



St. John the Baptist
Scottish Episcopal Church
Perth

QUEST



Harvest Festival 2009



St. John the Baptist
 Scottish Episcopal Church,
 Princes Street, Perth, PH2 8LJ
 Scottish Charity Number SC 011398
 office@episcopal-perth.org.uk
 www.episcopal-perth.org.uk/
 01738 634999



The Revd Patrick Grant,
 23, Comely Bank, Perth, PH2 7HU
 01738 625394
 rector@episcopal-perth.org.uk

www.scotland.anglican.org

www.standrews.anglican.org

Table of Contents

The Rector Writes.....	4	Thanks from Mary Burcher	15
Team based Stategy	5	Old photographs.....	15
Lockerbie Bombers Release	7	Fellowship.....	16
Vestry meeting - 22nd June	8	A Poem for Harvest Festival	16
Vestry meeting - 25th August	10	Thomas Sampson	17
Time to end Global Poverty	10	Night Trains	19
Back to Church	11	Gregory the Great	21
Tradecraft	11	Humour	21
Lectionary	12	Book Review - God Actually.....	22
From the Registers.....	12	Magazine Deadlines	22
Diary.....	13	Yoga	23
Farewell to Mary Burcher.....	14		



CASTING THE NET
 Growing Faith Communities in the Diocese of St. Andrews

Contacts

Church officers	(Mail to be sent to church office)
Rector's Warden	Alan McPherson
	church-warden@episcopal-perth.org.uk
People's Warden	Alastair Cruickshank
Lay Representative	Sue Moncrieff
Alternate Lay Rep	Malcolm Nixon
Vestry Secretary	Robin Miller
Treasurer	Tony Mason
Director of Music	Margaret Broad
Casting the Net Officer	
to liaise with Diocese	Lillian Fleming
Ministry and Education Officer	
to liaise with Diocese	Sarah Axford
Team Convenors	
Casting the Net	Revd Patrick Grant
Ministry and Pastoral	Alan MacPherson
Finance and Stewardship	Mary Emma Strange
	& Alastair Cruickshank
Communications and Administration	Malcolm Nixon
Children and young people	Alison Grant
Building and Eco	David Willington
Social	Liz Burke
Diocesan and Provincial Life	TBC
Church Activities	
Intercessors Group	Tony Mason
Flowers	Church Office
Transport	Judy Norwell
Magazine Editor	Rhiannon Miller
	editor@episcopal-perth.org.uk
Lunch Club	Jean Parrott
	Ruth Harris
Fellowship Secretary	Val Fox
Mothers Union	Elaine Kirk
Links	Ruth Harris
Traidcraft	Rhiannon Miller
PACT	Jean Hendry
Threshold bookings	Malcolm Nixon
& service sheet diary	office@episcopal-perth.org.uk
Retired Assistant Clergy	Revd Bill Glazebrook
.....	Revd Fergus Harris

The Rector Writes

Dear Friends

I would like to comment on a news item that dominated much of our headlines over the last few weeks: the release of the Libyan bomber al Megrahi. I was impressed that a Scottish minister, Justice Minister Kenny MacAskill, could put compassion ahead of political expediency. Compassion is one of the distinctive features of Scots Law. We do not look for vengeance but for justice, and even under immense political pressure this fundamental of our legal system was upheld. We do not keep dying, helpless individuals in prison to see them rot to death no matter what their crime unless they remain a danger to others.

Compassion, even for one's enemies, is a central plank of the Gospel message, a message limited in much of American Christianity that holds the Old Testament in equal terms to the New – and in some cases above it. In a culture that proudly supports an 'eye for an eye' theology and maintains a death penalty, compassion for an enemy is not high on the agenda. Until America drops the barbaric act of executing its prisoners and allowing torture of its captives I do not believe it has a moral high ground from which it can justly condemn Scots Law or its results.

This storm of protest also fails to recognise the good that such compassion might bring in our relationship with the Arab, or rather the Muslim, world. It is precisely this lack of compassion from Western

peoples that allows extremist suicide bombers and the like to say that we are corrupt and deserving of death. That we are showing compassion to those that hate us must unnerve the Imams who preach hate and condemn our moral corruption. Their people must ask 'can the corrupt offer compassion in this way?'

Thank God that even in our secular society we have not lost sight of the good lessons learnt from our Christian tradition. Forgiveness – so hard to find, but so important for those who have been scarred to find in themselves. Only this can bring peace, rather than living with the consuming burden of hate that we still see raw in some of the American victims' families. And compassion, a central message of the Gospel and once a hallmark of a civilised and strong society, now treated by some mistakenly as weakness. These are things we must value. No matter how hard it may be to do and no matter how unpopular it may make us in the eyes of those who are blind to the merciful, loving and compassionate Jesus Christ. It is, I believe, the right thing to do and thank God for Ministers who still uphold this invaluable cultural understanding.

