points sought to undermine his work. And so, when Jesus receives a visit from a Pharisee, and at night, we have the distinct feeling – this isn't going to end well.

So it comes as a bit of a surprise that the first words out of Nicodemus' mouth are not confrontational,

"Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Those aren't the words of someone looking for a fight. Nor does it seem that Nicodemus is out to trick Jesus, as some of his compatriots might.

So the exchange picks up with Jesus, quite sharply saying, *"I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."* Or some versions have *"born from above."*

And that hooks Nicodemus in, prompting him to ask, *"How can a man be born when he is old? ...Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born?"*

Now, some commentators take that response to mean that Nicodemus was a bit dim and was struggling to pick up on the image that Jesus was using. I don't think he was dim. And I don't think he was a naïve fool either. He was a mature, educated man in a

position of authority. A proud Jew with a keen mind – a teacher's mind. And what teacher hasn't picked a striking image – like birth - and deployed it in trying to get a point across? Nicodemus picked all that up and was willing to go with it, and to listen to the answers he got in order to try and work out for himself whether the reports he had heard of this man Jesus were truth, or hype, or lies.

And no, he wasn't a fool. He wasn't naïve enough to risk his position and reputation by going about it in a way that others would notice. Only a fool in his position would have been seen going to meet Jesus during the day. He went at night – under the radar.

Born again. Born of the spirit. That implies a new start. Not just a change of direction in life – but a new life quite unlike anything that had been experienced before.

And you can almost see the cogs in his mind turning this all over and making him feel uncomfortable. Why? Part of the reason is that Nicodemus, like many of us, thought he had all this stuff, this religion, neatly organised in his mind and in his life. He thought, like we do, that he understood the channels through which God worked, and those through which he didn't work. He thought, like us, that he would see the activity of God displayed in the actions of some people and not others. He thought, like us, that God was to be found in this place and not that.

I'm reminded of the last couple of lines of the poem *Invictus* [William Ernest Henley] – they might have been written for Nicodemus,

"I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul".

And yet, and yet. There was something about this man Jesus that intrigued him. There was something niggling away at him – the reports he had heard. He seemed to be the real thing. He had to find a way of finding out about him first hand. So he went to see and talk to him.

And how surprising it all was.

Why the new birth? Why the new start? Why the new thought, when we have the law, the legal code, the thousand years of worship. It's all so surprising.

Listen to the wind Nicodemus and take a lesson from it. *"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

Forget your religious certainties, open yourself to the possibility that God is not confined to working in ways that you prescribe and understand. Open yourself up to the idea that God wants to work through you.

Listen to the wind. You know it's real. You can see what it does. But you have absolutely no idea where it comes from and where it goes. And that's true of God's Spirit.

And God's Spirit is calling you Nicodemus to life in a whole new dimension.

A baby in the womb, warm, fed, in the dark but with senses keen and a mind being formed cannot imagine, cannot conceive of life outside that place. Life and the experience of life, is just of a quite different order.

That is the extent of the change needed in everyone's life says Jesus to Nicodemus. Not a change in direction, not a new set of objectives. No! A new birth. A birth into a life – into a world - that you cannot possibly imagine now. But a world full of wonder and potential and love.

You must be born again.

So Nicodemus leaves with all this new information rattling around in his head, to process it all and to think. To think about how what he has just heard, might change his life. And what the cost of that might be if he took the plunge and became a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Shall I become a disciple of Jesus Christ?

And that, I want to suggest, is the nub of the reading for us..

Shall I become a disciple of Jesus Christ?

That question is, I suppose, one that all of us in Church today have at some point of our lives thought about.

And for some here the question has been settled, and they are working out how best to live that out.

But for others here today, I guess the question is still open.

Shall I take the plunge? Shall I become a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Why is our answer important from an individual, personal point of view?

Putting aside the spiritual dimension to it, it is important because the answer to it will have an impact on every part of our lives.

It will determine the way in which we live: the work we do, the people we mix with, the choices we make, the way in which we spend our money, our attitudes to other people – no part of our lives is left untouched by this decision.

And here is what the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, had to say about it in his Lambeth Lecture in March 2015.

"The best decision anyone can ever make, at any point in life, in any circumstances, whoever they are, wherever they are, whatever they are, is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. There is no better decision for a human being in this life, any human being."

