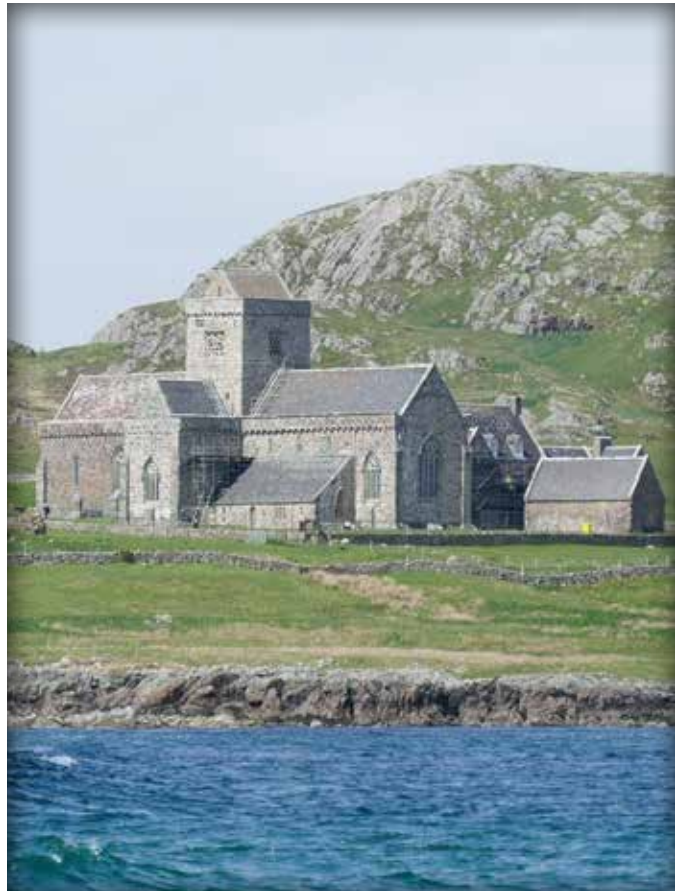




St John the Baptist  
Scottish Episcopal Church  
Perth

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Jul-Aug 2016



St. John the Baptist  
Scottish Episcopal Church  
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In partnership with  
the Scottish Association of Retired  
Anglican Clergy



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Cover image: Iona Abbey.



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## Letter from the Rector

Dear friends,

Some of you may be aware of our recent pilgrimage to Iona. Twenty-two of us set off from St John's at 8 a.m. on the Tuesday morning, arriving in Iona late afternoon, after catching various buses and ferries. (Our thanks go to Alan McPherson for organising our travel in such an efficient way.)

Over the next few days, we looked at the theme of 'Unexpected Journeys' together. We explored the story of Moses and the burning bush, relating it to our experience of God and His call on our lives.

Our time there was a mixture of worship (at Bishop's House where we were staying and at the Abbey), reflection, organised activities and opportunities to be together or alone. During our Compline services we were invited to reflect on the experiences of the day, using the Ignatian practice of Examen. We asked ourselves and each other what we were most grateful for that day and handed it to God. You will find the reflections of some of the pilgrims later on in this magazine. My thanks go to + Bruce and Nerys for sharing with me in the leading of the worship.

We left the island feeling refreshed and re-energised having had time with

God in this special place described by George MacLeod, founder of the modern Iona Community, as a 'thin place' with only as it were, 'a tissue paper separating the spiritual from the material'.

For me personally, it was a chance to spend time with members of my church family and deepen our love and commitment to one another and to St John's. Pilgrimage for me is about walking with God and walking with each other, allowing the Holy Spirit to touch our lives in a new and deeper way, so that we return home with a new purpose and vision. I hope that over the summer months you will be able to get away and be refreshed. If you are worshipping elsewhere, please take greetings from St John's with you and allow yourselves the space and time to find God in new and exciting ways.

Here in St John's on Fridays during the summer months we are opening our doors to visitors and giving them the opportunity to enjoy our beautiful church and find God within it. Thank you to those who have given up their time to enable this to happen. I would ask you all to pray that our visitors will be blessed.

Every blessing,  
**Graham**

## India Night

We arrived a little before 7pm on a chilly night in April to find the Threshold nearly full. The atmosphere was warm and friendly.

To start the evening, everyone helped themselves to the first course along with a drink - Indian beer, juice etc. This was followed by a selection of curries with rice and naan bread. The food had been prepared by a local restaurateur and was delicious.