We have just come out of our summer holidays and I hope you are all refreshed. We have lost a faithful member in Sam Sampson, a man who gave a great deal to teaching and the church over his lifetime. It was very touching to hear stories from former students who held him in such high regard. Alice Jackson, a regular who

moved to St Fillians a number of years ago, has now also passed away and she will be remembered by many with thankfulness. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Mary Burcher, our beloved sister, left us in July to move to Harrogate but she assured me she would be back for the bowls championship next year.

Effectively we start a new year in September and we see the launch of a new team structure to operate throughout the church. This will hopefully allow for a greater involvement by the congregation in running the life of the church, and enable greater communication of ideas. By the end of September all the teams will be in place and will be planning their tasks for the year. Please see a later article in regards to this.

Our AGM is not far off and once again I would ask that any group within the church write a half-page account of their work over the last year and if possible provide a picture to illustrate the work. This should be

sent, preferably by email, to the church office (office@episcopal-perth.org.uk) or to Robin Miller the Vestry Secretary

(robin@edessa.co.uk).



I take it our local supermarket has a rather good offer on tinned peas at the moment!!

And may I offer you my thanks for your patience while I try to resolve my trapped nerve.

*Yours in Christ
Patrick*

A Team - based Strategy for St John's

Two years ago I led the vestry in a retreat that examined the health of our church and our hopes for the future. A hope expressed at my interview was that I would help develop a more empowered laity **within St. John's who would actively participate in ministry.** We have been working to that end for the last two years and this September we are launching a new team based initiative to support the life and work of our church. Its purpose is to enable participation in the work of the

church and to encourage more people to take responsibility and share in the management of the church. It is in line with the new Diocesan strategy and to that end all the teams will consider their role in the mission so that we are consistently an outward looking body, intent on growth, both spiritually and numerically.

To this end nine groups have been set up in line with the casting the net strategy of the Diocese:

Teams

Casting the Net (to forward mission opportunities)	<i>Patrick Grant</i>
Ministry and Pastoral	<i>Alan MacPherson</i>
Finance and Stewardship	<i>Mary Emma Strange and Alastair Cruickshank</i>
Communications and Administration	<i>Malcolm Nixon</i>
153 Children and Young People Youth Initiative	<i>Alison Grant</i>
Building and Eco Team	<i>David Willington</i>
Social Team	<i>Lis Burke</i>
Diocesan and Provincial Life	<i>To be appointed</i>

Casting the Net Officer (to liaise with Diocese): Lillian Fleming
Ministry and Education Officer (to liaise with Diocese): Sarah Axford

Over the coming months these teams will be formed. If you are particularly attracted to serve on a team please contact the convenor. The teams will **initially work out a year's plan and** prioritise what they will do over the year and assess budgetary needs which will be examined by the vestry before the annual budget is given to the church at our AGM.

This is an exciting step forward in the **life of St. John's and hopefully allow** for the Holy Spirit to inspire us to new possibilities. I have been delighted by the very positive response of the vestry to these plans and to the convenors who have so

generously taken on these important tasks.

I will of course be available to all the teams to support and act as a resource and the Vestry will have oversight and veto over projected plans. I hope that many of you will feel able to participate in this new structure. It will take time to become natural to our way of being but I believe that in the long term it will enable new members to participate quicker and feel part of our community and will be a very positive expression of Church life.

Patrick

Reactions to the Lockerbie bomber's release

+David, Primus of the SEC

The Most Reverend David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, says:

The decision to release Lockerbie bomber Abdelbaset Ali al-Megrahi is a brave political choice taken in the face of strong pressure from outside Scotland. We respect and honour the courage which the Scottish Government has shown.

On one side of the balance is the suffering caused by this appalling act of terrorism and the need to sustain public confidence in our system of justice. On the other side is the need to consider whether, in circumstances such as these, justice should be tempered with mercy and compassion.

This decision sends to the world an important and positive message about our values.

Nelson Mandela

The chairman of the Mandela Foundation, Professor Jake Gerwel, has sent a letter to the Scottish Government supporting the decision:

Mr Mandela sincerely appreciates the decision to release Mr al-Megrahi on compassionate grounds.

Mr Mandela played a central role in facilitating the handover of Mr al-Megrahi and his fellow accused to the United Nations in order for them **to stand trial under Scottish law in the Netherlands.... The decision to release him now, and allow him to return to Libya, is one which is therefore in line with his wishes.**

Scottish Parliament debate

Malcolm Chisholm (Labour) said in the debate in the Scottish Parliament:

I regret the politicisation of what is a quasi-judicial matter and, for my part, commend the justice secretary for a courageous decision that is entirely consistent with the principles of Scots law and Christian morality, as evidenced by the widespread support for it of churches across Scotland. Does he share my revulsion at what happened when al-Megrahi returned to Libya, but does he accept that there is nothing that anyone in this Parliament could have done to stop it, and does he agree that it is entirely irrelevant to the rights or wrongs of the original decision?