And of course he would say that wouldn't he? But do we buy it? At one level we do. And people around the world for thousands of years have staked their lives making that choice. And I use that phrase – staking their lives – with some care. Because that is what some people do when they decide to follow Christ.

Is it true that this is the best decision anyone can ever make...whoever they are? Or let me be more specific, whatever faith they are?

A year ago I attended the Scottish Bible Society's AGM where the guest speaker was a Dr Michael Bassous, Chief Executive of the Bible Society in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. He explained both the work of the Bible Society in the region, but also the process by which Christians were removing from the region. [In Iraq it is estimated that 50% of the Christians have been displaced, over the last 18 Months. In Syria the Christian population has fallen from 1.25 million in 2011 to around 300,000 now.] And in areas taken over by extremist Islamic Groups, Christians are given a choice – covert, pay a levy and suffer confiscation of your wealth, or be killed.

His words were calm and measured. His description of the position was in complete accord with all that we see on TV and read in press reports. But what I had not heard about of course was the work of the Bible Society in the refugee camps. And what happened to the people who had picked up copies of the Gospels of Luke and John and had read them and had spoken to Bible Society staff confessing that they wanted to become disciples of Jesus Christ but they faced a huge dilemma – the cost.

The cost to them was of a totally different order to the cost we face in deciding to follow Christ. Potentially it meant total ostracism by family and

friends. The breaking of social bonds. The closing down of employment opportunities. The severing of cultural ties that gave them their whole identity. Conceivably it placed the lives of themselves their wives, husbands, children, indeed the whole family circle at risk.

So, they confessed to the Bible Society workers they were disciples of Jesus, but disciples *in their hearts*, until the time came when they could show to the outside world it was Christ they served.

Response of Nicodemus

And that, I think, was Nicodemus. A disciple of Jesus, *in his heart*, until the time came when he could show to the outside world it was Christ he served.

For Nicodemus the cost was equally great. The breaking of social bonds, loss of family and friends, expulsion from the ruling council, loss of position in society and work and the severing of cultural and social ties. So he was a disciple in his heart until...?

Until the next time we read of him in the Gospel. When he spoke up for Christ amongst his professional circle, when he reminded his peers in the Sanhedrin – when Jesus was brought before them - that the law required a person be heard before being judged.

Until the last time we read of him in the Gospel. Until he very publicly identified himself with Christ, when after the crucifixion he assisted Joseph of Arimathea to prepare the body of Jesus to be laid in the grave.

First a finding out about Jesus – hoping no one else would see.

Second a speaking out for him in his professional and social circle.

Third identifying himself publicly as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Our Response

Do we see ourselves in these encounters between Nicodemus and Christ?

Do we come here, wanting to find out more - under the radar – just by ourselves – hoping others won't notice – by night? Are we disciples *in our hearts*?

And do we recognise that God's Spirit works in ways and through people however unexpected and unlikely. And do we remain open to the possibility that his Spirit can work in us? And do we understand the need, not just to change the direction of our lives, but to step into a new life which in its love is beyond all we can wish and hope for?

Then do we then find ourselves speaking up for Christ in our place of work, our social circle and our home?

Then do we break cover in the wider world, to identify with him, knowing that the world is looking and watching and waiting to scoff.

Nicodemus recedes into the background, but Jesus continues to speak to us.

Let us choose today for the first or the tenth, or the hundredth time to follow him.

Because if we do we will be born again into the life of faith and hope and love, which has no limit and no end.

[Ed: note he
connection
between the
two
sermons!]

John Sawkins

Following Jesus

The sermon given by Professor Oliver O'Donovan on Sunday 3 September 2017

The readings were Exodus 3: 1–15; Romans 1 2: 9–21; Matthew 16: 21–28

If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his own cross and follow me (Matthew 5^o: 68)

St Matthew has just told us of Peter's dramatic declaration, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!*" And he has told us how Peter's achievement of faith was immediately followed by a failure: he could not understand or accept Jesus' prediction of his suffering and death. And at that highly charged moment Jesus turned to the wider circle of his disciples, and called out to them that *anyone who would come after me must deny himself and take up his own cross, and follow me*. A disciple is, literally, a "learner"; but the practice current in the Near East in Jesus' day was for teachers to travel, and their disciples went around with them. So the learner is one who follows. Which is the pattern for Christian discipleship in every age, including our own. We learn by following, and we follow by learning. Are we Christ's followers?