Following the meal Graham recounted his visit to Calcutta. We saw pictures of visits to the various charities including the Dum Dum project. Money donated had been spent really well on schools (the children looking, clean, well and happy); people looked after in hostels when they would have been sleeping rough on the street; and the Arunima Hospice, Graham's chosen project, caring for terminally ill adults and children affected by HIV/AIDS. We saw them singing and dancing and making the most of their short lives - an inspiration to us all. Gifts were exchanged and friendships forged, sharing sadness and laughter.



One couldn't help being affected by the sights and sounds of India and the contrast between the affluence and poverty.

Thank you Graham for a very special evening.

*Joyce Payne*

Thank you to all who attended the two India Nights and gave so generously to support the Arunima Hospice in our companion diocese of Calcutta. The total raised is roughly £900 including a donation from the Fellowship.

*Graham*

## Voices in a Mystery, an Easter Cycle of Poems

During Holy Week a number of members of St John's joined with members of the Cathedral to present a dramatic sequence of poems under the direction of Rev. Celia Matthews.



I wasn't sure about this but I decided to go along and I'm very pleased I did as it was reflections on the events of Easter week from the viewpoint of ordinary people - the maid who prepared the room for the Last Supper, the carpenter who made the cross, the doctor who signed the death certificate. The thoughts of those closest to the events and to Jesus were often moving and thought-provoking.

I would like to thank Celia and those taking part for this interesting introduction to Easter week.

*Vivian Mason*

## Comings and Goings at St John's

During the last couple of months we have seen a lot of change at our



church. First of all, our administrator, Donna McGlashan, has left our church office. We are grateful for all that Donna has done for us during her time at St John's.

We are blessed to have found as a new administrator Beverly Skene, who also works in the office at St Matthew's Church in Tay Street. Beverly brings to this post a wealth of experience in church administration. We look forward to getting to know

*Welcome to Beverley*

her and welcoming her to our church community.

Alison Grant has left the post of Director of Music. We are very grateful to Alison for her great contribution to the development of music at St John's and in particular for her work with the choir. We wish her and her family well and will keep them in our prayers.

Thankfully, our organist Robin Miller is stepping up to take over her responsibilities, at least on a trial basis to the end of this year.

It was with great sadness that we said

goodbye to Tom Axford who died after a brief illness. We acknowledge with gratitude Tom's contribution to the Vestry and to the life of the church in general. We remember Sarah, Paul and Lucy in our prayers.

And some good news. Nerys, our curate, will be ordained to the priesthood by +David here at St John's at 6 pm on Sunday 28th August. Please put this date in your diary. This is a very exciting time within the life of our church. Please remember Nerys, Davie and their family in your prayers.

*Graham Taylor*

## A Note from the Editor

This is the July-August issue of Quest, and no, you haven't missed anything. There was no May-June issue.

The fault is entirely mine. I have been very much struggling to fit in everything of late and for the first time ever, Quest became a casualty. I can only apologise to you all.

As some of you know, I will be starting an MBA course at Open University in November, and so I will have even less time. With much regret, I have to admit that I won't be able to continue as Comms Team convenor.

Fortunately, we have a very able replacement. Nerys will be our new Comms Team convenor from the start of September. Nerys is already doing sterling work creating posters and curating the Facebook page, as well as organising other communications tasks such as leafleting. She and I will work together on the next couple of issues of Quest and the annual reports handbook for the AGM, and by Christmas Nerys will have taken over completely.

I'd like to thank all the members of the Comms Team for your help and support over the years. I know you will continue to support Nerys in just the same way.

*Rhiannon Miller*





# Church Diary

## Regular Services

First Sunday in the month	8:30 am	Holy Communion (Scottish Prayer Book)
	9:30 am	Matins
	10:30 am	Alive for Christ all-age Eucharist
Third Sunday in the month:	8:30 am	Holy Communion (Scottish Prayer Book)
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist with healing service
	6:00 pm	Evensong
Other Sundays:	8:30 am	Holy Communion (Scottish Prayer Book)
	10:30 am	Sung Eucharist
Weekday services:		
Thursdays	11:00 am	Holy Communion (Scottish Prayer Book)

## Special Services

Sunday 31 July	10:30 am	Sea Sunday service
Sunday 28 August	6:00 pm	Ordination of Nerys as priest

## Special Events

Fridays during the summer		Church open for visitors
Friday 15 July	7:30 pm	Organ recital by Geoff Bolton
Sunday 24 July to Saturday 30 July		GLEN '16 Provincial Youth Week at Glenalmond College
Saturday 30 July	2:00 pm	Rectory garden party
Sunday 31 July	3:00 pm	Henry and Renee Neil wedding anniversary concert at St John's Kirk