Justice Minister Kenny MacAskill replied:

I am very grateful to Malcolm Chisholm. I am glad that we share the same beliefs and values, and that they transcend our political affiliations. He is quite right – what took place was deeply regrettable. Mr al-Megrahi acted without compassion and showed no sensitivity, but as I said, our values are deeper and different.

Vestry Meeting - 22nd June 2009

The Vestry meeting was held at the end of June before the holidays took hold. The first point of discussion was the rather peculiar colour the **Threshold has been painted...**

Patrick explained that the lollipop colours were entirely unintentional and will be treated as undercoat. As it has been such a long and frustrating business to get planning permission to change the colour of the Threshold, it had been decided that we would stick with the original colours and the painter was instructed accordingly. [*now done*]

Unfortunately, it appears that a genuine error may have been made when the paint was ordered. As I write the Threshold should soon be repainted in Episcopal Purple as intended.

The next item to be considered was correspondence from two congregation members raising some concerns about aspects of the Restoration project. It was argued that we should focus on selling the organ and restoring the West Wall before we tackle any other part of the project. While this clearly makes sense for many reasons, it is not practicable as the organ needs to be sold in situ and we can not afford to take it down and store it. We considered all the points raised in the letters in detail. Patrick and Robin have started to get the permissions and do the ground work for repairing the West Wall but it will probably take a year or so until we can actually get to grips with the repair. In the meantime, the Vestry

confirmed their decision to start the Restoration project with the Lady Chapel, as various gifts have been given for this purpose.

One of the correspondents also raised their unease about the use of Lady Chapel by the toddlers during the service. It has been suggested that it is an inappropriate space for the toddlers to play. We did consider this proposition very seriously but hand on heart can not agree: ***'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.'*** Luke 18:15–16 (NRSV)

We do want to encourage families to **come to St John's and to make it** easier for them when they do come. The changes include proper storage so that the toys can be put away out of sight when not in use. We also felt it inappropriate that such an important space within the Church should be set aside for what is currently only one said service a week. We also considered the commemorative plaques on the chairs and decided that it was important that they should remain in the Church. There is a tradition at **St John's of plaques being moved to** new objects so that the person commemorated remains remembered.

It is very important to Patrick that he can preside at the Eucharist facing the congregation and that the Lady Chapel can be used for a wider variety of Worship. We in the Vestry remain convinced that the Lady Chapel will continue to be a very

special and sacred space and its essence will be unchanged. We now have Diocesan permission to proceed with the changes to the Lady Chapel.

Tony reported on the Stewardship campaign. About 40% of family units have responded and another £16,000 per year has been offered (including gift aid). This is fantastic and a tremendous effort and the Rector and Vestry are *very* grateful. We do appreciate that some people have considered the appeal very carefully and are not able to give more at the moment. There may still be people who do feel able to increase their contribution but have not yet got round to it, and so this is a gentle reminder to the other half of the congregation. We have been given a reduction in our Diocesan quota which will help, but next year all Churches will face £2,500 increase in **quota to meet the Church's pension deficit**.

Tony and Patrick also reported that OSCAR, The Scottish Charity Regulator, require that all Church funds must be reported and audited centrally and be included in a single audited account for the church. We must expect to be inspected at some stage and make sure that all aspects of Church life run on a professional footing and in an OSCAR-approved way.

The main focus of the meeting was a discussion approving a new team structure to encompass the life of the whole church. Patrick explained the vision and commented that everybody approached so far had agreed to join and support the scheme. He sees it as our response to the Casting the Net initiative and it has been designed to

make use of the talents within the congregation and to build links between the congregation and the Vestry. Each team will have at least one Vestry member, initially as Convenor, and there will be nine teams to cover each aspect of Church life, from Ministry and Pastoral care to Finance and Stewardship. If anybody is interested in joining one of the teams please do come forward; team lists will be available in Church. The teams will meet to set out their aims and objectives in September. Each team will be able to approach the Vestry for funding and these proposals will be included in the budget for approval at the AGM. Patrick hopes that through these teams the congregation will feel more involved in the work and direction of our Church.

The meeting ended with a brief discussion of the problems that Patrick faces with hospital visits. Although the NHS does collect details of religious affiliation when a patient is admitted, this information is treated as confidential and not released to the hospital chaplains or used to indicate that a visit would be appreciated. It would help Patrick a great deal if next of kin could contact him when a member of the congregation is admitted to hospital as he may not hear otherwise. Patrick explained that a priest can visit at any time to talk to or pray with a patient or to perform the last rites but that the hospital will not ask him to come. He is very willing to visit people in hospital but does not always find out that he is needed until too late.

Mary Emma Strange

Vestry Meeting - 25th August

The August Vestry meeting focussed **on an update to the Church's** financial position and the Building project.

The Vestry are enormously grateful for the generous response of those families who have increased their giving. Due to this increase the **Church's financial position is better** than expected. Although we will still run a deficit for this year, the position improved after the Stewardship campaign. We should be in a better position next year, but will face an increase in costs as we will have to make an increased **contribution to the Province's** pension fund which, like so many others, has been depleted in the

current crisis.