Let us ask ourselves, what are we learning? Do we think of ourselves as learners? Then let us ask ourselves, how are we following him?

"Following" means more than one thing. It means following *with*, keeping close to the teacher and being in his company; it also means following *after*, carrying on the work of teaching where it has been left off, spreading the teacher's wisdom further and applying it to new circumstances. Again, this is true of Christian discipleship in every age, including our own. If we are Jesus' disciples, we follow by keeping close to him, through prayer and study and common worship. If we are Jesus' disciples, we follow by showing and speaking his message to the world in which we live.

And the world we live in is not identical to the one he lived in. With differences of time and place go other differences, of cultural expectations, practical possibilities and senses of

need. The disciple who follows Jesus has to live in more than one time and place. Our Christian life is lived here in Fife, now, twenty centuries after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea. But our Christian life is also lived there and then, keeping close to him as he journeyed by foot between Galilee and Jerusalem, teaching and demonstrating the wisdom and the power of God. The Holy Spirit forms our Christian identity *between* these two times and places. The Christian life is not all a matter of being tuned in and up to date; it is not all a matter of bearing in mind the world of the Scriptures. It is about being historically contemporary, letting the light of God that shone out in that first-century man of the Near East transform the way we see twenty-first century Fife. We have no choice about where and when we are given to live. We cannot choose to inhabit the world of our great-grandparents, nor indeed the world of our great-grandchildren, either. But we can make our own moment in history intelligible and inhabitable, if we also live beyond its limitations, “for the sake of” that other moment in history when Jesus lived and proclaimed the Gospel.

Lived, and proclaimed – and died! Jesus said that his disciple must *take up his own cross*, and follow. Very often we like to imagine our Christian mission as a kind of triumphal rescue of the world. Other people, we think, suffer the pressures and oppressions of living in this time and place; we gallop up to them like knights in

armour to bring them help and comfort. Well, it may sometimes be so. I may be given the opportunity from time to time to share another person’s cross in sympathy, and to lighten it by my support. But it is not *other people’s* crosses that Jesus calls me to take up, but my own. It is my cross, because it was his cross first. His mission was to bear it for me, and now it must become mine, because I am his disciple, following in the way where he led. And whatever form my cross takes – and it may take terrible forms, as his did – it begins in this way: I live *with* Jesus *after* Jesus, stretched between two times, experiencing the tension between two worlds, knowing him in a world that knows nothing of him, learning from him in a world that cares nothing for what he teaches. Without that cross I cannot become what I am called to be. That is my real life, and real life comes at a price:

So Jesus presents his disciples with a choice: *Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.* The meaning of this paradox is that are two possible ways of life open to us, but only one of them is real. We can settle down to make ourselves at home in the world we belong to. But *what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his life?* Jesus asked. Or we can make use of this world to follow Jesus, and that is the way to become truly ourselves. Grabbing at the life on offer in the world around, we end up creatures of that world. Following after Jesus, we gain a life our independence.

I called this a “choice”, but I don’t think that is quite the right word. A choice is a decision one makes between things that are more or less interchangeable, on which nothing of ultimate importance hangs. Shall we buy a Subaru or a Ford? Either way we will drive around the same streets at the same speed, and pay more or less comparable maintenance bills. There is no final right or wrong about a choice like that. But there are other decisions that are very definitely right or wrong. Typically, the right and the wrong of them is difficult to see when we are close up to them and have to face them. But the right and the wrong is proved in the event. And so Jesus challenges us by pointing to the future, when reality will break in, when *the Son of Man is to come with his angels... and will repay every man for what he has done*. That is how our decision to be disciples is to be brought to the proof. Shall we, then, follow him?

Oliver O’Donovan

Thought for the month

Our websites carry a ‘Thought for the month’. That for September carried the image on the back cover, an explanation of what it was (see page 29) (a joint) and this comment “The joint reminds us that making an effective bridge

- depends on lots of things coming together correctly;
- structures need flexibility to survive in a real-world environment;
- we need to be innovative, and use *today’s* solutions, not yesterday’s.