## Regular Events

Every Monday	12:00 pm	Giraffe Community Lunch in the Threshold
Every Thursday	6:00 pm	Yoga class in the Threshold



## From the Registers

Eternal Rest	Helen Barton	14 April 2016
	Annellen Beatson	27 April 2016
	Tom Axford	13 May 2016
	Helen Leeming	13 June 2016

## Lectionary

<b>10 Jul</b>	<b>Trinity 7</b> Colossians 1:1-14 Luke 10:25-37	<b>28 Aug</b>	<b>Trinity 14</b> Hebrews 13:1-8,15-16 Luke 14.1,7-14
<b>17 Jul</b>	<b>Trinity 8</b> Colossians 1:15-28 Luke 10:38-42	<b>4 Sep</b>	<b>Trinity 15</b> <i>Matins</i> Philemon 1-21 Psalm 1 Luke 14:25-33
<b>24 Jul</b>	<b>Trinity 9</b> Colossians 2:6-19 Luke 11:1-13	<b>11 Sep</b>	<b>Trinity 16</b> 1 Timothy 1:12-17 Luke 15:1-10
<b>31 Jul</b>	<b>Trinity 10</b> Colossians 3:1-11 Luke 12:13-21	<b>18 Sep</b>	<b>Trinity 17</b> 1 Timothy 2:1-7 Luke 16:1-13 <i>Evensong</i> Revelation 14:1-5 Psalm 119:145-152 Matthew 8:23-34
<b>7 Aug</b>	<b>Trinity 11</b> Hebrews 11:1-3,8-16 Luke 12:32-40	<b>25 Sep</b>	<b>Harvest Festival</b> 1 Timothy 2:1-7 Matthew 6:25-33
<b>14 Aug</b>	<b>Blessed Virgin Mary</b> Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 1:46-55		
<b>21 Aug</b>	<b>Trinity 13</b> Hebrews 12:18-29 Luke 13:10-17		

## Tracing the Rainbow through the Rain

*The Rt Rev Dr John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh, joined hundreds of people last night (15 June) in a vigil to 'Stand with Orlando' held in St Andrew's Square, Edinburgh.*

It is hard to estimate numbers. There must have been 500 or more of us, including a redoubtable band of Episcopalians, gathered in the rain in St Andrew's Square last night. Many more in Scotland and around the world have stated their solidarity with the victims of the outrage at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. It was the worst mass shooting in the USA, a macabre record in that land of the gun. 49 dead, 50 injured, families traumatised. A gunman professing some kind of extremist faith - a depraved sense of 'divine' vengeance persuading him to impose death on LGBTI human beings enjoying life.

Our world feels ugly at the moment. Foul rhetoric demonising difference. Lust for power without responsibility. Tunnel-visioned ignorance masquerading as idealism. Walls dividing 'us' from 'them'; barriers bequeathed to our children and children's children. Fear on fear; fear breeding fear. None of this peculiar to the USA, even if their daft gun laws seem to invite mayhem.

All these thoughts weighed me down last night. We sang of solidarity; of not being overcome by evil. Names of the victims were read; silence was kept. Politicians and others spoke of the need to stand together, of love being love, of love always winning in the end. As I looked around at the bedraggled crowd sheltering under hoods and umbrellas, I caught a glimpse of the goodness God saw in creation - the determination and resilience in the human heart made in God's image. All ages, all faiths, many nationalities, delighting in our differences as God does, looking each other in the eyes and daring to find hope there.

Yes, love may win in the end but, as our gospel tells us, it is a costly process. Light can only shine out of darkness, Easter comes only after Good Friday. For oftentimes it is not easy to love; compassion, empathy, forgiveness are hard won in the face of fear. Our love is rarely perfect enough to cast out fear. But God's love is. And if this love means that God never gives up on us, never accepts the barriers we build, we know what we must do.

That's why we stood in the rain last night, making present a world that, in God's purposes, has yet to be and looking for the rainbow.

*From the SEC website*

## Reflections on our time in Iona



*“Listening and watching the birds in the early morning at my bedroom window looking over the Sound of Iona to Fionnphart*



*“The companionship of such a committed group of St John’s friends*



*“A wonderful time of refreshment, healing, and respite from my normal life*



*“The communal worship and special reflections, poems and prayers*



*“The wind and rain, the pebble beach and sea birds, all experienced by St Columba about 1450 years ago.*



*“In the abbey, singing The Lord’s My Shepherd to the tune of Crimond (my favourite hymn)*



*“The call of the corncrakes and the cuteness of the puffins on Staffa quite unperturbed by our presence.*



*“The Spirit of God was moving in this place*



*“I loved the peacefulness the library at Bishop’s House offered.*



*“Fingal’s Cave - awe at God’s Creation.*

# Report On Diocesan Synod 2016

Having been elected as St John's Lay Representative at our last AGM, I was not too sure what I had taken on, other than the date in my diary for Saturday 12th March 2016 for the diocesan synod.