Patrick brought the meeting up to date on the current state of the building project. The plans are being scrutinised by both the Diocesan Buildings Committee and Perth and Kinross Council and it is likely to take a while for minor issues to be resolved. Although frustrating, delays are inevitable. We hope that the Lady Chapel will be completed by Christmas.

The last major area covered was the new team structure. Patrick reported that he had met with nearly all the Convenors of the new teams and that initial meetings had been set up for most teams.

Time to end global poverty, urges Christian Aid

Almost three quarters (72 per cent) of British men and women want to see poverty ended in their life time, says a poll commissioned by international development agency Christian Aid.

Almost half (45 per cent) feel the UK government should be doing more to help, while around the same number **(46 per cent) say a political party's** policies on ending poverty would influence their vote.

The YouGov poll marks the launch of a new Christian Aid report, Poverty Over, which says the financial and other crises offer an unprecedented opportunity for the final eradication of global poverty.

The report, which explores some of the measures that must be taken to

achieve such a goal, is intended to inject new life and urgency into efforts to help the poor.

'The world is in crisis,' says Christian Aid director Dr Daleep Mukarji. 'It isn't just financial. Climate change, the food security crisis and worsening levels of inequality are also undermining quality of life for many millions of people.

'Despite the large percentage of those polled wanting an end to poverty, only three per cent believed that goal would be achieved in their life time. If a determined effort is not made now to tackle poverty, they will **be right.'**

The fight, the report warns, cannot be won unless the structural causes of poverty are first uprooted. These, it

says, can be traced directly back to human and institutional indifference to people without power, and even, in some cases, policies intended to impoverish.

‘Poverty is political,’ the report says.

‘Rather than being merely an unhappy fact of life, it is the result of structures and systems created by humans, and of people being effectively excluded from decision-making. As such, the solutions must be political too.’

Back to Church Sunday 27th September

Churchgoers across the Anglican churches in Britain are set to personally invite up to half a million people to services on Back to Church Sunday, 27 September 2009, making the event one of the largest co-ordinated evangelism events shared across the Church in recent history.

A very high percentages of all the dioceses are taking part in the initiative this year, by encouraging churchgoers to invite someone they know who used to attend church to come back on a particular Sunday. Churches will focus on extending an even warmer welcome than usual on the day.

Saturday 26 September is also Open Doors Day in Perth. We plan to have **St John’s open all day (10:30am to 3:00 pm)** on this day as well as on Saturday 19 September (Historic Buildings Open Day). We are looking for volunteers to staff the building on each day, to show people round and be a friendly presence in the church. Please contact Patrick Grant if you would like to take a shift on 19 September, and Alastair Cruikshank if you want to help out on 26 September. You can sign up for as little as half an hour or as long as you like!

Traidcraft Christmas catalogue

It’s September. The weather is getting colder and the days are getting shorter. Before you know it we’ll be putting on our woolies, making snowmen... writing Christmas cards and wrapping our presents. We’re sorry, but you need to start thinking about Christmas presents now!

We are taking orders for the Traidcraft catalogue again this year. Please look through the catalogue, fill in the enclosed order form (spare catalogues are available at the back of church), and return it to Rhiannon

Miller. We will be placing a bulk order soon after 25 October. We can accept Christmas orders up to mid-December, but stock has a tendency to sell out **fast, so it’s best to order early!**

Traidcraft works with farmers and craft workers across Africa, Asia and South America. Look in the catalogue for features on a number of producers like Nazma, Mtulu and Kusmanto, and discover what fair trade means to them.

Rhiannon Miller

Lectionary

6th September

Isaiah 35: 4-7a
Mark 7:24-37

4th October

Genesis 2:18-24
Mark 10:2-16

13th September

Isaiah 50: 4-9a
James 3:1-12
Mark 8:27-38

11th October

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15
Hebrews 4:12-16
Mark 10:17-31

20th Sept. - Harvest Festival

Joel 2: 21-27
1 Timothy 2:1-7
Matthew 6:25-33

18th October

Acts 16:6-12a
2 Timothy 4:5-17
Luke 10:1-9

27th September

Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16,
24-29
James 5:13-20

25th October

Jeremiah 31:7-9
Hebrews 7:23-28
Mark 10:46-52

From the Registers

Eternal Rest Elizabeth Dent Dickie 8th July 2009

Thomas Lewin Sampson 20th July 2009

Mission to Seafarers appoint a new Chaplain for Scotland

Mission for Seafarers in Scotland now have a chaplain. The Revd Timothy Tunley will start on 1st November. His Induction Service will be on 9th November at 7:30pm at St Mary's, Grangemouth, with reception and light refreshments following in the church hall.

Members of St John's are welcome to attend.

<http://www.missiontoseafarers.org/>

Rev Jeremy Auld

I am delighted to announce that one of our own, Rev. Jeremy Auld, currently Rector of Dollar, has been appointed as Provost of St. Paul's Cathedral, Dundee. Our congratulations to him, Christine and family. They will be moving from Dollar in the new year.