“These comments apply equally to our task as Christians of making a bridge between church and community in Rosyth, working together in a way that is fit for purpose in 2017 and beyond...”

Martin Tarr

Rosyth Foodbank & the Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival donation from the two congregations weighed 80kilograms! An impressive 12stone 7lbs when I was at school, a really big gift that will help people in need in the community for a while.

The regular weekly donations from the generous members of both churches are really appreciated by both the recipients and the volunteers who check the stock and bag-pack.

The foodbank not only provides food but household cleaning products and personal toiletries but also dog and cat food too, hungry homes mean hungry pets although we usually receive pet food from the depot fairly regularly.

Volunteers are still needed and short training programmes are available to anyone with free time who would like to be involved in the community for a couple of hours each week. Thank you for this overwhelmingly generous Harvest offering and for the continuing weekly gifts so kindly and thoughtfully made.

Erica Lock

“Is the Lord with us or not?”

A sermon preached by the Rev Dr Michael Paterson on 1 October 2017

The readings were Exodus 17: 1–7; Philippians 2: 1–13; Matthew 21: 23–32

The place was named Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites complained and put the Lord to the test when they asked, “Is the Lord with us or not?” Exodus 17:7

The closing words of today’s first reading from the Book of Exodus pose a question which has run through every century and is still very much around today: **“Is the Lord with us or not?”**

It’s a question that is asked over and over again in the Bible. When the rains fail and there’s not enough water: **“Is the Lord with us or not?”** When there’s too much water and Noah is building his ark: **“Is the Lord with us or not?”** When God’s people are hemmed in by their enemies: **“Is the Lord with us or not?”** When there’s nothing but manna to eat in the Promised Land: **“Is the Lord with us or not?”**

Every time calamity and disaster strike, people ask: “Does God exist?” “Is God awake or sleeping?” “Has God abandoned us?” “Is God dead?” **“Is the Lord with us or not?”**

Fast forward from Biblical times to today. As the flames engulfed Grenfell Tower: **“Was the Lord with us or not?”** As hurricanes swept America and the Caribbean: **“Was the Lord with us or not?”** As the earthquake struck Mexico: **“Was the Lord with us or not?”** As thousands flee Myanmar: **“Is the Lord with us or not?”**

The Book of Exodus may be ancient, but the question it raises is very contemporary. And it’s a question that I wish religious people asked more often because, in my experience, it’s much easier to **“do religion”** than it is to have faith. Let’s face it, you don’t need faith to come to Church when life is going well and all your plans are going along nicely. But, when the going gets tough, and things collapse around you, by God you need faith then. When your relationships break down, and you hurt to the core, that’s when faith kicks in. And when you can’t control what is happening within or around you, that’s when you find out how little or how much faith you have.

And at such times it is the strong, not the weak, the courageous, not the timid, the true believer, not the atheist, who has the guts to ask: **“Is God still with me or not?” “Is God still among us or not?”**

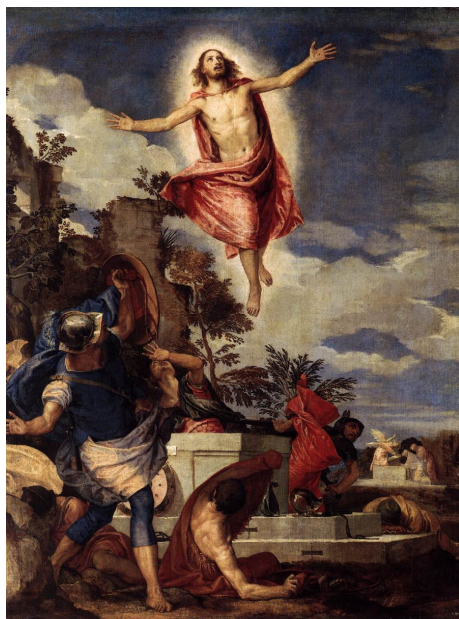
That question really came home to me some years ago when I was working in London with people with AIDS.

One night I was called to the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital to visit John, a Ugandan man and father of five, who was dying. John had stood

up to Idi Amin's dictatorship and had been imprisoned. Sadly, one of the most common punishments for political dissidents at the time was to forcibly inject them with the HIV virus. It was a particularly barbaric form of genocide. By some miracle John had escaped and found asylum in London.