I attended with Graham and Nerys. The day was in essence the Diocesan AGM, beginning with prayers and with a Eucharist ending the morning's proceedings. In the afternoon session, there was the choice of three workshops exploring how congregations can grow in the midst of rapid change in our culture and communities.

## Adoration

Father,  
In you is my birth  
In you is the earth  
In you is eternal worth  
I bow before you.  
Jesus,  
In you is love so dear  
In you salvation near  
In you I lose my fear,  
I bow before you.  
Spirit,  
In you is all strong power  
In you is every hour,  
In you my life will flower,  
I bow before you.

*David Adam*

All the reports had been issued with the agenda, and so one could read all of the papers in advance, although most representatives also chose to give their reports verbally.

The Bishop in his opening address talked about the Columba Declaration, an agreement between the Church of Scotland and the Church of England. He spoke of the 'companionship' with the diocese of Calcutta, recently visited by him and others of the diocese. Calcutta came to the end of 2015, its bicentennial year, with a service in Calcutta Cathedral at which Bishop David preached.

The morning concluded with a ballot to agree to lower the age to 16 at which one may be a Lay Representative. This is in line with current political thinking in Scotland.

A buffet lunch followed the morning's proceedings before the workshops then took place.

I would like to thank Jean Hendry for having been our Lay Representative for many years, and for her help and advice to me on taking on the role - particularly her wise words to wear something warm!

The date of next year's synod is Saturday the 11th March 2017.

*Lilian Fleming*

## Primus comments on the outcome of the EU Referendum

The decision of the people of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union is one of the most significant political events of our generation. It turns away from the long term project of building a new Europe following the devastation of two World Wars. It aspires to reclaim national sovereignty and to establish Britain as a major independent world trading nation.

The people have spoken and the will of the people must be respected.

In a hard-fought and at times bruising campaign, it has been clear that debate about Europe has allowed a number of difficult issues to come to the surface. The debate and the patterns of voting suggest that our politicians in recent years may not have paid sufficient attention to some of the deeper issues which are present in our life. The inevitable and necessary period of reflection which must now follow will allow space for questions of poverty and immigration to be explored.

Those of us who live in Scotland are aware that the outcome of the Referendum is potentially of great significance. We hope that our politicians on all sides will take time for careful reflection and consultation.

This is a time when we should hold all of our political leaders in our prayers.”

*+David Chillingworth*

### The Neil Family Ensemble

Sunday 31 July 3:00 pm  
St John's Kirk

To celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of Henry and Renee

£10 entry donation  
Proceeds will be shared between St John's Kirk and St John's Episcopal Church



## Nitekirk



In the last edition of Quest we were promised that Nitekirk would be ‘a space for reflection and prayer with an opportunity for some creative responses’. I found this to be an excellent addition to our range of worship at St John’s and the organisers, Gordon and Hazel together with Graham and their team, must be congratulated in creating something very special.

From first entering the church in dimmed lighting it immediately feels a very special place that is very conducive for reflection and prayer. There is quite a different atmosphere to what most of us are used to. The team has established a very meaningful space of prayerful quietness and stillness which, with well thought through use of atmospheric lighting and background music, helps to concentrate the mind.

You are encouraged to light candles for loved ones or for those holding a special place in your thoughts just now. This act felt a very spiritual symbol to me as the candles are set in a cross formation in the sanctuary before the altar, and as evening light faded the cross of candles became increasingly more powerful.

However Nitekirk is much more than this. One can simply think and pray, light a candle or quietly walk around the church to be stimulated by the various breakout activities that have been created and dotted around. Also on hand is a sympathetic and trained person for you to talk to if you wish to. Even people passing by are encouraged to sample the peaceful and tranquil atmosphere even if only for a few minutes. Already people not really associated with St John’s are beginning to attend, so there is obviously a need for this service.

*Alan McPherson*





**St John the Baptist  
Episcopal Church,  
Princes Street, Perth**



**Join us for**

# **Sea Sunday**

**July 31<sup>st</sup> at  
10.30 a.m.**

**An opportunity to  
celebrate and pray  
for seafarers all  
over the world.**