Patrick

Diary

Services

Thur 10th Sept	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 13th Sept		<i>Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity</i> Battle of Britain Sunday
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist
Thur 17th Sept	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 20th Sept		<i>Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity</i> Harvest Festival and Bring and Share Lunch
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist
		No evensong
Thur 24th Sept	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 27th Sept		<i>Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity</i>
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist
Thur 1st Oct	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 4th Oct		<i>Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity</i>
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	9:30 am	Matins
	10:45 am	Alive for Christ - Family service
Thur 8th Oct	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 11th Oct		<i>Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity</i>
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist
Thurs 15th Oct	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 18th Oct		<i>St Luke the Evangelist</i>
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist
Thur 22nd Oct	11:00 am	Holy Communion - SPB
Sun 25th Oct		<i>Last Sunday after Trinity</i>
	8:30 am	Holy Communion - SPB
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist

Events

Sat 12th Sept		Vestry Retreat
Mon 14th Sept	7:30 pm	Fellowship
Fri 18th Sept		Decoration of Church for Open day
Sat 19th Sept		Open day and Harvest Flowers
Sat 26th Sept		Historic Building Open Day
Sun 4th Oct		Last day for material for Quest
Mon 12th Oct	7:30pm	Fellowship

Farewell to Mary Burcher - Sunday 19th July

After the last service that Mary **attended at St John's, we gathered in** the Threshold for refreshments and cake but more importantly to say goodbye to her. Fergus gave this tribute:

It cannot often happen that an event in the business world can directly affect the life of one congregation in a quiet corner of the Scottish Episcopal Church. But so it was, some 40 years ago when the General Accident Insurance Company, here in Perth announced a merger with the Yorkshire Insurance Company and its satellite companies with offices in York. Almost immediately, a growing number of key staff from Yorkshire began to arrive in Perth, or in many cases Scone, which was at the time developing along the attractive lines we can see today.

Fortunately for us, many of these people made their spiritual home **here at St John's, and the rest as** they say is history.

Frank and Mary Burcher were among the first wave, arriving here in 1970. Both made a very special contribution to our lives here — **in Mary's case** serving under no less than five Rectors. They were the principal hosts for the innovative Scone Community — an early example of the **'house church' from which we have** still much to learn.

Mary has been a pillar of the **11 o'clock Thursday service which also** has a very special place in the life of our congregation.

But it is as a person that we shall best remember her: for her kindness, for



her wisdom — she likes a good argument — for her honesty and robust Yorkshire directness.

I am reminded of a comment made of some one by James Boswell in his life of Dr Johnson — **'but cheerfulness was always breaking in'**. We might say of Mary that her wonderful sense of humour was always breaking in.

Mary, as you move on to Harrogate to be nearer to your son and his family, we thank you for all you have meant to us. We will miss you, but we **certainly won't forget you. Go well** on the next part of your journey and may God bless you as you go.

Fergus Harris

Thanks from Mary Burcher

I have so many memories of the happy times shared with friends and members of the congregation of St John's over the past 39 years, that it was difficult to say goodbye.

However, the time came to move on I hope to keep in touch, meantime a

BIG THANK YOU to all for their help and support especially over the latter years. Best wishes for the future.

Mary Burcher

Production of Widdicombe Fair

Who are the members of St John's cast ? Answers in the next issue.



Photographs of the history of St John's

Mary provided the photograph here. Can you spot her and a few other regular members of the church? If others have similar photographs of events, we would be grateful for the loan so we can scan and publish them in Quest. I can quickly scan them on the photocopier, so no need to let precious photographs out of your possession!

Malcolm Nixon

Fellowship

At the Fellowship AGM in May, retiring treasurer, Margaret Terris, indefatigable worker Jean Parrot, and in particular retiring chairman, Diana, were thanked for their hard work over the years. The new committee for 2009-10 is Ruth Harris (Chairman), Val Fox (Secretary), Margaret Smith (Treasurer), with members Mabel Carcary and Dorothy Sinclair.

Payment of £16 for the Pitlochry Theatre outing is now due and should be made direct to Val.

Fellowship meetings start again on Monday 14th Sept at 7:30pm in The Threshold.

Speakers for next session include the Very Rev. Dr. J.A. Simpson, Bruce and Elaine Cameron, David Willington, David Torrie (on Desperate Dan), Sigurd Scott (on Lighthouse Life), Erin Scott from Perth and Kinross Council Waste Aware Team, and a representative from Home Start.

A full programme will be available soon at the back of church. Fellowship is friendly, fun and excellent value at £3 per annum or £1 per meeting. Why not give it a try?

Val Fox

A poem for Harvest Festival

Harvest

Sickle 'neath arm I forth to the crop,
The first deed the harvest-cut to lop.

Down I will lower my sickle-blade,
The fruitful ear in my grasp is laid,
Up mine eye I will lift from the ground,
Quickly on my heel I will turn round.