I had been visiting John and his family for about a year at their home in Battersea when I got the call to the hospital and had got to know them well. Arriving at the hospital, I did what I always did, and popped into the chapel to ask God to give me the strength I would need to be there for John and to be able to comfort his family. I knew the chapel well and had spent a lot of time there over the years. It was right bang in the middle of the hospital, and its most striking feature was a floor-to-ceiling painting of Jesus risen from the dead by the Italian artist Paolo Veronese. If you look it up on Google you will find a very confident depiction of a triumphant Christ conquering death and bringing light out of the most awful darkness.

It was an image which really spoke to me every time I saw it; an image that supported me and from which I drew strength for my role as chaplain to the dying. But this night – when I opened the chapel door – it was gone. And the wall was empty. And I found myself staring at a blank – empty space – with nothing to comfort me, nothing



to reassure me, nothing to tell me that God was still among us.

I had come looking for a sign of God's presence, but all I found was confirmation of God's absence. I had come looking for reassurance, but all I found was emptiness. (It turned out that the painting was on loan to an exhibition)

But that coming face to face with the absence of God was the most profound spiritual moment of my life, and set me thinking for months afterwards: If it was up to me, what would I put in that chapel, what would I place on that empty wall, that could speak to the wounded, hurting, bewildered relatives and patients who, like me, might pop into that chapel to draw breath or seek reassurance or give hope in a hospital

that knew so much about suffering and pain.?

That all happened a long time ago, but the experience taught me **not** to look for resurrection in church or in religion but in people, in people like John, who refused to hate his oppressors, and in people who refuse to let death have the last word.

That experience taught me to look for the presence of God, not in priests and bishops and church meetings but in the people who run towards human suffering and atrocities – not away from them – in people who do whatever they can to help others rise up again after a fall.

But, above all, that experience taught me that God turns up and shows his face among us every time someone gets up after a sleepless night, a depression, a setback, and, putting one foot in front of the other, faces a new day with courage, when they could so easily have given up and rolled the stone securely over their own premature tomb.

And so for me the question is no longer “Is God still with us or not?” but **“Are we still with God?”**, or have we who call ourselves believers abandoned faith for its poor substitute, religion?”

Michael Paterson

Puzzle page - continued from page 29

A5) This is easier than you think. First you multiply $5 \times 6 \times 7$, this equals 210, so the Pig and Whistle is 210 leagues away from their house, (this is the nearest the Pub could be to their house, the distance in theory could be any multiple of 210). As OG takes 5 league steps then he needs to take 42 steps to get to the Pub (6×7). Now he can take 40 steps an hour, so it will take him 1 hour plus $\frac{2}{40}$ of an hour, this is 3 minutes, so to get there on time he has to leave at 8pm minus 1 hour and 3 minutes, that is 6.57 pm .

In the same vein GOG who takes 6 league steps will take 35 steps (5×7) to get to the Pub, as he travels at 30 steps an hour it will take him 1 hour plus $\frac{5}{30}$ of an hour which is 1 hour and 10 minutes so he has to leave at 6.50 pm to get there on time.

Finally MAGOG who takes 7 league steps needs 30 steps (5×6) to get to the Pub. As he takes 20 league steps an hour this means 1 hour plus $\frac{10}{20}$ of an hour which is 1 hour 30 minutes, so he has to leave at 6.30 pm, to get there on time.

Dave Ward

The back cover image puzzle

This is of a small part of one of the two modular expansion joints on the bridge deck of the new Queensferry Crossing. These allow a total of 4m of movement as the bridge expands and contracts in response to wind, traffic loading and temperature.

Martin Tarr

Puzzle page

With puzzles from Dave Ward

New puzzles

1) What day is it? When the day after tomorrow is yesterday, today will be as far from Tuesday as that day was which was today when day before yesterday was tomorrow.

2) Who's who? Three identical triplets are visiting David's house for tea. They are sat in a line on the sofa, and David wants to work out which sister is which. He knows Anne always tells the Truth, that Beatrix lies, and that Caroline sometimes lies and sometimes tells the truth. David is allowed one question to each.

He asks the sister on the left, 'Who is sat in the middle?' She replies 'That is Anne.'