I will bring praise to the King of grace
For the ground-crops growing in this place,
To us and the flocks food he will give
As he bestoweth that we may live.

From an old Celtic prayer of South Uist

www.Parishpump.co.uk

Thomas Lewin Sampson (Sam)

Born 15th April 1920 - Died 12th July 2009

That best portion of a good man's life His little, nameless, unremembered, acts of kindness and of love.

These lines by William Wordsworth, composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey in 1798, sum up part of the man we remember.

Sam was born on the 15th of April 1920 in Charlton and brought up there, a small village near Malmesbury in Wiltshire. He was the eldest of three, having a sister Ruth, who lives in Cardiff, and a brother John, who died a couple of years ago. His Dad and Grandfather (Thomas) ran the family business - funeral undertakers, wheelwrights and carpenters – **which led to Sam's love of working with wood.** One of his first memories was of his Dad giving him a brush and a jar of liquid to paint the wood: it was only water and it soon dried and he could do it all over again. That kept him busy for days. His maternal Grandfather (Lewin) was head groom at Charlton House, home of the Countess of Suffolk and this **gave the young 'Tom' a vast area to climb trees and camp, an idyllic childhood.**

He attended Charlton Primary School and was a choirboy and then a server in the local church. He went on to secondary school in Malmesbury, gaining a senior school certificate and becoming Head Boy in his final year. There followed a two-year apprenticeship in Electrical Engineering in Chippenham, which was a 25-mile-plus round trip by bicycle three nights a week to



college. In 1939 he joined the Royal Navy as an Aircraft Mechanician in the Fleet Air Arm – perhaps an unusual choice for a young man who had never strayed far from Wiltshire, but that is what he had always wanted to do.

He served 24 years with the Navy, becoming a Chief Petty Officer. (And they are the people that run the navy!) In 1943 he was loaned to the New Zealand Navy for two years to service and maintain the Walrus aircraft on the light cruiser HMNZS *Leander*. He thoroughly enjoyed life there and with them he saw action in the Pacific, including Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands (but never saw John Wayne!). Although reluctant to leave New Zealand, Sam returned to Britain and in 1952 joined the aircraft carrier HMS *Ocean* to travel via Malta to Korea. There they worked with the United Nations and with the US 7th Fleet, regularly flying an incredible 80 sorties per day resulting, in 1953, with *Ocean* being awarded the Boyd Trophy for outstanding services in the Korean War Zone and Sam being **'Mentioned in Dispatches'**. One memory of Korea is when a Sea Fury from 802 Squadron made a forced landing. Sam was dropped in the area with his toolkit and rifle. He fortunately repaired the engine and

flew back to *Ocean* with the pilot.

On his return to Britain, Sam spent the remainder of his time in the navy as an instructor prompting him to train as a teacher at the end of his service. The next 22 years were spent teaching metalwork, woodwork and technical drawing at Perth High School and latterly also as Principal Teacher of Guidance.

Sam met his wife Joyce while teaching and they had 30 very happy years together, the last 25 being in Kinfauns village where, Joyce says, all the neighbours are friends and indeed some friends also became neighbours. It is a place where any reason to celebrate results in a party, barbecue or bonfire evening. I **understand that Sam's bird tables** adorn many of the gardens and a constant supply of peanuts and seed ensure that a varied collection of birds shared Kinfauns with him.

Sam and Joyce shared a great love of sport, especially cricket and rugby. Many holidays were spent caravanning or camping to attend Test matches and they regularly followed the fortunes of Perthshire Rugby Club, travelling the length and breadth of Scotland with friends Georgie and Graham. Only last week during the Cardiff Test Joyce was telling him the runs made and wickets taken by the English team but she omitted to mention how the Australians were doing. No harm in him thinking the Ashes were in the bag – he would have been happier today no doubt.

Sam adored Kinfauns and it made caring for him through his declining health so much easier for Joyce, because, with the wonderful help from all who assisted with his care,

he was able to remain there until his death. No one passed without looking to see if his bed was at the window so they could give him a wave. There is a big gap there today.

More than eighty years after joining the choir in Charlton, Sam was still a **regular churchgoer here in St. John's**, and more recently was appreciative of receiving communion and prayers at home. The readings today* sum up **the past and the future of Sam's life**.

I believe that the past years have really seen that love Paul describes acted out between Sam and Joyce. It was especially so over the past few months. There is a passage that I often use in wedding addresses. It is from *Captain Correlli's Mandolin* where Dr Iannis is telling his daughter Pelagia about love. I think it is appropriate to use now as a recognition of completion of a life of love:

Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement ... Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Your mother and I had it, we had roots that grew towards each other underground, and when all the peach blossom had fallen from our branches we found that we were one tree and not two.

That love is not ended and we are but at a different stage on the journey. **Sam has 'crossed the bar' and is part** of the new heaven in the closeness of his Saviour in whom he trusted.

*The readings were Psalm 131, *Crossing the bar* (Tennyson), Revelation 21: 1–7, and 1 Corinthians 13.