He asks the sister in the middle, 'What is your name?' She replies 'I am Caroline.'

He asks the sister on the right, 'Who is sat in the middle?' She replies 'That is Beatrix.'

He now knows who is who. How?

3) Marbles. A prisoner is given one last chance to live, the King gives him 2 bowls and 100 marbles (50 white and 50 black). He is told that he can distribute the marbles into the 2 bowls any way he chooses, then he is blindfolded and the bowls switched around so that he will not know which is which. He is then told to touch one of the bowls and pick a marble from

that bowl, if he picks white he will live, if he picks black he will die. How does he distribute the marbles to give him the best chance of survival?

4) Off to Market. As a woman strolled to Market she met 7 Farmers, each farmer had 3 pigs, 3 had 2 sheep, and 1 had 15 geese, how many feet were walking to Market?

5) Horse Race Two cowboys apply for the same job, the ranch manager tells them to ride to the top of the nearby hill. The one whose horse is 2nd gets the job, so how come they raced to the top of the hill as quickly as they could?

Answers to Aug/Sep puzzles

A1) Most people would have said 101 (one hundred and one), which is, on the face of it, correct. But 101 could be pronounced as one hundred one (no and), as we say 99 as ninety nine, not ninety and nine, and 24 as twenty four not twenty and four. So based on that, the correct answer would be 1000 (one thousand).

A2) The answer is 12345678 (time 12 34 date 5 of the 6 year 78).

A3) You would be holding the letter b in your right hand.

A4) Queue: remove the 'ueue' and you still have Q.

Continued on previous page for A5

Contact points and meeting times

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, St Margaret's Vestry, and by affiliated but independent organisations.

Church activities

Methodist Gift Aid enquiries to
Stuart Fowell 01383 823936
Stuart.Fowell@btinternet.com

Property matters & letting enquiries:
Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers13@talktalk.net

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

St Margaret's Gift Aid enquiries to
Gordon Pryde 01383 860450
gordonpryde@btinternet.com

Sunday School and Messy Church:
Gwyneth Kirby 01383 624779
gmkirby@hotmail.com

Toddlers' Group (Wed/Fri 0930-1100)
Elaine Lambert 01383 417071
elaine.lambert1@sky.com

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

Wednesday Fellowship (Wed 1415-1600)
Mary Kidd 01383 872332
cmarykidd@btinternet.com

Organisations meeting in our premises

Parahandies Disabled Club (Mon 0930-1400)
Peter Merckel (sec) 01383 822940
peter.merckel@yahoo.co.uk

Scout Group

Group Scout Leader
see Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers13@talktalk.net

Beaver Scouts (Tue 1730-1830)
David Sinclair 01383 410255
davidgraeme31@yahoo.co.uk

Cub Scouts (Tue 1830-2015)
Martin Rogers 01383 415458
martin.rogers13@talktalk.net

Scouts (Fri 1900-2115)
Alan Connery 01383 731391
scouts_13th_fife@btinternet.com

Explorer Scouts (Fri 1900-2115)
Gary Dewar 01383 411938
gary.dewar@sky.com

Guide Unit

Rainbows (Mon 1800-1900)
Susan Warren 01383 414355
susarren@aol.com

Brownies (Mon 1800-1930)
Nicola Byrne 07956 005996
NicolaByr44ne86@hotmail.com

Guides (Thu 1800-2030)
Linda Wallace 07455 213809
6throsythguides@gmail.com

** An asterisk indicates a change since the last issue (in either meeting time or contact details or both)*

Please let the Editor know of any changes or additions to this list, preferably by email to: editor@rosythmethodist.org.uk

What is this?

Can you work out what this object might be and its role? Where would you find examples of its use in this locality?



Are you puzzled? Turn to the concluding column of the Puzzle page, on page 29, to find out what it is, and to page 26 for a 'Thought for the month' based on it.

CONTACT on-line

You will find this issue, and many previous issues of CONTACT, on the archive pages of both of the church websites, where you will get the benefits of colour without the extra printing cost.

Our next issue

Grateful thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue. The next issue will be published in early November, so please send us your contribution by **Tuesday 21st November 2017**. You can send it to *editor\rosythmethodist.org.uk*.