Night Trains

Vivian Linacre looks back down the track over half a century

One of the attractions of our city is that I can leave home at 11:00 p.m. and stroll to the Railway Station to catch the Sleeper from Inverness which leaves Perth at 11:18 and arrives at Euston in central London before 8.00 a.m. I can either take the Sleeper back again, to have the evening free in town, or else return by the 6.00 p.m. from Kings Cross - which still affords a full working day - that gets into Waverley around 10:30; then up to St Andrew Square for the last CityLink bus to Perth leaving at 11:05, to deposit me at the Edinburgh Road/Marshall Place junction at **about 12:30 a.m., provided I haven't** fallen asleep to wake up in Dundee! This is a far more efficient and comfortable use of time than flying. It is now just fifty years since I started habitually to travel by night train between Glasgow or Edinburgh and London where I was training as a surveyor at the head office of a national firm that gave me responsibility for Scotland because of my Edinburgh antecedents. I was answerable to a Welshman known as **the 'Colonial Partner' because he was** in charge of Scotland, Ireland and Wales. I regularly spent alternate **weeks in the office and 'on safari' in** Scotland.

There were no motorways then and few short-haul flights, so railways dominated North-South transport. There were three sleeper trains each from Edinburgh and Glasgow **six nights a week: one booked the 'early, middle or late'.** On the platform at

Waverley and Euston complete passenger lists were posted - one name for each first-class compartment, and two names for the second-class berths - as if we were all boarding a Cunard liner. No doubt many of the names were aliases - **there was no obsession with 'ID' then. Before the 'Glorious Twelfth' of** August, the start of the grouse-shooting season, the first-class lists looked like pages from Debrett or **Burke's** *Peerage*, and similar migrations of gentry marked the seasons for Henley, Ascot, etc. Trains stopping at Perth were met by swarms of porters with their luggage barrows to escort passengers across to the Station Hotel.

We kept a car in a Glasgow garage, which I would collect early morning, straight off the sleeper, and set off on tour. To plan itineraries, I quickly learnt exact mileages to any town in Scotland. Once in the office I received a memo from a senior **partner, telling me, 'next time I was in Glasgow', to look at some building** in Inverness. As I wanted to keep my job, I refrained from pointing out in reply that the distance of 176 miles was the same as from London to Exeter, the difference being that the roads to Exeter were much better.

Day-time trains on the East Coast route today can reach London from Edinburgh in only four hours, so sleepers trundle down the West route because (a) nobody wants to arrive at Euston at 4.00 a.m. and (b) that leaves the east-coast line free for

night-time freight traffic. But in the 1960s trains were much slower, so the scheduled journey to Edinburgh (LNER) or Glasgow (LMS) comfortably filled the night, with time to spare for superb meals in the dining car. With no mobile telephones, personal stereos or laptops, it was very sociable - people actually engaged in conversation.

Travelling to Glasgow was a special delight, going in for breakfast as the train roared down from the Shap summit towards Carlisle and finishing our kippers or salmon and scrambled eggs when passing through Motherwell. Once the train stopped in the wilds of Cumbria and, while the locomotive stood panting, we could see a dining-car attendant in his splendid uniform jump down beside the track, carrying a pair of lidded milk-cans, with which he ran down a short farm-road, to come striding back with them ten minutes later, full of warm, frothy milk which, after another five minutes, was being poured over our porridge to the cheers of all present.

The compartments were masterpieces of walnut and mahogany veneer with solid brass fittings. I loved the plaque **which bore the legend: 'A linen drugget will be found on the luggage-rack to stand upon when dressing and**

undressing'. A drugget was a strip of linen carpet, but I often wondered how one could dress and undress at the same time - particularly while standing on the luggage-rack. But the rot set in during the late 60s, when that beautiful joinery was replaced by pale blue Formica, and further deteriorated when that was replaced in the late 80s by cheap brown plastic. Even worse, air-conditioning was introduced, sealing the carriages and recycling the air breathed through hundreds of lungs, so that the day after my return I invariably suffer a sore throat.

This cannot be dismissed as mere nostalgia. The decrepit, deserted Perth Station today, the lack of a direct train link to Edinburgh since the Glenfarg line was closed, the huge carbon footprint and environmental damage caused by millions of dirty, dangerous, cars choking our roads - mostly carrying nobody but the driver - are not just the lamentations of an old fogey but matters of acute present and future concern. It does seem incredible that Edinburgh's tram system has been so drastically curtailed, with no provision for a link beyond the Airport and across the planned new Forth Bridge into Fife.

Vivian Linacre

<http://www.scotrail.co.uk/caledoniansleeper/index.html>

Gregory the Great c 540 - 604

Pope Gregory never called himself **'the Great', but instead 'the Servant of the Servants of God'**. Nevertheless, Gregory was one of the most important popes and influential writers of the Middle Ages. The son of a very rich Roman senator, he left the service of the State upon his conversion as a young man. Gregory then sold off his tremendous estates to found six monasteries in Sicily and a seventh in Rome, and gave generously to the poor. He became a monk and adopted an austere lifestyle. But he was destined to be a frustrated monk, because successive popes kept appointing him to jobs with major public responsibilities.

Christians in Britain owe him a great deal. When Gregory came across some English slaves for sale in Rome, he asked who they were, and was **told, 'They are Angles.'** Moved with compassion for these humiliated and **despised men, he replied, 'They are not Angles, but angels!'** He wanted to lead a band of missionaries to England to evangelise the Angles, but then plague broke out in Italy, and during this time he was elected Pope. Reluctantly he accepted, and then



sent to work to deal with the crises facing Christendom: plague, floods, famine, and a Lombard invasion. But busy though Gregory was, he did not forget the Angles. He sent Augustine to England, and so indirectly became the apostle of the English.

Humour

'I'm sorry, I'll read that again.... with more and more church printing their own order of worship pitfalls lie in wait for the unwary. The following announcements have all appeared in church bulletins:

- **Don't let worry kill you.... let the church help.**
- **Remember in prayer all those who are sick of our church and community.**
- **At the evening service tonight the topic will be 'What is Hell?'. Come early and listen to the choir practice. '**

Book Review

God, Actually - Why God probably exists and why Jesus was probably divine

by Roy Williams, Monarch, £10.99

Why should we believe in God? It is a question that is profoundly engaging the minds of the world. Former lawyer, Roy Williams, contends that belief should be based on logical deductions from known facts: it is not a matter of blind faith. Using many examples drawn from science, politics, history, sociology and the arts, he tackles all the biggest questions by appealing to evidence and to reason.

A recurring theme of the book is the vital place of doubt and uncertainty in God's creation. Rebutting the

arguments of atheists such as Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins, Williams explores the role of faith, which he considers a much-misunderstood concept.

Roy Williams was a lawyer for 20 years, but now writes full-time. A sceptic about Christianity for most of his life, he came to faith in his mid-thirties via parenthood, prodigious reading and a life-changing illness.

www.Parishpump.co.uk

Your church magazine needs YOU!

This issue's star article winner

Here on the Quest team we're always on the lookout for home-grown articles for our magazine. We feel that a church magazine works best when we can include lots of stories, news, and pictures from the congregation, and so we would like to invite you to send in your items. All subjects are welcome, **although we can't promise to publish everything.**

Each issue, the Quest team award a box of Fairtrade Belgian chocolates to the person who sends in the best article, letter, or picture from the congregation. This issue the prize goes to Irene Layland and her yoga group, for an article with excellent pictures of the yoga class. Next issue – who knows? It could be you!

Rhiannon Miller, Quest editor

Magazine Deadlines

for the All Saints Edition

Last date for submission of material: Sunday 4th October

Publication date: 18th October

Early submission of material is appreciated

Via email if at all possible: editor@episcopal-perth.org.uk

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The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Rector or Vestry, unless specifically stated.

Yoga at St John's

Yoga classes for well-being and relaxation have now begun, and take place every Thursday in the Threshold from 6:00 to 7:00pm.

Please note that yoga classes are on holiday on the 20th and 27th of August and the 3rd of September, so we resume classes on Thursday September 10th.

If you have been wondering about going to a class during the Autumn and Winter evenings, why not give these classes a go? Just drop in any Thursday that suits you.

The classes cater for all ages and experience and are specifically designed to benefit general health, fitness, suppleness and relaxation.

Beginners are most welcome.

Please wear loose comfortable clothing. A blanket and warm top for relaxation would be good.

The classes are taken by Irene Layland, a member of the congregation and registered CYS Scotland yoga teacher.



Reading from the Bible: Leviticus 23 verse 22

HARVEST

My name is:

FRUIT & VEG

Things that grow in my garden



choose & draw it in the circle in each box

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



TOP FOODS

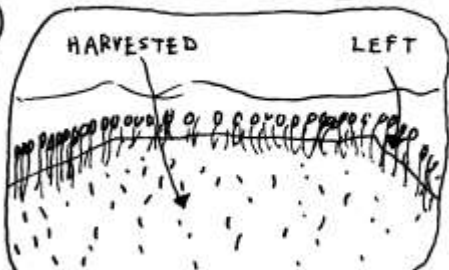
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Things that are "harvested" or made in the area where I live:

Things to be thankful for:

Number of tins of baked beans at this year's Harvest Service:



"When you reap the harvest do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor & the alien..."



People would look at me strangely if I brought one of these to the Harvest Service

But what sort of alien does the Bible verse mean?

Alien

Thought 1: Do you know where your food comes from? Look at the labels.

Thought 2: Is it a good idea to transport food around the world?

Thought 3: How can we make sure people who grow our food get paid fairly?

This verse is Leviticus 23 verse 22

God is giving instructions to Moses & the Israelites

What are 'gleanings'?

.....

.....

Why were they to leave them?

.....

.....

Can you think of ways we could do the same kind of thing today?

.....

.....

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